

"Actually a coincidence in religion."

"Then what Aunt Jane meant by going off in that way, I cannot conceive. The very best teachings, too."

"My dear Mamma," said Celia, "the conversation is useless. I am not engaged to Herr Raumer."

Nothing more was said, and the lover presently withdrew.

Mr. Tyrrell led me down stairs to his own office.

There he took the step common among Englishmen who are anxious and nervous, especially when they want to deepen repentance. He drank a tumbler and a-half of brandy and water strong.

"I wish he was dead, Laddy," he murmured; "I wish he was dead."

"Can you do nothing?"

"I can put him off—I can gain time—and perhaps something will happen. If not, she must marry him. She must. Else—"

He finished his glass of brandy and water.

"She must not. Face anything rather than bring such a fate upon your daughter."

"Face anything?" he repeated. "What do you know about it?"

"At least, I know that there is nothing in common with him and your daughter."

"What have I in common with my wife? Stuff and nonsense. What has any man in common with his wife? The husband and the wife lead different lives. When they are together in what they call society, they pretend. Rubbish about things in common."

"Then look at the difference of age."

"So much the better, Ladislav," said Mr. Tyrrell, fiercely. "I hardly knew him to-night in this unusual mood. 'So much the better.' He will die soon, perhaps; the sooner the better."

"Will he treat her kindly?"

"They shall live in this town. I shall watch them. If he ill treats my little girl—my pretty Celia—I will—I will—but that is nonsense. He will make her his plaything."

"Is that what Celia looks for in marriage?"

"Why, Ladislav," he resumed his talk, "how foolishly you talk. One would think you were a girl. What Celia looks for in marriage! What is the use of looking for anything, either from marriage or anything else in this world? Disappointment we shall get—never doubt it—and punishment for mistakes—never doubt that. Probably also had men, unscrupulous men, will get a hold of you, and make you do things you would rather afterwards have not done."

"If I had the key of that safe," he murmured, sinking into a chair: "if I only had the key of that safe"—it was the small fireproof safe, with Herr Raumer's name upon it—"Celia should be free."

I came away, sick and sorry. I had heard enough, and more than enough. I knew it all along. My poor Celia!

"If I had the key of that safe!"

Then it occurred to me that the German must have it somewhere. I went to bed, and dreamed that I was prowling round and round his room, looking for a key which I could not find.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CONSPIRATOR.

The Polish question was not forgotten. In truth, it was not easy altogether to forget it. The burning fervour of Wassielewski, his glorious indifference to the probabilities of death, his scorn of failure provided the sacred fire was kept burning, all this could not but impress the imagination. When I thought of them my heart burned within me, and it seemed for the time a light thing to join my countrymen, and march with them to certain death, if only to show the world that Poland was living yet. Celia thought this kind of patriotism, the carrying on of a vendetta from father to son, was unworthy. But I never could get her to see the beauty of war, even in the palmy days of Crimean victory.

I laid my case before her, as much as I knew of it, then the loss of my inheritance, the death of my father, my long line of brave progenitors, the obligations of a name.

She could not be persuaded.

"You are not a soldier, Laddy," she said.

"You are a musician and an artist. It is not for you to go fighting. And think of all the misery that you and I have seen. Why does not every man resolve that he for one will not fight unless he has to defend himself? Be one of the peacemakers. After all, you foolish boy, it is not you that the Russians have injured, and you have grown up an Englishman. Why, you cannot even speak your own language."

"Wassielewski will be my interpreter."

"Poor old Wassielewski! He will run against the first Russian bayonet he meets, and be killed at the very beginning."

That was, indeed, just what the old man would do. He came to see me one day, with eyes full of fervour, and a voice trembling with excitement.

"Come out, Ladislav, I have much to say to you."

He took me into St. Faith's Square, a large irregular place, with the red brick church at one end. He dragged out of his pocket a pile of papers and letters tied round with ribbon. It struck me disagreeably that Herr Raumer was walking on the other side of the Square.

"They are all with us," he whispered. "See, here are the men from Exeter, here are the London men, here are the Paris men, we have emissaries in Vienna and in Rome; for the present the country is kept quiet, no suspicious are

awakened yet; no movement of Russian troops has been made towards Poland; we shall strike a desperate blow this time."

I mechanically took the papers which he gave me to read. There were lists of names, copies of compromising letters, mysterious notes dated Paris, Vienna, Rome. This old enthusiast was a sort of Head Centre, or, at least, a confidential and trusted agent of a wide-spread conspiracy. My heart sank when I saw my own name at the head of a long list.

"The plan of the campaign is being considered. I have sent in my ideas. They are, after making a feint in Warsaw, to—"

We will not follow the conspirator's plans through all its details. I thought, five years later, when the rising of 1863 took place, of Wassielewski's projected campaign, and for my country's sake regretted that they had not been adopted.

"In a very short time—it may be to-morrow—it may be in six months—we shall receive our orders to move."

"And am I to see no one first—to obey orders blindly?"

"Not blindly, Ladislav Pulaski. I shall be with you."

I suppose there was something of uncertainty in my face, for he quickly added:

"You shall see some of our people before you go. Ladislav, your heart is not yet wholly with us. I have seen that all along. It is my fault. I ought to have educated you from the beginning into hatred of the Muscovite. There ought to have been no single day in which you should not have recited the catechism of Poland's wrongs. My fault—mine."

"Forgive me, Wassielewski."

"But another day of retribution is coming. There will be another massacre of Polish patriots to rouse Poland out of her sleep, and fill the hearts of Polish women with renewed hatred. You and I shall be among the slain, and yet you do not rejoice."

He looked forward to his own death with exultation, much as a Christian martyr brought before Nero may have looked to the cross or the stake with the fiery fervour of a confessor who glorifies the faith. And he lamented that I, fifty years younger than himself, with no personal memories of struggle and of wrong, could not rise to his level of self-sacrifice.

"I do not rejoice, Wassielewski. I have no wish, not the slightest, to be killed, even for Poland."

He groaned.

"You must wish. You must go with me as I go, ready to be killed—because we shall not succeed this time—for the cause. You must feel as I feel. The others think we shall not fail; they know nothing; those of us who have better information know that Russia is too strong. I want to take you with me knowing all. I pray, night and morning, that you may come to me of your own accord, saying, 'Son of Roman Pulaski and the Lady Claudia, I belong to Poland.'"

I was deeply moved by the old man's eagerness.

"What can I say, Wassielewski? When I am with you my spirit leaps up at your words. Helpless hunchback as I am, I am ready to go with you and do what you command. Away from you, my patriotism is feeble, and I care little for Poland. Forgive me, but I tell you the simple truth."

"There is one thing I have never told you. I meant to keep it till I landed you on the sacred soil of Poland. But I will tell you now. No; not now. I must go home and think before I can tell you that. Come to me to-morrow at this time, to my room, where you and I can talk alone. You will need to be alone with me when you hear all, Ladislav Pulaski—with that knowledge ringing in your brain, the scales will fall from your eyes and you shall see."

What was he to tell me? Were there not horrors enough that I had heard already? Men beaten to death; men tortured by the knout; men sent by thousands into exile; women insulted; brides robbed of their bridegrooms; mothers of their sons; was there one single outrage in the long list of possible crimes that had been committed in that dark story of Polish revolt and Russian repression? Needs must, but war brings misery. The annals of the world are red with tears of blood; "woe to the conquered" is the inevitable law; but such woe, such tears, such misery, as fell upon Poland by the will of the Czar are surely unequalled since the days when a conquered people all fell by the sword, or were led away to a hopeless servitude. What more had Wassielewski to tell me?

By some strange irony I always met Herr Raumer after Wassielewski had been with me. That same evening, as I came home from a walk with Celia, I was saluted by him. He looked down upon me with his white shaggy eyebrows and his green spectacles, as if half in pity, half in contempt. In his presence I felt a very small conspirator indeed.

"I saw you this morning," he said, "walking and talking with your old rebel, Wassielewski. Brave old man! Energetic old man! Useful to his friends. And, oh! how useful to his country!"

Nothing could surpass the intense scorn in his voice.

"He is getting up another little rebellion, I gather from certain Cracow papers. At least, there are indications of another rising, and it is not likely that Wassielewski will be out of it. Such a chance does not come often."

"You mean, such a chance for Poland?"

"No, I mean for a conspirator. You do not understand—how can you!—the charm of rebel-

lion. Once a rebel—always a rebel. It is like acting. Those who have faced the footlights once are always wanting to go on again. Wassielewski is seventy years of age, and for sixty, or thereabouts, has been conspiring. It would have been a good thing for Poland had some one knocked him on the head when he first begun. And a good thing for you."

"Why for me?"

"Because Roman Pulaski would still be living and still be a great proprietor in Poland; because you would have been, as he was, a friend and protégé of the Imperial Court."

"How do you know so much about me?"

He laughed.

"I have read current history. I read, and I remember. And I knew the story of Roman Pulaski. It was Wassielewski who took your father from his quiet chateau, and launched him on the stormy waters of rebellion. Thank him, then, not Russia, for all your misfortunes. You ought to be very grateful to that old man."

This was a new view of the case, and, for the moment, a staggering one.

"That is for the past, Ladislav Pulaski. Now for the future."

"What of the future?"

"It is a Paradise of Fools. In the Future, Poland will be restored; there will be no more wars; nationalities will not be repressed in the Future—"

"At all events, it is better to believe in the Future than in the Present."

"You think so? That is because you are young. I believe in the Present because I am old. I love the Present, and work for it. When I am dead people may say of me what they like, and may do what they like. That is their own business. I eat well; I drink good wine; I read French novels; I smoke excellent tobacco; what more can the Future give me? Your friend Wassielewski fought once for the Future. He gets tenpence a day for his reward; he fiddles for sailors; he conspires for Poland; he will die in some obscure field leading peasants armed with scythes against Russian troops armed with rifles."

"I would rather be Wassielewski than—"

"Than I! *Cherchez la mort*. You are young," he laughed, and showed his white teeth. "Meantime, remember what I told you. Where there are three conspirators there is one traitor. Have nothing to do with them; refuse to be murdered for Poland; go on with your music-lessons—anything you like—but do not join conspiracies."

He seemed to know everything, this man. For the first time a strange thought crossed my brain. Could he have detected intelligence of the intended rising?

"I mean well by you, Ladislav Pulaski, although you suspect me, and do not love me. That does not matter. I wish to see you kept out of the fatal business which killed your father."

"Crack-brained idiots!" he ejaculated.

"There is in the Kremlin a box. In the box is a most valuable document, shewn to strangers as a curiosity. It is the Constitution of Poland. Reflect upon that fact. Again, there is outside Cracow a mound erected in immortal memory of Kosciuszko. It is a mound so high that it dominates the town. Therefore, the Austrians have turned it into a fort by which, if necessary, to crush the town. That is another inspiring fact for a Pole to consider."

"It is like the Austrians."

"Doubtless. Otherwise they would not have built their fort. You would have preferred seeing them sympathize with the fallen hero. England and France have made of Poland a beautiful theme for the most exalted sentiments and speeches. But they do not fight for Poland. Voltaire, who did not share in the general enthusiasm, even wrote a burlesque poem on the Poles. Then England puts clauses in the Treaty of 1815 to ensure the government of the country by her Constitution. When Nicholas laughed at the clauses and tore up the treaty, England and France did not fight. Who keeps treaties when he is strong enough to break them? Who goes to war for a broken treaty when he is not strong enough? What does the new Czar say to the Poles? 'No dreams, gentlemen.' It is a dream to believe that Poland is not abandoned. It is a dream that a few madmen can get up a successful rebellion. *Fais Polonoie!*"

He inhaled a tremendous volume of smoke, and sent it up in the air in a thick cloud.

"Look—There goes the liberty of Poland. Say I will, Ladislav Pulaski!"

"No," I replied, bluntly.

"Did you ever hear what a great Pole said when they wanted him to conspire? '*Mourir pour la patrie! Oui, je comprend cela; mais je vivrai jamais.*' And he did neither."

I was filled with strange forebodings; with that feeling of expectancy which sometimes comes over one at moments when there seems impending the stroke of Fate; I could not rest; wild dreams crossed my brain. Nor was Celia happier. We wandered backwards and forwards in the leafy and shady retreat, restless and unhappy. The great elms about us were bright with their early foliage of sweet young June; the birds were flying about among the branches where they were never disturbed; the thrush with his low and cheerful note, surely the most contented among birds; the blackbird with his carol, a bird of sanguine temperament; the blue tit, the robin, the chaffinch—we knew every one of them by sight because we saw them every day. And the meadows at the foot of the walls were bright with golden cups.

"How can I give it up, Celia?" I asked.

She answered with her sweet sad smile. We had been both brooding in silence.

"I am selfish," she said. "I think of nothing but my own troubles. You must give it up, Laddy. You belong here, to the Captain, and to me. You must not go out among strangers."

I shook my head.

"Wassielewski says I must. It would be hard to tear myself away, Celia—not to talk to you ever again, to see you no more."

"Why no more, Laddy?"

"I am to give more than my presence to the revolt, Celia. I am to give what Wassielewski gives—my life."

Just then we saw him marching along the ramparts towards us. His eyes were upon us, but he saw nothing. He came nearer and nearer, but he took no notice; he swung his arms violently to and fro; his long white hair streamed behind him in the wind; he carried his black felt hat in one hand; he halted when he came to the wall of the bastion, leaned for a moment upon the rampart, gazing fixedly out upon the bright waters of the harbour. What did he see there? Then he turned and faced us, but spoke as if he saw us not.

"The time is at hand," he murmured, in the low tones of a prophet. "The wolves and the ravens may gather in the woods and wait for the dead. The mothers shall array their sons—the wives shall buckle the sword of their husbands, the daughters for their lovers; once in every generation the sacrifice of the bravest and noblest, till the time comes; till then the best must die."

"Not Ladislav," cried Celia, throwing herself in front of me. "Take anyone else, take whom you please to be murdered. But you shall not take my brother Ladislav."

He made no answer; I suppose he did not hear. Presently he stepped lightly from the breastwork, and walked slowly away, still waving his arms in a sort of triumph.

"He is mad, Laddy," Celia whispered. "You must not trust your fate to a madman."

"He is only mad sometimes, Celia. It is when he thinks too much about the past."

"Laddy, if you go away and leave me; if Leonard—but that is impossible. God will be good to us—yet. I could not bear my life without you."

"Tell me, Celia dear, has he pressed for an answer?"

She shook her head.

"It is not that," she said. "He is patient. But it is my father. Do not put my thoughts into words, Laddy. They are too dreadful. And my mother sees nothing."

(To be continued.)

HYGIENIC.

EMERALD green is the proper English name for the Paris green now so much spoken of in connection with the destruction of insects.

To cure inflammatory rheumatism take half an ounce of pulverised saffron, and put in half a pint of sweet oil; bathe the parts affected, and a sound cure will be speedily effected.

ALL fruit intended for keeping should be gathered just before it is fully ripe; by this precaution it is less liable to injury, and keeps longer. Fruit thoroughly ripe and intended to be eaten the same day should be gathered in the morning.

SLEEPING-ROOMS are a more serious consideration than many people imagine, as so much of our lives, especially those of our children, is spent in them. The old custom of huddling a whole family of children into one apartment, rows of beds being placed close together, is going out of date, but we are still many degrees removed from perfection in this respect.

HOMEOPATHISTS are said to have discovered a certain remedy for sea-sickness in apomorphia, a very small dose of which taken once an hour in water will remove the qualms. They are so certain of its success that they are going to procure a gratuitous circulation of it among the vessels that carry passengers. It is also useful for beasts, the sufferings of which are often extreme.

IF any considerate medical man wants to bring his name before the public, let him publish a series of sound rules for preventing those who will follow them from taking cold. No danger is more serious; there is none that physicians can do so very little to cure, except of course by regimen, of which the sufferers are impatient and there is none against which the population of all classes is more reluctant to take precaution.

The majority of people are not aware of the beneficial effect of wearing flannel next to the body, both in cold and warm weather. Flannel is not so uncomfortable in warm weather, as prejudiced people believe. Frequently cold and hacking coughs have disappeared on adopting flannel garments. There is no need of great bulk about the waist, which condemns the wearing of flannel to those who prefer wasp-waists to health, for in that case flannel can be cut as a loosely fitting bodice, always fastening at the back. There are scarcely any of the bad effects of sudden changes of weather felt by those who wear flannel, and mothers especially should endeavour to secure such for their little people in preference to all those showy outside trimmings which fashion commands.

PERSONAL.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR CAUCHON has left for Manitoba.

HON. D. A. SMITH, M. P. for Selkirk, has arrived in Montreal.

BARTLEY, the Brauce murderer, is hiding in Maine with a party of some ten or eleven men, some of them deserters from H. M. S. *Bellerophon*.

DR. DAVID ALLISON, Principal of the Sackville Collegiate Institution, has been appointed Superintendent of Education for the Province of Nova Scotia in the room of the late Rev. Mr. Hunt.

THE prosecution against Col. Bond for conspiracy in connection with the Montreal City and District Savings Bank has been discontinued, on the receipt from defendant of a written statement that he never conspired against the bank.

At the annual convocation, the new Convocation Hall at Trinity College was formally opened on the 15th. Hon. G. W. Allen was installed as Chancellor. In the evening a brilliant gathering was present at dinner at the College.