

unsuccessful rebels. To shoot them publicly, transport them, torture their wives, and issue arbitrary laws of repression—all this is simply to give the cause immortality. This is what the Russians have always done. The best way, surely, would be to forgive them, simply, and take away their arms, and to say, "My friends, you have now neither guns nor powder. We are not going to give you any. Sit down and grow your crops." Then such hot-headed irreconcilables as my old friend would be impossible. Or if they must be punished with death, then let it be done, as with Jugurtha and Catiline's conspirators, in the secrecy of some dark dungeon where newspaper correspondents cannot penetrate.

"Where are they, these heroes of Poland?" asked Leonard, laughing. He was determined that the thing should not be treated seriously. "Let us push the table back to the window—so. Now, Laddy, if you stand there on the hearth rug to receive them, it will be like holding a levee. The Captain shall be your Court—I will be your *aide-de-camp*. And here they are."

Five men, headed by Wassilewski, came solemnly into the room, nearly filling it up. The last of them shut the door carefully as if he was shutting out the world. But it opened again, and to my boundless astonishment admitted Herr Räumer, in his blue spectacles. He came in as if invited to take part in the ceremony, walked across the room, and stood in the window, his back to the light, beside the Captain. We formed two groups. I on the hearthrug, with Leonard at my right hand; and on the left the Captain, who contemplated the strangers with eyes of no favour, and beside him our German friend, to whom, since his magnanimous conduct in the matter of Celia, one felt an access of friendliness. And before us, the five men of my father's nation.

It was, as Leonard said, something like a levee, only there was a certain incongruity about it which made one feel rather ashamed.

It was curious to consider that the men who stood before us were, so to speak, pledged to fall for their country. One thought of the prisoners brought out to fight their last battle with each other; every man resolute to make a brave show and please the thousands; every one hopeless of any escape; every one looking forward with a certain fearful expectation to the down-turning of the thumb; one or two, perhaps, the more aged men, not sorry to escape the miseries of captivity in the glorious rush and shout of vivid battle; some whose thoughts turned back—then Leonard touched my shoulder, and I gave my attention to things present. Wassilewski was there to introduce; not, he said, to speak. He wore a satisfied and even a glad expression. The long-wished-for moment had arrived. He had brushed his black coat and buttoned it tightly round his long lean figure; his white hair was combed back and fell behind his head, leaving his face standing out keen and eager with bright and deepest eyes, and full white beard. His nervousness and restless manner was gone. You might think of him thus calm and collected charging his rifle for one more shot in a hailstorm from the advancing grey-coats.

The first of the four who came with him, and the most important, was a Pole about forty years of age; a tall, upright, and strong man, looking like a Frenchman in dress and the cut of his hair. His eyes had something of the wild look which characterized Wassilewski.

Wassilewski was about to introduce him to me, when he broke away and advanced, speaking in French, with a certain gaiety of manner, and held out his hand—to Leonard.

"Count Pulaski," he said, "we are indeed rejoiced to find you like your father, among the friends of Poland. Wassilewski had not prepared us for such an accession to our ranks."

I was hardened by this time to any such reference to my deformity, but I must own that it was not without a pang that I witnessed disappointment in his face, as Leonard bowed and indicated myself, the hunchback.

"Parlon, M. le Comte," he said. "This is my friend, Ladislas Pulaski."

The Pole's face fell, in spite of a polite attempt to disguise his disappointment. To be sure, there was some difference between a tall and handsome young man, whose very face commanded trust, and proclaimed him a natural leader, and myself, short, round-backed, and dreamy-eyed. We shook hands, and he said nothing, but stepped aside to make room for the other three. I received the greetings of all in turn. One of them was a short, thickset man, apparently an artisan, a man of fifty or so, in ragged and threadbare blouse, whose face was decorated, like Wassilewski's, with a sabre cut. Another was a much older man in spectacles and black cloth clothes. This was a Professor in some American College, who had come across the Atlantic in vacation to see his compatriots, and learn the chances. The third was, I believe, an importation from Warsaw direct, who spoke nothing but Polish, and was pained to find that I could not understand him. It seems strange that Wassilewski should have allowed me to grow up in ignorance of so important a thing. As they stood before me I was struck with a resemblance which they all seemed to bear to each other. It was only for a moment, and was due, I suppose, to the Slavonic type of face. And oddly enough, Herr Räumer's face bore this same characteristic. I thought of Leonard's suspicious. Could he, too, be a Slav? But it was absurd to harbour suspicions against one who had actually been converted—that very morning

—to the conviction that there may be honest men in the world.

"We are all friends of Poland, I suppose?" said the leader of the deputies, looking suspiciously around. It was odd that no one, not even Wassilewski, took the least notice of Herr Räumer.

"I am an old friend of Ladislas," said Leonard. "I am almost his brother, as Wassilewski knows. But we will withdraw if you wish."

"He is an officer in the British army. He has fought the Muscovite," said the old man. "He may stay."

The first speaker, the Gallicised Pole, drew out a paper.

"This is little more," he said, "than a meeting to make the acquaintance of a young Pole of illustrious descent, great misfortunes, and undoubted talents."

I bowed.

"Whose pursuits, we learn, have hitherto been peaceful. We hear, however, with pleasure, that we may confidently look for his adhesion whenever we find it possible—"

"That is, immediately," said Wassilewski.

"To take practical steps in the desired direction."

"To call Poland once more to arms," explained Wassilewski. "Speak, Ladislas Pulaski."

"Gentlemen," I said, speaking in French, "you see me as I am; deformed from my childhood, bearing a name which can never be made glorious by any achievement of my own. You know my story, and the fate of my father. Wassilewski has urged upon me to join you."

"And I," said Leonard, also in French, "have urged upon him the madness and folly of joining in your plans. Gentlemen—you, M. le Comte,"

—he addressed the chief of them—"are not all wild enthusiasts. If you concert any plan of rebellion, draw it up without consulting Ladislas Pulaski. He is not a soldier, nor is he of the stuff which makes soldiers. He is a poet and a musician. If you must pit the feeble resources of a province—I beg your pardon—a nation like Poland against the armies of a mighty Empire which has been able to resist for two years the combined forces of England, France, and Turkey, do not add to your numbers a man who in the field will be useless to you, whose death can do you no good, and whose life may do others much good."

The leader hesitated. Then he whispered to Wassilewski.

And then the old Captain had his say.

"I do not," he said, stepping forward and laying his hand upon my shoulder. "I do not unfortunately understand any language but my own. I have never regretted the fact till the present moment. Gentlemen, this boy is my son. I have adopted him, I have educated him, I refuse to let him go."

"The name of Poland," began my old conspirator.

"In the name of Poland," said the Captain, "I would let him go if I thought he would be of any use. But this is not in the name of Poland. It is—pardon me if I am rough—in the name of a conspiracy. Assure me, if you can, that the nation is with you, and Ladislas shall go."

"No, no," cried poor old Wassilewski. "He comes of his own accord, he cannot be kept back, he fights for his mother's wrongs. Tell me, Ladislas, tell me, is not that the case?"

His voice trembled, his eyes were so pathetic that I could not resist their appeal. I took his hand, and pressed it. But I had no word to say.

The man they called the Count looked disappointed and uneasy.

"This is not," he said to Leonard, "quite the reception which we expected. Still no doubt there is truth in what you urge, and besides—besides—nothing is quite certain. Be assured, M. le Capitaine," he addressed the Captain, "that we shall spare Count Pulaski if possible. If his name will help us, and if we can satisfy you that we obey the voice of the nation, we may call upon him—"

"If—if?" repeated Wassilewski. "Why, are the Poles gone mad to forget the glorious name of Pulaski?"

"Not mad, my friend," said the Count. "But twenty years have passed. In Polish villages, where there are no books and no papers, much is forgotten in twenty years."

I understood his look as he said these words. I was not to go. Of what use could I be, and who after all these years would be stirred for a moment by the intelligence that a Pulaski had joined the insurgents? Was my first feeling one of relief or of humiliation?

But the conference was brought to a sudden and unexpected end. The Count, looking round, perceived Herr Räumer standing modestly in the shade of the curtain.

"And who is this gentleman?" he asked. "Is he also a friend of yours, Count Pulaski?"

Before I could answer, Herr Räumer replied for me. It was in his most mocking tone, which brought out the curious rasp in his voice. It was a voice which somehow haunted one—you could never forget it. I hear it still, sometimes, in dreams.

"A friend of Ladislas Pulaski, and a friend to Poland. Perhaps a closer friend than any of you. Pray proceed with your papers, M. le Comte."

It was the ragged workman, the man in the blue blouse, who sprang forward as if he had been shot, and pushing everybody aside, began gazing in the German's face, gesticulating and gasping.

"I know that voice," he cried. "I have heard that voice—many times. When? In Warsaw.

From whom? From an agent of the police—the police—the Russian police!"

His voice rose to a shriek. Herr Räumer did not move or answer. His massive face seemed to be of marble as he stood there returning the other's gaze. And when the workman removed his blue spectacles he made no resistance, nor any sign.

"Who is this man, Wassilewski?" asked the Count.

"I do not know," he replied carelessly. "I did not see him come in. I have seen him walking with Ladislas. He belongs to the town."

"Man!" cried the *outrage*, "do you not know his voice? Are you deaf, then? Have you forgotten? Speak again—you. Speak, spy!"

But Herr Räumer did not speak. He folded his arms, looking down upon the little *outrage* with an expression of great contempt. But he did not speak.

The workman shrieked in a kind of rage.

"*Mais oui*," he cried, "*mais oui*. I am not mistaken. Wassilewski, M. le Comte, look at this man, I say again. Look at him. Here is treachery, here is a spy of the Muscov. We are invited to meet a Pole—bah! a Pole who cannot speak his own tongue—and we find our enemy in the middle of us. *Mes frères*," he looked round him with a face which revenge and hatred made a curious and hideous caricature, "*mes frères*, shall we let this man leave the house alive?"

"*Enfin*," cried the Count. "Who is he? Is it any use, Count Pulaski, asking you who he is?"

"It is Herr Räumer," I said, "a German gentleman, who has lived in this town for many years."

"Who brought him here?" asked the chief.

"He came in with you," I replied. "I thought Wassilewski brought him." The old man, puzzled and uneasy, shook his head. He was so eager to begin the fighting, this veteran rebel, that this preliminary talk, even talk of traitors and spies, worried him. No: he had not brought in this stranger, he said.

Then Herr Räumer laughed and spoke.

"I came," he said, in that deep base voice which jarred upon our nerves like a violoncello out of tune, "I came uninvited. Let that be understood. I was not asked to come by any one. I wish to make one in this gathering of Polish conspirators. It is a movement in which I take so deep an interest that I may be excused for wishing to know all that goes on."

Of course he was sneering, and, equally of course, he did not expect to be believed.

The Parisian Pole shrieked and danced with rage, ejaculating, cursing, pouring out imprecations with a volubility almost incredible.

"Here!" he cried, a little exhausted, "Here! In the very presence of the young Count Pulaski. You, Wassilewski, look at him. Do you not know him?"

He lifted himself on his toes and hissed a name in Wassilewski's ear.

The old man staggered.

"Here—in the same town—all these years—and I not to know it!" he cried. "Not to know it—"

Then he advanced upon Herr Räumer, tall, threatening, wild-eyed, waving his arms like the sails of a windmill.

"Oh! men—men—shall we kill him?"

He was hungry for the blood of the spy. Had he possessed a weapon, I think there would have been an end of him at once. Two of the others the Professor and the Count, placed themselves before the door, and the man in the house danced round and round, loudly crying that he should be killed, and that at once.

"He is a spy—oh! Ladislas—hope of my heart—the son of my dear mistress whom this man murdered, what have you told him about us—about our plans?"

"Nothing," Wassilewski. Remember—I know nothing.

"He has told the spy nothing," Wassilewski repeated. "Have you eaten his bread, Ladislas? Have you entered his house? Have you taken his hand?"

"I have done all those things," I replied.

Herr Räumer laughed.

"He has done all those things. Why not, conspirator and rebel?"

Wassilewski pointed to the man in the blouse.

"Tell him," he said, "tell Ladislas Pulaski why he should not have done those things."

"He should not have eaten his bread, or entered his house, or taken his hand, because the bread is paid for by Russia, because the house is the house of a Russian spy, and because the hand is red with Polish blood."

"And more—and more," said Wassilewski.

"Much more. That hand was the hand which arrested Roman Pulaski on his way to the Austrian frontier. It is the hand of the man who led the Cossacks when they robbed the Polish mothers of their children. Count Ladislas Pulaski, there stands the man who murdered your mother, and made you—what you are."

"More," said Wassilewski. "More."

"It is the hand of the man who drove Roman Pulaski along the road from Warsaw to Siberia."

Leonard laid his hands upon my shoulder.

"Steady, Laddy—quiet, dear boy, patience."

Then the Count spoke.

"It is unfortunate. We might have known that Russian spies would be in this place somewhere. We did not expect to find one in our very midst."

"Among us all these years, and I never knew him!" groaned poor Wassilewski. "Poles? What shall we do to this man?"

"Meantime," said the Count, "we have to face the fact that he has been here before to-day,

that he knew of our coming, and the reason of it, and that all our proceedings will be reported immediately to St. Petersburg. This, at least, changes our plans."

"Not to-day's proceedings. For he shall die—he shall die," cried the workman.

And then there was dead silence. The men looked at each other, as if asking who would strike the blow.

The Captain interfered.

"Gentlemen," he said, "do not forget that whatever this man is, or has been, he is in my house, and in England, and must be allowed to go unhurt. You cannot, as you might in Poland, kill him as a spy. That is impossible. You must let him go."

"Let him go?" cried the Parisian, springing to the front. "Never."

I will do the man justice. He never flinched or showed the slightest fear. But the Count drew him back gently.

"Let him go in peace," he said. "In England we cannot shoot him. Go; all that we can do, Monsieur le Monarch, is to parade your name, to describe your person, to make your calling impossible unless you can disguise yourself, and therefore to ruin you with the Secret Service Department. Go, loathed and accursed among men. Go, *canaille*."

He turned from him with such a gesture as Peter might have made to Judas. Leonard, to my astonishment, took Herr Räumer by the arm, and led him to the door, going out with him, as the Poles fell back right and left. Wassilewski and the man in the blouse whispered together for a moment, and then followed together. That boded ill for the spy, and I was relieved, on the whole, to think that Leonard was with him.

I was left alone with the three Poles and the Captain.

"Count Pulaski," said the leader, "I greatly deplore this accident. I hoped that we should have been able to lay before you all our plans, to enlist you in the cause, and to hold out hopes of an immediate insurrection."

"And now?"

"Now we have no plan. We must first find out how far our secrets have been made known by that man."

"Can I not help you?" I asked. "I am—what you see me—but I might do something yet for Poland."

"You shall *live* for Poland," he went on, with a sad but kindly smile. "No: we shall not, as your friend said, add murder to revolt in dragging you away from your peaceful life. Think, if you can, sometimes, of those who have personal sufferings and degradations burning in their souls. You have none. My back has felt the Russian stick; my cheek yet burns with the Russian blow. Still, you have the memory of your father's death, and you cannot love the Russian cause. Forget us, as soon as you can. I shall take Wassilewski away, and leave you free. We shall have meetings, I suppose, but you will not be asked to join. Everything is uncertain because in London, Paris, everywhere, the *monarchards* throng. And, of all *monarchards*, the most crafty, the most difficult to detect, is the Russian. I wish you farewell, Count Pulaski."

He took my hand and was gone, followed by his three friends, and I was left alone.

This was the end of my grand deputation.

I was free: my promise would never be fulfilled; I was relieved of my pledge. And I was profoundly humiliated. For I was allowed to go as one who could be of no use to the cause. I saw the disappointment on the chief's face when he turned from Leonard to me; I saw the readiness with which he acquiesced in Leonard's ex-postulation; I was of no use to him or to his party. The last of my race was another Edgar Atheling.

And would they think—no—they could not—that I had revealed the plot to this Russo-German spy? Or that I was a foolish creature who could not hold his tongue?

(To be continued.)

ROUND THE WORLD.

OBITUARY.—Sir Stirling Maxwell.—A son of Richard Cobden.

ITALY.—The funeral of Victor Emmanuel took place at Rome on the 17th, and was attended by an immense concourse of foreign and Italian deputations.

THE EASTERN WAR.—The Porte has asked for an explanation of the protest from Austria and England against a separate peace with Russia, and asks how far Turkey may rely on the help of the two former powers.—At a preliminary conference between the Grand Duke Nicholas and the Turkish peace plenipotentiaries, at Timova, the former said he would treat only at Adrianople, which place was therefore evacuated by the Turks, who retired upon the fortified lines round the city, where reinforcements are being concentrated.

GREAT BRITAIN.—The Imperial Parliament was opened on the 17th by Royal Commission. The speech from the Throne states that so long as England's neutrality is respected, her attitude will remain unchanged, but expresses a desire that precautions be taken in the event of unexpected occurrences, which may render it incumbent upon the country to interfere. During the debate on the address in the House of Lords, both Earl Beaconsfield and the Marquis of Salisbury denied the existence of divisions in the Cabinet, and the Address was, after some debate, agreed to.

INDIGESTION.

Chronic indigestion almost invariably affects the kidneys and bladder, producing acidity in the urine, which, on being analyzed, is found to be loaded with oxalate of lime. Individuals in this unhappy condition stand in great and urgent need of the Phosphozone. One or two of a dozen doses of Phosphozone may not cure them; but if they persevere in taking it a favorable result is inevitable. Sold by all Druggists, and prepared in the Laboratory of the Proprietors, Nos. 41 and 43 St. Jean Baptiste street, Montreal.