

## CHAPTER V.

There was great commotion in the corridors of the court when Nekhludoff entered.

The attendants flitted to and fro breathlessly, delivering orders and documents. Police captains, lawyers and clerks passed now one way, now the other; complainants and defendants under bail leaned sadly against the walls, or were sitting and waiting.

"Where is the Circuit Court?" asked Nekhludoff of one of the attendants.

"Which one? There is a civil division and a criminal one."

"I am a juror."

"Criminal division. You should have said so. This way, to the right, then turn to your left. The second door."

Nekhludoff went as directed.

At the door two men stood waiting. One was a tall, stout merchant, a good-natured man, who had evidently partaken of some liquor and was in very high spirits; the other was a clerk of Jewish extraction. They

were talking about the price of wool when Nekhludoff approached them and asked if that was the jury's room.

"Here, sir, here. Are you also one of the jurymen?" mirthfully winking his eyes, the good-natured merchant asked.

"Well, we will drudge together, I suppose," he continued in response to Nekhludoff's affirmative answer. "My name is Baklashoff, merchant of the second guild," he introduced himself, extending his soft, broad hand; "we must do our duty. Whom have I the honor of addressing?"

Nekhludoff gave his name and passed into the jury-room.

In the small jury-room there were about ten men of every description. They had just arrived; some were sitting, others walked about, eyeing, and making each other's acquaintance. One was a retired officer in uniform; others were in short coats, and but one in peasant garb.

Notwithstanding that they were all complaining that the jury duty was burdensome, and was taking them away from their business, they all seemed to be pleased with the consciousness of performing an important civic duty.

The jurymen talked among themselves of the weather, of the premature spring, of the business before them. Those who were not acquainted with Nekhludoff hastened to become so, evidently considering it an

honor. And Nekhludoff, as was usual with him among strangers, received it as his due. If he were asked why he considered himself above the majority of people he would not be able to answer, as there was nothing in his life transcending the commonplace. The fact that he spoke English, French and German fluently; that his linen, clothing, scarf and cuff-buttons were of superior make would not be sufficient reason for assuming his superiority, as he himself well understood. And yet he doubtless acknowledged in himself this superiority, and regarded the respect shown him as his due, and was offended when it was not forthcoming. It just happened that in the jury-room Nekhludoff experienced this disagreeable feeling of being treated with disrespect. Among the jurymen there was an acquaintance of Nekhludoff. This was Peter Gerasimovitch (Nekhludoff never knew, and even boasted of the fact that he did not know his surname), who was at one time tutor to his sister's children. Peter Gerasimovitch was now teacher in a college. Nekhludoff could never bear his familiarity, his self-satisfied laughter--in a word, his "communizing," as Nekhludoff's sister used to put it.

"Ha, ha! So you are also trapped?" he greeted Nekhludoff with a loud burst of laughter. "You did not escape it?"

"I never intended to evade my duty," sternly and gloomily said Nekhludoff.

"That I call civic virtue. But wait till you are hungry and sleepy,

you will sing another tune," Peter Gerasimovitch said, laughing still louder.

"This son of an archdeacon will soon begin to 'thou' me," thought Nekhludoff, with an expression of sadness on his face, as though he had just learned of a grievous loss in his family. He turned from the ex-tutor and approached a group of people that had formed around a clean-faced, tall man, of dignified carriage, who were holding a spirited conversation. The man was speaking of a case that was being tried in the civil division, showing his familiarity with the judges and the famous lawyers by referring to them by name. He was telling them of the remarkable turn given to the probable result of the case by the dexterity of a famous lawyer, by which an old lady, who was in the right, would be obliged to pay an enormous sum to the adverse side.

"He is a most ingenious attorney," he said.

He was listened to with respect, and some attempted to interrupt him with some remarks, but he cut them short as if he alone knew the true facts.

Although Nekhludoff arrived late, there was a long wait before him, which was caused by the failure of one of the judges to appear.