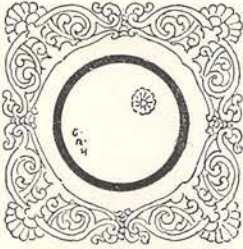


overwhelming difficulty of adequate technical achievement, from uncertainty of purpose, or from a mean desire to be "in the swim" of a realistic age (or moment, as ages are counted), content themselves with showing how a work of art should be made instead of making it. Therefore, we may be grateful to M. de Monvel that, having through devious ways found

what he has to say, and having acquired the means of saying it, he is not ashamed of his honest emotion, and from the gay note to the grave, from the miller and his sons to where the life of Xavière fairly fades from our sight — for what he has to say, and for his manner of saying it — he is a welcome arrival on the field of modern art.

Will H. Low.

ON A MISSION FOR KOSSUTH.



ONLY men past the meridian of life will recollect the passage of that brilliant political luminary, Louis Kossuth, flaming from the East, through our political sky, and the unparalleled enthusiasm he created for Hungary

and the cause he had so gallantly and gloriously, but haplessly, supported. He came with a legend already created, such as most heroes have to wait generations for; he appealed to America with an Oriental eloquence clothed in our own language, but spoken with a pathos few English speakers have ever attained, and which was vastly heightened by his evident unfamiliarity with the tongue. This made it seem as if he must have learned the language in order to bring us his supplications for aid in attaining that liberty the possession of which, according to his pleading, made us debtors to all enslaved nations. He went through the country preaching his crusade to audiences that listened with increasing enthusiasm, until he reached the slave States, where upon him fell the chill of a public opinion to which liberty was a suspicious word; then he felt that his mission had failed, for the slave States held the keys to all official action.

I saw him immediately after his arrival,¹ and being in the plastic state of mind of early manhood, eager for adventure and ignorant of danger, I offered myself for the cause of Hungary, having nothing else to give. I waited on Pulszky, the companion in exile of Kossuth and his acting English secretary, and proposed myself for any service Kossuth might require, perilous or other. I heard all the speeches he made in public in New York, and certainly I have never heard eloquence equal to his, fettered as it was, wing-tied by the strange speech in which it found expression. He spoke with a grave and solemn deliberation, as if he were searching always for the precise word

¹ Kossuth arrived in New York December 5, 1851.

which would serve him best among the unfamiliar tools of thought, but with no uncertainty, no vagueness of conception, as to which one it should be. He had searched our history for every local fact which could sharpen the point of application, and quoted our best authors and our greatest statesmen, and with a knowledge which amazed all who heard him brought all our own historical precedents to bear on his case. Wherever he went he seemed familiar with the local traditions and heroes; he knew the disasters and the glories of every region he appealed to, and flattered the *amour-propre* of his audiences by seeming to have made the history of their town his special study, while the critical epochs of our revolutionary history were the texts of his most powerful appeals. Wherever he went the gravest and wisest of our thinkers and statesmen paid him the tribute of the most attentive, and in the main sympathetic, reception, and while the sound tradition of entire abstention from all European questions, handed down from our early history, put a veto which seemed regretful on any practical answer to his appeal, there was no one who did not wish him God-speed.

The tradition of his years in prison, spent in the study of the Bible and Shakspeare, his mastery of our most classical English, and his use of sacred diction, at once impressed the religious part of our population with a certain evangelical dignity, and gave the cause he pleaded the character of a holy war. Had Austria been Mexico, we should probably have declared war by popular vote. He made Hungarian freedom a religious obligation. I remember how at one of his meetings he used the text, "On earth peace, good-will toward men," as we have it, as an appeal for our good-will, showing from the original that the true translation was, "Peace on earth to good-willing men," and how there ran round the audience that sort of electric thrill of recognition, and a looking from man to man and man to woman among those who heard, that was like the warming toward one another of the hearts of the disciples by the way. Another time he

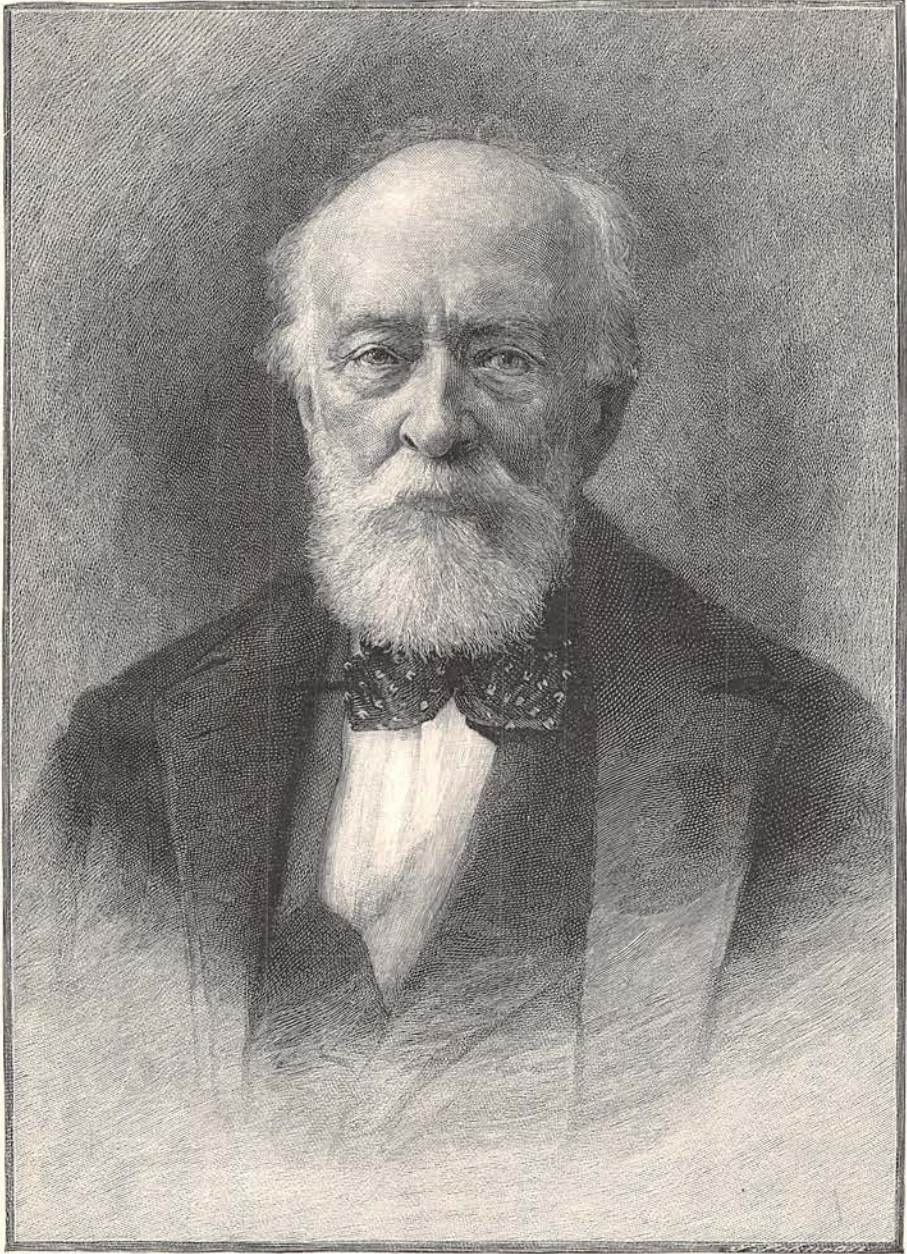
showed by the Greek that, through the slow progression of human selfishness, a word which once meant personal, *ιδιωτης*, from its original meaning of personal, had come to mean the complete negation of human intelligence, idiotic. The passion of his appeal left no chord of human nature untouched. In my experience of audiences I have never seen anything approaching the effect he produced, wrought even by an orator speaking in his own language. He seemed an incarnate voice of human freedom, the mystical, bodily presence of the woes and heroism of Hungary.

Pulszky presented me (for my volunteering) one night just before Kossuth left New York on his Western tour, and I saw him no more till he came back from Washington, where he had been received by the Senate and House of Representatives as a high official, instead of the fugitive and exile he was. If my memory serves me, it was just at the beginning of the presidential campaign, and Kossuth was unwilling to leave before he knew who was to be the new President. He hoped that Webster would be nominated, though just what he expected from our far-away country, even with a friend in office, it would have been hard to say; but when the choice lay between Scott and Pierce he appealed to them both, receiving from Scott only a cold and unsympathetic rebuff, and from Pierce vague promises of aid the precise nature of which I never knew. I used to go to see him in his New York lodgings, which it seems to me were in the neighborhood of Fourteenth street, but only late in the evening, as he was continually surrounded by spies of the Austrian government, and he considered it important that I should not be recognized as having been in relations with him. I went to see him late one evening, on the eve of the election, and after he had been receiving a committee of the supporters of Pierce, who had come to offer him terms for his support in the coming elections. He said to me sadly, "Mr. Stillman, if you do not get rid of those politicians, your country will be ruined in less than fifty years." They had offered him two men-of-war, equipped for action, and a sum of money, the amount of which I cannot recall, if he would throw his influence on the foreign vote for the Democratic candidate, and the formal offer had just then been made.

What was his reply and what his action, I never knew, but the incident and his grave words are impressed on my memory as a thing of yesterday. However, he got no such help, and in all the contributions to the cause were only about \$100,000; and he went back to London to await events which his heart, full of hopes to the exclusion of despair, told him would free his country from the rule of Austria. I followed him after a few weeks, and estab-

lished myself in a dark quarter, where spies would be little likely to notice me, and reported to him through Pulszky, whose address I had. I did not know London then very well, and I have seen no one since who could tell me where his lodgings were; but it seems to me by the road I used to take in going to see him, late in the evening, and by circuitous ways, for fear of spies, that it must have been in the outskirts of Bayswater. There I waited for several weeks for his plans to mature, and to learn where I could be most useful. At first my mission was to go to a little island in the Mediterranean south of Sardinia, on which, as he had learned by one of his multitudinous researches, the American flag had been hoisted years before, and which, being entirely unoccupied, and thus of doubtful jurisdiction, he thought of making his depot of material of war and his basis of action. This was apparently only a vague scheme of which he seems to have thought no more; moreover, the time was approaching for the rising of Milan under the plans of Mazzini, with which it was at first intended that the Hungarian movement should coincide, and Kossuth proposed that I should go there and distribute to the Hungarian regiments in the garrison of Milan his proclamation calling on them not to fire on the people if the latter rose. But Hungary was not yet ready, and he had tried to induce Mazzini to postpone the rising till they could act together; for, as he said, "I cannot play with the blood of my people." An insurrection was hopeless, as he believed, even for Italy, and as he knew, for Hungary, and all that he could do was to charge the Hungarian soldiers not to fire on Italians. Mazzini was impatient, and decided to move alone. Kossuth, however, had found emissaries better fitted than I for the service, I suppose, as I was not sent, and when the movement came it was soon repressed: but I heard that the faithful Hungarians did their leader's bidding, were decimated, and sent to Croatia; but of this I have no historical proof.

It was finally determined that I should undertake an expedition to Hungary. The object, I was told, was the rescue of the Hungarian crown-jewels, hidden at some point down the Danube before the flight of the dictator and his ministry into Turkey. I was to visit Vienna on the way, and Kossuth gave me the names of three persons in that city with whom I might communicate, requesting that the one who seemed to me the most apt for the purpose should go to London, and put himself in communication with Kossuth. On the way, as soon as I entered Austria, I was to study the public feeling as I saw it manifested, and report to him, from city to city, how far I judged it to be ripe for a movement. I was ordered to go in a roundabout way, so as not to seem to have



ENGRAVED BY T. JOHNSON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY AMBROSETTI.

LOUIS KOSSUTH, 1889.

By the by irve to me! and alas! woe to you also
Dear Willie! I am spoiled; go to! I really am mad to
annoy you with such scrawlings. I despatch
else I apprehend I may get into the style of Mrs what
Do you call her in Syracuse, at the meeting for
womens rights? Will you pardon my folly darling
and will you be good enough to care about your health till
it be not too late. Do Dear Willie do & believe me

Yours ever affectionate
Cara

FACSIMILE OF PART OF A LETTER IN CIPHER FROM KOSSUTH TO MR. STILLMAN.

come directly from London to Vienna, so I went from Paris to Brussels, then to Dusseldorf, Berlin, Dresden, and Prague, and thence to Vienna. Here began our cipher correspondence. I carried with me two sections of a long despatch, which disclosed the whereabouts of the treasure, one for myself, and one for a patriot whose name I do not remember, but to whom I was to go in Pest. A third was to go by another messenger via Constantinople, who also carried the key to the cipher, which was to be given to one Nagy Josef in Pest, and who should call us together, when the four were to decipher it in company. The communication was written in a manner which made it utterly impossible of decipherment to any one who had not the key, and at least two parts of the text. It was written in this manner. A song was selected which had in it all the letters of the alphabet, and each letter was indicated in the despatch by the number of the letter in the line, as the numerator, and the number of the line as the denominator, of a fraction. The first letter of the message was given in the first portion of the despatch, the second in another, and the third in the remaining one, so that the three must be united in the presence of the accomplice who had the key to enable anything to be learned from it.

My own communications were carried on with Kossuth in a simpler manner. Taking a sheet of letter-paper of a defined size, I cut out spaces on each line, at irregular intervals, and when I wrote I laid this on another sheet of paper of the same size, and wrote the message in the spaces, when, removing the shield, I filled in the spaces so as to make sense or intelligible nonsense. Kossuth, being provided with a duplicate, had only to lay his shield over the letter and read the message. For an alternative there was another similar, in which the first word of the message was the first word in the first line, the second the second in the second

line, and so on, the order being subject to variations as agreed on. For general advices on the state of public feeling, architecture was substituted for politics, Gothic being equivalent to revolutionary or democratic, classic to despotism. I give the conclusion of a letter in the second method, the letter being one received at Pest by the ordinary post. It is in Kossuth's own handwriting. It is hypothetically written by a lady-love, love-letters, as he said, pardoning any nonsense.

To steady my nerves in Vienna, Kossuth had told me of a conspirator who had been arrested on suspicion, his name having been found among many others in the memorandum-book of an emissary who had been arrested for tampering with the troops. All persons whose names were found in the book were arrested. This particular person, having really a most important position in the conspiracy, and not knowing why he was arrested, naturally believed that he had been betrayed, and to avoid being driven to disclosures under torture, adopted the only means offered him of committing suicide, by wrapping his bed-clothes around him, and setting fire to them; his bed and his light being his only furniture. When he had been burned so that he could not survive, he tore off the clothes, and, calling the guard, told him to summon the council, and when they had assembled in his cell, told them that he was a conspirator, but his secrets were beyond their power of extortion — and died. This gave me a keen sense of the necessity of caution, and as I was certain to be put under surveillance as soon as the police knew I was in Vienna, I took time by the forelock, and before the police paper had been sent in, took a cab, drove to within a block of the house of the person I was to see first, dismissed the cab, and made my visit, establishing communications and precautions against the police. But my consternation may be imagined when my fellow-

conspirator, after all our arrangements were complete, took me into the room where his family were assembled, and introduced me as a friend who came from Kossuth. With five women, from twelve to forty years old, in possession of my secret, the tranquillity of my stay in Vienna was far from complete; but it was a family of red republicans, and I was safe.

Pest being my destination, I went there after a stay in Vienna long enough to give me the air of a leisurely traveler. Here appeared the trifling item of neglect on the part of Kossuth that spoiled the undertaking. I had been ordered to go to a certain correspondent of his who lived in Karolyisches Haus, a large apartment-house in Pest; but it happened that this person was under proscription by the police, and his residence there of course not known, he being practically in hiding. Knowing nothing of this, I drove at once to the house, and in the presence of the cabman asked for him. Of course I was told that there was no such person there; but having found the house, I returned later, and inquired more privately, but was again repelled angrily by the porter, who was of course in the secret. Then I wrote to Kossuth, telling him that there was no such person there; to which he replied, reiterating the address. It did not occur to him to write to the person to say that I was looking for him. To him the finding a man in the same city was a trifle; to me, a stranger in the place, and with an exaggerated fear of the police, to go about inquiring for some one I did not know was a risk I felt no desire to undertake. I wrote again, and received the same reply. Of course it gave me no help in my search. Afterward I found out that the man I sought was also sought for by the police, and that checked my activity. I lingered in Pest long after all its attractions were exhausted, hoping that the man who was to come via Constantinople would arrive, and relieve me from my awkward position. But he was delayed for six weeks by another contretemps; the police got curious as to my business in Pest, and I had to undergo an examination, which I passed better than I hoped when I went up.

We were living in a state of siege, and after eight of the evening no one was allowed to appear in the streets without a permit from the commander of the place. This I did not know, and my ignorance nearly cost me my life. In London I had gone to a shoemaker in an obscure street, and had the heel of one of my boots excavated, so as to admit the cipher despatch, which, wrapped and sealed in a sheet of gutta-percha, was deposited in the cavity, and the heel covered with two thicknesses of leather. But as the boots were the most precious part of my outfit, and I had only one pair, I never left

them out of sight; so that with my peregrinations the leather wore down to a thinness which threatened to bring the wear on the packet inside, and it became necessary to remove it. This I did with my pocket-knife; but this presented another problem, two, in fact—where to hide the despatch, and how to get rid of the boots. I knew that every hotel-waiter was a spy, and to leave my excavated boot to be blacked, or to send it to be mended, was to call attention to the fact that it had been a means of concealment. So the boots must go into the Danube. Putting the packet of the despatch into a recess of my wardrobe for the moment, I took the boots, and, the night being of the deepest dark, threatening rain, I stole down to the riverside, and tossed them in without a splash, and saw them floating into the dark, without having been noticed by any one. I walked up the high dike which contains the Danube, and as my head rose above the top of it, I saw opposite me a guard-house, and heard the sentinel challenge the officer of the guard, just then going his rounds; whereupon I slipped back as quietly as I had come, and stole along the water's edge till I deemed myself at a safe distance from the sentry, when I took the back road to my hotel. However, I was still in range of the vision of the officer, who immediately hailed me. I pretended not to hear, and kept on toward the nearest lamp-post, with a double purpose: I expected the sentinel to fire at me, and I knew from experience how difficult it is to take sight on a rifle with a bright light in your eyes, and I wished to be in the light when the officer overhauled me, as I saw at once he would, having a sort of prevision that when he saw me in a good light he would see that I was a foreigner, and would give me no more trouble. I did not know that to be out at night was in itself an offense. Reaching the lamp, I allowed myself to be arrested and examined. I realized all the danger of my position perfectly, and as the officer, scrutinizing me severely from under the hood which overshadowed his face, said, "Was machen Sie hier?" I felt that I was in for something more than a frolic. Fortunately, I did not for an instant lose my self-possession, and though from nervousness my voice shook a little, I replied with promptness, "Nichts," and then went on, in bungling and ungrammatical German, to say that I had come out to see things, and added that I was a stranger, and did not know that I had no right to be out. I said "stranger" in the plural, which made the good fellow laugh, and he dismissed me with a kind direction to keep out of the track of the police patrols, who would not be so lenient as he was, and would probably not let me get back to my hotel. The next morning I disposed of my despatches by covering

the little flat package with pitch, and hiding it under my hair, which I wore rather long on purpose. I waited nearly a month, and, seeing that the police began to wonder what I had to occupy myself with, I took to my bed and sent for a doctor. This was Orzovensky, who had been chief of the medical staff of Kossuth's army, and with whom I made friends. But still I got no news from Kossuth or his correspondent in Pest, and as the position could not be prolonged indefinitely, one day I made a confidant of the doctor, told him my business, and asked him if I could leave the despatches with him while I went back to London to put matters on another footing. Not for the world, he replied, would he mix himself in the affair, and he added that if it were discovered that he had had knowledge of my business he would be arrested, and would be a ruined man for not having betrayed me to the police. Then, for the first time, I lost my nerve, and my mouth was in an instant as dry as a bone, my tongue resembling a dry stick. I was never so frightened before or since, but I kept self-possession enough to note the singularity of the phenomenon, and made up my mind on the spot to get out of the range of the doctor's revelations as soon as possible. As nearly as I can remember I did not stop to sleep in a bed till I reached Frankfort; and I got back to London by the earliest conveyance, and went to report to Kossuth. He received my report with perfect equanimity, and asked me only what I had done with the despatches. In my panic I had thrown them into the drain, as the only place where they were in no danger of being sought for if I were arrested before getting out of the country, and this I told him. He showed no irritation, but with an expression of perplexity rather than of vexation, said, "Three months lost," and then resumed his usual manner, asked me about many things in Hungary, told me that when I was at a loss I should have gone to the Hotel Tigris, which was the rendezvous of the patriots, and that there I would have made acquaintance with some of his friends who would have helped me out. He went on talking of other things as calmly as if I had not disappointed him. I had not the courage to urge my services in any other matter, and he saw that I had not in me the stuff for a conspirator, gave me the money to pay my passage home, and we parted with the understanding that if it came to fighting I should join him again.

I have said that my business was to recover the crown-jewels of Hungary, and I remember that Kossuth attached special importance to the abstraction of the crown of St. Stephen, to prevent the possibility of the Emperor of Austria being crowned with it, for, until then,

he told me, the Hungarian people would never recognize the emperor as king of Hungary until he had been. I was to go with the other conspirators to the place of concealment, and when the jewels were exhumed, we were to conceal them in a box or jar of a kind of conserve that was made there, and carry them to America, and deposit them with Dr. Howe, the well-known philanthropist. At any rate, I knew no other purpose in the expedition. I took my orders, and followed my instructions to the best of my abilities. The adventure failed, and I went back to my painting. I heard afterward that Bartholomew Czernere, a member of Kossuth's cabinet, and who shared with him the secret of the hiding of the regalia, on getting information that Kossuth had sent out an expedition to recover them, gave them up to the government; but how much truth there may be in this I do not know. My memory of days in which all my mental powers were at their quickest is complete, and the least detail of that rather nervous expedition is indelibly engraved on my mind.

Forty years had passed when I again saw Kossuth. I called on him last summer at Turin, where he had lived in retirement for twenty years, not having made a friend in the city, he assured me. He had evidently forgotten all about me and my expedition, or he was unwilling to admit that it had ever taken place; for he said at once, on my telling him that I was the young man who went to Hungary for him on the expedition for the regalia, that he had never sent such an expedition, and knew nothing about it. It was Czernere, he said, who had charge of that matter. When I told him details of our intercourse and facts connected with the expedition, he seemed to be recalling them, and replied, "There are some things that accord with the facts, but my memory is getting defective; yet I never sent any expedition for the jewels." As I went on to tell him things that he had told me in America, he grew more interested, and when I told him that I had two letters that he had written to me at Pest, and that I would send them to him to prove that all I said was true, he said eagerly that he would like to see them. And then, passing to other subjects, he told me some incidents of his experience in America, and how the hostility of the slavery people had worked against him. He was one day, he said, to meet at the house of Governor Seward several of the Southern representatives; and when they came, finding Chase there by chance, they left the room, contemptuously making a remark to the effect that they did not care to be in the company of that abolitionist. He asked Chase for an explanation, and got as the reply that he should make the acquaintance of those gentlemen at Chase's

house. In fact, when he returned from his Southern trip he was invited to Chase's, and there did meet the entire set in friendly relation with the abolitionist. When I recalled the offer made him by the committee of Pierce's friends, he interrupted impetuously, saying that he never would have made any such agreement—he could not; and on my replying that I did not say that he had accepted the offer, but that it was made, he made no further protest, and did not deny the incident. I think he finally satisfied himself that I was the man I asserted myself to be, and that there was something in my story; but he repeated that his memory was failing, as well it might, at ninety-odd, and with a brain charged with all his cognitions. He was nearly blind, and I did not understand how he would recognize his own handwriting in the letter I afterward sent him from Rome, and which, though he promised to return it, I did not again receive. As I registered it (inclosing an envelop directed to myself in that to him), there can be no doubt that he got it, and the not returning it adds to the complexity of the problem which the whole affair presents. It is as mysterious as the iron mask. Despite his rather excited manner of instantly denying that he had ever sent an expedition for the regalia when I told him who I was, and his professed ignorance of the whole subject, the direct and minute instructions given me, based on the recovery and delivery to Dr. Howe of the regalia, the elaborate precautions for the preservation of the secret against any chance of disclosure, my stay of over a month in Pest,

and his letters to me there, were no phantasm of my brain. And if the object of my expedition was not the regalia, but something more secret hidden under that pretext, what was that object? How could it be that a memory which retained the details of the meeting of the slave-holders at Seward's house should lose those of an expensive expedition for some serious purpose running over a considerable time? Or was there a reason why I should be misled at this late date as to the object of my journey, founded on some interest of Hungarian politics?

To the end Kossuth remained irreconcilable with the Austrian emperor; never, he said, would he recognize a ruler of Hungary from Austria. He remained an exile of will, not of necessity, for he might have returned at any moment to his country, so that this adventure could in no way have affected his position there. And he declared that he did not even know where the regalia was hidden, that being Czemeré's affair. What did I go to Hungary for, then, and for what great interest of liberty did I stand a month under the gallows? For that is what it meant. If, when I was arrested by the Austrian officer, he had been obdurate and held to his prisoner, the room I occupied at the hotel would have been searched, and the despatches in Kossuth's own hand could not have escaped detection. After that my shrift, in those terrible days of martial law and repression, would have been short; it would have been only a question of the gallows within twenty-four hours or being shot the next morning.

W. J. Stillman.



THE NESTING-PLACE.

WHEN back upon the soft south wind they roam,
 Mark how each bird, by instinct subtly willed,
 Ere long begins to seek where it shall build:
 High in the elm the oriole makes her home;
 Beneath the eaves the swallow shapes the loam;
 The house-wren's note all day is never stilled;
 The little finch's heart with joy is filled,
 To find a hollow with a grassy dome.
 Dost think the birds alone have this fine art,
 To know and choose what place for each is best,
 And there return and find a sheltering nest
 Howe'er abroad in roving sport they dart?
 I, too, have a wise spirit in my breast,
 I would not build at all except within thy heart!

Edith M. Thomas.



ENGRAVED BY R. G. TIETZE.

FROM A DAGUERRETYPE IN THE COLLECTION OF PETER GILSEY.

LOUIS KOSSUTH IN 1851.