

VIII.

THE BLESSED COINCIDENCE.

My heart beat high that night as I approached The Quarries. What were all my successes, what my professional triumphs, what my scientific fame, if calamity was to meet me under the dusk arch of that gateway? What were my young life worth with its rosy dawn, if a shadow deeper than that which lay under those gloomy elms were to be cast athwart it? No. I could not harbor such forebodings. The sharp, wintry night-wind that stung my cheeks, as I hastened down the solitary path, was the breath of keen vitality and not of death. The stars in the steel blue heavens were cold but bright, and the march of the young moon on the far line of the white river was an emblem of youth, not of decay. A trial might await me at The Quarries, but not a catastrophe.

I softly raised the latch of the little door leading into the park. I softly entered and as softly dropped the latch into its place. I walked up the avenue almost on tip-toe. I stopped before the great dark portico. The house was as still as a tomb. Not a light in any of the front windows. Should I ring the door-bell? No. I might waken the sleeping, and, perhaps—I might startle the dead. Frightened by this thought, I hastened on to the other face of the building and soon found myself in one of the alleys of the garden. I looked up. That was her room. The blinds were drawn and the curtains fallen. Only the palest glimmer there, as from a night lamp. I looked below. The window of M. Paladine's study was illuminated. The old man was watching. I walked up the gallery, stopped at the entrance and listened. Not a sound. I rapped almost inaudibly. A chair was lightly stirred, and a moment after the door was noiselessly opened. M. Paladine, in his dressing-gown and slippers, looked sharply at me from under his shady eyebrows. In the darkness he did not recognize me.

"Good evening, M. Paladine," I whispered, taking off my hat.

"What! Is it you, Carey?" he replied, grasping my hand and drawing me within, his pale, haggard countenance lighted up and the gleam of his eyes showing how pleased he was.

"This is a surprise," he continued. "I did not expect you to-night. Did you receive my letter?"

"I received your letter last night at seven; I started at nine; I took the boat this morning at eight; I arrived three hours ago."

The old man pressed my hand in his.

"But Ory! Pray, M. Paladine, how is she?"

The aged father's face became more serene as he replied:

"Come and see."

He took his shaded study-lamp, I laid aside my hat and overcoat, and we both crept silently up-stairs. I shall ever remember that sorrowful ascent, the lover's *ria crucis*, and how heavily my foot pressed upon each step, how helplessly my hand moved along the banister.

M. Paladine held up his lamp and preceded me into Ory's room.

The chamber of a young girl is a sanctuary. It is filled with the subtle perfume of innocence. It is white, clean, orderly. It repels all fleshly thoughts. It attracts to the simplicity of virtue. But when that chamber is transformed into a sick room, it becomes doubly solemn. Suffering and sacrifice infuse into it an atmosphere of awe. What before was holy, now becomes sacred.

It was with these feelings that I followed M. Paladine. My eye was fixed only on one point. There she lay in her little bed, under coverlets of immaculate whiteness, her face turned upward, but immovable, her eyes closed, her hands joined. At her feet, half sitting, half kneeling, lay Gaisso, dressed in deep black.

A terrible suspicion shot through my mind, and I became suddenly so faint that I almost fell to the floor.

"Is she dead?" I asked myself.

"She sleeps," whispered M. Paladine, with a sad smile.

I approached nearer. How pinched were those beautiful features; how sunken those cheeks; how discolored those lips; those clasped fingers, how long and lean! And those wonderful eyes—had they, too, lost their lustre?

"It is the first sleep she has had in a week," murmured M. Paladine. "I will sleep to-night," she said, "and dream of Carey; I know he will come."

The old man's eyes became dim as he said this, while the tears coursed down my cheeks.

"Poor Ory," I said. "Yes, I have come, and will not leave you till you are well once more."

I stooped, took one of her cold hands in mine, impressed a kiss upon it, and replaced it on her bosom.

A sweet smile played upon her lips, and there was a slight tremor about her eyes.

Gaisso here rose and approached me. I took her hand heartily in token of friendly recognition, as well as to thank her for the care which she had of Ory.

"Yes," she said, "this is her first sleep, and she told me, 'If he comes while I am asleep you must be sure to awake me.' Shall I do so, sir?"

"Oh, do not disturb her, Gaisso. I shall spend the evening with M. Paladine; and if she should awake during that time, tell her gently that I have arrived."

"Yes, that is the best," said the old man. "We will retire now. I have confidence that she will spend a good night."

M. Paladine led the way out of the room; I followed slowly. On the threshold I paused to look once more at the cherished form. What! Could it be? Her head had turned on the white pillow, her face was toward the door and her eyes were wide open. I stood for a moment fascinated. A heavenly smile wreathed her lips, she slowly unclasped her hands and held out her arms to me. Transported beyond myself, I rushed back into the room, and fell on my knees at her side.

"Ory, Ory," I sobbed.

"I knew you would come," she whispered sweetly. "I saw it all in my dreams. I beheld you leave the country house so well described in your letters, drive in the night along lonely roads and through lonelier woods, steam up the river, and stand over me full in the light of papa's lamp. I am better now. Let me sit up."

Both M. Paladine and Gaisso pleaded with her to remain perfectly still and not provoke a new attack of fever by useless stirring. But she insisted gently on being propped up with pillows, alleging that a change of position would be a relief. We did her bidding. Then at her request the three of us—M. Paladine, Gaisso and myself taking chairs, formed a semi-circle around her.

"Instead of sitting down stairs with papa," she said, "you will sit up here with me. That will be as agreeable to you, and it will be infinitely more agreeable to me. I want you to tell me all about yourself, Carey, during the past eight long weeks."

I complied with the request, making my narrative as lively as I could, and interspersing it with humorous anecdotes to amuse her. She smiled more than once, and the hilarity of M. Paladine and of Gaisso showed that they were pleased to see her so well entertained. When I spoke of my successes, of the approbation which my superiors had awarded me, her fine eyes brightened and the colour mounted to her cheek. But when I went on to mention the magnificent offer which Uncle Pascal had just made me, emotion overcame her and she burst into tears.

"How proud I am of you, Carey," she said. "How much you deserve all this. Oh! such good news would give me life, even if I were nearer than I am to the brink of the grave."

I entreated her to be calm. It was the crowning of my happiness to know that she took such part in my success, but I could not enjoy it at the risk of her health. She must lie down now and seek some rest.

M. Paladine who, though silent, had shown the greatest interest in my narrative, and had an air of serenity throughout, now approached his daughter.

"Look at me, my darling," he murmured.

"How is your head?"

"Quite clear to-night."

"No pain?"

"None whatever, papa."

He then felt her pulse very attentively.

"And no fever either, Ory," he said. "We are decidedly better. It was very kind of Carey to hasten to us thus, was it not?"

"Oh! I knew he would come as soon as he received your letter, papa dear. I have not thanked him, for he knows that words are too poor to express all I owe him. But now that he is come, I must get well. Indeed, I feel quite better now. No headache. No fever. No weakness."

"Then we may hope for a good night's rest, Ory. That is the doctor's *sine qua non*, mind. It is getting late now, and had you not better try to sleep? Carey has entertained you all he could this evening, and I am sure will find something new to make you laugh to-morrow."

She seemed so calm, so content, that obedience was a pleasure to her. She allowed Gaisso to replace her in a recumbent position.

"We must not abuse God's goodness," she said. "I must rest satisfied with the happiness I have enjoyed in the past hour. Ah! who could have believed yesterday at sunset that I would be so well, so happy this evening, with Carey at my side!"

"How was that?" I exclaimed, in dread.

"I was very low yesterday, Carey," she replied, with a smile.

"Very ill, but not alarmingly low, my dear," interrupted M. Paladine, evidently intending to dissimulate her condition.

"I was dying, papa. I knew it. I felt it. How I have ever rallied a merciful Providence alone can tell. I thought my fate would be that of Graziella, but I have been spared this act of supreme sacrifice."

"Oh! Ory," I exclaimed, "at that same hour yesterday I assisted at a scene and experienced emotions which I did not tell you a moment since lest they might move you too much, but which I may mention now as a blessed and providential coincidence." And I proceeded to relate what had happened in the village church, the wonderful music, the song without words and my sorrowful presentiment.

Ory's hands were clasped and she was engaged in prayer all the time that I spoke. Gaisso buried her face in the bed-clothes at her ward's feet. M. Paladine bent his head and seemed under the dominion of a powerful feeling. If ever in my life I found myself surrounded and buoyed up by spiritual influences, it was then. Mere sentiment may sometimes appear silly to the world-wise, but who could resist it at such moments as these?

After a long pause, during which M. Paladine took up his lamp quietly and prepared to depart, Ory beckoned me to her. She whispered these words in my ear:

"Our Lord alone knows for what purpose He restored me to life, when, according to all appearances, I should have died; but if it be to serve you, I will be content. Meantime, I must increase my debt to you by asking you one more favor. Bring Bonair back to The Quarries. You alone can do it. I shall never be really well till it is done," and in a tender voice she added, extending her hand:

"Good-night, Carey. You, too, need rest. I shall sleep tranquil to-night. Will you come to-morrow?"

I promised her, and we parted.

(To be continued.)

NAPOLEON IN RUSSIA.

HOW HE ENTERED THE CZAR'S DOMINIONS IN 1812 AND HOW HE LEFT THEM.

I.

As Napoleon was about to cross the Russian frontier he paused, literally faint with hunger, at the little Polish village of Skrawedze and made his way, accompanied by his staff, to the priest's house to ask if he had anything eatable.

The priest understood no French and could speak nothing but Polish, and Napoleon was unable to convey to him his meaning till he reflected that the Polish ecclesiastic was a Catholic and naturally had learned Latin. "Let's try him with the Roman Catholic language!" said the Emperor, and straightway entered into a conversation with him in the tongue of the Caesars.

The priest had nothing to give—nothing. The foragers had swept the village bare, a fact whereat the worthy ecclesiastic did not murmur, for were they not attempting the liberation of his country? "There's a priest," said the Emperor as with a laugh he clapped the good man on the shoulder, "there's a priest who doesn't set his heart on the things of this world."

Laughter, however, does not fill an empty stomach, and the Emperor in dejected perplexity was gazing out of the window into the yard when he espied a hen, the solitary survivor of the sack of Skrawedze.

"Reverendissime, ecce est pulla," he cried with elation; and summoning his aides, dashed into the garden in pursuit of the chicken, which was speedily captured and wrung as to its neck.

"If you are as good a cook as you are a clergyman," said the Emperor to his host, "I shall have a famous bowl of chicken broth." But the priest was unversed in culinary lore, and every she in the village had fled. Two aides-de-camp, however, set about the important labour, and soon Napoleon had, with a soldier's iron spoon, eaten his bowl of broth, thickened with broken biscuit, and half of the fowl. Then after a doze of half an hour he mounted his horse and prepared to ride forward.

The Poles meanwhile had gathered outside, and were acclaiming him as "Father" and "Saviour," but he paid no attention to their homage, and passed on, taking with him the priest as a guide. The unfortunate ecclesiastic had not even had the remainder of the last inmate of his pen-house wherewith to stay his stomach, and compelled to walk rapidly through the mud, was completely knocked up when at last they reached the highway near the frontier.

The Emperor bade Berthier send the priest back with an escort, having first counted out to him a sum of 20,000 francs to be distributed among his poor relatives and pensioners, then shook hands with him. "Vale, reverendissime," he said, "memento mei ad altare Dei," and rode across the frontier into Russia.

II.

The French army—the fragments of it, rather—bleeding, freezing, dying, was toiling homeward across the snow-covered plains. Napoleon, foremost, was hurrying to Paris, followed very closely by the Cossack scouts, when he reached a small town on the Polish frontier and entered its tavern (*Kaffee-haus*). There was a throng of customers in its principal room as he strode in, and going to the fire-place turned his back to the grateful warmth.

Mme. Mitzulewicz, the hostess, strove to push aside this unknown French officer who so cavalierly hindered her cooking apparatus. He wore the uniform of the Chasseurs of the Guard and over it a cloak of velvet and fur, with upon his head a huge fur cap.

"Tis he! 'Tis Napoleon!" whispered a tutor who was present, to his charge, a young lad, and the wondering and awed boy drew near, curious to see the great Emperor and to hear what he was saying to the hostess.

"Listen, you pretty little Pole, what a pretty little woman you are!" were the words that the youth heard. At that moment an officer of the Polish Krasinski regiment, the first that had crossed the Niemen and which at the passage had lost two hundred men and horses, swept away by the current, entered the tavern, and seeing the newly-arrived guest bowed reverently before him, hailing him as "Sire."

"How did you recognize me?" said the Emperor.

"The Emperor gave me this at Wagram," answered the officer, touching the cross of the Legion that he wore.

"I am the Emperor," said Napoleon; "I have

no need to deny it here. Go, bring the *sous-préfet* to me at once."

"Off with your hats—the Emperor!" cried the officer, as he quitted the apartment. Napoleon thanked the astonished and confused occupants as they rose, desired them to continue their occupations or amusements heedless of his presence, and set himself to teasing maliciously the hostess, who no longer protested against his monopolizing the fire.

There was also in the room the wife of the second Judge of the town, a young and very handsome woman; to her Napoleon paid violent court. "You are a very pretty little thing!" he said, pinching her ear and patting her cheek, after his accustomed fashion.

Rapp, Coulaincourt and some Polish officers of the escort meanwhile had entered, and the *sous-préfet* had hastened to the tavern. It was a ride of fifty versts through the woods to the nearest place of real safety, and already the Cossacks were scouring the frontiers. While the official, who had offered to find a guide, was preparing for his departure, Napoleon dined voraciously upon a leg of mutton and carrots. It was whispered that this was the first meal to which he had sat down since his departure from Moscow.

Looking up he saw upon the wall a framed engraving of the "Interview at Tilsit." "How things change in life!" he said. "Tilsit in 1807 and now—take that picture down!" Then he went on to praise loudly the courtesy and good qualities of the Czar and expressed his admiration of the military talents of Constantine. Then he fell to his mutton and carrots, remarking to an officer that, apropos of handsome women, the Queen Louisa of Prussia was the most charming creature he had ever met.

III.

At the moment it was announced that the sledges were in readiness, the Emperor was asked to review the National Guard of the town, which had been turned out in his honour. The sappers, who wore false beards and handled their picks in a very clumsy manner, excited his laughter, and turning to Rapp he exclaimed, "Aren't they ridiculous?" A great shout of "Long live the Emperor!" was raised by the silly folk, ready to die for the vanquished sovereign who laughed at them, and Napoleon seemed pleased and complimented their commander, who said that was not all his force—he could turn out 2,000 men.

"Two thousand men!" said the Emperor, with some surprise; "if we can raise 2,000 men in a place of this size, the country as a whole can easily furnish 200,000. Things are not desperate yet," he added to Rapp.

The sledges were drawn up. Napoleon entered the first with his Mameluke, Roustan, and Rapp; Coulaincourt and the Polish officers were in the second; the third was laden with food and forage. Mikoulicz, a Pole, who was to act as guide, was told that the Emperor travelled as Marshal Coulaincourt and not under his own name. Mikoulicz, who knew thoroughly all the intricacies of the forest, was to receive 25,000 francs for his services. From Elba Napoleon sent him a ring with his epher in brilliants, worth 6,000 francs. Mikoulicz sold it to a German trader for 400 francs. It may be added that the Russians, when they discovered that, thanks to the Pole's assistance, they had failed to capture the Emperor, decreed the guide's punishment, and when they caught him sent him to Siberia.

The whips cracked and the horses sprang forward. Turning round the Emperor cried gayly to Mme. Mitzulewicz, who was standing on her doorstep, "Adieu, baba!" and was gone.

He had mounted his horse for the campaign of Moscow humming "Malbrough s'en va-t-en guerre;" he disappeared into the pine forests, comforted with his leg of mutton and carrots, leaving behind him the Grand Army, with for all farewell "By-by, Sissy," to a pretty tavern wench.

IV.

The boy who was at the tavern with his tutor heard the words. He grew up to become a Polish Bishop, Mgr. Butlewicz, and wrote the curious and interesting "Memoirs" from which this account is taken, and wherein he piously thanks God for having been permitted to see and hear so many wonderful things. Much that the good Bishop saw and heard was by no means wonderful, but he saw Napoleon leave Russia and heard from the old priest how Napoleon entered Russia, and makes his contributions of priceless trilles to the history of the crisis of the conqueror's career.

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy, for the speedy and permanent cure of consumption, bronchitis, catarrh, asthma, and all throat and lung affections, also a positive and radical cure for nervous debility and all nervous complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive, and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send, free of charge, to all who desire it, this recipe, with full direction for preparing and using, in German, French, or English. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. W. Sherar, 149 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.