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Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.

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No. 22.

M. Kossuth and Mr Clay.

The interview between M. Kossuth and Mr Clay, says the National Intelligencer, has excited a general interest in the country, and the reports of it hitherto given to the public have been somewhat inaccurate, and, at the best, imperfect.

The company present on the occasion consisted of Senators Cass, Jones of Tennessee, Mr Feneall of Washington City, and the Hon. Presley Ewing of Kentucky. The last named gentleman has been induced, at the instance of several persons, and with the consent of Mr Clay, to give a more extended and careful report of the interview, and especially of Mr Clay's remarks, which we publish below, and which may be regarded as authentic, having, besides the authority of Mr Ewing, the sanction of Senator Jones, by whom the report has been examined and approved.

M. Kossuth was introduced by Senator Cass at about 3 o'clock.

On being presented to Mr Clay, who rose to receive him, "Sir," said he, "I thank you for the honor of this interview."

"I beg you to believe," said Mr Clay, interrupting him, "that it is I who am honored. Will you be pleased to be seated?"

After the mutual interchange of civilities, "I owe you, sir," said Mr Clay, "an apology for not having acceded before to the desire you were kind enough to intimate more than once, to see me. But really my health has been so feeble that I did not dare to hazard the excitement of so interesting an interview. Besides, sir," he added with some pleasantry, "your wonderful and fascinating eloquence has mesmerized so large a portion of our people, wherever you have gone, and even some of our members of Congress," waving his hand towards the two or three gentlemen present, "that I feared to come under its influence, lest you might shake my faith in some principles in regard to the foreign policy of this Government, which I have long and constantly cherished. And in regard to this matter, you will allow me, I hope, to speak with that sincerity and candor which becomes the interest the subject has for you and for myself, and which is due to us both as the votaries of freedom. I trust you will believe me, too, when I tell you that I entertain ever the liveliest sympathies in every struggle for liberty, in Hungary, and in every country. And in this, I believe, I express the universal sentiment of my countrymen. But, sir, for the sake of my country, you must allow me to protest against the policy you propose to her. Waiving the grave and momentous question of the right of one nation to assume the executive power among nations, for the enforcement of international law, or of the right of the United States to dictate to Russia the character of her relations with the nations around her, let us come at once to the practical consideration of the matter.

"You tell us yourself, with great truth and propriety, that mere sympathy, or the expression of sympathy, cannot advance your purposes. You require material aid. And indeed it is manifest that the mere declarations of the sympathy of Congress, or of the President, or of the public, would be of little avail, unless we are prepared to enforce those declarations by a resort to arms, and unless other nations could see that preparation and determination on our part. Well, sir, suppose that war should be the issue of the course you propose to us, could we then effect anything for you, ourselves, or the cause of liberty? To transport men and arms across the ocean in sufficient numbers and quantities to be effective against Russia and Austria would be impossible. It is a fact which may not perhaps be generally known, that the most imperative reason with Great Britain for the close of the last war with us, was the immense cost of the transportation and maintenance of forces and the munitions of war on such a distant theatre; and yet, she had not perhaps more than thirty thousand men upon this continent at any time. Upon land Russia is invulnerable to us, as we are to her. Upon the ocean, a war between Russia and this country would result in the mutual annoyance to commerce, but probably in little else. I learn recently that her war marine is superior to that of any nation in Europe, except

perhaps Great Britain. Her ports are few; her commerce limited; while we, on our part, would offer as a prey to her cruisers a rich and extensive commerce.

"Thus, sir, after effecting nothing in such a war, after abandoning our ancient policy of amity and non-intervention in the affairs of other nations, and thus justify them in abandoning the terms of forbearance and non-intervention which they have hitherto preserved towards us; after the downfall, perhaps, of the friends of liberal institutions in Europe, her despots, imitating and provoked by our fatal example, may turn upon us in the hour of our weakness and exhaustion, and, with an almost equally irresistible force of arms, they may say to us, 'You have set the example, you have quit your own to stand on foreign soil, you have abandoned the policy you professed in the days of your weakness, to interfere in the affairs of a people upon this continent, in behalf of those principles, the supremacy of which you say is necessary to your prosperity, to your existence. We, in our turn, believing that your anarchical doctrines are destructive of, and that monarchical principles are essential to, the peace, security, and happiness of our subjects, will obliterate the bed which has nourished such noxious weeds; we will crush you, as the propagandists of doctrines so destructive of the peace and good order of the world.' The indomitable spirit of our people might, and would be equal to the emergency, and we might remain unsubdued, even by so tremendous a combination, but the consequences to us would be terrible enough. You must allow me, sir, to speak thus freely, as I feel deeply, though my opinion may be of little import, as the expression of a dying man.

"Sir, the recent melancholy subversion of the republican government of France, and that enlightened nation voluntarily placing its neck under the yoke of despotism, teach us to despair of any present success for liberal institutions in Europe; it gives us an impressive warning not to rely upon others for the vindication of our principles, but to look to ourselves, and to cherish with more care than ever the security of our institutions and the preservation of our policy and principles. By the policy to which we have adhered since the days of Washington, we have prospered beyond precedent; we have done more for the cause of liberty in the world than arms could effect; we have shown to other nations the way to greatness and happiness. And if we but continue united as one people, and persevere in the policy which our experience has so clearly and triumphantly vindicated, we may, in another quarter of a century, furnish an example which the reason of the world cannot resist. But if we should involve ourselves in the tangled web of European politics, in a war in which we could effect nothing; and if in that struggle Hungary should go down, and we should go down with her, where would be the last hope of the friends of freedom throughout the world? Far better is it for ourselves, for Hungary, and for the cause of liberty, that, adhering to our wise, pacific system, and avoiding the distant wars of Europe, we should keep our lamp burning brightly on this western shore, as a light to all nations, than to hazard its utter extinction amid the ruins of falling or fallen republics in Europe."

Throughout Mr Clay's remarks, M. Kossuth listened with the utmost interest and attention; and indeed, throughout the whole interview, he illustrated the rare combination of the profoundest respect, without the smallest sacrifice of his personal dignity, exhibiting in all his bearing the most finished and attractive stamp which can be given to the true mental genius. He did not enter in his turn upon a controversy of Mr Clay's views, but began by stating what he thought the reasons of the repeated failures to establish liberal institutions in France. Education and political information, he said, did not descend very deep into the masses of the French people; as an illustration of which fact he stated that hundreds of thousands, when voting for the first time to elevate Louis Napoleon to the Presidency, thought the old Emperor was still alive and imprisoned, and that the vote they then gave would effect his deliverance. He gradually di-

verted his remarks to the affairs of Hungary, Austria, Russia and Turkey; speaking of the exaggerated estimate of the strength of Russia; of the strength and weakness of Turkey; her strength, which consisted in her immense land force, and especially in her militia, or *landwehr*, as he termed it; her weakness, which was the liability of the assault of Constantinople by sea. And here, apparently in allusion to Mr Clay's conviction of our being unable to effect anything in a European war, he spoke of the material aid which might be rendered Turkey in a war with Russia by a naval force for the protection of her capital. After a series of entertaining and instructive remarks about the condition and prospects of Europe generally, he rose to depart.

Mr Clay rose and bade him farewell forever, with the utmost cordiality and the kindest sympathy beaming in his face and suffusing his eyes; and grasping Kossuth's hand, he said, "God bless you and your family! God bless your country—may she yet be free!"

Kossuth, apparently overwhelmed by the warm and earnest sympathy thus exhibited for himself, his suffering family and country, profoundly bowing, pressed Mr Clay's hand to his heart, and replied, in tones of deep emotion, "I thank you, honored sir! I shall pray for you every day, that your health may be restored, and that God may prolong your life!" Mr Clay's eyes filled with tears, he again pressed the hand which clasped his own, probably for the last time, but he could say no more.

Thus closed one of the most interesting scenes it has ever been the fortune of the writer to witness. Two such men rarely meet in this world. The one, having finished the course of his destiny, having lived and acted through the better part of his country's lifetime, and with its growing greatness and renown having achieved his own; the sun of his glorious career just going down in unclouded brilliancy, and sending back the rays of its declining glory upon a happy land; the other, still acting, still hoping and fearing, his star just rising amid storms and clouds and darkness; before him, all the vicissitudes of an uncertain future for himself and his country; the one, like a prophet of old, proclaiming the principles of the fathers of his country, to whom he was shortly to be gathered—those principles, living by which that country had achieved her greatness; the other, like a scholar, listening to catch the words of wisdom, and hear the lessons of experience, which should be treasured up, and which might one day profit his country in her pupillage: to portray that scene might well challenge the skill of the poet and the painter. The writer would rival, too, the art of a Handel and a Haydn, could he transmit to this paper the sweet melancholy cadences of the voice of the Hungarian exile, sounding like the low melancholy wail of the stricken children of freedom; or the trumpet-toned voice of the old statesman, gathering some of its ancient strength, and ringing almost as full and sonorous as when in days of old its clarion peal sounded its note of cheer and courage to a nation in its triumphal march to glory and to greatness.

Communications.

BATHURST, March 5, 1852.

Mr Pierce,

In glancing over the news of the day by last mail, my attention was forcibly arrested by the immense amount of argumentation, talent, and magical eloquence displayed by some of the members of our Assembly, who placed themselves in a prominent opposition on the occasion of the discussion of the Temperance Bill; and having observed that while some of the speeches made in the course of the debate were ably commented on, others were entirely neglected, I feel disposed to make these the subject of a few remarks through the medium of your valuable paper.

To begin with Mr Barberie. He says, "The Bill is to coerce people to think as others do; it is an absurdity and a mockery. Moral influence is the only one that can prove effectual," and finally he fears

the Bill "would injure a cause to which all must wish success!" Now I would like to know what section of the Bill relates to the coercion of opinion. Do the acts in force against crime and immorality coerce men's opinions? I would refer Mr B. to the debate which arose two years ago on the Orange Bill. No one disputed the right of Orangemen to think as they pleased—no one disputed the right of Orangemen or any other Society to organize and walk in procession, provided no evil results arose therefrom. But it was Mr Barberie's opinion, and that of a majority of that House, that Orange Lodges led to Orange processions, and those processions led to bloodshed and crime, and in consequence the sanction of the law was very properly withheld from Orangeism. Now, the liquor traffic is fully sanctioned by law, and if Mr Barberie could pursue a train of reasoning in the Orange case, why cannot he in the other, when he knows that for one crime consequent on the practice he so strenuously opposed, ten thousand occur from the practice of intemperance.

That to some few the Bill would be an absurdity and a mockery, there can be little doubt. Some few there are who appear to take a pride in manifesting an utter absence of all appearance of morality; such men, as long as they can procure a cask or a barrel, will delight in adding open drunkenness to their other accomplishments.

That moral influence is the only effectual influence, is the opinion of a few; and most of those professing such a belief are impelled thereto by a fear of the loss of their gains, or of the means of gratifying an unnatural appetite, while some no doubt hold the opinion from conviction. Many there are who profess to be friendly to the cause of Temperance, whose every act shows real enmity to it, and among such are found in greatest force the enemies of legal suasion.

Mr Barberie's alarm lest the Bill should injure the cause, reminds me of the case of a polite "finisher of the law," who, after adjusting the rope round the neck of a culprit, kindly expressed a hope that the knot would not inconvenience him; and some who have heard the learned gentleman express his opinions elsewhere on the cause in question, think that were the cause in the position of the aforesaid culprit, Mr B., if he would not adjust the rope, would like to be a spectator.

As the medical gentleman who next adorned the floor, merely showed his opposition, without advancing any reason or argument, I shall merely observe that when a candidate for a seat in the Legislature repeatedly asseverates that he will support and advocate the cause of Temperance whenever it comes before the House, and then opposes such a Bill as this, it appears extremely "problematical" whether he has a good memory or not.

Mr Williston having advocated both sides, he will doubtless vote on both sides; and his remarks being altogether above common comprehension, they may at some future day furnish the antiquary with an interesting subject of investigation.

Mr Gray would like to assist in carrying out a Bill which would sweep off every species of immorality from the earth. Why does he not bring in such a measure? If, as he says, it is not right to enact laws against one species of depravity, and let gambling and others alone, he must also see the injustice of punishing murder and robbery. I would ask that gentleman, if it is right to punish the man who possesses himself dishonestly of another's worldly goods, in a forcible or secret manner, and to let the rumseller go free, who, for the love of unhallowed gain, dispenses that which instigates his brother to the commission of every crime which human nature shudders at? who, for the price of blood, destroys his brother, soul and body, and causes the sorrowing widow and starving orphan to cry aloud to heaven for vengeance upon the infamous and ruthless destroyers of social and domestic happiness.

If it is necessary and proper to protect the negro from being bought and sold into slavery, is it not necessary to protect the white man from being robbed and sold into a worse slavery by the rapacity and avarice of those who prove by their disgraceful and inhuman employment, that to them the slave trade, if not interdicted by law,