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Prose.

“THE CROSS OF CONSTANTINE.”
WRITTEN BY THE LADY FLORA HASTINGS, 1833, IN
THE ALBUM OF A FRIEND.

“Inquirer in this” — not unto thee alone
The vision spake, imperial Constantine;
As mere passage of an earthly throne
Lazied in ‘mid heav’n’ the consecrated sign,
The mystic cross doth with soft lustre glow;
It speaks through every age in every clime,
To every slave of sin and child of woe.

“Inquirer in this” — Aye, when the rebel heart
Lings to the idols it was wont to cherish,
As it sees those fleeting boons depart,
Wisteth that things so bright were formed to
perish.

“Inquirer in this” — Aye, and athwart the gloom,
Lead in the brightness of that cheering ray—
Hail, O! Christian, though so brief thy
bloom,
I thought that is worth a sigh shall pass away!”

“Inquirer in this” — when fairest visions come
To lure thy spirit to a path of flowers;
Singing the exile from a heathen home
To dwell a stranger in unholy bowers;
Clasp in His strength who bursts the bonds of sin
To thy bosom, clasp the holy cross!
Wilt thou not seek a heavenly crown to win
That thou not counted all beside but loss!

“Inquirer in this” — though powers of cart and anvil
Were leagued to bar thee from thy heathenward
way,
The cross shall every darkling shade dispel,
Erase every doubt, and reassure dimly,
Not, oh! weaned one! faint not—for thee
The Lord of Righteousness and Glory bled,
His spirit’s influence, with free
and pleasure’s sanction, is upon thee shed.

“Inquirer in this” — when by thy fever’d bed
Thou see’st the dark-wing’d angel take his stand,
Whom soon shall lay thy body with the dead,
And bear thy spirit to the spirit’s land,
Not—the cross sustains thee, and its aid
That last trial shall thy succour bring;
Carries through the dark, the unsaid shade,
To sin its banish’d, and death hath no sting!

A TRAGEDY FROM LIFE.

PART I.—THE PLOT.

On the banks of the Neva, not far from the
of Cronstadt, an enormous rock rises in-
alot, on which is erected the equestrian
of Peter the Great. About the com-
ment of April, 1831, two young men
seated at the foot of the monument, con-
sulting with admiration the fine edifices
were visible from the spot—the quays
quite confining each side of the river—
Academy of Arts—and the beautiful winter
ice, which was then a splendid building,
now it is only a heap of cinders and
The young men were evidently of
ent nations, as might be perceived, not
from the dissimilarity of their features,
from their style of dress. One was an
of the imperial guard of Russia, boasting
ancient ancestry, and tracing back his line
to the illustrious Memoir. His name was Petto-
Kainoff, and he was remarked amongst
sociates for his love of poetry, and the
able ardour with which he frequented
the gaming table. The other was a young
secretary of legation, named Eugène
Lally. He was also an admirer of litera-
ture, and loved better to repeat to his Russian
a hymn of Lamartine, or a point of
the brilliant compositions of Mackoff, or
Puckin, than to pursue the frivolous
of the empty pleasures which generally
occupied the leisure time of his associates at
ambassadors. Eugène had soon perceived,
commencing his diplomatic career, that
and much exaggerated the advantages he
could derive from it. He found that it com-
principally in learning some petty secrets
of the court, which were not of the slightest
consequence, or in engaging in some puerile
games, which led to fortune, though
glory. He therefore devoted himself to
improvement of his mind, and, as a re-
sult from time to time, composed dramatic
works, which he hoped to get represented on
the stage in France under a feigned name.

Not, but that the capital of Russia possessed
rich and numerous theatres. The vaudeville,
the opera, the drama, and even classical Ara-
gody were there all represented; and the
names of Scribe, Rossini, and Alexander Du-
mas, were as well known at St. Petersburg
as at Paris. But Eugène was of opinion that
an author’s works are the glory of his
country, and acting on that persuasion, he
kept his friends sacred for his native soil.
His Russian friends also wooed the muses,
and the *Abeille du Nord* frequently contained
some of his effusions. He possessed a noble fortune,
and could he altogether give up his passion for
gaming, might live in the enjoyment of every
luxury of life. He had promised his friend,
on their first acquaintance, to refrain from visiting
Nicolaï, the great gaming-house of St. Pe-
tersburg, for a year, and he had most un-
willingly kept his promise. The year terminated
on the day referred to at the commencement
of this story. The Russian had expressed his
determination to play once more, and then he
promised his friend that for ever he would
abandon the hazard of the die. The young
Frenchman tried all he could to induce him
to alter his intention of again yielding to the
baneful indulgence, but Petrowitch remained
firm in his resolution. Seeing that further
remonstrance was useless, Eugène offered to
relate to the Russian officer the plot of his last
drama. “It is laid,” he remarked, “in your
country, and I have tried to make it essentially
Russian. The hero is a young Siberian miner,
who supports his family by hard labour. He
tenderly loves his wife, and occasional gleams
of happiness lighten the gloom of their exist-
ence. For a few years they live thus in a
constant struggle with penury, when one day
the obscure peasant lights on a vein of silver,
which renders him as rich as the richest of the
boyards. The miner then rubs the earth from
his hands, bids adieu to the desert and his
cabin, and takes his departure with his family
for St. Petersburg.”

“Your plot is romantic enough, at all
events,” remarked the Russian.

“Romantic it certainly is, but, at least, it
is not without example. The wealth of the
five brothers, Demidoff, had no other origin.”

The young officer nodded his head in ac-
knowledgegment of the correctness of the state-
ment. “But what becomes of your hero in
the capital of Peter I. and Catherine II.?”

“Providence still smiles on him. He pur-
chases his freedom, and at a large price he
obtains titles of nobility. By a course of
circumstances, explained naturally enough for
my purpose in the drama, the Emperor be-
comes desperately in love with his wife, and
proposes to elevate him to the honours of first
favourite. Whilst debating what can have
caused the Emperor’s kindness, he finds out,
when too late, that his former position was a
far preferable one. A boyard, he is informed,
has taken off his daughter, and the Emperor
has insulted his wife. Then he curses his
wealth. Strung to madness by his injuries,
he engages in a conspiracy, which has for its
object to place the boyard at his mercy, and
to hurl the Czar from his throne. But every
thing is discovered at the moment of execu-
tion, and the Emperor, in his gracious clem-
ency, is contented to snatch from the en-
nobled peasant his titles and his treasures, and
to send him back to the poverty from which
he issued. . . . Such is my plot. What do you
think of the dénouement?”

“Why, if I must tell what I think, it ap-
pears to me to be not very dramatic, and very
improbable. A man so suddenly elevated
could not re-assume with resignation his former
poverty and slavery. Besides, a work of this
description ought to have a striking termina-
tion—the French stage has undoubtedly of
late years been prodigal to excess of the
poison, the poison-cup, the secret stab, the
church-yard, the executioner, and such san-
guinary deeds, yet you appear to me to fall
into the opposite evil. Leave your dénouement
to me Eugène. I will undertake it. You
shall have one in the morning I promise you.”

“With great pleasure,” said the young di-
plomatist.

“Adieu, then,” said Petrowitch, “To-
night at Nicolaï’s—it is the last time I sacrifice
at fortune’s altar.”

“Well, if you will go, all I say is, good
fortune be yours.”

PART II.—THE DÉNOUEMENT.

The next morning Eugène was idly reclining
in an arm chair near the stove, and call-
ing back to memory some of the scenes in
which he had borne a conspicuous part at Pa-
ris, and calculating how soon he might expect
to see again his family and his friends, when a
heavy hand was laid on his shoulder. He
turned round, and met the gaze of Petrowitch.
The Russian was pale as death, and his
features expressed something at once bitter
and determined.

“Good morning, Eugène,” said he, in a
hoarse and quick voice: “I have kept my
promise, and have been thinking of your
dénoûment. Listen,” continued he, with an
inexplicable smile—“Yesterday I was rich,
powerful, envied. I had 15,000 slaves,
150,000 roubles a year, a sumptuous residence
here, a summer palace on the banks of the
Volga, rich farms, entire villages as my prop-
erty. . . . Well, when I quitted you yesterday,
I went to play, and since then I have lost all—
my hotel, my palace, slaves, farms, villages—
all—I possess nothing in the world at this
moment but the dress I wear, and a dishonoured
name. . . .”

“Well?”—said Eugène in astonishment at
the Russian. “Well?”—said the young Russian, with a
sombre gaiety; “do you suppose that if I fell
thus from the highest pinnacle of grandeur to
utter misery, I should possess sufficient weak-
ness—or strength—whichever it may be—to
resign myself to my evil fortune?”

“You desire to prove to me that my fifth
act is not in keeping with the rest?” inter-
rupted Eugène, with an involuntary anxiety.

Petrowitch fell back a step, drew from his
pocket a pistol, cocked it, and placed it against
his right temple, before his friend could pre-
vent him.

“Neither in keeping, nor dramatic,” said
he, coldly. . . . “Not a step, my dear fellow;
you will only precipitate matters and hasten
my death—I lost all at Nicolaï’s last night—
but you will gain something by my mis-
fortune—I promised you a suitable dénoûment,
and I keep my word.”

The report of the pistol followed his words,
and he fell dead on the floor.

Eugène returned, sad and solitary, to his
office at the Ambassador’s. It is useless to add,
that he never finished the TRAGEDY OF LIFE.—
Court Gazette.

Extract of a Despatch from Lieut. General Sir
John Colborne, G. C. B., to Lord Glenelg,
dated Government House, Montreal, January
31st, 1839:—

My Lord,—I beg leave to state to your
Lordship that I am persuaded that the most
important remedial measures required in the
present situation of the country are those
which would tend to the construction and en-
largement of the judicature, to the establish-
ment of registry offices, to the commutation
or abolition of the *lots-et-ventes*, particularly
in towns, and the other oppressive incidents
of the feudal tenure, to the continuation and
completion of local improvements, and to the
introduction of a well regulated system of dis-
trict police.

With returning tranquillity it is justly ex-
pected that the measures to which I advert
will be speedily carried into effect, preparatory
to the changes of a more difficult nature which
may be proposed for the permanent govern-
ment of this province. Lord Durham, I am
aware, appointed commissioners to report upon
several of the subjects in question, and had, I
believe, framed Ordinances for the considera-
tion of Her Majesty’s Government, to autho-
rise a commutation of the *lots-et-ventes* in
Montreal, and the establishment of registry
offices; but I imagine that the reforms which
he was desirous of introducing were not finally
determined on, and I have therefore requested
the Executive Council to collect such infor-
mation as will enable me either to promote the

views of my predecessor, or to propose mea-
sures for reconstructing the Court of Appeal
and the Judicature of the Province, if the al-
terations which may be suggested can be effec-
ted through the legislative power granted to
the Special Council.

Most of the measures to which I have
thought it right to draw your Lordship’s atten-
tion as being of a character to demand the
prompt interposition of Her Majesty’s Govern-
ment, or of the Special Council, might, if
found to be practically beneficial, be subse-
quently embodied in an imperial act, provid-
ing for the future government of the province.
I have no doubt that they are immediately
required to impress a conviction of the efficacy
of the law in parts of this province where
justice has been hitherto imperfectly admin-
istered, to repair in some degree the evils under
which the loyal inhabitants have long laboured,
and relieve all classes from burthens which
they have reluctantly borne, and to deprive the
disaffected of that influence which acknowl-
edged grievances, speciously exaggerated,
have unhappily obtained for them.

COPY of a Despatch from Lieut. General Sir J.
Colborne, G. C. B., to Lord Glenelg.

Government House,

Montreal, March 15th, 1839.

My Lord,—With reference to Lord Dur-
ham’s despatch of the 16th June, No. 10, respec-
ting an additional power being granted to
authorize the Special Council to provide means
for improving the province, and completing
principal bodies to carry on and complete the
public works now in progress, I beg to trans-
mit to your Lordship the accompanying copy
of a Report of the Executive Council upon
this subject. I have adverted, in my des-
patch of the 31st January, No. 34, to the be-
nefits of extending the system of police, which
has been introduced into the cities of Quebec
and Montreal, to the rural districts. The
continuance, however, of the police already
established must depend on the enlargement of
the Special Council, which can alone ade-
quately provide for its support. Amongst
other measures connected with local improve-
ments which in the present situation of the
country are highly desirable, and which must
be deferred till the Special Council is invested
with the authority to raise loans applied for by
Lord Durham, are the establishment of inferior
tribunals in every district, for the summary
trial of petty offences, which may coviate
the evil and inconvenience of bringing com-
plainants and witnesses from remote distances;
and the erection of court houses and gaols.
Whatever may be the restrictions which it
might be deemed expedient to impose upon
the exercise of the required important power by
the Special Council, I cannot but express my
opinion that to promote the future tranquility
of the province, and to deprive the influential
factious individuals who have long exercised a
dangerous control in several sections of this
province, the speedy concession of this addi-
tional power is indispensable. I have, &c.
J. COLBORNE.

Extract of a Despatch from Lieut. General
Sir J. Colborne, G. C. B., to the Mar-
quis of Normandy, dated Government House,
Montreal, 13th April 1839.

The Ordinance to incorporate the Ecclesi-
astics of the seminary of St. Sulpice, to confirm
their title, and to provide for the general ex-
tinction of seigniorial rights and dues within
their fiefs and seigniories, I trust will be
sanctioned by Her Majesty’s Government as
soon as possible, and be authorized by an Im-
perial Act to be continued in force till repealed
or revoked by competent Legislative authority
in the province. The provisions of this Or-
dinance appear to give satisfaction generally
to the inhabitants of Montreal, and also to the
Superior and Ecclesiastics of the seminary,
but certainly demand the confirmation of the
Imperial Parliament with reference to the
extensive interests which would be affected
by any doubt as to the permanency of the
arrangements proposed.