Turgenev Ivan Sergeevich

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Содержание

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INTRODUCTION

In this masterly unromantic novel, Turgenev drew a character, Bazarov, who served to express what he taught us to call Nihilism, and made a movement into a man. In Russia itself the effect of the story was astonishing. The portrait of Bazarov was immediately and angrily resented as a cold travesty. The portraits of the "backwoodsmen," or retired aristocrats, fared no better. Turgenev had indeed roused the ire of both sides, only too surely.

The Petrovitchs, typical figures as he designed them of the Russian nobility, were intended he confessed to breathe "feebleness, nonchalance, narrowness of mind." His sense of fitness made him paint with extreme care these choice representatives of their class. They were the pick, and if they were humanly ineffective, what of their weaker kind? "Si la crême est mauvaise, que sera le lait?" as he put it. The bitterest criticism came, however, from the side of the revolutionaries and incompatibles. They felt in Turgenev the sharper artistry and the intimate irony as if he had only used these qualities in dealing with the specific case of Bazarov; whereas they were temperamental effects of his narrative art. He was ready to assert

himself one of the party of youth. He was at one with Bazarov, he declared, in nearly all his ideas, a chief exception being Bazarov's ideas on art, which in truth are apt to be more crudely delivered than the rest of that iconoclast's destructive opinions. Bazarov, he said once and again, was his favourite child.

It is nearly forty years now (in 1921) since the novel appeared in *The Russian Messenger*, a weekly which was the recognised exponent of the new movement. That proverbial period has lent a softer cast to the lineaments of the people in the group, as time touches the canvas of the pictures in an old country-house gallery. But the interesting thing is to find that history in the large has terribly and irresistibly confirmed the history in little that Turgenev drew, with a sure instinct, for the potential anticipations of his saga.

But we should be wrong if we mistook its clear pervading realities for those of a tract-novel, or a document of any one particular generation. It is as its title declares in a sense another fable of the inevitable coil and recoil of the two generations. The sympathetic power of Turgenev is shown in his instinctive understanding of them both. An aristocrat by training, he was saved as Tolstoi was from sterilising his imaginative and dramatic powers by any sense of caste and privilege. He loved the play of human nature, knew how to reckon with its foibles, its pride, habitual prejudices, and all tragic and comic susceptibilities. So he drew Bazarov, as a protagonist of the revolt against the old order and the protective habit of age. When Bazarov enters the

house of Arkady's father, he is like Don Quixote entering the inn of his direst probation. If the parallel seems a trifle fantastic, it was yet one that Turgenev would let pass, since he affirmed that Don Quixote himself was, in his inimitable extravagance, a type of the eternal spirit of revolution. And one would like, if there were room for it, to print as preamble to *Fathers and Sons*, the essay in which its writer has compared the deeper essentials of Hamlet and Quixote.

We must be satisfied instead to recall the direct event of the novel, as it falls in his own record. The present writer, some years ago, spent a spring at Ventnor in the Isle of Wight, and found the house on the sea-brink in which he stayed had been occupied by Turgenev at one time. Then and there it was, in 1860 and at Ventnor, that he had the first idea of this novel; and it is scarcely being too fanciful to think that he imagined the home environment and the spacious vista of the Russian provinces more fondly and more freely, because of his being at a long remove from them in that small and confined seaside nook of Ventnor. Already, we must remember, the liberation of the serf had taken place; and the ferment of liberal ideas was working in the new generation. As we look back, we see in our wisdom after the event, having realised Turgenev for the novelist he was – an artist who was for ever adjusting the moment to the permanent in art – that it was inevitable he should write this book, this tragi-comedy of age and youth, of the old order and the new, the conservating fathers and the revolutionary sons.

E. R.

The following is the list of Turgenev's chief works:

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF WORKS: Russian Life in the Interior: or, the Experiences of a Sportsman, from French version, by J. D. Meiklejohn, 1855; Annals of a Sportsman, from French version, by F. P. Abbott, 1855; Tales from the Notebook of a Sportsman, from the Russian, by E. Richter, 1895; Fathers and Sons, from the Russian, by E. Schuyler, 1867, 1883; Smoke: or, Life at Baden, from French version, 1868, by W. F. West, 1872, 1883; Liza: or, a Nest of Nobles, from the Russian, by W. R. S. Ralston, 1869, 1873, 1884; On the Eve, a tale, from the Russian, by C. E. Turner, 1871; Dimitri Roudine, from French and German versions, 1873, 1883; Spring Floods, from the Russian, by S. M. Batts, 1874; from the Russian, by E. Richter, 1895; A Lear of the Steppe, from the French, by W. H. Browne, 1874; Virgin Soil, from the French, by T. S. Perry, 1877, 1883, by A. W. Dilke, 1878; Poems in Prose, from the Russian, 1883; Senilia, Poems in Prose, with a Biographical Sketch of the Author, by S. J. Macmillan, 1890; First Love, and Punin and Baburin, from the Russian, with a Biographical Introduction, by S. Jerrold, 1884; Mumu, and the Diary of a Superfluous Man, from the Russian, by H. Gersoni, 1884; Annouchka, a tale, from the French version, by F. P. Abbott, 1884; from the Russian (with An Unfortunate Woman), by H. Gersoni, 1886; The Unfortunate One, from the Russian, by A. R. Thompson, 1888 (see above for Gersoni's translation); The Watch, from

the Russian, by J. E. Williams, 1893.

WORKS: Novels, translated by Constance Garnett, 15 vols., 1894-99, 1906, 1921. Novels and Stories, translated by Isabel F. Hapgood, with an Introduction by Henry James, 1903, etc.

LIFE: See above, Biographical Introductions to Poems in Prose and First Love; E. M. Arnold, Tourguéneff and his French Circle, translated from the work of E. Halperine-Kaminsky, 1898; J. A. T. Lloyd, Two Russian Reformers: Ivan Turgenev, Leo Tolstoy, 1910.

I

"Well, Peter? Cannot you see them yet?" asked a *barin*[1] of about forty who, hatless, and clad in a dusty jacket over a pair of tweed breeches, stepped on to the verandah of a posting-house on the 20th day of May, 1859. The person addressed was the *barin's* servant – a round-cheeked young fellow with small, dull eyes and a chin adorned with a tuft of pale-coloured down.

Glancing along the high road in a supercilious manner, the servant (in whom everything, from the turquoise ear-ring to the dyed, pomaded hair and the mincing gait, revealed the modern, the rising generation) replied: "No, *barin*, I cannot."

"Is that so?" queried the *barin*.

"Yes," the servant affirmed.

The *barin* sighed, and seated himself upon a bench. While he is sitting there with his knees drawn under him and his eyes moodily glancing to right and left, the reader may care to become better acquainted with his personality.

His name was Nikolai Petrovitch Kirsanov, and he owned (some fifteen versts from the posting-house) a respectable little property of about two hundred souls (or, as, after that he had apportioned his peasantry allotments, and set up a "farm," he

[1] Gentleman or squire.

himself expressed it, a property "of two thousand *desiatini*"[2]). His father, one of the generals of 1812, had spent his life exclusively in military service as the commander, first of a brigade, and then of a division; and always he had been quartered in the provinces, where his rank had enabled him to cut a not inconspicuous figure. As for Nikolai Petrovitch himself, he was born in Southern Russia (as also was his elder brother, Paul – of whom presently), and, until his fourteenth year, received his education amid a circle of hard-up governors, free-and-easy aides-de-camp, and sundry staff and regimental officers. His mother came of the family of the Koliazins, and, known in maidenhood as Agathe, and subsequently as Agathoklea Kuzminishna Kirsanov, belonged to the type of "officer's lady." That is to say, she wore pompous mobcaps and rustling silk dresses, was always the first to approach the cross in church, talked volubly and in a loud tone, of set practice admitted her sons to kiss her hand in the morning, and never failed to bless them before retiring to rest at night. In short, she lived the life which suited her. As the son of a general, Nikolai Petrovitch was bound – though he evinced no particular bravery, and might even have seemed a coward – to follow his brother Paul's example by entering the army; but unfortunately, owing to the fact that, on the very day when there arrived the news of his commission, he happened to break his leg, it befell that, after two months in bed, he rose to his feet a permanently lamed man. When his father had finished wringing

[2] The *desiatin* = 2.86 acres.

his hands over the mischance, he sent his son to acquire a civilian education; whence it came about that Nikolai, at eighteen, found himself a student at the University of St. Petersburg. At the same period his brother obtained a commission in one of the regiments of Guards; and, that being so, their father apportioned the two young men a joint establishment, and placed it under the more or less detached supervision of Ilya Koliazin, their maternal uncle and a leading *tchinovnik*.[3] That done, the father returned to his division and his wife, and only at rare intervals sent his sons sheets of grey foolscap (scrawled and re-scrawled in flamboyant calligraphy) to which there was appended, amid a bower of laborious flourishes, the signature "Piotr Kirsanov, Major-General." In the year 1835 Nikolai Petrovitch obtained his university degree; and in the same year General Kirsanov was retired for incompetence at a review, and decided to transfer his quarters to St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, just as he was on the point both of renting a house near the Tavritchesky Gardens and of being enrolled as a member of the English Club, a stroke put an end to his career, and Agathoklea Kuzminishna followed him soon afterwards, since never had she succeeded in taking to the dull life of the capital, but always had hankered after the old provincial existence. Already during his parents' lifetime, and to their no small vexation, Nikolai Petrovitch had contrived to fall in love with the daughter of a certain *tchinovnik* named Prepolovensky, the landlord of his flat; and since the maiden was

[3] Civil servant.

not only comely, but one of the type known as "advanced" (that is to say, she perused an occasional "Science" article in one newspaper or another), he married her out of hand as soon as the term of mourning was ended, and, abandoning the Ministry of Provincial Affairs to which, through his father's influence, he had been posted, embarked upon connubial felicity in a villa adjoining the Institute of Forestry. Thence, after a while, the couple removed to a diminutive, but in every way respectable, flat which could boast of a spotless vestibule and an icy-cold drawing-room; and thence, again, they migrated to the country, where they settled for good, and where, in due time, they had born to them a son Arkady. The existence of husband and wife was one of perfect comfort and tranquillity. Almost never were they parted from one another, they read together, they played the piano together, and they sang duets. Also, she would garden or superintend the poultry-yard, and he would set forth a-hunting, or see to the management of the estate. Meanwhile Arkady led an existence of equal calm and comfort, and grew, and waxed fat; until, in 1847, when ten years had been passed in this idyllic fashion, Kirsanov's wife breathed her last. The blow proved almost more than the husband could bear – so much so that his head turned grey in a few weeks. Yet, though he sought distraction for his thoughts by going abroad, he felt constrained, in the following year, to return home, where, after a prolonged period of inaction, he took up the subject of Industrial Reform. Next, in 1855, he sent his son to the University of St. Petersburg,

and, for the same reason, spent the following three winters in the capital, where he seldom went out, but spent the greater part of his time in endeavouring to fraternise with his son's youthful acquaintances. The fourth winter, however, he was prevented by various circumstances from spending in St. Petersburg; and thus in the May of 1859 we see him – grey-headed, dusty, a trifle bent, and wholly middle-aged – awaiting his son's home-coming after the elevation of the latter (in Nikolai's own footsteps) to the dignity of a graduate.

Presently either a sense of decency or (more probably) a certain disinclination to remain immediately under his master's eye led the servant to withdraw to the entrance gates, and there to light a pipe. Nikolai Petrovitch, however, continued sitting with head bent, and his eyes contemplating the ancient steps of the verandah, up which a stout speckled hen was tap-tapping its way on a pair of splayed yellow legs, and thereby causing an untidy, but fastidious-looking, cat to regard it from the balustrade with marked disapproval. Meanwhile the sun beat fiercely down, and from the darkened interior of a neighbouring granary came a smell as of hot rye straw. Nikolai Petrovitch sank into a reverie. "My son Arkady a graduate!" – the words kept passing and repassing through his mind. Again and again he tried to think of something else, but always the same thought returned to him. Until eventually he reverted to the memory of his dead wife. "Would that she were still with me!" was his yearning reflection. Presently a fat blue pigeon alighted upon the roadway,

and fell to taking a hasty drink from a pool beside the well. And almost at the instant that the spectacle of the bird caught Nikolai Petrovitch's eye, his ear caught the sound of approaching wheels.

"They are coming, I think," hazarded the servant as he stepped forward through the gates.

Nikolai Petrovitch sprang to his feet, and strained his eyes along the road. Yes, coming into view there was a *tarantass*,[4] drawn by three stagehorses; and in the *tarantass* there could be seen the band of a student's cap and the outlines of a familiar, well-beloved face.

"Arkasha, Arkasha!" was Kirsanov's cry as, running forward, he waved his arms. A few moments later he was pressing his lips to the sun-tanned, dusty, hairless cheek of the newly-fledged graduate.

[4] A species of four-wheeled carriage.

II

"Yes, but first give me a rub down, dearest Papa," said Arkady in a voice which, though a little hoarsened with travelling, was yet clear and youthful. "See! I am covering you with dust!" he added as joyously he returned his father's caresses.

"Oh, but that will not matter," said Nikolai Petrovitch with a loving, reassuring smile as he gave the collar of his son's blue cloak a couple of pats, and then did the same by his own jacket. Thereafter, gently withdrawing from his son's embrace, and beginning to lead the way towards the inn yard, he added: "Come this way, come this way. The horses will soon be ready."

His excitement seemed even to outdo his son's, so much did he stammer and stutter, and, at times, find himself at a loss for a word. Arkady stopped him.

"Papa," he said, "first let me introduce my good friend Bazarov, who is the comrade whom I have so often mentioned in letters to you, and who has been kind enough to come to us for a visit."

At once Nikolai Petrovitch wheeled round, and, approaching a tall man who, clad in a long coat with a tasselled belt, had just alighted from the *tarantass*, pressed the bare red hand which, after a pause, the stranger offered him.

"I am indeed glad to see you!" was Nikolai Petrovitch's greeting, "I am indeed grateful to you for your kindness in paying

us this visit! Alas, I hope that, that – But first might I inquire your name?"

"Evgenii Vasiliev," replied the other in slow, but virile, accents as, turning down the collar of his coat, he revealed his face more clearly. Long and thin, with a high forehead which looked flattened at the top and became sharpened towards the nose, the face had large, greenish eyes and long, sandy whiskers. The instant that the features brightened into a smile, however, they betokened self-assurance and intellect.

"My dearest Evgenii Vasiliev", Nikolai Petrovitch continued, "I trust that whilst you are with us you will not find time hang heavy upon your hands."

Bazarov gave his lips a slight twitch, but vouchsafed no reply beyond raising his cap – a movement which revealed the fact that the prominent convolutions of the skull were by no means concealed by the superincumbent mass of indeterminate-coloured hair.

"Now, Arkady," went on Nikolai Petrovitch as he turned to his son, "shall we have the horses harnessed at once, or should you prefer to rest a little?"

"Let us rest at home, Papa. So pray have the horses put to."

"I will," his father agreed. "Peter! Bestir yourself, my good fellow!"

Being what is known as a "perfectly trained servant," Peter had neither approached nor shaken hands with the young *barin*, but contented himself with a distant bow. He now vanished through

the yard gates.

"Though I have come in the *koliaska*," said Nikolai Petrovitch, "I have brought three fresh horses for the *tarantass*."

Arkady then drank some water from a yellow bowl proffered by the landlord, while Bazarov lighted a pipe, and approached the ostler, who was engaged in unharnessing the stagehorses.

"Only two can ride in the *koliaska*," continued Nikolai Petrovitch; "wherefore I am rather in a difficulty to know how your friend will – "

"Oh, he can travel in the *tarantass*," interrupted Arkady. "Moreover, do not stand on any ceremony with him, for, wonderful though he is, he is also quite simple, as you will find for yourself."

Nikolai Petrovitch's coachman brought out the horses, and Bazarov remarked to the ostler:

"Come, bestir yourself, fat-beard!"

"Did you hear that, Mitiusha?" added another ostler who was standing with his hands thrust into the back slits of his blouse. "The *barin* has just called you a fat-beard. And a fat-beard you are."

For answer Mitiusha merely cocked his cap to one side and drew the reins from the back of the sweating shafts-horse.

"Quick now, my good fellows!" cried Nikolai Petrovitch. "Bear a hand, all of you, and for each there will be a glassful of *vodka*."

Naturally, it was not long before the horses were harnessed,

and then father and son seated themselves in the *koliaska*, Peter mounted the box of that vehicle, and Bazarov stepped into the *tarantass*, and lolled his head against the leather cushion at the back. Finally the cortège moved away.

III

"To think that you are now a graduate and home again!" said Nikolai Petrovitch as he tapped Arkady on the knee, and then on the shoulder. "There now, there now!"

"And how is Uncle? Is he quite well?" asked Arkady – the reason for the question being that though he felt filled with a genuine, an almost childish delight at his return, he also felt conscious of an instinct that the conversation were best diverted from the emotional to the prosaic.

"Yes, your uncle is quite well. As a matter of fact, he also had arranged to come and meet you, but at the last moment changed his mind."

"Did you have very long to wait?" continued Arkady.

"About five hours."

"Dearest Papa!" cried Arkady as, leaning over towards his father, he imprinted upon his cheek a fervent kiss. Nikolai Petrovitch smiled quietly.

"I have got a splendid horse for you," he next remarked. "Presently you shall see him. Also, your room has been entirely repapered."

"And have you a room for Bazarov as well?"

"One shall be found for him."

"Oh – and pray humour him in every way you can. I could not express to you how much I value his friendship."

"But you have not known him very long, have you?"

"No – not very long."

"I thought not, for I do not remember to have seen him in St. Petersburg last winter. In what does he most interest himself?"

"Principally in natural science. But, to tell the truth, he knows practically *everything*, and is to become a doctor next year."

"Oh! So he is in the Medical Faculty?" Nikolai Petrovitch remarked; after which there was silence for a moment.

"Peter," went on Nikolai, pointing with his hand, "are not those peasants there some of our own?"

Peter glanced in the direction indicated, and saw a few waggons proceeding along a narrow by-road. The teams were bridleless, and in each waggon were seated some two or three *muzhiks* with their blouses unbuttoned.

"Yes, they are some of our own," Peter responded.

"Then whither can they be going? To the town?"

"Yes – or to the tavern." This last was added contemptuously, and with a wink to the coachman that was designed to enlist that functionary's sympathy: but as the functionary in question was one of the old school which takes no share in the modern movement, he stirred not a muscle of his face.

"This year my peasants have been giving me a good deal of trouble," Nikolai Petrovitch continued to his son. "Persistently do they refuse to pay their tithes. What ought to be done with them?"

"And do you find your hired workmen satisfactory?"

"Not altogether," muttered Nikolai Petrovitch. "You see, they have become spoilt, more's the pity! Any real energy seems quite to have left them, and they not only ruin my implements, but also leave the land untilled. Does estate-management interest you?"

"The thing we most lack here is shade," remarked Arkady in evasion of the question.

"Ah, but I have had an awning added to the north balcony, so that we can take our meals in the open air."

"But that will give the place rather the look of a villa, will it not? Things of that sort never prove effectual. But oh, the air here! How good it smells! Yes, in my opinion, things never smell elsewhere as they do here. And oh, the sky!"

Suddenly Arkady stopped, threw a glance of apprehension in the direction of the *tarantass*, and relapsed into silence.

"I quite agree with you," replied Nikolai Petrovitch. "You see, the reason is that you were born here, and that therefore the place is bound to have for you a special significance."

"But no significance can attach to the place of a man's birth, Papa."

"Indeed?"

"Oh no. None whatsoever."

Nikolai Petrovitch glanced at the speaker, and for fully half a verst let the vehicle proceed without the conversation between them being renewed. At length Nikolai Petrovitch observed:

"I cannot remember whether I wrote to tell you that your old nurse, Egorovna, is dead."

"Dead? Oh, the poor old woman! But Prokofitch – is *he* still alive?"

"He is so, and in no way changed – that is to say, he grumbles as much as ever. In fact, you will find that no *really* important alterations have taken place at Marino."

"And have you the same steward as before?"

"No; I have appointed a fresh one, for I came to the conclusion that I could not have any freed serfs about the place. That is to say, I did not feel as though I could trust such fellows with posts of responsibility." Arkady indicated Peter with his eyes, and Nikolai Petrovitch therefore subdued his voice a little. "He? Oh, *il est libre, en effet*. You see, he is my valet. But as regards a steward, I have appointed a *miestchanin*,[5] at a salary of 250 roubles a year, and he seems at least capable. But" – and here Nikolai Petrovitch rubbed his forehead, which gesture with him always implied inward agitation – "I ought to say that, though I have told you that you will find no alterations of importance at Marino, the statement is not strictly true, seeing that it is my duty to warn you that, that – " Nikolai Petrovitch hesitated again – then added in French: "Perhaps by a stern moralist my frankness might be considered misplaced; yet I will not conceal from you, nor can you fail to be aware, that always I have had ideas of my own on the subject of the relations which ought to subsist between a father and his son. At the same time, this is not to say that you have not the right to *judge* me. Rather, it is that at my age –

[5] A member of the trading or shopkeeping class.

Well, to put matters bluntly, the girl whom you will have heard me speak of – "

"You mean Thenichka?" said Arkady.

Nikolai Petrovitch's face went red.

"Do not speak of her so loudly," he advised. "Yes, *she* is living with us. I took her in because two of our smaller rooms were available. But of course the arrangement must be changed."

"Why must it, Papa?"

"Because this friend of yours is coming, and also because – well, it might make things awkward."

"Do not disturb yourself on Bazarov's account. He is altogether superior to such things."

"Yes, so you say; but the mischief lies in the fact that the wing is so small."

"Papa, Papa!" protested Arkady. "Almost one would think that you considered yourself to blame for something; whereas you have *nothing* to reproach yourself with."

"Ah, but I have," responded Nikolai Petrovitch. His face had turned redder than ever.

"No, you have *not*, Papa," repeated Arkady with a loving smile, while adding to himself with a feeling of indulgent tenderness for his good, kind father, as well as with a certain sense of "superiority": "Why is he making these excuses?"

"I beg of you to say no more," he continued with an involuntary feeling of exultation in being "grown up" and "emancipated." As he did so Nikolai Petrovitch glanced at him

from under the fingers of the hand which was still rubbing his brows. At the same moment something seemed to give his heart a stab. Mentally, as before, he blamed himself.

"Here our fields begin," he observed after a pause.

"I see," rejoined Arkady. "And that is our forest in front, I suppose?"

"It is so. Only, only – I have sold it, and this year it is to be removed."

"Why have you sold it?"

"Because I needed the money. Moreover, the land which it occupies must go to the peasants."

"What? To the peasants who pay you no tithes?"

"Possibly. But some day they will pay me."

"I regret the forest's loss," said Arkady, and then resumed his contemplation of the landscape.

The scenery which the party were traversing could not have been called picturesque, for, with slight undulations, only fields, fields, and again fields, stretched to the very horizon. True, a few patches of copse were visible, but the ditches, with their borderings of low, sparse brushwood, recalled the antique land-measurement of Katherine's day. Also, streams ran pent between abruptly sloping banks, hamlets with dwarfed huts (of which the blackened roofs were, for the most part, cracked in half) stood cheek by jowl with crazy grinding-byres of plaited willow, empty threshing-floors had their gates sagging, and from churches of wood or of brick which stood amid dilapidated graveyards

the stucco was peeling, and the crosses were threatening at any moment to fall. As he gazed at the scene Arkady's heart contracted. Moreover, the peasants encountered on the road looked ragged, and were riding sorry nags, while the laburnum trees which stood ranged like miserable beggars by the roadside had their bark hanging in strips, and their boughs shattered. Lastly, the lean, mud-encrusted cows which could be seen hungrily cropping the herbage in the ditches were so "staring" of coat that the animals might just have been rescued from the talons of some terrible, death-dealing monster; and as one gazed at those weak, pitiful beasts, almost one could fancy that one saw uprisen from amid the beauty of spring, the pale phantoms of Winter – its storms and its frost and its snow.

"Evidently this is not a rich district," reflected Arkady. "Rather, it is a district which gives one the impression neither of abundance nor of hard work. Yet can it be left as it is? No! Education is what we need. But how is that education to be administered, or, for that matter, to be introduced?"

Thus Arkady. Yet, even as the thought passed through his mind, Spring seemed once more to regain possession of her kingdom, and everything around him grew golden-green, and trees, shrubs, and herbage started to wave and glimmer under the soft, warm breath of the vernal zephyrs, and larks took to pouring out their souls in endless, ringing strains, and siskins, circling high over sunken ponds, uttered their cry, then skimmed the hillocks in silence, and handsome black rooks stalked among the

tender green of the short corn-shoots, or settled among the pale-white, smokelike ripples of the young rye, whence at intervals they protruded their heads.

Arkady gazed and gazed; and gradually, as he did so, his late thoughts grew dimmer and disappeared, and, throwing off his travelling-cloak, he peered so joyously, with such a boyish air, into his father's face that Nikolai Petrovitch bestowed upon him yet another embrace.

"We have but little further to go now," he remarked. "In fact, when once we have topped that rise the house will come into view. And what a time we are going to have together, Arkasha! For you will be able to help me with the estate (if you care to, that is to say?), and you and I will draw nearer to one another, and make one another's better acquaintance."

"We will!" cried Arkady. "And what splendid weather for us both!"

"Yes; specially for your home-coming is spring in all its glory. Yet I am not sure that I do not agree with Pushkin where he says, in *Eugène Onegin*:

> "How sad to me is your coming,
> O spring, spring, season of love!"

"Arkady," shouted Bazarov from the *tarantass*, "please send me a match or two, for I have nothing to light my pipe with."

Instantly Nikolai Petrovitch ceased quoting poetry, and

Arkady (who had listened with considerable surprise, though also with a certain measure of sympathy, to his father) hastened to produce from his pocket a silver matchbox, and to dispatch the same by the hand of Peter.

"In return, would you care to have a cigar?" called Bazarov.

"I should," replied Arkady.

The result was that when Peter returned to the *koliaska* he handed Arkady not only the matchbox, but also a fat black cigar. This Arkady lit at leisure, and then proceeded to diffuse around him so strong and acrid an odour of tobacco that Nikolai Petrovitch (a non-smoker from birth) found himself forced to avert his nose (though he did this covertly, for fear of offending his son).

A quarter of an hour later the vehicles drew up at the steps of a new wooden mansion, painted grey, and roofed with red sheet-iron. The mansion was Marino, or Novaia Sloboda, or, to quote the peasants' name, "Bobili Chutor."

IV

There issued on to the verandah to greet the arrivals no throng of household serfs – only a solitary girl of twelve. Presently, however, she was joined by a young fellow much resembling Peter, but dressed in a grey livery coat to which embossed, silver-gilt buttons were attached. This was Paul Kirsanov's valet. In silence he opened the door of the *koliaska*, and unhooked the apron of the *tarantass*; whereupon the three gentlemen alighted, passed through a dark, bare hall (the face of a young woman peered at them for a moment from behind a door), and entered a drawing-room upholstered in the latest fashion.

"So here we are at home again!" exclaimed Nikolai Petrovitch, taking off his cap, and shaking back his hair. "Let us have supper, and then for bed, bed!"

"Yes, something to eat would undoubtedly be welcome," remarked Bazarov as, yawning, he seated himself upon a sofa.

"Quite so; I will have supper served at once." Nikolai Petrovitch, for no apparent reason, tripped over his own feet. "And here comes Prokofitch," he added.

As he spoke entered a man of about sixty who, white-haired, and of thin, swarthy features, was wearing a cinnamon-coloured tail-coat with brass buttons and a crimson collar. He smiled with delight as he approached and shook hands with Arkady. Then, with a bow to the guest, he retired to the doorway, and folded

his hands behind his back.

"So here is the young master, Prokofitch!" said Nikolai Petrovitch. "He is home at last. And how, think you, is he looking?"

"Very well, very well," the old man said with another smile. The next moment, however, he knit his shaggy brows, and suggested: "Shall I lay the table?"

"If you please, if you please." Nikolai Petrovitch turned to Bazarov.

"Before supper," he said, "would you care to go to your room?"

"I thank you, no. But please have my trunk conveyed thither, and also this wrap." And Bazarov divested himself of his cloak.

"Certainly. Prokofitch, take the gentleman's cloak."

The old butler received the garment gingerly, held it well away from him with both hands, and left the room on tiptoe.

"And you, Arkady?" continued Nikolai Petrovitch. "Do you not wish to go to your room?"

"Yes; for a wash I should be thankful," was Arkady's reply as he moved towards the door. At that moment it opened to admit a man of medium height who was dressed in a dark English suit, a fashionably low collar, and a pair of patent leather boots. This was Paul Petrovitch Kirsanov. Although forty-five, he had close-cropped grey hair of the sheen of new silver, and his sallow, unwrinkled face was as clear-cut and regular of outline as though carved with a light, fine chisel. Still retaining traces

of remarkable comeliness, his bright, black, oblong eyes had a peculiar attraction, and his every well-bred, refined feature showed that symmetry of youth, that air of superiority to the rest of the world which usually disappears when once the twenties have been passed.

Drawing from his trouser pocket a slender hand the long, pink nails of which looked all the slenderer for the snowy whiteness of the superimposed cuff and large opal sleeve-link, he offered it to his nephew; after which, this prefatory European "handshake" over, he thrice kissed Arkady in the Russian fashion – that is to say, touched his nephew's cheek with his perfumed moustache, and murmured: "I congratulate you."

Next Nikolai Petrovitch presented to him Bazarov. Inclining his supple figure with a faint smile, Paul Petrovitch this time did not offer his hand. On the contrary, he replaced it in his pocket.

"I was beginning to think that you never meant to arrive," he said with an amiable hoist of his shoulders and a display of some beautiful white teeth. "What happened to you?"

"Nothing," replied Arkady, "except that we lingered a little. For the same reason are we as hungry as wolves; so pray tell Prokofitch to be quick, Papa, and I shall be back in a moment."

"Wait; I will go with you," added Bazarov as he rose from the sofa; and the two young men left the room together.

"Who is your guest?" asked Paul Petrovitch.

"A friend of Arkady's, and, according to Arkady's showing, a man of intellect."

"He is going to stay here?"

"He is."

"A long-haired fellow like that?"

"Certainly."

In that particular direction Paul Petrovitch said no more, but, tapping the table with his finger-nails, added:

"*Je pense que notre Arkady s'est dégourdi.*[6] And in any case I am pleased to see him back again."

At supper little was said. In particular did Bazarov scarcely speak, though he ate heartily; and only Nikolai Petrovitch proved garrulous as he related various incidents in what he termed his "agricultural life," and gossiped of forthcoming administrative measures, committees, deputations, the need of introducing machinery, and other such topics.

For his part, Paul Petrovitch paced the room (he never took supper), and sipped a glassful of red wine, and occasionally interjected some such remark – rather, exclamation – as "Ah!" or "Oh, ho!" or "H'm!" Arkady's contribution consisted of a little St. Petersburg gossip, even though, throughout, he was conscious of a touch of that awkwardness which overtakes a young man when, just ceased to be a boy, he returns to the spot where hitherto he has ranked as a mere child. In other words, he drawled his phrases unnecessarily, carefully avoided the use of the term "Papasha,"[7] and, once, even went so far as to substitute for it

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[6] "I think that our friend Arkady has acquired some polish."

[7] Dear Papa.

the term "Otety"[8]– though, true, he pronounced it with some difficulty. Lastly, in his excessive desire to seem at his ease, he helped himself to more wine than was good for him, and tasted some of every brand. Meanwhile Prokofitch chewed his lips, and never removed his eyes from his young master.

Supper over, the company dispersed.

"A queer fellow is that uncle of yours," Bazarov said to Arkady as, clad in a dressing-gown, he seated himself by his friend's bed, and sucked at a short pipe. "To think of encountering such elegance in the country! He would take a prize with his finger-nails."

"You do not know him yet," said Arkady. "In his day he was a leading lion, and some time or another I will tell you his history. Yes, many and many a woman has lost her head over his good looks."

"Then I should think that he has nothing to live on save memories," observed Bazarov. "At all events, there is no one *here* for him to enslave. I looked him over to-night, and never in my life have beheld a collar of such marvellous gloss, or a chin so perfectly shaven. Yet such things can come to look ridiculous, do not you think?"

"Yes – perhaps they can. But he is such an excellent fellow in himself!"

"Oh, certainly – a truly archangelic personage! Your father, too, is excellent; for though he may read foolish poetry, and

[8] Father.

though his ideas on the subject of industry may be few, his heart is in the right place."

"He is a man with a heart of gold."

"Nevertheless, did you notice his nervousness to-night?"

Arkady nodded as though to himself such a weakness was a perfect stranger.

"Curious indeed!" commented Bazarov. "Ah, you elderly Romanticists! You over-develop the nervous system until the balance is upset. Now, good-night. In my room there is an English washstand, yet the door will not shut! But such things (English washstands I mean) need to be encouraged: they represent 'progress.'"

And Bazarov departed, while Arkady surrendered himself to a sensation of comfort. How pleasant was it to be sinking to sleep in one's comfortable home, and in one's own familiar bed, and under a well-known coverlet worked by loving hands – perhaps those of his good, kind, tireless old nurse! And at the thought of Egorovna he sighed, and commended her soul to the Heavenly Powers. But for himself he did not pray.

Soon both he and Bazarov were asleep; but certain other members of the household there were who remained wakeful. In particular had Nikolai Petrovitch been greatly excited by his son's return; and though he went to bed, he left the candle burning, and, resting with his head on his hands, lay thinking deeply.

Also, his brother sat up in his study until nearly midnight. Seated in an ample armchair before a corner where a marble

stove was smouldering, he had effected no alteration in his costume beyond having exchanged his patent leather boots for a pair of heelless, red felt slippers. Lastly, he was holding, though not reading, the latest number of *Galignani*, and his eyes were fixed upon the stove, where a quivering blue spurt of flame kept alternately disappearing and bursting forth again. Whither his thoughts were wandering God only knows; but that they were not meandering through the past alone was proved by the fact that in his expression there was a concentrated gloom which is never in evidence when a man's mind is occupied with memories and no more.

Finally, seated on a chest in a small room at the back of the house, and wearing a blue dressing-jacket and, thrown over her dark hair, a white scarf, was the girl Thenichka. As she sat there she kept listening, and starting, and gazing towards an open door which at once afforded a glimpse of an infant's cot and admitted the sound of a sleeping child's respiration.

V

Next morning Bazarov was the first to awake and go out of doors.

"Ah," thought he to himself as he gazed about him, "this is *not* much of a place to look at."

When apportioning allotments to his peasantry, Nikolai Petrovitch had found himself forced to exclude from the new "farm" four *desiatins* of level, naked land, and upon this space had built himself a house, quarters for his servants, and a homestead. Also, he had laid out a garden, dug a pond, and sunk two wells. But the young trees had fared badly, very little water had risen in the pond, and the wells had developed a brackish taste. The only vegetation to attain robust growth was a clump of lilacs and acacias, under the shade of which the household was accustomed to take tea or to dine. Within a few minutes Bazarov had traversed all the paths in the garden, visited the stables and the cattlesheds, and made friends with two young household serfs whom he happened to encounter, and with whom he set forth to catch frogs in a marsh about a verst from the manor.

"For what do you want frogs, *barin*?" asked one of the lads.

"To make them useful," replied Bazarov (who possessed a peculiar gift for winning the confidence of his inferiors, even though he never cozened them, but, on the contrary, always treated them with asperity). "You see, I like to open them, and

then to observe what their insides are doing. You and I are frogs too, except that we walk upon our hind legs. Thus the operation helps me to understand what is taking place in ourselves."

"And what good will that do you?"

"This. That if you should fall sick, and I should have to treat you, I might avoid some mistakes."

"Then you are a doctor?"

"I am."

"Listen to that, Vasika! The *barin* says that you and I too are frogs. My word!"

"I don't like frogs," remarked Vasika, a barefooted boy of seven with a head as white as tow, and a costume made up of a grey blouse and a stiff collar.

"*Why* don't you like them?" asked Bazarov. "Do you think they will bite you? Nay! Into the water, my young philosophers!"

Nikolai Petrovitch too had left his bed, and, on going to visit Arkady, found him fully dressed; wherefore father and son proceeded to repair to the terrace, and there seated themselves under the shade of the awning. Amid nosegays of lilac, a tea-urn was simmering on a table by the balustrade, and presently there appeared upon the scene also the damsel who, on the previous night, had met the arrivals on the verandah. She announced in shrill tones:

"Theodosia Nikolaevna is not very well this morning, and cannot come to breakfast. So she has told me to ask you whether you will pour out tea for yourselves, or whether she is to send

Duniasha?"

"I will pour it out myself," Nikolai Petrovitch replied with some haste. "Will you have cream or lemon in your tea, Arkady?"

"Cream," he replied. After a pause he continued:

"Papasha – "

Nikolai Petrovitch glanced confusedly in his direction.

"Yes?" said he.

Arkady lowered his eyes.

"Pardon me if my question should seem to you indiscreet," he began, "but, owing to your frankness of last night, I am emboldened to return it. You will not take offence, will you?"

"Oh no! Pray go on."

"Then I feel encouraged to ask you whether it – whether it is because I am here that she – that is to say, Thenichka – has not joined us at breakfast?"

Nikolai Petrovitch slightly averted his face.

"It may be so," he said at length. "At all events, I presume that – that she prefers, she prefers – in fact, that she is shy."

Arkady glanced at his father.

"But why should she be shy?" he inquired. "In the first place, you know my views" (he uttered the words with no little complacency), "and, in the second place, surely you cannot suppose that I would by a hair's breadth intrude upon your life and your habits? No; sure am I that never could you make a bad choice; and if you have asked this girl to reside under your roof, that is tantamount to saying that she has well deserved it.

In any case, moreover, it is not for a son to summon his father to judgment – least of all for me, who possess a father like yourself, a father who has never restricted his son's freedom of action."

At first Arkady's voice had trembled a little, since not only did he feel that he was doing the "magnanimous," but also he knew that he was delivering something like a "lecture" to his father; but such an effect does the sound of his own voice exercise upon a human being that towards the end Arkady pronounced his words firmly, and even with a certain degree of *empressement*.

"I thank you, Arkady," Nikolai Petrovitch said faintly as his fingers began their customary perambulation of his forehead. "Nor is your conjecture mistaken, for if this girl had not deserved the invitation, I should not, of course, have – in other words, as you imply, this is no frivolous whim on my part. Nor need I have spoken of the matter, were it not that I desired you to understand that she might possibly have felt embarrassed at meeting you on the very day after your arrival."

"Then let *me* go and meet *her*," exclaimed Arkady with another access of "magnanimity" as he sprang from his chair. "Yes, let *me* go and explain to her why she need not shun me."

Nikolai Petrovitch also rose.

"Arkady," he began, "pray do me a favour. Hitherto I had not warned you that – "

But, without listening to him, Arkady darted from the terrace. For a moment or two Nikolai Petrovitch gazed after him – then, overcome with confusion, relapsed into a chair. His heart was

beating rapidly. Whether or not he was picturing to himself a strangeness of future relations with his son; whether he was imagining that, had his son refrained from interfering, the latter might have paid him more respect in future; whether he was reproaching himself for his own weakness – it is difficult to say what his thoughts were. Probably in them there was a combination of the feelings just indicated, if only in the form of apprehensions. Yet those apprehensions cannot have been deeply rooted, as was proved by the fact that, for all the beating of his heart, the colour had not left his face.

Soon hasty footsteps were heard approaching, and Arkady reappeared on the terrace.

"I have made her acquaintance!" he shouted with a kindly, good-humoured, triumphant expression. "That Theodosia Nikolaievna is not well to-day is a fact; but also it is a fact that she is going to appear later. And why did you not tell me that I had a little brother? Otherwise I should have gone and kissed him last night, even as I have done this moment."

Nikolai Petrovitch tried to say something – to rise and to make an explanation of some sort; but Arkady cut him short by falling upon his neck.

"What is this? Again embracing?" said Paul Petrovitch behind them.

As a matter of fact, neither father nor son was ill-pleased to see him appear, for, however touching such situations may be, one may be equally glad to escape from them.

"At what are you surprised?" asked Nikolai Petrovitch gaily. "Remember that I have not seen Arkesha for several centuries – at all events, not since last night!"

"Oh, I am not surprised," said Paul Petrovitch. "On the contrary, I should not mind embracing him myself."

And Arkady, on approaching his uncle, felt once more upon his cheek the impression of a perfumed moustache. Paul Petrovitch then sat down to table. Clad in an elegant morning suit of English cut, he was flaunting on his head a diminutive fez which helped the carelessly folded tie to symbolise the freedom of a country life. At the same time, the stiff collar of the shirt (which was striped, not white, as best befitted a matutinal toilet) supported with its usual rigour an immaculately shaven chin.

"Well, Arkady?" said he. "Where is your new friend?"

"Out somewhere. He seldom misses going for an early morning walk. But the great thing is to take no notice of him, for he detests all ceremony."

"So I have perceived." And with his usual deliberateness Paul Petrovitch began to butter a piece of bread. "Will he be staying here very long?"

"Well, as long as he may care to stay. As a matter of fact, he is going on to his father's place."

"And where does his father live?"

"Some eighty versts from here, in the same province as ourselves. I believe he has a small property, and used to be an army doctor."

"H'm! Ever since last night I have been asking myself where I can have heard the name before. Nikolai, do you remember whether there was a doctor of that name in our father's division?"

"Yes, there used to be."

"Then that doctor will be this fellow's father. H'm!" And Paul Petrovitch twitched his moustache. "What exactly is your Bazarov?" he enquired of Arkady.

"What *is* he?" Arkady repeated smiling. "Do you really want me to tell you what he is, Uncle?"

"If you please, my nephew."

"He is a Nihilist."

"A what?" exclaimed Nikolai Petrovitch, while even Paul Petrovitch paused in the act of raising a knife to the edge of which there was a morsel of butter adhering.

"A Nihilist," repeated Arkady.

"A Nihilist?" queried Nikolai Petrovitch. "I imagine that that must be a term derived from the Latin *nihil* or 'nothing.' It denotes, I presume, a man who – a man who – well, a man who declines to accept *anything*."

"Or a man who declines to *respect* anything," hazarded Paul Petrovitch as he re-applied himself to the butter.

"No, a man who treats things solely from the critical point of view," corrected Arkady.

"But the two things are one and the same, are they not?" queried Paul Petrovitch.

"Oh no. A Nihilist is a man who declines to bow to authority,

or to accept any principle on trust, however sanctified it may be."

"And to what can that lead?" asked Paul Petrovitch.

"It depends upon the individual. In one man's case, it may lead to good; in that of another, to evil."

"I see. But we elders view things differently. We folk of the older generation believe that without principles" (Paul Petrovitch pronounced the word softly, and with a French accent, whereas Arkady had pronounced it with an emphasis on the leading syllable) – "without principles it is impossible to take a single step in life, or to draw a single breath. *Mais vous avez changé tout cela.* God send you health and a general's rank, Messieurs Nihil – how do you pronounce it?"

"Ni-hi-lists," said Arkady distinctly.

"Quite so (formerly we had Hegelists, and now they have become Nihilists) – God send you health and a general's rank, but also let us see how you will contrive to exist in an absolute void, an airless vacuum. Pray ring the bell, brother Nikolai, for it is time for me to take my cocoa."

Nikolai Petrovitch did as requested, and also shouted for Duniasha; but, instead of the latter, there issued on to the terrace Thenichka in person. A young woman of twenty-three, she was pale, and gentle-looking, with dark eyes and hair, a pair of childishly red, pouting lips, and delicate hands. Also, she was clad in a clean cotton gown, a new blue kerchief was thrown lightly over her rounded shoulders, and she was carrying in front of her a large cup of cocoa. Shyly she placed the latter before

Paul Petrovitch, while a warm, rosy current of blood suffused the exquisite skin of her comely face, and then she remained standing by the table, with lowered eyes and the tips of her fingers touching its surface. Yet, though she looked as though she were regretting having come, she looked as though she felt that she had a right to be there.

Paul Petrovitch frowned, and Nikolai Petrovitch looked confused.

"Good morning, Thenichka," the latter muttered.

"Good morning," she replied in a low, clear voice. Then she glanced askance at Arkady, and he smiled at her in friendly fashion. Finally she departed with a quiet step and slightly careless gait – the latter a peculiarity of hers.

Silence reigned on the terrace. For a while Paul Petrovitch drank his cocoa. Then he suddenly raised his head, and muttered:

"Monsieur Nihilist is about to give us the pleasure of his company."

True enough, Bazarov could be seen stepping across the flowerbeds. On his linen jacket and trousers was a thick coating of mud, to the crown of his ancient circular hat clung a piece of sticky marshweed, and in his hand he was holding a small bag. Also, something in the bag kept stirring as though it were alive. Approaching the terrace with rapid strides, he nodded to the company and said:

"Good morning, gentlemen! Pardon me for being so late. I shall be back presently, but first my captures must be stowed

away."

"What are those captures?" Paul Petrovitch inquired. "Leeches?"

"No, frogs."

"Do you eat them? Or do you breed them?"

"I catch them for purposes of experiment," was Bazarov's only reply as carelessly he entered the house.

"In other words, he vivisects them," was Paul Petrovitch's comment. "In other words, he believes in frogs more than in principles."

Arkady threw his uncle a reproachful look, and even Nikolai Petrovitch shrugged his shoulders, so that Paul Petrovitch himself felt his *bon mot* to have been out of place, and hastened to divert the subject to the estate and the new steward.

VI

Bazarov, returning, seated himself at the table, and fell to drinking tea. The brothers contemplated him in silence. Arkady glanced covertly from his father to his uncle, and back again.

"Have you walked far this morning?" at length Nikolai Petrovitch inquired.

"To a marsh beside an aspen coppice. By the way, Arkady, I flushed five head of woodcock. Perhaps you would like to go and shoot them?"

"Then you yourself are no sportsman?"

"No."

"That is to say, you prefer physics to anything else?" This from Paul Petrovitch.

"Yes, I prefer physics – in fact, the natural sciences in general – to anything else."

"Well, I am told that the *Germanics* have made great strides in that department?" (Paul Petrovitch used the term "Germanics" instead of "Germans" ironically, but no one noticed it.)

"True," was Bazarov's careless reply. "In fact, the Germans are, in the same respect, our masters."

"You think highly of the Germans?" Paul Petrovitch's tone was now studiously polite, for he was beginning to feel irritated with the man – his aristocratic nature could not altogether stomach Bazarov's absolute lack of ceremony, the fact that this

doctor's son not only knew no diffidence, but actually returned snappish and reluctant answers, and infused a *brusquerie* akin to rudeness into his tone.

"At least the savants of that part of the world have some energy in them," retorted Bazarov.

"Quite so. And your opinion of our Russian savants is – well, perhaps less flattering?"

"It is, with your leave."

"That constitutes a piece of laudable modesty on your part," Paul Petrovitch observed with a slight hitch of his figure and a toss of his head. "But how comes it about that Arkady has just told us that you recognise no authorities whatsoever? Do you not trust authorities?"

"Why should I? Is anything in the world trustworthy? Certainly, should I be told a fact, I agree with it, but that is all."

"Oh! Then the Germans confine themselves solely to facts?" Paul Petrovitch's face had now assumed an expression of detachment, as though he had suddenly become withdrawn to the ultimate heights of the empyrean.

"No, not all Germans," replied Bazarov with a passing yawn. Clearly he had no mind to continue the controversy. Meanwhile Paul Petrovitch glanced at Arkady as much as to say: "Admit that your friend has beautiful manners!"

"For my own part," he continued, ostentatiously, and with an effort, "I, a fallible mortal, do *not* favour the Germans. Of course, I am not including in that category the *Russo*-Germans, who,

as we know, are birds of passage. Rather, it is the Germans of Germany proper whom I cannot abide. Once upon a time they used to produce men like Schiller and like – what's his name? – Goethe: for both of which authors my brother has a marked predilection. But now the German nation has become a nation solely of chemists and materialists."

"A good chemist is worth a score of your poets," remarked Bazarov.

"Quite so." Paul Petrovitch hitched his eyebrows a little, as though he had come near to falling asleep. "Er – I take it then that you decline to recognise art, but believe only in science?"

"I have told you that I believe in nothing at all. What after all, is science – that is to say, science in the mass? A science may exist, even as a trade or a profession may exist; but with regard to science in the mass, there is no such thing."

"Very good. And, with regard to such other postulates as usually are granted in human affairs, the attitude which you adopt is negative in the same degree?"

"What is this?" suddenly countered Bazarov. "Is it an examination in tenets?"

Paul Petrovitch turned pale, and Nikolai Petrovitch thought it time to intervene in the dispute.

"Nay, we will debate the subject later," he said. "And then, while recognising your views, good Evgenii Vasilitch, we will state our own. Individually speaking, I am delighted that you should be interested in the natural sciences. For instance, I am

told that recently Liebig[9] has made some surprising discoveries in the matter of the improvement of soils. Consequently you might be able to help me in my agricultural labours, and to give me much useful advice."

"Always I shall be at your service, Nikolai Petrovitch," replied Bazarov. "But what has Liebig to do with us? First the alphabet should be learnt before we try to read books. We have not even reached the letter A."

"You are a Nihilist – that is plain enough," reflected Nikolai Petrovitch; while aloud he added: "Yet allow me to seek your occasional assistance. Brother Paul, I believe it is time that we interviewed our steward."

Paul Petrovitch rose from his chair.

"Yes," he said, without looking at any one in particular, "it is indeed a terrible thing to have lived five years in the country, and to have stood remote from superior intellects! If one is *ab origine* a fool, one becomes so more than ever, seeing that, however much one may try not to forget what one has learnt, there will dawn upon one, sooner or later, the revelation that one's knowledge is all rubbish, that sensible men have ceased to engage in such futilities, and that one has lagged far behind the times. But, in such a case, what is one to do? Evidently the younger generation know more than we do."

And, slowly turning on his heel, he moved away as slowly, with

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[9] Justus Freiherr von Liebig (1803-1873), the great German chemist – in particular, the founder of agricultural chemistry.

Nikolai Petrovitch following in his wake.

"Does Paul Petrovitch always reside here?" asked Bazarov when the door had closed upon the pair.

"Yes, he does. But look here, Evgenii. You adopted too sharp a tone with my uncle. You have offended him."

"What? Am I to fawn upon these rustic aristocrats, even though their attitude is one purely of conceit and subservience to custom? If such be Paul Petrovitch's bent, he had better have continued his career in St. Petersburg. Never mind him, however. Do you know, I have found a splendid specimen of the water beetle *dytiscus marginatus*. Are you acquainted with it? I will show it you."

"Did I not promise to tell you his history?" observed Arkady musingly.

"Whose history? The water beetle's?"

"No; my uncle's. At least you will see from it that he is not the man you take him for, but a man who deserves pity rather than ridicule."

"I am not prepared to dispute it. But how come you to be so devoted to him?"

"Always one ought to be fair."

"The connection I do not see."

"Then listen."

And Arkady related the story to be found in the following chapter.

VII

"Like his brother, Paul Petrovitch Kirsanov received his early education at home, and entered the Imperial Corps of Pages. Distinguished from boyhood for his good looks, he had, in addition, a nature of the self-confident, quizzical, amusingly sarcastic type which never fails to please. As soon, therefore, as he had received his officer's commission, he began to go everywhere in society, to set the pace, to amuse himself, to play the rake, and to squander his money. Yet these things somehow consorted well with his personality, and women went nearly mad over him, while men called him 'Fate,' and secretly detested him. Meanwhile he rented a flat with his brother, for whom, in spite of their dissimilarity, he had a genuine affection. The dissimilarity in question lay, among other things, in the fact that, while Nikolai Petrovitch halted, had small, kindly, rather melancholy features and narrow black eyes, and was of a disposition prone to reading omnivorously, to bestirring himself but little, and to feeling nervous when attending social functions, Paul Petrovitch never spent a single evening at home, but was renowned for his physical dexterity and daring (he it was who made gymnastics the rage among the gilded youth of his day), and read, at most, five or six French novels. Indeed, by the time that he reached his twenty-eighth year Paul had risen to be a captain, and before him there seemed to lie a brilliant career; but everything suddenly

underwent a change, as shall be related forthwith.

"Among the society of St. Petersburg of that period there was accustomed to appear, and to disappear, at irregular intervals a certain Princess R. whose memory survives to this day. Though wedded to a highly placed and very presentable (albeit slightly stupid) husband, she had no children, and spent her time between making unexpected visits abroad and unexpected returns to Russia. In short, she led a very curious life, and the world in general accounted her a coquette, in that she devoted herself to every sort of pleasure, and danced at balls until she could dance no more, and laughed and jested with young men whom she received before dinner in the half-light of a darkened drawing-room. Yet, strangely enough, as the night advanced she would fall to weeping and praying and wringing her hands, and, unable to rest, would pace her room until break of day, or sit huddled, pale and cold, over the Psalter. But no sooner would daylight have appeared than she would once more become a woman of the world, and drive, and laugh, and chatter, and fling herself upon anything which seemed to offer any sort of distraction. Also, her power to charm was extraordinary; for though no one could have called her a beauty (seeing that the one good feature of her face lay in her eyes – and even then it was not the small, grey eyes themselves which attracted, but the glance which they emitted), she had hair of the colour and weight of gold which reached to her knees. That glance! – it was a glance which could be careless to the point of daring or meditative to the

point of melancholy; a glance so enigmatical that, even when her tongue was lisping fatuous nonsense, there gleamed in her aspect something intangible and out of the common. Finally, she dressed with exquisite taste.

"This woman Paul Petrovitch met at a ball; and at it he danced a mazurka with her. Yet, though, during the dance, she uttered not a single word of sense, he straightway fell in love with her, and, being a man accustomed to conquests, attained his end in this case also. Yet, strangely enough, the facility of his triumph in no way chilled him, but led him on to become more and more resolutely, more and more painfully, attached, and that though she was a woman in whom, even after she had made the great surrender, there still remained something as immutably veiled, as radically intangible, as before – something which no one had yet succeeded in penetrating. What was in that soul God alone knows. Almost would it seem as though she were subservient to a mysterious force of which the existence was absolutely unknown to her, but which sported with her as it willed, and whose whims her mentality was powerless to control. At all events, her conduct constituted a series of inconsistencies, and even the few letters which she wrote to Paul Petrovitch – missives which would undoubtedly have aroused her husband's suspicions had he seen them – were written to a man who was practically a stranger to her. And in time her love began to be succeeded by fits of despondency; she ceased to smile and jest with the lover whom she had selected, and looked at him, and listened to his voice,

with reluctance. In fact, there were moments – for the most part, unexpected moments – when this reluctance bordered upon chill horror, and her face assumed a wild, corpse-like expression, and she would shut herself up in her bedroom, whence her maid, with ear glued to the keyhole, would hear issue sounds as of dull, hopeless sobbing. Paul Petrovitch himself frequently found that, when returning home after one of these tender interviews, there was naught within his breast save the bitter, galling sensation which comes of final and irrevocable failure. 'What more could I want?' he would say to himself in his bewilderment; yet always he spoke with an aching heart.

"It happened that on one occasion he gave her a ring having a stone carved in the figure of the Sphinx.

"'What?' she exclaimed. 'Do you offer me the Sphinx?'

"'I do,' he replied. 'The Sphinx is yourself.'

"'I?' she queried with a slow lift of her enigmatical eyes. 'You are indeed flattering!'

"With the words went the ghost of a smile, while her eyes looked stranger than ever.

"Even during the time that the Princess loved him things were difficult for Paul Petrovitch; but when she cooled in her affection for him (as soon happened) he came near to going out of his mind. Distracted with jealousy, he allowed her no rest, but followed her to such an extent that at length, worn out with his persistent overtures, she betook herself on a tour abroad. Yet even then Paul Petrovitch listened to neither the prayers of

his friends nor the advice of his superior officers, but, resigning his commission, set out on the Princess's track. Thus four years were spent in hunting her down, and losing sight of her again: and though, throughout, he felt ashamed of his conduct, and disgusted with his lack of spirit, all was of no avail – her image, the baffling, bewitching, alluring image which ever flitted before his eyes, had implanted itself too deeply in his breast. At last – it was at Baden – the pair once more came together; and though it seemed that never had she loved him as she did now, before a month was over another rupture had occurred, and, this time, a final one, as, with a last flicker, the flame died down and went out. True, that the parting would come he had foreseen; yet still he sought to be friends with her (as though friendship with such a woman could have been possible!), and only the fact that she quietly withdrew from Baden, and thenceforth studiously avoided him, baffled his purpose. Returning to Russia, he endeavoured to resume his former mode of life: but neither by hook nor crook could he regain the old rut. As a man with a poisoned system wanders hither and thither, so did he drive out, and retain all the customs of a society *habitué*. Nay, he could even have boasted of two or three new conquests. But no. What he wanted was obtainable neither through himself nor others, since his whole power of initiative was gone, and his head gradually growing grey. To sit at his club, to consume his soul in jaundice and *ennui*, to engage in bachelor disputes which failed to interest him – such was now become his sole occupation. And, as we know, it is an

occupation which constitutes the worst of signs. Nor, for that matter, seems he to marriage to have given a thought.

"Thus ten years elapsed in colourless, fruitless pursuits. Yet Paul found time pass swiftly, indeed, with amazing swiftness, for nowhere in the world does it fly as it does in Russia (in prison only is its passage said to be still swifter); wherefore there came at length a night when, while dining at his club, he heard that the Princess was dead – that she had died in Paris in a state bordering upon insanity. Rising from the table, he fell to pacing the rooms of the club with a face like that of a corpse, and only at intervals halting to watch the tables of the card-players; until, his usual time for returning home having arrived, he departed. Soon after he had reached his flat there was delivered for him a package containing the ring which he had given to the Princess. The Sphinx on it was marked with a mark like the sign of the cross, and enclosed also was a message to say that through the cross had the enigma become solved.

"These things took place just at the time (early in '48) when Nikolai Petrovitch had lost his wife, and removed to St. Petersburg; and since, also, the period of Nikolai's marriage had coincided with the earlier days of Paul's acquaintance with the Princess, Paul had not seen his brother since the day when the latter had settled in the country. True, on returning from abroad, Paul had paid Nikolai a visit with the intention of staying with him for a couple of months, as a congratulatory compliment on his happiness; but the visit had lasted a week only, since the

difference in the position of the two brothers had been too great, and even now, though that difference had diminished somewhat, owing to the fact that Nikolai Petrovitch had lost his wife, and Paul Petrovitch his memories (after the Princess's death he made it his rule to try and forget her) – even now, I say, there existed the difference that, whereas Nikolai Petrovitch could look back upon a life well spent, and had a son rising to manhood, Paul Petrovitch was still a lonely bachelor, and, moreover, entering upon that dim, murky period when regrets come to resemble hopes, and hopes are beginning to resemble regrets, and youth is fled, and old age is fast approaching. To Paul Petrovitch that period was particularly painful, in that, in losing his past, he had lost his all.

"'I shall not invite you to come to Marino,' were Nikolai Petrovitch's words to his brother. 'Even when my wife was alive, you found the place tedious; and now it would kill you.'

"'Ah, but in those days I was young and foolish and full of vanity,' replied Paul Petrovitch. 'Even though I may not have grown wiser, at least am I quieter. So, if you should be willing, I will gladly come and make your place my permanent home.'

"For answer Nikolai Petrovitch embraced him; and though a year and a half elapsed before Paul Petrovitch decided to carry out his intention, once settled on the estate, he has never left it – no, not even during the three winters spent by Nikolai Petrovitch with his son in St. Petersburg. Meanwhile he has taken to reading books – more especially English books, and, in

general, to ordering his life on the English pattern. Rarely, also, does he call upon his neighbours, but confines his excursions, for the most part, to attending election meetings, where, as a rule, he holds his tongue, but occasionally amuses himself by angering and alarming the older generation of landowners with Liberal sallies. From the representatives of the younger generation he holds entirely aloof. Yet both parties, though they reckon him haughty, accord him respect. They do so because of his refined, aristocratic manners, and of what they have heard concerning his former conquests, and of the fact that he dresses with exquisite taste, that he always occupies the best suites in the best hotels, that he dines sumptuously every day, that once he took dinner with the Duke of Wellington at the Court of Louis Philippe, that invariably he takes about with him a silver *nécessaire* and a travelling bath, that he diffuses rare and agreeable perfumes, that he is a first-rate and universally successful whist-player, and that his honour is irreproachable. The ladies too look upon him as a man of charming melancholy: but with their sex he has long ceased to have anything to do.

"You see, then, Evgenii," wound up Arkady, "that you have judged my uncle very unfairly. Moreover, I have omitted to say that several times he has saved my father from ruin by making over to him the whole of his money (for they do not share the estate), and that he is always ready to help any one, and, in particular, that he stands up stoutly for the peasants, even though, when speaking to them, he pulls a wry face, and,

before beginning the interview, scents himself well with eau-de-Cologne."

"We all know what nerves like his mean," remarked Bazarov.

"Perhaps so. Yet his heart is in the right place; nor is he in any way a fool. To myself especially has he given much useful advice, especially on the subject of women."

"Ah, ha! 'Scalded with milk, one blows to cool another's water.' That is a truism."

"Finally, and to put matters shortly," resumed Arkady, "he is a man desperately unhappy, not one who ought to be despised."

"*Who* is despising him?" exclaimed Bazarov. "All that I say is that a man who has staked his whole upon a woman's love, and, on losing the throw, has turned crusty, and let himself drift to such an extent as to become good for nothing – I say that such a man is not a man, a male creature at all. He is unhappy, you say; and certainly you know him better than I do; but it is clear also that he has not yet cleansed himself of the fool. In other words, certain am I that, just because he occasionally reads *Galignani*, and because, once a month, he saves a peasant from distress for debt, he believes himself really to be a man of action."

"But think of his upbringing!" expostulated Arkady. "Think of the period in which he has lived his life!"

"His upbringing?" retorted Bazarov. "Why, a man ought to *bring himself* up, even as I had to do. And with regard to his period, why should I, or any other man, be dependent upon periods? Rather, we ought to make periods dependent upon *us*.

No, no, friend! Sensuality and frivolity it is that are at fault. For of what do the so-called mysterious relations between a man and a woman consist? As physiologists, we know precisely of what they consist. And take the anatomy of the eye. What in it justifies the guesswork whereof you speak? Such talk is so much Romanticism and nonsense and unsoundness and artificiality. Let us go and inspect that beetle."

And the two friends departed to Bazarov's room, where he had already succeeded in creating a medical-surgical atmosphere which consorted well with the smell of cheap tobacco.

VIII

At his brother's interview with the steward (the latter was a tall, thin man of shifty eyes who to every remark of Nikolai's replied in an unctuous, mellifluous voice: "Very well, if so it please you") Paul Petrovitch did not long remain present. Recently the system of estate-management had been reorganised on a new footing, and was creaking as loudly as an ungreased cartwheel or furniture which has been fashioned of unseasoned wood. For the same reason, though never actually giving way to melancholy, Nikolai Petrovitch often indulged in moodiness and sighing, for the reason that it was clear that his affairs would never prosper without money, and that the bulk of the latter had disappeared. As for Arkady's statement that frequently Paul Petrovitch had come to his brother's assistance, it had been perfectly true, for on more than one occasion had Paul been moved by the sight of his brother's perplexity to walk slowly to the window, to plunge a hand into his pocket, to mutter, "*Mais je puis vous donner de l'argent*," and, lastly, to suit the action to the word. But on the day of which we are speaking Paul had no spare cash himself; wherefore he preferred to remove himself elsewhere, and the more so in that the *minutiæ* of estate-management wearied him, and that he felt certain that, though powerless to suggest a better way of doing business than the present one, he knew at least that Nikolai's was at fault.

"He is not sufficiently practical," would be his reflection. "He lets these fellows cheat him right and left."

On the other hand, Nikolai had a high opinion of Paul's practicality, and always sought his advice.

"I am a weak, easy-going fellow," he would say, "and have spent the whole of my life in retirement; whereas you cannot have lived in the world for nothing – you know it well, and have the eye of an eagle."

To this Paul Petrovitch would make no reply: he would merely turn away without attempting to undeceive his brother.

After leaving Nikolai Petrovitch's study, Paul traversed the corridor which separated the front portion of the house from the rear, and, on reaching a low doorway, halted in seeming indecision, tugged at his moustache for a moment, then tapped with his knuckles upon the panels.

"Who is there?" replied Thenichka from within. "Pray enter."

"It is I," said Paul Petrovitch as he opened the door.

Springing from the chair on which she had been seated with her baby, she handed the latter to the nurse-girl (who at once bore it from the room), and hastened to rearrange her bodice.

"Pardon me for having disturbed you," said Paul Petrovitch without looking at her, "but my object in coming here is to ask you (for I understand that you are sending in to the town to-day) if you would procure me a little green tea for my own personal use."

"I will," replied Thenichka. "How much ought I to have

ordered?"

"I think that half a pound will suffice. But what a change!" he went on glancing around the room with an eye which included also in its purview Thenichka's features. "It is those curtains that I am referring to," he explained on seeing that she had failed to grasp his meaning.

"Yes – those curtains. They were given me by Nikolai Petrovitch himself, and have been hung a long while."

"But it is a long time, remember, since last I paid you a visit. The room looks indeed comfortable, does it not?"

"Yes, thanks to Nikolai Petrovitch's kindness," whispered Thenichka.

"And you find things better here than in the wing?" continued Paul Petrovitch politely – also, without the least shadow of a smile.

"I do."

"And who is lodged in the wing in your place?"

"The laundry women."

"Ah!"

Paul Petrovitch relapsed into silence, while Thenichka thought to herself: "I suppose he will go presently." So far from doing so, however, he remained where he was, and she had to continue standing in front of him with her fingers nervelessly locking and unlocking themselves.

"Why have you had the little one taken away?" at length he inquired. "I love children. Pray show him to me."

Thenichka reddened with confusion and pleasure; and that though Paul Petrovitch was accustomed to make her nervous, so seldom did he address her.

"Duniasha!" she cried (Duniasha she addressed, as she did every one in the house, in the second person plural[10]). "Bring Mitia here, and be quick about it! But first put on his clothes." With that she moved towards the door.

"Never mind, never mind," said Paul Petrovitch.

"But I shall soon be back." And she disappeared.

Left alone, Paul looked about him with keen attention. The small, low room in which he was waiting was clean and comfortable, and redolent of balm, camomile, and furniture polish. Against the walls stood straight-backed, lyre-shaped chairs which the late General had purchased during the period of the Polish campaign; in one corner stood a bedstead under a muslin coverlet, with, flanking it, a large, iron-clamped, convex-lidded chest; in the opposite corner burnt a lamp before a massive, smoke-blackened *ikon* of Saint Nikolai the Miracle Worker – the Saint's halo suspended by a red riband, and a tiny china egg resting on his breast; on the window-sills were ranged some carefully sealed jars of last year's jam, which filtered the light to green, and of which the parchment covers were inscribed, in Thenichka's large handwriting, "Gooseberry" – a jam of which Nikolai Petrovitch was particularly fond; from the ceiling hung,

[10] Used, as in French, in formal speech or that of a person addressing a social superior.

by a long cord, a cage containing a short-tailed siskin which kept up such a perpetual twittering and hopping that its cage rocked to and fro as it sang, and stray hemp seeds came pattering lightly to the floor; on the wall space above a small chest of drawers hung a few poorly executed photographs of Nikolai Petrovitch in various attitudes (the work of a travelling photographer); alongside these photographs hung a very unsuccessful one of Thenichka herself, since it revealed nothing but an eyeless face peering painfully from a dark frame; and, lastly, above the portrait of Thenichka hung a picture of Ermolov in a big cloak and a portentous frown – the latter directed principally towards a distant mountain range of the Caucasus, while over the forehead of the portrait dangled a silken pincushion in the shape of a shoe.

For five minutes or so there came from the adjoining room a sound as of rustling and whispering. From the chest of drawers Paul Petrovitch took up a greasy, dog's-eared volume of Masalsky's *The Strielitsi*, and turned over a few of its pages. Suddenly the door opened, and Thenichka entered with Mitia, whom she had now vested in a red robe and beaded collar, while his little head had been brushed, and also his face washed. Though he was breathing stertorously, and wriggling his whole body about, and twitching his tiny arms after the manner of all healthy children, the dainty robe had had its effect, and his face was puckered with delight. Also, Thenichka had tidied her own hair, and rearranged her bodice – well enough though she would have done as she was. For, in all the world, is there a more

entrancing spectacle than that of a young, handsome mother with, in her arms, a healthy child?

"What a little beauty!" Paul Petrovitch exclaimed indulgently as he tickled Mitia's double chin with the tip of his forefinger. The baby fixed its eyes upon the siskin, and smiled.

"This is Uncle," said Thenichka as she bent over the boy and gave him a gentle shake. For fumigating purposes Duniasha deposited upon the window-sill a lighted candle, and, beneath it, a two-kopeck piece.

"How old is he?" asked Paul Petrovitch.

"Six months. On the eleventh of this month he will be seven."

"No, eight, will he not, Theodosia Nikolaievna?" timidly corrected Duniasha.

"No, seven."

Here the infant crowed, fixed his eyes upon the chest in the corner, and suddenly closed his five tiny fingers upon his mother's mouth and nose.

"The little rascal!" she said, without, however, freeing her features from his grasp.

"He is very like my brother," commented Paul Petrovitch.

"Whom else should he be like?" she thought.

"Yes," he continued, half to himself. "Undoubtedly I see the likeness." He gazed pensively, almost mournfully, at the young mother.

"This is Uncle," again she said to the child: but this time she said it under her breath.

"Oh, here you are, Paul!" cried Nikolai Petrovitch from behind them.

Paul Petrovitch faced about and knit his brows. But so joyously, and with such a grateful expression, was his brother regarding the trio that Paul could only respond with a smile.

"He is a fine little fellow, this baby of yours," the elder brother observed. Then, glancing at his watch, he added: "I came here merely to arrange about the purchase of some tea." With which he assumed an air of indifference, and left the room.

"He came here of his own accord, did he?" was Nikolai Petrovitch's first inquiry.

"Yes, of his own accord," the girl replied. "He just knocked at the door and entered."

"And what of Arkasha? Has he too been to see you?"

"No, Nikolai Petrovitch. By the way, might I return to the rooms in the wing of the house?"

"Why do you want to?"

"Because they suit me better than these."

"I think not," said Nikolai Petrovitch, rubbing his forehead with an air of indecision. "Before there was a reason for your being there, but that reason no longer exists."

"Good morning, little rascal!" was his next remark as, with a sudden access of animation, he approached and kissed the baby's cheek. Then, bending a little, he pressed his lips to Thenichka's hand – a hand, against the red of Mitia's robe, as white as milk.

"Why have you done that, Nikolai Petrovitch?" she murmured

with downcast eyes. Yet when she raised them, their expression, as she glanced from under her brows and smiled her caressing, but slightly vacant, smile, was charming indeed!

Of the circumstances of Nikolai Petrovitch's first meeting with Thenichka the following may be related. Three years ago it had fallen to his lot to spend a night at an inn in a remote country town; and, while doing so, he had been struck with the cleanliness of the room assigned him, and also with the freshness of the bed-linen. "Clearly," he had thought to himself, "the landlady must be a German." But, as it had turned out, she was not a German, but a Russian of about fifty, well-dressed, and possessed both of a comely, intelligent countenance and of a refined manner of speaking. When breakfast was over, he had had a long conversation with her, and conceived for her a great liking. Now, as fate would have it, he had just removed to his new house, and, owing to a reluctance to continue keeping bonded serfs, was on the look-out for hired domestics; while she, for her part, was in despair over the question of the hard times, which caused only a limited number of visitors to resort to the town. In the end, therefore, Nikolai Petrovitch proposed to her to come to his house as housekeeper; and to this proposal, (since her husband was dead, and her family consisted only of a young daughter named Thenichka) she eventually agreed. Accordingly, within two weeks Arina Savishna (such was the new housekeeper's name) arrived at Marino with her child, and took up her abode in the wing of the new manor-house; nor was

it long before she had put the place to rights. To Thenichka, however, then a girl of sixteen, she never referred; and few people even caught a glimpse of the maiden, since she lived a life so modest and retired that only on Sundays could Nikolai Petrovitch contemplate the delicate profile of her face in an aisle of the parish church. More than a year thus elapsed.

But one morning Arina entered his study, bowed to him as usual, and requested him to be so good as to come and help her with her daughter, one of whose eyes had been injured with a spark from the stove. It so happened that, like most men of sedentary habit, Nikolai Petrovitch had picked up a smattering of medicine – nay, he had even compiled a list of homoeopathic remedies for one and another emergency; wherefore he hastened to order Arina to produce the sufferer. As soon as she heard that the *barin* had sent for her, Thenichka turned very nervous, but followed her mother as in duty bound; whereupon Nikolai Petrovitch led her to the window, took her head in his hands, and, after an inspection of the red, inflamed eye, wrote out a prescription for a lotion, compounded the stuff himself, and, lastly, tore off a portion of his handkerchief, and showed her how best the eye could be bathed. Meanwhile Thenichka listened attentively, and then tried to leave the room. "But the idea of going away without kissing the *barin's* hand, foolish one!" cried Arina; whereupon, in lieu of offering the girl his hand, Nikolai Petrovitch felt so embarrassed that in the end he himself kissed her bent head at the spot where the hair lay parted.

Soon Thenichka's eye healed, but the impression produced upon Nikolai Petrovitch did not pass away so quickly. Continually there flitted before him a pure, tender, timidly upturned face; continually he could feel between the palms of his hands soft coils of hair; continually appearing to his vision there would be a pair of innocent, half-parted lips between which a set of pearl-like teeth flashed back the sunlight. Consequently he began to observe the girl more in church, and to try to engage her in conversation. But shyness always overcame her, and, on one occasion when she happened to meet him on a narrow path through a rye field, she turned aside, and plunged into the mass of tall grain and undergrowth of cornflowers and wormwood. Yet, despite her endeavours to escape, his eye discerned her head amid the golden mesh of cornblades, and he called to her, as she gazed at him with wild eyes:

"Good morning, Thenichka! I shall not hurt you."

"Good morning, *barin*!" she whispered in reply, but did not leave her retreat.

As time went on, however, she grew more accustomed to his presence; and by the time that she was beginning really to get over her bashfulness, her mother died of cholera. Here was a dilemma indeed! For what was to be done with the young Thenichka, who had inherited her mother's love of orderliness, and also her mother's good sense and natural refinement? In the end, she was so young and lonely, and Nikolai Petrovitch was so good-hearted and modest, that the inevitable came about. The rest need not

be related.

"So my brother has been to you?" he inquired again. "You say that he just knocked at the door and entered?"

"Yes, he just knocked at the door and entered."

"Good! Now, hand me Mitia."

And Nikolai Petrovitch fell to tossing the baby up and down towards the ceiling – a proceeding which greatly delighted the little one, but as greatly disquieted the mother, who, at each upward flight, stretched her hands in the direction of the infant's naked toes.

Meanwhile Paul Petrovitch returned to his study, of which the walls were lined with a paper of red wild roses, and hung with weapons; the floor was covered with a striped Persian carpet; and the furniture, consisting of a Renaissance bookcase in old black oak, a handsome writing-table, a few bronze statuettes, and a stove, was constructed, for the most part, of hazelwood, and upholstered in dark-green velvet. Stretching himself upon a sofa, he clasped his hands behind his head, and remained staring at the ceiling. Did presently the thoughts which were passing through his mind need to be concealed even from the walls, seeing that he rose, unhooked the heavy curtains from before the windows, and replaced himself upon the sofa?

IX

The same day also saw Bazarov make Thenichka's acquaintance. This was when he was walking in the garden with Arkady, and discussing the question of why certain trees in the garden, especially oaks, had not prospered as they might have done. Said he:

"You ought to plant the place with as many silver poplars as you can, and also with Norwegian firs – limes too, if loam should first be added. For instance, the reason why this clump has done so well is that it is made up of lilacs and acacias, of which neither require much room. But hullo! There is some one sitting there!"

The persons seated in the arbour were Thenichka, Duniasha, and little Mitia. Bazarov halted, and Arkady nodded to Thenichka as to an old acquaintance. Then the pair passed on again, and Bazarov inquired of his companion:

"Who was she?"

"To whom are you referring?"

"You know to whom. My word, she *is* good-looking!"

Arkady explained, with a touch of embarrassment, the identity of Thenichka.

"Ah!" Bazarov remarked. "Then your father has not at all bad taste. Indeed, I commend it. But what a young dog he is! I too must be introduced."

And he turned back in the direction of the arbour.

"Evgenii!" exclaimed Arkady nervously as he followed his friend. "For God's sake be careful what you do!"

"You need not be alarmed. I know what is what. I am no rustic."

And, approaching Thenichka, he doffed his cap.

"Allow me to introduce myself," he said with a polite bow. "I am a friend of Arkady's, and a perfectly harmless individual."

Rising from her seat, Thenichka gazed at him in silence.

"Oh, and what a fine baby!" he continued. "Pray do not disturb yourself. Never yet have I cast upon a child an evil spell. But why are his cheeks so red? Is he cutting teeth?"

"Yes," replied Thenichka. "He has now cut four of them, and the gums are a little swelled."

"Then let me see them. Do not be afraid. I am a doctor."

With that he took the baby into his arms, and both Thenichka and Duniasha were astonished at the fact that it made no resistance, showed no fear.

"I see," he continued. "Well, everything is going right with him, and he will have plenty of teeth. Nevertheless, should he in any way ail, please let me know. Are you yourself well?"

"Yes, thank God!"

"'Thank God,' say I too, for health on the part of the mother is the chief point of all. And you?" he added, turning to Duniasha. The latter, ultra-prim of demeanour in the drawing-room, and ultra-frivolous of behaviour in the kitchen, answered with a giggle.

"Well, you *look* all right. Here! Take your hero back again."

He replaced the baby in Thenichka's arms.

"How quiet he has been with you!" she exclaimed under her breath.

"Always children are quiet with me," he remarked. "You see, I know how to handle them."

"And *they* know when people are fond of them," put in Duniasha.

"True," assented Thenichka. "Though it is seldom that Mitia will go to any one's arms but mine."

"Would he come to me?" ventured Arkady, who, until now standing in the background, at this moment came forward towards the arbour. But on his attempting to wheedle Mitia to his arms, the infant threw back its head, and started to cry – a circumstance which greatly perturbed Thenichka.

"Another time – when he has come to be more used to me," said Arkady indulgently. And the two friends departed.

"What is her name?" asked Bazarov.

"Thenichka – Theodosia," replied Arkady.

"And her patronymic?"

"Nikolaievna."

"*Bene*! What I like about her is her total absence of shyness. True, that is a *trait* which some might have condemned in her, but I say, 'What rubbish!' For why need she be bashful? She is a mother, and therefore justified."

"I agree," said Arkady. "And my father – "

"Also is justified," concluded Bazarov.

"No, I do not agree in that respect."

"You do not altogether welcome a superfluous heir?"

"For shame, Evgenii!" cried Arkady heatedly. "How can you impute such motives? What I mean is that my father is not justified from *one* point of view. That is to say, he ought to marry her."

"Oh, ho!" said Bazarov quietly. "How high and mighty we are getting! So you still attribute importance to the marriage rite? This I should not have expected of you."

For some paces the friends walked on in silence. Then Bazarov continued:

"I have been inspecting your father's establishment. The cattle look poor, the horses seem broken-down, the buildings have a tipsy air, the workmen manifest a tendency to loaf, and I cannot yet determine whether the new steward is a fool or a rogue."

"You are censorious to-day?"

"I am; and the reason is that these good peasants are cheating your father – exemplifying the proverb that 'The Russian *muzhik* will break even the back of God.'"

"Soon I shall have to agree with my uncle in his opinion that you think but poorly of Russia."

"Rubbish! The Russian's very best point is that he holds a poor opinion of *himself*. Two and two make four. Nothing but that matters."

"And is nature also rubbish?" queried Arkady with a musing

glance at the mottled fields where they lay basking in the soft, kindly rays of the morning sun.

"Nature *is* rubbish – at least in the sense in which *you* understand her. She is not a church, but a workshop wherein man is the labourer."

At this moment there came wafted to their ears the long-drawn strains of a violoncello, on which a sensitive, but inexperienced, hand was playing Schubert's *Erwartung*. Like honey did the voluptuous melody suffuse the air.

"Who is the musician?" asked Bazarov in astonishment.

"My father."

"What? Your father plays the 'cello?"

"He does."

"At his age?"

"Yes – he is only forty-four."

Bazarov burst out laughing.

"Why do you laugh?" asked Arkady.

"Pardon me, but the idea that your father – a man of forty-four, a paterfamilias, and a notable in the county – should play the 'cello!"

And he continued laughing, though Arkady, for all his reverence for his mentor, failed to accomplish even a smile.

X

During the next two weeks life at Marino pursued its normal course. Arkady took things easily, and Bazarov worked. In passing, it may be said that, for all his careless manner and abrupt, laconic speech, the latter had become an accepted phenomenon in the house. In particular had Thenichka so completely lost her shyness of him that one night she sent to awake him because Mitia had been seized with convulsions; whereupon Bazarov arrived, and, half-joking, half-yawning, according to his usual manner, helped her for two hours in the task of attending to the baby. Only Paul Petrovitch disliked the man with the whole strength of his soul, for he accounted him a proud, cynical, conceited plebeian, and suspected him not only of failing to respect, but even of holding in contempt, the personality of Paul Petrovitch Kirsanov. Also, Nikolai Petrovitch stood in slight awe of the young Nihilist, since he doubted the likelihood of any good accruing from Bazarov's influence over Arkady. Yet always he would listen with pleasure to Bazarov's discourses, and gladly attend the chemical or physical experiments with which the young doctor (who had brought a microscope with him) would occupy himself for hours at a stretch. On the other hand, in spite of Bazarov's domineering manner, all the servants had become attached to him, for they felt him to be less a *barin* than their brother; and in particular did

Duniasha readily joke and talk with him, and throw him many meaning glances as she sped past in quail-like fashion, while Peter himself, though a man full of conceit and stupidity, with a forehead perpetually puckered, and a dignity which consisted of a deferential demeanour, a practice of reading journals syllable by syllable, and a habit of constantly brushing his coat; even Peter, I say, would brighten and strike an attitude when he was noticed by Bazarov. In fact, the only servant to disapprove of Bazarov was old Prokofitch, the butler, who looked sour whenever he handed the young doctor a dish, and called him a "sharper" and a "flaunter," and declared that, for all his whiskers, Bazarov was no better than "a dressed-up pig," whereas he, Prokofitch, was practically as good an aristocrat as Paul Petrovitch himself.

In the early days of June, the best season of the year, the weather became beautiful. True, from afar there came threatenings of cholera, but to the local inhabitants such visitations had become a commonplace. Each day Bazarov rose early to set forth upon a tramp of some two or three versts; nor were those tramps undertaken merely for the sake of the exercise (he could not abide aimless expeditions), but, rather, for the sake of collecting herbs and insects. Sometimes, too, he would succeed in inducing Arkady to accompany him; and whenever this was the case the pair would, on the way back, engage in some dispute which always left Arkady vanquished in spite of his superior profusion of argument.

One morning the pair lingered considerably by the way, and

Nikolai Petrovitch set out across the garden to meet them. Just as he reached the arbour, he heard their voices and brisk footsteps approaching, though he himself was invisible to the returning friends.

"You do not understand my father," Arkady was saying.

Nikolai Petrovitch halted instead of revealing himself.

"Oh, he is a good fellow enough," replied Bazarov. "But also he is a man on the shelf, a man whose song has been sung."

Though Nikolai Petrovitch strained his ears, he failed to catch Arkady's reply. So the "man on the shelf" lingered for a minute or two – then walked slowly back to the house.

"For the past three days I have noted him reading Pushkin," continued Bazarov. "You ought to explain to him that no good can come of that, for he is no longer a boy, and ought to have shaken himself free of such fiddlesticks. Who would desire to be a Romanticist? Give him something *practical*."

"For instance?"

"Let me consider. For a start, give him Büchner's[11] *Stoff und Kraft*."

"Good!" Arkady's tone was approving. "*Stoff und Kraft* is at least written in a popular style."

The same day Nikolai Petrovitch was sitting with his brother. At length he said:

"I find that you and I are men on the shelf, that our songs have been sung. Eh? And perhaps Bazarov is right. Yet I confess that

[11] Ludwig Büchner (1824-1899), German physician and materialist philosopher.

one thing hurts me: and that is that, though I had hoped to draw nearer to Arkady, I am being left in the rear, and he is for ever marching ahead. No longer do he and I understand one another."

"And why is he for ever marching ahead?" asked Paul Petrovitch indignantly. "How comes he to stand at such a distance from us? The reason is simply the ideas which that precious 'Nihilist' is putting into his head. For myself, I detest the fellow, and think him a charlatan. Also, I am certain that, in spite of his frogs, he is making no real progress in physics."

"We ought not to say that, brother. For my own part, I look upon him as a man of culture and ability."

"If so, a detestably conceited one."

"Perhaps he *is* conceited," Nikolai Petrovitch allowed. "But then it would appear that nothing can be done without something of the kind. What I cannot make out is the following. As you know, I have done everything possible to keep up with the times – I have organised my peasantry, I have set up such a farm that throughout the province I am known as 'Fine Kirsanov,' persistently I read and educate myself, in general I try to march abreast of the needs of the day. Yet, though I do all this, I am now given to understand that my day is past and gone! And, brother, I do not say that I am not partially inclined to accept that view."

"For what reason?"

"For the following. To-day, as I was reading Pushkin (I think it was 'The Gipsies' that I had lighted upon), there suddenly entered the room Arkady. Silently, and with an air of kindly regret, and

as gently as a child, he withdrew the book from my hand, and laid before me another book – a German production of some kind. That done, he gave me another smile, and departed with my volume of Pushkin under his arm."

"Good gracious! And what might be the book which he has given you?"

"This."

Nikolai Petrovitch extracted from the tail pocket of his frock-coat a copy (ninth edition) of Büchner's well-known work.

Paul Petrovitch turned it over in his hands.

"H'm!" he grunted. "Arkady does indeed seem solicitous for your education! Have you tried reading the book?"

"Yes."

"And how do you like it?"

"Well, either I am a fool or the thing is rubbish. Of the two views, the former seems to me the most probable."

"It is not because you have forgotten your German, I suppose?"

"Oh no. I understand the language perfectly."

Again Paul Petrovitch turned over the book, and again he glanced at his brother from under his brows. A moment's silence ensued.

"By the way," continued Nikolai Petrovitch with an evident desire to change the conversation, "I have received a letter from Koliazin."

"From Matvei Ilyitch?"

"From the same. It seems that he has just arrived at – , for the purpose of carrying out the Revision[12] of the province, and he writes very civilly that, as our kinsman, he would be glad to see Arkady and you and myself."

"Do you intend to accept his invitation?" asked Paul Petrovitch.

"I do not. Do you?"

"No. We have no need to drag ourselves fifty versts to eat blanc-mange. The good Mathieu wants to show off a little – that is all. He can do without us. But what an honour to be a Privy Councillor! Had I continued in the Service, continued hauling at the old tow-rope, I myself might have been Adjutant-General! As it is, I, like yourself, am on the shelf."

"Yes, brother. Clearly it is time that we ordered our tombstones, and folded our hands upon our breasts."

A sigh concluded Nikolai Petrovitch's speech.

"But *I* do not intend to give in so soon," muttered his brother. "There is first going to be a skirmish between that chirurgeon of Arkady's and myself. That I can see beyond a doubt."

And, sure enough, the "skirmish" occurred the same evening. Ready for battle as soon he repaired to the drawing-room for tea, Paul Petrovitch entered angrily, but firmly, and sat waiting for an excuse to advance upon the foe. Yet for a while that excuse hung fire, since Bazarov never said much in the presence of "the old Kirsanovs," and to-night was feeling out of spirits, and drank his

[12] *i. e.* the census-taking of the serf population.

tea in absolute silence. However, Paul Petrovitch was so charged with impatience that his wish was bound to attain fulfilment.

It happened that the conversation became turned upon a neighbouring landowner.

"He is just a petty aristocrat," Bazarov drily remarked (it seemed that he and the landowner had met in St. Petersburg).

"Allow me," put in Paul Petrovitch, his lips quivering. "In your view, do the terms 'good-for-nothing' and 'aristocrat' connote the same thing?"

"I said '*petty* aristocrat,'" replied Bazarov as he lazily sipped his tea.

"Quite so. Then I take it that you hold the same opinion of aristocrats as of 'petty aristocrats'? Well, I may remark that your opinion is not mine. And to that I would add that, while I myself possess a reputation for Liberal and progressive views, I possess that reputation for the very reason that I can respect *real* aristocrats. For instance, my dear sir" (the latter term was so heatedly uttered that Bazarov raised his eyebrows), "for instance, my dear sir, take the aristocracy of England. While yielding upon their rights not an iota, they yet know how to respect the rights of others. While demanding fulfilment of obligations due to themselves, they yet fulfil their own obligations. And for those reasons it is to her aristocratic caste that England stands indebted for her freedom. It is because the English aristocratic caste itself supports that freedom."

"A tale which we have heard many times before!" commented

Bazarov. "But what are you seeking to prove?"

"I am seeking to prove this," replied Paul Petrovitch. "That without a certain sense of personal dignity, without a sense of self-respect (both of which senses are inborn in the true aristocrat), the social edifice, the *bien public*, cannot rest upon a durable basis. It is *personality* that matters, my dear sir: and the human personality requires to be as firm as a rock, in that there rests upon it the entire structure of society. For example, I know that you ridicule my customs, my dress, my fastidious tastes. Yet do those very things proceed from that sense of duty – yes, of duty, I repeat – to which I have just alluded. In other words, I may live in the depths of the country, yet I do not let myself go. For I respect in myself the man."

"Allow me, Paul Petrovitch," said Bazarov. "You say that you respect yourself. Very good. Yet you can sit there with your hands folded! How will *that* benefit the *bien public*, seeing that inaction would scarcely seem to argue self-respect?"

Paul Petrovitch blanched a little.

"That is another question altogether," he said. "However, I do not feel called upon to explain the reason why I sit with my hands folded (according to your own estimable term). It will suffice merely to remark that in the aristocratic idea there is contained a *principle*, and that nowadays men who live without principles are as destitute of morality as they are of moral substance. The same thing did I say to Arkady on the day after his arrival, and I say it now to you. You agree with me, Nikolai, do you not?"

Nikolai Petrovitch nodded assent, while Bazarov exclaimed:

"The aristocratic idea, forsooth! Liberalism, progress, principles! Why, have you ever considered the vanity of those terms? The Russian of to-day does not need them."

"Then what, in your opinion, does he need? To listen to you, one would suppose that we stood wholly divorced from humanity and humanity's laws; whereas, pardon me, the logic of history demands – "

"What has that logic to do with us? We can get on quite well without it."

"How can we do so?"

"Even as I have said. When you want to put a piece of bread into your mouth do you need logic for the purpose? What have these abstractions to do with ourselves?"

Paul Petrovitch waved his hand in disgust.

"I cannot understand you," he said. "You seem to me to be insulting the Russian people. How you or any one else can decline to recognise principles and precepts is a thing which passes my comprehension. For what other basis for action in life have we got?"

Arkady put in a word.

"Both I and Bazarov have told you," he said, "that we recognise no authority of any sort."

"Rather, that we recognise no basis for action save the useful," corrected Bazarov. "At present the course most useful is denial. Therefore we deny."

"Deny everything?"

"Deny everything."

"What? Both poetry and art and – I find it hard to express it? – "

"I repeat, *everything*," said Bazarov with an ineffable expression of *insouciance*.

Paul Petrovitch stared. He had not quite expected this. For his part, Arkady reddened with pleasure.

"Allow me," interposed Nikolai Petrovitch. "You say that you deny everything – rather, that you would consign everything to destruction. But also you ought to construct."

"That is not our business," said Bazarov. "First must the site be cleared."

"Yes; for the present condition of the people demands it," affirmed Arkady. "And that demand we are bound to fulfil, seeing that no one has the right merely to devote himself to the satisfaction of his own personal egotism."

With this last Bazarov did not seem altogether pleased, since the phrase smacked too much of philosophy – rather, of "Romanticism," as Bazarov termed that science; but he did not trouble to confute his pupil.

"No, no!" Paul Petrovitch exclaimed with sudden heat. "I *cannot* believe that gentlemen of your type possess sufficient knowledge of the people to be rightful representatives of its demands and aspirations. For the Russian people is not what you think it to be. It holds traditions sacred, and is patriarchal, and

cannot live without faith."

"I will not dispute that," observed Bazarov. "Nay, I will even agree that you are right."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.