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CHAPTER I

"BRING in the prisoner."

The speaker, a man of about thirty, dressed in a simple suit of black, was seated at a table littered with papers, evidently of an official character. Near him sat an elderly man in the uniform of an officer of high rank, his breast glittering with decorations. The latter's attitude was that of a counsellor to a very eminent superior.

"Your Highness, may I advise caution in this interview? This man is dangerous."

"Restrain your solicitude, Count. Why should I fear an unarmed man, a prisoner and manacled?"

"As Your Highness wishes, of course. But men of this stamp are desperate. They use their very chains at times as weapons; and how do you know but one of his guards may not be of the same secret fellowship, ready to supply . . ."

"My dear Count, you would harness Providence to your solicitude," interrupted His Highness, with a slight gesture of impatience; "an overstrained

prudence is a worse constraint than chains, and a crueller tyrant than—well, than Carl Runder thinks I am," he concluded with a flitting smile.

"Will your Highness not keep the guard in the room?"

"Only yourself, Count. Surely Carl Runder is not such a terrible fellow that General Count Von Hammerstein and His Royal Highness of Unterwald need tremble before him." There was a suspicion of sarcasm in the Prince's voice and a twinkle of the eye unnoticed by the elder man, who merely bowed his head in unwilling acquiescence, sighing like one whose wisdom is squandered in vain. Rising, the Count withdrew to the door with a profound obeisance, gave an order to a guard stationed without, and, returning, took his stand beside the Prince.

"The prisoner will be here immediately, Your Highness; he was held waiting in the ante-room," he said in a resigned voice.

After a moment's interval, during which the Prince drummed absently on the table, the folding doors at the farther end of the chamber were thrown open and there entered an officer with a drawn sword, and two soldiers with bayonneted rifles, between them a prisoner, handcuffed. The lieutenant saluted.

"Retire," commanded the Count. "Wait without."

The prisoner stood facing the Prince. He had drawn himself up to his full height, as if in defiance. He was of medium stature and of rather slender

figure. His beard was closely cut, his hair was wavy, of a dark chestnut in color, and somewhat long; his eyes were grey and open under fluent brows; his lips, compressed by some strong emotion, and his chin, square and full, thrust forward at the moment. Count Von Hammerstein drew himself up stiffly.

"So," exclaimed the Prince, "it is to this you have come, Carl Runder!"

"To this, Adolph Von Fausten," answered the prisoner in a tense and harsh voice; "but I glory in it. I am ashamed of nothing. I confess it openly. I plotted against you and your government. I would break down your despotism and make this a free land, where there should be no privilege, no rank, no invidious distinction of birth or fortune, but all men stand on the same level in the nakedness of manhood and the truth of nature; all things for all, untrammeled distribution of the goods of life, and none to suffer and none to be exploited." The prisoner's voice rose in strident declamation.

"You were always a dreamer, Carl; I remember you at the University. Your dreams have brought you to this. I am truly sorry for you."

"I despise your pity," the prisoner burst out. "Who are you to pity me? You, the creature of fortune, thrust by the chance of birth into your place of tyranny, too blind to realize your own misfortune, too puffed in your own conceit to know the greatness of humanity; too cabined in the slavish

traditions of a vile and narrow barbarism to understand the duty of renunciation, too . . ."

"Your Highness!" vehemently remonstrated Von Hammerstein, "this is intolerable—to be lectured by this blind fool! It is not to be endured. Permit me to have him removed."

"No, Count; he means what he says—" Hammerstein stared at the Prince; "Carl is in dead earnest; I have heard a thousand times all that he can say; it is the stock of socialistic rhetoric, the constant dream of young visionaries like Carl. Unfortunately for the enthusiasts, when they would put such dreams into action, as Carl has endeavored to put his, there is a practical side which we must consider; the dreamers who insist on seeking the realization of their dreams must be put out of the way for the good of society." A mocking smile played over Carl's features at the last words of the Prince, uttered with deliberate emphasis.

"For the good of society!" he echoed ironically. "You mean, Adolph Von Fausten, for your own good and those of your class; those who, under the mockery of rule, exploit humanity at large. Yes, for your good, who fatten and batten on what you call the proletariat. Our stock rhetoric! Have *you* no stock rhetoric, no banal platitudes, under which you cloak your selfishness and greed? The thinkers, for instance, must govern the toilers; the strong must needs protect the weak, the learned must guide the ignorant, under which wretched disguises

you plunder the fruits of their toil, and call it government! Bah! *You* preach and steal. *I* preach and seek to right your wrongs, and you smite me down with the bludgeon of force! It is only by force that you hold your place of despotism. See, you have manacled humanity!" and the prisoner held forth his handcuffed wrists.

The Prince smiled. Von Hammerstein snorted and started to speak, but the Prince waved him into silence.

"True, Carl, force does constitute a large part of social stability. But men are not angels, and the millennium has not come. But let be argument. You are in my power; you have plotted traitorously against me. You are a menace to me and mine. Shall I not use my power in my own defence? Grant it be selfish, but selfishness you say is the present constitution of the world. You have vainly striven to burst the meshes that society has woven about you; you are an avowed and deadly enemy to its present constitution. Must it not rid itself of a mortal foe?"

"I am not afraid of martyrdom for the glorious cause!" exclaimed Carl, lifting up his manacled hands.

"Were the conditions reversed, and I in your place, the declared and mortal enemy of the established socialist state, what would you do with me?"

Carl looked steadily at the Prince for a moment and said, "execute you, or incarcerate you for life."

"So be it," said the Prince, "you shall be transported to Schlectland for life. You have pronounced your own sentence."

The prisoner stood rigid for a moment, the blood gathering tumultuously to his heart, his face pale, his lips colorless; then, drawing himself up, he stood and waited, uttering no word; for Schlectland, in Unterwald, was a name of evil odor, an island in the sea from which no man was ever known to return and with which no one in all Unterwald, save government officials, ever had any communication. It was a penal colony, whither were transported all convicted of capital crimes who did not meet their fate on the gallows.

As the prisoner was escorted out of the chamber by the armed guards, an enigmatical smile played over the face of His Highness of Unterwald.

CHAPTER II

It was a long and bitter voyage for Carl Runder. How long, he did not know, for in his narrow cabin with its dim lantern light through an iron grating above the door, he knew not the difference between day and night. He saw no one but his jailer who brought him his food, and this man spoke no word.

So this was the end of all his dreams! Still young and ardent, his brain fresh and vigorous, his heart strong and his spirits bright, a solitary prisoner in an iron sepulchre or a slave in a chain gang, lashed and driven to labor? The realization was unendurable anguish. It seemed to sear his brain. No, no, it could not be! It was a dream, a hideous dream; he must soon awaken; how long would it last? In his agony he would at times start to his feet and, lifting up his manacled hands, curse the tyranny which thus exercised its monstrous power.

What was his crime save that he wished to alleviate the burdens of a groaning race, to make men happier, to give freedom to all, to bring mankind back to the truth of nature, which the hideous artifice of human society had overlaid and hidden by foolish.

traditions and iron customs, the vicious barrier behind which the tyrannous few cunningly entrenched themselves.

Force by force—that had been his plan; to seize power and smash down those barriers. It was by force the tyrants held their advantage; it must be by force that they were to be dislodged. Had he succeeded, had he but triumphed, ah! what a hero he would have been, acclaimed by all as the benefactor and liberator of his kind, but, failing—see to what he had come! The dreadful abyss between success and failure! And yet what a little thing had turned his scheme into disaster! A cipher letter accidentally placed in the hands of the wrong person, and the mailed gauntlet of the tyrant had reached out and clutched him with an iron grip. Never to relax, never, never! It would send him to madness! But even madness would be welcome, an escape from the consciousness of this hell!

At times, exhausted by the intensity of his futile passion, he would fall back into a brooding apathy in which he was conscious of the constant pulsation of the steamer's machinery vibrating through the great bulk of the iron monster carrying him to his doom, like an accompaniment of metallic instruments, reiterating and reiterating the same dull note, in a deep, mechanical rhythm to the fantastic tumult of his imagination, as picture after picture stretched before his mind's eye of what might have been and what he now was.

So the days came and went without distinction to him, consumed by his own bitterness, no longer noting or caring to note the flight of time, until at last the cessation of the ship's vibration and the sudden crash of a gun, re-echoed by the distant boom of another in response, conveyed to him the tidings that they had arrived at the point of destination, the fatal island of Schlectland.

He was morbidly eager when a guard with fixed bayonet appeared at his cabin door, and he was ordered to ascend to the deck. Blinded at first by the sudden glimpse of day after his long darkness, he could see nothing of the prospect around him, but as his faculty of vision slowly returned, he gradually took in a precipitous shore line, above which rose high mountains, sweeping sinuously around and almost locking in a narrow harbor of deep blue waters in which the vessel lay anchored.

Along the shore, apparently at the very edge, stretched several long, low, stone buildings, with narrow, iron-barred windows; to the right, a group of houses, from one of which, higher than the rest, floated the white eagle of Unterwald on its dark background. At either side of the harbor entrance, earthen fortifications projected, their black guns pointing with sinister muzzles toward the open sea; cresting a hill just back of the long stone buildings, a battery of apparently lighter armament. The sky was intensely blue, the air clear, while the sunlight streamed down in an effulgence that brought

out the sombreness and ruggedness of the scene with intense vividness.

All this came gradually into Carl's awakening vision as he was being rowed ashore with his armed escort. The boat landed at a steep wooden dock, projecting out from what seemed to be a warehouse. Carl was marched to this building, from which he had seen the emblem of Unterwald floating. He was then ushered into the presence of an officer whose uniform indicated a colonel's rank. The sergeant commanding his escort handed the officer a sealed letter. He read it with an indifferent air, and then, turning to Carl, laconically remarked, "Carl Runder, Socialist. To the Spielgarten."

The sergeant saluted, wheeled about, ordered his men to form double file, one on either side of Carl, and march Issuing from the building, the soldiers, with Carl in their midst, took a road to the right for some hundred yards along the shore, and then struck off with many windings up the mountainside.

It was toilsome marching up, the ascent growing at every turn. Carl staggered heavily along, weak as he was from the narrow confinement of his voyage, and hampered by his handcuffed wrists. After two hours' steady climb, he was ready to drop with faintness and fatigue. The sergeant, realizing his prisoner's condition, called a halt, and, taking a flask, placed it to Carl's dry and cracked lips; this he supplemented with a half loaf of bread, and, ordering the prisoner to sit on a projecting ledge, bade

him rest and eat. This Carl did eagerly, and felt life flow back into his veins with the refreshment of the liquor and the food.

After some ten minutes' rest, during which no word was spoken, for strict silence had evidently been commanded, the marching was resumed. After another two hours' heavy tramping upward, interrupted by one short respite, they reached the summit of the road which then proceeded at almost a level for another hour's march, and then descended at a steep incline for some thirty minutes' rapid pace, when it entered a narrow defile whose steep sides lifted some two hundred feet.

Here a low, one-storied building of stone, which Carl took to be a guardhouse, stood against the right-hand cliff. In front of it paced a sentinel; when they were within some fifty yards a halt was called and the sergeant, taking from his knapsack a strip of cotton cloth, proceeded to bind Carl's eyes.

The apprehension which had been gathering in the prisoner's mind all during the march upward, that he was being led to a place of execution, was now confirmed. They were bandaging his eyes preparatory to shooting him.

A coldness seized upon him, the perspiration stood out in beads upon his forehead. It was a physical trepidation. He had no distinct fear of death; it was simply an overmastering dread of something appalling that was about to happen. He could formulate nothing in his mind; his brain seemed be-

numbed and unable to grasp the situation; it was a mental feeling analagous to the sensation of one's hand asleep, when its prehensile power is gone.

A sharp command to march partly roused him from his mental stupefaction. He obeyed mechanically as if in a nightmare. It seemed to him that he passed through the shadow of a deep archway and then again into the open; a hundred paces farther, and he was stopped by an abrupt order to halt. Some one stepped in front of him and, swiftly unlocking his handcuffs, drew them off. The next instant a hand reached to his head and snatched off the bandage over his eyes, and a voice behind him peremptorily commanded: "Do not look back or you will be shot down like a dog. Go forward; follow the road."

For a moment he stood dazed; an almost irresistible desire to look back seized him, but the voice menacingly repeated its command to go forward.

Was this simply a refinement of cruelty, to remove his handcuffs and unbandage his eyes and then shoot him down from behind as he advanced along the road? Rousing himself from his bewilderment, he stepped forward, noting at the same time that he had now passed out of the defile and that the mountains on either side of the road were sloping and covered with a growth of stately fir trees, reaching high into the heavens. An impulse at first seized him to rush into the shelter of the forest away from the danger at his back, but the salutary thought that

perhaps the rifles of his guard were levelled at him, ready to fire on the instant, held him in check.

Nobody, evidently, was following, for he heard no footsteps on the road behind him. He had gone some hundred yards in this state of curious agitation, between intense fear and bewilderment, when he saw, lying in the very middle of the road, almost at his feet, a human skeleton. He recoiled with a sudden horror. Was this the remains of some unfortunate shot down as he himself was about to be? A distant shout came from behind: "Forward."

With a shudder he stepped over the bleached bones, expecting to hear the crash of rifles, speeding his own similar doom. But no sound broke the mountain quiet. And now he noticed, a short distance in front, a bend in the road. It flashed across him: Would not this conceal him from the awful threat behind? Dare he run for it? He quickened his pace, but still in fear, restrained his impulse to run. It seemed an eternity before he reached that bend, and as he turned he broke instantly and frantically into the top of his speed, fleeing blindly forward, away from that horrible menace.

He ran impetuously, as a child would, from some unknown terror, how far he knew not, until finally, out of sheer exhaustion, he flung himself trembling, and with a darkness in his eyes, upon a mossy spot by the roadside.

He lay there, panting and shaken, conscious only that he had escaped from some terrible danger, like

a man first wakening and dimly realizing that the terror of his dreams was, after all, but a phantom of his sleep. Gradually his breath came back to him and his brain began to clear again. What had happened? Where was he?

He looked up; above, to the right, rose the mountain with its great silent firs stretching up its slopes, beyond his ken. On the other side of the road, to the left, the scene was open. In his headlong flight he had not noticed that the road, just this side of the bend, where he had started to run, skirted a steep precipice, at the bottom of which, he could hear the roar of raucous waters through a narrow bed. Raising his eyes and gazing out, he saw, stretching beneath him, a valley, apparently some twenty miles in length and broadening, at its widest part, to perhaps ten miles. Great mountains hemmed it in on all sides.

He was startled at the prospect. The air was very clear. Below, lengthening through the valley, he could see a considerable stream winding in and out through meadow and forest land. The fields were cultivated, and he could distinguish the varied hues of the growing crops. Farmhouses and their outbuildings were clearly discernible.

Some distance down the stream, whose waters were flowing at the bottom of the gorge beside him, was a village or town, four or five miles away. Its buildings appeared to be low, and he was unable to distinguish the streets. Over all, the sunshine

poured down with a rare radiance. It was a scene of peace and beauty. The silence of the mountain height, broken only by the sound of the water, and the balmy odor of the firs, fell soothingly upon his senses. The rich sunshine bathed him and warmed him, filling him with a delicious languor, relaxing him strangely and delightfully after the severe tension of body and mind through which he had just passed. A dreaminess came over him, a weird seizure of unreality took possession of him. Where was he? What did it all mean?

CHAPTER III

It was some time in the latter half of the afternoon, for the sun was in the heavens toward the mountains at the far end of the valley, when Carl awakened. His mind was full of conjectures. They had not shot him down, no doubt, in order to reserve him for a worse fate. There was evidently some sinister scheme in thus releasing him. He was being sent into some new and terrible danger.

And yet the scene before him was one of peace and quiet. Nature was serene and smiling on mountain height and in the outstretched valley below. Men evidently dwelt there, following peaceful avocations; the earth was cultivated and bearing, and the town by the river's edge was a sign of industry and intercourse.

Yet he was fearful; his mind was confused. The revulsion of feeling which followed upon his sudden and unexpected release from what had seemed a certain and ignominious death to what now appeared unbounded freedom amidst so strange a scene, clouded his mental faculties, and he walked on as in a dream, which might at any moment change into a hideous phantasmagoria.

He tried to concentrate and reason the matter out, as he proceeded on his way, now eagerly and swiftly forward in a fever of anxiety, then restraining his steps to a lagging pace as suggestive doubt and uncertainty of suspicion entrammeled his flagging spirits.

He had now descended almost to the base of the mountain, when he was startled by a sudden crashing sound some little distance ahead. He stopped and listened. Nothing broke the stillness; all was silent again.

Pushing forward slowly and cautiously, again the crash, nearer. He now recognized it as falling timber; someone nearby was evidently felling trees. At the end of another two hundred yards he could hear the thud of axes, followed by an interval filled with the sound of voices, and then the sound of axes again. The woodsmen were off the road among the trees.

He went in their direction, seeking concealment behind intervening bushes and trees and shortly came upon half a dozen men at work, wielding their axes. One stood apart, evidently directing the others, though he, too, held an axe in his hand.

Carl stood hesitating. Should he reveal himself and accost them? Who were they? Would they prove friend or foe? He knew that he must make himself known to the people of the valley. Why not to these, the first upon whom he had chanced?

The mystery of the situation had become a bur-

den to him; he would find out what it all meant. Stepping from behind his concealment he advanced into open view of the woodcutters.

The man directing the others perceived him first. He was a tall, raw-boned, stalwart fellow. His face was heavily tanned. He did not seem surprised at the sight of Carl.

"Begorra!" he exclaimed with an unmistakable brogue, "here's another lad for the Spielgarten! The Spalpeens have given him a run for it. Faith, he looks like a ghost! Don't be afraid," he shouted to Carl, who had stopped, hesitating, "Come on, me lad, we're brothers to ye. It's a cozy bit of a place ye've come to; afther ye're own likin', I'm thinkin'."

"Who are you? Where am I?" queried Carl.

"Sure, the question's natural, me lad," answered the other, "and you're not the first that's asked it. It's a hard time ye've had, no doubt; I was there meself, onct. It's a little way they have of scarin' the soul out of your body; but there's small harm done, afther all."

"But where am I?" querulously reiterated Carl. "What does it all mean?"

"Whist now, be aisy, and I'll tell you; but soon you'll be findin' out for yoursel' before long and ye'll be as plased as if ye'd found a whole litther of pigs for the mere findin'. Sure ye're in the Spielgarten and to sthay, at that, too."

"Well, what is the Spielgarten?" impatiently

asked Carl, nettled a little at the indirection of the brawny woodsman.

The other laughed. "I'm thinkin' it a bit of a thrick of the man that's sent ye here. Now be aisy me lad, and I'll tell ye. The Spielgarten is this bloomin' valley, and a purty bit of nature it is, as ye're findin' out for yersel', and it's a place the man that sent you here has prisinted to the loikes of ye that disagrees with him in the matter o' govermint, an' he says to thim, not straight and forward-like, but quite contrarywise, ye wurrk out ye're own notion of governmint here and let me run mine accordin' to me own ideas. So, me lad, we're runnin' ourselves our way without bein' bothered by him, at all, at all. I'm thinkin' he's a wise one that makes an experiment on another man's hide."

There was a bit of latent sarcasm in the woodsman's voice and a twitch of his eye.

"Do you mean Socialism?" came from the wondering Carl.

"Bedad, that I do; the very same, me boy," replied the other.

"What?" Carl exclaimed, drawing his breath sharply as he gleaned the significance of the other's words. "Do you mean to say that the Prince of Unterwald has given over this valley to the Socialists to work out their own theory of government?"

"Ye jump quick, me lad," answered the other with an amused smile. "It's the very same, I'm thinkin'. Sure, an' ye'll get used to it. 'Tis a Socialist colony

left to its own devices and other things in the bargain, I'm thinkin'," he added, taking off his cap and stroking the back of his head in a way suggesting reflection.

Carl stood for a moment in utter surprise. He was stunned by the news. The woodsman with his companions, who had ceased their work, grouped themselves around Carl and looked at one another, smiling knowingly. Carl stood dazed. It was like being tossed out of the gulfs of hell to the heights of Paradise. Hopeless, he had looked death in the face but a short hour ago, a doomed political criminal, felon and outcast from society, and now he stood among friends, brothers indeed and in truth, in a land where his long dream of Socialism, he was told, was being realized; a Socialist state founded and working out its great ideals!

He looked half-doubtingly and inquiringly at the faces around him. They understood the interrogation of his eager eyes. They nodded and smiled. Yes, they all assured him, it was true; the Spielgarten was a Socialist colony where Socialism was practised down to its completest detail; no privilege, no caste, no rank, no social distinction, all equal, the good of all the supreme interest.

It was too much for Carl's overwrought nerves; he fairly broke down. The brawny Irishman who had been the spokesman of the party took the weakened "laddie," as he called him, in his sturdy arms and supported him, all the while pouring out a flood

of soothing terms in a rich soft brogue, and telling Carl how he himself had been through the same ordeal; had, like him, been marched blindfolded through the mountain defiles and then set free on the road leading into the valley.

When Carl's emotion had spent itself, the Irishman, McCarthy, for so he was called by the others, pulled out a flask, out of which he made Carl drink of a refreshing beverage. The drink, with some bread, put a little strength into his exhausted body again, for he had taken nothing the whole day save what his guard on the road up the mountain had given him.

The sun was now back of the mountains, whose shadows stretched over the valley, making a long twilight. McCarthy and his fellow woodsmen, shouldering their axes, left the scene of their labors, and with the refreshed Carl entered the road and followed it into the valley.

As they walked, little was said; Carl felt his fatigue and though a thousand questions swarmed into his brain, he did not ask them, but gave himself up to the strange exaltation which had taken hold of him, like a man whose fondest hopes had at last been realized. He was in a Socialist State! The great dream of his life, against which the barriers of long ages of tyranny and iron custom, and brutal force had stood impregnable suddenly rising up before him like a beautiful vision, and yet not a vision, but a practical reality.

Here the artificial society which had encumbered the progress of mankind for long centuries was unknown; everything came from nature, pure and unadulterated from the beginning. Here, society had started without prejudice, unhampered by vicious customs, having as its root, simple and free humanity. How glorious it all was! What a joyous consummation of all his deepest aspirations! Here was the reign of perfect justice, the ideal of truth and love for mankind.

Carl's fond thoughts were interrupted by their approach to a farmhouse by the roadside, where McCarthy announced to him they would rest for the night. As they drew near, the twilight, which had long been softly glowing in the sky, died out suddenly, and the heavens were instantly aglow with thousands of lustrous stars. Never were they so bright to Carl, never so beautiful. They seemed to speak of peace and love and justice and rest to him from these serene heights, the bright symbols of the new life he had so surprisingly found.

CHAPTER IV

CARL had now been a month in the Spielgarten, a citizen of the Socialist State, which was putting into practice the economic and social principles known only in theory elsewhere in the world. He had learned that there existed a secret compact, which had originated in Unterwald, between the governments of Europe, to transport all Socialists to this island, where they might freely work out the socialist scheme.

The purpose of the world's rulers was not benevolent, but corrective; it was supposed that the Socialist State would break down under its own weight after an unhampered and practical trial. It was, besides, an easy way of getting rid of elements troublesome and dangerous to the traditional system of society founded upon inequality and privilege.

Communication with the outside world was absolutely cut off. The island was hemmed in by lofty and precipitous mountains, natural and impregnable barriers save at the eastern end. At the sole entrance was a garrison of soldiers to guard against any exit on the part of the inhabitants of the valley,

and death was the instantaneous penalty of any attempt to make an egress. In several instances those who had tried it were brutally shot down.

The skeleton which Carl had come across on the road the day he came to the island was that of a man who, growing discontented, had boldly sought to reach the outer world through the pass, after vainly essaying to escape elsewhere over the mountains. Equally rigid were the safeguards against communication. A soldier who was discovered to have had communication with an inhabitant of the valley, even so much as a word, was forthwith shot. So jealously was this exclusion from the outside world guarded that the Socialists of the Spielgarten might have been the inhabitants of another planet. Their only knowledge of humanity at large came through the recruits who, like Carl, were thrust from time to time into the valley, never to return.

The colony had been in existence for fifty years at the time of Carl's advent. The founders were a band of five hundred Socialists who had been gathered and transported *en masse* into the valley by a preconcerted arrangement of the different governments of Europe. Among these were a number of women, for the most part, wives of the founders. Others were women who had been convicted for capital offenses, and were sent in during the first ten years to supply the dearth of the female sex, which had been foreseen by the originators of the scheme.

Of the founders of the colony few were now alive, but what with recruits from without and the natural propagation of the race, which was carefully supervised by the State, the inhabitants of the valley had grown to some ten thousand souls, the majority of whom were native to the Spielgarten and had been brought up under the socialist regime.

The climate of the island was semi-tropical, the soil fertile, and nature beneficent. The mountains were profusely timbered and rich in ore. Nothing was materially wanting to supply human needs.

At first many difficulties beset the colonists in devising a system of government, which should meet the requirements of the Socialist State. There were bitter differences of opinion as to ways and means, some conservative, some progressive, and it was not until some twenty years after the foundation of the colony that a consistent and logical plan was gradually evolved in keeping with the Socialist ideal. This regime had been rigidly enforced ever since, and Socialism in its fullest logic and completest expression now flourished in the Spielgarten, the only spot on earth where it had struck root and been followed according to its own ideals.

The people of the Spielgarten were made up of various nationalities. The largest element was German, and the language spoken was of that nation. There were Russians, Poles, Italians, a few Englishmen, and one solitary Irishman, the man who had met Carl on the way down the mountain.

Among the native-born the distinction of national type was almost lost. It was only among the recruits, who had been transported thither, that the difference of racial type remained distinctive. The natives, with rare exceptions, presented a notable homogeneity both in feature and in manner, which Carl did not fail to remark, after he had been in the island a few weeks.

The climate was evidently healthful, and there seemed to be little sickness on the island; the air was salubrious and the water pure, the changes of temperature within a narrow range throughout the entire year. The physique of both the men and women was robust. Indeed, to Carl's eyes, Schlectland seemed a veritable paradise, climate and soil all that could be desired, nature beautiful and varied, and, above all, that perfect human equality, based upon the common good, which Socialism, freed from the constraints of tradition and custom, was here practically demonstrating to be the millennium of humanity. Oh, that the world might know of the social paradise into which he had been so strangely and happily thrust!

For the first few weeks he seemed to be living in a dream. Although he had been a close student of Socialism, it was only by degrees that he learned to comprehend the practical workings of what had been to him heretofore a theory. The social machinery around him worked so noiselessly and smoothly that it was scarce perceptible. The administration of

government seemed remarkably simple, and, as far as he could observe, almost autonomous.

Its basis was the popular franchise. All over the age of twenty-one voted, and the suffrage was not restricted to the male sex, but also accorded to women. There was a General Assembly whose members were elected every four years from ten different districts into which the Spielgarten was politically divided. The functions of this body were chiefly legislative, and its enactments became law subject only to the decision of what was called the Council of Welfare, which passed judicially upon the constitutionality of the laws enacted by the General Assembly, when these were called in question.

The Constitution was drawn upon strict Socialist principles and based upon the absolute supremacy of the State, the recognized fountain head of all legislation, the source of domestic and civic duties. The Constitution was declared inviolable and subject only to the interpretation of the Common Council of Welfare. Its preamble affirmed that the safety of the people was the supreme law, that the absolute equality of all men was the fundamental principle of nature, and that it was the first duty of the State to guard and maintain this perpetual equality in all domestic, social, civic and political relations.

The Common Council of Welfare elected from its own body an executive staff known as the Particular Council of Welfare, whose duty was the

administration of the laws, and whose responsibility for the faithful performance of their offices hark-ened back to the General Assembly, which possessed the constitutional power of impeachment and pun-ishment of any executive officer for malfeasance in the performance of his duties. The Particular Council appointed judges, one for each two districts, who presided over all trials within their respective territories, and from whose decisions appeal could always be made to the Particular Council.

Such in general outline was the structure of the government of this unique system which Carl found working so smoothly and simply in the Spielgarten. To him it was a revelation beyond his wildest hope, an ideal condition of humanity, of which he had hitherto only dreamed as the possibility of a millen-nial future.

On all sides peace and content reigned. Day in and day out men went about their various avocations quietly and happily. None questioned, all obeyed. There was no poverty, no want, no inequality, no distinction of persons, and no rank. The State supervised and directed everything.

Under the working of this omnipresent regime there existed no possibility of one man excelling or obtaining more than his neighbor. Food, clothing, and shelter were carefully distributed to all alike, and all occasion of envy was inevitably eliminated. While each contributed according to his ability, under State direction, to the common stock, to each

was distributed with an even-handed impartiality an equal share.

The hours of labor were fixed by law, and so arranged as to fall with little duress upon any. One day of the week was free, and on that day labor was strictly prohibited. Every three months a period of three days was set aside, during which the people might occupy themselves as they pleased; but if during this time they devoted themselves to labor, of a productive nature, the result had to be deposited in the common store.

These "play-days," as they were called, were usually spent in recreation; some busied themselves with domestic concerns, such as arranging and fitting their dwellings according to their tastes, though a limit was placed upon all domestic ornamentation, which might savor of an ostentatious distinction. A few filled in this leisure time with productive work. Many took the occasion to visit friends living at a distance. Recreation and leisure was the spirit of the hour during the "play-days."

Carl's wonder grew as he watched and noted the operations of what seemed to him so simple and so perfect a system. Here was the one spot on earth where the burden of life did not bear upon groaning shoulders, where a social hierarchy did not lay its heavy weight in successively increased oppressions upon the galled backs of the sweating masses. None here were trampled in the mire under the feet of a callous and haughty aristocracy. There was no op-

portunity in this garden of peace and blessedness for a bourgeoisie to exploit the helpless and the hopeless crowd. The curse of greed, the root of the world's evil, where society was based upon the idea of individual gain, was here utterly eliminated. For none could possess more than nature dictated for his proper needs.

A ruling class, entrenched in fossil traditions and antiquated privileges, was impossible in the Spielgarten, for here tradition was unknown and privilege the forgotten folly of another world. Here at last was the high realization of nature's true manhood; human value estimated upon the basis of a common humanity; no fictitious stamp of rank or wealth to make distinction in the pure gold of equal human worth. Coming to Carl so suddenly, so unexpectedly, it was like sleeping, and then waking in Paradise.

For the first month he walked in an ecstasy of idealism. The beauty of nature around him was tenfold more beautiful. The green valley, ribboned and silvered with its many streams carrying their pure waters to enrich the fertile soil, whence nature poured forth her bounties to the touch of honest toil, stretched its lowlands and its wooded hills, studded here and there with farmhouses and variegated with the enriching hues of cultivated fields, which human industry for the first time in man's history under the impulse of a common love, had made to blossom and bear for the common welfare.

Encircling the valley, the haunt of peace and ease and happiness, the mountain heights, their lower slopes clothed in the deep green of exuberant forests, lifted lofty summits into the intense azure of a heaven which burned in liquid sapphire beyond. Here and there some great peak soared with snowy shoulders in the vast distance above the lower ranges. Highest of all, midway on the eastern side, like a great needle pricking into the empyrean, rose Mount Bebel, a giant sentinel watching over the valley. The deep repose and the solemn calm of the mountains fell upon Carl's spirit like a great balm. It seemed to him that at last he had come into a supreme felicity.

The sublimity of the scene seized upon his soul; the peace and tranquility of the valley entered into his heart. Mere living was a bliss. Here was nature and man in closest union; peace and good-will, content and happiness everywhere. He had, indeed, been transported into the golden age.

CHAPTER V

THERE were no idlers in the Spielgarten. Each one had his allotted share in the labor of the community. The division of labor was predetermined by the judges of the various districts. If one were discontented with the avocation to which he was assigned, he had the right of an appeal to the Particular Council at the end of six months, and then again at the end of a year, but their decision was final.

At first the colony had experienced great difficulty in adjusting the division of labor, as there was a strong tendency to overcrowd the lighter tasks as well as seek those places which seemed to carry some mark of distinction. But as the native-born element, which had been reared and schooled in the idea of the Socialist State, began to preponderate in the community, the leaven of self-seeking, which had been brought by the original colonists as a sinister inheritance of their former life under the regime of a state based upon inequality, gradually disappeared, and an appeal from the first assignment of the district judge was now a rare occurrence.

The children were taught from infancy that they were at maturity to be placed at certain assigned tasks, and during youth were trained with a view to the avocation thus predetermined for them.

It was inculcated also as a cardinal principle of their ethical code that there was no distinction of merit or reward in the different avocations and conditions of life. The man who dug or ploughed occupied as meritorious and honorable a place in the community as the judge of a district, and no distinction in the distribution of the goods of life was made between them. The dominance of this conception of human existence and its practical fulfilment in the equal awards distributed by the State soon settled the problem of the division of labor. There was no emulation when there could be no distinction, and avocations were accepted with ready acquiescence.

When Carl arrived in the colony he was treated as were all recruits from the outside world. As manual labor was always most in demand, he was allotted to that division, as was the custom with recruits. This was by no means to his liking, as he was a lawyer by profession and had never in his life turned his hand to manual toil. His enthusiasm, however, overcame his repugnance, and he set to work with zeal and energy.

At Denis McCarthy's suggestion he was attached to the Irishman's band of woodcutters with which he had fallen in on the day of his arrival. He was at first clumsy at the work but zealous and industrious,

and scarcely brooked the good-natured restraint with which Denis sought to hold him back. "Be aisy, me lad," urged the Irishman, "Sure an ye'll have all the threes in the Spielgarten down in another month if ye keep on at this rate." And Carl learned in time to wield his axe with less intense energy and more effectively under McCarthy's instructions.

In the beginning the fatigue of the unusual labor distressed him excessively and the soreness of his muscles in spite of his heaviness drove sleep away at night and made him feel as if he were stretched upon a rack. By degrees this physical distress passed away; his hands grew callous and his muscles firm and hard. But his highly keyed energy began to slacken as his fervor cooled and he steadied down to a situation which began to grow irksome as time went by.

Yet there was some compensation in the work inasmuch as it kept him constantly out of doors and built him up physically in such a fashion as surprised himself; besides, McCarthy was a genial and good-natured companion to whom he had taken a great fancy. The others in the band he soon discovered to be ordinary workmen who chopped away apathetically and exerted themselves at their task as little as possible, and had as little to say. Denis was supervisor of the band, though, like all supervisors in the Spielgarten, he took a share in the work.

Carl soon noticed that Denis, like the others, went

about his woodchopping in anything but an energetic way. A minimum of performance seemed to be the goal; and it was not long before he learned that a minimum of labor in a given time prevailed throughout the Spielgarten. He was inclined at first to resent this as a shirking from public duty, and expostulated with Denis over it. But the latter replied that enough was sufficient and to fell more trees than could be used would be mere waste. "Ye'll learn betther betimes," Denis remarked, "for, as me ould mither used to say, 'too many pigs ate too many praties an' too many praties put up the rint'!"

They were on their way home after the day's labor, cutting timber a mile east of Marxville, whither they were returning. Denis and Carl were walking together in the rear, their companions some distance ahead.

"But this is simply putting things at the lowest level," urged Carl, in reply to Denis' remark. "Surely to get the best out of life is the noblest ambition, and the State with the highest ideal will not stop short of providing the best for the common welfare."

Denis took off his cap, as he was wont when an argument came his way, and stroked the back of his head. "I'm thinkin'," he said sententiously, "that thrue contintment is the best. For why should a man go on botherin' himsel' with more than he nades? 'Tis just that, bedad, that plays the divil wid the other fellows beyont the mountains there,

and sure 'tis this same contintment wid nothin' to bother about that makes it aisy here."

"Yes, but it isn't ease that we are looking for; that ought not to satisfy human brains and power and energy," impatiently urged Carl. "It's the highest, the best, all that human brains and power and energy can devise and give us, that we should strive for. Humanity must go on progressing from the lower to the higher. It is the duty of the State, in lieu of the selfish motive which urges individuals living in inequality, to provide all this for the common good."

"And what may all that be?" queried Denis with a dry intonation in his voice.

"Everything that nature and art gives to man. All that man by toil may win from the bosom of the earth, or the air, or the heavens; all that sculpture, painting, architecture and poetry can create for the delectation of the mind and the soul. With all the instruments of production in the hands of the State commanding all human intelligence and energy, what is there the State cannot achieve? Who is there that the State cannot lead and instruct and educate to the understanding and appreciation of the highest, the noblest? All that the autocracy of the earth has ever wrung from the misery of the many by tyrannous extortion can be placed within the reach and the enjoyment of all without stint, if the State but seizes upon the powers and utilizes the instruments which have heretofore been the possession of the

few. No—it is not simple content, but a noble enthusiasm for the best and the highest to be placed in the hands of all that must be the goal and ambition of the State. That is the Socialist ideal."

" 'Tis aisy thinkin', me lad, but 'tis in the Spielgarten ye'll find the doin'. 'Tis mesel' would like to be an aristocrat along wid the rest well enough, but 'tis a long time in the gettin'." And Denis stroked the back of his head again with a meditative air.

"Not so far as you think," answered Carl, "and here in time, and that not far distant, with proper and energetic direction, all this will be accomplished. Here we start free and untrammeled; here the barriers of custom and tradition do not impede progress. With the shackles stricken from the limbs of nature we can march forward with giant strides."

Denis looked rather negative at Carl's prophetic picture and remained rather cold to the latter's enthusiasm. He made no reply, and when Carl, who, as was his wont when speaking on the subject of the Socialistic ideal, was about to launch into further golden prognostications, the Irishman interrupted him, as they approached a farmhouse by the roadside, with the suggestion that they might stop for "a dhrink of wather here, to take away the dhryness that was bedivilin' him this half hour."

The farmhouse was like all other dwellings in the Spielgarten, of one story, for the law forebade a residence of any greater height. Buildings for pub-

lic use alone were suffered to go beyond this measure. When needed, enlargements to the rear only were permitted in dwellings, whose frontage on a street or road invariably took up an equal space and presented a uniform appearance.

Carl had observed this house on the way out to his work in the morning, for a great vine with a multitude of rich red roses clambered luxuriantly over the low porch, in front of which was a bed of variegated and brilliant flowers of a kind he had never seen before. The perfume of the flowers floated out to them on the roadside, and Carl, who was keenly sensitive to all impressions of nature's beauty, inhaled it with deep drawn breath.

They had turned in from the road and as they neared the entrance a young woman emerged from the door, but upon perceiving them stopped and stood waiting. The rose-vine wreathing around and above her on the trellis work framed her as in a picture. Carl stood and gazed with astonished eyes. Her hair was of a rich, deep chestnut, drawn lightly back from her forehead and coiled into heavy, glossy folds; her eyes of a deep blue and of a frank openness under strikingly arched and delicate eyebrows. Her features were mobile, and not markedly regular, though you could not point out precisely why. Her figure was a perfect poise of grace as she stood in an expectant attitude, lithe and supple, and, though slender, rounded into the fullness of womanhood. The slightest tinge of color softened her

cheeks in a complexion smooth as ivory and as delicate as a May blossom.

The women Carl had seen in the Spielgarten could lay little claim to beauty and this apparition of loveliness startled him. He stood for the moment spellbound, gazing with avid eyes, when Denis' "An' is it you, Fraulein Mina?" brought him to himself. "Sure, it's that glad I am to see you, for the sight of ye would make an ould man young and a cripple skip. An' it's purtier ye grow every blessed minute. The flowers themselves are rags to ye, me darlin'," said the gallant Denis as they advanced to the door.

At the sound of Denis' voice the young woman, with a smile of recognition that lighted up her face into an even rarer beauty, it seemed to Carl, came from her frame of roses and with outstretched hands welcomed Denis with naive frankness.

"Indeed, I'm glad to see you, Denis," she said, "and father will be glad, too, I know. Where have you been so long, since we last saw you?"

"Beyont the town there for these two months gone amongst the timbers at the head of the valley. Sure it's a long time, but the longer the time the sweeter the welcome." And turning to Carl, who had stood back the meanwhile, "Here is a recroot I found up there,—Herr Runder, Fraulein Mina."

The young woman held out her hand to Carl, saying with simple sincerity, "Welcome to the Spielgarten, Herr Runder."

"It was while choppin' the timber up there that I

came across the lad," continued Denis. "He'd just been inthrojuced to this part of the wurruld by the sojers beyont, and a sorry figure he was with their iligint ways of inthroduction," added Denis, with a grim smile.

The look of sympathy which Carl received from Fraulein Mina more than compensated for Denis' sally.

"Where's the father?" inquired Denis, "and it's a bit dhry we are, Fraulein, what wid workin' and talkin', for Carl here can orrate like Dan O'Connell himsel', and I've a bit of tongue of me own."

Mina smiled, and to Denis' inquiry about her father answered that he had just gone to the barn and would return presently, and asked them into the house where Denis' thirst might find suitable relief. After they had entered and Mina had left the room to fetch the liquid refreshment, Carl, who had had little chance to say anything between Denis' volubility, turned to the latter to express his astonishment at the beauty of the young girl, pouring out a flood of admiration, which Denis took with the patronizing air of one who had known it this long time.

"Sure," he said, "I've known her from a bit of a colleen and seen her bud from a wee thing so high. 'Twould be hard to bate her I'm thinkin', in the whole wurruld beyont the mountains there," and Denis' long arm flourished in a wide circle to indicate the entire round of the globe. "There's only

one slip of a girl I ever knew," and here Denis heaved a great sigh and his voice grew softer, "that could top up to her at all, at all, and that was little Nora Murphy in the ould counthry."

But Denis' further dilation on the one rival to Mina's charms in the whole world was interrupted by the latter's return with a tankard of rich beer, and by the entrance at the same time of Mina's father.

Carl had never seen a sturdier and nobler specimen of manhood than John Clausen, who stood a full six feet, broad of shoulder and still strong of frame, despite his sixty-five years, and with little indication of age in his appearance save for a profuse sprinkling of gray in his beard. His eyes, like Mina's, were a deep blue and clear, and his manner was frank and hearty. He welcomed Carl warmly and sympathetically and began at once to ply him with questions as to the present conditions in the world beyond the mountains, showing interest in everything and commenting shrewdly upon Carl's answers.

Carl graphically pictured the situation in Europe as it appeared to his Socialist eyes, narrated the story of his attempt to overthrow the government of Unterwald, the unfortunate accident which had betrayed him into the hands of the enemy, his transportation and his entrance into the Spielgarten. Mina sat by, an eager and sympathetic listener. A high color mounted to her cheek, and a deep light

burned in her eyes as Carl poured out his tale. Herr Clausen listened with a great interest, here and there interrogating or commenting. But Denis, who had heard it all before, gave but idle attention with now and then a word or two of banter, which called forth sympathetic protests from Mina.

By the time that Carl had finished his narrative and satisfied Herr Clausen's queries, night had fallen and Denis rose, declaring that they must take their way back to Marxville, which lay a good mile to the north of Clausen's house. As they were departing, Herr Clausen laid his hand kindly on Carl's shoulder, and bade him come again and frequently, and to her father's invitation, Mina added hers. When the young girl's hand touched Carl's, as the party bade their good-nights, on the rose-embowered porch, Carl felt a strange thrill. The heavy scent of the roses hung in the night air, and the stars above shone down with a thousand soft lights, that laid a mellow spell upon the scene, as he passed down the garden out into the road, and Denis and he took their way back to Marxville.

CHAPTER VI

JOHN CLAUSEN had been an inhabitant of the Spielgarten for nearly thirty-five years, having arrived fifteen years after the foundation of the colony. He was an Englishman who, as a young man, had gone to the German University of Heidelberg to take a special course in international law. While there he had become interested in Socialism through some fellow students, and it was not long before he found himself a member of a vast secret Socialist society, whose branches were spread throughout the entire continent and actively engaged in conspiracies against all existing governments.

The Socialist lodges were in alliance with all the elements of discontent throughout Europe in the revolutionary period of the second quarter of the nineteenth century, which culminated in the disorders and outbreaks of the year 1848. Clausen was apprehended, with others, and transported to Schlectland and thrust into the Spielgarten. The colony was at this time gradually settling down to those conditions which were now dominant, viz., a level of equality amongst its people and the complete supremacy of the State.

Two years after his arrival Clausen married the daughter of one of the original colonists. His wife died, leaving him a daughter, Wilhelmina, a child four years of age, on whom the widower poured out the deep affection of a strong nature. Wilhelmina, shortened familiarly to Mina, was to John Clausen the apple of his eye. As she grew older he withdrew from the active political life, into which he had eagerly participated during the first years of his residence in the colony, and devoted himself to her care and training what time he could spare from his farming, the occupation which from the first he had followed in the Spielgarten.

Mina had been educated in the schools of the Spielgarten, but her father, a man of university training, had supplemented her studies by private instruction and direction, storing her mind with all he could remember of the literature and art and history of Europe. Knowledge of this nature was carefully excluded from the schools of the Spielgarten as unsuited to the purposes of a Socialist community whose end was to form a people on a purely communistic ideal, for the literature and art of Europe had sprung from individualistic sources and breathed the spirit of individualism.

From the start Mina's father had impressed upon the child the necessity of reticence and secrecy in this matter, for he feared the interference of the State and the transferrence of the custody of Mina to other hands if it became known that he had instructed her

in forbidden things. Himself a man of imagination and culture, he could not bear that his child should grow up without the knowledge of what in so many respects was to him a source of delight and consolation.

In John Clausen, Carl Runder found a man of broad and cultivated sympathies, and a close friendship soon ripened between them, the elder man, in the experience of his years and the settled gravity of his character, proving a salutary check, as events developed themselves, upon the younger man's often rash impetuosity.

As time went on Carl found himself a frequent visitor at the farmhouse. Mina always welcomed him graciously and Clausen with much heartiness. Here was the one place in the Spielgarten where he met with kindred spirits; for outside of Clausen and Mina and Denis, Carl had found the people of the Spielgarten in some way alien to him. He could not at first quite explain it to himself, but after his enthusiasm had ebbed away, he began to realize that, though here was the practical exemplification of what he had so long dreamed, a people whose life in all its phases, even the most intimate, was passed in strict conformity with the principles of Socialism, and where the hated tyranny of inequality was absolutely abolished, still there was something lacking in it all, which took him a long time to formulate in his own mind. It made him restive and impatient, and it was only at John Clausen's house that the irritation

and the feeling of isolation which had lately taken possession of him were alleviated and allayed.

With Clausen he spoke his mind freely; with others, he found that there was no possibility of discussion, for Socialism in the Spielgarten had settled into an accepted fact on an immovable basis. Ways and means had sublimated long ago into stereotyped conditions. It was against these that Carl began to feel he was out of sympathy. He had ideas of his own; but the moment he broached them he was met with a shrug and a stare, or the remark that the Spielgarten had passed out of the stage of experiment.

With Clausen, however, he could and did talk, for he discovered in Mina's father a certain sympathy with his own views, though the latter was circumspect and prudent in their expression, and urged Carl to be cautious in giving utterance to his ideas, as the State authorities were jealous of anything like political discussion or agitation.

"Some years ago" said Clausen in one of his talks with Carl, "a recruit attempted what he called a reform, and his ideas were in many respects yours, Herr Runder. He gathered a small following amongst other recruits who were then more numerous than they are now. The result was that he was finally apprehended for treason, tried before the Council of Particular Welfare, and condemned to death. You see, the Socialist as well as the Individualistic State takes radical means to defend it-

self against innovators," and Herr Clausen smiled gravely at Carl's expression of surprise.

"But is there no freedom of ideas and speech within proper limits in the Socialist State?" expostulated Carl. "Surely this is a tyranny as bad as that against which Socialism is a protest."

"You must admit," replied Clausen, "that the State must defend itself against innovations that it considers dangerous to its safety. When Socialism has become an established system it must protect itself against revolutionary tendencies or overt acts that would seek to undermine it."

"I do admit it, of course," declared Carl, "but ideas quite in keeping with Socialism are surely not revolutionary, and when those ideas which I hold and ways such as I would propose are simply better means to the Socialist ideal, it is only a despotism that would prohibit their expression or their agitation among the people. I am heart and soul a Socialist, and I want to see Socialism realized in all its completeness and beauty. Here, you must confess, Socialism has fallen into a rut of commonplace and apathy. I know, Herr Clausen, I can speak freely to you."

"I am afraid that you are right," answered Herr Clausen, "but first let me say a word to your first statement: Who is to determine in a Socialist community what ideas are in keeping and what means are fit? Surely not the individual, but the State itself. You may call it despotism, but it is the logical

outcome of your own principle. A government established on the communistic idea must perforce defend its own integrity against individualism of any kind, and be the supreme judge and arbiter of what is or is not Socialism, and this, of course, implies the right of decision as to ways and means."

"But surely," protested Carl, "the conditions which exist here are not the true result of Socialism. This apathy, this indifference to everything except the mere routine of living, this dead level of existence, is simply an arrested phase of Socialism. Its ideal lies beyond. In the Spielgarten the stimulus to progress seems to be wanting. It is this that . . ."

"Yes," interrupted Clausen, "the stimulus to progress does seem to be lacking. There's the rub."

"It is this," continued Carl, not heeding Clausen's remark, "that I deplore, it is this that I would like to supply; to rouse the people to a desire for higher things. Here is where the leaders fail."

"Leaders!" said Clausen, with a half-smile, "you forget there are no leaders in a Socialist State. Leadership would mean inequality, my dear friend, and that would plunge us at once into individualism."

"No; not so," answered Carl. "I cannot admit that; Socialism is not the denial or negation of differences amongst men, but the assertion and the practice of equality in the awards of labor, the impartial distribution of the common product of labor to each one alike. It is the principle and method of a com-

mon justice in the State whereby the weak are protected from the exploitation of the strong, the many from the tyranny of the few, who would inevitably rob them of the fruits of their toil in an individualistic system.

"You strike here the very root of the matter," said Clausen. "That is the very pith of the difficulty which unfolded itself to me after I had been here a short time only."

"Well, what is that?" asked Carl, as Clausen paused.

"It came home to me in my own case first," continued Clausen. "I was naturally enthusiastic when I first arrived, as you were, and filled with a great zeal to build up that ideal which you now would. But an argument best comes home to a man in practical affairs. I expended my efforts zealously at first, but, I confess, it was not long before I found my zeal slowly oozing away and my diligence slackening. I found that the result did not correspond to them. I did not reap what I sowed."

"Pardon me," interrupted Carl, "but was not that on your part the selfishness of individualism asserting itself? The very essence of Socialism is to sacrifice oneself for the common good; to labor not for oneself, but the community; to put out one's best effort that all may profit by it equally, and not oneself alone."

"I confess," answered Clausen a little dryly, "that I found human nature lamentably weak. It is a

discovery I never made until I came to the Spielgarten."

"Pardon me again, this was your failure, the overassertion of individualism," declared Carl with emphasis; "you surely cannot lay this to the charge of Socialism, whose ideal is the direct opposite of what you have just admitted to be the defect in the individual."

"True," answered Clausen, "but it was just in the principle of my failure that the present commonplace level prevailing in the Spielgarten is due."

"How is that; I do not see it."

"You said a moment ago," Clausen went on, "that Socialism meant the equal distribution of all awards of labor to each alike without distinction; that, however varied either in quantity or quality the source of production in the individual, the award was to be exactly alike to each."

"Yes, that is what I said, that's the Socialist basis."

"The only incentive then to the individual in the communistic State is the common good, is it not?"

"Most certainly; what else should it be?"

"It may also be said," continued Clausen, "that the only result of individualistic labor will be what is comprised in the common good. With that fixed in his mind as the end of his work, the individual will naturally aim at that alone, and what may be beyond that, he will not strive for."

"But what is there beyond that?" demanded Carl, "is not everything comprised in that?"

"Well," answered Clausen, smiling, "look around you here and tell me what you find in the Spielgarten."

"But this is not a fair example," insisted Carl. "Here we have the common good reduced to its lowest level."

"And why?" asked Clausen.

"Because no ideal of better is proposed to the people; because there is no stimulus here to strive for something higher. The people are left to an apathetic indifference by those who should strive to lift them to a higher place."

"I suppose you mean by those whose conceptions and ideas are higher and farther reaching than the conception of the people in general."

"Yes, men like yourself and myself, if I may say so," answered Carl.

"True," said Clausen, "but we have drawn our ideals from the outside, from an ideal which we found and brought with us, from a system, which grew up under the impulses of individualism. We have drawn our conception from another state of society, and we would create out of the material of Socialism an ideal condition which, as far as we have known, has been built out of quite other stuff. You lay down as the stimulating force of the socialist community a principle of differentiation of which Socialism itself knows nothing. You and I would

seek to lift the people from the dead level at which they exist by virtue of the individualistic forces we find in ourselves. Now these are not a part of their makeup. We must take Socialism at its own level and the people as they are."

"But are you not assuming all this?" answered Carl. "Why do you speak of Socialism at its own level?"

"Because I have lived in a community in which I see the effect of the Socialist principle on two generations born and bred under its domination. The influence of the outside element, as represented by you and me, who are recruits and not native-born, has died out. In the beginning that influence was felt, but it has been constantly eliminated, as a dangerous factor, and such it would be here. We have educated our children in Socialism, pure and simple, with the result that they possess no other idea of the State. They have grown up with the notion that there is no real distinction between man and man, that all differences between individuals are purely artificial, that a community of equal awards is the sole end of government. The result has been that individualism has practically atrophied. A common level for all, and that means in practice the plane of the average if not the lowest, obtains. Effort is, therefore, limited to the common plane. To strive for more would be futile. Indeed, the main spring of individualistic effort, viz., the distinctive reward of the individual is altogether wanting here.

The moment you attempt to differentiate the community by your ideals brought from the outside world, you begin to introduce the one intolerable element in the Socialist State, the principle of individualism."

"Permit me to finish," for Carl had started to interrupt Clausen. "What I am describing is the practical result of the working of the Socialist system upon those who are brought up under its regime. The people of the Spielgarten, outside of the recruits, know nothing beyond their present state of existence, and care nothing. A moment ago you said that Socialism does not deny or negate the difference between individuals. That is Socialism in your theory, which is a remnant of the individualism which you have known in the outside world, and remains like a fly in the ointment. But Socialism does in its practical results reduce individualism to so small a minimum that it is in fact eliminated. I have carefully observed and watched the working of the principle here, and my conclusion is that human nature responds only to the end which it knows, that human effort extends only as far as the possibility within its reach. Deny to the individual the result of that particular effort which the individual alone can enjoy, and he ceases to aim at it. Limit the individual to that common result, which all alike can possess, and he rests satisfied with it. Your assertion that there can be inequality in the effort and source of production and yet perfect equality

in the distribution of award carries with it a radical flaw. It is the possibility of the achievement, the end in view, which governs human activities and when that end is a common result without distinction, the effort minimizes itself to equivalent means. The idea of equality in distribution begets the idea of equality in the means; and effort inevitably adjusts itself to its possible results. Socialism with the aim of perfect equality, and in the Spielgarten you see it in practice, soon eliminates all differentiation in individuals and so equalizes the sources of producing."

"But I would make that common aim higher," urged Carl, I would raise the common level by presenting and inculcating a higher common ideal."

"Yes, *you* would," retorted Clausen, "you who comprehend a loftier range of ideas, a wider scheme of life; but all this is your individualistic conception drawn from elsewhere, and when you would inject it into the common life and so move it to a higher level, you are doing it by force of an individualism which Socialism cannot recognize. Yours in reality is the cardinal doctrine of individualism, viz., that progress has its well springs in the distinction found in individuals, and that the higher and stronger individual force works downward from above upon the masses below, and I confess that when we read history, we find that all movements of human progress have their origin in the superior, the personal achievement of power, wealth, fame or what not. But it is just this individualistic result that Socialism

eliminates from its progress by denying unequal distribution in its awards; it refuses all scope to simply individualistic ambition and so cuts off the very source which supplies the power of advance. Here in the Spielgarten no distinction of persons is tolerated; the awards of labor are absolutely equalized. The apathy and indifference you witness here is the natural result. You cannot rouse the people to an ideal of which they know nothing nor would you be suffered to preach your doctrine. Believe me, I learned the lesson bitterly before I had been long in the Spielgarten, and soon realized my own impotence."

CHAPTER VII

CARL was impressed, but not convinced, and had started to reply when he was interrupted by the arrival of a stranger whose shadow fell athwart the open door as Herr Clausen uttered his last words. Mina, who had been sitting by, knitting, as an interested listener, started up and stood for a moment irresolute. The man who had intruded so abruptly stood in the doorway.

"Ah," he said in an unctuous tone, holding his hands in front of him with the fingers touching, "I see I have interrupted you. Pardon me, Herr Clausen, but I knocked and, not being heard in the interest of your conversation, took the liberty of entering unbidden. Ah, Fraulein," he added, turning to Mina and advancing into the room with an increasing unction in his voice. "How do I find you? But it is needless to ask; such health speaks in the roses of your cheeks and in the brightness of your eyes," and he took Mina's proffered hand in both his own with a lingering clasp.

Carl felt an instinctive aversion from the man at once. The voice seemed masked and the manner

subtly insinuating. A head too large for an undersized body gave him an incongruous and an almost ridiculous appearance at first; but this was immediately counteracted upon seeing the face with its heavy jaws protruding somewhat, a long acquiline nose and eyebrows overhanging small, ferret-like eyes, whose color was invisible, so deep set were they in the shadow of the bushy eyebrows. It was a face of power, but with something sinister in it, and as Carl gazed he felt a positive loathing come over him. Meantime Herr Clausen had risen and welcomed the intruder, whom he saluted as Herr Schmidt, with gravity and something of distance in his manner.

"Ah, and whom have we here?" said Herr Schmidt, turning to Carl after Herr Clausen's welcome, a sort of purr in his voice, looking at the young man keenly.

"This is Herr Runder, Herr Schmidt," answered Clausen, introducing the two men. "Herr Runder is a recent recruit to the Spielgarten."

"Ah, indeed," ejaculated Herr Schmidt as his brows closed over his eyes so as to make them almost invisible. "And how do you like the Spielgarten, Herr Runder? Does it come up to your hopes?"

Carl flushed, hesitating, for a moment, and was about to answer, when Mina broke in suddenly: "Herr Runder has scarcely had time; everything is very strange to him yet. It takes one some time to get used to so great a change." Herr Schmidt

pursed his great lips, looking intently at Carl, when Herr Clausen, catching up Mina's clue, went on:

"It is, indeed, a great change for a man from beyond the mountains when he first arrives in the Spielgarten. I remember how strange it seemed to me—and you yourself passed through the same experience, no doubt, Herr Schmidt. But won't you sit down? And Mina, bring some beer. Herr Schmidt must be thirsty, the day is warm. Did you come far?"

"From Marxville, where I have been attending a meeting of the Particular Council," answered Herr Schmidt, as he took the proffered seat.

As Mina left the room to get the beer, she threw a significant glance at Carl and laid her finger on her lips. Carl felt grateful, but scarcely needed the warning, for he had already gathered that Herr Schmidt was a man before whom it might be dangerous to express his views, and his sinister manner repelled him greatly. Mina presently returned with the refreshments and then left the room, with an excuse that some household duties called her away. A moment after Carl rose and bade the two men adieu, saying that he must betake himself homeward.

As he left he noticed that Herr Schmidt again scrutinized him keenly with something of a sneer lurking about his heavy lips. When he got into the open air he instinctively shook himself, as if he had suffered some subtle contamination in the man's pres-

ence. Mina was standing at the further end of the garden and beckoned him as he came out. There was a faint distress in her face as he approached.

"Come," she said, in a low voice. "Come, I wish to speak with you a moment, Herr Runder; let us go to the back of the garden where we may not be observed."

Carl wondered, but followed. When they had reached the end of the garden which bordered on a little stream, Mina seated herself on a bench built around a tree on the bank and motioned to Carl to sit beside her.

"Herr Runder," she said, "I am going to make bold to ask a promise of you. Will you promise me?" and she looked with grave eyes into his.

"Why, Fraulein!" exclaimed Carl, "I would be only too pleased to grant you any favor in my power. But what may I be able to do for you?"

"Well, it is for yourself mostly," answered Mina, "that I ask it. You are," she hesitated a moment, a faint blush stealing into her face, "you are very impetuous, father says, and it is dangerous to speak too freely in the Spielgarten. And I want to ask you not to talk before others as you speak to father and me. It would bring you into trouble."

"Dear Fraulein," said Carl, "you are very kind. I see it is for myself you speak. Indeed I am grateful, and I will be careful. I promise you."

"And then," added Mina, "be careful to say nothing before Herr Schmidt," and she pointed towards

the house with a deprecatory gesture. "He is a dangerous man and a very strict Socialist; it was he who denounced the man of whom father told you, and had him executed."

"I felt repelled by him as soon as I saw him," said Carl, frowning at the thought of Herr Schmidt. "Yes, I promise that I will not express my views before him."

"And you will be very, very careful?" Mina's voice conveyed a world of solicitude, and Carl felt his heart beat faster.

"Mina, Mina," he cried with a sudden impulse, and seizing her hand kissed it fervently, "and do you care, do you care?"

Mina drew back, startled and blushing, and rose to her feet at his impetuosity. "I have offended you. Forgive me. I presumed——"

Mina stood in agitation with her hands covering her face, her bosom heaving.

"Oh, forgive me, Fraulein, I forgot myself," urged Carl. She stood for a moment in an effort to control herself. Carl gazed at her with a desperate yearning in his heart and yet fearful that he had spoken hastily.

"Yes, I do care," she said tremulously, "but it seems so strange, and—and——" her voice broke.

Carl was at her side in an instant and, snatching her hands away from her averted face, held them in his own and drew her, half reluctant, to himself. "Mina, Mina!" he exclaimed fervently, "I love you!

I love you! I have loved you from the very first, from the day I first saw you on the porch there. I have been afraid to tell you. I did not know you cared for me. You seemed so reserved and distant. I love you, I love you, Mina," he went on passionately, "say that you love me."

He had clasped her in his arms, and felt her tremble in his embrace. She did not yield to him altogether; there was a maidenly shyness in her reluctant response.

"I do care for you, Carl," she murmured. "I do love you, Carl," and her voice was very low as for the first time she called him by his Christian name; "but it all seems too strange. I cannot understand." And here she suddenly broke away from him. "I ought not, I ought not, for it can never be. No, it can never be!" she exclaimed with a poignant emphasis.

"What can never be?" asked Carl, startled at her sudden action in the very moment when she seemed all his own.

"They would never allow it in the Spielgarten," she went on; "they have prohibited it."

"Prohibited what?" asked Carl, perplexed.

"Any free choice between a man and a maid. In the Spielgarten the Particular Council chooses for us. We cannot choose for ourselves."

Carl stood astounded. Mina's words came upon him like a thunder bolt out of heaven.

"It is preposterous!" he exclaimed indignantly;

"such a regulation transgresses the first law of nature. Surely they cannot go so far; it is an unbearable despotism!"

"But it is true, Carl; it is the law of the Spielgarten."

"But I love you, Mina, and you me, and no man has the right to come between us. What has the Particular Council to do with our loves?"

"I do love you, Carl," and Mina blushed at her own words, as she caught Carl's eager and fond glance in response to them, "but the Particular Council regulates and controls all marriages. It chooses those who are to marry," and the girl's eyes grew troubled as she spoke, while Carl broke out into a storm of indignant invective. "Oh, promise me," she said, placing her hands upon his shoulders and looking with infinite tenderness into the young man's eyes, "promise me that you will say or do nothing rash."

"For you, Mina, dear, I would do anything. I will be careful, but one thing I will never submit to, and that is this infamous rule. To have you taken from me and given to another would be worse than death," and Carl's voice rose in his excitement.

"Hush, not so loud, Carl," exclaimed Mina. "I hear voices. It is father and Herr Schmidt."

As they stood listening they heard the two elder men talking as they came out of the house. Herr Schmidt was evidently leaving. They could not catch the words, but there seemed a suppressed note

of anger in the voices. Mina's hand rested on Carl's arm as she stood in an expectant attitude. She looked up at Carl, who placed his hand upon hers with a protecting tenderness.

The voices had ceased; Herr Schmidt had evidently gone. Presently they heard the footsteps of Herr Clausen approaching. Mina did not withdraw her hand from Carl's, but stood waiting in naïve confidence. Herr Clausen turned the corner of some shrubbery that had concealed him from view. His brow was contracted and his face flushed. He was laboring under some deep agitation. He stopped abruptly when he came in sight of Mina and Carl. Mina did not stir. Clausen gazed at them for a moment, and then advanced. In their attitude he read the situation.

"Mina, my child," he cried with emotion and held out his arms to her; "Mina, yes, I understand," as the young girl buried her face upon his shoulder, "I understand; I, too, am fond of Carl," and he extended his free hand to the young man, "but what can we do, what can we do?" Carl looked in wonder at Clausen, whom he had never seen perturbed before, for the latter was now deeply moved, and his voice actually broke as he spoke.

"Father, what is it?" nervously inquired Mina, looking into his face anxiously. "What is it, what disturbs you so much?"

"It has come at last," said Clausen with a groan. "I have been fearing it for the past two years.

Mina, Mina, they are going to take you from me," here the man's voice shook with agitation. "The Particular Council has just been making the quarterly selections and you among others, my child, have been chosen." Mina paled and trembled, and Carl started violently. Here was the very danger upon them against which he had just been so bitterly defiant.

"They have chosen you, Mina; God! but the words choke me! They have chosen you, my Mina, for Herr Schmidt! It was this he came to tell me. It was hard to restrain myself; I could scarce keep from strangling the devilish brute, and he saw it; but I held back, and he smiled and rubbed his hands, until I felt as if I could kill him then and there. I curbed myself and spoke to him politely enough. Mina, Mina, what shall we do? I cannot bear it! Carl, my boy, you love her, what shall we do?" And he turned to Carl, who scarcely recognized Herr Clausen, usually so calm and strong, staggering under a blow that seemed to shatter the resolution and resource of his nature.

Carl himself was completely taken aback at the suddenness of the blow, but Herr Clausen's appeal roused him, and his strong impetuous spirit shook itself free from the shock of the announcement.

"We will not submit to it," he cried; "it is devil's work, Herr Clausen. Surely there is some way to circumvent it. Can we not appeal to the courts? Is there no justice in the Spielgarten?"

Herr Clausen shook his head despairingly. "There is no appeal from the Particular Council. Its decrees are final. It has absolute control of such matters. It mates and unmates at its will."

"Let us rouse the people and break this iniquitous law. We will appeal to the people."

Herr Clausen looked up at Carl with haggard eye. "No, Carl, it would be useless. The people in the Spielgarten have long ago become passive instruments in the hands of the State. They would not understand you; besides, we would be seized and imprisoned on the instant——"

"Then we must flee from the Spielgarten," cried Carl.

"See the mountains around you," answered Clausen, stretching out and sweeping his arm around; "and then the sea beyond; and armed soldiers at every egress to shoot us down. No one has ever succeeded in escaping."

CHAPTER VIII

BEFORE Carl left, Herr Clausen had recovered something of his wonted equanimity. The blow had fallen upon him heavily, none the less because it had been expected. It had been hanging over his head like the sword of Damocles ever since Mina had come to womanhood. He dreaded it all the more because so certain. To have Mina taken from him was to blot the light out of his life, and to have her given to another without choice and inevitably by the fiat of the Particular Council was beyond endurance.

In his own mind he had long ago recoiled against this state supervision and determination of marriage. As it was arranged in the Spielgarten, he realized the transaction in its naked ugliness. He saw in it the mere mating of human creatures like cattle. The logic of it on the principle of Socialism did not in the least mitigate his repugnance.

That it was to the interest of the Socialist state to regulate and govern the propagation of the race by selecting and mating with an eye to the well-being of the future citizen those who were to be parents,

he knew only too well was an inevitable conclusion from the premises which declared the individual to be entirely subordinate to the State's welfare, but it was precisely the practical results of Socialism thus logically carried over into life that had first brought him to the realization of the insufficiency of its scheme of government. He had been a witness to these results and had in consequence come to rebel against the principles whence they followed, though he was careful to conceal his true sentiments.

And now the brutal fact which he had so long dreaded stared him in the face; Mina, who alone had made life bearable during the long years which he had come to regard as a veritable, though irrevocable exile, in the Spielgarten, was to be torn from him, and given over—how the thought galled him—to the lust of the one man above all others whom he thoroughly and utterly detested. Schmidt was coarse and brutal, and his hypocritical exterior but heightened the disgust which he stirred in Clausen's breast.

After the first poignancy of his grief, the strength of his nature reasserted itself and his judgment began to clarify. He became absorbed in the one idea, how possibly to avert the disaster which so threatened, without remedy. He refused to yield to the inevitable and was constantly casting about in his mind for some means of staving off, at least for the time being, the gross dishonor, as he conceived it, which menaced Mina, in the hope that in the mean-

time something might eventuate to save her.

Carl, to whom had come in the same moment the bright possession of Mina's love, and the dire threat of forever losing her, was as resolutely and more passionately, as became a lover, set against yielding to circumstances, which seemed beyond mortal power to compass. It was only the elder man's maturer counsel that held him back from some desperate measure.

"Let us think it out first, Carl," said Clausen; "we are utterly helpless if we betray ourselves at the start. Herr Schmidt knows his advantage, and if we show any spirit of opposition, he would make the utmost of it to ruin us."

When Carl returned to Marxville that evening and narrated to Denis McCarthy the events that had occurred at Clausen's, the Irishman's eyes flashed with a dangerous light. "The hell-hound!" he exclaimed when Schmidt's name was mentioned, "I know the beast. An' it's he would be takin' little Mina. By God, but I'll break his ugly head first, sure as I'm Denis McCarthy!"

After Denis had given vent to his wrath, he did what was not usual in Denis, he lapsed into silence for a while with his brows deeply knit, his lips pursed and thinking, as Carl continued giving him the details, with many expressions of his own bitter dissent against the way things had shaped themselves in the Spielgarten.

When Carl had finished Denis rose and, walking

over to the door of the room in which they were, carefully shut it and then coming to Carl, laying his hand upon his shoulder, said with sharp emphasis:

"Me boy, ye're no longer a Socialist."

Carl started and looked at him.

"Ye're converted, me lad," went on Denis, "from the damned nonsense." Carl stared in greater surprise than ever. "Yis, me boy, ye're a converted Socialist. It's bowl'd over ye are and clane knocked out. Arrah, but it takes a blow under the belt to jolt a man's brains into a bit of common sinse."

Carl was more than surprised by Denis' words.

"Why, Denis, are you like Herr Clausen? Have you, too, learned to repudiate Socialism?"

"Not a bit of it, me boy. I niver was a Socialist. Sure it was only an accident that shifted me into this hole. It was all along from me love of ould Oireland."

"And how was that?" asked Carl.

"Ye see, I was in London, and got into a bit of a plot wid the boys to free the ould counthry, whin I met up wid a Frinchman, who was one of us. Divil a bit of a Socialist did I suspict in him. One day he ast me to bring some papers to some of our friends in Paris. Bad cess to him, if iver I lay me hands on him!" and Denis shook his brawny fist in a way that boded ill for the Frenchman. "Well, I took the papers to Paris and whin I got there, the police took me. The papers was a whole plot in cipher showing how to assassinate the Prisident, and

me as innicent as a lamb! An' it wasn't two weeks an' I was in the Spielgarten."

"So you never were a Socialist and never believed in its doctrines?"

"No more than I believed in the English Governmint," answered Denis with emphasis. "An' I haven't thought any the more of it since I've been here; but I haven't been confidin' me notions to the public, me boy."

"Denis," said Carl, turning eagerly upon the Irishman, "what would you give to get out of this cursed hole?"

"Give!" echoed Denis, "iverything excipt me immortal soul! but it's dramin' ye are. I've dramed it mesilf sometimes, but it's only been in me sleep."

"No, Denis, I mean it in sober earnest. We must escape from this. We must get away from the Spielgarten, Mina, and her father, you and I."

Denis stared at Carl for a moment: "Sure, it's your head that's turned. Why, me boy, it's only by flyin' that ye'd iver get out o' this."

"No, I mean it with all my soul. I know the difficulties seem insurmountable. But we have strong bodies and sound heads. We are in face of a desperate situation. We must try. We cannot sit down and let this horrible fate overtake Mina," and Carl brought his clenched hand down on the table.

Denis stroked the back of his head with a perplexed air.

"We must explore the way, Denis, you and I. We

have ample opportunities in our woodcutting expeditions. We can be away for several days at a time without anyone suspecting us. We have a month's time allowed between the matrimonial decisions of the Particular Council and the Espousals for the year."

"Thrue enough," said Denis. "I'm wid ye, me boy, though it's thinkin' I am that it's a bigger job than we know."

"But we mustn't think about it, we must do," answered Carl. "You're not a man to shirk difficulties, I know. We can try, at any rate. Let us find out what is in the way before we decide. Do you know anything about the lower end of the valley? The river flows out at that end, perhaps we may find some way out there."

"The river flows into a great gorge there and beyont there's a big cataract, they say. Ye can hear the water roarin' a mile away."

"Well, can't you arrange to go to that end of the valley to explore for timber? I heard you say the other day that the largest trees in the island were at the lower end of the valley. Can't you arrange with your department of labor to cut timber there?"

"Sure an' I can," answered Denis, for Carl's urgency with the practical suggestion the latter was making had awakened his interest, even if the proposition did not appear feasible to his judgment.

"Get permission at once and lose no time. We will set out to-morrow. We will go by Herr Clau-

sen's on our way down and acquaint him with our plan."

"Well, no harm can come of thryin'. If there's any way of batin' the divil, and sure it's batin' him to get out o' this, I'm wid ye, me lad.

"And to save little Mina," continued Denis, "begorra, I'd climb the mountain, fight the sojers there and swim the whole ocean beyont."

And as he spoke, Denis grasped Carl's hand with a warm and sympathetic clasp.

CHAPTER IX

LITTLE sleep came to Carl that night. His brain was in a whirl. He imagined a thousand wild devices to escape from the Spielgarten, all equally vain and inconclusive. He was in a feverish anxiety to be up and doing.

With the first ray of light, he arose and went to McCarthy's room and eagerly aroused the Irishman, who, not being a distressed lover, had not tossed restlessly the night through, but slept soundly, as was his wont. Denis stared blankly at first at being so peremptorily awakened, but soon gathering his sleepy wits, responded with alacrity.

After breakfast the Irishman went to the office of the superintendent of the lumber department to arrange for permission to prospect the southern end of the valley on the plea of getting larger trees there than his wood-cutting corps had been securing of late at the upper end. There was little difficulty in getting the necessary permission, as there could be no possible suspicion in such an expedition, which Denis had often before undertaken.

It was well towards seven o'clock when he and

Carl set forth. The sun had not yet risen above the mountains along the eastern edge of the Spielgarten, and their shadows fell across the valley. To Carl the whole scene wore a sinister aspect. Nature seemed to threaten and the Spielgarten had come to be a horrible prison house. How different it all seemed now in contrast with those happy days when he first came into the valley to that large liberty, as he thought, which was only to be found in a community where Socialism flourished and where mankind was enfranchised from the shackles of the hated conventions of the outer world.

Marxville was scarce astir, and they met but few people as they traversed its streets on their way to Clausen's house. When they arrived there, they found that Mina and her father had passed an anxious night. Clausen seemed to have aged suddenly, and Mina looked pale and worn. Carl and Denis only stopped long enough to communicate their plan of exploring the southern end of the valley, which did not seem to hearten Clausen very much, who entertained little hope, he told them, of ever getting out of the Spielgarten. But Carl was eager and so he and Denis pushed on, following the road along the river.

It was noon when they arrived at the narrow gorge into which the stream embouched in a swift and foaming rapid. They could hear the roar of a distant cataract booming through the precipitous cliffs that rose above the rushing waters. On either

side the steep hills rose abrupt and dense with heavy timber. It was not a prospect to hearten them. It was all new ground to Denis who surveyed the scene in silence. Even his wonted light-heartedness grew heavy-winged. Any egress by way of the stream was clearly impossible. To scale those towering and unknown heights was a task to appall the sturdiest and beyond these the ocean itself!

"Me lad," said Denis, "I'm thinkin' it's a balloon we nade."

"If we only had a balloon!" ejaculated Carl, as he gazed upward at the sharply defined mountain range towering above.

"But we haven't," retorted Denis, "so let's be pushin' on a bit, though it's a tough job, I'm thinkin'."

"Let's first take a look at the river," suggested Carl, "as it goes into the gorge. There may be a chance——"

"Divil a chanct," interrupted Denis, "but looking will work no harm, sure."

They turned to the river bank. The waters rushed headlong by them, here and there breaking into foam over hidden rocks. Carl was eager to push on, Denis reluctant, asserting that they could not proceed for any distance, and it was impracticable to waste time in seeking further in a direction which obviously could not be pursued. Carl, however, insisted, and started forward along a narrow ledge jutting out from the constantly increasing pre-

cipitousness of the bank. Denis followed with many exhortations to be cautious.

In this way they advanced some hundred yards, flattening themselves closely to the steep sides while the ledge narrowed to a footing scarcely twelve inches wide. Just beyond them the ledge turned, hiding further view.

Carl, eager to see beyond the bend ahead, flattened his body still more against the cliff, and edged onward, unheeding Denis' querulous admonition to be careful. Suddenly he felt the ledge crumbling beneath his precarious footing, and with Denis' startled outcry ringing in his ears, realized that he was falling. With a desperate effort he grasped at a shrub, which stayed him for an instant only, and then he found himself plunged into the boiling waters and swept onward with the impetuous current.

Denis stood shrinking back against the cliff and gazing in impotent agony as he saw Carl swirled onward and out of sight. Great beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead. In sudden terror he shouted, "Carl! Carl!" as if in some way he might assist his friend, thus abruptly swallowed up before his very eyes in the sinister flood below. He could not advance a step farther, as the treacherous ledge on which Carl had just been standing had broken away. But Denis was not the man to wait irresolutely when occasion demanded action.

Carefully and swiftly as was consistent with his

cramped position, he pushed back along the ledge to where the nature of the bank admitted an ascent and climbed to the top, hurrying desperately through the dense undergrowth until he came to a point where, after much labor and delay, he could survey the river beyond the point where Carl had fallen, in the slender hope of perhaps seeing Carl clinging to some rock above the surface or to some chance projection from the shore.

But the banks on both sides rose sheer and, although there were here and there rocks above the stream, Carl was nowhere visible. Denis called again and again, but his voice went unanswered, save for the deep roar of the distant cataract, as if in mockery of his now despairing solicitude.

"O Carl, Carl, why didn't you hade me," wailed Denis, as he gazed helplessly down on the boiling current. "O Mother of God, and the blessed saints help him! Sure it was I that warned him. Wurra, wurra, what in the wurruld will I do?" and Denis fairly broke down, sobbing like a child.

Plainly there was little hope for Carl in that raging torrent below, and Denis shuddered as he thought of the cataract whose roar resounded so ominously near. Rousing himself, he climbed still higher up the edge of the gorge, but the higher he ascended, the farther below lay the river and the less prospect there was of a possibility of seeing anything in the growing depth beneath.

After a vain hour spent in the attempt, and in his

heart he felt it a hopeless effort, Denis turned sadly back and sought his way downward, revolving dejectedly in his mind how he was to break the news of the horrible disaster to Mina and her father.

He had become deeply attached to Carl, but he felt that his own grief, strong as it was, would be as nothing in comparison with that of the young girl who had given her maiden love to Carl, and he shrank from the hard task of telling her of Carl's death. After a three-hours' steady trudge up the valley, he reached Clausen's house. As he drew near an appalling dread settled down upon him. How was he to break the news? He would tell Clausen and let him tell Mina. He stood irresolute for a moment at the gate, with a desperate inclination to turn back and go on to the town, but, gathering himself together, he finally went up the little path lined with flowers, which seemed to mock his grief, and knocked at the door. To his intense relief, it was opened by Clausen himself.

"Denis!" exclaimed Clausen in surprise. "Are you back so soon? I thought——" He stopped abruptly, reading trouble in the Irishman's face. "What is it, man?" Clausen went on. "What is it?" and he grasped Denis' arm abruptly.

"Where's Mina? I can't—it's you'll have to tell her. Carl's——" and he stopped, looking into Clausen's eyes significantly.

"What has happened?"

"Come out into the road with me," and Denis,

fearful that Mina might be nearby, drew Clausen to the gate and hurriedly narrated the events of the day. Clausen was greatly shaken at the news and Denis, whose spirit seemed to be completely broken by the disaster, bade Clausen a hurried and disconsolate good-bye, and hastened to Marxville to report the death of Carl for the public record.

Here was a sad ending to a deep attachment, which the advent of Carl some few months ago had brought to these three souls in the Spielgarten. Clausen, who had been shaken to the depths of his being by the threatened espousal of Mina to Herr Schmidt, as decreed by the Particular Council, felt the blow all the more keenly.

How was he to break the sad news to Mina? As he left Denis and took his way back to the house, his thoughts were bitter. Though he had long ago realized the perverse fate that had set him down in this narrow prison house, it was only now that he fully felt the crushing force of the iron hand which held him impotent in its relentless grasp.

CHAPTER X

CARL'S loss completely prostrated Mina. As long as Carl was alive and by her side, she felt that there would be some way of escape from the horrible possibility of the espousals with Herr Schmidt. Carl's sanguine temperament, which could never be brought to admit as possible what he refused to accept, had been a prop to her hopes and inclinations. But now, bereft of his sympathy and presence, she pined and drooped under the grief of his loss with the dreadful prospect of the hated marriage with Herr Schmidt.

Denis, who came over frequently to confer with her father, had little consolation to offer. A deep gloom had settled upon the spirits of both men. They realized only too well the desperate nature of the situation.

In the early years of the settlement there had been a sharp conflict over the question of marriage and the family. The first colonists had been divided in sentiment; some had advocated free choice in marriage and a continuance of the family life, as they had known it in the world beyond the Spielgarten.

But the more ardent and, indeed, the more consistent Socialists had vigorously opposed it as an institution of the capitalist's world, the very rock and basis of individualism.

They urged first of all that free choice was essentially individualistic, an indiscriminate and selfish seeking without regard to the common weal. To allow it would be to foster an institution entirely inconsistent with the idea of the collective good at which Socialism aimed. The whim or caprice of individual citizens must give way to the general welfare. The individual, led by his likes and dislikes, was not capable of determining the supreme good of the State.

Therefore, the marital relation must necessarily fall under the full control of the State, whose wisdom would select and direct the citizen in that most important office upon which the future of the common weal depended. That relation once entered into under the direction of the State, it followed that its regulation and control should be just as vigilantly exercised by the State itself.

The family, if allowed to continue as a unit, as in that older civilization which Socialism in the Spielgarten had discarded and supplemented, would naturally engender individualistic forces antagonistic to the Socialist policy. Family life naturally begot strong and selfish affections. The love of the parent for the child, and the child for the parent was purely individualistic and led of necessity to a

desire for property, the very basis of the individualistic State. To conserve the family would be more than dangerous to the Socialist ideal; it would, in fact, be a contradiction in terms and absolutely incompatible with the fundamental tenet of Socialism.

In the Spielgarten the logic of the situation rapidly developed and a practical conclusion was quickly come to, namely, the entire control and regulation of the marital relation by the State. One temporary concession was tolerated, namely, the continuance of the family for those who had entered upon it prior to the adoption of the new law some twenty years after the foundation of the colony.

By the time of Carl's advent the new regulation had been in force for many years. Children, as soon as born, were taken from their mothers and cared for under State supervision. Two large houses, one in Marxville, the other at the lower end of the valley, had been erected for this purpose.

The children, as soon as born, were confided to a corps of women called State Mothers, chosen usually from those who had themselves proved childless, or were too old to bear children. When a woman had been mated two years without issue, she was never re-mated, but placed among the State Mothers.

Clausen had been among those who had at first opposed this policy, but, recognizing the futility of further opposition, he yielded to a logic which was inevitable when once the premise of Socialism was

admitted. He himself had embraced Socialism on economic and political grounds, thinking to find in it a way out of what seemed to him intolerable conditions in the lot of the masses.

When he was brought face to face with the practical results of the Socialist creed,—and, indeed, he could see no escape from the conclusion—he recoiled before the ghastly consequences. He was thankful for the compromise effected for the time being in favor of those original colonists who had established families before the adoption of the new law, for it was only by virtue of this arrangement that he was allowed to retain Mina and rear her in his own keeping.

Now the blow which he had so long dreaded had at last fallen. Mina was to be taken from him and mated to Herr Schmidt by order of the Particular Council, from whose decree there was no appeal.

It was Friday and the tenth day after the loss of Carl in the river. Denis had come over from Marxville with the news that preparations were being made in the town for the ceremony of mating on the Monday following. That morning he had met Herr Schmidt, who had informed him that the Particular Council had decided to advance the date of the ceremony two weeks ahead of the time originally arranged. Herr Schmidt had not told Denis the reason for the change, but Denis had shrewdly guessed that the advancement of the time had been concerted in some way by Herr Schmidt himself,

whose voice was potent in the deliberations of the Council.

Denis, whose dislike of Schmidt had now grown to a vigorous loathing, had not been slow to pour the vials of his wrath upon Schmidt's head, accusing him of subterfuge in bringing about the selection of Mina for himself. Schmidt's face darkened as the angry Irishman turned upon him and damned him vigorously.

"You shall smart for this, Herr McCarthy," he snarled savagely, and without further reply turned curtly away.

"By God," ejaculated Denis, as he narrated the incident to Clausen, "in another moment I'd have wrung the dirty spalpeen's neck. May the divil take him for the blackguard he is."

Clausen's brow darkened when he heard the news. He clenched his hands in a bitter rage, but felt himself impotent. Denis placed his hands on Clausen's shoulders, looking him square in the eyes, his own burning with a fierce light, and said with deadly significance: "Herr Clausen, rest aisy for yourself. Mina shall never go to that baste. I'll kill him first."

"What good would that do, Denis?" groaned the anguished father. "The same fate would befall Mina in the end, with someone else selected by the Particular Council, and you would go to the house of Euthanasia."

"Divil a bit would I," retorted Denis, "while

there's a bit of fight left in me little finger. Kill they might, and kill me they must, if it's dying at all, but no Euthanasy for Denis McCarthy, as long as he's alive with a head on his shoulders and two good arms."

"No, no, Denis; violence is of no avail. We are in the cruel jaws of a malign fate. Those mountains are the walls of our prison and there is no escape."

"Just let me get in a row with Schmidt. It won't be murther, just a clane dacent fight, wid a dead man at the end of it, and that won't be Denis McCarthy."

Clausen could not help smiling in spite of his own dejection at the Irishman's ethical disposition of Herr Schmidt.

"No, Denis," he reiterated, "violence will do no good. I would not for an instant suffer you to jeopardize yourself in such a way. Killing, except by sheer accident, has no extenuation in the code of the Spielgarten. Our course does not lie that way; though what way, I don't know, I don't know," he ended, with a despairing break in his voice. "There is but one thing I can think of now and that is to temporize, if possible, by trying to get the Particular Council to rescind its action in advancing the ceremony and have it put back to the time originally set."

"T'will all be the same in the end," urged Denis, "with Schmidt, the blackguard, crushing little Mina like the big ugly spider he is. Bad cess to him, but

I'd like to get me hand around his windpipe just onct!" And Denis reached out his big arm and gripped the imaginary throat of Herr Schmidt.

"I'll make a petition to the Particular Council," said Clausen, "to defer the mating. Perhaps something may turn up in the meantime, God help us!"

"There is but one thing, Clausen," answered Denis, "to relieve the prisent situation, and that is Herr Schmidt nately removed. An' I'm the boy to do it, not by murtherin' him, the Saints forbid! but by disposin' of him in a straight fight. As for mesilf, I'm done with the whole damned institution! I've been tin years in this hathen hole and that not of me own seeking, and I've a long score to settle. And as there's no gettin' out, I'd as lave make one good straight drive of it an' go down shoutin' wid some damage to the inimy. It's the divil's own bailiwick, your damned Socialism, where a man's soul isn't his own and everybody no betther than a black nigger wurkin' for the State. To hell wid it all, says I! An' it's quittin' I am at last. One good hour of rale freedom, when a man's himself for onct, is worth a thousand years of this hathenism that even the Turk would be ashamed of. No, Clausen, you needn't say a word. You know it yoursel'. I've been thinkin' hard over it this long time, and I've seen this divil's grind here for tin years, and I'm goin' to end it for mesel'. The next time I meet him I'll slap his dirty face. He's a fighter, and then I'll

get me chanct. When the others come afther me, there'll be some of them to the bad before Denis McCarthy. I'm a rebel, and I intend to be a free man for this onct anyway!"

Denis spoke with an impassioned vehemence, and at a length which Clausen had never before heard him indulge. It was the ebullition of ten years of gathering wrath, which had been simmering in the Irishman's heart ever since he had been thrust into the Spielgarten.

By race and creed, Socialism was repugnant to him, and it was the very irony of fate that made him its enforced victim. He had endured its iron system with secret loathing, but with an Irishman's ready adaptability and good nature had made the best of a bad bargain, and carefully concealed his true sentiments.

Mina's impending fate was the first instance which had completely struck home to his strong and generous nature. He had known her as a child and he had conceived a strong affection for her. To see her brought to the level of a Circassian slave, and mated to a man like Schmidt was too much for his chivalric temperament.

The system under which he had been forced to live for the past ten years he might have tolerated indefinitely, provided there was no hope of escape from it. But when it reached the point where it was about to enmesh in its loathsome toils a woman whom he both respected and loved from childhood

as a father, his whole nature rose in reckless rebellion.

It was in vain that Clausen expostulated with him. The Irishman's mind was fixed. In vain did Clausen urge upon him the inevitable result of his rashness, certain death in the end. Denis' reply was, that at least he would die with his boots on, and that there was a heap of consolation in that, for "Euthanasy was not at all to his likin'."

CHAPTER XI

WHEN Carl was precipitated into the turbulent stream below by the breaking of the ledge under his feet, he felt himself seized by the whirling waters and rapidly borne onward. Confused and gasping, for the first moment he was conscious only of a roaring in his ears and a patch of blue sky above. With the instinct of self-preservation at the moment of peril, he reached out desperately for the side of the cliff, which rose precipitously out of the water, in the hope of catching some shrub or branch or jutting rock. But the cliff was bare of all vegetation and his hands slid over a wet and slippery surface.

Gathering his scattered senses, he endeavored to take some cognizance of his situation as he was rapidly whirled away. He soon realized that he was powerless to beat up against the current, which was both deep and strong.

He found that he was being borne out from the shore towards the middle of the stream, and, realizing that his only chance to stay his onward course was some possible projection from the cliff which he

might grasp, he struck out with all his strength towards the shore and managed to keep within a few feet of the face of the overhanging walls. Twice he felt his body strike some hidden projection beneath the surface, but before he could even make an effort to cling to it with his legs, he found himself swept past.

The roar of the cataract beyond was growing ominously louder, and he was keenly aware that his progress was becoming swifter and swifter with an evidently accelerated current. Higher and higher rose the stony walls on either side; and he was growing spent with his efforts. Suddenly he noticed a projecting ledge some forty feet before him. With a desperate effort he struck out, hand over hand, lifting his body as high above the current as he could, and just grasped it, but it was slippery and covered with a wet moss to which he clung with desperate fingers. The respite was only momentary. In spite of his tenacious grip he was hurled away again, and, yielding to exhaustion, resigned himself to the resistless grasp of the waters.

Turning on his back, he abated his efforts to merely keeping afloat, gasping for breath. In this position he must have been borne on some two hundred feet, when he noticed that he was floating rapidly out from the shore. He was almost too spent to care and could only wonder at it. He saw the sky above very blue and very far away. The sound of the cataract boomed heavily in his ears; it was all

over and he only wished that it might end quickly.

Then he became half-conscious that his direction had changed; he was now being swept in towards the shore. Yes, he evidently was, for suddenly the great cliff loomed over him and he found himself floating in the direction opposite to the current. Turning on his stomach again, he saw that he had been swung inward on a rapid eddy, formed by a great curve in the precipitous banks. At the innermost edge his eyes confusedly caught a low ledge, back of which was an opening into the face of the cliff.

Exhausted as he was, he gathered a desperate courage and, striking out with hysteric energy, kept himself as close as possible to the cliff. He was now within a few feet only of the ledge whose top was no more than a foot above the surface of the stream. As he came to it, with a last effort he threw both arms over it and clung to it with all the tenacity of despair, but his body felt like lead.

How was he to raise himself up on it? For there was neither crack nor roughness, which his fingers might clutch. Struggling with the last ounce of energy he possessed, and only as a man can whose safety depends upon a single chance, he grasped the rock with his elbows and forearms, and, leaning to the right side, slowly and painfully lifted his left leg out of the water and succeeded at last in getting it on top of the ledge. With his leg as a lever he managed to drag his body up, gasping and faint-

ing, and then rolled over and lost consciousness.

When Carl recovered from his swoon, in which he must have lain for an hour at least, he felt chilled and weak. His clothes were still wet and he had had no food since morning. It was then, from the position of the sun, as nearly as he could guess, about three o'clock in the afternoon. At first he gazed about him with lassitude from his weakness. After a time he roused to a realization of his perilous situation. Before him swirled the great eddy, with its sinister green waters, and out beyond it the main body of the stream swept on like a mill-race, and nearer than ever the roar of the cataract thundered in his ears.

Sheer above rose the cliff, a thousand feet or more, clearly impossible to scale. Within two feet of where he lay—for he had not yet attempted to rise—trickled a little stream over the ledge into the river. It flowed from an opening some four feet in diameter in the face of the cliff. He noted also a current of air coming from the opening.

He was still somewhat bewildered. His exhaustion, the sense of imminent peril, from which he seemed to have been miraculously snatched, still weighed upon him. Suddenly it occurred to him that in his pocket was some food for luncheon, which he had placed there when he had set out in the morning. With avidity he plunged his hand in and drew out two sandwiches, sodden with water. These he devoured eagerly, in spite of their soggy condi-

tion. It gave him strength, and with strength his courage was rekindled.

Perilous as was his position, there was yet hope, he thought, seeing how marvelously he had been saved from the cataract. Fortified with this thought, he arose to his feet and surveyed his surroundings with a clearer brain. In front of him the river meant certain death; back of him rose the cliff, a sheer wall, which would require wings to surmount. But the opening in the cliff! He approached it. A draft of damp air was plainly issuing from it. Did not this argue that there must be some opening beyond? Either river or cliff was impossible. There was but one way, the hazard of the opening in the cliff.

Carl approached the opening with the sensation of a man who was about to plunge into the unknown, as indeed he was, for there could be but one of two issues to his enterprise; either he must helplessly perish of starvation on this barren ledge, or find a way out of his present certain death by the way of the passage before him. Stooping to his hands and knees, he entered and slowly groped his way forward, his hope justified by the fact that he felt the draught of air blowing steadily against him, as he made his way painfully. In a short time the glimmer of light coming from the entrance disappeared, and he was in total darkness.

Feeling up along the damp wall, he now discovered that the roof of the passage was high enough

to enable him to stand upright. The current of air still blew against him. Relieved from the stooping posture, he pushed on with extreme caution, slowly feeling his way along the wall. He could hear the stream running quietly along the floor of the cave a few feet away.

Once, with a sudden shock, he slid into a pool of water some three feet deep. Recovered from this, he painfully pursued his necessarily slow way, groping, as he was in a darkness worse than that of blindness, for his open eyes were painfully strained in a vain effort to see.

After what appeared to him a half hour of this tedious passage, he was brought to a sudden halt by a wall immediately in front of him, and seemingly barring all further progress. Was it, after all, only a blind passage into which he had come? The thought staggered him. If so, there was the sole alternative of returning to the ledge by the river and slowly starving to death there.

He stood for a moment, his knees faint under him, as hope seemed to die out of his heart. He noticed that the current of air, which up to then had blown steadily in his face, was now upon his left side. He must have come to a sharp angled turn in the passage. Facing around to his left, which put the wall he had so abruptly met on his right hand, he resumed his onward way, his heart beating violently, with the dreadful fear that perhaps he would in another minute meet with a second barrier; but

nothing intervened for several hundred yards, when he noticed that the floor of the passage inclined upward with a sharp rise, so much so as to make the ascent laborious. But what kindled his hope further, was that the draught was here plainly stronger than he had yet felt it.

Sometimes he stumbled and fell over loose rocks, bruising himself and cutting both hands and knees. After his last fall, he lay prone for a time, utterly spent. Rising to a sitting posture, he held his throbbing head in his hands, trying to think clearly, for the tension of groping blindly on in utter darkness, and the oppressive silence, were beginning to confuse him. For a moment, he seemed to lose consciousness. Rousing himself with an effort, he staggered to his feet and pressed on against the draught, which was his only clue in what had now become to him almost a living tomb.

He had only one thought left, that of a dogged persistance. He must go on whatever happened. The sense of extreme caution with which he had heretofore slowly groped along gave way to an impetuous recklessness. Go on he must, go on he would; fight his way out of this darkness and rid himself of the horrible weight that seemed to be holding him down as if the mountain above were closing in upon him. With hands outstretched against the wall on the right side, he trudged on at a faster pace than he had yet taken. Fortunately, there were fewer stones in his path, and he escaped

without a fall for the next quarter of an hour. Then the floor took an abrupt decline, almost throwing him from his feet, and then as sudden an ascent for a few paces.

Here the wall, by which he was guiding himself, drew sharply away to the right and a sense of being in a wider expanse took instantaneous possession of him. It seemed to him as if he had come out of a narrow passage into a wide cavern. Reaching down, he took up as small a stone as he could find and threw it from him with sufficient force to go ordinarily some twenty feet. He waited a tense moment, and then heard it plunge heavily into water, and immediately a volley of replicated echoes on every side startled him. Evidently he was in a cavern of some dimensions. He threw a second and a larger stone with the same result. The echoes of its plunge reverberated with a thunderous exaggeration. After the clamorous noise had died away, Carl stood irresolute.

The plunging sound of the stone seemed ominous, as if in deep water and this immediately in front of him. Instinctively he drew closer to the wall and continuously felt his way along its line with outstretched arms and back flattened against it and his feet projected sideways to feel his footing. Slowly he thus crept on, sliding one foot after another.

He seemed to be on an inclined edge whose slope made his foothold perilously insecure. He no longer felt the air-current which had given him a clue here-

tofore as to direction. In this more spacious chamber such as he now surmised he had entered, the current seemed lost, whereas the narrow tunnel which he had recently traversed made a funnel for the downward suction of the air current to its exit by the river's ledge.

An inlet there must be somewhere, or there could be no flow outward. Was he taking the proper direction? Was the way to the right or to the left? He had chosen the right side without reflection. It was a blind chance. Perhaps he had wandered into a subterranean labyrinth with many ramifications, but with only one possible exit. All this passed through his purturbed mind, as he crept sideways along the wall in the direction he had thus chosen, at a mere hazard.

Inch by inch he made his way for what seemed to him an interminable distance, surmising as he went that he was making a circuit from the fact that the wall at his back against which he lay as flat as he could, seemed curved. Finally, after almost a half hour's painful progress, he reached with his outstretched right arm an opening out of which, to his inexpressible joy, he felt again a current of air flowing inward. Buoyed up by the renewed hope, he plunged into it. Clearly the air was stronger and fresher than in the tunnel on the other side. He must be nearing the opening.

Once more he felt as if he were in narrower quarters. The sense of spaciousness about him had gone.

The ascent now grew steeper and he had to resort to a posture on hands and knees as he toiled upward. After an hour's laborious climbing, he rested, through sheer exhaustion. Faintly from above and beyond came a distant murmur. Pulling himself together, he resumed his toil for another half hour, upward, at times, and at times at a level, and as he went, the murmurous sound increased and gradually grew into a distant roar.

Was it the sound of the cataract? He must surely be approaching the surface. Pushing onward with desperate resolve, he at last saw a faint glimmer of light at a sudden turn of the tunnel. He staggered forward, and, though weak and faint, redoubled his almost spent powers in the rush of joy that flooded his soul at the prospect of a near release from what had seemed a living entombment. Fortunately, the floor of the tunnel at this point leveled and then gently sloped downward. The gleam of light had now visualized into a clearly defined opening. He could even dimly see his way.

As he had no longer to climb, he hastened his gait, feeble as it was, into an attempt at running, spurred by a vague sense of dread, as of something behind him in pursuit, and after a few minutes he reeled out of the mouth of the cave into the open air. He flung his arms upward in an ecstasy of joy, as if saluting the sky in worship for his escape. The landscape danced about his dazed vision. He shouted aloud incoherently and laughed in a semi-

delirium. He was saved, he was saved! Oh, it was good to draw great draughts of fresh air deep into his lungs and feel the lightness of the atmosphere about him, relieving him of the dreadful weight of the darkness of the black cavern from which he had just emerged.

He had come from the very jaws of death in its most hideous form, and, sinking down upon the earth with outstretched arms, he sobbed and sobbed until at last he passed into the deep and heavy sleep of utter exhaustion, and the shadows of night crept into the little valley upon which the cavern opened, and into which he had come.

CHAPTER XII

It was not until the sun stood high in the heavens the next morning that Carl woke from his profound slumber. He was bruised and sore and stiff, but withal, refreshed. It was some moments before he got his bearings. Then he recalled the events of the day before, his fall into the river, the eddy and the ledge under the cliff, and his horrible journey in the darkness through the cavern.

As he glanced at the ominous opening only a few feet from where he had fallen, he shivered as he recalled his struggle through the bowels of the mountain the day before. In his utter exhaustion upon emerging from the cave, he had taken no note of the surroundings. He now saw that he was in a small valley between two mountain ridges. Below him, some two hundred yards away, he saw a little stream wending its way at the bottom of the valley.

The valley was well wooded, with all the variety of trees that grew in the island. He could hear the roar of the great cataract towards the lower end, which he supposed to be that from which he had so marvelously escaped the day before. Happily just

below him he saw some banana trees laden with fruit, for the island contained many kinds of tropical fruit growing in wild profusion. Hastening to them he gathered some half dozen and devoured them eagerly, for he was desperately hungry. Refreshed by these, he descended the mountain side to the stream below and quenched his thirst in its clear, cold waters. The physical man being thus replenished, he began mentally to cast up his situation.

Back of him rose a lofty range, cutting him off from the Spielgarten. In front of him, on the other side of the stream, rose another lofty range, perhaps bordering on the sea. The stream by which he stood, flowed, no doubt, into the river beyond at no great distance, for the noise of the cataract now fairly thundered in his ears.

His first thought was to get back into the Spielgarten. He had no means of estimating how far from it he was, but, what with his journey down the stream and the time covered, as he might guess it, in his way through the cavern, he concluded that he could not be less than three miles from the Spielgarten in a direct line, but between him and it rose a mountain range, jagged and precipitous, and apparently inaccessible.

Looking up the valley, he remarked that it curved to his left, perhaps a mile beyond, in the direction of the Spielgarten. To go down the valley was clearly to go further from the Spielgarten. The only alter-

hut, and began turning over its pages, now yellow and dry.

At a glance, he saw that it was a diary in a closely written and educated hand. The first three pages, which had curled upward, were undecipherable, save for a word here and there, on account of the indistinct tracings of the pencil and the yellow color of the paper, but the fourth page was fairly clear, and as Carl turned the succeeding pages over, he saw, as they had not been exposed to the air, as the first pages had been, that the characters were plainly legible.

Notwithstanding his own precarious situation, he was devoured with a not unnatural curiosity to fathom the mystery of the dead man if the diary could throw any light upon it. The top of the fourth page began with the conclusion of a sentence, "graduated with distinction." But he could not decipher the beginning of the sentence at the bottom of the third page. He could only barely make out the words "college" and "year" and conjectured from the context that followed that the writer was stating that in a certain year in a certain college he had graduated with distinction. From this on the writing was perfectly legible and ran as follows:

"After graduation, as my father was desirous that I should follow in his footsteps in the profession of medicine, in which he himself had achieved some distinction, it was determined that I should go to Vienna the following fall to pursue my medical

studies in its famous schools, although I had no inclination in that direction. In accordance with this arrangement, I found myself in Vienna the ensuing October as a medical student. There was little eventful in my first year. Not being interested, I was not a keen student, and fell into a rather loose way of living, for which there was abundant opportunity in the capital city of the Austrian empire. Among my fellow students was a Russian who, like myself, was little inclined to devote himself seriously to the study of medicine. He was a handsome lad with a brilliant mind, and a boon-companion.

"We became fast friends, but under his levity there was a serious strain, which, strange as it was to me at first, found its channel in an ardent advocacy of Socialism. This he only revealed to me by degrees and by the middle of my second year, to make a long story short, he had completely converted me to his ideas.

"I found that he was a member of a secret Socialist organization with international ramifications. Under the influence of his persuasive eloquence, I joined the society, and with the ardor of youth flung myself whole-souled into the movement. Naturally of a daring disposition, I was always ready to undertake any perilous enterprise for the sake of the cause. A plot was devised to assassinate the Emperor. To Nicholas, my friend, fell the lot of making the attempt, and to me the task of secretly

preparing the deadly bomb with which the assassination was to be perpetrated.

"In spite of my enthusiasm for the cause of Socialism, I balked at the idea of assassination. I confided my scruples to Nicholas. I was an American, I said, to whom assassination was abhorent as a political method. He answered me by a torrent of contempt, reproaching me with cowardice and lukewarmness for the cause. The danger was his, not mine. He was to do the deed. I was only to prepare the bomb in safety.

"Now, I was an ardent believer in Socialism and thoroughly convinced of the justice of its cause. Stung by his reproaches, though still shrinking from the repugnant task, and, at the same time fully aware that I was already hopelessly complicated, and would have to render a stern account to my brother conspirators if I failed to obey the injunction laid upon me, I resolutely, though loathingly set to work to make the necessary preparations, Nicholas assisting me. A month's time was given to complete them.

"It was still lacking one week from the time set when, one day, Nicholas burst into my room, panting and agitated, fairly shouting at me: 'Flee, Lorimer, we are betrayed! There was a spy among us. Do not wait an instant, but go at once!' He rushed out as impetuously as he had entered, and I heard him go headlong down the stairs into the street below. I have never seen him since.

"Trembling violently, my first impulse was to hide

every evidence of our design that might be found in my rooms. My head was reeling and my legs shook uncontrollably under me, so nerve-racking was the shock caused by Nicholas' announcement. Snatching some incriminating papers from my desk, I hastily flung them into the stove. Seizing my hat, I started down the stairs,—my room was on the third floor—and just as I reached the second landing I heard the tramp of several men coming up from below. The hallway was dark in the rear and thither I hastened, crouching behind the jamb of the door. They passed without perceiving me. I had no doubt they were police, though they wore no uniform. After they had proceeded, I hastily descended the stairs, but as I stepped over the threshold, a heavy hand was laid upon my shoulder and I found myself arrested.

"My first impulse was to resist, but my captor was not alone. Two other men accompanied him, who also seized me. 'Resistance, you see, is useless,' he said, 'come quietly, or we'll use force. Here is a conveyance ready,' and he pointed to a carriage standing at the curb.

"I will not dwell upon the events immediately subsequent to my seizure. I was dragged to prison, and, after a week's solitary confinement, I was brought before a tribunal where I was put through a searching examination and learned that all our plans had been known to the police from the beginning. We had been betrayed by one whom we sup-

posed to be a loyal member of our brotherhood, but who was, in reality, a secret agent for the police. My case was hopeless and I confessed. My sentence was penal servitude for life in Schlectland, of which, until then, I had never heard."

Here followed a narration of Lorimer's voyage in transportation to Schlectland and his commitment to the Spielgarten. The march up the mountain with the dreadful expectation of execution, and his introduction to the Spielgarten itself; his first joy upon finding himself in a Socialist Community; then the gradual realization that everything was not up to his expectations, until at last he became disillusionized. All this was a counterpart of Carl's own experience. Carl read it with conflicting emotions; it confirmed his own experience. Continuing, he found Lorimer's story upon a phase of life in the Spielgarten, which Carl had not as yet verified, except in prospect, but against which his soul rose in protest. He read on in the faded diary:

"I came, after a year's sojourn in the Spielgarten, to a clear apprehension of the practical working of Socialism in the economic world. All capital was in the hands of the State, that is, all the tools of production were owned and operated by the State, as also the distribution of the product. The Socialist maxim, 'to every one according to his need,' is here for the first time in human history carried out in complete practice. There is no private property and the entire product is distributed equally. There is

no class distinction; there is no poverty; there is no competition; no struggle after wealth. The economic problem of the individualistic world has been leveled down to terms of the common good.

"The Socialist ideal is completely realized, but the penalty is paid in full. The individual as such has ceased to exist. He has become merely a cog in the State machine. The State admits no individualistic distinction and no individual profit. Individual initiation has disappeared. The individual is but grain ground into common grist. The consequence is the atrophy of individualism. Superior energy or capacity in the individual has no goal for its effort, and consequently, no stimulus to its excitation.

"This is strikingly and, to my mind, horribly evident in the natives of the Spielgarten who have been born and bred under this system. They have been educated from infancy in the Socialist doctrine that the State is the supreme good, that the common weal is the sole sanction of conduct; that the individual should have no thought, desire, or object other than the public welfare, of which the State is the creator and the inviolable guardian. As soon as the child is capable of learning, he is taught the Socialist catechism, whose first questions run as follows:

" 'Q. By whom were you begotten?'

" 'A. By the Sovereign State.'

" 'Q. Why were you begotten?'

" 'A. That I might know, love and serve the Sovereign State always.'

" 'Q. What is the Sovereign State?'

" 'A. The Sovereign State is Humanity in composite and perfect being.'

" 'Q. Why is the State supreme?'

" 'A. The State is supreme because it is my Creator and Conserver, in which I am and move and have my being and without which I am nothing.'

" 'Q. What is the individual?'

" 'A. The individual is only a part of the whole, and made for the whole, and finds his complete and perfect expression in the Sovereign State. Individuals are made for co-operation only, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth.'

"This is the premise which Socialism has laid down as the basis of its system, and in the Spielgarten this premise is put into practical operation. There is no escape from its conclusion. Government here has been built upon it and the result is that the individual has been completely and intentionally eliminated from its consideration. Individuals in the Spielgarten are but the cogs in the co-operative machinery of the State, the rows of the upper and lower teeth.

"It was to the realization of this inescapable machinery of absolutism that I gradually awakened in the Spielgarten. I began to appreciate the grim

irony of the sentence which had condemned me to penal servitude for life.

"When I first came into the Spielgarten I was caught up into the seventh heaven of bliss at finding myself under a Socialist regime in actual working order. Here was nature bountiful and beneficent. Man freed from the exploitation of his fellow beings; poverty unknown; struggle eliminated in the industrial order; the rivalries of greed and ambition as completely eradicated in the body politic as in the Garden of Eden. Here was peace and plenty, content and ease, the paradise of my dreams, but now at last I have come to realize that all this is at the precious price of freedom and at the costly expense of a disguised slavery.

"We in the Spielgarten have achieved material contentment and even comfort, freedom from the responsibilities, cares, and struggles of the individualistic world, by paying the supreme price of what, after all, alone constitutes manhood, the price of liberty. We have made the State our god and it has logically exacted from us the bitter sacrifice of our individuality. It has immolated us on its altar, the helpless victim of an iron creed.

"It was not at once that I arrived at this evaluation of practical Socialism. It took me a year of actual experience under its regimen before I became convinced, and that with reluctance. Indeed, I was forced to it, for I hated to acknowledge that what had once seemed to me the ideal of mankind should,

after all, be but a fool's paradise; that the fruit of the promised land was, after all, but dead sea fruit, dust and ashes in the eating.

"But the full horror of the situation was not brought home to me until after my first year in the Spielgarten. By that time I had come to understand the industrial and political servitude of Socialism in practice, which could be likened to no other human institution than slavery as it existed in the United States before the war; but it required a more intimate personal experience with its attendant suffering to awaken in me a feeling of utter and desperate rebellion against the intolerable bondage which this new phase of my existence was to make manifest. I cannot think of it now without such anguish of heart and soul that even with the hope of possible escape before me, life becomes doubly bitter.

"It was at the end of my first year that I received an order from the Particular Council to mate (the word marriage is forbidden in the Spielgarten) with a young woman by the name of Louise. There are no family names in the Spielgarten save those of the recruits or of the few surviving original colonists, for the family under a Socialist regime is non-existent.

"Here I must premise for a moment. In a community whose fundamental political principles completely sweep away all recognition of capitalism, and consequently either of ownership in the instruments

of production or of the right of disposition of the product at the will of the individual producer—for this would constitute property in the individualistic sense—it would be fatal to tolerate an institution which could foster the instinct of mine as counter-distinct from thine. Under Socialism there is but one absolute right, that of the State, of the Collective Right. As against this supreme and sovereign good embodied in the State, there can be no right—or claim on the part of the individual, or any group of individuals. The moral basis of Socialism centers in this conception of the State as the absolute and supreme good of all.

"The founders of the Socialist State in the Spielgarten laid down this principle as their fundamental law. It is the centre of their Solar System, about which everything else must revolve. They had come from a civilization founded on individualism, which they called barbarism, and they had learned that the two great obstacles in the way of the realization of Socialism were the institution of Religion and the institution of the Family.

"Socialism could never come to a practical operation among men until Religion and the Family were eradicated. Religion taught that the supreme relation of the individual was to a personal God; this was supreme individualism, making the individual of an eternal importance and worth. Religion, furthermore, postulated a life beyond the grave where the evils of this life were to be adjusted in the bal-

ance of an eternal justice. Under this delusion—I am speaking the language of Socialism—men are easily reconciled to the evils of this world in the hope of beatitude in another. Under such a conception of the universe men readily accept and endure the evils of life as a part of the divine scheme—nay, are taught to accept them in the assurance of a future remedy in a life to come and are, therefore, proof against that radical discontent which Socialism must arouse in them before it can bring home to them the realization of its own panacea; for all the foul injustices which find their sole source in the inequality of conditions are rooted in and fostered by individualistic institutions.

"Redemption in a life hereafter can, therefore, have no part in Socialism. Social redemption, that is, the total submergence of the individual in the welfare of the whole, is the only religion compatible with practical Socialism. The State, therefore, becomes the object of worship, as is evident by my citations from the catechism of the Spielgarten. In the individualistic system the Family is the unit or nucleus of civilization. From it springs the instinct of private property. It can, therefore, have no place in the Spielgarten.

"In devising this plan of government the founders cut out the Family—root and branch. Family affection would naturally carry with it the desire of providing primarily for one's own, a capital crime in the eyes of Socialism. The love of husband and wife, of parent for child and child for parent, the most

indomitable in nature, would first seek the welfare of those to whom it was bound by a special tie and so create a radical antagonism to the collective good as conceived by the Socialist State.

"The propagation of the race must, therefore, be provided by other means than the selfish institution of marriage. Free love was out of the question as it would lead to social disorder without control or direction and, moreover, have an individualistic basis in the matter of choice. There was but one plan which could be carried on with due order and under proper control, and that was of mating its citizens for a stated period under the direction and supervision of the State authorities.

"In the Spielgarten the Particular Council is entrusted with this duty. Under its direction men and women are mated for a stipulated period of two years and their offspring, as soon as born, taken over by the State and reared in the House of Infancy, under the common charge. The mother, when the time comes for the birth of the child, is taken to the House of Maternity for her confinement and never sees her babe. Neither father nor mother know their own children in the Spielgarten.

"Children are given no family name and never know their own parents. In this way the family relation is absolutely eradicated. The temporary character of the mating period also conduces to check the growth of any permanent affection between the mothers and the fathers.

"It was under this arrangement that I was mated

with Louise, who was born in the Spielgarten and had never known her own parents. I was at first indifferent to the arrangement, accepting the situation as a matter of course, under the enforced circumstances in which I found myself. I had for some time before this event come to realize that I was in a condition of servitude from which there was no way of escape. I simply obeyed—there was no help for it—the mandate of the Particular Council.

"It was not long, however, before I came to the realization of a new horror in my life. Not only was I in servitude, but I found that I had entered upon a new relation which, in the end, was to plunge me into an abyss of cruelty and suffering. I found, after a time, that I had grown to love Louise with an affection which possessed my whole being, and she in turn reciprocated my love. I loved her not as a lover might his mistress, but with that profound devotion which a man bears for his wife, that we were two in one flesh. At the same time, I wakened to the horrible realization that the bond could only be temporary, and that we must, in a short time, be separated.

"The thought was torture, and I cursed the fate that had brought this new and terrible affliction upon me. Educated in the Spielgarten, Louise had no conception of any other ideal in life than what she had been taught under its system, complete subservience to the State, for the fulfilment of its design, and this had been the dominant note of her education.

"The outside world she only knew as its history was rehearsed through Socialist eyes in which individualism stood for barbarism. Its story was the wretched record of the cunning and greed of the few, who had devised institutions simply to exploit and keep the many in iniquitous subjection to their masters. Under the influence of this idea her mind and character had been moulded, and I found her as I had all the other natives, acquiescent in this child-like and ignorant conception.

"She accepted things as they were without question and the events of life as they occurred as a matter of course in an established and perfected order like the sequence of day and night. Whatever the allotted task, it was accepted without demur; whatever the mandate of the State, it was accepted and obeyed implicitly. In short the native, under the Socialist system in the Spielgarten, is fashioned into an automaton; servitude is his unquestioning habit, the result of a system of education devised to eliminate all individualistic tendencies.

"This I never would have admitted before my coming into the Spielgarten, but I have now seen it demonstrated and practised under my very eyes, and, going over the ground reflectively in my mind, I now perceive that it is simply the logical outcome of the system. As a Socialist, I would have indignantly repudiated this as a forecast of the workings of Socialism. But what I have actually experienced in the Spielgarten, and what I have come to

know in the concrete, is its inevitable operation.

"When I now reflect I recall how evasive Socialist literature and Socialist arguments were in regard to its practical workings. Indeed, the stress of all Socialist pleading is laid upon the existing evils of capitalism and individualism with the assertive prophecy of their remedy by the adoption of Socialism; but when it comes to an explicit exposition of its actual operation in detail, Socialism evaporates into a vague outline of a paradisial condition in the dim future.

"It makes a tremendous promise, but elusively refuses to limn the picture in its fulfilment. The truth is, Socialist writers dare not trace the plan of their scheme to its logical conclusion for two decided reasons. In the first place, the natural individualism of mankind would revolt at the picture of the result; in the second, the conclusion would be in such startling contradiction to the Socialist ideal that the Socialist would find himself hoist by his own petard and this for the reason that the average Socialist, i.e., the Socialist who is not a leader, entertains an ideal in direct contravention of the logical outcome of his creed. The ordinary Socialist—I am here speaking of the rank and file—in which I once included myself—allies himself with the Socialist movement not because he is really a collectivist, but because he is an extreme individualist.

"What he covets is absolute freedom, and he imagines that the way to it is by substituting for the

institution of capitalism, which he regards as the tyranny of a class, the ownership of all capital by the State, which he has come to regard as an institution of which he will be one of the proprietors. He fancies that in this way he would immediately achieve ownership and, therefore, free himself from the necessity of serving another and so become a freeman, which in his mind is emancipation from the tyranny of capitalism. Whereas, the bitter fact is that in making this exchange he not only surrenders his individualism, but absolutely eliminates his only possibility of ever becoming an owner at all, for the common proprietorship of all capital by the State means the particular servitude of every citizen. He, as an instrument of production, is owned just as much by the State as any other tool. Liberty in the economic sense means the individual right to become a possessor of property, and if this opportunity be absolutely withheld from individual achievement, as it necessarily is under Socialism, the citizen faces the inevitable consequence of always remaining a simple worker in the service of the State, the sole proprietor.

"It is this delusion, like the mirage in the desert, that lures the rank and file of Socialists to an acceptance of its doctrine. They embrace Socialism under the false supposition that it leads to an easy freedom from service to another. They rail at capitalism as a system of economic slavery, little realizing that the practical outcome of the Social-

ist scheme, not only imposes upon them a system of helotry worse than capitalism ever devised, a condition of servitude which has its only parallel in the slave system of the ancient world. More than this and worse than this, they utterly fail to realize that with this economic servitude there comes an utter degradation of the sexual relation between man and woman in the entire extinction of the family.

"It is with this latter phase of Socialism that I am now most concerned, for it has branded itself like a burning iron into my heart and soul.

CHAPTER XIII

"When Louise first came to me, she had all the limitations of a native of the Spielgarten, but I soon discovered that she was a woman of good mental qualities, with quick apprehension, ready imagination and a profound sympathy, added to which was a depth of sweetness of character that awakened my surprise and bound me in ardent devotion. She had never been really developed. She was like a bird which had been always confined in a cage and had never been able to try its wings. By degrees I awakened her broader intelligence and quickened her sympathies and her character. She expanded and grew surprisingly under the influence which I was able to bring to bear, from my experience in the outer world.

"I told her of that outer world and that larger life of humanity beyond the narrow limits of the Spielgarten, its hopes, its struggles, its ambition, all that mankind had suffered and achieved in the course of the ages in its endeavor to establish liberty in order and in justice.

"We became, indeed, two in one flesh and in one

mind, so indissolubly bound that to be parted seemed to be worse than death. The time arrived when she was to give birth to her child. She was taken to the House of Maternity and when she returned to me there was a deeper and tenderer yearning in her eyes than I had ever seen before.

"She had become a mother, but she had never seen her babe. She threw herself into my arms and sobbed as if her heart were breaking. 'O Robert, my baby, my baby,' she sobbed convulsively. 'They took it from me; I cried out for it and begged them to let me hold it, even for a little moment, but they would not, they would not.'

"And as I held her in my arms the agony of her grief shook her frame and pierced my own heart like a red hot steel. I tried to soothe and console her—how impotent my words!—but in my soul was a dumb rage. I cursed the Moloch of Socialism. Had I only the power to smash this idol of hell and topple it over once for all, this foul monster which feeds on the hearts and souls of the men and women of the Spielgarten! What a colossal irony of fate! Humanity in the Spielgarten has built up a system of government in its own name which has devoured its very heart and soul, leaving but a painted semblance, an empty husk of itself.

"In time a second child was born to her, but Louise never returned to me from the House of Maternity; she died in child-birth, though the infant survived, and, as was the custom, was taken to

the House of Infancy to be reared. In the Spielgarten are my two children, whom I have never even seen and will never know.

"For a time after Louise's death, I was like a man stricken. A heavy apathy seized upon me. I went about my appointed tasks as if in a dream. I walked about among shadows and cared nothing.

"In due course, nature reasserted herself and life again flowed normally through my veins, but a hardened grief and a grim hopelessness had fixed themselves in my very marrow.

"It was not long, just three months after Louise's death, before a second order came from the Particular Council to mate again. When I received it, I felt my blood surge furiously. I threw the order on the ground and stamped it into the earth, and swore in my heart that come what would, I would defy it. It was sheer madness, I knew, but such a loathing had risen in me at the bare thought, such a revulsion at the outrage upon my love for Louise, at being thus brought to the level of the mere brute, that I rebelled in every fibre of my being. To refuse was treason in the code of the Spielgarten and meant death, but I determined that if I was to die—and for what had I to live?—I would not die tamely, I would die fighting. Then a wild idea flashed upon me—escape! But how hopeless that seemed!

"Between me and the outer world lay those grim mountain ranges and beyond these the vast ocean. To attempt to get out by the way of the pass that I

had entered meant certain death. Still, if it came to the last resort, why not? Better death that way than by execution in the Spielgarten. How I had begun to hate the very name of Socialism! Come what might, I resolved that I would not die by the fiat of the Socialist State.

"A month, as was the custom, was to intervene between the order of the Particular Council and the ceremony of mating. This gave me breathing time to consider. The more I pondered, the more to my liking seemed the plan of braving an escape by way of the mountains. There was the element of adventure in it, and though it seemed eventually futile, might not there be a bare chance, after all? At any rate, I was desperately resolved to defy the order.

"When a young man I had made several trips into the mountain region of the western United States and had there gained some little experience in mountain climbing and learned something of mountain topography. I immediately began studying the lay of the mountains surrounding the Spielgarten. To the south flowed the river, making its exit through a lofty gorge, whence it was precipitated in a steep cataract toward the sea. To attempt an exit here was certain destruction.

"The only possible course as nearly as I could surmise lay over the range to the east below Mt. Bebel, where I observed a lower range running up to and meeting the foothills flung out from the base of this

towering peak. If indications counted for anything in such a formation, judging from my experience in the Rocky Mountains of America, there would be a possible pass lying to the south of Mt. Bebel, opening upon a probable valley between the range bordering upon the Spielgarten and the range beyond, whose highest peaks, though hidden from view from the eastern side, were observable from the western side of the valley of the Spielgarten.

"My idea was that by striking into the foothills at the southern base of Mt. Bebel, where there was an evident depression indicating a pass, I might strike the head of the valley just beyond the immediate range, which bordered the Spielgarten on the east, and follow it down towards the river below the point of the cataract.

"All this was, of course, conjecture, but the more I scrutinized the topography of these ranges, the more convinced I grew that I was right in my surmise. At any rate, if I contemplated escape at all, I must make a hazard somewhere, and this seemed the most, if not the only, likely spot.

"I proceeded to make my preparations. I secreted a stout rope some thirty feet in length. Blankets I had at hand. It was with some difficulty I secured leather straps, which I fashioned into a tump-line, such as the woodsmen and Indians use in America. A hatchet was easily obtained and a stout jackknife I already possessed. As there were no firearms in the Spielgarten, I could, of course, obtain none.

"I managed to gather bread and bacon sufficient for several days, though on the score of food I had no apprehension, as fruit grew abundantly everywhere in the island.

"It was just two weeks after I had received the order of the Particular Council to mate again that one day after nightfall I set out on my adventure of escape. My provisions I had rolled in my blankets, which were carried strapped on my back in the way of a pack and held by the tump which passed over the shoulders and then encircled the forehead, leaving my hands and arms entirely free. The hatchet was secured on the outside of the pack by the straps encircling it.

"There was no moon at the time, but as in all tropical climates, the light of the stars gave sufficient illumination to pick my way. I avoided roads and struck directly across the fields. After two hours of steady walking, I reached the first slopes, and after resting a little and refreshing myself with a mouthful of food, I began the ascent.

"It was arduous though not difficult climbing, and by midnight I must have been at least six miles from my starting point. Here I halted and, rolling up in my blankets, flung myself on the ground and slept. When I awoke the sun must have been up an hour or more. I had no thought of pursuit. The people in the Spielgarten would never dream of my attempting to escape and even if they did, they would scarcely concern themselves over my flight, as the

utter folly of such an attempt was too well understood. I would either return baffled by the desperate character of the enterprise, or perish in the mountains. Moreover, no one knew the direction I had taken.

"Nevertheless, I was eager to push on, and after breakfasting hurriedly on the bread and bacon I continued the ascent, a good half of the mountain still remaining to be achieved.

"It was midday before I reached the summit of the ridge up which I had been laboring. I imagine I must have then attained a height of some four thousand feet above the Spielgarten. From the top, which was sparsely wooded with a kind of spruce I had never seen before, I obtained a good idea of my position. To the west lay the Spielgarten with the river winding through forest and field. Marxville was almost opposite, a little to the south. Mt. Bebel soared above me to the north, clothed in snow, reaching an altitude, I roughly guessed, of fifteen thousand feet.

"On the east another valley lay some fifteen hundred feet below and rising from it on the other side a ridge higher by some two thousand feet or more than the one on which I stood. Back of that again some two or three miles a lofty and rugged range ran parallel, on the north sweeping up to Mt. Bebel, and to the south presenting a succession of jagged peaks, curving with the shore of the island.

"The valley immediately below me terminated in a precipitous cañon. I concluded, therefore, that my course was still directly to the east over the second ridge confronting me and thence into the second valley beyond, which I hoped led downward towards the mouth of the river at the lower end of the island. I forthwith began to descend and in an hour found myself at the bottom, where I gathered some fruit to replenish my stock of provisions.

"The ascent of the second ridge I found extremely laborious, encountering in many places loose gravel and sand, and when night overtook me I had climbed scarcely three-fourths of the way up. Thoroughly worn out, I ensconced myself on an edge of the rock, which afforded the only level ground I could find, and slept heavily despite the hardness of my bed.

"By daylight I was up, and sturdily pushed onward, reaching the top about eleven o'clock. As I had surmised, I found a second valley on the other side, but to my surprise it was shallow, not more than a few hundred feet below me, and spreading out to the range beyond in a plain strewn with immense boulders.

"Through it ran a shallow stream ten or twelve feet wide, from which I drank long and copiously, as I had had no water since the preceding day. The stream flowed south, and I followed its course with the conviction that it must somewhere below flow into the river. Except for the boulders, which neces-

sitated constant detours, the way was easy, but after some three miles I was brought to an abrupt stop. The stream shot over an immense precipice a thousand feet in depth. It fell sheer, and as far as one could see there was no way down. On either side, and here the valley converged to a space of something like five hundred feet in width, there was nothing but steep walls of rock which only a winged creature might essay.

"Up to this I pursued my way with but one definite thought, to get out of the Spielgarten. I pushed forward, spurred by this goad, in a fever of desire, and as long as no serious obstacle barred my progress, I reckoned neither the fatigue nor the distress. But now that what seemed an effective barrier to my going checked me, a reaction set in and my spirits fell.

"I was two days' journey now from the Spielgarten, some six thousand feet above its level, I judged. The region was arid, the vegetation sparse, in this rock-strewn valley. My provisions were low, for in the expectation of finding ample fruit, I had consumed my stock with little regard to the future. All that was left was a little bacon and bread, barely enough for a single meal, and I perceived that no fruit trees grew at that altitude. I must either go forward or retreat. Rather than the latter, I felt I preferred to perish amid the desolation around me.

"Save for the flow of the stream, the silence was

profound. I was tired out, and yet in a fever to go on. In front of me yawned the great chasm, apparently impassable. Lying flat upon my stomach, I gazed down over the edge into the abyss, searching in vain for some evidence of a way down; nothing but sheer rock met my straining sight. So far below was the bottom that the stream broke midway into a rain, and there was no sound of its waters as they fell upon the rocks beneath.

"A lassitude crept over my body and dejection seized upon my mind, partly due, no doubt, to fatigue, which had begun to make itself keenly felt after my two days of strenuous effort. Recovering myself, I drew back from the dizzy edge, and for a moment gave myself up to the bitter thought of the helplessness of my position.

"What was I to do? To go back was to admit defeat and return to the intolerable slavery of the Spielgarten. To go forward seemed impossible. I had not eaten since morning, and as it was then well into the afternoon I felt the need of food. I divided my rations and ate only half, though all would not have been nearly enough to satisfy my craving. Little as it was, with the food came renewed strength and a sense of encouragement.

"I determined to search further, and cautiously skirted the right-hand side of the precipice, peering over and down the abyss every two or three hundred feet, only to gaze hopelessly into its sheer void. After a mile's barren pursuit in this fashion, the

precipice turned suddenly at right angles and I found myself on the edge of a smaller cañon running back into the range I was traversing. Its opposite walls were not more than a hundred feet away, but both these and the side upon which I stood fell precipitously away without the possibility of a descent.

"Yet I was greatly encouraged. This was evidently an abutting cañon on the larger one, and, judging from its appearance, could not run very far back into the range, and at its head there was more than likely a possible way of descent, for I remembered, out of my Rocky Mountain experiences, that a cañon tributary to a larger one, as this evidently was, was not usually of any considerable length, and gradually sloped down from the mountain at its head, owing to the accumulation of débris from the frequent washing of water from the heights above.

"Greatly heartened by these considerations, I followed the lip of the smaller cañon upward with renewed hope and resolution. It was longer than I supposed, running back a full two miles, and it was about sunset when I reached its head. My joy was inexpressible to find that, as I had surmised, its sides shelved down at its head, though not unbroken. I walked around the entire segment, carefully surveying its sides for the best spot to essay a descent. The average angle of the slope was at least seventy degrees. For the most part it was composed of loose gravel with here and there boulders thrusting out, and occasionally sheer rock. I finally selected a

place that seemed to afford the least difficulty and after cutting a strong stock from a tree I began slowly and cautiously to descend.

"My stock stood me in good stead, for the loose gravel gave alarmingly under my feet, and it was only by firmly planting the stock in the gravel below it that I saved myself from sliding bodily down with the constantly loosened soil at every step. Once I did slide some twenty feet in spite of the stock and was only saved by a boulder in my path, which was, fortunately, buried deep enough to resist the impact of my body. A cold sweat broke out over me, for, except for the happy intervention of the boulder, I would have shot down over a sheer drop of some twenty-five feet just below.

"This made me doubly cautious, and I proceeded step by step, planting my stock deep in the earth at each advance. Half-way down I came upon a jutting ledge, having a clear fall of about forty feet, which I could find no way to circumvent. Here I had to make use of my rope, which I fastened securely to a jagged edge of rock, but as it was not more than thirty feet long, when I reached the end I was forced to drop some ten feet, but as it was loose gravel below, I did so with no injurious results save the burning of my feet somewhat. The rope, however, was left out of reach, fastened to the rock above, and so I was forced, to my regret, to leave it behind.

"The remainder of the descent, though fraught

with some labor here and there, I at last successfully achieved. When I reached the bottom the sun was behind the mountains and in the depth of the cañon deep shadows made it almost night. Spreading my blankets, over-wearied, though rejoicing in my heart in my success in at last reaching the bottom of the valley, which I believed to lead out upon the river at the southern end of the island, I slept soundly until morning.

CHAPTER XIV

"I HAD accomplished the most difficult part of my journey, as the event proved. The cañon into which I had descended embouched, as I have already described, into the larger cañon, which was in reality the head of the valley leading to the river, about six miles below the point of my descent. After traversing the smaller cañon to its mouth and entering the larger one, I pursued my way along the stream, whose waters re-assembled after their fall of a thousand feet, and thence flowed uninterruptedly into the river beyond.

"I estimate the distance from the junction of the two cañons to the river as six miles. This was traversed with comparative ease, presenting no difficulty save its roughness from frequent stones and boulders. The lower end of the valley I found plentifully supplied with the fruit trees indigenous to the island, so that I entertained no apprehension of lack of food.

"Footsore, though relieved of my anxiety that I might fail in reaching the valley, I pursued my way at a less eager pace, and rested at noon for a full

hour before setting out to explore the mouth of the stream as it enters into the river, the roar of whose great cataract I had heard for some time in the distance.

"When I did reach the mouth it was with a beating heart, for I had arrived at what seemed to me the verge of freedom. The stream just before debouching into the river shot raucously down a narrow gorge at an angle of thirty degrees, formed a deep pool at the bottom, and then for some fifty paces, between thickly wooded banks, flowed quietly into the river.

"A hundred yards above the mouth of the little stream thundered the great cataract in a steady volume, in an unbroken fall of over fifty feet in height, with a width from shore to shore of three times the distance of its height. The descent of the gorge was easy as the stream was shallow, and filled with rocks and boulders, which afforded ready footing. The side of the pool, however, was steep, and I had some difficulty in holding my footing as I climbed along, but after that I easily found my way to the river's edge.

"The river here flowed deeply and quietly between sloping and thickly wooded banks that gradually rose to mountain heights on either side. Keeping to the left-hand bank, which was fairly open along the shore, I soon turned a slight bend, where I came in full view, half a mile below, of a small, concave bay into which the river's flood swept. Be-

yond lay the sea, the sight of which made me catch my breath sharply.

"I was startled, as my eye caught, in the scene before me, a small square stone structure, on the opposite bank, just where river and bay met. I stood for a moment spellbound, so unexpectedly was this sudden vision of a human habitation in this place. Then a glint of light from a polished object flashed in my eyes. There was a soldier pacing up and down in front of the building, from whose shouldered rifle the sun's rays had gleamed into my eyes. I realized now. The mouth of the river was guarded. The house was a barracks. The guardians of the Spielgarten had placed a garrison at this point against the possible chance of anyone seeking an exit here, remote as I well knew that possibility was. I drew back hastily into the screening foliage. Had I been seen?

"The soldier continued his pacing unperturbed. He had not discovered me. I felt my heart beating violently. I had stumbled into a sudden danger. I stood watching intently, with a sort of fascination, the stone house. What was to be done? Farther advance was clearly cut off. Throwing myself upon the ground, from under some overhanging shrubbery, I continued my scrutiny of the scene before me and cast about in my mind what course to take.

"My first thought was one of utter despair, but, after reflecting for a while, I began to realize that

after all I must in the end arrive at just the situation that now confronted me. Indeed, as I turned the matter over in my mind, was this not a possible step in furtherance of my design? Had I found the shore deserted, my progress was effectually barred by the open sea beyond. I had ruminated all along some vague idea of building a raft and trusting myself to the precarious mercy of the sea, but now it presented itself to my mind that here there was, perhaps, an opportunity of possibly, under cover of night, seizing a boat, should one be at hand, and putting out to sea.

"From my present position that side of the little bay behind the stone house was entirely cut off from view. I must reconnoiter further. At present, as it was near sunset, there was no alternative but to retreat into the valley for the night and resume further investigations the next day.

"Deeply pondering over the situation, I turned back and traced my way up the gorge, and after replenishing the physical man with the various fruits I found abundantly at hand, I gave myself up to rest for the night.

"I was up early the next morning and immediately started out on my reconnoiter. Carefully concealing myself in the shrubbery, I followed the bank of the river where it flowed into the bay. Here I had an unobstructed view of the bay and barracks just opposite, not more than two hundred yards away.

"A sentry, as on the evening before, paced off the space in front of the house. I scanned the shore in vain for any sign of a boat. The placid waters were empty, as was the sweep of the beach, of a boat of any kind. On my side there was plainly no road running along the coast, nor from where I was could I see any evidence of one on the other side. I drew the conclusion that the garrison's means of communication with the settlement at the north end of the island, where I had landed before being thrust into the Spielgarten, must be by sea. No doubt at fixed intervals a boat must visit them to convey provisions.

"I determined to wait and watch. On the morning of the third day of my vigil I was rewarded by discovering in the bay a good-sized tug boat lying at anchor a hundred yards out just off from the stone house. On the beach lay a row-boat with double oar-locks, and alongside three soldiers unloading it of what were evidently supplies. In a few moments three more soldiers issued from the house, and, going to the boat, began to assist the others. Presently two more men, sailors from their garb, came out of the house and joined the others. When the boat was empty the sailors entered it and rowed out to the tug. One of the sailors entered the pilot house and presently I heard the clang of her bell signalling the engineer, while the second sailor hoisted the anchor by means of the windlass. The tug then steamed out of the harbor, and, turning northward,

was soon lost to my view around the headland on my side of the river.

"I watched the scene with keen anxiety, my heart thumping hard, for here was a possible opportunity. I immediately began to speculate. The tug had come into the bay some time during the night. Did the sailors then come ashore and spend the night in the guardhouse, leaving their boat on the beach, or did they wait until morning? If the former, my chance of seizing the boat while they slept and of rowing out to the tug and boarding it while the engineer slept, if, indeed, he remained aboard, would be an easy matter to accomplish. If the engineer spent the night ashore (for I surmised that the two sailors and the engineer constituted the entire crew), I considered that there would be no trouble at all; it would be merely a question of getting out to the tug.

"But there was the sentry. Did he pace his post all night? If so, it would require extreme caution to reach the tug without his seeing me, for, though the boat lay on the beach a little back of the house and hidden from his view, the tug was in full sight as he passed in the direction facing the bay, since the house stood lengthwise, on the right-hand bank of the river, which flowed directly east. As the sentry paced his beat in front of the house, the tug lay in full view, provided, of course, it was always anchored in the same place, or even within a radius of a hundred feet of the same place. At any rate, this was clearly my plan.

"But to put it into execution I must be on the other side of the river. I could not cross it in the day-time, as this would bring me in full view of the sentry unless perhaps at midday, for then I observed the entire guard, which I now knew were only six soldiers, busily engaged in a swim in the bay.

"Evidently discipline, and this I noted with pleasure, was slack at this remote post. The small garrison, no doubt, relied upon the seemingly impassable barriers of the mountains and the river to keep any intruder from the Spielgarten from disturbing the easy life they were apparently enjoying. Indeed, I frequently saw the sentinel sitting at times in relaxation on a long bench running along the front of the house and sometimes even going inside for a few moments. At midday he always deserted his post to take his swim with his comrades.

"The next night after the departure of the tug, I swam across the river, an easy enough task, for I am a strong swimmer, and slept until morning on the other bank. I then cautiously advanced to its extreme end, which there terminated in an abrupt cliff, almost hanging over the roof of the house. From that vantage point I could look down upon it, not more than fifty feet below. Here I could make my observations with ease and even hear the soldiers talking when they were not in the building itself. At midday the entire six, as usual, took their swim. They splashed and shouted noisily in the water, like boys, for a full half hour.

"The next day while they were bathing, instead

of going to the top of the cliff, I crept down to its base as near to the house as possible, determining upon an inspection of the interior. When I heard the men in the water at their usual gambols, I swiftly and cautiously crept across the intervening space and entered the interior. There was a single room with ten cots along the rear wall, a cooking stove at one side and along the opposite wall a rack containing a dozen rifles and a number of cartridge-belts and small arms. Evidently here was provision for more than six men. I imagined that the superfluous cots were for the crew of the tug on the nights of their sojourn.

"My immediate impulse was to seize a rifle, a cartridge-belt and a revolver, but if any of the arms were missed, would not suspicion be immediately aroused? Dared I run the risk? I hesitated, gazing at the tempting rack. I took down one of the rifles and examined it. It was a Mauser. I examined the revolvers. They were six-shooters of the Colt pattern. To feel a gun in my hand stirred my blood. To be thus armed gave me a certain sense of security and if the occasion arose, I could sell my life dearly. Without arms, I was helpless as a beast of the wilds, if it ever came to a conflict.

"I seized a cartridge-belt, which was filled, and adjusted it around my waist, picked out a revolver, put it in my pocket and hastily departed. I ascended to the top of the bluff and awaited developments. The men returned as usual from their bathing and

entered the house. The sentry resumed his post. I lay on the top of the cliff anxiously waiting all the afternoon for any sign on the part of the garrison of the discovery of the missing weapons. At nightfall, I withdrew, and swimming back across the river, passed the night as usual at the head of the gorge.

"The next morning found me at my post on the left bank watching, but the day passed with no sign that the soldiers had found anything amiss. And so the second and third day and finally a week passed, until at last my anxiety was relieved entirely. The weapons I had purloined had not been missed. The sentry was perhaps the only man who had occasion to handle a weapon, and he, no doubt, from long custom, simply took down a rifle from the rack without even so much as glancing at the remainder of the contents.

"I passed another week in this wise, watching during the day and going back at night to the head of the gorge where, in a convenient place, I had made a bed of boughs, under a spreading bread-fruit tree. One morning just three weeks after the visit of the tug, I saw it enter the harbor again, and steam up to the anchorage. Aboard, beside the crew, were six more soldiers, who were greeted vociferously by their fellows ashore, who seemed to be in high spirits. I soon perceived why! They were being relieved by the six who had just arrived. Two hours afterwards, the six whom I had found at the barracks had steamed out of the harbor, waving jubilant farewells

to the new arrivals who had taken their places. Meantime the tug had left further provisions.

"Every three weeks then was the period of the tug's visitation. But this last time they had come in daylight. Was the time of the arrival irregular, sometimes at night, sometimes in the day? If in the day, then I had little or no chance of ever seizing the tug. I determined to wait for another interval of three weeks and watch during the night, withdrawing during the day to my resting place at the head of the gorge. But I watched in vain. At the end of the second week, and then the third week, the tug had not made her re-appearance. Clearly the second visitation had been only for the purpose of relieving the garrison and I was again at sea as to the time of her possible return.

"The monotony of the situation began to grow intolerable. I even thought of revealing myself to the soldiers, in moments of desperation, and throwing myself upon their mercy in the hope that if I could induce them to listen to my story they might take pity upon me. But when I recalled the iron regulations which had always prevailed in the island, of shooting down at sight any deserter from the Spielgarten—and this had occurred twice since my advent there—I shrank back from the desperate chance.

"One day I ventured again across the river, and while the soldiers were in bathing stole stealthily for the second time into the house. I looked around

more leisurely and even sat down for a moment in a chair beside the table. There was a vague notion in my mind that to sit again in a chair was in some sort of way to get back to civilization. As I sat down my arm brushed against what was evidently a blank book lying there. I picked it up and read on the cover in a crude and sprawling hand: 'Diary of Hermann Grund.' Upon opening it I discovered several entries in the same illiterate handwriting, but they had not gone beyond the third page.

"A happy thought flashed upon me. I would keep a diary myself, detailing my experience in the Spielgarten and my escape. Here was the means at hand. It would give me something to do during these dreary days of waiting and watching, and serve to relieve the monotony and sometimes agonizing sense of isolation and loneliness.

"Jumping to my feet, the now precious blank-book clutched in my hand, I searched around for a pencil. There was none on the table. Catching sight of a drawer, I pulled it open and was rewarded with the discovery of some half-dozen. I took three and, making a hasty exit, safely achieved the shelter of the cliff and the woods, long before the soldiers returned. As soon as the sun had set and darkness favored me, I swam back to the other shore, holding the blank-book in my teeth, my head well up, to keep it from getting wet.

"The next morning I began this account. God knows no mortal eye may ever read it, but the mere

writing of it has proved a safety valve for me. I had begun to despair almost, and at times felt that death would be only too welcome. Not that I ever dreamed of suicide, for that I am convinced would be cowardly, even in so desperate a plight as mine, and in my heart I believe in God and would not go before His tribunal with the guilt of my own blood.

"It is now six weeks since my flight from the Spielgarten and I seem as far away as ever from an escape from the island. One morning as I came down to the river's bank on my way to my place of lookout, I saw two soldiers on the opposite side. They had not seen me, as I had not yet emerged from the leafy cover along the shore. They were fishing and intent upon their sport. I immediately retraced my steps and climbed back to the head of the gorge, which I had made my habitat. What if they should ever come across to my side? Here was a contingency that I had not before contemplated. It is true they had no boat, but could they not swim across as I had done? And might not some one or two of them in a spirit of adventure or exploration some day take the notion? I could afford to take no chances. It would be more prudent for me to make my abode farther up the valley.

"I immediately proceeded to destroy all evidences of my presence at the head of the gorge. I then selected a spot some two miles above and built a hut of larger dimensions than the slighter structure which I had temporarily erected at the head of the

gorge. For the wall I gathered stones and small boulders, which were plentiful along the banks of the creek, and plastered the crevices with mud from the bottom. The roof I made from saplings, overlaying them with a plentiful supply of palm boughs. I felt a glow of satisfaction upon its completion and the first night I slept under its roof there was almost a sense of contentment in the thought.

"Nothing has happened in the past two weeks since I moved from the head of the gorge to my present location. I have watched in vain for the reappearance of the tug. Again that horrible sense of loneliness and oppression is coming over me. I must do something, one way or the other. I have just returned from my daily vigil on the headland opposite the barracks and am writing these lines just before darkness closes in. I do not believe I can bear this strain much longer. Something must eventuate or I shall go mad. It is not merely the dreadful loneliness, but the Tantalus-like vicinity of human beings whom I constantly see, but to whom I cannot speak or so much as reveal myself that is tormenting me. At times an almost irresistible impulse comes over me to shout at the soldiers on the bank opposite, and I have several times come down from the river with a feverish determination of giving myself up, but at sight of the pacing sentinel my resolve has always melted away.

"I long to brave the issue out of sheer desperation, yet as desperately fear to face the peril. The

writing of this diary alone has saved me either from losing my mind, or making the rash attempt—ah, there is the tug coming at last into the harbor. It is just rounding the headland. God help me—I must make the attempt to escape to-night. I cannot bear this cruel struggle between hope and fear any longer . . ."

Here the diary abruptly ended. No word or inkling of how Lorimer had met his fate, for surely this body was Lorimer's, could be gathered from the faded pages. Carl's heart was full of a great pity for the young American whose story he had just read. His own plight, however, was desperate enough. He must be up and doing.

Lorimer's story indicated a way back to the Spielgarten, for return by the way Carl himself had come, through the mountain and the river, was an impossibility. He must ascend the valley and then climb the range of mountains and follow Lorimer's route under Mt. Bebel. But before starting back, he determined to explore the gorge and the river below on whose further bank the guardhouse was located, as described in Lorimer's diary.

Carl descended the stream to its mouth as indicated by Lorimer, and found the situation exactly as the latter had depicted it. The river into which the stream emptied, with the great falls just above, the soldiers' barracks on the further bank, where the larger stream emptied into the sea. After a care-

ful reconnoiter Carl returned to Lorimer's hut and began preparations to make his way back to the Spielgarten over the route described in the pages of the diary.

CHAPTER XV

But three days remained before the date set for the mating of Mina. Clausen had petitioned the Particular Council to rescind its order for the advancement of the date of mating, but his prayer had been denied. At first he thought of going to Herr Schmidt to enlist the latter's aid, but felt that it would be futile, as he knew only too well that it was through Schmidt's machinations that the earlier date had been substituted. Besides, he could not bring himself to sue for assistance from a man whom he knew not only obdurate by nature, but who had been always hostile to him.

Clausen had drilled himself for some years for what he knew would sometime become inevitable, the handing over of his own beloved child to a fate which he abhorred. In the earlier conflict in the Spielgarten, when the issue whether the family life was to be retained or the other method of state domination over marriage to prevail, he had taken sides against the now prevailing system.

He himself was the sole survivor of the compromise which had been temporarily tolerated by the

victorious party, namely, that families then existing should maintain their integrity until they should have disappeared naturally, in the course of time. He had witnessed the transition and the finally complete establishment of absolute control by the State save in his own exceptional case. And now the time had come when he, too, the one remaining unit, was to be swept remorselessly into the maelstrom of absolute collectivism. He had tried to steel himself to face stoically the dreadful issue, but now that it had arrived, he found his philosophy melt away like snow in a furnace.

Denis was of no value in this predicament, though the Irishman's sympathy was of some poor consolation. In his hot rage Denis was for a grim fight and a grim end in a glorious battle against the forces of Satan. But this would not save Mina. His daughter's escape from the hateful peril of mating was the one thought in Clausen's mind and it always ended in an impasse. He felt like a prisoner in an iron cell whose horrible walls were slowly but surely closing in upon him.

Mina herself was growing thinner and whiter as the day of doom drew near. Worse than death it seemed to the young girl who, under her father's protecting and solicitous care, had lived a life apart from the community routine of the Spielgarten. Besides, her lately awakened woman's love for Carl had aroused in her all a woman's loathing for the fate that awaited her.

But in spite of it all she would not give up the hope, unreasonable as it seemed, that Carl was still alive. She constantly insisted, both to her father and to Denis, that Carl would yet return. Neither had the heart to gainsay her, though both were fully convinced that Carl had perished the day he had fallen into the river just above the cataract.

And even if Carl did return, of what avail would it be? Only one more to suffer the dreadful agony of seeing her forced to the loathsome embraces of Herr Schmidt. Both Denis and Clausen, in their own hearts, were thankful that Carl would not be there, though they were careful not to reveal this sentiment to Mina.

Clausen was sitting in a blank despair at the door of his cottage, upbraiding himself in his dark mood that he had kept Mina as a precious flower apart from the common life of the Spielgarten all these years and had not long ago yielded to the system to which fate had consigned them, when he felt Mina's hand upon his shoulder. He grasped it convulsively and held it tight.

"Father," said Mina, "I feel somehow that Carl will come back. I don't know why, but I feel somehow that he is not dead, and that when he comes he will save me."

"Yes, my dear child," answered Clausen, though his heart was heavy indeed, for he felt he had no right to break the slender stem of her unreasonable hope which seemed to be the only thing that buoyed

her up under the terrible burden that weighed upon her. It was all he could do to restrain his tears in the great love and pity that swept over him as he looked into the white face of his child. She had been his single solace in his exile—for to him the Spielgarten had long ago become a prison house—and now to think that she was to be snatched from him to a fate that was worse than death! He shuddered at the thought and his face grew tense and ashen.

"No, father, no," Mina cried, as she read his emotion. "It will never be. I tell you Carl must come back. I know it! I know it!"

"Yes, Mina, Carl will come back," repeated Clausen after her, seeking refuge in an outward assent to her highly keyed-up hope. "Yes," he went on, "Carl may, indeed, have somehow escaped the cataract. Such things have happened before. It is possible, I believe it is possible." But he felt the lameness of his speech as in his inmost heart he knew his words belied his thoughts.

"And when Carl comes," went on Mina, with intensity, "everything will be right. I feel it; I am certain that everything will be right."

At this moment Denis came swinging through the gate, waving his hand to Clausen and Mina.

"Denis, Denis," cried Mina, as she rushed to him, taking both his hands in hers, "Carl will come back. He isn't dead. I know it. I'm sure of it."

"Glory be to God," echoed Denis, "but your faith

would move mountains, and that's the kind of faith that will bring Carl back."

"You do believe it, Denis, don't you, Denis?" Mina insisted with intense excitement.

"I do, indade!" exclaimed Denis. "I was born in the faith and I'll live in it and I'll die in it, in spite of the divil and his myrmidons and the whole Spielgarten. It's a little thing for the faith to have Carl turn up again."

Never before had Denis stretched his faith in his own heart to such a breaking point, and, in spite of himself, he caught something of Mina's enthusiasm.

"But I've been thinkin'," and Denis began stroking the back of his head, as was his wont, when about to propound something that seemed of moment, "of a bit of a thrick that might have put me in the woolsack if I was in the ould counthry again. Sure an' it might shtop things a bit until Carl gets back," and Denis paused a moment reflectively. Clausen regarded him intently, for he knew the Irishman, beneath the surface, to be a man of keen intelligence in spite of his light-hearted manner.

"I've been thinkin'," continued Denis, "that there's a way, maybe, to bate the divil around the stump afther all. An' it must have been the blissed St. Pathrick, for I've been askin' him, since Mina's trouble began, how to beat Herr Schmidt at ould Nick's game, to give me a little light in this wurruld of darkness, and it's this, Herr Clausen." Here

Denis took off his hat and stroked the back of his head again.

"You'll remember, Herr Clausen, the fight about the family, for that was before my time and t'was yoursel' told me. T'was agreed, yoursel' said, when they decided to play the divil's game by the matin' system and to do away with God Almighty's plan of having little children with a rale father and mither, that ivery family in the Spielgarten be guaranteed to remain a family under the ould way until it should die out. Sure, your family was one of the families and now is the only one left. An' Mina here bein' your child, is one of your family, and by the powers, sure, isn't she eximpt from the law of matin'. For it's the law agin the law, that I'm pointin' out in me own sweet way. For whin they made the law of matin' they made the exciption, and the exciption proves the law, and now wouldn't that make me Lord High Chancellor, if I'd but argued the case in the ould counthry!" Denis looked at Clausen inquiringly, and then went on:

"Maybe there's a way, Herr Clausen. Sure you can see for yoursel'. You can petition the Particular Council that undher the agreemint whin the matin' system was made the law, your family was made eximpt, and that manes both Mina and yoursel'. Even if they'd not admit it, it'd save time, and time's a blessed jewel this minute, it is."

As Clausen listened to Denis his face began to lighten a little. The Irishman's contention seemed

to have some point to it. He himself could plead the right of exemption and why should it not be extended to Mina, who was a member of his family? At least, the putting in of the petition might cause some delay, and, for a time, stave off the fast-approaching hour that threatened Mina.

"There may be something in what you say, Denis," said Clausen. "Yes, surely, both Mina and I are entitled to exemption under the old agreement. I never thought of it before. I doubt that they will allow it; the chances are they won't, for I know their temper, and Herr Schmidt himself is an influential member of the Council."

"Thry it on, anyhow," urged Denis, "an agreemint's an agreemint, an' they're such sthicklers for the law in the Spielgarten it'd be fine sport to give them a dose of their own medicine. An' be quick about it. There's no time to lose. Draw up your petition at onct and put it in before the sun's beyont the mountains there."

Clausen needed no urging. Denis' suggestion seemed at least a way to possible delay. He turned into the house to draw up the petition.

"Mina, my dear," said Denis, as Clausen disappeared, "don't worry yoursel', mavourneen. I promise ye by the blissed St. Pathrick that Schmidt will never lay hands on ye. Lave it to Denis McCarthy, as sure as he's an Irishman who loves the ould sod. It's ould Nick himself I'm fightin', an' an Irishman can beat the divil at his own game ivery time."

"Oh, Denis, you are kind and brave and strong," said Mina, with gratitude shining in her eyes. "Yes, I know you will do everything possible for me and I believe that God is good and that Carl is not dead and will come back yet."

"Sure he will, of course he will," assented Denis. "The Lord forgive me," he thought to himself, "but it's no lie I'm tellin', but only a bit of a prophecy an' a prophecy's no lie until it's proved not thrue, and that's beyont anybody's knowin' until it happens."

"You only half believe, Denis," said Mina, "but I know. Something tells me Carl is not dead." So assured was Mina's tone that Denis was startled and, in spite of himself, he suffered himself to be half convinced. He was an Irishman, and believed that there were other things in life than logic and the visible things of this world.

"I wondher!" he said to himself.

At any rate, Mina's belief in Carl's safety was a supreme comfort to her in her trial, and Denis, though his reason could not assent to her insistence, allowed his heart to run away with his head and, after a time, began to half believe that somehow Carl had escaped the river and the cataract. "Sure, it's not impossible," he argued with himself, "an' what's not impossible, may be, after all." Mina herself never for an instant wavered in her conviction. It was a supreme faith with her, which only grew stronger as the days passed by.

Clausen, the next day, presented his petition to

the Particular Council, claiming exemption for Mina from the law of mating on the ground that his was one of the original families to which exception had been granted at the outset. Herr Schmidt objected and made the point that while it was true that the original families were exempted from the workings of the law, this applied only to those members of the family living at the time the exception was allowed, but that Wilhelmina Clausen was born subsequent to the enactment of the law and did not, therefore, come under its provision. As the policy of the construction of the law of the Spielgarten was always strictly in favor of its letter and of strengthening the Socialist ideal of collectivism in all its logical bearings, the decision was against Clausen and his petition was denied.

Denis was enraged at the result, for he had come to make himself believe that his contention would stand. Clausen was disappointed, though his hopes were never high that he would succeed; he knew too well the temper of the tribunal before which he pleaded, and also realized that his own family, being the sole remnant of an institution hateful to the Socialist system, would scarcely find its judges well-disposed.

Mina herself seemed indifferent, save in so far as she sympathized with her father and Denis and shared their disappointment. So sure was she that Carl would return and all come out right in the end that nothing could shake her confidence.

CHAPTER XVI

It was the morning of the day set for the mating of Mina. Denis came early to Clausen's house. The Irishman's face was grimly set and his shaggy brows were contracted more heavily than usual above his deep-set grey eyes. Clausen looked haggard and worn.

"Mina, girl, never ye care. Herr Schmidt shall never lay a hand on ye."

Clausen looked keenly and inquiringly at Denis.

"Do ye go through the cerimony, darlint, though it's I who knows ye'd rather die than say the hated words—but do ye be brave and lave it to me. Go to Schmidt's house as if ye were willin' enough, and then . . ." And Denis' eyes blazed: "I've a little plan of me own. You sthay home, Herr Clausen, and wait for me."

"What do you intend to do?" asked Clausen.

"I'll tell ye that afther it's done," was Denis' response, and he refused obstinately to reveal his plan, notwithstanding Clausen's importunity.

The mating was to take place that evening, just after sunset, as was the custom in the Spielgarten.

Denis remained during most of the morning at Clausen's house, but in spite of Clausen's entreaties, as to what he intended to do, refused to disclose his course of action. He, however, inspired Mina with confidence and begged her not to falter in the least during the ceremony or after she had arrived at Schmidt's house, but to rely implicitly upon him.

It was not until nearly noon that Denis departed. Mina had almost become cheerful under the Irishman's steady stream of encouragement; so determined and confident seemed Denis that even Clausen began to believe that perhaps the Irishman had hit upon some plan of staying the dreadful event.

Under the spell of Denis' encouraging exhortations, Mina induced herself to take some rest during the afternoon and even dozed off for a few minutes and awakened somewhat refreshed. But as the hour grew near Clausen felt his spirits sink.

A little before sunset Mina arrayed herself in the red robe which all those who were to be mated were ordered to wear for that brief and business-like ceremony. For mating in the Spielgarten had nothing of sentiment attached to it. It was a mere official formula, gone through with just as any other official business, for those who participated had neither kith nor kin and the relation to be entered into was, under the system prevailing in the Spielgarten, a strictly official relation. There were no fathers or mothers, sisters or brothers to be present, no congratulations, no gifts nor rejoicing. Those to be

mated simply assembled in the great official building in Marxville and proceeded to pledge themselves for the stipulated period.

At the time designated Mina appeared, arrayed in the regulation red robe. She found about fifty other couples assembled for the same purpose. The president of the Particular Council officiated. The only indication of anything out of the ordinary were the red robes of the participants and the red flag floating above the building in which the mating ceremony took place. The building itself was a two-story structure of yellow brick, square in shape, with great columns supporting a heavy architrave, which projected from the façade. This was the only attempt at ornamentation and had no relation whatsoever to the character of the building itself, but was evidently intended to afford some relief from its box-like appearance. Indeed, it was a symbol of the civilization of the Spielgarten, without ornamentation or variation, and lived down to the bare bones of a monotonous existence.

Herr Schmidt was there with his insufferable smile. Mina glanced at him but once, and then shuddered with apprehension. The men stood on one side of the room, and the women on the other in a pre-arranged order. Mina and Schmidt's turn came almost at the last. It was only with the utmost effort of her will that Mina was able to take her place with Schmidt in front of the President of the Particular Council, and when she and Schmidt clasped

hands, as was the custom, she felt her knees tremble. The ceremony was of the simplest.

"Do you, Man, take this Woman for a mate for the period of two years, for the purpose of propagating the race in the service of the Supreme State?" was the question put by the official.

The same question was put to the women with the necessary variation of sex. The answer on the part of the principal was a simple "Yes," after which each couple took their departure. Mina could barely falter the repulsive "yes" which she was constrained to reply, but Schmidt's "yes" resounded with emphasis through the entire room.

It was dark when Mina and Herr Schmidt left the building, for in the tropics night swiftly follows day when once the sun has gone below the horizon. The heavens were brilliant with stars. Herr Schmidt, looking up, smiled significantly at Mina and remarked, "See, Wilhelmina, how bright the stars are to welcome us," and then rubbing his hands together, "You see, it is a beautiful beginning."

Mina made no reply, but walked beside him with eyes on the ground, her heart beating violently and grasping with might and main at the assurances which Denis had poured into her ears that morning.

Schmidt's house was in the suburbs of Marxville, about a mile distant from the official building. Like all the other houses in the Spielgarten, it was of one

story, and stood back from the street fifty feet, with the usual garden in front. Schmidt opened the gate and bade Mina enter. Reaching the door of the house, he did the same thing, and the courage which had sustained her up to this point seemed suddenly to leave her as she went in. A great fear seized her; she became limp and weak. Schmidt grabbed her roughly and dragged her in. Mina shrank from his grasp; upon which he caught her to himself suddenly in a fierce embrace. She struggled and thrust her hands with all the force she could muster into his glowering face, now contorted with passion.

At the same moment Schmidt felt a heavy hand grab him by the collar. He was suddenly torn from Mina and hurled staggering against a desk that stood on the other side of the room. Turning with an oath, he beheld Denis McCarthy confronting him with squared jaw and deep-set eyes aglow with a dangerous fire. For a moment Schmidt snarled inarticulately at the Irishman; then he sputtered through his clenched teeth: "What are you doing here? Get out! you dirty Irishman!"

Denis regarded Schmidt for a moment without replying, and then in a level, tense voice said: "Ye'll niver accomplish your divil's work, Herr Schmidt, as long as Denis McCarthy's alive. It's twixt me and you now, for good. I've been waitin' for ye this long time and your dirty scheme to get Mina Clausen for yourself in this nasty matin' business.

It's the last thrick ye'll ever play. I wouldn't murther you, skunk though you are, but I'm goin' to kill ye in a clane, dacent fight. I'm goin' to teach ye your last lesson, an' it's a fair game, for I have nothin' but me two arms, and twixt you and me we'll see who's the betther man."

While Denis was speaking Schmidt had recovered himself from the Irishman's rough handling and stood leaning with both hands on the desk, his eyes fixed on Denis' face with a sinister gleam, his underjaw protruding as he nervously bit his upper lip with his lower teeth. As Denis finished his words Schmidt suddenly threw open a drawer of the table at which he stood and, snatching a revolver from it, thrust it pointblank at the Irishman.

Denis stood startled. Where had Schmidt got the revolver, was the first thought in his mind, for no weapons were made in the Spielgarten, and it was against the law to possess one. Herr Schmidt's heavy lips drew back in a wolf-like smile, as he witnessed the Irishman's surprise.

"So, you damned Irishman, you would kill me, would you? Well, who will do the killing now, I want to know? You thought I wasn't armed. Well, I'll tell you for your satisfaction, for you'll never be able to tell anyone else afterwards, that I came into possession of this revolver—well, never mind how. That's my business, after all. I'm going to kill you, you dog!"

While Schmidt was talking, Denis had advanced

two full paces and stood looking right into the muzzle of the ugly weapon. Scarcely had Schmidt spoken the words when Denis suddenly stooped and threw himself with all his force against the desk, which smashed full against Schmidt's body. The revolver went off with Denis' sudden movement, the bullet just grazing the top of the Irishman's head.

In an instant Denis had leaped forward and grabbed Schmidt by the wrist of the hand in which the revolver was held and, with his other hand, gripped Schmidt's throat Schmidt was a strong man, with unusually long arms and broad shoulders, though of no great height. He was fashioned like an orang-outang, a formidable physical antagonist. But Denis had been hardened by his outdoor life and the wielding of a heavy axe for many years, besides being a man of natural athletic build, agile and quick in movement. Every muscle in his body had grown to iron in the past ten years in the Spielgarten, but Schmidt was animated by desperation. He felt that he was fighting for his life, for the Irishman had plainly declared his intention of killing him, and he knew that Denis meant what he said.

Schmidt, with his free arm, struck at Denis' face and had the advantage of the Irishman from his longer reach of arm. He delivered two smashing blows before Denis realized Schmidt's advantage. To offset this, Denis pressed himself as close to Schmidt's body as possible, to shorten the blows, at

the same time lowering his head so that Schmidt could not strike him in the face. Schmidt struggled hard to wrench his right wrist from the Irishman's grasp so as to be able to use his revolver again. But Denis' hold there was like a vise.

Meantime the latter's grip upon his foe's throat was tightening. Schmidt's eyes were bulging and the veins grew distended and black on his forehead. Denis, gritting his teeth, pressed harder and harder and at length, although the sweat was pouring from his own forehead with the exertion, felt his antagonist's body relaxing.

The revolver dropped out of Schmidt's nerveless hand to the floor. Denis promptly transferred his free hand to Schmidt's throat and put on additional pressure, until finally the man's body lay prostrate and limp across the desk, with Denis above, glaring down upon his now unconscious foe.

Mina, who had been watching the struggle in fear and trembling, had shrunk back to the farthest corner of the room. The report of the revolver had both surprised and shocked her, as she had never heard the explosion of a weapon before,—indeed, had never seen one. When she saw Denis over Schmidt's body fiercely gripping his throat, she drew a deep breath of relief and, rushing over, stood beside the Irishman, and asked in a subdued voice, in which there was still fear and wonder, if Schmidt were dead.

"I don't know," answered Denis, relaxing his

grasp. "Sure, he ought to be. But to keep on choking him seems like cold murther and that's not to me likin'. I can kill a man in a fair fight, but I don't like to choke him to death afther he is onct down and out." Denis stood over Schmidt, gazing with intense scrutiny into his face. To all appearances the breath had been squeezed out of Schmidt's body. He lay inert, with horribly gaping lips and bulging eyes. "Maybe I'd betther make sure," said Denis, reaching again for Schmidt's throat.

"Oh, no, don't, Denis, don't!" said Mina, as she covered her face with her hands and shuddered. "It's too much like murder now."

"It's right ye are, Mina dear." And Denis drew back from the prostrate form. "But we cannot lave him this way if he should be alive. We'll have to take precaution aginst that. Here, sthrip me a bit of your robe off and I'll gag him and bind him so that if he should come around again it's little mischief he'll be able to do."

Mina tore her red robe into strips, with which Denis promptly bound the hands and feet of Herr Schmidt and secured his mouth with a gag.

"Come, Mina," said Denis, taking her by the arm and leading her to the back door. "I'll be takin' ye home now."

Apparently no one had been aroused by the shot from Schmidt's revolver. Before stepping out into

the field back of the house, Denis made a careful survey, but saw no one moving about.

"We'll be goin' now," he whispered, and together they started across the fields in the direction of Clausen's house.

CHAPTER XVII

MEANTIME Clausen remained at home in an agony of suspense, waiting to hear from Denis, who had promised to communicate with him within an hour after the mating ceremony. He paced up and down the little pathway of the garden leading from the door to the gate, straining his eyes through the darkness in the direction of Marxville. What had happened? What had Denis done? He firmly believed in his own mind that Denis would stop at nothing, and was convinced that Denis' intention was to kill Schmidt. That seemed to him the obvious conclusion from the Irishman's words, although Denis had preserved a rigid reticence as to what he would do.

It was a full half hour after sunset, which had been the time for the ceremony of mating, when Clausen, standing at the gate in anxious suspense, was startled to hear footsteps behind him coming from the other direction. It was bright starlight, for the moon had not yet risen, and the outline of a figure plodding heavily up the road caught his eye some hundred feet away. The person approaching

was evidently much spent, for he swayed as he walked along. Clausen stood waiting and, as the man approached, he heard his name called, "Clausen, Herr Clausen, is it you?" Clausen's heart seemed to leap into his throat. It was Carl's voice! He stood for a moment stunned. Meantime the figure had come up to him and staggered into his arms. This was clearly a body of flesh and blood, and indeed Carl. "My God, is it you, Carl? We thought you——"

"Yes," said Carl, "I know. You supposed, of course, that I was dead, and it is only by the luckiest chance that I did escape death from the cataract, but I will tell you afterwards. I am faint now and hungry. I have good news for you. We can get out of the Spielgarten. But give me something to eat and drink. I will tell you more later. Where is Mina?"

"Come inside and I will get you something," said Clausen, putting his arm around Carl and helping him up the path to the house.

"Where is Mina?" Carl reiterated as they entered the door.

"Just a moment," answered Clausen, "rest yourself and let me get you something to drink and eat. Mina will be here presently." And Clausen hurried out into the kitchen, bringing in some food and drink to the exhausted man.

Carl drank and ate ravenously. To his repeated inquiry about Mina, Clausen put him off by answer-

ing that she had just gone down the road for a stroll with Denis and would be back within a short time. "I'll go meet them," declared Carl when he had finished his repast and stood up with renewed vigor in his limbs. His clothes were fairly in rags and his shoes worn to the soles of his feet.

"Wait a moment!" exclaimed Clausen. "You are a perfect scarecrow. You would frighten Mina to death. Come, let me get you a change of clothing and shoes for your feet; they are on the ground."

But Carl was not to be restrained and, in his eagerness to see Mina, started for the gate, when Clausen put a detaining hand on his shoulder. "No, Carl, don't go. I'll tell you, but you must contain yourself."

"What's that you say?" and Carl turned sharply around, questioning Clausen with a feeling of premonition, for there was a warning note in the latter's tone.

"I do expect Mina and Denis here within a few minutes, Carl, and I have not told you all. But you must hold yourself in, because I believe everything is all right; so let me tell you without interruption, and restrain yourself, my dear boy."

"Yes, yes!" excitedly ejaculated Carl. "What is it, what has happened?"

"It was only this evening just after sunset that the ceremony of mating took place, and Mina," and here Clausen's voice broke for a moment, "was

mated to Herr Schmidt. Hold yourself, Carl, it's all right—let me tell you," as Carl grabbed him fiercely by the arm. "Denis had a plan to save Mina from Schmidt. I am now waiting to hear from him. He told me he would let me know within an hour, and Denis swore that Schmidt should never lay a hand on Mina. You and I can do nothing more than has been done. Let us wait here now in patience. I am sure that Denis has accomplished his purpose, although he would not tell me what it was. I firmly believe that he intended to kill Schmidt and I do not doubt that he has done it."

By this time they had reached the gate, Carl determined to hasten away, with Clausen's detaining hand on his arm. "Don't go," urged Clausen. I am sure they will soon come. I know how impatient you are, but I have the utmost confidence in Denis, and I know that you have also."

Carl finally yielded reluctantly to Clausen's persuasion, though he was all impatience to seek Mina. It was just possible, the thought occurred to him, that Denis' plan had failed. He struggled with his own doubt, but restrained himself at Clausen's insistency.

As they stood waiting, Carl, in a fragmentary way, narrated to Clausen his adventures after falling into the river and his discovery of Lorimer's body and diary in the valley the other side of the Spielgarten, as well as the fact of the garrison stationed at the mouth of the river. Clausen was as-

tonished to hear of the possibility of escape, though he appreciated the many difficulties that lay before them in the attempt. The immediate necessity of preparing, though, pressed in upon them. When Denis and Mina should put in their appearance, they must make haste.

"Carl," said Clausen, "as soon as Mina and Denis come, we must prepare to flee. I think it would be wise for us to start our preparation while we are waiting. Let us go inside. We shall need food, blankets, and other things. Let us save time and get them ready."

Carl needed no urging and the two men entered the house and began to make preparations forthwith. They had scarcely started when they heard the approach of feet outside on the road and then the click of the gate. "Carl," said Clausen, "go into the other room for a moment. It might be too great a shock for Mina, for her to meet you suddenly like this. I'll call you." And he pushed Carl, who went with reluctance, into the adjoining room. Scarcely had Carl disappeared when the door opened and Denis, supporting Mina, entered.

"Father!" she exclaimed, as Clausen took her in his arms. Clausen looked at Denis inquiringly.

"Well, it's done," said Denis. "At least, I think so. He's either dead, or it'll be some time before he's alive again." And then Denis narrated to Clausen what had occurred at Schmidt's house. Clausen listened intently, and after Denis had finished said:

"Well, we've got to get out of this now, as soon as possible. The die is cast. I have good news for you. Carl is here."

Mina, who had been sobbing in her father's arms as Denis told his story, suddenly looked up and cried, "Carl?" and as she spoke the door opened and Carl rushed to her from the other room. It was a joyful meeting. Mina, now happy in Carl's arms, kept saying, "I knew you would come back! I knew you would come back, Carl!"

Denis fairly gasped when he first saw Carl. "Sure, an' it's a miracle!" he exclaimed, and grabbed Carl's hand until the latter winced in the Irishman's powerful grip. "Glory be to God!" exclaimed Denis. "But Mina was right after all, and how did it happen? I thought it was the end of ye when ye wint over the cliff into the wather, Carl."

Carl repeated his story to Denis and Mina as briefly as he could, while Clausen was making preparations. "Come," said Clausen finally, "we haven't time to talk much. We must get ready. We must get away to-night."

All immediately set to work to gather what things they might need for their adventure, food, blankets, clothing, kitchen utensils, bundled together and securely made into three packs. These were distributed among Carl, Clausen and Denis. Mina was to carry nothing.

Clausen provided Carl with another suit of clothing and shoes. No extra clothing, save for Mina,

was taken, as they did not want to burden themselves.

A hearty meal was eaten before they set out and enough food for three days was provided. There was plentiful fruit in the valley, Carl informed them, and also fish in the stream so that they had no apprehensions upon that score.

It was now about ten o'clock and Clausen suggested that Carl and Mina set out ahead of himself and Denis to meet at a designated spot. There were some few things to be attended to before leaving, which he and Denis could readily do and he wanted Mina to start ahead so that she might take the journey easily and not be pressed.

Following this arrangement, Carl and Mina departed first, having agreed with Clausen to wait for them at the foot-bridge, three miles beyond, on the road which passed Clausen's house. Clausen cautioned both Carl and Mina not to talk within the vicinity of any house on the road and in the event of seeing anybody coming along the road to step aside and conceal themselves.

It was a bright starlight night when Carl and Mina set out, Carl carrying his pack over his shoulder and a hatchet in his hand. There were but three houses on the road between them and the foot-bridge, and as they came near these they walked on in silence. Fortunately, they met nobody.

Arriving at the foot-bridge, they halted, waiting for Denis and Clausen. Mina, turning to Carl,

placed both hands on his shoulders, and looking up with a wondrous sweet smile, said: "I knew that you would come back, Carl. Something told me that you were not dead and that you would come to save me. It seems strange, but I never once wavered in my belief. How dreadful it must have been! How you must have suffered!" and Carl felt more than compensated for all he had been through, in her sweet solicitude, and in the happiness of holding her in his arms again.

"To think that I should have found you in the Spielgarten, Mina! I was looking for the fulfilment of a vain dream and found only what has proved to be a horrible nightmare. But I have found you, which more than compensates for everything. Yes, I know now that true happiness does not consist in seeking the good of all by levelling us down to what Socialism brings us to, but in the possession of that happiness which we can find alone in each other, as individuals, and that when we destroy individuality and the family, we have torn up the roots of human joy. But, my dear, this is philosophizing, and I have you and I do not want to philosophize with you in my arms." And Carl pressed Mina closer to his side.

"Oh, my dear, my dear, how glad I am!" murmured Mina, and as they stood there, they looked up at the stars and forgot that there were any other people in the world.

Meantime Clausen and Denis were busying them-

selves with their final preparations. Clausen went through the entire house looking for what might be worth the while to take with them. Denis busied himself in making the packs as compact as possible. He and Clausen stood together, just as they were about to open the door for the departure and with a common instinct, each grasped the other by the hand.

"Denis," said Clausen, "it seems to be coming true. I can scarcely believe that we have a chance to get out of this. It always seemed so hopeless to me."

"Begorra," said Denis, "I'd as soon have thought of goin' to the moon, but shure it's here now, and glory to God, but we'll make it thrue. I don't know much about the other ind of it, for Carl's story was too hurried to size up the situation fully, but from what I undherstood, I do believe we've got more than a fightin' chanct."

"Come," said Clausen, and the two strode through the door down to the gate and struck out along the road, towards the foot-bridge where Mina and Carl were awaiting them.

As they emerged onto the road the moon just tipped over the mountain tops to the east and its silvery illumination began to flood the valley.

"I don't like that," exclaimed Clausen, "in another ten minutes it will almost be as light as day with that moon."

"Moon or no moon," said Denis, "we're in for

it and we'd best use our legs fast to get a good start in case we should be pursued. It may be that divil Schmidt isn't in hell afther all," and the two men hurried their pace down the road.

After three-quarter's of an hour steady walking, they came in sight of Mina and Carl standing by the foot-bridge. When they came up Clausen asked Carl: "Which way, now?"

"Over the bridge and then across the country right to where you see that depression in the mountain ridge just below Mt. Bebel. Wait a moment," added Carl as they were about to start out, and he plunged into some bushes by the side of the road, coming out in a moment with a rifle and a revolver in his hand.

"I brought these in case we might need them. They are a rifle and revolver I found beside Lorimer's body. Here, Denis, you take the revolver, and Clausen, you take the rifle and I will take care of Mina. Both weapons are in order. I saw to that before I left the valley on the other side of the range."

With hearts beating and with their hopes high, the four fugitives from the Spielgarten started. By this time the moon had risen clear above the mountain tops and bathed the entire valley in a wonderful brilliancy. As they wended their way across the fields, they were easily visible for a full quarter of a mile and there was no sheltering forest for a full two miles in the direction in which they were going.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE house next to that of Schmidt, some hundred feet distant, was occupied by a man by the name of Wilhelm. When Schmidt fired at Denis, Wilhelm heard the shot, but the sound came muffled to him, nor did he apprehend what it meant, for he was a native of the Spielgarten, and knew nothing of fire-arms. The sound, however, seemed extraordinary to him and aroused his curiosity. What could it mean?

He went to his door and looked about, but saw nothing. Schmidt's house was quiet and no one was stirring in the vicinity. Wilhelm went in again and resumed the reading of *The Spielgarten Clarion,* the one periodical published there. The *Clarion* had little news, for there was little news to give in such a community, and, for the most part, contained dissertations upon the beauty and the happiness of the Socialist State.

But Wilhelm read distractedly. He could not get out of his mind the curious report he had heard. Twice he went outside to look. The second time ne walked in the direction of Schmidt's house and

knocked at the door, but received no answer, though the light was burning. Going around to the back, he discovered the rear door standing wide open.

Standing on the threshold, he called aloud, but received no answer. Entering, he groped his way through the kitchen, for there was no light there, into the dining-room just beyond, through the partly open door of which he could see that there was a light in the room beyond. Again he called, but again received no answer. Opening the door, he cautiously peered in. There was no one visible. "Herr Schmidt!" he called in rather a subdued voice, for the silence somehow oppressed him. Walking across the room, he came upon the figure of a man lying in the farther corner, bound hand and foot with strips of red cloth and a piece of the same material over his mouth by way of a gag.

It was Herr Schmidt! Hastily releasing the gag and undoing the red strips from Schmidt's hands and feet, Wilhelm sought to restore the unconscious man, who was breathing laboredly. Wilhelm hurried back to the kitchen and, bringing water, dashed it in Schmidt's face, who responded by gasping. He looked up at Wilhelm with filmy eyes and endeavored to say something, but so indistinctly that Wilhelm could not understand him.

"What is it, Herr Schmidt? What has happened?" asked Wilhelm. But Schmidt could only groan and was still laboring for breath. Wilhelm placed a glass of water to his lips and made him sip

it. At first Schmidt could not swallow at all, but after a while he managed to take a little. Meantime Wilhelm had dragged him up into a chair and began chafing his hands vigorously. At last Schmidt was able to articulate.

"McCarthy," he managed to say, though his utterance was very thick. Wilhelm looked puzzled. "McCarthy," reiterated Schmidt, holding out his wrists and putting them together to indicate what he wanted to tell.

"McCarthy did it? Is that what you want to say?" asked Wilhelm, and Schmidt nodded his head painfully.

"He tried—to—kill me," came slowly from the lips of Schmidt.

"Why?" asked Wilhelm in wonderment.

"Wilhelmina Clausen, he abducted her," painfully ejaculated Schmidt, who by this time had recovered his faculties, although he was much shaken and trembled violently.

All this was mystifying to Wilhelm. He knew, of course, that Schmidt and Wilhelmina had been mated that afternoon. That was a matter of no special concern to him, or, indeed, to anybody else in the Spielgarten, and he could in no way associate Denis with the affair.

"Don't you understand?" cried Schmidt, who by now was strong enough to vent his rage. "You fool," hoarsely shouted Schmidt, rising from his chair, but clinging to its arm, for he was still weak.

"You fool, he tried to murder me and has taken Wilhelmina Clausen from me by violence. Don't stand there blinking like an idiot, but get somebody! We must pursue them wherever they have gone!" and he sank back into his chair, exhausted after his outburst.

Wilhelm, still perplexed, hurriedly left the house and ran across the street to a neighbor for assistance. He pounded at the door, shouting, "Herr Schmidt has been murdered! Come quick!" The clamor made by Wilhelm roused several people in the neighborhood and soon some half dozen had gathered at Schmidt's house. Schmidt explained what had occurred.

This was a most astounding event in the Spielgarten, the even tenor of whose life was rarely broken by any event beyond a natural death. Murder or attempted murder was unknown. The placidity of life was rarely disturbed even by so much as a quarrel. Schmidt's hearers were astonished and horrified.

"Don't stand there like blithering idiots," shouted Schmidt, now thoroughly himself again, "but bestir yourselves and get ready to pursue the scoundrel with me! Arm yourselves with anything you can find, and we will start immediately."

The only weapons used in the Spielgarten were clubs, and these were carried only by the police, a small body of twenty-five, of whom only ten were constantly on duty. The other fifteen were practic-

ally reserves to be called upon in an emergency. In the last twenty-five years no such occasion had arisen in the history of the Spielgarten.

Schmidt hastily summoned whoever of these reserves might be within easy call, of whom some six responded, and these, in addition to the neighbors who had gathered to Schmidt's assistance, made a body of fifteen men altogether.

Leaving Schmidt's house they immediately started, under his direction, for Clausen's. They were all armed with clubs save Schmidt, who had picked up his revolver from the floor. The revolver he put in his pocket. None of his companions had noticed it—not even Wilhelm, who had found him unconscious.

When they arrived at Clausen's house Schmidt went to the front door and knocked upon it vigorously. The house was dark and there was no response. Schmidt took a club from one of his followers and beat upon it with a half dozen resounding blows. Still there was no response. Without more ado he then threw it wide open, calling the others, and marched in, shouting loudly for Herr Clausen.

On turning up the lights they found evidences of disorder. On the floor were pieces of rope, a blanket, a knife and several cooking utensils.

A perfunctory search was made, but nobody was found. It was very evident that the inmates had fled, and Schmidt had no doubt in his mind that the whole scheme had been premeditated; but he smiled

as he thought that their flight could not be far. The Spielgarten was a very limited area and it would not take long to capture the fugitives.

A brief consultation was held as to what possible course the fugitives could have taken. It was decided to divide the party into two bands, one to go northward and the other southward. One man was sent back to Marxville to gather a searching party to see if the fugitives could possibly be hiding somewhere within its limits, though that seemed most unlikely to Schmidt. The fact of a flight at all was most astounding. It was impossible to escape ultimately, and it would be only a matter of two or three days before the rebels (for rebels they were in Schmidt's mind) were captured.

At the moment he was full of wrath at being thwarted by Denis just when his prey was within his reach. One party, with Herr Schmidt leading, took the road to the north. A keen lookout was kept on either side, which was bordered by open fields. In the bright moonlight, anyone would be easily visible. When they arrived at the footbridge, over which Clausen, Mina, Denis and Carl had crossed, the pursuers halted. It was a question in Schmidt's mind whether Clausen and the others had crossed here or whether they had continued straight ahead on the open road.

He stood hesitating, when one of his companions suggested that he thought it was likely that the fugitives would abandon the road and seek concealment

in the woods. Schmidt accepted the suggestion and started across the foot-bridge, with the others following him. Reaching the further side, he started into a steady trot, going directly east. He soon outdistanced his followers, who were not perhaps as keen as he.

After ten minutes, on coming to the top of an elevation, he thought he saw, some distance ahead, human figures. Although he was pretty well spent by running, he quickened his pace, and after proceeding some two hundred yards further, saw quite distinctly four figures going toward the forest, not more than half a mile distant. The four figures puzzled him. Turning back and holding his hands to his mouth, he shouted to his followers, "Hurry up!" and then started again in pursuit.

The wind was blowing towards Clausen and the others with him, and the sound of Schmidt's voice carried to them. It was the first inkling they had that they were being pursued. All four turned abruptly and halted for a moment, looking anxiously in the direction of the voice. Denis was the first to discover the figure approaching, though, of course, he could not distinguish who it was.

This much at least seemed evident, that the man was pursuing them, and it was only a few moments when the figures of several more men became visible over the rise of ground back of the first figure, all hurrying forward. Hitherto Clausen and his party had pursued their way without haste, but now there

was need of speed with their pursuers close upon them. Denis and Carl caught Mina by either arm to help her. The burden of their packs and the need of helping Mina retarded them considerably. Their pursuers were clearly gaining upon them. What they hoped was to find the shelter of the woods before those behind them would be able to come up.

"Could that divil have come back to life?" was Denis' thought, for, frankly, he was surprised at this early pursuit. He supposed Schmidt dead and counted upon the discovery of Schmidt's body not before the next day at the earliest.

Schmidt was not more than two hundred yards behind them, shouting at them to stop.

"Stop, or I fire!" he cried.

Then for the first time Denis remembered Schmidt's revolver. Why had he forgotten to secure it when Schmidt lay unconscious? Denis swore under his breath at himself for being such a forgetful fool.

"Stop, or I shoot!" cried Schmidt again.

Clausen and Carl were astounded to hear Schmidt's words.

"He has a revolver!" said Denis. "I forgot to tell ye. He fired at me in the house. Bad cess to me, but I forgot to bring the revolver with me!"

Just at this moment Schmidt fired, but his shot went wild. Clausen and the others faced about immediately. Meantime Schmidt was still coming on

and was now not more than a hundred yards distant.

"Shoot him!" yelled Denis, and accompanying his words with the action Denis fired at the advancing man, but without effect. Schmidt paid no heed to the shot, but kept on with his own revolver pointing at them. Clausen leveled the rifle at him and ordered him to stop; but again Schmidt paid no heed.

"Shoot!" cried Denis. "Don't wait any longer!" Clausen lifted the rifle and fired deliberately, and Schmidt, throwing up his hands, fell, a crumpled heap upon the ground. Denis rushed over to him and took the revolver from his lifeless grasp. He was evidently dead.

Meantime the remaining pursuers had stopped in consternation a hundred yards from where Schmidt had fallen, where Denis, now with two revolvers, one in either hand, stood facing them.

"Go back!" shouted Denis, "or we will serve ye as we have this blackguard here."

The Spielgarten people stood in consternation. Very few, if any of them, had ever heard the discharge of firearms.

"Go back, I say!" shouted Denis a second time, "or I'll fire again. You'll never take us alive, and most of ye will be dead men before you do it!"

There seemed to be little disposition on the part of the pursuing party to advance. They were completely intimidated. One of them cried out to Denis: "You had better come back. You cannot get

away in the long run. You have violated the law and you have committed murder."

"Glory be to God, but ye're thickheads!" answered Denis. "It's the divil's law, and I'm thinkin' it's a dacent deed we've done. And, as for murther, this blackguard here tried to kill me beyont, not two hours ago, and he was thryin' to kill us just now! Go back, and let us alone. We'll take care of oursel's. An' what we intend to do is none of your dirty business." And Denis withdrew backwards towards Clausen and the others, still facing the Spielgarteners with his two revolvers threateningly pointed at them.

"Go on," said Denis when he reached his party. "I'll be rear guard as ye go on."

With that, Clausen, with Carl and Mina, turned and continued onward toward the woods, which were now not more than four hundred yards away. Denis, meanwhile, walking behind them a short distance and every now and then turning with pointed revolvers toward the silent group of Spielgarteners, who did not venture to advance further.

When they reached the fringe of the woods the fugitives stopped and stood looking at the Spielgarteners, who were now evidently discussing what to do. In a few moments one of them advanced to where Schmidt lay and, stooping down, examined the body. He called the others, who in turn came forward and gazed down, awestricken, upon the lifeless man. Such swift and sudden death was new to

them. Violence was a rare thing in the Spielgarten. In all its history there had been but two murders committed and these were during the first ten years of its existence. To see one of their fellows struck down instantaneously by a weapon known to them only by hearsay and so completely disastrous in its effect not only surprised but shocked them beyond comprehension. After some little parley they picked up Schmidt's body and turned back in the direction of Marxville.

It was with intense relief that the fugitives saw the Spielgarteners retreating. They had been fearful lest they would be compelled to resort to further violence in beating their attackers off and were thankful that this necessity no longer obtained. To have had to kill Schmidt was sufficient blood on their hands, and Clausen was somewhat shaken with the experience, although he felt that he was, after all, acting only in self-defense. Mina was trembling from head to foot and clung desperately to Carl, who was doing his best to soothe her and allay her fright. Denis asserted that Schmidt had got his proper deserts and only regretted that he had not killed him in the first encounter.

CHAPTER XIX

THE fugitives remained in the shadow of the woods, watching the Spielgarteners as they disappeared over the crest of an elevation in the direction of Marxville. The question in their minds was whether the Spielgarteners would return later on. Clausen was of the opinion that they would not, as the people in the Spielgarten were not accustomed to think or move rapidly in emergencies. In fact, emergencies were rare in the Spielgarten, and an entirely new situation had developed.

Moreover, the knowledge that there was no egress from the Spielgarten would make the authorities feel secure in their belief that they could easily apprehend the little party of rebels at their own convenience. Schmidt, through whom all the evil had come about, was dead. If he were alive, there might be fear of attack again that night, as his personal interest and his vindictiveness would have urged him on without rest.

"At any rate," said Carl, "we ought to move farther on. If they pursue us, even if they wait until to-morrow, they will come directly to this spot. We

should be part way up the mountain when they arrive. I know the way. We can reach the nearest hilltop in another hour."

"Ye're right, Carl," added Denis. "We don't want to be caught here in broad daylight. How is it with you, Mina? Can you go on for another hour?" for Mina was very pale and showed traces of fatigue.

"By all means, let us go," said Mina bravely. "I am not tired. See, I'm ready!" and she took Carl's arm to indicate her willingness.

"It will be easier," said Carl, "to skirt the edge of the woods. The way is a little roundabout, but we will, in the end, save time."

The party started out, keeping to the open on the left-hand side, Carl in front with Mina to lead the way and to set the pace, according to her ability. Under these circumstances their going was slow, but as they felt no present urgency, they could afford to take it quietly. After a half hour they came to the lower slope of the elevation, which they intended to ascend.

"Let us rest for a moment," suggested Carl. "Mina is very tired." After ten minutes' wait they began the ascent. It was slow and tedious work, as they had to pick their way through underbrush and a heavy growth of trees, which almost completely shut out the light of the moon, brilliant as it was. Carl and Denis between them almost carried Mina, for, by this time, she was practically exhausted.

It took them a good hour, after many pauses, to reach the summit of the elevation. Here they determined to rest for the night. It was agreed that each of the men should keep watch in turn. Denis volunteered to take the first watch for two hours, when he would arouse Clausen for the second. Carl would take the final watch. Without more ado they wrapped themselves in their blankets, all except Denis, and, in spite of the excitement and toil of the day, were soon slumbering heavily.

Carl, who kept the last watch, refrained from waking them when the sun arose, as he felt that Mina needed the sleep. So he waited a good hour before he disturbed their slumbers. Mina arose much refreshed and quite dazed at first with her novel situation. Denis stretched himself vigorously and took in a deep breath with great satisfaction.

"It's the first time I wakened up, a freeman, in this tin years," said the Irishman. "Whether we get out or not, I'm done with the Spielgarten! I'd rather be free and dead than be alive and a slave again! I'm me own master now, and it's a blissed thing to feel this way again."

Clausen could not help smiling at the Irishman's way of putting it, but he, too, felt a new sense of life, upon waking into a world where the yoke of Socialism no longer burdened his heart and soul.

Carl, by this time, had started a fire, over which they cooked their breakfast. In the meantime Denis climbed a tree for the purpose of getting a view of

the clearing beyond the line of the forest. From this vantage point he could see all the way to Marxville. He scanned the scene with eager eyes and breathed a sigh of relief at seeing no evidence of any one approaching through the open fields. Having satisfied himself, he descended and reported to the others that there was no sign of a pursuit.

Clausen again declared his belief that the people in the Spielgarten would be slow to follow them. Carl, however, thought otherwise, but Denis agreed with Clausen. They had been in the Spielgarten for a number of years and knew the character of the people thoroughly. Nobody knew of their intention to attempt escape from the island, and, of course, no one knew that Carl had returned.

Before leaving, Denis again climbed a tree to see whether anybody was pursuing them, but, as before, nobody was visible. After breakfast they gathered all their effects together and started, under Carl's guidance. They descended from the elevation where they had spent the night, and after a half hour's steady tramp, struck the bottom of the valley of the first range. The ascent here was a long and fatiguing climb, especially to Mina. They had to make frequent halts out of regard for her, although she constantly insisted that they go on, but Carl, who alone realized the difficulty of the way and the hard task that yet lay before them, urged upon her the necessity of sparing herself. Clausen and Denis added their solicitations to his.

It was late in the afternoon when they reached the summit of the first range. They had to pick their way, at times making laborious detours. Not only Mina, but Clausen himself was showing signs of distress, for the latter, though still hearty, was well over sixty and quite unused to mountain climbing, to which Carl and Denis, as lumbermen, had become enured. Mina had borne up bravely, but was now completely worn out.

It was, therefore, determined to pitch camp for the night, although full two hours of daylight still remained. From where they were the entire valley of the Spielgarten lay visible to them. The silver thread of the river wound in and out through the variegated fields, which looked like an immense checker board below. Marxville seemed rather insignificant, with its low buildings grouped irregularly on the farther bank of the river.

It was a strange and rare sight to Mina, who had never before stood on such an elevation. She was filled with astonishment and admiration. The peaceful and slumbering valley, the profound silence around, the immense prospect filled her with awe as she stood gazing down upon the scene which had always been her world. How different it now seemed!

"It is wonderful and beautiful, isn't it, Mina, dear?" Carl's voice broke in upon her.

"How you startled me, Carl!" exclaimed Mina, as she confidingly took Carl's hand. "It all seems so

strange. All these years I have lived down there, never dreaming it would be otherwise. And it is already beginning to seem so far away—like another life entirely."

"It is the beginning of another, a new life, a greater life outside of the prison from which we are now escaping. It is even stranger to me than to you. All my life I had dreamed of the Socialist State as man's ideal condition, and to have found what I found there, what a terrible awakening! It has been a hard wrench for me to discover that my idol was, after all, of grossest clay. But I thank God that my eyes are now open, and it was worth all to have found you."

"I am glad, Carl," said Mina, looking up, with all the confidence of youth and love, into his eyes. "I think it is a great blessing that you should have seen for yourself what Socialism really is. You might have gone on all your life deluding yourself, but now you know."

"You are right, Mina. We will put by the past and bury it and look only to that future of happiness that lies before us. We will go out into the great world beyond and live as man has always lived; normally, striving for happiness and success, each according to his ability. I see it all now; I was blind before. There is no such thing as ideal freedom in the world. A man wins out by overcoming his adverse circumstances, and must hew his own path to make the most and best of himself. When

the State regulates, provides for and controls the individual as it necessarily does in the Socialist system, it reduces us to the level of sheep or cattle."

Just then Denis interrupted them by calling out, "Come on, Carl, we are ready."

They descended into the valley under Carl's direction. Although it was easier going down than their ascent of the day before, it was, nevertheless, difficult ground to cover. Fallen timber, underbrush, loose gravel, and at times precipitous places made the going often slow and difficult, but by midday they found themselves at the bottom of the second valley. Here they rested for an hour and took their lunch.

Before them loomed a second range much higher than the one they had just crossed. After toiling upward with many rests on account of Mina, by nightfall they had only achieved half the ascent. Here they remained for the night, but early in the morning, at sunrise, they started again, and steadily climbed until sunset, when they finally reached the summit of the second range overlooking the plateau strewn with boulders, as described by poor Lorimer. They were then at least seven thousand feet above the Spielgarten valley. The range they had crossed the previous day looked dwarfed below them; above them soared Mt. Bebel, snowclad and with masses of cloud gathered around its summit. Mina was filled with even greater awe and admiration as she gazed upon the stupendous prospect.

The Spielgarten lay before them almost in miniature. Marxville looked like the merest handful of houses. On the other side of the plateau rose in sheer nakedness the range of mountains between them and the sea.

With the setting of the sun the air became very cold. Carl and Denis gathered firewood from fallen timber and soon had a bright and roaring fire, around which they grouped with their blankets wrapped around them, for a cold and raw air was blowing down from the snowclad heights of Mt. Bebel. It was arranged that each of the men should keep a watch and replenish the fire during the night.

When morning broke they bestirred themselves again and prepared to set out. They followed the course of the stream flowing through the plateau until they came to the edge of the great precipice over which it plunged. As they gazed down over the precipice Mina drew back with a sharp breath, saying it made her dizzy. Skirting the precipice on the right under Carl's guidance, they followed the upper side of the abutting cañon along which Lorimer had originally made his way. In due time they came to the head of the cañon and found, as Lorrimer had, and as Carl had on his return to the Spielgarten, the graduated descent from the accumulated washing of the rain.

Carl informed them that they could descend in two ways: one by the way in which Lorrimer had taken, using a rope, which they had provided, to swing them-

selves down from the forty-foot cliff which lay nearly at the bottom, or they could make a considerable detour to the extreme end of the cañon where the descent would be easier, but would take a much longer time to achieve. He himself had been compelled to come back by the latter way, as he had no means of getting up the forty feet of sheer cliff which Lorimer had descended by means of the rope.

They were all of the opinion that it would be better to take the longer way round rather than run any risk, especially with Mina. There was no need for hurry, and in all likelihood they would have to remain a considerable time in the valley below before an opportunity of escape presented itself.

The descent was finally successfully accomplished, though not without some minor mishaps, chiefly in the way of bruises from rocks and boulders with which they came into collision, and a strained shoulder on the part of Denis, who slipped in the loosened gravel and, sliding down some twenty feet, struck against a heavy boulder. Once at the bottom of the cañon in safety, they pursued their way into the valley and traversed it to the little hut that had been built by Lorimer. There they concluded to remain and make it their abiding place until they should be able to escape.

That night the three men talked over the plan of escape as suggested in Lorimer's diary. It was determined that they would go down to the river the next morning and reconnoitre. They agreed that

one of them should keep a constant watch for the coming of the tug with provisions for the garrison. The information contained in Lorimer's account pointed out the way clearly to them, and they determined to seize the first opportunity that offered.

The next morning Denis, Carl and Clausen went down to the river's bank and surveyed the scene. They selected a point just opposite the barracks where some one of them would be constantly on the watch. There Carl and Clausen left Denis and returned to Lorimer's hut. Before doing anything else they dug a grave and placed the remains found in the hut in it. They then set to work to enlarge the structure for their own convenience, as they did not know how long they would be forced to remain. As Lorimer had done, they built the walls of the rough stones they found along the bank of the stream and in its bed, plastering the crevices with mud. It took them several days to complete it, two of them working diligently at it, while one kept watch on the point overlooking the bay.

It was now two weeks since their arrival and there were no signs of the tug appearing. They could easily imagine the loneliness of Lorimer during his long and weary vigil, with no soul to speak to. Denis and Carl were growing restless, but there was no help for it. Meantime they had speculated much upon what they should do when they seized the tug and whither they should go, as they were utterly without knowledge as to what part of the

world they were in. The people of the Spielgarten knew nothing of their place on the surface of the earth, and those who had been transported thither from the outside had always been kept prisoners below deck during the voyage with no means of even calculating the time of the voyage. Carl thought it must have been at least ten days, though that was only guess work on his part. The island, from its character and its flora, was clearly within the upper edge of the tropical zone. Whither, then, should they steer their course in the event of their safely capturing the tug? All these things were discussed again and again, but with no result, save the one idea of finally getting to America.

CHAPTER XX

One day Clausen was talking with Mina as she was drying her hair after washing it in the stream a little above the hut. The sun shone directly upon her head and as she stood with her luxuriant tresses streaming down over her shoulders, Clausen noticed little gleaming specks through it.

"Why, Mina," he said, "how your hair sparkles in the sunlight! Come here, my child, let me look," and Clausen, taking a strand in his hand, examined it closely and uttered an exclamation of astonishment. "Where were you washing your hair?" he asked eagerly.

"Why, father, what is the matter? You seem excited over it."

"Yes, yes," Clausen cried, "it looks like gold dust, Mina. Show me the spot."

"It is just beyond the first bend there where the bushes are." And Mina led the way to a bend in the bank where an eddy had formed; the bottom was sand. Clausen stooped over and, scooping up a handful let the water ooze out between his fingers, sorting the sand in his hand with his forefinger and

holding it exposed to the bright sunlight. Little particles glinted in the sun. Clausen felt his heart beat. If it were gold, here was the solution of a difficulty which had perplexed him ever since the prospect of escape had opened up. If they successfully reached the outer world, what were they to do without the means of life, for wherever they might go they would be empty handed, and, at least in the beginning, dependent upon the charity of others; but with gold in their possession they would be masters of their destiny.

Mina could not understand her father's excitement; reared in the Spielgarten, she had no idea of the value of the precious metal. Money was not used in the Spielgarten, and there was no gold even for ornament. The Spielgarteners were a purely agricultural and rural people, living an idyllic life on the lowest terms. To Mina gold meant nothing, but to Clausen, who knew the outer world, it meant much, and to be armed with it, under the circumstances in which they would have to face the world, meant secured victory in the battle of life.

"Denis, Denis!" shouted Clausen. "Come, come." Denis, who was near by, roused by the intensity in Clausen's voice, and imagining that something unusual or serious had happened, came rushing to where Clausen and Mina were standing. "What is it?" asked Denis anxiously, staring at Clausen, who was still sorting the particles in the palm of his hand.

"Look, Denis," said Clausen, stretching out his hand. "Look at the particles of gold there! See them glitter in Mina's hair! It is gold, I tell you. I discovered it first in Mina's hair, which she had been washing in the stream there."

"Glory be to God!" exclaimed Denis, with his eyes almost bulging from their sockets as he looked at the sand in Clausen's hand and at Mina's hair. "I'm thinkin' I could be contínted for a while here now if there is enough of the stuff to make it worth the waitin'." And Denis forthwith proceeded to scoop up a handful of the sand and scrutinize it eagerly.

"Sure, it's the stuff that makes the wurruld go round. It's thinkin' I am that we needn't be in such a pother to get away now. A bit of this in our pockets when we get out will go a long ways to makin' friends."

Mina was greatly astonished at her father's and Denis' excitement over the finding of gold, but, nevertheless, she had gleaned enough to understand that it must have tremendous value in the world outside.

"You do not understand, Mina," said Clausen. "Gold is the most precious of all metals, and mankind the world over has always set the highest store upon it, and amongst all people it is taken in exchange for everything. If we can gather a sufficient quantity of gold here, and it seems to me there must be a good deal in the bed of the stream, we can go out into the world with all confidence in the future.

It will put power and independence in our hands."

As Clausen was speaking they heard Carl's voice calling only a short distance away. His tones were excited, and as they turned in his direction they saw him running toward them from a little distance down the stream.

"The tug! the tug!" shouted Carl, waving his hand at them.

Denis and Clausen looked at each other. Here was a crisis. The tug coming just at the moment when they had found that gold was contained in the stream that flowed at their feet. Carl came up, panting and flushed; he had rushed back from his observation point as soon as he had seen the tug enter the bay, in order to convey the news to the others as quickly as possible. To his astonishment, neither Clausen or Denis shared his excitement. They stood looking at each other rather blankly, each holding a fistfull of sand in his hand. It seemed very odd to Carl and even stupid. Why didn't they arouse to the situation at the good news of the coming of the tug?

The same thought had come into the minds of both of the other men. To leave now before they could gather enough gold for their advent into the outer world would be folly, with it lying right under their feet only waiting for the taking.

"What's the matter?" asked Carl. "You stand there looking at each other as if I had not brought you the most momentous information you could

hear! I tell you the tug is coming into the bay now!"

"Yes, we understand, Carl," answered Clausen. "But something has happened here that makes things quite different. See this in my hand," and Clausen held out his open palm to Carl with its numerous glittering particles.

Carl opened his eyes wide and stared, and then lifting up his head looked wonderingly into Clausen's face as he began to comprehend. "Is it gold?" Clausen nodded, and Carl, seizing Clausen's hand, held it closer to his eyes as if scarce believing the truth of them.

"How did you find it?" asked Carl.

"Through Mina there," answered Clausen. "I noticed the glint of something in her hair, and found she had been washing it in the stream. The sand that I hold in my hand was taken from the spot, and you can see the gold in it."

For the moment the coming of the tug went entirely out of Carl's mind.

"We must make a quick decision," said Clausen. "If we are to attempt escape by seizing the tug on this trip we shall have to abandon all idea of securing any of the gold. What do you say?" addressing both Carl and Denis.

"I'm for shtayin', sure," said Denis. "T'would be throwin' away the chanct of a lifetime to turn our backs now upon it. Besides, the tug will come again, sure, and we know that it would take some time to

pan enough gold, for panning it is the only way we can get it."

"What do you say, Carl?" asked Clausen. "Shall we make the attempt now, or shall we remain to get the gold?"

"I think as Denis does," responded Carl. "There is no argument about it. If we can get out into the world provided with means of sustenance and even more by spending a little time here we would be more than foolish to neglect it. By all means let us begin at once to pan for the gold, but who knows the process?"

"I have read about it," said Clausen, although I have never seen it. Do you know anything about it, Denis?"

"Divil a bit," answered Denis, "the only gold I ever saw was in ould Ireland, and there it is as scarce almost as the snakes, and I have a way of thinkin' that maybe in some ways we're the better off for the scarcity of them both," and Denis' eyes twinkled as he got off this bit of moral sententiousness.

"Well, we shall have to make the attempt as best we can," said Clausen. "All I know is that a shallow vessel is filled with the material with which the gold is mixed, and held just beneath the surface of the water and gently occillated while the lighter elements are washed over the lip and the heavier sink to the bottom. Then the gravel and other non-metallic elements of a larger size are picked out by the fingers."

"That's a slow process," remarked Carl, "and it will take a long time to pan sufficient gold."

"Well, it's plenty of time we have," said Denis. "It's the one thing that's costin' us nothing and in this climate 'tis aisy passin'. There's no hurry about gettin' away, and sure we are comfortable enough here, an' the tug will be comin' again."

"Very good," said Clausen, "but let us get busy at once. The only vessels we can utilize are cooking utensils, and I think they will do admirably."

"In the meantime I think it would be well," said Carl, "to go to the point and watch the proceedings as the tug lands and find out all we can for future guidance when we make the attempt to seize it later on. I will go down to the point and let you know what I observe."

For the next three weeks all busied themselves, including Mina, in panning the gold. Mina soon grew more expert than any of them. The residue of gold left was not great at first, but Denis explored the stream higher up and found a much richer deposit. This they worked diligently, and before long had accumulated a considerable quantity.

The tug visited the garrison again at the end of the three weeks, but they determined not to make the attempt to seize her until her next visit, so that they might be able to accumulate more of the precious metal. They utilized a large and very tough leaf, something like the palm leaf, which grew profusely

in the valley, as pouches. These Mina sewed together to hold the gold.

Carl had duly reported what he had seen at the point during the two visits of the tug boat, and it was determined that on her next appearance they would make the attempt to escape. They laid their plans carefully. There was only one difficulty that bothered them, and that was how to get Mina across the river. Carl suggested the building of a raft on which they could float Mina over and which the three men could push in front of them, but Denis made the happy suggestion that this was needless, as when they seized the boat it would be easy to row over and get Mina. In this way also she would be in no danger in case of a struggle, which, however, they did not anticipate as they hoped to take the soldiers unawares when they were in bathing.

It was just ten weeks after the discovery of the gold that Denis, who was keeping watch at the point, announced that the tug was approaching. It was then late in the evening. The three men waited until night had fallen and then swam across the river under cover of darkness. They spent the night at the top of the bluff just above the garrison and waited in hiding until midday. The tug lay about one hundred yards out from the shore just opposite the barracks. It had been unloading all the morning and by noon the work seemed to have been completed. The three men watching were fearful at

first that the tug might perhaps depart immediately, but, fortunately, this did not happen.

At the noon hour all the soldiers and the two sailors, who had been unloading, proceeded to the shore and plunged in, disporting themselves in great glee in the water. As soon as the three men were satisfied that no one remained in the house they cautiously slipped down and crossed the space between the barracks and the bluff and quietly entered. The interior was as Lorimer had described it in his diary. All three immediately seized rifles and revolvers, which they proceeded to load. When all was ready they walked around the barracks and advanced toward the bathers. At first they were not seen and were half way down to the beach before one of the soldiers, perceiving them, uttered an exclamation of surprise and alarm, whereat all the men in the water turned and faced them in dumb astonishment. "Hands up!" shouted Denis.

It was a full half minute before the bathers recovered from their consternation. They looked at Carl, Denis and Clausen as if they were apparitions, for they never dreamed that any human being could possibly get out of the Spielgarten at that end of the island.

"Hands up!" again shouted Denis, and immediately sixteen hands were lifted with alacrity.

"What need is there of our lifting our hands?" ventured one of the soldiers; "you see we are not armed."

"Sure, I see," said Denis, "but it is the regulation way of doin' the job. Ye can put them down now, and do all ye come ashore all together." The bathers obeyed sheepishly. "Now," said Denis, after the bathers had gathered in a group on the beach, "is this all of ye? If there is any more of ye let me know."

"Yes," answered the man who had spoken before, "this is all of us except the engineer, who is on the tug." Denis glanced at the tug in fear that perhaps the engineer had seen the performance, but there was no appearance of the man anywhere, and Denis concluded that he must be down below. "Be quiet there, you spalpeens," he admonished the group. "The first one of ye that makes a noise will go to Kingdom-come quicker than he knows," and there was a menace in the Irishman's voice. "Carl, do you and Clausen get in the boat there and go out to the tug and seize it. If the engineer gives any tròuble don't be compunctious; we can't afford to have any slip now."

Carl and Clausen immediately jumped in the boat, while Denis stood with two pistols in his hands, covering the mute and cowed men.

In a few minutes Carl and Clausen reached the tug. Carl cautiously climbed aboard with the revolver ready, and Clausen followed him, after having made the boat fast. They stealthily approached the cabin door, which was open, and peered in. There was no evidence of the engineer there. They

then proceeded to the engine room, but he was not there either. There was but one place left and that was in the pilot house. Ascending the three or four steps which led up to the door, Carl cautiously opened it, and in full view, outstretched upon a cushion to one side, lay the engineer, evidently asleep.

Carl stepped in and prodded the prostrate man in the side with the muzzle of his revolver. The engineer grunted and then lazily opened his eyes, which grew wide in astonishment at seeing a stranger bending over him. Coming to a sitting posture, he stared blankly at Carl for a moment. "Get up," ordered Carl, as he held his revolver pointblank at the now thoroughly awakened and open-mouthed engineer.

"Where did you come from, and what do you want?" stammered the surprised man.

"Never mind," said Carl, "you come with me." The engineer obeyed with a shrug of his shoulders, as much as to say that there was no help for it. Taking the man to the deck, Carl and Clausen ordered him into the boat and rowed ashore with him.

As soon as they landed Denis shouted to the engineer, "Hands up, there!" and then to Clausen and Carl, "don't you see he has his clothes on and may be armed?" Whereat both Clausen and Carl felt a bit sheepish, for they had entirely overlooked that possibility. "Search him, Carl," said Denis, which Carl forthwith proceeded to do, but found no weapon upon the engineer except a jackknife, which Carl put in his own pocket. The engineer was then

commanded to place himself with the other prisoners.

"Denis, you and Clausen stay here on guard and I will row over immediately to get Mina," and Carl stepped into the boat and started across the river.

"Did you come out of the Spielgarten?" inquired one of the men.

"We did," answered Denis, "thanks be to God, and we'll never go back. It's a divil of a hole I tell ye, and I niver want to see its likes again." Whereat the man who had asked the question grinned.

"An' what's more," continued Denis, "we brought a lady wid us. Carl there has just gone to fetch her. An' our present intintion is to take the tug there and get to the outside world, leaving ye here with our compliments and best wishes, but, meanwhile, as the lady will soon be here I recommend that ye put on your clothes."

The prisoners proceeded immediately to dress themselves while Denis went through the crowd, searching to see if they might have any weapons, but found none.

"Is there any of you, spalpeens," said Denis, "who would like to take the voyage wid us?" None of the prisoners answered. "Well, then," said Denis, "we'll have to do a little impressin'. I think we will stand in nade of the engineer. Here, you," pointing to the engineer, "sthand aside there, we'll need your services."

The prisoners began talking among themselves

and finally one of the sailors stepped out from among them and volunteered to go with them. "Right ye are," said Denis, "sthand there by the engineer." Two of the other men also volunteered, but Denis declined, with the remark that they had a full crew, and that he did not want to weaken the garrison for fear the Spielgarteners might come down upon them in force.

By this time Carl was half way across the river, returning with Mina. Denis suggested to Clausen to go up to the barracks and secure all the cartridges in the place and to see that none of the guns were loaded. After this had been done and Clausen returned, the entire party, including the engineer and the sailor who had volunteered, stepped into the boat, which had arrived with Carl and Mina. As they rowed away Denis shouted back to the soldiers on the beach, "Now, gintlemen, you can continue your bathin'." They immediately boarded the tug and weighed anchor, and proceeded to steam out of the bay, Denis standing by the sailor who was acting as pilot and Clausen in the engine room with the engineer.

In ten minutes the entrance of the harbor was reached and the tug steamed out into the open sea. The sailor at the wheel turned to Denis and asked: "Which way?"

Denis looked blank for an instant, then put his hand to the back of his head reflectively. "Divil a bit do I know. What part of the world are we in, anyhow? I have been in that hell hole over there

these tin years past, and whin I came it was in the black darkness below decks of the steamer that brought me. What part of the world is it, me lad?"

"Schlectland is about north latitude twenty-three degrees and longitude seventy degrees."

"Just leave the latitude and longitude alone, me boy. Little geography I've got. What I want to know is, where are we?"

"Schlectland is in the Atlantic Ocean, about a hundred miles east of the Bahama Islands, and about three hundred miles from the coast of America."

"America, that's it; we'll steer sthraight for America, me lad. That's the land for me, and for all good Irishmen."

Meantime Clausen was plying the engineer below with questions, and elicited from him about the same information that Denis was getting from the sailor in the pilot house above.

Clausen's mind was much relieved at this information. So far they had met with extraordinary good luck. Indeed, the episode of intimidating the soldiers and seizing the tug had been almost ridiculously easy.

The engineer turned to Clausen and said: "I want you to understand that I am perfectly willing to go with you; there is no need of that revolver in your hand."

Clausen thrust the weapon into his pocket, and went up the hatchway to the deck and into the pilot house. Denis had already instructed the sailor to head the tug in a westerly direction. They were now

ten miles off, and Schlectland was beginning to recede in the distance.

Mina and Carl stood together in the bow of the boat. Carl held her clasped to steady her, as the motion of the boat was beginning to be felt considerably. She had never seen the sea before. The rich color had come into her cheeks and her eyes sparkled with a keen delight.

"It's wonderful, Carl! I never dreamed the world could be like this!"

Around them the great waves were tossing with white crests above the blue waters. The sky over them was a deep and fleckless sapphire. They both turned and looked at the island now lessening constantly in the distance. "Thank God we are rid of that," said Carl. And Mina's only reply was to draw closer to him.

In the pilot house Clausen and Denis were consulting about their course. Neither knew anything about navigation and the sailor at the wheel knew little more, and his knowledge of the seas to the west of Schlectland was not great. "We shall have to depend on you, my lad," said Clausen, "as we are ignorant of both navigation and the sailing of a ship. You do your best for us and we will reward you amply. Are you willing?"

"Yes sir, I am," replied the sailor. "I joined you of my own free will, and as long as I am with you I will be glad to do all that I can."

They continued their course steadily westward, and, after four hours, the only part of Schlectland

visible to them was the soaring summit of Mount Bebel. Carl, Clausen, Mina and Denis stood grouped on the after deck, gazing at the distant peak. At the end of another hour it had become a hazy outline on the horizon to the east. The sun was sinking, a huge red globe, into the waters before them. As night fell and the stars rushed out, the sea behind them became one wide waste of waters—Mount Bebel, grim sentinel of their long prison-house, had disappeared. They were free at last! Onward the little boat ploughed through the tumbling seas to the land of liberty awaiting them beyond, America.

THE END