Then he turned slowly and mounted his horse. His Cossacks were waiting at the foot of the height.

"Forward! forward! Good health to you, my soldier friend!" said he to the lieutenant. "The times are such at present that brother trusts not brother. This is why you know not whom you have saved, for I have not given you my name."

"You are not Abdank, then?"

"That is my escutcheon."

"And your name?"

"Bogdan Zenovi Hmelnitski."

When he had said this, he rode down from the height, and his Cossacks moved after him. Soon they were hidden in the mist and the night. When they had gone about half a furlong, the wind bore back from them the words of the Cossack song, —

"O God, lead us forth, poor captives,
From heavy bonds,
From infidel faith,
To the bright dawn,
To quiet waters,
To a gladsome land,
To a Christian world.
Hear, O God, our prayers, —
The prayers of the hapless,
The prayers of poor captives."

The voices grew fainter by degrees, and then were melted in the wind sounding through the reeds.

CHAPTER II.

Reaching Chigirin next morning, Pan Skshetuski stopped at the house of Prince Yeremi in the town, where he was to spend some time in giving rest to his men and horses after their long journey from the Crimea, which by reason of the floods and unusually swift currents of the Dnieper had to be made by land, since no boat could make head against the stream that winter. Skshetuski himself rested awhile, and then went to Pan Zatsvilikhovski, former commissioner of the Commonwealth, — a sterling soldier, who, though he did not serve with the prince, was his confidant and friend. The lieutenant wanted to ask him if there were instructions from Lubni; but the prince had sent nothing special. He had ordered Skshetuski, in the event of a favorable answer from the Khan, to journey slowly, so that his men and horses might be in good health. The prince had the following business with the Khan: He desired the punishment of certain Tartar murzas, who had raided his estates beyond the Dnieper, and whom he himself had punished severely. The Khan had in fact given a favorable answer, — had promised to send a special envoy in the following April to punish the disobedient; and wishing to gain the good-will of so famous a warrior as the prince, he had sent him by Skshetuski a horse of noted stock and also a sable cap.

Pan Skshetuski, having acquitted himself of his mission with no small honor, the mission itself being a proof of the high favor of the prince, was greatly rejoiced at the permission to stop in Chigirin without hastening his return. But old Zatsvilikhovski was greatly annoyed by what had been taking place for some time in Chigirin. They went together to the house of Dopula, a Wallachian, who kept an inn and a wine-shop in the place. There they found a crowd of nobles, though the hour was still early; for it was a market-day, and besides there happened to be a halt of cattle driven to the camp of the royal army, which brought a multitude of people together. The nobles generally assembled in the square at Dopula's, at the so-called Bell-ringers' Corner. There were assembled tenants of the Konyetspolskis, and Chigirin officials, owners of neighboring lands,

settlers on crown lands, nobles on their own soil and dependent on no one, land stewards, some Cossack elders, and a few inferior nobles, — some living on other men's acres and some on their own.

These groups occupied benches at long oaken tables and conversed in loud voices, all speaking of the flight of Hmelnitski, which was the greatest event of the place. Zatsvilikhovski sat with Skshetuski in a corner apart. The lieutenant began to inquire what manner of phœnix that Hmelnitski was of whom all were speaking.

"Don't you know?" answered the old soldier. "He is the secretary of the Zaporojian army, the heir of Subotoff, — and my friend," added he, in a lower voice. "We have been long acquainted, and were together in many expeditions in which he distinguished himself, especially under Tetera. Perhaps there is not a soldier of such military experience in the whole Commonwealth. This is not to be mentioned in public; but he has the brain of a hetman, a heavy hand, and a mighty mind. All the Cossacks obey him more than koshevoi and ataman. He is not without good points, but imperious and unquiet; and when hatred gets the better of him he can be terrible."

"What made him flee from Chigirin?"

"Quarrels with the Starosta Chaplinski; but that is all nonsense. Usually a nobleman bespatters a nobleman from enmity. Hmelnitski is not the first and only man offended. They say, too, that he turned the head of the starosta's wife; that the starosta carried off his mistress and married her; that afterward Hmelnitski took her fancy, — and that is a likely matter, for woman is giddy, as a rule. But these are mere pretexts, under which certain intrigues find deeper concealment. This is how the affair stands: In Chigirin lives old Barabash, a Cossack colonel, our friend. He had privileges and letters from the king. Of these it was said that they urged the Cossacks to resist the nobility; but being a humane and kindly man, he kept them to himself and did not make them known. Then Hmelnitski invited Barabash to a dinner in his own house, here in Chigirin, and sent people to Barabash's country-place, who took the letters and the privileges away from his wife and disappeared. There is danger that out of them such a rebellion as that of Ostranitsa may arise; for, I repeat, he is a terrible man, and has fled, it is unknown whither."

To this Skshetuski answered: "He is a fox, and has tricked me. He told me he was a Cossack colonel of Prince Dominik Zaslavski. I met him last night in the steppe, and freed him from a lariat."

Zatsvilikhovski seized himself by the head.

"In God's name, what do you tell me? It cannot have been."

"It can, since it has been. He told me he was a colonel in the service of Prince Dominik Zaslavski, on a mission from the Grand Hetman to Pan Grodzitski at Kudák. I did not believe this, since he was not travelling by water, but stealing along over the steppe."

"He is as cunning as Ulysses! But where did you meet him?"

"On the Omelnik, on the right bank of the Dnieper. It is evident that he was on his way to the Saitch."

"He wanted to avoid Kudák. I understand now. Had he many men?"

"About forty. But they came to meet him too late. Had it not been for me, the servants of the starosta would have strangled him."

"But stop a moment! That is an important affair. The servants of the starosta, you say?"

"That is what he told me."

"How could the starosta know where to look for him, when here in this place all were splitting their heads to know what he had done with himself?"

"I can't tell that. It may be, too, that Hmelnitski lied, and represented common robbers as servants of the starosta, in order to call more attention to his wrongs."

"Impossible! But it is a strange affair. Do you know that there is a circular from the hetman, ordering the arrest and detention of Hmelnitski?"

The lieutenant gave no answer, for at that moment some nobleman entered the room with a tremendous uproar. He made the doors rattle a couple of times, and looking insolently through the room cried out, —

"My respects, gentlemen!"

He was a man of forty years of age, of low stature, with peevish face, the irritable appearance of which was increased by quick eyes, protruding from his face like plums, — evidently a man very rash, stormy, quick to anger.

"My respects, gentlemen!" repeated he more loudly and sharply, since he was not answered at once.

"Respects! respects!" was answered by several voices.

This man was Chaplinski, the under-starosta of Chigirin, the trusted henchman of young Konyetspolski. He was not liked in Chigirin, for he was a terrible blusterer, always involved in lawsuits, always persecuting some one; but for all that he had great influence, consequently people were polite to him.

Zatsvilikhovski, whom all respected for his dignity, virtues, and courage, was the only man he regarded. Seeing him, he approached immediately, and bowing rather haughtily to Skshetuski, sat down near them with his tankard of mead.

"Well," inquired Zatsvilikhovski, "do you know what has become of Hmelnitski?"

"He is hanging, as sure as I am Chaplinski; and if he is not hanging yet, he will be soon. Now that the hetman's orders are issued, let me only get him in my hands!"

Saying this, he struck the table with his fist till the liquor was spilled from the glasses.

"Don't spill the wine, my dear sir!" said Skshetuski.

Zatsvilikhovski interrupted: "But how will you get him, since he has escaped and no one knows where he is?"

"No one knows? I know, — true as I am Chaplinski. You know Hvedko. That Hvedko is in his service, but in mine too. He will be Hmelnitski's Judas. It's a long story. He has made friends with Hmelnitski's Cossacks. A sharp fellow! He knows every step that is taken. He has engaged to bring him to me, living or dead, and has gone to the steppe before Hmelnitski, knowing where to wait for him."

Having said this, he struck the table again.

"Don't spill the wine, my dear sir!" repeated with emphasis Skshetuski, who felt an astonishing aversion to the man from the first sight of him.

Chaplinski grew red in the face; his protruding eyes flashed. Thinking that offence was given him, he looked excitedly at Pan Yan; but seeing on him the colors of Vishnyevetski, he softened. Though Konyetspolski had a quarrel with Yeremi at the time, still Chigirin was too near Lubni, and it was dangerous not to respect the colors of the prince. Besides, Vishnyevetski chose such people for his service that any one would think twice before disputing with them.

"Hvedko, then, has undertaken to get Hmelnitski for you?" asked Zatsvilikhovski again.

"He has, and he will get him, — as sure as I am Chaplinski."

"But I tell you that he will not. Hmelnitski has escaped the ambush, and has gone to the Saitch, which you should have told Pan Pototski to-day. There is no fooling with Hmelnitski. Speaking briefly, he has more brains, a heavier hand, and greater luck than you, who are too hot-headed. Hmelnitski went away safely, I tell you; and if perhaps you don't believe me, this gentleman, who saw him in good health on the steppe and bade good-by to him yesterday, will repeat what I have said."

"Impossible, it cannot be!" boiled up Chaplinski, seizing himself by the hair.

"And what is more," added Zatsvilikhovski, "this knight before you saved him and killed your servants, — for which he is not to blame, in spite of the hetman's order, since he was returning from a mission to the Crimea and knew nothing of the order. Seeing a man attacked in the steppe by ruffians, as he thought, he went to his assistance. Of this rescue of Hmelnitski I inform you in good season, for he is ready with his Zaporojians, and it is evident that you would n't be very glad to see him, for you have maltreated him over-much. Tfu! to the devil with such tricks!"

Zatsvilikhovski, also, did not like Chaplinski.

Chaplinski sprang from his seat, losing his speech from rage; his face was completely purple, and his eyes kept coming more and more out of his head. Standing before Skshetuski in this condition, he belched forth disconnected words, —

"How! — in spite of the hetman's orders! I will — I will — "

Skshetuski did not even rise from the bench, but leaned on his elbows and watched Chaplinski, darting like a hawk on a sparrow.

"Why do you fasten to me like a burr to a dog's tail?"

"I 'll drag you to the court with me! — You in spite of orders! — I with Cossacks!"

He stormed so much that it grew quieter in other parts of the room, and strangers began to turn their faces in the direction of Chaplinski. He was always seeking a quarrel,

for such was his nature; he offended every man he met. But all were astonished, then, that he began with Zatsvilikhovski, who was the only person he feared, and with an officer wearing the colors of Prince Yeremi.

"Be silent, sir!" said the old standard-bearer. "This knight is in my company."

"I'll take you to the court! — I'll take you to the court — to the stocks!" roared Chaplinski, paying no attention to anything or any man.

Then Skshetuski rose, straightened himself to his full height, but did not draw his sabre; he had it hanging low, and taking it by the middle raised it till he put the cross hilt under the very nose of Chaplinski.

"Smell that!" said he.

"Strike, whoever believes in God! — Ai! here, my men!" shouted Chaplinski, grasping after his sword-hilt.

But he did not succeed in drawing his sword. The young lieutenant turned him around, caught him by the nape of the neck with one hand, and with the other by the trousers below the belt raised him, squirming like a salmon, and going to the door between the benches called out, —

"Brothers, clear the road for big horns; he'll hook!"

Saying this, he went to the threshold, struck and opened the door with Chaplinski, and hurled the under-starosta out into the street. Then he resumed his seat quietly at the side of Zatsvilikhovski.

In a moment there was silence in the room. The argument used by Pan Yan made a great impression on the assembled nobles. After a little while, however, the whole place shook with laughter.

"Hurrah for Vishnyevetski's man!" cried some.

"He has fainted! he has fainted, and is covered with blood!" cried others, who had looked through the door, curious to know what Chaplinski would do. "His servants are carrying him off!"

The partisans of the under-starosta, but few in number, were silent, and not having the courage to take his part, looked sullenly at Skshetuski.

"Spoken truth touches that hound to the quick," said Zatsvilikhovski.

"He is a cur, not a hound," said, while drawing near, a bulky nobleman who had a cataract on one eye and a hole in his forehead the size of a thaler, through which the

naked skull appeared, — "He is a cur, not a hound! Permit me," continued he, turning to Pan Yan, "to offer you my respects. I am Yan Zagloba; my escutcheon 'In the Forehead,' as every one may easily know by this hole which the bullet of a robber made in my forehead when I was on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in penance for the sins of my youth."

"But leave us in peace," said Zatsvilikhovski; "you said yourself that that was knocked out of you with a tankard in Radom."

"As I live, the bullet of a robber! That was another affair in Radom."

"You made a vow to go to the Holy Land, perhaps; but that you have never been there is certain."

"I have not been there, for in Galáts I received the palm of martyrdom; and if I lie, I am a supreme dog and not a nobleman."

"Ah, you never stop your stories!"

"Well, I am a rogue without hearing. To you, Lieutenant!"

In the mean while others came up to make the acquaintance of Skshetuski and express their regard for him. In general Chaplinski was not popular, and they were glad that disgrace had met him. It is strange and difficult to understand at this day that all the nobility in the neighborhood of Chigirin, and the smaller owners of villages, landed proprietors, and agriculturists, even though serving the Konyetspolskis, all knowing in neighbor fashion the dispute of Chaplinski with Hmelnitski, were on the side of the latter. Hmelnitski had indeed the reputation of a famous soldier who had rendered no mean services in various wars. It was known, also, that the king himself had had communication with him and valued his opinion highly. The whole affair was regarded as an ordinary squabble of one noble with another; such squabbles were counted by thousands, especially in the Russian lands. The part of the man was taken who knew how to incline to his side the majority, who did not foresee what terrible results were to come from this affair. Later on it was that hearts flamed up with hatred against Hmelnitski, — the hearts of nobility and clergy of both churches in equal degree.

Presently men came up to Skshetuski with liquor by the quart, saying, —

"Drink, brother!"

"Have a drink with me too!"

"Long life to Vishnyevetski's men!"

"So young, and already a lieutenant with Vishnyevetski!"

"Long life to Yeremi, hetman of hetmans! With him we will go to the ends of the earth!"

"Against Turks and Tartars!"

"To Stamboul!"

"Long life to Vladislav, our king!"

Loudest of all shouted Pan Zagloba, who was ready all alone to out-drink and out-talk a whole regiment.

"Gentlemen!" shouted he, till the window-panes rattled, "I have summoned the Sultan for the assault on me which he permitted in Galáts."

"If you don't stop talking, you may wear the skin off your mouth."

"How so, my dear sir? Quatuor articuli judicii castrensis: stuprum, incendium, latrocinium et vis armata alienis ædibus illata. Was not that specifically vis armata?"

"You are a noisy woodcock, my friend."

"I 'll go even to the highest court."

"But won't you keep quiet?"

"I will get a decision, proclaim him an outlaw, and then war to the knife."

"Health to you, gentlemen!"

Some broke out in laughter, and with them Skshetuski, for his head buzzed a trifle now; but Zagloba babbled on just like a woodcock, charmed with his own voice. Happily his discourse was interrupted by another noble, who, stepping up, pulled him by the sleeve and said in singing Lithuanian tones, —

"Introduce me, friend Zagloba, to Lieutenant Skshetuski, — introduce me, please!"

"Of course, of course. Most worthy lieutenant, this is Pan Povsinoga."

"Podbipienta," said the other, correcting him.

"No matter; but his arms are Zervipludry —"[1]

"Zervikaptur,"[2] corrected the stranger.

"All right. From Psikishki —"[3]

"From Myshikishki,"[4] corrected the stranger.

"It 's all the same. I don't remember whether I said

[1] Tear-trousers. [2] Tear-cowl.
[3] Dog entrails. [4] Mouse entrails.

mouse or dog entrails. But one thing is certain: I should not like to live in either place, for it is not easy to get there, and to depart is unseemly. Most gracious sir," said he, turning to Skshetuski, "I have now for a week been drinking wine at the expense of this gentleman, who has a sword at his belt as heavy as his purse, and his purse is as heavy as his wit. But if ever I have drunk wine at the cost of such an original, then may I call myself as big a fool as the man who buys wine for me."

"Well, he has given him a description!"

But the Lithuanian was not angry; he only waved his hand, smiled kindly, and said: "You might give us a little peace; it is terrible to listen to you!"

Pan Yan looked with curiosity at the new figure, which in truth deserved to be called original. First of all, it was the figure of a man of such stature that his head was as high as a wall, and his extreme leanness made him appear taller still. His broad shoulders and sinewy neck indicated uncommon strength, but he was merely skin and bone. His stomach had so fallen in from his chest that he might have been taken for a man dying of hunger. He was well dressed in a gray closely fitting coat of sveboda cloth with narrow arms, and high Swedish boots, then coming into use in Lithuania. A broad and well-filled elk-skin girdle with nothing to support it had slipped down to his hips; to this girdle was attached a Crusader's sword, which was so long that it reached quite to the shoulder of this gigantic man.

But whoever should be alarmed at the sword would be reassured in a moment by a glance at the face of its owner. The face, lean like the whole person, was adorned with hanging brows and a pair of drooping, hemp-colored mustaches, but was as honest and sincere as the face of a child. The hanging mustaches and brows gave him an expression at once anxious, thoughtful, and ridiculous. He looked like a man whom people elbow aside; but he pleased Skshetuski from the first glance because of the sincerity of his face and his perfect soldierly self-control.

"Lieutenant," said he, "you are in the service of Prince Vishnyevetski?"

"I am."

The Lithuanian placed his hands together as if in prayer, and raised his eyes.

"Ah, what a mighty warrior, what a hero, what a leader!"

"God grant the Commonwealth as many such as possible!"

"But could I not enter his service?"

"He will be glad to have you."

At this point Zagloba interrupted the conversation.

"The prince will have two spits for his kitchen, — one in you, one in your sword, — or he will hire you as a cook, or he will order robbers to be hanged on you, or he will measure cloth with you to make uniforms! Tfu! why are you not ashamed as a man and a Catholic to be as long as a serpent or the lance of an infidel?"

"Oh, it's disgusting to hear you," said the Lithuanian, patiently.

"What is your title?" asked Skshetuski; "for when you were speaking Pan Zagloba interrupted so often that if you will pardon me —"

"Podbipienta."

"Povsinoga," added Zagloba.

"Zervikaptur of Myshikishki."

"Here, old woman, is fun for you. I drink his wine, but I'm a fool if these are not outlandish titles."

"Are you from Lithuania?" asked the lieutenant.

"Well, I'm two weeks now in Chigirin. Hearing from Pan Zatsvilikhovski that you were coming, I waited to present my request to the prince with his recommendation."

"Tell me, please, — for I am curious, — why do you carry such an executioner's sword under your arm?"

"It is not the sword of an executioner, Lieutenant, but of a Crusader, and I wear it because it is a trophy and has been long in my family. It served at Khoinitsi in Lithuanian hands, and that's why I wear it."

"But it's a savage machine, and must be terribly heavy. It's for two hands, I suppose?"

"Oh, it can be used in two hands or one."

"Let me have a look at it."

The Lithuanian drew the sword and handed it to him; but Skshetuski's arm dropped in a moment. He could neither point the weapon nor aim a blow freely. He tried with both hands; still it was heavy. Skshetuski was a little ashamed, and turning to those present, said, —

"Now, gentlemen, who can make a cross with it?"

"We have tried already," answered several voices.

"Pan Zatsvilikhovski is the only man who raises it, but he can't make a cross with it."

"Well, let us see you, sir," said Skshetuski, turning to the Lithuanian.

Podbipienta raised the sword as if it were a cane, and whirled it several times with the greatest ease, till the air in the room whistled and a breeze was blowing on their faces.

"May God be your aid!" said Skshetuski. "You have sure service with the prince."

"God knows that I am anxious, and my sword will not rust in it."

"But what about your wits," asked Zagloba, "since you don't know how to use them?"

Zatsvilikhovski now rose, and with the lieutenant was preparing to go out, when a man with hair white as a dove entered, and seeing Zatsvilikhovski, said, —

"I have come here on purpose to see you, sir."

This was Barabash, the Colonel of Cherkasi.

"Then come to my quarters," replied Zatsvilikhovski. "There is such a smoke here that nothing can be seen."

They went out together, Skshetuski with them. As soon as he had crossed the threshold, Barabash asked, —

"Are there news of Hmelnitski?"

"There are. He has fled to the Saitch. This officer met him yesterday in the steppe."

"Then he has not gone by water? I hurried off a courier to Kudák to have him seized; but if what you say is true, 't is useless."

When he had said this, Barabash covered his eyes with his hands, and began to repeat, "Oh, Christ save us! Christ save us!"

"Why are you disturbed?"

"Don't you know the treason he has wrought on me? Don't you know what it means to publish such documents in the Saitch? Christ save us! Unless the king makes war on the Mussulman, this will be a spark upon powder."

"You predict a rebellion?"

"I do not predict, I see it; and Hmelnitski is somewhat beyond Nalivaika and Loboda."

"But who will follow him?"

"Who? Zaporojians, registered Cossacks, people of the towns, the mob, cottagers, and such as these out here."

Barabash pointed to the market-square and to the people

moving around upon it. The whole square was thronged with great gray oxen on the way to Korsún for the army; and with the oxen went a crowd of herdsmen (Chabani), who passed their whole lives in the steppe and Wilderness, — men perfectly wild, professing no religion, ("religionis nullius," as the Voevoda Kisel said). Among them were forms more like robbers than herdsmen, — fierce, terrible, covered with remnants of various garments. The greater part of them were dressed in sheepskin doublets or in untanned skins with the wool outside, open in front and showing, even in winter, the naked breast embrowned by the winds of the steppe. All were armed, but with the greatest variety of weapons. Some had bows and quivers on their shoulders; some muskets or "squealers" (so called by the Cossacks); some had Tartar sabres, some scythes; and finally, there were those who had only sticks with horse-jaws fastened on the ends. Among them mingled the no less wild, though better armed men from the lower country, taking to the camp for sale dried fish, game, and mutton fat. Farther on were the Chumaki (ox-drivers) with salt, bee-keepers from the steppes and forest, wax-bleachers with honey, forest-dwellers with tar and pitch, peasants with wagons, registered Cossacks, Tartars from Bélgorod, and God knows what tramps and "vampires" from the ends of the earth. The whole town was full of drunken men. Chigirin was the place of lodging, and therefore of a frolic before bedtime. Fires were scattered over the market-square, while here and there an empty tar-barrel was burning. From every point were heard cries and bustle. The shrill squeak of Tartar pipes and the sound of drums was mingled with the bellowing of cattle and the softer note of the lyre, to which old men sang the favorite song of the time, —

"Oh, bright falcon,
My own brother,
Thou soarest high,
Thou seest far."

And besides this went up the wild shouts "U-ha! u-ha!" of the Cossacks, smeared with tar and quite drunk, dancing the tropak on the square. All this was at once wild and frenzied. One glance was enough to convince Zatsvilikhovski that Barabash was right; that one breath was sufficient to let loose those chaotic elements, inclined to plunder and accustomed to violence, with which the whole

Ukraine was filled. And behind these crowds stood the Saitch, the Zaporojie, recently bridled and put in curb after Masloff Stav, still gnawing the bit impatiently, remembering ancient privileges and hating commissioners, but forming an organized power. That power had also on its side the sympathy of a countless mass of peasants, less patient of control than in other parts of the Commonwealth, because near them was Chertomelik, and beyond lordlessness, booty, and freedom. The standard-bearer in view of this, though a Russian himself and a devoted adherent of Eastern orthodoxy, fell into gloomy thought.

Being an old man, he remembered well the times of Nalivaika, Loboda, and Krempski. He knew the robbers of the Ukraine better perhaps than any one in Russia; and knowing at the same time Hmelnitski, he knew that he was greater than twenty Lobodas and Nalivaikas. He understood, therefore, all the danger of his escape to the Saitch, especially with the letters of the king, which Barabash said were full of promises to the Cossacks and incitements to resistance.

"Most worthy colonel," said Zatsvilikhovski to Barabash, "you should go to the Saitch and neutralize the influence of Hmelnitski; pacify them, pacify them."

"Most worthy standard-bearer," answered Barabash, "I will merely say that in consequence of the news of Hmelnitski's flight with the papers of the king, one half of my men have followed him to the Saitch. My time has passed; not the baton awaits me, but the grave!"

Barabash was indeed a good soldier, but old and without influence.

Meanwhile they had come to the quarters of Zatsvilikhovski, who had regained somewhat the composure peculiar to his mild character; and when they sat down to half a gallon of mead, he said emphatically, —

"All this is nothing, if, as they say, war is on foot against the Mussulman; and it is likely that such is the case, for though the Commonwealth does not want war, and the diets have roused much bad blood in the king, still he may carry his point. All this fire may be turned against the Turk, and in every case we have time on our side. I will go myself to Pan Pototski, inform him, and ask that he, being nearest to us, should come with his army. I do not know whether I shall succeed, for though a brave man and a trained warrior, he is terribly confident in himself

and his army. And you, Colonel of Cherkasi, keep the Cossacks in curb — and you, Lieutenant, the moment you arrive at Lubni warn the prince to keep his eyes on the Saitch. Even if they begin action, I repeat it, we have time. There are not many people at the Saitch now; they have scattered around, fishing and hunting, and are in villages throughout the whole Ukraine. Before they assemble, much water will flow down the Dnieper. Besides, the name of the prince is terrible, and if they know that he has his eye on Chertomelik, perhaps they will remain in peace."

"I am ready," said the lieutenant, "to start from Chigirin even in a couple of days."

"That's right. Two or three days are of no account. And do you, Colonel of Cherkasi, send couriers with an account of the affair to Konyetspolski and Prince Dominic. But you are asleep, as I see."

Barabash had crossed his hands on his stomach and was in a deep slumber, snoring from time to time. The old colonel, when neither eating nor drinking, — and he loved both beyond measure, — was sleeping.

"Look!" said Zatsvilikhovski quietly to the lieutenant; "the statesmen at Warsaw think of holding the Cossacks in curb through such an old man as that. God be good to them! They put trust, too, even in Hmelnitski himself, with whom the chancellor entered into some negotiations or other; and Hmelnitski no doubt is fooling them terribly."

The lieutenant sighed in token of sympathy. But Barabash snored more deeply, and then murmured in his sleep: "Christ save us! Christ save us!"

"When do you think of leaving Chigirin?" asked Zatsvilikhovski.

"I shall have to wait two days for Chaplinski, who will bring an action, beyond doubt, for what has happened to him."

"He will not do that. He would prefer to send his servants against you if you did n't wear the uniform of the prince; but it is ugly work to tackle the prince, even for the servants of the Konyetspolskis."

"I will notify him that I am waiting, and start in two or three days. I am not afraid of an ambush, either, having a sabre at my side and a party of men."

The lieutenant now took farewell of Zatsvilikhovski, and went out.

The blaze from the piles on the square spread such a glare over the town that all Chigirin seemed burning. The bustle and shouts increased with the approach of night. The Jews did not peep from their houses. In every corner crowds of Chabani howled plaintive songs of the steppe. The wild Zaporojians danced around the fires, hurling their caps in the air, firing from their "squealers," and drinking gorailka by the quart. Here and there a scuffle broke out, which the starosta's men put down. The lieutenant had to open a way with the hilt of his sabre. Hearing the shouts and noise of the Cossacks, he thought at times that rebellion was already beginning to speak. It seemed to him, also, that he saw threatening looks and heard low-spoken curses directed against his person. In his ears were still ringing the words of Barabash, "Christ save us! Christ save us!" and his heart beat more quickly.

But the Chabani sang their songs more loudly in the town; the Zaporojians fired from their muskets and swam in gorailka. The firing and the wild "U-ha! u-ha!" reached the ears of the lieutenant, even after he had lain down to sleep in his quarters.