Gavreel: A Glimpse of Polish Life.

CHAPTER I.

"What do you think? Is it good or bad?" The questioner was a little fellow seven or eight years of age, and the question was propounded to his own shadow on the wall, for other company he had none. He stood just within the half open door of the basement corridor of the convent church of St. Catherine. The corridor led into one of the numerous rooms set apart by the fathers for certain of their workmen and a few privileged poor of both sexes. It adjoined the receiving vault, and the voice of the priest chanting the funeral prayers might be distinctly heard by anyone passing along the corridor.

The little questioner had not asked himself the question apropos of nothing. His whole heart had been in the effort that had called it forth. He had been practising alone, and, as he supposed, quite unseen, the Russian national dance—a lively dance indeed, and one demanding infinite agility. Pausing a second to take breath, he asked himself the momentous question, "Good or bad?" and catching sight of his shadow on the wall he had added, "What do you think?" "I say good, for sure," he shouted, as he ran out of the door, through the great gates and into the place Michel, where, turning sharply and suddenly, he seemed to drop into the earth and disappear. He had only descended, with one plunge, the steep flight of stone steps leading down into a chandler's shop, where cucumbers and black bread were to be procured, as well as tallow candles and pottery of all kinds.

"A pound of black bread," he demanded, in clear, ringing tones. While waiting for it, with a snap of his fingers and an involuntary movement of his impatient and restless feet, "Good, very good, I think," he whispered to himself. "Good, very good," he again repeated aloud, as the pound of black bread was thrust towards him.

"Of course it is good," said the shopman. "Take it and be off."

The boy laughed merrily as he flew up the stone steps, looking back an instant before he disappeared to show a saucy face to the merchant, and singing blithely as he dashed back through the stone corridor and into a room, small, dark and close.

The day was gloriously bright though bitterly cold, and the boy was in high spirits, though for what reason he could not have told. His young blood was dancing in his veins, his feet keeping time to some inward melody, and his blue eyes sparkling with glee.

He had hardly time to lay down the black bread when he hears a heavy step. He springs to open the door.

"Here it is, my Dyada," and he points to the loaf. "My Dyada," (my uncle) he pronounces in a caressing tone, with a little emphasis on the pronoun that is very touching to hear.

"My Dyada" takes the loaf and cuts one generous slice, and one small one; then, sprinkling both liberally with coarse salt, he begins his breakfast.

"Take the big one this morning, Dyada; it is too much for me."

Dyada shakes his head and goes on eating, or pretending to eat. The boy makes no pretence, and eats his portion as he does everything, quickly, promptly and begins to busy himself about the room, though there is nothing to do, nothing to arrange, nothing to put away.

"Gavreel!"

"Here I am, my Dyada."

Dyada was fumbling in his pockets. He was old, partially paralyzed, and consequently very slow in his movements.

"Gavreel, kneel down."

Gavreel obeyed, and Dyada placed his trembling hand upon his head. Had the boy looked up he would have seen tears in the dim old eyes; but he did not look up.

"Gavreel," at length spoke the old man, "I must leave you for a day or two. This money is for your bread; and the watchman's wife has promised me to give you a bowl of soup each day. You are to go to her for it. Hold out your hand."

Gavreel held out his hand, and Dyada counted into it five kopecks, the price of two pounds of bread.

"Will you take care of the place till I return, and be a good boy, Gavreel?"

"Yes, my Dyada; but would it not be better if you were to take me along with you?"

"Impossible, Gavreel. Surely you will not be afraid to stay alone one night, or two at most?"

No, Gavreel would not be afraid, but he would be very lonesome.

"I will come back as soon as I can, dear. Be good and brave. Lock the door whenever you go out; let no one enter, and bring no one in with you till my return. Go into the church in the morning if you are cold."

Gavreel promised all these things, and followed Dyada to the door and out into the courtyard of the church. He would have gone on still further had not Dyada sent him back.

He would have plenty of time to practise his steps now; and he did till he was tired, for there was a strong spirit of rivalry raging in the hearts of the boys of the court, as to who should best dance the trepaka. He danced till he was so tired that he fell asleep on Dyada's bed; and when he awoke it was so dark that he did not know for certain whether it was not the middle of the night.

Presently he heard a knocking at the door, and a voice calling him. It was the watchman, who, true to his work, had come to look after him.

"Hey, what, asleep in the middle of the afternoon! Why didn't you come for your plate of soup, youngster?"

Gavreel rubbed his eyes and looked up in the man's face, smiling the while. "Come, come," said the kind, rough voice; "there's a little left in the bottom of the pot yet;" and he led him away to his own room, a larger and a lighter one than Dyada's, and made him eat the plateful of cabbage-water they called soup, and a delicious salted cucumber besides, and another good slice of black bread with salt. Gavreel enjoyed these dainties immensely, and without invitation he began to play with the chubby baby that was toddling after the watchman's wife as she went about her household work.

Presently he heard boys' voices outside, and knew that school was out, and he bade the baby Timka, or little Timothy, good-bye and ran out to join them in their sports.

"Gavreel! Gavreel!" He was their chosen champion, and soon a ring was formed around him and his rival, and there was a dancing-match, at which Gavreel was as usual victorious. With three cheers for the winner they dispersed, and Gavreel returned to his lonely room and looked out of the window till he was tired.

While kneeling on Dyada's bed, looking out of the window, he remembered that Dyada had said that he might go into the church in the morning if he felt cold, and he resolved to do so, for he loved to hear the tones of the organ. He fell asleep again, dreaming of the music he was to hear, and smiling at sight of the convent school boys filing into church with their sumkas, or satchels, strapped on their backs, and wishing he was one of them.

The morning broke intensely dark and cold; the air was dense with frost, and the sun came not forth, and Gavreel kept waiting and watching for morning to dawn, till at length the boys came out at noon to take their recreation. Then he flew out to them, and found that the promised pleasure had been lost (the church doors being closed till the next day). It was too dark and cold for the boys to remain out long; so he was left to himself. He was beginning to feel the pangs of hunger, yet not caring for his black crust when the watchman beckoned to him to come for his soup. This time he was not taken into the room, for little Timka was asleep; so he carried his bowl away with him, and ate a little of its savory contents, and put the rest away for Dyada when he should arrive, tired, cold and hungry.

"He is sure to come soon now," said Gavreel to himself; "the watchman thought he might come at any moment, and so did the porter."

Gavreel fought against sleep as long as he could that he might hear the very first sound of approaching footsteps; but conquered at last, he forgot his watching and the growing cold and darkness and solitude, and slept sweetly.

CHAPTER II.

Gavreel had a neighbor whom he had never seen, or at least had never particularly noticed; she was not an important or an imposing personage—she slipped by one without attracting the least attention. She had been christened Marie Felicitas, but they called her "Felicie," because of her happy face and disposition. Whence came the rose-bloom of her soft cheeks, the blue of her sweet eyes, the waves of soft, brown hair, the whiteness of the little, shapely hands, and the even teeth? Above all, whence came the heavenly expression, the invariably happy smile she wore? Who shall say? She was only one of the poor of the convent church—one of its pensioners—who received a tiny room in the basement of the great edifice, that she and her mother might die in peace after a long life of goodly and most unselfish labor.

"ONE OF THE PENSIONERS."

Which was the mother and which the daughter it would have been hard to tell at the first glance. Save that the elder woman's eyes were darker, and that she was a helpless invalid, while her daughter was very active for her age, there was hardly any difference between them.

They had worked at flower-making for more than half a century, and their principal and favorite work was altar flowers, for which they could never be induced to accept pay. No wonder that they had not laid up treasures for the rust and the moth to consume.

Finally the good mother died, and Felicie is alone. She has taken the "little mother" to the Viborge side and laid her away in a narrow little grave, with a cross and crown of her own flowers lying upon the damp earth they shoveled so hastily into the narrow pit.

Father X—— had come and closed the pure eyes, and Felicie had prepared her mother for the narrow bed where no cushions were needed. Who would not envy you, old flower-maker? envy your pure life and peaceful death; hands that clung to nothing earthly; heart that beat never for self; ready feet that daily for seventy-five years had found the way to the altar-steps! Good-bye, and pray for us, old flower-maker.

"It is enough, mother," said Felicie, rising from her knees. She turned, smiling, from her mother's bed to her own, which was the same, only without the settle, that is to say, a couple of "cushions" on the hard floor. She took them up, dusted them, looked to see if they were quite whole—clean she knew they were—and went out and knocked at her neighbor's door.

She knew the half-paralyzed old man well enough by sight, and guessed that another cushion or two would not be useless, either for himself or the boy she had so often seen dancing about the courtyard of the convent.

She knocked a timid knock. Gavreel opened the door.

"Give these to your Dyada, dear boy; they are clean and good, and I do not want them any more."

Gavreel looked in wonder at the smiling little old woman. Felicie was hardly more than fifty-five; yet she was so well muffled up, and had such a stoop that, save for her bright face, you might have taken her for a hundred. Gavreel looked in wonder and shook his head.

"He is not here," he managed to say after a pause. "He has gone away."

"But he will come back," said Felicie. The lad shook his head and shrugged his shoulders, in token of uncertainty she thought.

"Are you quite alone, dear child?"

A nod was the only answer.

"Have you food and fire?" Food he had, but fire he could do without, he said.

"Let me come in," said Felicie; "I will see for myself."

But Gavreel would not suffer her to enter, for fear of displeasing Dyada.

"Then come with me," urged the good little creature. "I have fire and everything; come, I am lonesome."

It was hard to prevail upon Gavreel to do this; Dyada might come in his absence and find the door locked. But Felicie found a way to satisfy all his fears on that score by notifying the watchman and the gate porter as to where he was to be found. The wood carriers, whose duty it was to carry stacks of wood to the hundred lodgings of the convent building, were also told, and they, one and all, good-naturedly promised to be on the lookout for "my Dyada." The old man had been nicknamed by them thus in playful mockery of Gavreel.

When all this was done the little fellow put his hand into Felicie's hand and let himself be led away. He had no idea they were such near neighbors, and was delighted that he could himself hear Dyada's steps if he approached. He was so glad of the discovery that their doors were only a few feet apart that he fell to dancing while Felicie was unlocking her door. When the door was thrown open, and he saw the interior of what she called her gilded hovel, he danced and sang and laughed with all his might. Felicie smiled back at him, to reassure him, though noisy mirth jarred upon her at all times, and more especially just then.

"This is good!" declared Gavreel. "Is it all yours? Oh what a wonderful, what a beautiful place! All flowars, just like a garden."

He had never seen anything like it in his life, except in church. Suddenly he ceased his mirth and looked earnestly at Felicie. A thought, a fear had smitten him, like a sharp arrow. Who was this smiling little being who had tempted him in her palace? Was she the dumovoy, the familiar spirit of every Russian house? and had she brought him here to do something terrible to him? He backed towards the door, keeping his eyes on her the while. Unconscious of his gaze Felicie was preparing their supper.

Gavreel, like Hans Andersen's Fir Tree, had never heard but one story, and that was of a dumovoy that appeared in many forms, and could assume any shape at will, either beautiful or ugly, and who had power over children especially, and could change them into anything it chose."

"Perhaps Dyada has come," he strove to say, his hand on the door. "I will go and see."

"Take some supper first, dear; see, it is all ready." She did not look at him. She was both hungry and thirsty, poor little creature; for since her communion at the early mass that morning nothing had passed her lips; and seeing him mirthful and gay she thought him all right. She made the sign of the cross slowly, reverently looking up at the pictures of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary that hung, flower-framed, together on the wall above the settlebed, and then said again, "Come, Gavreel, supper is ready."

Gavreel drew a long breath. It was part of his story that the dumovoy fled from the sign of the cross.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am Felicie, the flower-maker," she answered, "the last and only one now," she said to herself aloud.

"Where are the others?" asked Gavreel.

"One other," said Felicie. "She has gone home to heaven."

"Then she will see my mother," said Gavreel; "she said she was going there. Tell me about your mother."

"After supper, dear. Come now, take this nice cup of coffee and this lovely cake a kind lady brought me, for I never eat cake; you shall have it all; and see! we have sugar and butter and white bread, which the kind rich people brought when mother died."

"Why didn't they bring them before?" asked Gavreel; "didn't she want them?"

"She did not care for such things, dear. They are for the rich, and we could do without them. Eat, dear; you must be hungry."

Gavreel had never tasted such dainties; yet he ate sparingly of them, and piled up very carefully at one side the greater portion of what Felicie had heaped on his plate.

"Is this all for me?" he asked.

"All for you? Yes, certainly; and why do you not eat it?"

"I would like to keep it for Dyada."

"So you shall, dear heart, and eat plenty besides, in honor of this day."

"What day?" asked Gavreel.

"My dear mother's birthday."

"Was she born to-day? I thought you said she died."

"She was born to her new life in heaven this day," said Felicie smiling and looking upwards.

"Tell me about her," pleaded Gavreel. "But first I will see if my Dyada has come."

He ran out, but soon returned to say that there was no sign of his coming. He looked so sad and disappointed that Felicie began to tell him about her mother, while her fingers busily shaped flowers and leaves. The child listened in wonder to her talk of God and heaven and angels. To interest him more, she placed her favorite pictures before him, and he asked a thousand questions about the "Little Jesus," who interested him more than any of the others because He was most like himself. He was happy for a long while thus engaged, and was busily thinking how he could get his Dyada transformed into a carpenter like St. Joseph, and, if he could, how pleasantly they would work together.

Felicie did not know that he was thinking his own thoughts thus, and kept on talking of the Divine Lord and His Blessed Mother, describing the miracles, and finally coming to the Last Supper and the Betrayal.

She was speaking in a soft, low voice that did not interfere with his own plans, till something made her appeal directly to him, and he had to answer. Then he listened more attentively and became aware that Felicie was speaking in a very sorrowful strain, telling how the foster-father was dead, and how the Child had grown to be a man, and how He was betrayed and condemned to die.

"This very little Jesus?" asked Gavreel, pointing to the picture.

"Yes," said Felicie; "this dear Lord was led away to be nailed on the cross."

Gavreel looked at her in horror.

"You wish to make me cry," he said. "I am afraid of you. Oh, do let me go to my own Dyada. He never made me cry."

Poor Felicie was struck with remorse. "How could I? How could I?" she asked herself. "O dear little lad, do not fear. How could I know that you had never learned the story before? Come, we will go together and see if Dyada has come."

No, he had not come, but Gavreel would not re-enter with her. He chose to creep into his own cold bed and wait and wait.

Some hours later Felicie knocked softly at his door. There was no answer, and she said to herself: "He has come; they are both asleep."

The next morning she arose early and cleaned and dusted her little room, polished her chairs, or her one chair, and the chest of drawers whereon was piled her wealth of flowers. She then knelt and devoutly said her morning prayers. Some time afterwards she donned her ancient little cloak, and close black hood, tied a black shawl over it, and under her pretty little chin, took her beads and her prayer-book, and her bit of candle to light herself out of the dark hall, and hurried to church.

She had time to say a good many decades of her beads, and yet there was no sign of the doors being opened. She usually arrived before the time, so she thought nothing of that; but she began to feel the cold and got up off her knees, to walk up and down to keep herself from freezing. It was very dark, but she fancied there was a figure of some kind in one corner, near the side door. She approached to assure herself, and lo! there all huddled up was little Gavreel, waiting to get into the church to warm himself.

"My Dyada said I might come," he pleaded in excuse.

"I should think you might, indeed," she answered, cheerily; "but you must have made a mistake, and got up too early. Wait—I will go and ask the gate porter to tell me what o'clock it is."

She hurried off and soon came running back. "A good hour yet, my dear. Come, we shall have plenty of time to get warm before mass begins. Let us run."

Gavreel could hardly move, he was so benumbed with cold; but she helped him, and unresistingly led him to her little room, and wrapped him up, and put him on the bed. He was soon asleep, and she left him there sleeping, and went to mass. He was still sleeping when she returned, and she sat down to her work, deferring the preparation of her breakfast till he should be awake to share it.

To pass the time she chanted to herself sacred hymns in low sweet tone—the dear old Polish hymns of long ago. Gavreel was awake and listening to her for a long time ere she was aware of it. He lost patience, and he seemed to have forgotten his fear of the night previous.

Before he could be prevailed upon to eat Gavreel went once more to look out for some signs of Dyada, but he came back with the same sad story, no sign of him. And so passed breakfast, dinner, supper; and in spite of the church music, his play with the schoolboys, and Felicie's stories, Gavreel could not for an instant forget that Dyada came not.

In the midst of the hilarious schoolboy game he would suddenly stop and look wistfully up the road by which the old man had departed. When the street lamps were lighted he crept into his cold little room and flung himself on the bed in a sort of dumb hopelessness. He did not cry; indeed Felicie learned later that he never cried. He had never been seen to relieve his childish heart by tears or sobs. When in pain, or anger, or grief, he hid his childish face and thought his thoughts out in dumb silence. She sought him soon after nightfall and found him thus, silent, cold, pensive.

She had much ado to make him rise and accompany her, for he feared to be absent for an instant lest his Dyada came. He kept fancying he heard his steps and insisted upon opening the door at every slightest sound. The bitter cold air blew in upon him, yet he felt it not, and begged so hard to be permitted to go home and wait there that she had to yield an unwilling consent. She insisted, however, on making a little fire upon her own responsibility, but it would take a long time to expel the cold and damp from the room.

When morning broke and she went to bring him to his breakfast she found him very feverish and ill. He staggered as he tried to follow her, and when the door was locked and he tried to hide the great iron key as usual in his bosom, fearing that his pocket was not sufficiently safe, he could not hold it, and it fell with a resounding noise upon the stone floor.

"Let me put it away for you," said poor Felecie, who was sadly troubled at the sight of the poor lad.

"I promised not to part with it," he answered.

She helped him to put it away and then led him in and did what she could to make him comfortable. But he sickened sorely in spite of her wise remedies, and before night he was delirious. Felicie was just putting on her black hood to run for help when a heavy step on the stone floor without and a heavy thump of a heavy stick against a neighboring door told her that Dyada had come at last. Gavreel heard nothing. Felicie hurried out to prepare the old man for the sad news of his boy's illness.

"I feared it," he said. "You are the good flower-maker, I know; and I thank you for all you have done for him. May I see him?"

She led him in. The old man had walked thirty miles that day, but this did not deter him from working all night on the tender invalid, who at length seemed to recognize the touch of the caressing hand and murmured "My Dyada."

The old man shook his head in silence. Felicie tried to encourage him by saying the malody was only a cold, which would be all right in a few days, but the venerable watcher was not deceived.

"Shall I tell you his story?" he at length asked.

"Thank you for your confidence," said Felicie.

"It is short," said the old man, "and not new. His mother was my niece, my only sister's child. A spoiled pretty child as ever the sun shone on; the worse for her. She was the pride of our life, the innocent bright creature, and as ignorant at the age of seventeen as the lad lying there. She had never had a friend or a companion save the little children of our farm till then. With them she danced and sang and played the life-long day. So it was till the day, the black day, when a Russian regiment was quartered in our town, and three Russian soldiers billeted upon my sister.

"One of them, a handsome, dashing fellow, won the child's affection, took her with him to the regimental chaplain, who was glad enough to marry them, for by the marriage my sister's lands, houses, farms, all would pass into Russian hands, she being the only child of her widowed mother. The silly fool forgot, or never knew, that, should she ever have a child of her own, it would have to be of its father's faith.

"So it was. This is her child."

He went away and looked down upon the boy, who was tossing restlessly upon his bed.

"The villain borrowed money on every hand," continued the old man, coming back, and again looking down upon the little flower-maker, as she arranged the petals of a rose with her deft fingers, borrowed money on his wife's prospective inheritance, drank it, gambled it away, and then deserted her and her child in some Russian town, to which he had got himself transferred on purpose to separate her from her people. By some means she got here in search of me, not knowing I was paralyzed. She knew I loved her always in spite of all. They had to take her to the hospital before long—her health was broken. She begged me to keep the boy and to bring him up in our own faith.

"Keep him and love him is all that I could do. To teach him anything would be a capital offense. Not that I hesitated for my own sake; but, had I attempted it, he would have been taken from me. Now they may claim him at any moment. Though I am ready to lay down my life for him, yet I know that they will force me to give him up now that she has gone."

"Has she gone?" asked Felicie softly.

"Yes, she is at rest. Yester morn they heaped the cold clods of earth upon her. I saw it thankfully. Poor wreck of our rare, bright little girl."

The old man went back to the bed and sank down beside it. Felicie worked on in silence.

Thus one day and night, then many days and nights of anxious watching before Gavreel awoke to recognize his Dyada and smile upon him. But he did so at last.

"Who is she?" he asked, pointing to Felicie.

"That is good Felicie, who has saved your life."

"Good Felicie," said Gavreel, thoughtfully, "yes—I remember her; she told me stories of the Christ Child, and wanted to make me cry, but I ran away."

"She has been very good to you," said Dyada.

"Has she been good to you?" questioned Gavreel.

"Yes, indeed, my dear one; better than I can say.

"Then she may finish the story," said Gavreel; I will hear all from good Felicie."

"Did she tell you that the rich people brought cakes and sugar, and lots of good things to her mother when she was dead?"

The old man shook his head.

"She told me," said Gavreel. "Do you think she wanted them, my Dyada?"

"Who, dear?"

"Why, the dead mother."

"She wanted nothing dear, any more. The Lord took her to Himself."

"I am very glad," said Gavreel. "When will Felicie tell me the end of the story?"

When he was well once more he heard the whole story, and took it into his loving heart eagerly. Again he danced about the courtyard, bright and happy, making the sunshine of two lives. Felicie found a thousand ways of doing him good, and took the whole responsibility upon herself. In an incredibly short space of time he knew his prayers, then his catechism, besides many sweet hymns. But of all this, and of other things greater and far more precious that she accomplished for his soul, there is no use in speaking now.

He was, indeed, a bright and beautiful Polish lad, though only poor old Dyada's nephew. Poor old Dyada! He had been a brave soldier in his day, but was forced to live here, in exile and dire poverty; though, if he had never fought for his dear Poland, he might be living at his ease, with his only sister, on the dear old farm that she still held in spite of much injustice and persecution.

One day, it was a bright day, too, for the sun shone down hotly, and the blue sky was cloudless, there came a knock at the old man's door.

"Enter."

A Russian soldier of dissolute mien and air stepped in. He saluted, military fashion, looking about the small room sharply.

"You are Stanislas Ivanovitch?"

The old man had arisen, but had no power to answer.

"I came for my son. Where is he?"

"I CAME FOR MY SON."

It had come at last. The drunken, dissolute father had put forth his claim, and who could gainsay it? Not a Polish uncle, or grandmother, or any Pole, since the boy was a Russian subject, like his father.

No need of dwelling on the parting. He took away his son, not because he wanted, or could or would keep him. Quite the reverse. Gavreel was a big boy for his years; he could be made useful to the father; he was nine years of age.

It was weeks and weeks before his uncle could trace him. Finally he succeeded through the bureau of addresses. The father had apprenticed him to an undertaker; to a rich undertaker, who kept besides the gorgeous funeral cars, all white and gold, and the sable plumed cars so imposing in their sombre richness, the poor, bare car, the platform on wheels, on which the yellow hospital coffins were transported to the cemeteries of the very poor. In the quarter assigned to these rude vehicles, to the miserable broken-down skeletons they called horses, and to the drunken hostlers and rude stable boys and apprentices, our dancing Gavreel had found a home.

What a change was here! From Dyada's caressing voice and touch, from the lessons of Felicie the flower-maker, and the companionship of the pleasant school boys, to these filthy stables, and the company of swearing, drunken men and boys.

But Gavreel danced here, too, though not exactly for his own pleasure. The tones of a hand-organ happening to reach his ears one day, his feet betrayed him. Unconsciously they beat time to the music.

"He can dance!" was the shout; and he had to dance. He did his best to please them, and they urged him on by drunken cheers, and when he fain would cease they urged him on still.

He never would admit to Felicie that they beat him, but she knew it well enough. She had found him out, and as often as she dared she stole near the place with some message from Dyada, or some token from herself.

Sometimes Gavreel had to go as mourner after pauper funerals; that was in the way of learning the business. He would walk slowly, head inclined solemnly, after the rude, black platform and the yellow coffin, with its unknown and unnamed occupant, and after the skeleton horse, the miserable lad, clad in a long, black cloak with double cape, sleeves too long for his arms, and huge old black hat that fell backwards over his lean shoulders and ears.

Little Gavreel knew the way to all the poor cemeteries. It used to tire his once tireless feet terribly to walk such long distances. They let him ride home often, but this was a questionable pleasure. Often the rude boy driver would torment him; and once a drunken man, who had replaced the boy for the occasion, had bade him rise and dance on the platform. He had tried to obey, and the wretch in high glee whipped up the miserable animal that could crawl with difficulty, but it now made a frantic plunge forward as the whip cut through its poor hide. The whip was only a knotted cord that the man kept in his pocket to amuse himself with, on occasions like these. Gavreel did not complain, though he had fallen and been sorely shaken and bruised.

One day it was his turn to don the black hat and cloak, and to take the driver's seat. Why "driver" I know not. There was certainly no driving about it.

The horse knew the way and took it, slowly, patiently, with drooping head. The stablemen had been boisterous and drinking the previous night, and morning found them still wildly bent on having a little "fun." An accordion-player was within hearing. They would hail him, and have the dancing boy out.

Poor little lad! He did his very best to please them, for often and often they were kind to him, and generous, too, giving him perhaps an apple or a piece of cheese they had themselves received as a gift.

He had to hurry off after that dance, all heated as he was, to take his place on the lonesome car. The way was long from the hospital to the graveyard. The wind blew bitterly cold through the tattered old cloak, swelling out the huge sleeves, and the enormous hat was lifted nearly off his small head, and the capes flapped about his face, while his feet were not slow in cooling after his exercise.

He tried to extricate his hand from the long sleeve that he might feel the medal that Felicie had so carefully sewed into the lining of his vest; but he could not, because the wind blew so hard. He tried to think about the pleasant things she had told him, and to repeat some of the hymns he had learned from her, but the words were blown down into his poor little throat, nearly choking him. By-and-by he forgot to try and think, and knew nothing more.

The horse took him home, and waited quietly at the stable door till he should descend; but Gavreel kept his place till someone, noticing the old hat, playfully knocked it off just for fun, and beheld the ghastly little face

They carried him in and put him on his little mattress of straw in the dark corner of the crowded room. The noisy mirth of the men was hushed. They spoke in whispers. They were very sorry for the dancing boy, and would not have him die. Every remedy was tried, even to pouring hot brandy down his throat.

One, kindest of all, ran for Felicie, who came quickly. Dyada could not come, he was himself dying fast, of a broken spirit.

Felicie knelt beside Gavreel and called him softly by tender names. He opened his eyes and knew her, smiled, and asked for his Dyada. He even tried to tell her many things and to ask her questions; but only the lips moved; there was no voice. Still she understood him.

Once he laughed, and she almost thought he was delirious, but he formed the words, "Little Jesus," and looked up, to show her that he knew he was going to Him.

"Good Felicie." He had found a little voice at last.

"What, dear Gavreel?"

"Tell Dyada to come soon."

"Yes, dear."

"Good Felicie."

"Yes, dear."

"Will you come soon, good Felicie?"

"If the Lord wills, dear."

"Come soon, good Felicie, to Little Jesus and me."

"Light the lamp, good Felicie, please."

Felicie lighted a little end of a blessed candle that she always kept in her pocket now. It had been in her dying mother's hand. The dying child smiled as he saw the flicker of the red flame.

"Will Little Jesus take me soon, good Felicie? I am so tired—and sleepy."

"Sleep, dear," murmured Felicie.

And Gavreel slept.

* * * * * * * *

"It is better so," said Dyada, when Felicie had told him all. "He is at rest. We shall meet the sooner."—American Messenger.

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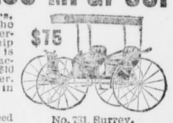

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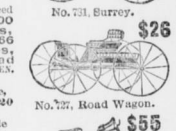

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AN ORDINANCE to provide for the lighting of the streets and alleys within the borough of Freeland.

Be it ordained and enacted by the burgess and town council of the borough of Freeland, and it is hereby ordained by authority of the same, that the burgess and the president of council be and are hereby authorized and empowered to enter into a contract with the Freeland Electric Light, Heat and Power Company for the purpose of lighting the streets and alleys in the borough of Freeland for a term of five years from the first day of August, A. D., 1894, on the following terms and conditions:

Lights to be are lights of two thousand candle-power each, to be erected and kept in repair by the Freeland Electric Light, Heat and Power Company, to be burned all night, and every night of the week, and to be furnished along such streets and at such places as the borough of Freeland may require. The number of lights not to be less than fifteen (15).

The borough of Freeland to pay for each and every light the sum of one hundred dollars per annum in monthly payments, each monthly payment to be made on or before the 20th for the lighting of the preceding month.

Passed finally in council, April 2, 1894.

Frank DePierro, president.

Thomas A. Buckley, secretary.

Approved, April 2, 1894.

Patrick McLaughlin, burgess.

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