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**A Matrimonial
Lottery**

In Which One Man Owned
Most of the Tickets

By DWIGHT NORWOOD

There are in various countries curious customs with regard to matrimony. In Lapland the groom must chase his bride in a foot race. In Russia, which has a very large area, with many different peoples, one and all having their own peculiar methods, there are a number of varied customs. One of these is that a girl may go into the house of any man whom she wishes to marry and remain there till he marries her. If he refuses he is considered to have insulted her and her family, and they take revenge on him if they can.

Another Russian custom among a certain people is this: They have a lottery. A girl is put up as the prize. Sufficient tickets are sold to give her a dowry. The holder of the winning ticket is compelled to marry the prize he has drawn, but she may decline him. If she does they may divide between them the money paid for the tickets. If a married man is the winner he may give the prize to any bachelor he may select. In N., a village in the northern part of Russia near the Siberian border, there were four of these lotteries held each year, thus providing for four girls who had reached a marriageable age and had not the necessary dowries.

The simple people of this village, buried in the heart of what might almost be called a wilderness, naturally resorted to simple amusements. They were an athletic people, especially adapted to the management of animals. One of the chief recreations of the people of N. was a sort of circus in which the young men performed in gymnastics and trained animals and feats of horsemanship were exhibited.

At one of these performances a slender young man named Ivan Ivanoff, with a figure fit for a statue, led the barebacked horses at one time, stepping from one horse to another.

Among those who looked at the feats of this young man was Nina Dimitrieff, a girl barely sixteen years old. To her Ivan, standing erect with a foot on each of two horses, guiding them wherever he wished, was the most beautiful sight she had ever beheld. When he had finished his performance and stood bowing before the plaudits of his audience Nina Dimitrieff took from her girdle a bunch of hardy flowers that grew wild in the woods of that region and threw them at his feet. He picked them up, meeting at the same time her admiring gaze.

In that glance which passed between these two simple creatures was an instantaneous flash of love. No courtship was needed. The mingling of two spirits was complete. Long associations might strengthen it, as constant use will develop a man, but it was from that moment a perfect love.

These two children—they were not much more than children—did not stop to follow out the consequences of this newborn passion, the nature of which in their innocence they did not understand. Among these people parents regulate marriages, and no marriage is permitted except where the bride has a dowry. Nina's parents could give her no dowry, and Ivan could not afford to marry her without one.

Not that they would, if left to themselves, consider this as a barrier. They would consider nothing but their love and mate like a pair of doves. It was the older heads of their parents, foreseeing the wretchedness of poverty for them and their children, that would keep them apart. It was some time before their attachment was discovered, but as soon as it was known to exist Nina was forbidden to have anything to do with her young lover.

For some time there were clandestine meetings, usual in such forbidden affairs. Then, the two being caught together by Nina's father, he took measures to marry her off. One of the marriage lotteries was about to come off, and he arranged that his daughter should be offered as the prize.

It was a terrible blow to the lovers. A thousand chances were to be sold at a ruble a chance. If they were all disposed of the bride would have a dowry of 4,000 rubles, or \$2,000 of our money, a very large sum in that region for a young couple with which to set up housekeeping. If the chances were not all sold the deficiency would be made up by the wealthier citizens of the village. In this case, where Nina was the prize offered, the chances would have doubtless all been sold had it not been that her love for Ivan was generally known. As it was, but a quarter of the chances had been taken up. So great was the deficiency that it was doubted

whether those who usually made up such sums would do so in this case.

Almost directly north of N. is Kara, in Siberia, where political offenders are sent to work in the mines. N. is the nearest town of any importance on the western side of the border between Russia and Siberia. Not long before the drawing of the marriage lottery was to take place Ivan and Nina, by a preconcerted arrangement, met in a wood to the northward of the village. The meeting was not to devise a plan, but to lament together over their approaching separation. They were in the heart of the forest under snow laden branches when, hearing a stirring in a thicket near by, they turned and saw

a face that caused Nina to shriek. It was the face of a man, but so wild looking that for a moment they thought it some creature of the forest. Then a figure stepped forth, a man with unkempt hair and beard, ragged, shoeless, with cheeks shrunken and eyes glaring like those of a hunted beast.

"My children," he said, "can you not hide me? If they get me they will take me back to the mines."

Ivan had once before seen an escaped prisoner from Kara who had been pursued and arrested in N. and had never forgotten the despair on his face when, loaded with chains, he was taken away on his dismal march back to prison. Ivan knew well that this man was a fugitive, and the hearts of the children went out to him. They asked him what they could do for him, and after consultation it was arranged that they should return to the town and bring him food. This they did, and as soon as night came on they took him into the town, where Ivan hid him in his father's barn.

Early in the morning a number of officials entered the town looking for an escaped prisoner. But he whom they sought was safely hidden and ministered to by Ivan and Nina. After searching the village in vain the party left, and the fugitive as well as his preservers breathed more freely. Two or three days after the officials' departure Ivan took clothes and shaving materials to the loft, and the fugitive relieved himself of his beard, cut his hair and put on a peasant's suit. Then he asked Ivan to bring him pen, ink and paper, and he wrote a letter, which he addressed to some one in Moscow, and asked Ivan to put it in the post for him.

After this the fugitive occasionally left the barn and, growing more venturesome, at last took up his quarters at an inn. He invented a story that he had a little money, with which he proposed to buy a few acres of ground, and was looking about him for that purpose. This explanation of his presence in N. was welcomed by his many neighbors, since he was rid of his wild appearance, marked him for a gentleman. However, the people with whom he mingled were not very acute, and even had they known that he was an escaped political prisoner would have shielded him so far as was possible. After awhile he began to receive mail, which, of course, was addressed to him under an assumed name.

Meanwhile the lottery scheme by which Nina was to be disposed of dragged because so few tickets had been sold. But at last they were disposed of, and the drawing was announced to take place at once. Some curiosity was manifested to know who had taken them. But the managers of the affair would give no information.

On the evening of the drawing Nina was present, as was customary for the bride, with a despairing look on her face that excited the commiseration of all. Ivan had saved enough money to pay for ten tickets. But what were ten chances in a thousand? The same was one in a hundred. He could not bring himself to attend the drawing, so he remained away. During the drawing he walked back and forth before the building in which it took place, looking up at the place where the girl he loved was to be disposed of.

Presently he heard a commotion, which he believed followed the announcement of the name of the winner. A wild hope sprang up in his breast that one of his chances had won. He ran up into the hall and asked who had drawn the prize. He was told that the name was Nicholas Axelrod, but who Nicholas Axelrod was no one seemed to know. His heart fell. Winding his hands, he was about to turn away when the manager of the lottery, standing on the platform where the drawing had taken place, advanced and read from a paper he held in his hands:

"If I, Nicholas Axelrod, win the prize, being a married man, I give it to Ivan Ivanoff."

Shouts arose, and cries for Ivan were heard. A man caught him by the arm as he was leaving and, turning him around, led him up to the platform where Nina sat, a smile of delight on her features. He kissed her, and the shouting broke forth anew.

But who was Nicholas Axelrod? There were cries for him, but he did not respond. Persons looked about them, expecting to see him arise and make his way to the platform to receive the ovation which it was evident was awaiting him. But he did not

appear, nor was he ever seen again in N. The happy couple sought him, but did not find him. It was rumored that he was a member of a noble family; that he had been pardoned by the czar; that he had been returned to Siberia. None of these rumors was ever proved. Both Ivan and his wife believe today that he bought all the unsold chances in the lottery, thus having three out of four chances of winning, and that he had done this to repay them for succoring him.

Nicholas Axelrod's real name was Paul Gerowsky, a Pole, whose family, related to the kings of Poland, submitted only because they were obliged to submit to the partition of their country among the three powers—Austria, Germany and Russia. But the Gerowskys did not give up hope that Poland would be redeemed and were ever watching for an opportunity to assert its reunion and independence. Some years before the marriage of Ivan and Nina, Paul Gerowsky became the leader of a plot with this end in view. It was discovered, and he was sent to Siberia. His escape from there, his succor by the lovers, his purchase of the unsold tickets to the lottery, as has been stated, were all that was ever known of him by the people of N. Under his own name he spent the rest of his life as a citizen of the United States.

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Endurance is more valuable than cleverness. It is the patient, steady plodder who gains and keeps fortunes.

Awakened from his sleep early Saturday morning to find his home in flames, Henry Marentette, an Essex farmer, had time to waken other members of the family and get them from the house. When the fire was discovered it had gained great headway, and, despite the efforts of the neighbors, the building and contents were burned to the ground. The loss will be about \$6000. The fire is thought to have originated from a defective oil lamp that had been left burning in one of the rooms. There was no other fire around the place. The barns and outbuildings were saved from the fire, but only after a hard fight.

Whether the corn be of old or new growth, it must yield to Halloway's Corn Cure, the simplest and best cure offered to the public.

The contract price for the new Methodist Church, Sarnia, is \$16,000. The new building will be considerably larger than the old one.

James Harris, aged 70, a Detroit man who recently purchased a summer cottage at Linden Beach, Cedar Creek, near Kingsville, attempted suicide during Tuesday night by cutting his throat with a razor. Dr. Lee was called and dressed the wound. Small hopes are held for the man's recovery, his windpipe being nearly completely severed.

COUNTY OF LAMBTON
Treasurer's Notice as to Lands
Liable for Sale for Taxes
A. D. 1914

TAKE NOTICE that the list of lands in the County of Lambton liable for sale for arrears of taxes by the Treasurer of the County has been prepared by me and that copies thereof may be had in the office of the County Treasurer.

And further take notice that the list of lands liable for sale as aforesaid is now being published in the Ontario Gazette in the issues thereof bearing date the 27th day of June A. D. 1914, and the 4th, 11th and 18th days of July A. D. 1914.

And further take notice that in default of payment of the taxes in arrears upon the lands specified in said list together with the costs chargeable thereon, as set forth in the said list so being published in the Ontario Gazette before the day fixed for the sale of such lands being the 1st day of October A. D. 1914, the said lands will be sold for taxes pursuant to the terms of the advertising in the Ontario Gazette.

And further take notice that this publication is made pursuant to Assessment Act, 4 Edward VII, Chap. 23 and Amendments.

Dated at Sarnia this 22nd day of June A. D. 1914.

HENRY INGRAM,
Treasurer of Lambton.

**Clerk's Notice of First Posting
of Voters' List, 1914**

Municipality of the Township of
Warwick, County of Lambton.

NOTICE is hereby given that I have transmitted or delivered to the persons mentioned in section 2 of the Ontario Voters List Act, the copies required by said sections to be so transmitted or delivered of the list, made pursuant to said Act, of all persons appearing by the last revised assessment roll of the said Municipality to be entitled to vote in the said Municipality at elections for members of the Legislative Assembly and at Municipal Elections, and that said list was first posted up at my office, at Warwick, on 20th day of July, 1914, and remains there for inspection, and I hereby call upon all persons to take immediate proceedings to have any errors or omissions corrected according to law.

Dated at Warwick this 20th day of July, A. D. 1914.

N. HERBERT,
Clerk of Warwick.

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