

wished evidently to drive away terrible thoughts. But the little knight was afraid when he looked at that face in the moonlight; for it seemed to him altogether like the face of a monk, stern, emaciated by fasting and mortification.

And then that voice began again to sing, in the rear, —

"You will find when the war is over, poor fellow,
You will find when the war is over,
Everything empty at home,
And your skin full of wounds."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SKSHETUSKI so marched with his detachment that he rested during the day in forests and ravines, throwing out pickets carefully, and pushed forward only in the night. Whenever he approached a village he usually surrounded it so that not a man went out, took provisions, feed for his horses, but above all collected information concerning the enemy; then he marched away without inflicting harm on the people. But when out of sight he changed his road abruptly, so that the enemy in the village might not know in what direction he had gone. The object of his expedition was to discover whether Krívonos with his forty thousand men was still besieging Kamenyets, or having given up the fruitless siege, was marching to assist Hmelnitski so as to join him for a general engagement; and further what the Dobrudja Tartars were doing, — whether they had crossed the Dnieper already and joined Krívonos, or were still on the other bank. These were important items for the Polish army, which the commanders should have tried to obtain; but being men without experience, it did not enter their heads to do so. Yeremi therefore took that burden on himself. If it should appear that Krívonos, with the hordes of Bélgorod and Dobrudja, had abandoned the siege of the impregnable Kamenyets and was marching to Hmelnitski, then it behooved them to attack the latter as quickly as possible before he had grown to his highest power.

Meanwhile the commander-in-chief, Prince Dominik Zaslavski Ostrogski, was not hastening, and at the time of Skshetuski's departure he was expected at the camp in two or three days. Evidently he was feasting along the road, according to his custom, and felt well; but the most favorable moment for breaking the power of Hmelnitski was passing, and Prince Yeremi was in despair at the thought that if the war should be carried on further in this fashion, not only Krívonos and the forces beyond the Dniester would come to Hmelnitski in season, but also the Khan himself at the head of all the forces from Perekop, Nogai, and Azoff.

There were tidings in camp that the Khan had already crossed the Dnieper, and was moving westward day and

night with two hundred thousand horse; but day after day passed, and Prince Dominik did not arrive. It became more and more likely that the troops at Cholganski Kamen would have to meet forces five times more numerous, and in case of defeat nothing would prevent the enemy from breaking into the heart of the Commonwealth at Cracow and Warsaw.

Krivos was the more dangerous in this, that in case the commanders wished to push into the heart of the Ukraine, he, by going from Kamenyets directly northward to Konstantinoff, could bar their retreat, and in every case they would be taken then between two fires. Skshetuski determined therefore not only to gain information concerning Krivos, but to check him. Penetrated with the importance of this task, on the accomplishment of which the fate of the whole army was in part dependent, he risked willingly his own life and the lives of his soldiers, though that undertaking might have been considered insane or mad if the young knight had had the intention of checking with five hundred men in an offensive battle the forty thousand men of Krivos reinforced by the hordes of Belgorod and Dobrudja. But Skshetuski was too experienced a soldier to rush into insane undertakings, and he knew perfectly well that in case of battle the torrent would sweep over the bodies of himself and his men in an hour. He seized upon other means. He gave out among his own soldiers that they were merely the advance guard of a whole division of the terrible prince, and this report he spread everywhere in all the farms, villages, and towns through which it came to him to pass. And in truth it spread like a flash of lightning along Zbruch, Smotrich, Studenitsa, Ushka, Kalusik, and from them it reached the Dniester and flew on farther as if driven by the wind from Kamenyets to Yagorlik. It was repeated by Turkish pashas in Khotim, the Zaporozhians in Yampol, and the Tartars in Rashkoff. And again was heard that famous cry, "Yarema is coming!" from which the hearts of the rebellious people sank, and from which they trembled, knowing neither the day nor the hour.

And no one doubted the truth of the report. The commanders would fall upon Hmelnitski, and Yereimi on Krivos, — that lay in the order of things. Krivos himself believed in it, and his hands dropped. What was he to do? Move on the prince? At Konstantinoff there was another spirit in his men and he had more troops; still

they were beaten, decimated, barely escaped with their lives. Krivos was sure that his Cossacks would fight madly against all other armies of the Commonwealth, and against every other leader, but with the approach of Yereimi they would speed away like a flock of swans before an eagle, or like the thistle-down of the steppes before the wind.

To wait for the prince at Kamenyets was still worse. Krivos determined to hurry eastward as far as Bratslav, to avoid his evil spirit and move toward Hmelnitski. He knew, it is true, that circling around in this way he would not arrive in time; but at least he would hear of the results in season, and plan for his own safety.

A new report came with the wind, that Hmelnitski was already defeated. Skshetuski had spread it purposely, as he had the previous report. This time the unfortunate Krivos knew not what to do.

Later he determined all the more to march to the east and push on as far as possible into the steppes; maybe he would meet the Tartars and find shelter among them. But first of all he wished to be sure; therefore he looked carefully among his colonels to find a man trustworthy and prepared for everything, so as to send him with a party to get information. But the choice was difficult; there was a lack of volunteers, and it was absolutely necessary to find a man who in case he should fall into the hands of the enemy would not disclose the plans of retreat, even if burned with fire, empaled on a stake, or broken on a wheel. At last Krivos found the man. One night he gave the order to call Bogun, and said to him, —

"Do you hear, Yurku, my friend Yarema is marching on us with a great force; we shall all perish, unfortunates!"

"I have heard that he is coming, — you have already spoken of that, father. But why should we perish?"

"We cannot withstand him. We could another, but not Yereimi. The Cossacks are afraid of him."

"But I am not afraid of him. I cut to pieces a regiment of his at Vassilyevka beyond the Dnieper."

"I know that you are not afraid of him; your fame of a Cossack and a hero is equal to his as a prince. But I cannot give him battle, for my Cossacks are unwilling. Remember what they said at the council, — how they rushed on me with sabres because I wanted to lead them to slaughter."

"Then we will go to Hmelnitski; there we shall find blood and booty."

"They say that Hmelnitski is already defeated."

"I do not believe that, Father Maksim. Hmelnitski is a fox; he will not strike the Poles without the Tartars."

"I think so too, but we must find out. Then we could go around this devil of a Yeremi and join Hmel; but we must have information. Now, if some one who has no fear of Yeremi were to go with a party and take prisoners, I should fill his cap with ruddy sequins."

"I'll go, Father Maksim, — not for sequins, but for Cossack, for heroic glory."

"You are the next ataman to me, and since you are willing to go, you will become first ataman yet over the Cossacks, good hero, for you are not afraid of Yeremi. Go, my falcon, and hereafter you have but to ask for what you want. Well, I tell you, if you were not going I should go myself; but it is not for me to go."

"No; for if you were to go, father, the Cossacks would say that you were saving your head and would scatter over the world, but when I go their courage will increase."

"Shall I give you many men?"

"I will not take many; it is easier to hide and approach with a small force. But give me about five hundred good warriors, and my head for it, I will bring you informants, — not soldiers, but officers from whom you will learn everything."

"Go at once! They are firing cannon from Kamenyets with joy, — salvation to the Poles and destruction to us innocents."

Bogun went out, and began to prepare at once for the road. His heroes, as was the fixed practice on such occasions, drank to the verge of destruction, "before Mother Death should clasp them to her breast." He too drank with them till he was snorting from gorailka.

He frolicked and revelled, then had a barrel filled with tar, and just as he was, in brocade and serge, sprang into it, sank a couple of times, once over his head, and shouted, —

"I am black as Mother Night. Polish eyes won't see me now!"

He rolled himself on Persian carpets, sprang on his horse and rode away. After him clattered, amid the darkness of night, his trusty heroes, followed by shouts: "Glory! Luck!"

Skshetuski had already pushed on to Yarmolintsi, where, meeting opposition, he baptized the townspeople in blood, and having told them that Prince Yeremi would arrive next day, gave rest to his wearied horses and men. Then assembling his officers in council, he said to them, —

"So far God has given us success. I see also, by the terror which seizes the peasants, that they take us for the advance guard of the prince, and believe that his whole force is following. We must look out, however, that they do not bethink themselves when they see that one company is going everywhere."

"And shall we go about in this way long?" asked Zagloba.

"Till we find out what Krivonos has determined."

"Then we may not come in time for the battle at the camp?"

"Maybe not."

"Well, I am not glad of that," said Zagloba. "My hand has become a little exercised on the ruffians at Konstantinoff. I captured something from them there; but that is a trifle. My fingers are itching now."

"Perhaps you will get more fighting than you expect," answered Pan Yan, seriously.

"How is that?" asked Zagloba, rather alarmed.

"Why, any day we may come upon the enemy, and though we are not here to bar the road with arms, we shall have to defend ourselves. But to return to the subject. We must occupy more country, so they may know of us in several places at once; cut down the obstinate here and there, so as to spread terror; and everywhere circulate reports. Therefore I think we must separate."

"So I think," said Volodyovski. "We shall increase in their eyes, and those who escape to Krivonos will talk about legions."

"Well, Lieutenant, you are leader here, give the orders," said Podbipienta.

"I will go through Zinkoff to Solodkovets, and farther if I can," said Skshetuski. "You, Podbipienta, will go straight down to Tatarjiski; and you, Michael, go to Kupin; and Zagloba will press on to Zbruch, near Satanoff."

"I!" exclaimed Zagloba.

"Yes. You are a man of thought and full of stratagems. I supposed you would undertake the enterprise willingly; but if not, Sergeant Kosmach will lead the fourth party."

"I will take it under my command," cried Zagloba, who was suddenly dazzled by the thought that he would be the leader of a separate party. "If I asked, it was because I am sorry to part with you."

"But have you experience in military matters?" asked Volodyovski.

"Have I experience? It had n't yet come into the head of any stork to make a present of you to your father and mother when I was commanding larger bodies of men than this. I served all my life in the army, and should have served to this moment had it not been for the mouldy biscuit that stuck in my stomach and stayed there three years. I had to go for a bezoar to Galáts, the details of which journey I will tell in proper time, but now I am in a hurry for the road."

"Go on, then, and spread the reports that Hmelnitski is beaten, and that the prince has passed Ploskiroff," said Skshetuski. "Don't take the first informant that comes along; but when you meet scouting-parties from Kamenyets, try to get people who are able to give information about Krívonos, for those whom we have now tell contradictory stories."

"I hope I may meet Krívonos himself. I hope he will want to go on a scouting expedition. I should give him pepper and ginger. Don't be afraid! I will teach the ruffians to sing, and dance for that matter."

"In three days we shall meet again at Yarmolintsi, and now each one to his journey," said Skshetuski. "And I beg of you to spare your men."

"In three days at Yarmolintsi," repeated Volodyovski, Zagloba, and Podbipienta.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

WHEN Zagloba found himself alone at the head of his party, he felt uncomfortable somehow and terribly alarmed, and would have given much to have at his side Skshetuski, Volodyovski, or Pan Longin, whom in his soul he admired with all his might, and near whom he felt completely safe, so blindly did he believe in their resources and bravery. At first, therefore, he rode rather gloomily at the head of his party, and looking around suspiciously on every side, measured in his mind the dangers which he might meet, and muttered, —

"It would always be livelier if some one of them were here. To whatever God predestined a man, for that he created him; and those three ought to have been born horseflies, for they love to sit in blood. They are in war just as other men are at the cup, or like fish in water. War is their play. They have light stomachs, but heavy hands. I have seen Skshetuski at work, and I know what skill he has. He hurries through men as monks through their prayers. That's his favorite work. That Lithuanian, who has no head of his own, is looking for three strange heads, and he has nothing to risk. I know that little fellow least of all, but he must be a wasp of no common kind, judging from what I saw at Konstantinoff, and what Skshetuski tells me about him, — he must be a wasp! Happily he is marching not far from me, and I think that I shall do better to join him, for if I know where to go may the ducks trample me!"

Zagloba felt so lonely in the world that he took pity upon his own loneliness.

"Indeed!" muttered he. "Every man has some one to look to; but how is it with me? I have neither comrade nor father nor mother. I am an orphan, and that is the end of it!"

At that moment the sergeant, Kosmach, approached him. "Commander, where are we marching to?" asked he.

"Where are we marching to?" repeated Zagloba. "What?" Suddenly he straightened himself in the saddle and twisted his mustache. "To Kamenyets, if such should be my will! Do you understand?"

The sergeant bowed and withdrew in silence to the ranks, unable to explain to himself what the commander was angry at. But Zagloba cast threatening glances at the neighborhood, then grew quiet and muttered further, —

"If I go to Kamenyets, I'll let a hundred blows of a stick be given on the soles of my feet, Turkish fashion. Tfu! tfu! If I only had one of those fellows with me, then I should feel more courage. What shall I begin to do with these people? I would rather be alone, for when alone a man trusts to stratagem. But now there are too many of us for stratagems and too few for defence. A very unfortunate idea of Skshetuski's to divide the detachment! And where shall I go? I know what is behind me, but who shall tell me what is in front, and who shall assure me that the devils there haven't set some snare? Krívonos and Bogun, a nice pair, — may the devils flay them! God defend me at least from Bogun! Skshetuski wants to meet him; may the Lord listen to him! — I wish him the same as I wish myself, for I am his friend, — amen! I'll work on to Zbruch, return to Yarmolintsi, and bring them more informants than they want themselves. That is not difficult."

Kosmach now approached. "Commander, some horsemen are visible behind the hill."

"Let them go to the devil! Where are they, — where?"

"There, on the other side of the hill, I saw flags."

"Troops?"

"They appear to be troops."

"May the dogs bite them! Are there many of them?"

"You can't tell, for they are far away. We might hide here behind these rocks and fall on them unawares, for their road lies this way. If their numbers are too great, Pan Volodyovski is not far off; he will hear the shots and hasten to our aid."

Daring rose suddenly to Zagloba's head like wine. It may be that despair gave him such an impulse to action; possibly hope that Volodyovski was still near. Enough that he waved his naked sabre, rolled his eyes terribly, and cried, —

"Hide behind the rocks! We will show those ruffians —"

The trained soldiers of the prince turned behind the rocks, and in the twinkle of an eye placed themselves in battle-array, ready for a sudden attack.

An hour passed. At last the noise of approaching people

was heard. An echo bore the sounds of joyful songs; and a moment later the sounds of fiddles, bagpipes, and a drum reached the ears of the men lurking in ambush. The sergeant came to Zagloba again, and said, —

"They are not troops, Commander, nor Cossacks. It is a wedding."

"A wedding? I'll play a tune for them; let them wait a bit."

Saying this, he rode out, and after him the soldiers, and formed in line on the road. "After me!" cried Zagloba, threateningly.

The line moved on a trot, then a gallop, and passing around the cliff, stood suddenly in front of the crowd of people, frightened and confused by the unexpected sight.

"Stop! stop!" was the cry from both sides.

It was really a peasant wedding. In front rode the piper, the flute-player, the fiddler, and two drummers, already somewhat intoxicated, and playing dance-music out of tune. Behind them was the bride, a brisk young woman in a dark jacket, with hair flowing over her shoulders. She was surrounded by her bridesmaids, singing songs and carrying wreaths in their hands. All the girls were sitting on horseback, man-fashion, adorned with wild-flowers. They looked at a distance like a party of handsome Cossacks. In another line rode the bridegroom on a sturdy horse, with his groomsmen, having wreaths on long poles, like pikes. The rear of the party was brought up by the parents of the newly married and guests, all on horseback. In light wagons strewn with straw were drawn a number of kegs of gorailka, mead, and beer, which belched out a pleasant odor along the rough, stony road.

"Halt! halt!" was shouted from both sides. The wedding-party was confused. The young girls raised a cry of fear, and drew back to the rear. The young men and elder groomsmen rushed forward to protect the young women from the unexpected attack.

Zagloba sprang before them, and brandishing his sabre, which gleamed in the eyes of the terror-stricken peasants, began to shout, —

"Ha, you bullock-drivers, dog-tails, rebels! You wanted to join the insurrection! You are on the side of Hmel-nitski, you scoundrels! You are going to spy out something; you are blocking the road to troops, — raising your hand against nobles! Oh, I'll give it to you, you foul

spirits of curs! I'll order you to be fettered, to be empaled, O rascals, Pagans! Now you will pay for all your crimes."

A groomsman, old, and white as a dove, jumped from his horse, approached the noble, and holding his stirrup humbly, began to bow to his girdle and implore,—

"Have mercy, serene knight! Do not ruin poor people! God is our witness that we are innocent. We are not going to a rebellion. We are going from the church at Gusiatoryn. We crowned our relative Dmitry, the blacksmith, with Ksenia, the cooper's daughter. We have come with a wedding and with a dance."

"These are innocent people," whispered the sergeant.

"Out of my sight! They are scoundrels; they have come from Krivonos's to a wedding!" roared Zagloba.

"May the plague kill him!" cried the old man. "We have never looked on him with our eyes; we are poor people. Have mercy on us, serene lord, and let us pass; we are doing harm to no man, and we know our duty."

"You will go to Yarmolintsi in fetters!"

"We will go wherever you command. Our lord, it is for you to command, for us to obey. But you will do us a kindness, serene knight! Order your soldiers to do us no harm, and you yourself pardon us simple people. We now beat to you humbly with the forehead, to drink with us to the happiness of the newly married. Drink, your mercy, to the joy of simple people, as God and the holy Gospels command."

"But don't suppose that I forgive you if I drink," said Zagloba, sharply.

"No, no, my lord," exclaimed with joy the old man; "we don't dream of it. Hei, musicians!" cried he, "strike up for the serene knight, because the serene knight is kind; and you, young men, hurry for mead,—sweet mead for the knight; he will not harm poor people. Hurry, boys, hurry! We thank you, our lord."

The young men ran with the speed of wind to the kegs; and immediately the drums sounded, the fiddles squeaked sharply, the piper puffed out his cheeks and began to press the wind-bag under his arm. The groomsman shook the wreaths on the poles, in view of which the soldiers began to press forward, twirl their mustaches, laugh, and look at the bride over the shoulders of the young fellows. The song resounded again. Terror had passed away, and here and there too was heard the joyful "U-ha! u-ha!"

Zagloba did not become serene-browed in a moment. Even when a quart of mead was brought to him, he still muttered to himself: "Oh, the scoundrels, the ruffians!" Even when he had sunk his mustaches in the dark surface of the mead, his brows did not unwrinkle. He raised his head, winked his eyes, and smacking his lips, began to taste the liquid; then astonishment, but also indignation, was seen on his face.

"What times we live in!" muttered he. "Trash are drinking such mead. O Lord, thou seest this, and dost not hurl thy bolts!" Then he raised the cup and emptied it to the bottom.

Meanwhile the emboldened wedding-guests came with their whole company to beg him to do them no harm and let them pass; and among them came the bride Ksenia, timid, trembling, with tears in her eyes, blushing and beautiful as the dawn. When she drew near she joined her hands. "Be merciful, our lord!" and she kissed the yellow boot of Zagloba. The heart of the noble became soft as wax in a moment. He loosened his leather girdle, began to fumble in it, and finding the last gold sequin of those which Prince Yeremi had given him, he said to Ksenia,—

"Here! may God bless thee, as he does every innocence!"

Emotion did not permit further speech, for that shapely dark-browed Ksenia reminded him of the princess whom Zagloba loved in his own fashion. "Where is she now, poor girl, and are the angels of heaven guarding her?" thought he, completely overpowered, ready to embrace every one and become a brother to all.

The wedding-guests, seeing this lordly act, began to shout from joy, to sing, and crowding up to him to kiss his clothes. "He is kind," was repeated in the crowd. "He is a golden Pole! he gives away sequins, he does no harm, he is a kind lord. Glory to him, luck to him!" The fiddler quivered, he worked so hard; the hands of the drummers grew weary. The old cooper, evidently a coward to his innermost lining, had held himself in the rear till that moment. Now he pushed forward, together with his wife, the cooperess, and the ancient blacksmithess, the mother of the bridegroom; and now they began such a bowing to the girdle and insistent invitation to the house for the wedding, because it was a glory to have such a guest, and a happy augury for the young couple; if not, harm would come to

them. After them bowed the bridegroom and the dark-browed Ksenia, who, though a simple girl, saw in a twinkling that her request was more effective than any other. The best men shouted that the farm was near, not out of the knight's road; that the old cooper was rich, and would set out mead far better than this. Zagloba gazed at the soldiers; all were moving their mustaches as rabbits do their whiskers, foreseeing for themselves various delights in the dance and the drinks. Therefore, though they did not ask to go, Zagloba took pity on them, and after a while the groomsmen, the young women, and the soldiers were making for the farm in most perfect harmony.

In fact the farm was near, and the old cooper rich. The wedding therefore was noisy; all drank heavily, and Zagloba so let himself out that he was the first in everything. Soon strange ceremonies were begun. Old women took Ksenia to a chamber, and shutting themselves in with her, remained a long time; then they came forth and declared that the young woman was as a dove, as a lily. Thereupon joy reigned in the assembly; there rose a shout, "Glory! happiness!" The women began to clap their hands, the young fellows stamped with their feet; each one danced by himself, with a quart cup in his hand, which he emptied to "fame and happiness" before the door of the chamber. Zagloba danced also, distinguishing the importance of his birth by this only, that he drank before the door, not a quart, but half a gallon. Then the friends of the cooper and the blacksmith's wife conducted young Dmitry to the door; but since young Dmitry had no father, they bowed down to Zagloba to take his place. Zagloba consented, and passed in with the others. During this time all became quiet in the house; but the soldiers drinking in the yard before the cottage shouted, crying "Allah!" from joy, in Tartar fashion, and fired from pistols.

The greatest rejoicing and uproar began when the parents appeared again in the main room. The old cooper embraced the blacksmith's wife with delight, the young men came to the cooper's wife and raised her from her feet, and the women glorified her because she had guarded her daughter as the eye in her head, kept her as a dove and a lily. Then Zagloba opened the dance with her. They began to stamp in front of each other; and he, keeping time with his hands, dropped into the *prisyadka*, sprang so high, and beat the floor with his metal-shod heels in such fashion

that bits flew from the planks, and sweat poured from his forehead in abundance. They were followed by others, — those who had space dancing in the room, and those who had not in the yard, — the maidens with the young men and soldiers. From time to time the cooper had new kegs brought out. Finally the whole wedding-feast was transferred from the house to the yard; piles of dry thistles and pitch-pine were set on fire, for a dark night had settled down, and the rejoicing had changed to drinking with might and main. The soldiers fired from their pistols and muskets as in time of battle.

Zagloba, purple, steaming in perspiration, tottering on his feet, forgot what was happening to him, where he was; through the steam which came from his hair he saw the faces of his entertainers, but if he were to be empaled on a stake he could not tell what sort of entertainers they were. He remembered that he was at a wedding, but whose wedding was it? Ha! it must be the wedding of Pan Yan and the princess. This idea seemed to him the most probable, and finally stuck in his head like a nail, and filled him with such joy that he began to shout like a madman: "Long life! let us love each other, brothers!" and every little while he filled new half-gallons. "To your success, brothers! To the health of the prince! Prosperity to us! May this paroxysm of our country pass!" Then he covered himself with tears, and stumbled going to the keg, and stumbled more and more; for on the ground, as on a field of battle, lay many a motionless body. "O God," cried Zagloba, "thou hast no longer any manhood left in this Commonwealth! There are but two men who can drink, — one Pan Lashch, and the other Zagloba. As for the rest, my God, my God!" And he raised his eyes in sorrow to the sky. Then he saw that the heavenly bodies were no longer fastened quietly in the firmament like golden nails, but some were trembling as if they wished to spring from their settings; others were whirling in a round dance; a third party of them were dancing the *kazachka* face to face with each other. Then Zagloba fell into terribly deep thought, and said to his musing soul, —

"Is it possible that I alone in the universe am not drunk?"

But suddenly the earth itself quivered, like the stars, in a mad whirl, and Zagloba fell his whole length on the ground.

Soon awful dreams came to him. It seemed as if nightmares were sitting on his breast, pressing him, squeezing him to the ground, binding him hand and foot. At the same time tumult and as it were the sound of shots struck his ears; a glaring light passed his closed lids, and struck his eyes with an unendurable flash. He wished to rouse himself, to open his eyes, and he could not. He felt that something unusual was happening to him, — that his head was dropping back as if he were being carried by hands and feet. Then fear seized him; he felt badly, very badly, very heavy. Consciousness returned in part, but strangely, for in company with such weakness as he had never felt in his life. Again he tried to move; but when he could not, he woke up more and opened his eyelids.

Then his gaze met a pair of eyes which were fastened on him eagerly; their pupils were black as coal, and so ill-omened that Zagloba, now thoroughly awake, thought at the first moment that the devil was looking at him. Again he closed his eyes, and again he opened them quickly. Those eyes looked at him continually, stubbornly. The countenance seemed to him familiar. All at once he shivered to the marrow of his bones, cold sweat covered him, and down his spine to his feet passed thousands of ants. He recognized the face of Bogun!

CHAPTER XL.

ZAGLOBA lay bound hand and foot to his own sabre, which was passed across behind his knees, in that same room in which the wedding was celebrated. The terrible chief sat at some distance on a bench, and feasted his eyes on the terror of the prisoner.

"Good-evening!" said he, seeing the open lids of his victim.

Zagloba made no answer, but in one twinkle of an eye came to his senses as if he had never put a drop of wine to his mouth; the ants which had gone down to his heels returned to his head, and the marrow in his bones grew cold as ice. They say that a drowning man in the last moment sees clearly all his past, — that he remembers everything, and gives himself an account of that which is happening to him. Such clearness of vision and memory Zagloba possessed in that hour; and the last expression of that clearness was a silent cry, unspoken by the lips, —

"He will give me a flogging now."

And the leader repeated, with a quiet voice: "Good-evening!"

"Brr!" thought Zagloba, "I would rather go to the furies."

"Don't you know me, lord noble?"

"With the forehead, with the forehead! How is your health?"

"Not bad; but as to yours, I'll occupy myself with that."

"I have not asked God for such a doctor, and I doubt if I could digest your medicine; but the will of God be done."

"Well, you cured me; now I'll return thanks. We are old friends. You remember how you bound my head in Rozlogi, do you not?"

Bogun's eyes began to glitter like two carbuncles, and the line of his mustaches extended in a terrible smile.

"I remember," said Zagloba, "that I might have stabbed you, and I did not."

"But have I stabbed you, or do I think to stab you? No! For me you are a darling, a dear; and I will guard you as the eye in my head."