

## **The Insurrection of Thirty.**

**The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Desperate Revolutionary Movement of the Poles to be Celebrated on the 29th Instant—An Interesting Sketch of the Rise, Progress and Overthrow of the Revolutionists in Warsaw—How the French People Felt and What Their Government Did.**

The Polish residents of San Francisco propose to celebrate, on the 29th inst., the fiftieth anniversary of their country's gallant struggle for independence, being the day of the year on which the revolution against the despotic power of the Czar commenced in Warsaw, half a century ago. Invitations are extended by the Polish Society of California to all the natives of Poland on this Coast, without distinction of sex or creed, to join in the celebration. A solemn mass of requiem for the victims of Russian tyranny who perished in the struggle will be celebrated at St. Rose's Church, Brannan street, near Fourth, at nine o'clock in the morning. Upon the termination of the religious exercises a meeting will be held at the rooms of the Polish Society, 1032 Market street, at one P. M., when the anniversary will be honored with suitable literary exercises. The celebration will be closed by a banquet at six o'clock P. M., at which will be present several veterans of the struggle who are now residents of this State. All those wishing to participate in the banquet are requested to send their names early to the Secretary of the Society, 1032 Market street. The following sketch, relating to the insurrection of 1830, has, at the request of the Polish Society of California, been prepared for the ALRA by Mr. Alexander Bednawski, a member of the Society and one of the veterans of that memorable uprising of the Poles in their war for independence:

MR. BEDNAWSKI'S SKETCH.

Fifty years ago the Polish Nation rose in arms as one man, hoping to regain her downtrodden rights, and, although at the end of that bloody war she was obliged to submit in presence of an overwhelming power, history is inscribed with her deeds of brilliant valor, and above all justifies her course in claiming the right of liberty and independence. In the history subsequent to the partition of Poland, this uprising constitutes an epoch. It was not only a glorious and desperate struggle of the Nation for her inalienable rights, but it was somewhat an invigoration of Polish vitality. Poland, although oppressed—her nationality annihilated, even her name effaced—does not cease to live in the hearts of her sons, and continues to hope. Only a nation which has ceased to hope, can be reckoned dead. After all, who dare prophesy the future? Only look at those Bulgarians, Servians, Roumanians, Montenegrins—forsorn, almost vanished from the memory of the world, and groaning for ages past under a heinous oppression;—to-day they are free and independent. It will not be without interest to give the readers, and especially those of the new generation who are not acquainted with the history of that epoch, a few outlines of the revolution of Warsaw in 1830—an event which, under any circumstances deserves to be known, because of its manifest tendency to do away with the treaties of 1815, and to restore to France the sceptre of the Occident.

#### EVENTS PRECEDING THE OUTBREAK.

After the fall of Napoleon in 1815, the territorial limits of partitioned Poland were thoroughly re-arranged by the Congress of Vienna, which, as if by some caprice, while creating a shadow of Polish independence in the Lilliputian republic of Cracow, at the same time transferred the greatest part of Polish territory to Russia. The Czar Alexander I, surnamed the Pacificator (uncle of the present Emperor), created in his turn out of his new acquisitions, extending from the rivers Niemen and Bug down to Prozna, the so-called "Kingdom of Poland," to which he gave a liberal constitutional form of government, with a separate responsible ministry, a national army of about 50,000 enlisted men, and so on. Of this separated and privileged part of his Polish possessions, the "magnanimous" Czar proclaimed himself King, and his brother Constantine was made Generalissimo of the Polish Army—Military Governor, or rather, virtually, Viceroy; and General Zajoneczk, the *compagnon-in arms* of Kosciuszko and General Dombrowski, was remanded, practically, to a nominal position.

#### POLAND UNDER A NEW RULE.

But the harmony between new rulers and a nation which was thrown out violently from the family of nations, among which she had shone so brilliantly, could but be very superficial, and it was of very short duration. Mutual distrust, suspicion, and recriminations prevailed almost from the beginning, and the opposition to the Government gained ground from time to time. Violations of the Constitution were of frequent occurrence, followed by secret discontent and endeavors to get rid of that Government. The Grand Duke Constantine, who governed after the fashion of his wildest fantasy, seemed to have nothing better to do than to martyr the army by exorbitant drilling, excessive rigor, etc. He alienated the most distinguished officers and best citizens by insults and his whimsical attempts at subordination. Moreover, he surrounded himself mostly by individuals of foreign extraction and of exceedingly low morals, who owed their elevation chiefly to the servility with which they strove to satisfy the caprices of their master. In addition to that, he had an army of spies at his disposal. In fact, there was an

ORGANIZED SYSTEM OF ESPIONAGE,

Of which it would be difficult to give a correct idea. Every word in public, each expression the most innocent, was watched carefully and denounced; each letter at the Post Office was opened; every noble aspiration for progress was stamped as a crime, and, as such, was punished severely. Even in travelling abroad there was, to a person who had the misfortune to be a subject, no security. Each step, each action, was noted down carefully. Thus the rupture became inevitable, and the uprising of the 29th of November, 1830, was not only not to be wondered at, but was justified. For a long time revolutionary ideas spread all over the country. A so-called "Political Free-Masonry," organized by some prominent patriots, has made for some few years a tolerably rapid progress in the way of philanthropic, scientific and literary affiliations. It gained at first the turbulent youth of the Universities, and, by the aid of military companionship, it was imparted to the army, and, finally by the aid of workingmen-fellowships, it reached the people. It was especially in Warsaw, in the corporations of shoemakers and cobblers of the old city, that the revolutionary spirit grew fast. Soon after the revolution of July in France, and the expulsion of Charles X, the agitation assumed a somewhat strange character, and propagated itself everywhere. Shortly after, among the Universities of Wilna, Cracow, and Warsaw, there appeared an astounding exchange of opinions and ideas, which were pushed forward with vigor and great courage. In the whole kingdom there was evidence of a dull presentiment—a vague uneasiness, a mysterious anxiety—which took hold of all minds. Almost everybody was preparing himself for an unknown struggle. The expectation was general and of a very serious character. From the shores of Vistula to those of Niemen the people were preparing lances, carbines, sabres, scythes, and other weapons; but in the centre of that movement (Warsaw) there was ripe a conspiracy, of which the aim was positive, and of which the main-springs were very cleverly combined.

THE PRINCIPAL CONSPIRATORS

Were among the students of the school so-called "Podchoronshyck," or a polytechnic school of the sort at West Point. A great many officers of the garrison of Warsaw belonged to them, all being headed by the young Lieutenants, Wysocki and Zaliwski. The former exercised an exceedingly great influence over the minds of his youthful companions by his staunch character, purity of soul, and spotless life; and the latter by his activity and perseverance, and his rare courage. From time to time the young men were holding meetings together in great secrecy, and at a certain day it was resolved that the outbreak should take place on the 29th of November, 1831. But all of a sudden, like a bombshell, there arrived an imperial Ukaze (Nicholas I, then, was on the throne) which commanded that the Polish army should be put on a war footing as soon as possible. At such news everybody was almost stunned. Nobody, until then, had forgotten the glorious fraternity in arms established during the triumphal march of Napoleon throughout Europe; a fraternity which made almost impossible a war between the countrymen of Poniatowski and the countrymen of Napoleon I. The order was given to the Polish army to be in readiness to march against "rebellious France" in 1830, and seemed, as far as concerned Russia, to grow out of some misunderstanding or resentment.

#### THE POLISH ARMY

Was expected to serve as "avant garde" to the great invading army, which was being prepared against France. This "avant garde," according to the words of General de Lafayette, instead of marching onward, resolved to turn their arms against the "Corps de Caturille." The conspirators, perceiving that there was not a moment to be lost, decided to act on the 29th of November, 1830. Emissaries were despatched in all haste to all parts of the interior, and the workingmen, properly the artisans, were with prudence being prepared to rise at the first signal. Meanwhile the Emperor Nicholas made fearful preparations against the Occident. He accumulated in all the fortresses of Poland vast stores of ammunition, which seemed to predict a long and obstinate struggle, and his soldiers concentrated on the river Bug were waiting only for an order from St. Petersburg to rush upon France, pushing the Poles before them. At this very moment Warsaw assumed a gloomy aspect. The police, scenting something unusual, renewed its exertions and displayed all its resources—but all in vain. Several noted patriots were arrested at random, and thrown mercilessly into prisons; but they took great care not to betray any one of their companions.

#### THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 29TH.

At last the 29th of November arrived. About six o'clock in the evening a detachment of intrepid young men at the school of Podchoronshyck rush into the habitation of the Grand Duke Constantine, brother of the Emperor, and Viceroy of Poland. They knock down the sentries, and precipitate themselves with fixed bayonets into the apartments and the garden. The alarm spreads all over the palace, and an indescribable panic seizes everybody. The Grand Duke, sleeping, has scarcely a moment to throw a military cloak over his shoulders and conceals himself from the vengeance of his assailants; while on her knees and half fainting in a hall on the ground floor, the beautiful Duchess, his wife, with tears in her eyes, implores for the life of the Prince, who, for her sake, scorned the Empire. (It is known that the Grand Duke, on the death of Alexander I, as next brother to him, and who ought to succeed him, abdicated in favor of his youngest brother, Nicholas.) This was the commencement, or rather signal of a fearful and bloody fight in the streets between a party of Russian soldiers (guards of the Grand Duke) and the people. On all sides was heard a brisk discharge of musketry, mixed with fearful cries; tumult, deafening sound of carriages, the clatter of the cavalry, were echoing. The armed workmen especially, angry and vociferous, poured from all parts into the streets, in a heat of excitement bordering on frenzy. Every inch of the ground was disputed at great sacrifice of life. The soldiers were at length seized with

#### AN IRREPRESSIBLE PANIC,

And fought their way as well as they could. Some of them ran away from their posts, and it was with the utmost difficulty that they succeeded in joining their respective corps. Finally, the order was given to retreat, and there was nothing left to Constantine but to seek safety with his 7000 guards, in a precipitate flight beyond the limits of the city. The 30th of November dawned upon independent Warsaw. Shouts of "Independence" filled the air from all mouths. The White Eagle, representing the National arms, appeared on all the public edifices. There was much weeping from mere joy and enthusiasm. Warsaw was free! The memorable night of the 29th had just witnessed many heroic deeds, but also many deplorable scenes and massacres. There is nothing in history which may be compared to the heroic fever which, for the first day, agitated the capital of Poland. It was an universal excitement, bordering on frenzy, which soon spread over the

whole country. The whole people immediately declared

IN FAVOR OF THE REVOLUTION.

Soon a provisional Government was formed, with Prince Adam Czartoryski at the head, and General Ohtoploke, a well tried soldier under Napoleon, was proclaimed as Dictator and Generalissimo for a short time. Meanwhile a powerful Russian army, under Gen. Dieblich (Labalkanski), crossed the Bog, on the Russian frontier, and a series of bloody battles was fought near Warsaw, perhaps unexampled in the history of mankind. There was seldom quarter asked or given. Whole battalions, whole regiments, were mowed down like grass before a scythe. It was indeed a war of extermination. After a few months the army of General Dieblich was almost shattered to pieces, and at the same time the Polish army was greatly reduced. By an ukase of the Emperor Nicholas, Dieblich was relieved from his command, and while on his way to St. Petersburg he died from grief, or, as some say, he took poison. But Russia was inexhaustible in men and resources. The furious Emperor, bent upon Poland's annihilation, sent another overwhelming army under the command of the well known General Paszkiewicz, which poured into Poland on all sides like lava. Again and again a succession of bloody battles followed, (under successors of General Ohtopicki, who shortly after his nomination resigned,) culminating in the storming of Warsaw, August 18th, 1831. During that battle 40,000 were killed on both sides, and the capitulation of the city and subsequent submission of the Poles, sealed the fate of that unhappy land. The weaker, whatever may be his endeavors, whatever the righteousness of his cause, must always lay prostrate at the feet of the stronger. But in this connection we must see for a while what happened in France. The tidings of the revolution in Warsaw when known in Paris were gladly received, and applauded with great enthusiasm. With characteristic love for scenical effects inborn in the French, the heroism of Poles was represented and celebrated in all grand and lesser theaters. On meeting in the streets there was no other greeting or saluting, except the words :

" LA POLOGNE EST LIBRE "

(" Poland is free.") It was in France a sort of a National holiday; somewhat a second Revolution of July. The sentiment: " Succor to our brethren of Poland " resounded from all parts of France. But such was not the design in the Palais Royal, residence of Louis Philippe, the King of France. When the Court feigned at first to share the sympathies of France, it was solely for the reason that it was perhaps not very safe to brave it. Once this attitude taken in public, there was the utmost care to contradict it in the secret instructions to the representatives abroad. Some time after the 29th of November, 1830, Mr. Biernacki, a member of the National Assembly, went on a visit to the Consul General of France in Warsaw.

" What shall we expect from the sympathies of the Government of July? " asked Mr. Biernacki.

" Nothing," answered the Consul, coldly.

" But suppose fortune should favor us? "

" But suppose fortune should favor us ? "

" I repeat to you, distinctly, Monsieur, that you have nothing to await from the Cabinet which I represent ; neither encouragement nor succor," replied the Consul.

" Would you consent to act as our mediator with your Government ? "

" No, Monsieur."

" Or at least to transmit to it our despatches ? "

" Your despatches will be opened and read by the Austrian Government."

" Be pleased to state what in your opinion Poland should do ? "

" Submit."

From this interview Mr. Biernacki retired with indignation, disgusted and surprised. But after all, what could Poles not accomplish, were they succored, even indirectly ? Every one may form an opinion as to their powers and capacity, from the superhuman efforts of their prolonged struggle of 1830 - an event which is the subject of universal admiration, and its failure an eternal reproach to France.