

globa. Then, turning to Jendzian, he said: "You could n't have found much joy in that service; here is a thaler for pleasure."

"Thank you humbly," said Jendzian.

"He," cried Pan Yan, "is a perfect rogue. He bought plunder of the Cossacks. You and I could n't purchase what he has now, even if you were to sell all your estates in Turkey."

"Is that true?" asked Zagloba. "Keep my thaler for yourself, and grow up, precious sapling; for if you'll not serve for a crucifix, you will serve at least for a gallows-tree. The fellow has a good eye." Here Zagloba caught Jendzian by the ear, and pulling it, continued: "I like rogues, and I prophesy that you will come out a man, if you don't remain a beast. And how does your master Bogun speak of you, hi?"

Jendzian smiled, for the words and caress flattered him, and answered: "Oh, my master, when he speaks of you, he strikes fire with his teeth."

"Oh, go to the devil!" cried Zagloba, in sudden anger. "What are you raving about?"

Jendzian went out. They began to discuss the journey of the morrow, and the great happiness which was awaiting Pan Yan. Mead soon improved Zagloba's humor; he began to talk to Skshetuski, and hint of christenings, and again of the passion of Pan Andrei Pototski for the princess. Pan Longin sighed. They drank, and were glad with their whole souls. Finally the conversation touched upon military events and the prince. Skshetuski, who had not been in the camp for many days, asked, —

"Tell me, gentlemen, what has happened to our prince? He is somehow another man; I cannot understand it. God has given him victory after victory. They passed him by in the command. What of that? The whole army is rushing to him now, so that he will be hetman without any one's favor, and will destroy Hmelnitski; but it is evident that he suffers, and suffers from something —"

"Perhaps the gout is taking hold of him," said Zagloba. "Sometimes when it gets a pull at me in the great toe, I am despondent for three days at a time."

"I tell you, brothers," said Podbipienta, nodding his head, "I have n't heard this myself from the priest Mukhovetski, but I heard that he told some one why the prince is so tormented — I do not say this myself; he is a kindly man,

good, and a great warrior, — why should I judge him? But since the priest says so — but do I know that it is so?"

"Just look, gentlemen, at this Lithuanian!" cried Zagloba. "Am I not right in making fun of him, since he does n't know human speech? What did you wish to say? You circle round and round, like a rabbit about her nest, but cannot come to a point."

"What did you really hear?" asked Skshetuski.

"Well, since for that — they say that the prince has shed too much blood. He is a great leader, but knows no measure in punishment, and now sees, it seems, everything red, — red in the daytime, red at night, as if a red cloud were surrounding him —"

"Don't talk nonsense!" shouted Zatsvilikhovski, with rage. "Those are old wives' tales. There was no better master for the rabble in time of peace; and as to his knowing no mercy for rebels, — well, what of that? That is a merit, not an offence. What torments, what punishments, would be too great for those who have deluged the country in blood, who have given their own people captive to Tartars, who know neither God, king, country, nor authorities? Where will you show me such monsters as they, where such cruelties as they have perpetrated on women and little children? Where can you find such criminal wretches? For them the empaling stake and the gallows are too much. Tfu, tfu! You have an iron hand, but a woman's heart. I saw how you whined, when they were burning Pulyan, that you would rather have killed him on the spot. But the prince is no old woman; he knows how to reward and how to punish. What is the use of telling me such nonsense?"

"But I have said, father, that I don't know," explained Pan Longin.

The old man puffed for a long time yet, and smoothing his milk-white hair, muttered: "Red, h'm! red, — that's news. In the head of him who invented that it is green, and not red!"

A moment of silence followed, but through the windows came the uproar of the revelling nobles. Little Volodyovski broke the silence reigning in the room.

"Well, father, what do you think can be the matter with our prince?"

"H'm!" said the old man, "I am not his confidant, therefore I do not know. He is thinking of something, he is struggling with himself, — a hot battle of some kind, —



it cannot be otherwise; and the greater the soul, the fiercer the torture."

The old knight was not mistaken; for in that same hour the prince, the leader, the conqueror, lay in the dust in his own quarters, before the crucifix, and was fighting one of the most desperate battles of his life.

The guards at the castle of Zbaraj called out midnight, but Yeremi was still conversing with God and with his own lofty soul. Reason, conscience, love of country, pride, perception of his own power and great destiny, were turned into combatants within his breast, and fought a stubborn battle with one another, from which his breast was bursting, his head was bursting, and pain contorted all his limbs. Now, in spite of the primate, the chancellor, the senate, the generals, against the will of the government, the regular soldiers, the nobles, the foreign troops in private service, were going over to that conqueror, — in one word, the whole Commonwealth was placing itself in his hands, taking refuge under his wings, committing its fortune to his genius, and in the person of its choicest sons was crying: "Save, for you alone can save!" In one month or in two there will be at Zbaraj one hundred thousand warriors, ready for a struggle to the death with the serpent of civil war. Here pictures of a future surrounded with light immeasurable, of glory and power, began to pass before the eyes of the prince. Those who wished to pass him by and subdue him are trembling, and he takes those iron legions and leads them into the steppes of the Ukraine, to victories and triumphs such as history has not yet known. The prince feels in himself corresponding power, and from his shoulders wings shoot forth like the wings of the archangel Michael. And at that moment he turns into such a giant that the whole castle, all Zbaraj, all Russia, cannot contain him. As God lives, he will rub out Hmelnitski, he will trample the rebellion, he will bring back peace to the fatherland! He sees extended plains, legions of troops; he hears the roar of artillery. A battle! a battle! Victory unheard of, unparalleled! Legions of bodies, hundreds of banners, cover the blood-stained steppe, and he tramples on the body of Hmelnitski, and the trumpets sound victory, and that sound flies from sea to sea. The prince rises, rushes up, extends his hands to Christ, around whose head is a mild purple light. "Oh, Christ, Christ!" he cries, "thou knowest, thou seest that I can; tell me that I should do this."

But Christ hung his head on his breast, and was as silent, as sorrowful as if he had been crucified the moment before.

"To thee be the praise!" cried the prince. "Non mihi, non mihi, sed nomini tuo da gloriam! To the glory of the faith of the Church and of all Christianity! Oh, Christ, Christ!" And a new image opened before the eyes of the hero. That career was not ended by the victory over Hmelnitski. The prince, having destroyed the rebellion, grows strong on its body. He becomes gigantic in power. Legions of Cossacks are joined to legions of Poles, and he goes farther, — strikes the Crimea, reaches the terrible dragon in his den; he erects the cross where hitherto bells had never called the faithful to prayer. He will go also to those lands which the princes Vishnyevetski have already trampled with the hoofs of their horses, and will extend the boundaries of the Commonwealth, and with them the Church, to the remotest corners of the earth. Where then is the limit to this impetus, where the bounds to this glory, power, and strength? There are none whatever.

The pale light of the moon falls into the chamber of the castle, but the clock beats a late hour, and the cocks are crowing. It will soon be day; but will it be a day in which with the sun in heaven a new sun will shine upon earth?

Yes, it will. The prince would be a child and not a man if he did not do this, if for any reasons whatever he drew back before the voice of these destinies. Now he feels a certain calm, which the merciful Christ had evidently poured on him, — praise to him for that! His mind has become more sober; he takes in more easily too with the eyes of his soul the condition of the country and all its affairs. The policy of the chancellor and those magnates in Warsaw, as well as of the voevoda of Bratslav, is evil, and destructive for the country. To trample the Zaporojie first, and squeeze an ocean of blood out of it, break it, annihilate it, bend, and conquer, and then only acknowledge that everything is finished; to restrain all oppression; to introduce order, peace; being able to kill, to restore to life, — that was the only path worthy of that great, that lordly Commonwealth. It might have been possible perhaps to choose another path long before, but not now. What in truth could negotiations lead to then? Armed legionaries stand against one another in thousands; and even if negotiations were concluded, what power could they have! No, no! those are dream visions,



shadows, a war extended over whole ages, a sea of tears and blood for the future. Let them take the only course which is great, noble, full of power, and he will wish and ask for nothing more. He will settle again in Lubni, and will wait quietly till the terrible trumpets call him to action again.

Let them take it? But who? The Senate? The stormy Diet? The chancellor, the primate, or the commanders? Who, besides him, understands this great idea, and who can carry it out? If such a man can be found, it is well. But where is he? Who has the power? He alone, — no one else. To him the nobles come; to him the armies gather; in his hand is the sword of the Commonwealth, — but the Commonwealth when the king is on the throne. But now when there is no king the will of the people rules. It is the supreme law, expressed not only in the Diets, not only through deputies, the Senate, and chancellors, not only through written laws and manifestoes; but still more powerfully, more emphatically, more definitely, by action. And who rules in action? The knightly estate; and this knightly estate is assembling at Zbaraj, and says to him, "You are the leader." The whole Commonwealth without voting gives him authority by the power of events, and repeats, "You are the leader. And should he draw back? What appointment does he wish besides? From whom is he to expect it? Is it from those who are endeavoring to ruin the Commonwealth and to conquer him? Why should he, why should he? Is it because when panic seized upon all, when the hetmans went into captivity, and the armies were lost, magnates hid themselves in their castles, and the Cossack put the foot on the breast of the Commonwealth, he alone pushed away that foot and raised from the dust the fainting head of that mother; sacrificed for her everything, — life, fortune; saved her from shame, from death, — he the conqueror!

Let him who has rendered more service, take the power. Let it rest in the hands of the man to whom it belongs more of right. He will resign that burden willingly, and say to God and the Commonwealth, "Let thy servant depart in peace;" for he is wearied, greatly weakened, and besides he is sure that neither the memory of him nor his grave will disappear.

But if there is no such person, he would be doubly and trebly a child and not a man if he should resign that power, that bright path, that brilliant, immense future, in which

lies the salvation of the Commonwealth, its power, glory, and happiness. And why should he?

The prince raised his head again proudly, and his flaming glance fell on Christ; but Christ hung his head on his breast, and remained in silence as painful as if they had crucified him the moment before.

Why should he? The hero pressed his heated temples with his hands. Maybe there is an answer. What is the meaning of those voices which amidst the golden rainbow visions of glory, amidst the thunder of coming victories, amidst the forebodings of grandeur, of power, call out so mercilessly to his soul, "Oh, halt, unfortunate one!" What means that unrest which goes through his breast like the shudder of alarm? What means it that when he shows himself most clearly and convincingly that he ought to take the power, something there in the depths of his conscience whispers, "You deceive yourself; pride misleads you; Satan promises you the glories of the kingdom"?

And again a fearful struggle began in the soul of the prince; again he was carried away by a whirlwind of alarms, uncertainty, and doubts.

What are the nobles doing who join him instead of the commanders? Trampling on law. What is the army doing? Violating discipline. And is he, a citizen, is he, a soldier, to stand at the head of lawlessness? Is he to cover it with his own dignity? Is he to give an example of insubordination, arbitrariness, disregard of law, and all merely to receive power two months earlier; for if Prince Karl shall be elected to the throne, power will not pass him by? Is he to give such a fearful example to succeeding ages? For what will happen? To-day Prince Yermi acts in this way; to-morrow, Konyetspolski, Pototski, Firlei, Zamoyski, or Lyubomirski. And if each one, without reference to law and discipline, acts according to his own ambition; if the children follow the example of their fathers and grandfathers, — what future is before that unhappy country? The worms of arbitrariness, disorder, self-seeking have so gnawed the trunk of that Commonwealth, that under the axe of civil war the rotten wood is scattered, the dry limbs fall from the tree. What will happen when those whose duty it is to guard and save it as the apple of the eye put fire under it? What will happen then? Oh, Jesus, Jesus! Hmelnitski



too shields himself with the public good, and does nothing else; still he rises up against law and authority.

A shudder passed through the prince from his feet to his head. He wrung his hands. "Am I to be another Hmelnitski, O Christ?"

But Christ hung his head on his breast, and was as painfully silent as if crucified the moment before.

The prince struggled on. If he should assume power, and the chancellor, the Senate, and the commanders should proclaim him a rebel, then what would happen? Another civil war? And then the question, Is Hmelnitski the greatest and most terrible enemy of the Commonwealth? More than once she has been invaded by still greater powers. When two hundred thousand armored Germans marched at Grünwald on the regiments of Yagello, and when at Khotim half Asia appeared in the fight, destruction seemed still nearer. And what had become of these hostile powers? No; the Commonwealth is not in danger from wars, and wars will not be her destruction. But why, in view of such victories, of such reserved power, of such glory, is she, who crushed the knights of the cross and the Turks, so weak and incompetent that she is on her knees before one Cossack, that her neighbors are seizing her boundaries, that nations are ridiculing her, that no one listens to her voice, or regards her anger, and that all are looking forward to her destruction?

Ah! it is specifically the pride and ambition of magnates, each one acting by himself; self-will is the cause of it. The worst enemy is not Hmelnitski, but internal disorder, waywardness of the nobles, weakness and insubordination of the army, uproar of the Diets, brawls, disputes, confusion, weakness, self-seeking, and insubordination, — insubordination, above all. The tree is rotting and weakening from the heart. Soon will men see how the first storm will throw it; but he is a parricide who puts his hand to such work. Cursed be he and his children to the tenth generation!

Go then, O conqueror of Nyemiroff, Pogrëbische, Mahnovka, Konstantinoff, — go, prince voevoda, — go, snatch command from leaders, trample upon law and authority, give an example to posterity how to rend the entrails of the mother!

Terror, despair, and fright were reflected in the face of the prince. He screamed terribly, and seizing himself by the hair, fell in the dust before the crucifix. The prince

repented, and beat his worthy head on the stone pavement, and from his breast struggled forth the dull voice, —

"O God, be merciful to me a sinner! O God, be merciful to me a sinner! O God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

The rosy dawn was already in the sky, and then came the golden sun and lighted the hall. In the cornices the chattering of sparrows and swallows began. The prince rose and went to rouse his attendant Jelenski, who was sleeping on the other side of the door.

"Run," said he, "to the orderlies, and tell them to summon to me from the castle and the town the colonels of the regular army and of the militia."

Two hours later the hall began to be filled with the mustached and bearded forms of warriors. Of the prince's people there came old Zatsvilikhovski, Polyanovski, Pan Yan with Zagloba, Vurtsel, Maknitski, Volodyovski, Vershul, Ponyatovski, almost all the officers to the ensigns, except Kushel, who was in Podolia on a reconnoissance. From the regular army came Osinski and Koritski. Many of the more distinguished nobles were unable to rise from their feather-beds so early; but no small number, even of these, were assembled, — among them personages of various provinces, from castellans to sub-chamberlains. Murmurs and conversation resounded, and there was a noise as in a hive; but all eyes were turned to the door through which the prince was to come.

All grew silent as the prince entered. His face was calm and pleasant; only his eyes reddened by sleeplessness, and his pinched features testified of the recent struggle. But through that calm and even sweetness appeared dignity and unbending will.

"Gentlemen," said he, "last night I communed with God and my own conscience as to what I should do. I announce therefore to you, and do you announce to all the knightly order, that for the sake of the country and that harmony needful in time of defeat, I put myself under the commanders."

A dull silence reigned in the assembly.

In the afternoon of that day, in the court of the castle three hundred of Vershul's Tartars stood ready to journey with Pan Yan; and in the castle the prince was giving to the officers of the army a dinner which at the same time was a farewell feast to our knight. He was seated therefore by the prince as "the bridegroom;" and next to him



sat Zagloba, for it was known that his daring and management had saved "the bride" from mortal peril. The prince was in good spirits, for he had cast the burden from his heart. He raised the goblet to the success of the future couple. The walls and windows trembled from the shouts of those present. In the anteroom was a bustle of servants, among whom Jendzian had the lead.

"Gentlemen," said the prince, "let this third goblet be for posterity. It's a splendid stock. God grant that the apples may not fall far from the tree! From this falcon may noble falconets spring!"

"Success to them! success to them!"

"In thanks!" cried Pan Yan, emptying an enormous goblet of Malmoisie.

"Success to them! success to them!"

"Crescite et multiplicamini!"

"You ought to furnish half a squadron," said old Zatsvilikhovski, laughing.

"Oh, he will fill the army entirely! I know him," said Zagloba.

The nobles roared with laughter. Wine rose to their heads. Everywhere were to be seen flushed faces, moving mustaches; and the good feeling was increasing every moment.

Just then at the threshold of the hall appeared a gloomy figure, covered with dust; and in view of the table, the feast, and the gleaming faces, it stopped at the door as if hesitating to enter. The prince saw it first, wrinkled his brows, shaded his eyes, and said, —

"But who is there? Ah, that is Kushel! From the expedition. What news do you bring?"

"Very bad, your Highness!" said the young officer, with a strange voice.

Suddenly silence reigned in the assembly, as if some one had put it under a spell. The goblets raised to the lips remained half-way; all eyes were turned to Kushel, on whose wearied face pain was depicted.

"It would have been better had you not spoken, since I am joyful at the cup," said the prince; "but since you have begun, speak to the end."

"Your Highness, I too should prefer not to be an owl, for these tidings halt on my lips."

"What has happened? Speak!"

"Bar is taken!"

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

ON a certain calm night a band of horsemen, about twenty in number, moved along the right bank of the Valadinka in the direction of the Dniester. They went very slowly, the horses almost dragging one foot after the other. A short distance in front of the others rode two, as it were an advance guard; but evidently there was no cause for guarding or being on the watch, since for a whole hour they had been talking together instead of looking at the country about them. Reining in their horses every little while, they looked at the party behind, and one of them called out at this moment: "Slowly there! slowly!" And the others went still more slowly, scarcely moving.

At last the party, pushing out from behind the eminence which had covered them with its shadow, entered the open country, which was filled with moonlight, and then it was possible to understand the reason of their careful gait. In the centre of the caravan two horses abreast carried a swing tied to their saddles, and in this swing lay the form of some person. The silver rays lighted its pale face and closed eyes.

Behind the swing rode ten armed men. From their lances without bannerets, it was evident that they were Cossacks. Some led pack-horses, others rode by themselves; but while the two riders in front seemed to pay not the least attention to the country about them, those behind glanced around on every side with unquiet and alarm. And still the region seemed to be a perfect desert.

Silence was unbroken save by the noise of the horses' hoofs and the calling of one of the riders in front, who from time to time repeated his warning: "Slowly! carefully!"

At length he turned to his companion. "Horpyna, is it far yet?" he inquired.

The companion called Horpyna, who in reality was a gigantic young woman disguised as a Cossack, looked at the starry heavens and replied, —

"Not far. We shall be there before midnight. We shall pass the Enemy's Mound, the Tartar Valley, and right there is the Devil's Glen. Oh, it would be terrible to pass that