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WILLIAMSTON, N. C., FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1903.

WHOLE NO. 220.

# THE MYSTERY **OF GRASLOV**

Prince Neslevov wants to marry Frances Gordon, the charming daughter of an American, who is building the Transliberian railroad. Prances is interested in the fortunes of Vadimir Paulpoff, a stalwart Russian blacksmith: She asks Neslevov to use his influence for Vladimir. Neslevov goes to Vladimir's hut. The blacksmith has talent and shows Neslevov a picture he has painted. It is the portrait of a woman of rank copied from a minature. The Prince is excited and asks for the original. Vladimir's father says it has been lost. To Vladimir old Paulpoff contesses that he lied to Meslevov and still has the minature. III—Neslevov has the Paulpoffs sent to Siberia as athilists. IV—Frances Gordon goes to the forge with books for Vladimir, At the door of the lonely hut she exceuntery Neslevov. The prince presses his unit violently, and Frances stuns him with a pistol shots in the head. V—Gordon wishes his daughter to marry Jack Deaten, an American bridge engineer. Frances demands that her father intercede with the governor for Vladimir. They start for Obi. Neslevov boards the same train, which breaks in two, and Neslevov has Frances alone in his power. VI—Neslevo drargs Frances before a priest and bids him to perform a marriage ceremony. Jack Deaton comes to the rescue. Neslerov is beaten off. VII—Denton nearly kills Neslevov loa aduel, VIII—Jack promises Frances to save the blacksmith. IX—Jack repairs a disabled turning with a special car for his daughter. Frances will not expose Neslerov's absences. X—Neslerov ends his creature Jansky, chief of police, to the Siberian mines to recover the original of Vladimir's picture from the Paulpoffs; also to put Denton out of the way, secretly. XI—Princes Olga, cousin of Neslerov's sits the palace at Tomak. She recognizes in the Vladimir picture the portrait of Princes Alexandra, the deceased wife of Neslerov's brother, and connected with a mystery at Graslov. X II.—Princess Olga secretly tearns the story of Vladimir, Jack Denton. Frances Gordon and Maslerov estates. The body was ne upon herself so great a task would be dominates our society today."
"I think it will prevail for a time."
"Where would you advise me to go to study the convict system at its worst?"

Olda, whose travels may given ner a lear insight to human character, ingled Colonel Barakoff out at once

"I have seen enough of St. Peters-burg gareties to last for a time," an-

think that the wealthy nobles of usula are not doing their full duty to one who, it is true, are dependent on them, but upon whom also they dependent."

kept a semiprisoner."

"I fear that some of that same spirit

"Its worst? Do you not wish to se it at its best?"
"I understand it at its best."

"Well, it is a serious matter to ad-vise, yet if you are working under the protection of the czar we must help you. I should say Tivoloffsky."
"I shall go there. Where are your

The colonel rubbed his grizzled mus

"We have guardhouses in all settle

"Dungeons?"
"Not many dungeons. There are dungeons under this very palace, but they are obsolete. I do not think they bave been used in years."
"Then they could be inspected."

"I see no reason why they should not. But that would be for the governor to say. Shall I ask him?"
"No; since they are under his palace

singled Colonel Barakon out at once as a man of sterling integrity and a fearless soldier. To him she was extremely gracious, and encouraged him to talk, and he was proud of her attention. When the dancing began, the I shall have an opportunity later. I suppose they are entered by way of a secret door."

"There was a door at the end of the police offices," replied the colonel. "Of course, being a soldier, I know scarcely wd scattered through the palace, it was not long before Colonel mkoff and Olga found themselves

anything about them. They are wholly in charge of the police."
"But you formerly had no police in sitting in a retired spot with the Siberia save the Cossack guards. "True, but I was not at Tomsk then. I came here from Tobolsk."

not been a short one, that one of our noble ladies has condescended to visit our capital. And now one of the powerful house of Nesierov is here. It causes wonder that she would formable Olga spoke then to the colonel's wife, and the subject of the dungeons did not recur. wonder that she would forsake leasures and gayeties of St. burg for this dismal place."

Neslerov came and presented a youn officer, a member of a noble family, and be asked Olga for a waltz. She thank-ed the colonel, and they did not meet a pleasure. I am not yet your age, slowel, but I have learned that to be appy and to be contented with one for must find some work to do, do to the well."

again. The dancing continued till a very late hour, after which there was a supper served with the true Russian prodigality. Oiga was becoming weary, but she maintained her usual spirits. She chanced to have again. The dancing continued till a

o it well."

are very young," said the
d slowly, "and very wealthy to
found that out. I, of course,
d it long ago, but my age is three "Lleutenant Dermsky is not presen Whom will you name as the lieutenan of the palace guard?"
"None will be necessary," answered

arned it long ago, but my age is three mees yours. You say you have found leasure in work. Would it be precuptuous to ask what work has bund favor in your eyes?"

"Presumptuous? Not at all, colonel. am always pleased to talk with one he is able to appreciate it. I have seems theroughly convinced that there we faults in our social system. I am alther a nihilist nor a socialist, but I eathink that the wealthy nobles of Neslerov. "Itzlg will be at his post As it is nearly morning, no more will be necessary. Dismiss the guard, take them to the banquet hall and give them

supper. Soon after that Olga found occasion to cross the ball to the offices of police. People were passing to and fro, and no one could think it strange that the princess went where she pleased. She found at the end of the suit of room found at the end of the suit of rooms devoted to police affairs a small apartment, the door of which was closed. Turning, to see that Neslerov was not in the hall—she did not care for the glests—she entered. Sitting there in lonely state was a man. He was not particularly agreeable looking and seemed to be of a stupid order.

"Ne van not below forsted with the

"It is a bold stand for a young woman to take. Men have been sent to Siberia for those sentiments."

"And the septiment sent me to Siberia, but not under sentence. I have come partly to visit the governor, who is a relative, and, more than that, to study the convict system as worked out under his rule in Tomsk."

The colonel became cautious.

"You will find plenty to study," be answered, "but I fancy you will not proceed rapidly. Our system—well, it "Are you not being feasted with the others?" asked the princess.
"No: they forget poor Itzig," was the

"Wint is your duty here?"
"To guard the door to the passage yetder. Stupid! No one could enter The key never leaves the pocket of the superintendent of police."

Jansky had been constant in his attackers.

ceed rapidly. Cur system—well, it e same, I suppose, as that in vogue coholsk." ndasce at the bottle and already owed the effect of his heavy pota-

"You shall not be overlooked," sale

mted with Count de Muloff, govern-meral, and I know that, while Le-stern man, he is just. When he he merciful without lending an rent aid to the unworthy, he does satisate to show lenlency. I hope I find the same spirit prevailing the first went to her room and return She first went to her room and returned to the banquet hall. She ordered one of the servants to open a fresh fortie of wine, which was done. Then a tray was prepared, and she ordered it taken to Itzig. Quickly, without u second's delay, a small vial in her hand was emptied into the wine.

\*Take this also," she said.
When she returned to the throng, the guests were leaving. They came in throngs to hid her adlen, and she saw

the last one leave. Jansky, Neslerov

feel completely worn out. And you, cousin, must be weary also."
"I am," she answered. "I shall not be long getting to sleep."
"Nor I. I hope you enjoyed your ball."

ball."
"Very much. I thank you for the kind attention. And now good night."
"Good night."
"Fin going, but I shall first make a round of inspection," said Jansky. "There being no guard this morning. It will do no harm. It will not be daybight for two hours."
They parted, and Olga went to her room, but not to sleep. Therese was usleep in a chaft, waiting for her mistress.

tress.

"Oh, pardon me! I was asleep!" said

Therese, starting up.
"Hush! I do not wish any one to

"I am ready. Command me, prin

"I know, faithful Therese, but this is work that will require all your nerve. Listen. The ball is over and the guests have gone. Chance has fa-vored us tonight. It has enabled me to plot and plan for what we are to do. Neslerov dismissed the guard, and there will be in a short time no one awake in the palace. The superintend-ent of police carries the key to the dungeons, and he is now half drunk. The door to the dungeons is guarded by a stupid fool named Itzig. I found him at his post, and sent him a bottle of wine and tray of food. Into the wine I poured that vial of toothache medi cine I obtained from you. It is enough to make any one sleep for hours. Where Jansky sleeps I do not know; but we must find him. We must wait -it is too soon-but in half an hour to will be safe to descend. Jansky sald it would not be daylight for two hours. That will give us an hour and a half "And that work?"

"To release the American and Viadi-mir from the dungeons and send them to old l'aulpoff to get him to safety He must not be harmed, for we want

his testimony."
"Good!" said Therese, with a shiver. "It is grand—but dangerous." Olga opened a traveling bag and took

therefrom a silver mounted revolver. "I do not wish to kill," she said "but if we are discovered there will be trouble, and I must succeed. Come now, for the honor of the Neslerovs and the house of Graslov!"

The princess opened her door an peered into the corridor. The light were still burning as brightly as dur-ing the ball, but no one was in sight. "Come-all is silent as the grave," she said. "Even if we meet some one

it will not cause suspicion."

She led the way, and Therese, shiver ing with terror, followed. The great stairway and hall were descrited, but from the little guardroom at the end of the police quarters there came the sound of curses

"Stupid blockhead!" said the voice of Jansky. "Drunk! Who brought bim this bottle of wine?"

With a quick motion Olga whisked Therese into the same room where she had crouched to listen to Jansky and Unsgethop. There came the sound of unsteady footsteps. Jansky, with the unfinished bottle of Itzig's wine in his hand, went drunkenly to bis office.
"I'll finish this—then go to bed," he muttered.

He finished it, and it finished him It was not ten minutes before his own eyes closed in that terrible sleep from which he could not arouse himself until the effect of the drug had passed off.

"Come!" said Olga. Nervously and quickly she rifled the banch of keys. Swiftly, then, these two rushed to Itzig's room and, shut-ting the door, barred it on the inside.

"Now we can work without molesta tion," said Olga.

She tried several keys in the lock of on iron door that formed part of the rear wall, but without success. Fi-nally she found one that turned the rusty tolt, and the door swung open. This door led into a small passage, in which there were various articlesterns, whips, chains and weapons, Olga quickly chose a lantern which showed it had been recently used and lighted it. At the end of the passage was an iron grating forming a door, and this,

too she unlocked with Jansky's keys. Beyond this was a flight of stone steps leading downward, and then all was darkness. Olga, holding the lantern above her head, led the way down the steps. The stones were cold and damp and slippery as she neared the bottom. The dark atmosphere sent a chill through her, but the brave girl did not falter. Therese came creeping after her, shivering with fear. They did not count the number of steps, but knew there were many. At last they stood on a cold stone floor.

"Now, which way?" she asked, hold-ing the instern to flash its light as far to possible around her.

file could see that they were in a large chamber from which various passages broke away in every direction. "We must not linger—to lose time would be to lose the game," she said. "Choose this passage and follow it to

the end." She turned into the nearest passage She turned into the nearest passage, and the gleams of the lantern were reflected from slippery walls. As she walked she examined these walls for doors. There were arches that led to other passages and smaller ones that opened into chambers that had evidently been once used for prison cells, for chains were hanging on the walls.

The lantern in Olga's hand flashed its light into every nock and cranny until Inclinatery to Oga's had massed as light into every nook and cranny until at last she reached the end of that passage. Making sure Therese was close behind, she turned her steps into

another passage, running apparently at right angles with the other. This she traversed in the same way until the very biguess of the place and its silence began to awe her.

The first courage that had led her to the desperate act graduily gave way to the awful gloom and mystery of the place. But in its stead there came a determination not to relinquish the search until she had found the unfortunate victims of Nesilera's hate or provid that they were not there. She walked on, gradually increasing her pace. A door at last greeted her vision—a real door that swung on hings.

"At last, perhaps," whe suid.

She tried her strength against the door, and, though it was not locked, yet she could not open it sufficiently to enter.

"Therese, help me," she said, setting the lantern down upon the floor.

The two placed their shoulders against the door and pushed, and it suddenly opened. Therese was precipitated head-long into the chamber. A rush of foul air almost stided Olga. There was a

peculiar sound, as if Therese had fall-en upon a heap of something. She was whimpering in her terror. Olga seized the lantern and dashed into the chamber. A cry of horror es-caped her. She was in what seemed to be an old tomb. At least, there were heaps of bones scattered about, and into one of these poor Therese had pitched headlong.

Olga swung the lantern and, near to the spot where Therese lay, two skele-tons hung in chains. One had lost its head, but the other, by reason of being fastened in a peculiar way, had retained its grinning top piece.

Therese was in a dead faint.

Olga was now in a terrible difficulty.

the knelt by the side of Therese.
"Oh," she said, "if I had but some water! She will never recover in this place."
Setting the lantern down, she

dragged the woman from the place of horrors and laid her down on the cold floor of the passage. Then she swung the door shut.

Again she began working over The rese. Olga saw that she was suffering a severe nervous shock, and the only hope of restoration of her senses was

Swinging her lantern upon her arm, she selzed hold of Therese and began dragging her nlong the passage, going backward in order to exert a greater pull on the unconscious woman.

In some way—she never knew how—she lost her bearings and came suddenly against a great stone pillar which stood in the center of a sort of court, from which passages ran like the spokes of a wheel.

For a moment she stood there half unwilling to believe the truth. Then, as the horrible fact was borne in upon her, she let the shoulders of Therese lie neglected on the floor while she stared helplessly around her. She could not discover the one through which she

CHAPTER XIV. TOTAL

OUT OF THE CHAINS. ME horror of the situation was so great that Princess Olga's brain could not accept it all at once.

Not only was she lost, but there was a certainty that if she was rescued she would also be discovered in this act against the rule of Neslerov. Powerful as was her family, she was now absolutely at the mercy of the governor of Tomsk, whom she knew to be merci-less. Who could ever know that Prin-cess Olga, the rich and beautiful Neslerov, dled in the dungeons under ber

cousin's palace?

To her vivid imagination already the horrors of starvation loomed up. To lie in that cold, dark place and suffer To and slowly waste away, to lose her mind, to rave in madness-all these thoughts burned into her brain. Then, looking at poor Therese, the girl's heart was stirred with pity.

"I am not only a suicide, but I am a nurderer as well," she said. "I should not have induced Therese to come." Therese stirred.

"Ab, Therese! Good Therese! Speak to me, will you not?" pleaded the prin-"You should not have come was horrible, that den! And perhaps I brought you here to die;" "I don't want to die!" exclaimed

Therese, sitting upright as though the word had acted like an electric shock. "I do not wish to die either; but we are lost, Therese."

"Lost! How can we be lost? Are we not under the paince?" "Yes, we are under the palace, but we are nevertheless lost. I have lost the way. See all these passages? I do not know by which one we reached this terrible place."

"We seem to be almost at the center. They cannot all lead to the stairs, "No, certainly not. And there is lit-tle chance of telling which does lend to the stairs. I do not even know in which direction the stairs lie. We are lost, Therese, and will perhaps die here of starvation."

"You must not! You shall not!" exclaimed Therese, made stronger now by the evident need of some one to as-sist the princess. She did not think so much of berself as she did of Olga. "There must be a way out and close at band," said Olga. The terrible silence acted upon the

shaken nerves of poor Therese, she began to scream hysterically. "I will not die! Heaven belp us both! Help! Help! Help!" The screams of the distracted wom-an rang in weird echoes through the

"The echoes mock me!" she cried.
"Is there no one to help?"
"Hark!" said Olga. "I think I heard "A voice! I beard a thousand of

them—and they are all my own."
"No, but this was not. It was a man's voice. Wait till I call." Subscribe for THE ENTERPRISE

"Is there any one here?" rang out Olga's clear voice. "We are lost in the "Here, here, here!" came back the

"I am here a prisoner!" came an answering cry.
"Hare—prisoner—isoner!" came the

"Where are you?" called Olga. "You—you—you!" echoed the mocking caverns.
"I must be near you—the voices sound

not far—follow the sound of my whis-tle?" came a louder voice. "Whistle—istle—istle?" came the trou-bled echoes.

Immediately there began, not far from them, the tune of "The Star Span gled Banner." Olga knew it was ar American tune and instinctively realized that the person who was guiding trying to solve the mystery of Graslo

and had been imprisoned by Jansky, ments she manage to distinguish between the real soun



"Who are yout" asked Olga. "Why are you a prisoner here?"

and the echoes, and began slowly to work her way toward it. Therese trembling with weakness and terror

At last the whistle led her into one of the passages, and she swung her lantern high to see where there was a dungeon. It was not far away, and the gleams of the lantern went through the door of a gloomy cell. The light fell upon a man chalmed to the walls. One chain was around his waist, another held his feet, and each arm was extended and held to the wall by a smaller but stout chain. These chain were built into the wall and their ends locked together.
"Who are you?" asked Olga. "Why

are you a prisoner here?"
"My name is Denton," was the reply.
"I am an American, and my arrest is

an outrage that will not go unpunish "It shall not, I promise that, if any

of us ever gets out alive. "But who are you, and what are you doing here?" asked Denton.
"I am a Neslerov and came to liber-

ate you and Vladimir Paulpoff." In the light of her lantern she could see him stare.

"You a Neslerov! When did you com to Tomsk?" "Two days ago. The governor is a distant relation of mine. I am here

upon a mission that you will under-stand when I speak—the mystery of Graslov." "You are trying, you are seeking"—
"I am a cousin of that Princess Neslerov who married the son of the Duke of Graslov. Is that sufficient?"

"It is. Then, if we work together justice will be done." "First we must work to get out of here," said Olga. "How were these chains fastened?"

"With a small iron key. It was on a long chain, so I presume it has that passage at the head of the The stairs are not far from this spot. It was not a long distance when I was

"It may not be far, but in what direc tion?"

"There was a stupid kind of fellow down here once after I was brought in He brought me some food. I watched him and think I can guide you to the stairs. Count three passages to the left from that black stone in the wall." Yes; this is the third."

"Yes; this is the third."
"Now go through that till you reach a
heap of rubbish in a little court. I remember the rubbish heap, for I stumbled over it. At this rubbish heap the
passage divides, and one lane leads to the left and the other to the right. The on the right will lead you to the "Come, Therese!"

Taking her lantern, Olga again start-ed, carefully following the directions of Denton. She found the rubbish heap and, taking the passage to the right, soon came to the stairs. She left Therese at the foot of the stairs while she

crept softly up.

In the guardroom Itzig still lay snoring, and Olga glanced at the door to make sure the bolt had not been disturbed. If a dozen Cossacks had beer turbed. If a dozen Cossacks had been hammering at the door she would not have faltered now. She searched in the little passage and found a small iron key suspended from a peg by a "It must be the one," she said. ar

CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR

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### The Giving Of Christmas Presents DR. JOHN D. BIGGS,

Olale Library

HE library in the home of Mrs. Richly might easily be mis-taken for a department store. It is nearly filled with all sorts of objects from a Louis XV, miniatur costing a thousand dollars to a me chanical pony for little Tom Richly and half a dozen aprons for the cook. In the midst of this confusion Mrs. Richly's secretary wanders, pencil and paper in hand, trying to bring order out of chaos. Mrs. Richly herself lounges in a chair and lazily surveys opera-

"There now," she remarks, "do you think you have them all straight? I really have a score of things to attend to and can't waste any more time over Christmas presents. What a bother Christmas is anyway! Now see that they are wrapped up nicely in that white paper and tied with pink baby ribbon. You'll find a ball of it in that plece of brown paper. And, above all, don't forget to erase the price marks ribbon. and to inclose my cards." So much for Christmas in the Richly

house, a mere matter of driving around to a few shops, of having a few things charged and sent home and of making the intelligent secretary do them up and inclose the proper sentiments. It's a little different matter in Mrs

Stingybody's household. That lady, had she been of a different sex, would doubtless have been a successful financier. Christmas with her is purely a business proposition. It means the smallest outlay possible with the largest results. For weeks Mrs. Stingy-body has haunted bargain sales, where things were to be found almost as good as certain other things which they resembled and which cost twice as much. All these \$1.98 and \$2.00 articles she carefully frees from all ider tifying marks and then sends them out beautifully done up in pink or blue cotton batting, which costs next to nothing, in boxes bearing the names of well known "swell" stores. I forget to add that one whole closet in Mrs. Stingybody's house is devoted to these boxes, which she collects during the year. She has the list of her friends carefully marked out and each one graded according to her future useful ness. The gifts are sent accordingly.

This sounds pretty bad; but, take my word for it, there are a great many women who, consciously or otherwise, follow Mrs. Stingybody's method.

resolved itself into a committee on



FLOWERS TO THOSE WHO CANNOT AFFORD

ways and means. Money is scarce There is always a pair of boots or a dress to be bought when least expect ed. or. worse still, doctors' bills. family pride makes the Largefamilys give out the same number of presents every year. If they did not, they have the firm idea that their position in their little circle would be lost forever. So each of the Misses Largefamily exploits her particular talent, or, rather the talent she fondly believes she has Amelia paints lopsided calendars, Bes sie embroiders (?) impossible center pleces, and even little Mary steals the time from her lessons to make wabbly pincushions. These works of art cause more than one pang of anguish amon the recipients, for of course they have to be placed in conspicuous position and kept there for a couple of month at least. However, no one has the courage to acquaint the Largefamilys with the fact that their friendship would be just as much appreciated without their gifts. Take it all in all, I think Miss Bach-

elorgiri's way is the best. Her income is small, and so she doesn't try to give presents to all the people she knows in town. What she does select, though while inexpensive, is in good taste and sure to give pleasure to the one who receives it. If she has to choose be tween a poor and a rich friend the poor friend gets the present every time, and it doesn't take the form of the ugly serviceable things so many wom-en make the mistake of giving to their less fortunate sisters. No, indeed! Miss Bachelorgir's presents are meant to be rays of sunshine. She sends brinch of violets to the struggling type writer who can never afford flower and a prin of some fine old painting to make beauty in the little teacher's gloomy har bedroom, That is Miss Bachelorgire's way.

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