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Evans sumendum est optimum.—Cic.

No 15] SAINT ANDREWS, N. B., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 1856. [Vol. 23

THE RUSSIAN SLAVE.

It was the epoch of the Congress of Vienna, when the fate of half of Europe was decided amidst pomp and festivities without a parallel in modern history. Tournaments, carousals, masked balls, theatres, and operas, horse racing and gaming, regattas, illuminations, fire works, everything which the imagination could devise, was employed, for the amusement of these "kings taking a holiday." Amid the programme of festivities prepared by the Imperial committee, there figured a stag hunt, and the woods in the neighborhood of Schenbrunn were gay with the crowd assembled to witness or participate in the sport. One person alone, elegantly dressed and mounted on a high bred steed, took no part in the amusements of the day. His eyes were intently fixed on Sir James Raily, an Englishman, noted for his wealth, his eccentricities, and his passion for play; he followed him wherever he went, and seemed to wish to attract his attention.

What does this mean? said Sir James to himself. Twice my eyes have encountered this man, and he has made the same mysterious gesture. I cannot be deceived; it is intended for me; and he turned his horse's head towards the stranger. The latter, seeing the movement, advanced to meet him.

Sir, said he, bowing low, I have had the honor to meet you before.

Yes, replied the Englishman, who was vainly interrogating his memory; Yes, your face is a creditor which torments me, and which I cannot satisfy by giving him the name that he seeks for.

You have never known my name. We met at Moscow.

In society?

No; at the Hotel Sans Souci, and in public places. Pardon me if, with only this title to your notice I have ventured to accost you at so opportune an hour. The importance of the motive will, I hope, be some excuse to a mind so generous as yours.

What can I do for you? said Raily, in a tone of extreme courtesy, yielding to the sympathetic interest, which the pleasing face, and manners of the young man had inspired.

I have come to ask for liberty.

Of me?

Of you.

Are you not mistaken, asked Sir James, with some hesitation, not knowing exactly what to make of the singular demand. I am Sir James Raily, an Englishman, by birth, remarkable for nothing but love of play.

And for success in it, cried the young man. It is my only hope. If I should tell you sir, that it perhaps reserved for you to rescue a fellow man from an oppressive condition, to efface from his brow a mark, which devotes him to humiliation and scorn, what would you reply?

You embarrass me; for I do not see what such a hypothesis can have to do with a gentleman like yourself.

A gentleman! Yes, by elevation of soul perhaps also, by education; but not by accident of birth. I am a slave.

You! said Raily, with astonishment.

My name is Swerkoff Feodorowicz, and the estate on which I was born, belongs to Prince Gouloubkoff.

How can I serve you? asked Raily, extending his hand affectionately to the young man. I would gladly do more than pity you. But let us go this way, he added, taking the direction of the path which led away from the throng; it is more prudent. You know, perhaps, that the Prince is here.

Yes; but I could not choose the moment to speak to you. This evening I believe, the court gives a fete on the Reitenburg.

Yes.

You will not return to Vienna, for after the fete you are to go to the chateau of the Count de Solensk.

Yes.

To play there?

A million! exclaimed Raily, surprised out of his usual calm by the amount.

Take it sir, I beg of you, and deign to listen to me. My father and I were born on a small estate near the Volga, the estate belonged to Prince Gouloubkoff, the father of the Prince now in Vienna. My father was attached to his person for a long time, and served him with such zeal and devotion, that, at his death, he bequeathed him a considerable sum; but unfortunately for our family, he forgot his enfranchisement. My father, trafficked in furs with Southern Russia, and being intelligent and energetic, he rapidly became rich. My education was entrusted to a French emigrant, and to his care I owe all my subsequent success; for, when I grew up, I joined my efforts to those of my father, and extending our operations to the East, I doubled his fortune in the course of a few years. Our position as serfs excited the solicitude of my friend, the Frenchman, and he urged me to seek an adopted country in the Western World; but although I ardently desired to withdraw my neck from the yoke of bondage, I could not fly, without leaving my poor old father a prey to my master's vengeance. If I once left Russia finally, the smallest chastisement for him would be the loss of his property, and a return to the rudest labours of slavery. I could not do it. Besides, I nourished a hope, which strengthened me each day to await the morrow. I thought that Alexander, who was said, was ambitious of the title of regenerator of his country, would associate his name with the abolition of servitude. But all the philanthropy of the Emperor, restrained as it was by the hateful and pitiless nobles, produced only the ukase, which forbade the individual sale of the serfs; they could only be sold with the estate. I had waited in vain.

Why did you not try to purchase yourself?

It would have been useless. The great Muscovite lords have made a horrible pact, binding themselves not to accept the ransom of a slave. Are you ignorant that a serf of Count Schermetoff offered two millions of roubles for his liberty and was pitilessly refused? Yet the Count receives but a small tribute from this man; only a few roubles; but these great lords find a cruel pleasure in counting the number of their vassals, and absolutely dependent on their caprice are millionaires, whose fortune they could ruin at a word. I have borne my hard lot with the fortitude of a Christian. I have sought to forget it in business and travel, and deeds of charity; but now my courage fails for I love—and the woman who accepts me for a husband, must accept the chain of slavery.

After a moment's pause, the young Russian resumed. Prince Gouloubkoff, I have said, possesses an estate on the border of the Volga. It counts only fifty hearths, yet he will not sell it at any price. But the Prince plays, and play with him is an unbridled passion, for which he will sacrifice everything.

In the feverish excitement of this passion, he may be led to risk this estate. If he does so, he may lose. In this village I was born—my father was born there—my family are there still. Gain this village for me—Man, Englishman, Christian—under this triple title I put my fate in your hands—you have an unlimited credit over my purse—stake everything—triumph at any price. If fate should be against you—if I must lose everything, and yet remain a slave, I will bless you at least for having tried to break my chains.

I accept the task said Raily, gravely.

This night?

No, this night circumstances will not serve.—They will play languet. Besides, I have an engagement with O'Beara. But the day after, I think, a favourable occasion will offer naturally, between Gouloubkoff and myself. He will not recoil, I judge, by the temerity which he showed yesterday I will profit by it.

Thanks! Sir James, said Swerkoff; and now, we must separate. Your friends will seek you. I would avoid meeting them.

Four days after this conference a dense crowd was collected in one of the gaming halls, around a small table, under the rotunda, at which were seated two players. They were Sir James Raily and Prince Gouloubkoff.

For two days these two had been contending for victory—now at languet, now at faro, now at ecarte; and the losses of Raily amounted to 200,000 roubles. The game at present was ecarte, and had been four against four; but the betters becoming alarmed, thought it prudent to resume their stakes; they were renewed by the Prince and Raily, and the stakes now amounted to the round sum of 80,000 florins.

The cards were shuffled and distributed; the trump card was hearts; they were to be renewed twice.

Fire sparked in the eyes of the Prince, but those of Raily were impervious. It was not a man but a statue, the expression never changed.

Hearts! said the Prince.

I have it.

Hearts! he replied.

Here it is.

Hearts! again.

Here!

Raily leaned back in his chair, looking with indifference on the table, the heap of gold, to which the hands of the Prince were eagerly extended.

The joy of Gouloubkoff amounted to intoxication; you will not quit playing, I hope, Sir James, he said; an Englishman never abandons the field of battle.

Never Prince! nor a Russian either. Is it not so?

It is a national prejudice with us; but perhaps you would like to change the game. Will you take for two suit you?

Faro let it be.

The two adversaries entered the lists again. The Prince held the bank, and gained 20,000 roubles. His good fortune seemed fatally itself. Yet the perfect calmness of the Englishman was not less astonishing. He pursued his object with the impetuosity of his compatriots before the French battalions at Waterloo; when Wellington, seeing his soldiers fall one after the other, took out his watch and said:—They die at so many a minute, I have yet such number of men; it will be an hour before the last one falls; Blucher will have time to arrive, the victory is mine!

Raily dealt in his turn. This time fortune passed over to his side. He gained.—He doubled his stakes and gained again.—He had just gathered up 80,000 roubles, when he announced that he had tripled his stake.

The Prince was too good a player to recoil.—Raily still gained. Gouloubkoff still played on till he had exhausted all the gold and notes at his disposal. He then proposed to play on credit, chalking the stakes upon the table. Raily accepted, and gained three times in succession.

By Sir George, he cried, I have gained 90,000 roubles.

I congratulate you, said the Prince, with a nervous contraction of countenance. He began to suffer.

You will not quit playing, I hope, Prince. A Russian never abandons the field of battle.

Never, Sir James, as I told you. But, shall we change the game? The air is stifling here. Let us go into the garden.—You have a reputation as a marksman; suppose we try a shot.

Raily, who saw the feverish agitation of his companion, readily consented.

In a moment the hall was empty.

What shall the stake be, Sir James?

Two hundred thousand roubles.

Agreed, but I have no more gold; and I must not exhaust my credit at the bank of Vienna, which is quite indispensable to me.

Then I will wager 200,000 roubles against one of your estates.

Do you wish to become a Muscovite proprietor?

It is a mere whim like any other.

And one which I am not disposed to thwart. I have something of that value near Moscow. It is, on the declivity of a hill, from which you can see admirably the yet smoking ruins of the holy city. I have also, at two miles from Volodga.

Raily shrugged his shoulders. It is too cold, he said.

Ah, then, I have something else which may suit you—a charming little village near the Volga.

Here goes for the Volga, then. And you estimate this property

At something more than 200,000 roubles.

The cords were agitated, and a door fell on the left. The Prince turned his weapon in that direction, and fired.

Down! cried, distinctly, the voice of the official.

The same stillness prevailed when it was Sir James' turn to fire. The trap fell. The shot followed instantly.

Down! exclaimed the voice again.

Did you say, Prince, that this estate borders on the Volga?

From the balcony of the house you can see the course of the river.

An explosion was heard.

Down! said the same voice.

There are magnificent plantations of young trees, grouped with infinite art—delicious fruits, fine peaches.

That is my favourite fruit.

Down!

The strife continued, with success on both sides, till the sixth shot, when Raily failed.

Missed! said the crier.

At the eighth trial, the Prince having failed and Raily succeeded, they were again equal, and the two sportsmen took a moment for repose.

The Prince took his place, fired, and missed. Raily was more fortunate. The shot was approaching its solution.

What passed, then in the souls of the Prince and Sir James? It was a mystery beyond human intuition. To some the approach of an important event is announced by low inward voices, to others presentiments seem mere follies and chimeras. But it was remarkable that, when the Prince took his carbine again, it was without a word, without display, without the haughty look which was natural to him.

He fired. The bird, which had flown in a straight line, suddenly turned.

Wounded! said some.

No, no? cried several voices.

Every eye was fixed upon it, but it mounted, its flight became stronger, and it disappeared, while Raily calmly whistled:—God save the King!

Raily having killed the ninth bird, the bet was decided by a single shot, for the Prince failed again.

The two adversaries were superb at this moment, each in his fashion; the Prince, by the courage which raised him above his loss, and Raily by the deep, concentrated joy which he felt in thinking of the serious consequences of his success. They extended their hand to each other and separated, the best friends in the world. It was but an incident of sportsman life, which might have its counterpart to-morrow!

Fifteen days passed. The act of cession first made out in the name of Raily, then transferred to that of Feodorowicz, was fully authenticated, and Sir James quitted Vienna.

He attempted to restore the 1,000,000 of roubles which was entrusted to him, not wishing to receive a price for an action whose only merit, he said, was success; but he could not resist the entreaty of the ransomed serf. Feodorowicz forced him to accept, inscribing upon the pocket-book these words:

"To the free man who has made me free!"

ARRIVED AT DEMARARA.—The mail steamer arrived at St. Thomas from Demarara reported that the negroes of the colony, instigated by Orr, known as the "Angel Gabriel," had commenced to slaughter the Portuguese. Governor Woodhouse had sent Orr to jail, but the military under his command were unable to cope with the maddened negroes, and his Excellency had despatched couriers to the Windward Islands for the aid of troops to quell the insurrection caused by Orr's fanatical appeals.

The Demerara Royal Gazette of Feb. 23, contains an account of the disturbance, which was finally put down, and order restored.—The Gazette says:—

An immense number of persons of all classes having volunteered as special constables, both mounted and on foot, selections were made and armed from the Government stores. The streets of Georgetown are protected by special constables every night.

On Wednesday, the Tyne steamer took up a detachment of the 2d West India regt., consisting of two sergeants, one drummer, and fifty men, under the command of Capt. Reece and Ensign Macnamara, and proceeded to Berbice. The troops took with them three days' salt provisions, and they will remain at Fort Canjo, to aid the civil power. As long as they remain there, there is no fear of the peace of New Amsterdam being disturbed.

The origin of the disturbances is a deep-rooted dislike on the part of the coloured and negro races towards the Portuguese, long pent up. The arrival of the man Orr, and his rabid animosity to the Roman Catholic religion, which most part of the Portuguese profess, pointed him out to the ringleaders as a suitable agent—and the plan has been so far successful as to occasion a vast destruction of property, the loss of many lives, and the exposing of a large portion of the rural population to the miseries of starvation

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and disease, and the creating of a rancorous and bitter feeling of vindictive dislike, which will not only occasion much discord among the people themselves, but may materially affect the prosperity of the colony.

Orr is a native of Demarara, and his mother resides there. He was in prison last accounts, being unable to obtain bail.

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY.
APRIL 2.

There was a short discussion in the House this morning, in reference to an Educational pamphlet sent each of the members by Mr. J. Gregory; this mode of influencing members was warmly censured by Mr. End.

Bill relating to Mining Licenses was taken up, and gave rise to much speech making—majority of speakers in favor of bill, progress reported.

Bill relating to Land required for Railway purposes, and bill relating to Municipalities, were introduced by Atty. General.

Mr. Hatheway's resolution to surrender initiation of money grants to the Executive, was taken up, and discussion occupied most of the afternoon. Speakers in favor of resolution were Hatheway, Boyd, J. A. Harding, Street, Cutler, Connell, Brown,—in opposition, End, McPhelim, Allen, McLeod,—Speaker in the chair, House adjourned at half-past 5 o'clock.

Initiation of money grants passed.

Beautiful Sentiment.

Shortly before the departure of the lamented Heber for India, he preached a sermon, which contained this beautiful illustration:—

"Life bears us on like the stream of a mighty river. Our boat at first glides down the narrow channel—through the playful murmuring of the little brook and the winding of its grassy borders. The trees shed their blossoms over our young heads, the flowers on the brink seem to offer themselves to our young hands; we are happy in hope, and we grasp eagerly at the beauties around us, but the stream hurries on, and still our hands are empty. Our course in youth and manhood is a deeper flood, amid subjects more striking and magnificent. We are animated by the moving picture of enjoyment and industry passing us; we are excited at some short-lived disappointment. The stream bears us on, and our joys and griefs are alike left behind us. We may be shipwrecked, we cannot be delayed; whether rough or smooth, the river hastens to its home till the roar of the ocean is in our ears, and the tossing of the waves is beneath our feet, and the land lessens from our eyes, and the floods are lifted around us, and we take our further voyage where there is no witness save the Infinite and Eternal!"

COUNSELS FOR THE YOUNG.—Fight hard against a hasty temper. Anger will come, but resist it stoutly. A spark will set a house on fire. A fit of passion may give you cause to mourn all the days of your life.—Never revenge an injury.—

He that revenges knows no rest.—The meek possess a peaceful breast.—

If you have an enemy, act kindly towards him, and make him your friend. You may not win him at once, but try him again.—Let one kindness be followed by another till you have compassed your ends. By little and little great things are completed.—

Waters falling day by day—Wear the hardest rock away.

MELANCHOLY OCCURRENCE.—A little girl, about 11 years of age, belonging to Mrs. M'Affee of this place, left her school about 10 o'clock, A. M. on Tuesday for the purpose of getting some water; in a short time she was missed; a search was made when her bonnet was found in a water hole in the Creek quite convenient. An alarm was immediately made; and we never witnessed a greater degree of sympathy than was manifested towards the afflicted mother. (The father of the child was drowned a little more than three years ago.) Upwards of fifty men commenced cutting away the ice about 11 o'clock the same day, and continued their exertions until about two o'clock, P. M. on Thursday; their labors terminated by the discovery of the body about four rods from where she fell in, and in about two feet of water.

The ingenuity of Mr. McCaslan, watchmaker of this place, suggested the plan by which the deceased was discovered. He procured a water tight cask, in which he inserted two panes of glass; sunk it with weights, and then a boy went into it, who through the glass could see all around him, and by this means discovered the situation of the body.—[Woodstock Sentinel.

If a stout healthy man applies to you for charity, give him a job of work and let him earn it. If he is honestly poor, he will return again; if not you have a happy riddance.

Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty, are three great pillars.