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BIOGRAPHY.

POLISH HEROES. SOWENSKI, GENERAL OF BRIGADE.

Joseph Sowenski, descended of a noble, though impoverished family, was born in Poland in 1779. At a very early age he manifested an inclination for the profession of arms; and as Poland possessed at that time no special military school, the young Sowenski was sent to prosecute his studies at one of the first military academies in the Prussian dominions.

Already, at that period, he had evinced a marked predilection for mathematics, when therefore, it became necessary to select the branch of the service to which he would, in future devote himself, his choice fell on the artillery, and he accordingly entered the school of that arm.

On completing his course of studies, which he had prosecuted with most indefatigable activity, his zeal, his capacity, his perseverance, elicited the admiration of his instructors, who recommended him for a commission in the foot artillery. As Poland at the time, was without a political existence, possessing neither army nor Generals, she had no means of rendering the talents of her sons useful. Sowenski, in consequence, entered the Prussian service.

During the brilliant campaign of 1809, Sowenski displayed, in the presence of the enemy, an intrepidity equal to the capacity he had given proofs of at school; there were few better acquainted with the theory of his arms, and none evinced more sang froid, when it became necessary to come to practice in the field. Prussia was then at war with a powerful adversary. The French were advancing, preceded by the terror of their name, and the brilliant reputation of Napoleon. The recollection of his recent conquests had spread demoralization through the Prussian ranks. But the confidence of Sowenski was not shaken: and, although his personal and political sympathies were all for the enemy, he not only faithfully fulfilled all his military duties, but displayed a daring bravery, that attracted the attention of the French themselves. On this occasion he was decorated by the king with the cross of Commander of the Order of Merit, a decoration rarely given to subaltern officers.

But Sowenski felt that his talents should be exerted in a better cause: he, therefore, quitted the Prussian service. In 1809, at the head of a battery of Polish artillery, he was present in all the actions in that campaign, and greatly distinguished himself. Endowed with a sound mind, and an heroic calmness, he had often those bold inspirations which decide great enterprises. Obeyed by his artillery-men as a father by his children, his battery resembled a family. Affable and condescending in the extreme, his fine qualities conciliated the affection of all around him; and the grief of the army was universal, when, at the battle of Mozaisk, his leg was carried off by a cannon-ball. His active career in the field thus closed, he was obliged to resign himself to the service of theory and instruction. Appointed Lieutenant Colonel, Chevalier of the Polish Order Vertuti Militari, and Officer of the Legion of Honour, Sowenski remained in the corps of invalids till the year 1816, when he was taken from it by the Emperor Alexander, and appointed colonel and director of the School of Application, just founded by that monarch at Warsaw.

The revolution of the 29th of November, found him invested with these functions on the memorable night, in which the Belvidere palace was attacked. The young cadets of the School of Application, hearing the report of musketry, wished to force the gates of the establishment, in order to join the patriots on the outside.

Sowenski totally unprepared and ignorant of the object of the insurrectionary movement, fearful, moreover, in case of failure of drawing down upon his pupils the wrath of the grand duke, threw himself at their feet, and supplicated them to wait till the morning. "To-morrow," said he, "To-morrow, if the affair is of any importance we will sally out, and I will place myself at your

head." The cadets yielded to his entreaties, and the director kept his word: for on the following morning he marched out at the head of his pupils, traversed several quarters of Warsaw, accompanied every where by the cries of "Sowenski for ever," and as his wooden leg did not permit him to march far, he was carried in triumph on the shoulders of the populace to his own house.

Sowenski was now charged by the government with the fortification and armament of Warsaw; during the whole course of this murderous war, all his faculties were concentrated upon this one object, he every day effected some change or improvement in the system of defence. When the decisive moment at length arrived, the brave Sowenski, stung to the quick by the inactive share which the loss of his leg had obliged him to take in this glorious struggle, solicited the commander-in-chief, to confide to him the defence of the most important point of the fortification. At his request he was appointed to command the Wola, but the defences of this fort were so incomplete, and its garrison so weak, that it was unable to hold out long against the vigorous assault of the Russians. His first line forced, he retreated to the second, from whence he kept up a galling fire of musketry, until Field Marshal Paskevitch, surrounded and carried this obstinately disputed point.

After having seen all his soldiers butchered, left quite alone among the slain, Sowenski seized the firelock of a soldier who had fallen by his side, and keeping up a fire until he had expended his last cartridge, he placed his back against the wall of a small church, where he defended himself with the bayonet till he fell pierced with six wounds. The subjoined account is given by a Russian officer, and eye witness of this scene of heroism and butchery.

"Enraged at the obstinate defence, thirsting for revenge, said the officer, the Russian soldiers carried the church of Wola.— Old men, women, and children, who were intermingled with its heroic defenders, fell victims to their imprudence; the church was strewn with dead bodies. Among the number was General Sowenski, an old man with six bayonet wounds in the breast.— His eye appeared yet animated with a spirit of revenge; and his noble features, even in death, breathed the most heroic courage and devotion. Our soldiers, in passing before his body, gave way to that feeling of respect, which, while living, they were, unable to refuse him."

Thus perished Sowenski, on the 6th of September, 1831, on the very day that Warsaw was carried by assault, unwilling, perhaps, a second time to witness her downfall.

It is an extraordinary circumstance that his death had been predicted two years before, in a most singular manner. A free-thinker on most points, Sowenski had the weakness to believe in magnetism, and he even intended publishing some memoirs on this subject. His belief however, in magnetism was not entire, for expressing his doubts on this point, in a letter to one of his friends, he said that we ought to credit with great reserve revelations of this nature. "As a proof of it," he went on expressing himself, "only imagine a person with whom I have lately had some communication, has predicted that in two years Warsaw will be deluged in blood, and that I shall fall in battle." The original of this letter exists at Paris.

Whether his end were foretold or not, the death of General Sowenski was heroic; and his name will live in the memory of mankind as one of the noblest martyrs to Polish independence.

MICHEL WOLLOWICZ AND LEON PRZECLAWSKI.

No sooner had the news of the Polish revolution reached Lithuania, than a desire to imitate this noble example manifested itself among her population, but in order to give unity and force to the insurrectionary movement, it was imperative to establish relations with the national government, just installed at Warsaw. All felt this, but few dared to risk themselves in so perilous an enterprise, for communications between Warsaw and

Lithuania were become almost impossible; the spies of the Russian police infested the country, and numerous corps of the enemies troops occupied all the roads.

In spite of so many perils and obstacles, two men were found, unawed by the difficulty of the undertaking, and the risk it entailed on their heads. These were Michel Wollowicz and Przeclawski, both young and of noble families; the first born in the Palatinate of Grodno, the second in the town of Rozanna. Both of them the objects of their parents' most assiduous care, were educated at Warsaw. Przeclawski, in the School of Engineers, and Wollowicz in that of Iolabor, from whence he repaired to the University of Weln. Having finished their studies, they retired into the bosom of their families. Wollowicz had even selected a partner for life, and his marriage was on the eve of celebration, when the Polish revolution broke out.

Such were the two young men who nobly offered to proceed to Warsaw, without calculating that death or an eternal prison menaced them, along a line of route of 120 leagues. Anxious to confer with the Dictator Chlopecki, and to speak to him in the name of Lithuania, they set out, proud of so lofty an enterprise and full of confidence in their star.

With the view of increasing their chances of success, the two envoys took different routes. Wollowicz directed his course towards the Nieman, accompanied by five well-armed domestics. Surprised in the environs of Merez, by two companies of Russian soldiers, and forced back upon the banks of the river, he saw himself reduced to the alternative of surrendering to the enemy, or of precipitating himself into the Nieman, from the summit of a steep rock. On one side was eternal slavery—on the other an imminent danger, but surmountable. Wollowicz hesitated not a moment. Mounted as he was, he threw himself into the river, filled with large floating pieces of ice. His domestics, animated by his example, dashed after him. This intrepidity saved them all. They reached in safety the opposite bank, while the Russians beheld, with shame and rage, the escape of their gallant prey.

Przeclawski entered the Palatinate of Wollhynia, disguised as a Russian employe, with the assistance of a peasant he deceived the vigilance of five sentinels, and passed the frontier in safety. By dint of great courage, and well-conceived stratagems, the two envoys reached Warsaw on the same day.

Immediately on their arrival they had an interview with the commander-in-chief, in which they gave him a faithful exposé of the state of Lithuania, and of the eagerness of her population to rally round the standard of independence. They conjured him not to suffer such powerful elements of force to lie dormant. Having finished their mission and desirous of marking their journey by some active service, they enlisted as privates in the Lithuanian legion just formed; it was about the period of the celebrated battle of Grochrow. Unable to march with the corps the organization of which was not completed, the two Lithuanians quitted Warsaw, almost by stealth, armed with sabres and lances, and joining the Polish ranks as volunteers, they shared in the glory of that memorable day.

Some time afterwards, an unexpected intelligence reached the Polish capital, that Samogitia had effected alone her insurrectionary movements; impatient of longer delay, without ammunition, armed with scythes and lances, the patriots of this country had arisen against the Russians, and were harassing them by their active diversions. At this news, the Polish government felt the necessity of supporting this insurrection. They sent for the Lithuanian patriots, and requested them to repair to Samogitia, in order to spread the news of what was passing in Poland, to animate the zeal and hopes of the insurgents, and to announce to them, at the same time, that two vessels, laden with arms and ammunition, would shortly cast anchor in the port of Polangen.

(To be continued.)

ST. JOHN'S JANUARY 9, 1833.

Legislature of Newfoundland.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,

Wednesday, Jan. 9.

Mr. BROWN moved for leave to bring in a Bill to regulate the admission of members into the House. He thought the limited state of the representation required some control. It might so happen that the greater number of members might become contractors under Government, and placemen, and independence could hardly be expected from them under such circumstances.

Mr. KENT fully agreed in the propriety of the measure, which he considered of vital importance for securing honest representatives for the people. Such persons as the hon. member for Conception Bay had alluded to, were excluded by law from the British Parliament. The bill should be so framed as not to disturb any of the present members, but to form a salutary precedent.

Mr. KOUGH knew of no member in the House to whom such a bill could then apply; but it was one which should have his cordial support, as well as any other having for its object the independence of its members. It was most desirable that members of that House should be perfectly untrammelled.

Mr. THOMAS's opinions were in unison with those of the hon. member who had originated the motion; but he thought every purpose could be answered by bringing it forward in the form of a resolution, and referring it to the Committee of Privilege.

Mr. HOYLES thought if it could be ascertained that the English law applied in all cases to the Colonies, there would be no necessity for a motion on the subject.

Mr. KENT reminded the hon. member, that the present judges had declared that the penal laws, when the statute laws, did not extend to this Colony.

Leave granted.

At one o'clock the Hon. James Crowdy delivered two messages from His Excellency the Governor—one transmitting Lord Goderich's despatch of the 27th July last, the other acquainting the House, that His Excellency's views in submitting the petitions of the inhabitants of Brigus and Bay Bulls, were to obtain the assistance and advice of the House as to the nature and extent of the distress, and the least onerous mode by which it might be relieved. His Excellency, therefore, wished the House would take the subject into consideration, and afford him advice thereon. His Excellency did not entertain the expectation that such expenses, as might be found necessary to incur, should be provided by the House.

Mr. THOMAS said, with reference to that part of Lord Goderich's despatch recommending a consolidation of the Council and Assembly, he was ready to meet it on the threshold with a negative. Newfoundland had been too long the sport of experimentalists in legislation, and he hoped the House would not hesitate in, at once, rejecting such a proposition. It might answer very well in a colony of slaves, but was, by no means, applicable to the free and independent people of Newfoundland. He would never consent to allow persons to sit in that House, who had not a will of their own, but should act immediately under the influence of government. With such sentiments, he submitted the following resolution:—"That a Committee be appointed to draw up an address to His Excellency the Governor, in reply to his Excellency's message, (transmitting to the House the letter of Lord Goderich, his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies), submitting to the consideration of the House the propriety of amalgamating the Council and Assembly of this Island, stating that this House is not disposed to adopt the suggestion of his Majesty's Secretary of State on this subject."

Mr. KENT, before he attempted to advocate such an encroachment on the privileges of the House, should see how the present system worked, particularly as it was one analogous to the British constitution. He thought Lord Goderich unfortunate in hav-