3 Tale of the Empire under Peter the Great.

CHAPTER I. TABLE time at which we open our story is this information, sir?" he asked.

1 midwinter, and towards the close of the seventeenth century. Russia is the

In the suburbs of Moscow, and very near the river Moskwa, stood an humble cor, which beirayed a neatness of arrangement and show of taste that more than made up for its smallness of size. Back of the est was an arrizan's shop, and other out-buildings. This shop was devoted to the manufacture of fire-arms, mostly, noble Duke, her guardian, and he objects Some swords, and other edged weapons, were made here upon special application.

The nurster of this tenement was the her love for you. He knows full well- will be hero of our tale, Rurie Nevel. We find as I know, and as all must know, that she hero of our tale, Rurie Nevel. We find as I know, and as an invalence of our tale, Rurie Nevel. We find as I know, and as an invalence of the cried the efficer excitedly.

Lim standing by his forge, watching the she could never be your wife; but yet he cried the efficer excitedly.

"So I think," resumed Rurie calmly. white smoke as it curted up towards the is anxious not to interfere too much against throat of the chimney. He was a young her inclinations. So a simple denial from man of not over three-and twenty, and possessed of a frame of more than ordinae symmetry and muscular development. He was not large-not above a medium require is simply your signature. Heresize-but a single glauce at the swalling chest, the broad shoulders, and the sinewy ridges of the bare arms, told at once that he was master of great physical power, riage." His father had been killed in the then late war with the Turks, and the son, leaving his mother with a sufficiency of sustenance, went to Spain soon after the bereavement There he found work in the most noted trade, he had returned to his native city a Sir Cout o follow his calling and support his mo-

Near by stood a boy-Paul Peepoffa bright intelligent lad, some fifteen years of age, who had bound himself to the sion. "Do you refuse?" gramaker for the purpose of learning the

Claudia Nevel, Rurie's mother, was a noil, turning pale with rage. "Here it is noble looking woman, and the light of her -sign! If you would sive-sign!" still handsome countenance, was never brighter than when gazing upon her boy. She had a thankful, loving heart, and a

prayerful, hepeful soul.
"It is snowing again, faster than ever," "It is snowled again, faster than ever," our tone, remarked Paul, as he took a scat at the "It might not require much more urging supportable in company with the others. to induce me to make my mark in a man-

Ab," returned Rurie, resting his knife per not all agreeable to you, sir," the a few moments while he bent his ear to youth retorted, with his teeth now set, listen to the voice of the storm. "I had and the dark veins open his brow starting hoped 'twould snow no more is the press "more plainty out. "Do you seek a quarrel out. The snow is deep enough now. And with me?"

"Never mind," spoke the danse, in a you sign?" trustful easy tone, "it must storm when it listeth, and we can only thank God that we have shelter, and pray for these who what it is to thwart such as me. How's for you," have none." 'Amen !" responded Rurie, fervently.

The meal was at length caten, and the lips in a low, hissing whisper, he aimed a ranged, table set back, and shortly afterwards Paul blow with his fist at Rurie's head. The On the retired to his bed. Rurie drew his chair close up to

fire-place, and leaning against the jam be bowed his head in absorbing thought. This had become a habit with him of late. brow that felled him to the floor like a His mother having observed these fits of dead ox. abstraction, became uneasy and pressed Rurie to tell her what it was over which, ed to the Count's companion, as that inhe was so constantly and so moodily dividual made a movement as though he brooding. Being thus urged, fluric con- would come forward. "I am not mybrooding. Being thus urged, Rurie confessed that it was of Resalind Valdai (the self now, and you are safest where you orphan daugter of a nobleman, and now are." the ward of Olga, the powerful and haughty Duke of Fula) he was thinking. Ra- gunmaker a few moments, and he seemed ric's father, and the father of Resalind, to conclude that he had better avoid a perhad been comrades in arms in their youth, sonal encounter.
and their children had been playmates.
Conrad Damonoff slowly rose to his feet, But when the elder Nevel was slain in und gazed into his antagonist's face a few battle, Ruric was yet a boy, and the widow moments in silence. His own face was and her son remained poor and obscure; deathly pale, and his whole frame quivwhile Valdai, more fortunate, had risen to cred. a high rank, and dying, left Rosalind a "Rurie Nevel," he said, in a hissing, title and a fortune. The young people, however, had not I can overlook your plebian stock."

forgotten each other. Rurie loved Rosa. And with this he turned away. lind with all the ferver of his being, and he felt assured that Rosalind returned his to his boy, after the men had gone, " not love. As he and his mother sat debating a word of this to my mother. Be sure." a blade like that?" the matter on that stormy night, a loud knock upon the outer door startled them. "Is there any one here?" the gunmak

er asked, as he opened the door, 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,

"Then follow quickly," said Rurie, and garb. "Here-give me your hand.-Therenow come.

The youth found the thickly gloved resided. hand—gloved with the softest fur—and baving led the invisible applicant into the ball he closed the door, and then led the Tuia sat Rosalind Valdai; She was a the door. way to the kitchen. Without speaking, Rurie turned and gazed upon the newcomer. The stranger, who was equally desirous of uscertaining what manner of man was, was a monk-and habited of age, and she had been ten years an orsomething like one of the Black monks of phan. There was nothing of the aristocrat St. Michael. He was of medium height, and possessed a rotaudity of person which haughty; but gentleness and love were was comical to behold. the true elements of her soul.

At length, after warming himself by the fire, the guest asked if he could be ac- as her waiting maid entered. commodated with some sleeping place, and "There is a gentleman below who would being answered in the affirmative, Rurie see you," the girl replied. showed him to a chamber and then retired

The next morning, after breakfast, the Monk went with Rurie to his shop, and examined with much interest the various starting up, while the rich blood mounted before, but the Monk replied evasively, and swered. Lead him hither, Zenobie. after saying that in case the gunmaker a friend, that he might apply to him, he walked quickly to where Rosalind had was there also.

took his leave. Towards the middle of the afternoon, shop was opened, and two men entered. length, and then he received Rosalind's which was close at hand. They were young men, dressed in costly furs, and both of them stout and goodlooking. The gunmaker recognized them Duke of Tula. Rurie informed her of dinner. I dine with Olga to-day, and a as the Count Courad Damonoff and his the visit of Count Damanoff to his shop, fair maiden awaits my coming." friend Stephen Urzen

"I think I speak with Rurie Nevel," said the Count, moving forward.

"You do," returned Rurie not at all suprised, by the visit, since people of all owed him money, she said, and might angry, and so unhinge your nerves." ranks were in the habit of calling at his perhaps be playing with the Count. place to order arms. "You are acquainted with the Lady

Rosalind Valdai?" he said. "I am," answered Rurie, now beginning

to wonder.

much haughtiness, "perhaps my business | that the Count would be no match for me. | this work I wish all present to understand can be quickly and satisfactorily settled. It is my desire to make the Lady Rosalind

my wife. Rario Nevel started at these words, and to let Rosalina know of this. He thought ed me most grossly, and this is the climax.

THE GUNMAKER OF MOSOOW. he clarped his hands to hide their tremu- she would be unhappy if she knew that a So, before God and man, be the result uplousness. But he was not long debating duel was likely to come off between himon your own head." on your own head." Out, lying kna " And why have you come to me with

As the Count spoke he drew a paper

a Sir Count," he said calmly and firmly,

"you have plaily stated your proposition, and I will as plainly answer. I can not

sign the paper."
"Ha!" gasped Damenoff, in quick pas-

" Most flatly."

" Once more—No!"

that ?"

After some minutes of comparative si " Rurie Nevel, you shall not say that I tered his sledge, and drove to the barracks yourself when you do it. If you have in the Khitagorod, where he inquired for come to fight, do so honorably." did not make myself fully understood, hence I will explain." The Count spoke this as speaks a man who feels that he is a young friend named Orsa, a lieutenant of doing a very condescending thing, and in the guard. The officer was quickly found, lips, but he did not speak it. He turned the same tone he proceeded: "The Ludy and as he met Rurie his salutation was warm and cordial. After the first friendly Ro-alind is of noble parentage and very wealthy. My own station and wealth are greetings had passed, Rurie remarked, "I equal with hers. I love her and must have may have a meeting with Conrad Count Damonoff. He has sought a quarrelher for my wife. I have been to see the insulted me most grossly-aimed a blow not to my suit. But he informed me that at my head—and I knocked him down. there was one impediment, and that was You can judge as well as I what the result Rurie.

" Most surely he will challenge you,"

"And now will you serve me in the you, to the effect that you can never claim event?

"With Pleasure."

her hand, is all that is necessary. I have And thereupon Rurie related all that a paper here all drawn up, and all that I had occurred at the time of the Count's visit to his shop, and then took his leave. it is only a plain, simple avowal on your He reached home just as his mother was spreading the board for dinner. He part that you have no hopes nor thoughts of seeking the hand of the lady in maroften went away on business, and she

thought not of asking him any questions.
On questioning Paul, in the shop, in from the bosom of his marten doublet, and having opened it he handed it towards the afternoon, Rurie, to his great surprise, learned that the Black Monk bad been the gunmaker. But Rurie took it not. there during his absence, to purchase a He drew back and gazed the visitor sternly dagger; that he had drawn out of the boy a minute account of the visit of Urzen an Damonoff, and that he seemed to be much pleased with Rurie's conduct. As they were talking, Urzen called and presented a challenge from the Count. Rurie at once referred him to his friend, and he took his leave.

"Bul you will sign it!" hissed Dama-That evening, about eight o'clock, a sledge drove up to Rurie's door, and young Orsa cutered the house. He called Rurie " Perhaps he can not write," suggested aside, and informed him that the arrange-Utzen, contemptuously.
"Then he may make his mark," re-

ments had all been made.
"Danonoff is in a burry," he said, "and we have appointed the meeting at ten joined the Count, in the same contemptuo'clock, to morrow foresoon. It will take place at the bend of the river just beyond the Viska Hill."

"And the weapons?" asked Rurie. "Swords," returned Orsa. "The Count will bring his own, and he gives you the privilege of selecting such an one as you choose."

"I thank you, Orsa, for your kindness " Seek ?- I seek what I will have. Will thus far, and you may rest assured that I shall be prompt."
"Suppose I call here in the morning "Then, by heavens, you shall know suggested the visitor.

"I should be pleased to have you do so," As these words passed from the Count's the gunmaker said; and thus it was ar-

On the following morning Rurie was up betimes, and at the breakfast table not a gunmaker had not dreamed of such a dastardly act, and he was not prepared for it. word of the one all absorbing theme was Yet he dedged it, and as the Count drew uttered. After the meal was finished the back Rurie dealt him a blow upon the gunmaker went out to his shop, and took down from one of the closets a long leathern case, in which were two swords. They " lieware, Stephen Urzen," he whisperwere Toledo blades, and of most exquisite workmanship and finish. Rurie took out the heaviest one, which was a two edged weapon, with a cross hilt of beavily gilded metal. He placed the point upon the floor, and then, with all his weight he bent the blade, untill the pommel touched the The man thus addressed viewed the point. The lithe steel sprang back to its place with a sharp clang, and the texture was not started. Then he struck the flat of the blade upon the anvil with great force. The ring was sharp and clear, and the weapon remained unharmed.

"By St. Michael," said the gunmaker to his boy, "Moscow does not contain another blade like that. Damascus never saw

maddened tone, " you will hear from me. " Paul," said the gunmaker, turning of the blade with unbounded admiration. Session: each to continue 13 weeks, inclu "But," he added, "could you not temper

"Perhaps, if I had the steel. But I On the following morning, as Rurie was preparing for breakfast, he saw Olga, the have it not. The steel of these two blades Duke pass by, and strike off into the came from India, and was originally in Bordino road. Now, thought he, is the one weapon-a ponderous, two handed time to call on Rosalind; and as soon as affair, belonging to a Bengal chieftain. he had caten his breakfast he prepared for The metal possessas all the hardness of the visit. He dressed well, and no man the finest razor, with the elasticity of the in Moscow had a nobler look when the most subtle spring. My old master at Todust of toil was removed from his brow ledo gave me these as a memento. Were I to mention the sum of money he was He took a borse and sledge and started once offered for the largest one, you would off for the Kremlin, within which the duke | hardly credit it."

After this Rurie gave Paul a few direc

the nutiful girl; molded in perfect form, Rurie was all ready. His mother was with the fall flash of health and vigor, and in the kitchen. He went to her with a possessing a face of peculiar sweetness and smile upon his face. He put his arms intelligence. She was only nineteen years about her and drew her to his bosom. "God bless you, my mother.- I shall

come back." He said this, and then he in her look-nothing proud, nothing He dared stop to speak no more, but

opened the door and passed out.
"Have you a good weapon?" asked Or-" How now, Zenebie?" asked Rosalind. so, as the horse started on.

"I have," Ruric said, quietly; "and one which has stood more tests than most "Then tell him I can not see him," said swords will bear." And after some further remarks he related the peculiar cir-Resulted, trembling.
"But it is Rurie Nevel, my mistress." cumstances attending the making of the "Rurie!" exclaimed the fair maiden, sword, and his possession of it.

At length they struck upon the river weapous therein. Ruric questioned him to her brow and temples. "O, I am glad and in half an hour more they reached the closely as to whether he had ever met him be has come. My prayers are surely an- appointed spot. The day was beautiful. They had been upon the ground but a few The girl departed, and ere long after- minutes when the other party came in sight should ever, in any great emergency, need wards Rurie entered the apartment. He around the bend of the river. The Monk

arisen to her feet, and taking one of her As soon as the Count and his second hands in both his own he pressed it to his and surgeon had arrived, and the horses just as Ruric had finished tempering some lips. It was with difficulty he spoke. But had been secured, the licutenant proposed parts of a gun lock, the back door of his the emotions of his soul became calm at that they snould repair to an old building promise that the would never permit her

"Aye," added Damanoff .- "Let us have hand to be disposed of to another by the this business done, for I would be back to " Notice him not," whispered Orsa, who

its purpose and the result. Rosalind was astonished and alarmed. Still, she could walked close to Rurie's side. "That is not believe that the Duke meant to be- one of his chief points when engaged in an stow her hand upon Damanoff. The Duke affair of this kind. He hopes to get you " Never fear," answered the gunmaker. The party halted when they reached the

Rurie started as a new suspicion flashed

youth to himself, "the Duke knows that I

upon him. Had the Duke sent Damonoff interior of the rough structure, and the upon that mission on purpose to get him Count threw off his pelisse and drew his into a quarrel. "Aye," thought the sword. Ruric followed his example. " Sir Count," the latter said, as he mo-"Well, sir," resumed Damonoff, with bave taught the sword play, and he knows ved a step forward, "ere we commence So he thinks in this subtle manner to make distinctly how I stand. You have sought me an instrument for ridding him of a this quarrel from the first. Without the

But the youth was careful not least provocation from me you have insult-

"Out, lying knave——"
"Hold," cried the surgeon, laying his lence, Rurie took leave of Rosalind, and hand heavily upon the Cout's arm. "You was soon in the open court. Here be en-

An angry reply was upon Damonoff's to his antagonist and said,—
"Will you measure weapons, sir? Mine

The undersigned have associated themselves into copartnership for the purpose of carrying on the Lumbering, Planing, and Carpentering business in all their various branches, at the may be a mite the longest. I seek no advantage; and I have one here of the same length and weight as my own, if you branches, at the Lewisburg Steam Planing Mills, "I am well satisfied as it is," replied

"Then take your ground. --- Are you

The two swords were crossed in an in stant, with a clear sharp clang.

The above is all of this story that will

be published in our columns. We give this as a sample. The continuation of it from where it leaves off here can only be found in the New York Ledger, the great family paper, for which the most popular writers in the country contribute, and which is for sale at all the stores throughout the city and country where papers are sold. Remember and ask for the New York Ledger of March 19, and in it you will get the continuation of the story from where it leaves off here. If you can not get a copy at any book store, the publishor of the Ledger will mail you a copy on the receipt of five cents.

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