

German Emperor; but she filled honest little Katya with disgust.

Once during a grand ball at Madame Shiria's, Katya ran from room to room, looking and listening, as was her custom. The band was playing, couples were dancing, and laughter and merrymaking reigned supreme. At last Katya reached the outer room. In the shadow of the doorway stood a sorrowful figure with bowed head. It was a serf waiting to see Madame Shiria. He had been waiting there all day in the same attitude. He was in tatters, and through the rents in his rags his limbs looked like those of a skeleton. At last Madame Shiria's silken train was heard sweeping along the polished floor, and she appeared. The starving peasant trembled, and a faint light of hope flickered in his eyes. She asked in a chilling tone, "What do you want here?" He threw himself at her feet, and broke into a storm of sobs.

"My lady, God bless you! Have pity on me. My cow is dead. Help me, I beg of you!"

Madame Shiria stepped back with disdain. "How do these things concern me? Go to my steward. Go."

The serf had already been to the steward, who had sent him to the lady. Katya and her sisters pleaded for the unfortunate man, but he was put out of the house, and Madame Shiria went back to her ballroom. Katya's heart felt as if it were weighed down by a heavy stone.

Another neighbor was fat Duke Baratov, whose "god was his belly." Poor himself, he had married a rich countess, and built a luxurious palace with his wife's money. He kept an orchestra, and gave magnifi-