

## MY ADVENTURES IN RUSSIA.

CONCLUDED.

THAT was the programme exactly. The steamer left the quay without other passengers, and pushed out into Lake Ladoga, which stretches away to the east of Cronstadt and St. Petersburg. Getting clear of the shipping, the steamer was headed to the northeast, and then I knew that Joe was right. To guard the fourteen on the chain there were ten soldiers, all sullen-looking, uncivil fellows, who would not answer a question. The twelve Russian prisoners on the chain kept sobbing and lamenting, but the women bore up more bravely than the men, and were the soonest over their outburst of grief. We all sat down in a circle on the deck of the clumsy dirty craft, and the guards occupied benches a little distance off, and gave us no particular attention. Encouraging one of the prisoners to hope that something favorable might turn up in his case, I questioned him as to the long journey, the usage we would receive, the fare, and what the prospects were of escape.

"Ah, my dear sir," he whispered, "have no hope from this moment! They look upon us as wolves, and we will be treated as such from now to the end. I have read that prisoners have escaped while pursuing the journey, but they were recaptured and cruelly tortured, and then sent to even a worse fate than Siberia."

I saw that it was no use trying to encourage any of them, and Joe and I held conversation between ourselves. Both of us had read as much as the Russian had about the journey, but we began planning escape from the very start, and were quite positive of getting out of the country somehow, if we could once elude the vigilance of those who would guard the chain.

The steamer went along like an old tub, having a head wind and a bad sea, and it was near midnight before we landed at Shakudoo, a small town on the northeast. We marched up the crooked street to the jail, filed in, and dumped down on a stone floor, having no straw or blankets, and having had no food since morning. When Joe found out that they did not intend to feed us, he began howling and hooping in a way to make one's hair stand up. The prisoners begged him to be quiet, but he would not, and continued his noise until an official came in, when I explained what was wanted. He shook his head, and went out, but Joe's yells brought him back, and after storming around and threatening, he finally brought some bread and water.

None of us got much sleep that night, and at daylight we were marched out, and our guards delivered us to those who were to take the chain through to Siberia. These men were differently uniformed, looking more like guides, but well armed, and had had previous experience. I never could understand why the Russian government tramps its prisoners so far across the country, when they might have posts and use some sort of conveyance; but it is perhaps because they do not take time into account, and marching wears out no wheels. We were to go the whole journey on foot, as the commander of the guards informed us. He stated that if we made no trouble we should be well treated, and get the best of fare in his power to give; but that if we attempted to escape, it would end in the speedy death of those who planned the enterprise. It was four hundred leagues to the Ural Mountains, and fifty more to the point where we would be left, making a journey of over thirteen hundred miles. He would be satisfied if we made six leagues, or eighteen miles, per day on an average. This would give us a journey of seventy-five days, or nearly three months, not counting for delays.

There was a general sobbing and groaning among the prisoners as they contemplated the hardships of the long march. The fare would be black bread and water, with meat now and then, and vegetables every seventh day, if they could be procured.

"It's too much walking and too poor living for a Yankee," replied Joe, when I had explained the soldier's statements. "I'll bet you an anchor against a chaw of 'bacca that I don't march a week!"

I should have said the same thing, only I didn't see at that moment how we could help taking the whole journey. The word was given to march, and away we went, just as the Russian burghers were crawling out of their beds. The weather was by no means unpleasant, it being midsummer, and the weight of the chain was so evenly distributed that we marched quite freely. The first thing was to practise us to march; a soldier went in front of us, another came behind, each calling, "hup-hup," in place of "left-left," as in the American army. After a little practice we could march pretty well, and the soldiers took a free and easy gait, behind us, except one who marched some distance in advance.

The day was extremely long and full of hardships. The road over which we marched was generally dreary and forbidding. We passed through several small villages, and were looked upon by the residents as Americans gaze at a circus procession. Joe and I took note of every landmark, and the appearance of the country, and behaved so well on the march that one of the

soldiers complimented us at night, when we drew up at an untenanted loghouse, half way between two villages. Here we were to stop for the night. There was clean straw on the floor, and one of the guards went away to a farmhouse and purchased a supply of bread and a bite of meat all around. Joe gave them a lively sailor song before we stretched out, and I never slept better than during that night. We were on the road again at daylight, and the march of the first day will do to describe the march of the next seven. The prisoners were in better spirits as the days went by, and even got so that they spoke cheerfully of the future. The country was sometimes quite well cultivated, but generally it was composed of a sterile soil, rock, hill and forest. The villages were further apart after the third day, and we jogged along sometimes for three hours without meeting any one.

"I have gone as far as I mean to!" whispered Joe, as the eighth day was drawing to a close. "We must give them the slip to-night!"

He explained that while crossing Lake Ladoga on the steamer he had found and secreted a large nail. We had been carefully searched before leaving Cronstadt, and every article removed from our pockets, and this search had not been followed by a second. The sailor had therefore retained possession of the nail, and he had made such use of it on the night before this explanation of his as to make it possible to free himself from his irons. He examined mine closely as we walked along, and he thought he could bend up the hook around the link so that the band could be unclasped. Everything would depend on the disposition made of us that night. He requested me to secure a piece of flint stone, if I could do it without exciting suspicion; and just before dark, under pretence of stumbling while crossing broken ground, I picked up and secreted a thin piece of stone, as large as my hand and as tough as iron.

The journey ended at dark. It was a warm pleasant evening, and the chain were a unit in asking that we might camp on the ground, instead of being taken into a farmer's cowshed, as was proposed. The soldiers had experienced no trouble with us, and after some hesitation, granted the request. Thus far on the journey two of them had stood guard by turns, so that they had run no risks, and lost but little sleep. As we sat in a circle on the ground round a tree, the ends of the chain were brought together and locked, and the soldiers thought they had struck a brilliant idea.

Joe rattled off a couple of songs, and then I braced my back against a stone and spread my feet apart, and he hugged up to me as close as he could, and went right to work at the irons. We were four feet from any of the other prisoners, and the guards were twenty feet away, sitting together. Men never combine more caution, ingenuity and persistency, than when working for freedom. With the nail and the piece of stone Joe worked deftly and vigorously, while I held the chain in such a position that the other prisoners could not take the alarm. The poor wretches had not the remotest idea of escape; even had they been free from the chain, I doubt if they would have had the courage to creep away. The word "Siberia" is enough to unnerve any Russian, and few gangs will ever think of escape after being once started on the road.

The guards could not tell from our position who slept and who remained awake. Two of them stretched out for sleep, and the other two kept watch, maintaining a muttered conversation, which allowed Joe to work with more vigor than he would otherwise have dared to use. He got his irons off in about an hour, and then commenced on mine. Either because the blacksmith had made a poorer job of it, or used inferior material, the rivet through my irons soon yielded to his efforts, and by midnight we were both clear of the chain. The prisoners had all been asleep for hours, but the guards were awake and alert. The night was pretty dark, but I could make out their forms, and our irons had not been off five minutes when one of them rose up and walked around the circle, to see that we were all right. He made no discovery to excite suspicion, and when he sat down again Joe whispered to me:

"I'll go first! If I have good luck, follow me; if we are discovered, leap up, and we'll run away together!"

My heart never beat faster or louder than when the sailor commenced working himself away. It seemed to me that he was fifteen minutes passing from my sight, and I was so excited that my hair was wet with sweat. He had crept away without raising an alarm, and now it was my turn. The chain was across my lap, and I was a long time working clear of it; then I found I must drop over on my side, and turn on my face. I expected discovery every instant, and even when I had joined Joe, forty feet away, it was hard to realize that I had neither awakened any of the prisoners nor alarmed the guards.

We crept on our hands and knees about a hundred rods, and then moved like burglars for a good half mile. There was but one course to pursue; if we would get back to St. Petersburg, the minister would of

course protect us. St. Petersburg was distant more than a hundred miles, but we knew the direction, and set out with considerable confidence, having heard no alarm from those left behind.

We had five hours before daylight, and during these hours we were hardly ever off a "dog-trot," and we made a good twenty miles. We flanked one village, and did not once meet a person, though we pursued the road most of the time. When signs of daylight appeared we discovered that we had been holding too far to the north, and had thus departed a considerable distance from the direct route back to the port on Lake Ladoga where we landed. This was, however, of no great moment, and we looked about for a place to stop, realizing that our dress would prohibit us from traveling during the day, if there were no other considerations. We selected a thicket of pines on a hill, which we afterwards found to overlook a village not more than half a mile away. We also discovered soon after daylight that there was not another thicket or bit of woods within three miles of us. This made us anxious to secure a less exposed location, but when the people began to move about, we dared not make the attempt. It was a clear sharp morning, and we suffered some with the frost until the sun grew strong. We had no provision, but were too anxious to feel hunger.

The road was half a mile away, in plain sight, and we saw quite a number of horsemen pass during the forenoon. It was about one o'clock before we got an alarm; we heard a horn blowing a great way off, and a horse and rider finally passed us on the gallop, and halted at the village. That he was a courier heralding the news of our escape was plain enough. When a member of the Siberian chain gang escapes the soldiers do not leave the chain to pursue, but notify the first traveller or farmer, and keep right on their journey. The traveller or farmer must spread the news, and each one who receives notice must give notice, and be on alert. There is a severe penalty for harboring or aiding an escaped prisoner, and a small reward for delivering him up.

We now knew that the news of our escape was being spread, and expected that our place of refuge would be searched. Several villagers put off on their horses, and the courier took another road, but no one came near us, and the afternoon passed without cause for alarm. Mountains were in sight to the southwest and the northwest, and before darkness came we had settled on our direction. The journey to St. Petersburg around the lake could never be made; neither would it do to return to the port of Shakudoo, where we had landed from the steamer. We decided to work further to the north, and strike Lake Ladoga near the mouth of the River Soir, and then in some way get transportation across.

When night came we left our retreat and headed to the south, so as to make a detour of the village and the farms. We were both suffering considerably from hunger, and were so stiff that we did not get along very fast. After an hour's traveling, and just as we were heading to the north, we heard the baying of hounds on our trail. We were for a moment undecided as to whether the hounds were tracking us, or whether the dogs were accompanying a party along some road, but we soon made up our minds that we were being hunted. No domestic animal has the ferocious nature of the Russian bloodhound; once upon a trail, and nothing can rival its persistency in following the track. The country was devoid of trees or water courses, and as the deep-toned bays came nearer, Joe and I started forward on the run, keeping our course, but having no plan to escape the hounds. We were crossing a farm, and coming upon a logbarn, the door of which stood open, we dashed in. A horse and colt ran out, and Joe shut the door when the hounds were not over ten rods away.

There were two of the dogs, and I supposed they picked up the trail while rambling around, else they would not have done just as they did. They followed the trail to the very door, and then both ran after the horse, which galloped off at a furious pace. He ran away half a mile, and then made a circuit back, and by this time the farmer was out with his gun. He fired at one of the dogs, and the report and his shouts drove them off. Our fear was that he would come to the barn, and it was soon realized. We dared not leave the cover until sure that the hounds were out of the neighborhood, and the man was at the door before we expected him. As he came up we moved away into a corner, and he opened the door and came in, growling and cursing about the hounds. We had moved into the corner where he kept the rope for fastening the horse, and he came right up, hands stretched out, and clutched Joe's clothing. Next instant he was down on the floor, the sailor having him by the throat and I by the legs.

"Now hand me the rope, and I'll fix him up so that he'll anchor here for the balance of the night!" whispered Joe.

The man did not know who we were, but if he escaped us he would raise an alarm, and we must therefore make him secure until we had a good start. We had

him bound and gagged in five minutes, and were just rolling him into a corner when we heard footsteps at the door. Next moment the voice of a woman cried out:

"Husband, where are you?"

The man struggled a little, though he could not speak, and she called:

"There are government officials at the house, who are following the chain gang to retrieve two Americans! Answer me—are you there?"

"Your husband is here in the corner!" I answered, as we sprang up. The woman screamed and ran, and while Joe was untieing the farmer, I followed her. I reached the house just behind her; a wheeled vehicle stood at the door, and at the table inside sat Vlitchy and a companion spy.

"I am very glad to see the gentleman!" exclaimed Vlitchy, as he caught sight of me; "you have been pardoned!"

I never fully understood how it all came about. After my arrest, government spies went to Mr. Morrow, and told him that I had been drowned from the quay. My uncle, for some reason, did not accept the statement, but had cause to believe that I had been arrested and sent away. He made a demand on the government for my release, and, in short, raised a storm about their ears, and finally got at the truth. Couriers were then despatched to bring us back, and an apology was made, and the matter finally blew over. I had not been in St. Petersburg four hours when my uncle said:

"A steamer leaves to-morrow morning; your passage is paid, and you will be on board an hour before sailing; this country does not agree with your health."

I did not hesitate about following these instructions, as there was more at stake than my individual liberty, and Joe got a ship the same morning. The two police officials stood on the quay as the steamer backed out, and, as both removed their hats and bowed, one of them called out:

"The gentleman has our best wishes for a pleasant voyage home!"

Such a Nose.

Stotesbury lost his nose in early life during an interview with a patent hay chopper, but he succeeded in procuring a wax nose of such a marvelous construction that only keen scrutiny could detect the fraud. One night last winter, while Stotesbury was on his way to Miss Johnson's, a tremendous fire broke out, and Stotesbury stopped to look at it. He became deeply interested and drew quite near to the flame. The heat was so great that Stotesbury's nose gradually softened, and assumed something of the shape of a raw oyster. He did not notice it, however, but went calmly onward to Miss Johnson's. When he entered, the servant girl at the door gave one startled look at him and began to laugh in a most boisterous manner. Stotesbury, indignant, pushed onward to the parlor, as he entered, Miss Johnson rose to receive him. As she caught a glimpse of his nose she stopped, looked amazed, and then buried her face in her handkerchief in a convulsion of laughter. "What is the meaning of this extraordinary conduct, Miss Johnson?" demanded Stotesbury. "Oh, Mr. Stotesbury," she said "please excuse me—but what's the matter with your nose?" Stotesbury went to the pier glass, gazed at the serious oyster on his face, jammed his hat suddenly on his head, and fled from the room. As he reached the entry, he found Miss Johnson's little brother just in the door, and as that urchin perceived the condition of Stotesbury's face, he gave one wild yell and shrieked, "Oh, Tilly, come here, come here quick, and look at old Stotesbury's nose!" Then Stotesbury emerged all at once from the front door and went home. He is now wearing an India-rubber nose, and goes past Miss Johnson's without ringing the bell.

Capt. Jack's Theology.

Capt. Jack got off a good thing just the day before his execution. A clergyman was engaged in explaining to him the immortality of the soul and the consolation of religion to one in his fearful situation. He told him all about Heaven, and what a blessed place it was, and how happy he would be when he got there, where he would meet many of his old friends who had gone to glory before him, and how much happier he would be in the next world than in this one, and that instead of suffering a loss by the change he would be the gainer, and that in view of the great glory into which he was about to enter, it was better to die and be translated into Heaven than to stay here in this wicked world of sin and suffering. Jack listened attentively, and when the preacher got through said:

"But, are these things true you are telling me?"

"Yes, every word I told you."

"You are certain about them?"

"Yes, sir, I am certain. There can be no doubt about it."

"You know it to be so?"

"I do and am positive about the truth of all that I told you."

"Well, sir," said Jack, "I will give you ten horses if you will take my place to-morrow."

The clergyman, it is almost needless to say, did not accept the horses!

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Dissolution of Co-Partnership.

NOTICE is hereby given that the co-partnership heretofore existing between the undersigned, under the name of Kough, Snyder & Co. is dissolved by mutual consent. The books of the firm will be found with J. W. S. Kough, and notice is given that accounts must be settled within thirty days from this date.

J. W. S. KOUGH,

W. H. SNYDER,

Newport, Aug. 20, 1873.

The business heretofore conducted by Kough Snyder &amp; Co., will be continued by the subscribers J. W. S. KOUGH, W. H. KOUGH.