

Tartar friendship, and besides was not sure of his terrible ally. Any whim of the Khan, and all the hordes might turn against the Cossacks, who would be lost beyond redemption. Hmelnitski knew this, and knew too that the Khan was aiding him really for the sake of plunder, gifts, and unfortunate captives, and still looking upon himself as a legitimate monarch, was ashamed in his soul to stand on the side of rebellion against a king, on the side of such a "Hmel" against such a Vishnyevetski. The hetman of the Cossacks often got drunk, not from habit alone, but from desperation.

"Great monarch," said he, "Yeremi is your enemy. It was he who took the Trans-Dnieper from the Tartars; he hanged, murdered murzas like wolves on the trees, as a terror; he intended to visit the Crimea with fire and sword."

"And have you not done damage in the uluses?" asked the Khan.

"I am your slave."

The blue lips of Tugai Bey began to quiver. He had among the Cossacks a deadly enemy, who in his time had cut a whole chambul to pieces and almost captured him. The name of that man was pressing to his mouth from the implacable power of revengeful memories; he did not restrain himself, and began to snarl in a low voice: "Burlai! Burlai!"

"Tugai Bey," said Hmelnitski, immediately, "you and Burlai, at the exalted and wise command of the Khan, poured water on your swords the past year."

A new salvo of artillery from the castle interrupted further conversation.

The Khan stretched out his hand and described a circle with it enclosing Zbaraj, the town, the castle, and the trench. "To-morrow will that be mine?" asked he, turning to Hmelnitski.

"To-morrow they will die there," answered Hmelnitski, with eyes fastened on the castle. Then he bowed again, and touched with his hand his forehead, beard, and breast, considering the conversation ended.

The Khan wrapped himself in his weasel-skin shuba, — for the night was cool, though in July, — and said, turning toward the tent: "It is late already!"

Then all began to nod as if moved by one power, and he went to the tent slowly and with dignity repeating in a low voice: "God is one!"

Hmelnitski withdrew also, and on the road to his quar-

ters muttered: "I'll give you the castle, the town, booty, and captives; but Yeremi will be mine, even if I have to pay for him with my life."

Gradually the fires began to grow dim and die, gradually the dull murmur of thousands of voices grew still; but here and there was heard the report of a musket, or the calling of Tartar herdsman driving their horses to pasture. Then those voices were silent, and sleep embraced the countless legions of Tartars and Cossacks.

But at the castle there was feasting and revelry as at a wedding. In the camp all expected that the storm would take place on the morrow. Indeed the throngs of the mob, Cossacks, Tartars, and other wild warriors marching with Hmelnitski had been moving from early morning, and approached the trenches like dark clouds rolling to the summit of a mountain. The soldiers, though they had tried in vain the day before to count the fires, were benumbed now at the sight of this sea of heads. This was not yet a real storm, but an examination of the field, the intrenchments, the ditch, the ramparts, and the whole Polish camp. And as a swollen wave of the sea, which the wind urges from afar, rolls, advances, rears itself, foams, strikes with a roar and then falls back, so did they strike in one place and another, withdraw, and strike again, as if testing the resistance, as if wishing to convince themselves whether the very sight of them by numbers alone would not crush the spirit of the enemy before they would crush the body.

They fired cannon too, and the balls began to fall thickly about the camp, from which answer was given with eight-pounders and small arms. At the same time there appeared a procession on the ramparts with the most holy sacrament in order to freshen the benumbed soldiers. The priest Mukhovetski carried the gilded monstrance; holding it with both hands above his face and sometimes raising it on high, he moved on under a baldachin, calm, with closed eyes and an ascetic face. At his side walked two priests supporting him under the arms, — Yaskolski, chaplain of the hussars, a famous soldier in his time, in military art as experienced as any chief; and Jabkovski, also an ex-soldier, a gigantic Bernardine, second in strength only to Pan Longin in the whole camp. The staffs of the baldachin were supported by four nobles, among whom was Zagloba; before the baldachin walked sweet-faced young girls scattering flowers. They passed over the whole length of the ramparts, and

after them the officers of the army. The hearts of the soldiers rose, daring came to them, fire entered their souls at the sight of the monstrance shining like the sun, at the sight of the calmness of the priest, and those maidens clothed in white. The breeze carried about the strengthening odor of the incense burned in the censers; the heads of all were bent down with humility. Mukhovetski from time to time elevated the monstrance and his eyes to heaven, and intoned the hymn, "Before so great a sacrament."

The powerful voices of Yaskolski and Jabkovski continued, "We fall on our faces;" and the whole army sang, "Let the old give place to the new law with its testament!" The deep bass of the cannon accompanied the hymn, and at times the cannon-balls flew past, roaring above the baldachin and the priests; sometimes the balls striking lower in the ramparts scattered earth on the people, so that Zagloba wriggled and pressed up to the staff. Fear affected especially his hair. When the procession halted for prayer there was silence, and the balls could be heard distinctly flying like great birds in a flock. Zagloba merely reddened the more; the priest Yaskolski looked to the field, and unable to restrain himself muttered, "They should rear chickens and keep away from cannon!" for in truth the Cossacks had very bad gunners, and he, as a former soldier, could not look calmly on such clumsiness and waste of powder. Again they went on till they reached the other end of the ramparts, where there had been no great pressure from the enemy. Trying here and there, especially from the western pond, to see if they could not create a panic, the Tartars and Cossacks drew back at last to their own positions, and remained in them without sending out even skirmishers. Meanwhile the procession had freshened the minds of the besieged completely.

It was evident that Hmelnitski was waiting for the arrival of his tabor; still he felt so sure that the first real storm would be sufficient, that he barely ordered a few trenches to be made for the cannon and did not undertake other earthworks to threaten the besieged. The tabor arrived the following day, and took its place near the camp, wagon after wagon, in a number of tens of rows a mile in length, from Vernyaki to Dembini. With it came also new forces; namely, the splendid Zaporozian infantry, almost equal to the Turkish janissaries in storms and attacks, and far more capable than the Cossacks or the mob.

The memorable day, Tuesday, July 13, was passed in feverish preparations on both sides. There was no doubt that the assault would take place, for the trumpets, drums, and kettle-drums were sounding the alarm from daybreak in the Cossack camp; among the Tartars a great sacred drum, called the balt, was roaring like thunder. The evening came, calm and clear, but from both ponds and the Gnyezna thin mists were rising; at length the first star began to twinkle in the sky.

At that moment sixty Cossack cannon bellowed with one voice; the countless legions rushed with a terrible cry to the ramparts, and the storm began. It appeared to the soldiers standing on the ramparts that the ground was quivering under their feet; the oldest remembered nothing like it.

"Jesus and Mary! what is that?" asked Zagloba, standing near Skshetuski among the hussars, in the interval of the rampart; "those are not men coming against us."

"Of course you know they are not men; the enemy are driving oxen ahead, so that we may spend the first shots on them."

The old noble became as red as a beet, his eyes were coming out of his head, and from his mouth burst one word, in which all the rage, all the terror, all that he could think at that moment was included: "Scoundrels!"

The oxen, as if mad, urged by wild, half-naked herdsmen with clubs and burning brands, were insane from fear; they ran forward with an awful bellowing, now crowding together, now hurrying on, now scattering or turning to the rear; urged with shouts, burned with fire, lashed with rawhides, they rushed again toward the ramparts. At last Vurtsel's guns began to vomit iron and fire; then smoke hid the light, the air was red, the terrified cattle were as if cut by a thunderbolt. Half of them fell, and over their bodies went the enemy.

In front ran captives with bags of sand to fill the ditch; they were stabbed from behind with pikes and scorched with musketry fire. These were peasants from around Zbaraj, who had been unable to take refuge in the town before the avalanche came, — young men as well as old, and women. All ran forward with a shriek, a cry, a stretching of hands to heaven, and a wailing for mercy. Hair stood on end from the howl, but pity was dead upon earth at that hour. On one side the pikes of Cos-

sacks were entering their shoulders; on the other the balls of Vurtsel mashed the unfortunates, grape-shot tore them to pieces, dug furrows among them. They ran on, fell, rose again, and went forward; for the Cossack wave pushed them, — the Cossack, the Turk, and the Tartar. The ditch was soon filled with bodies, blood, and sand-bags; at last it was evened, and the enemy rushed over with a shout.

The regiments pushed on, one after another; by the light of the cannon-fire were to be seen the officers urging forward new regiments to the ramparts. The choicest men rushed to the quarters and troops of Yeremi, for at that point Hmelnitski knew the greatest resistance would be. The kurens of the Saitch therefore came up; after them the formidable men of Pereyaslav, with Loboda. Voronchenko led the regiment of Cherkasi, Kulak the Karvoff regiment, Nechai the Bratslav, Stepka the Uman, Mrozovetski the Korsun regiment; also the men of Kalnik went, and the strong regiment of Belotserkoff, — fifteen thousand men in all, and with them Hmelnitski himself, in the fire, red as Satan, exposing his broad breast to the bullets, with the face of a lion and the eye of an eagle, — in chaos, smoke, confusion, slaughter, and tempest, in flames, observant of everything, ordering everything.

After the Zaporojians went the wild Cossacks of the Don; next, Cherkas fighting with knives; Tugai Bey led chosen Nogais; after them Subahazi, Belgorod Tartars; then Kurd-luk, swarthy men of Astrakhan, armed with gigantic bows and arrows, one of which was almost equal to a spear. They followed one another so closely that the hot breath of those behind was blown on the necks of those in front.

How many of them fell before they reached the ditch filled with the bodies of the captives, who shall tell, who shall relate? But they reached and crossed it, and began to clamber on the ramparts. Then you would have said that that starry night was the night of the Last Judgment. The cannon, unable to strike the nearest, bellowed unceasing fire on the farther ranks. Bombs, describing arcs of fire through the air, fell with a hellish laughter, making bright day in the darkness. The German infantry with the Polish land regiments, and at their side the dismounted dragoons of Vishnyevetski poured fire and lead into the faces and breasts of the Cossacks.

The first ranks wished to fall back, but pressed from behind they could not; they died in their tracks. Blood

spattered under the feet of the advancing. The rampart grew slippery; hands, feet, and breasts went sliding upon it. Men grasped it, and again fell covered with smoke, black from soot, stabbed, cut, careless of wounds and death. In places they fought with cold weapons. Men were as if beside themselves from fury, with grinning teeth and blood-covered faces. The living battled on top of the quivering mass of wounded and dying. Commands were not heard; nothing was heard but a general and terrible roar, in which all sounds were merged, — the thunder of guns, the cough of the wounded, the groans, and the whistling of bombs.

This gigantic struggle without quarter lasted whole hours. Around the rampart rose another rampart of corpses, which hindered the approach of the assailants. The Zaporojians were cut almost to pieces, the men of Pereyaslav were lying side by side around the ramparts; the Karvoff, Bratslav, and Uman regiments were decimated; but others pressed on, pushed forward themselves from behind by the guard of the hetman, the Rumelian Turks and Tartars of Urum Bey. But disorder rose in the ranks of the assailants when the Polish land infantry, the Germans, and the dragoons drew back not a step. Panting, dripping with blood, carried away with the rage of battle, streaming in sweat, half mad with the smell of blood, they tore over one another at the enemy, just as raging wolves rush to a flock of sheep. At that juncture Hmelnitski pressed on again with the remnants of his first regiments and with the whole force, as yet intact, of the Belotserkoff Tartars, the Turks and Cherkas.

The cannon from the ramparts ceased to thunder, and the bombs to flash; hand-weapons alone were heard through the whole length of the western rampart. Discharges flashed up anew. Finally, musketry fire also stopped. Darkness covered the combatants. No eye could see what was doing there, but something was turning in the darkness like the gigantic body of a monster cast down in convulsions. Even from the cries it could not be told whether it gave forth the sounds of triumph or despair. At times these sounds also ceased, and then could be heard only one measureless groan, as if it were going out on every side, from under the earth, over the earth, in the air, higher and higher, as if spirits were flying away with groans from that field of conflict. But these were short pauses; after such a moment the uproar and howls rose

with still greater power, ever hoarser and more unearthly.

Then again thundered the fire of musketry. Makhnitski with the rest of the infantry was coming to aid the wearied regiments. The trumpets began to sound a retreat in the rear ranks of the Cossacks.

Now came a pause; the Cossack regiments withdrew a furlong from the ramparts, and stood protected by the corpses of their own men. But a half-hour had not passed when Hmelnitski rushed on again and hurried his men to the assault a third time.

But this time Prince Yeremi appeared on the rampart himself, on horseback. It was easy to know him, for the banner and bunchuk of the hetman were waving above his head, and before and behind him were borne a number of tens of torches, shining with blood-colored gleams. Immediately they opened the artillery on him; but the awkward cannoneers sent the balls far beyond the Gnyezna, and he stood calm and gazed upon the approaching clouds.

The Cossacks slackened their gait as if bewitched by the sight. "Yeremi! Yeremi!" passed in a low murmur, like the sound of a breeze, through the deep ranks. Standing on the rampart in the midst of the blood-colored torches, that terrible prince seemed to them like a giant in a myth tale of the people; therefore a quiver ran over their wearied limbs, and their hands made signs of the cross.

He stood motionless. He beckoned with the gilded baton, and immediately an ominous flight of bombs sounded in the air, and fell into the advancing ranks. The host twisted like a mortally wounded dragon; a cry of terror flew from one end of the line to the other.

"On a run! on a run!" commanded the Cossack colonels.

The dark mass rushed with all its impetus to the ramparts under which refuge from the bombs could be found; but they had not passed half the interval when the prince, ever visible as on the palm of the hand, turned somewhat to the west and again beckoned with his baton.

At this signal, from the side of the pond, through the space between it and the ramparts, the cavalry began to push forth, and in the flash of an eye they poured out on the edge of the shore-level. By the light of the bombs were perfectly visible the great banners of the hussars of

Skshetuski and Zatsvilikhovski, the dragoons of Kushel and Volodyovski, with the prince's Tartars, led by Roztvorovski. After them pushed out still new regiments of the prince's Cossacks and the Wallachians of Bykhovets. Not only Hmelnitski, but the last camp-follower of the Cossacks, knew in one moment that the daring chief had determined to hurl his entire cavalry into the enemy's flank.

That moment the trumpets sounded a retreat in the ranks of the Cossacks. "Face to the cavalry! Face to the cavalry!" was heard in alarmed voices. Hmelnitski endeavored simultaneously to change the front of his troops and defend himself from cavalry with cavalry. But there was no time. Before he could arrange his ranks the prince's regiments had started, moving as if on wings, shouting "Kill! slay!" with rustling of banners, whistling of plumes, and the iron rattle of arms. The hussars thrust their lances into the wall of the enemy, and followed themselves, like a hurricane, overturning and crushing everything on the road. No human power, no command, no leader could hold the infantry on which their first impetus came. Wild panic seized the picked guard of the hetman. The men of Belotserkoff threw down their muskets, pikes, scythes, sabres, and shielding their heads with their hands in helplessness of terror, with the roar of beasts, they rushed against the Tartars in the rear. But the Tartars received them with a storm of arrows. So they rushed to the flank, and ran along the tabor under the infantry fire and the cannon of Vurtsel, covering the ground so thickly that it was rare when one did not fall upon another.

But now the wild Tugai Bey, aided by Subahazi and Urum Murza, struck with rage on the onrush of hussars. He did not hope to break; he wished merely to restrain them till the Silistrian and Rumelian janissaries might form in a quadrangle and protect the men of Belotserkoff from the first panic. He sprang at them as if into smoke, and flew on in the front rank, not as a leader, but as a simple Tartar; he cut and killed,—exposed himself with the others. The crooked sabres of the Nogais rang upon chain-mail and breastplates, and the howl of the warriors drowned all other voices. But they could not hold out. Pushed from their places, crushed with the terrible weight of the iron horsemen, against whom they were unaccustomed to stand with open front, they were driven toward the janissaries, hacked with long swords, whirled from their saddles, thrust

through, beaten down, twisted like poisonous reptiles; but they defended themselves with such venom that in fact the onset of the hussars was stopped. Tugai Bey rushed like a destroying flame, and the Nogais went with him, as wolves with their female.

Still they gave way, falling more frequently on the plain. When the cry of "Allah!" thundering from the field, announced that the janissaries had formed, Skshetuski rushed on the raging Tugai Bey, and struck him on the head with a double-handed sword. But it was evident either that the knight had not regained his whole strength, or perhaps the helmet forged in Damascus withstood the blow; it is enough that the blade turned on the head, and striking with the side was shivered to fragments. But that instant darkness covered the eyes of Tugai Bey; he dropped into the arms of his Nogais, who, seizing their leader, hurried away on two sides with a terrible uproar, like a cloud blown by a mighty wind. All the prince's cavalry was then in front of the Silistrian and Rumelian janissaries and Mohammedanized Serbs, who together with the janissaries formed one great quadrangle, and were withdrawing slowly to the tabor with their front to the enemy, bristling with muskets, lances, javelins, battle-axes, and swords.

The squadrons of armored dragoons and the Cossacks of the prince rushed on like a whirlwind; and in the very front, with a roar and heavy tramp, Skshetuski's hussars. He flew on himself in the first rank, and at his side Pan Longin on his Livonian mare, his terrible broadsword in his hand.

A red ribbon of fire flies from one end of the quadrangle to the other; bullets whistle in the ears of the riders; here and there a man groans, here and there a horse falls. The line of cavalry is broken, but pushes on,—is approaching. The janissaries now hear the snorting and blown breath of the horses; the quadrangle forms more closely still, and inclines its wall of spears, held by sinewy arms, against the furious chargers. How many points are in that wall? With how many deaths does it threaten the knights?

Just then a certain hussar of gigantic size rushes upon the wall of the quadrangle with an irresistible impulse; in a moment the forefeet of his great horse are in the air; and the knight with his steed falls into the middle of the throng, splintering lances, overturning men, breaking, mash-

ing, destroying. As an eagle swoops on a flock of white partridges, and they, crouching before him in a timid group, become the prey of the robber, who grasps them in his talons and his beak, so Pan Longin Poddipienta, falling into the midst of the enemy, rages with his broadsword. And never has a whirlwind made such destruction in a young and thick forest as he is making in the throng of janissaries. He is terrible; his form assumes superhuman proportions. His mare becomes a species of dragon, snorting flame from her nostrils; and the double-handed sword triples itself in the hands of the knight. Kislar-Bak, a gigantic aga, hurls himself upon him and falls, cut in two. In vain do the strongest men put forth their hands, stopping him with their spears. They die as if struck by lightning. He tramples them, pushes on to the densest throng, and when he strikes they fall, like grass beneath the scythe. An open space is made; the uproar of terror is heard,—groans, the thunder of blows, the biting of steel on the helmets, and the snorting of the infernal mare.

"A div! a div!"¹ cried terrified voices.

That instant the iron mass of the hussars, with Skshetuski at the head of it, bore down the gate opened by the Lithuanian. The walls of the quadrangle burst, like the walls of a falling house, and the masses of janissaries rushed fleeing in every direction.

It was not a moment too soon, for the Nogais under Subahazi were returning to the fight like bloodthirsty wolves, and from the other side Hmelnitski, rallying the men of Belotserkoff, was coming to the aid of the janissaries; but now everything was in confusion. Cossacks, Tartars, renegade Serbs, janissaries, fled in the greatest disorder and panic to the tabors, giving no resistance. The cavalry pressed on them, cutting as they came. Those who did not perish in the first furlong perished in the second. The pursuit was so envenomed that the squadrons went ahead of the rear ranks of the fugitives; their hands grew weary from hewing. The fugitives threw away arms, banners, caps, and even coats. The white caps of the janissaries covered the field, like snow. The entire chosen force of Hmelnitski's

¹ *Div* is a Persian word for "demon" or "evil spirit." This word meant "a divinity" in times anterior to Zoroaster, and is identical with the root *div* in our word "divine." In India and Europe it retained its original signification, and became of evil import only in Persia, in consequence of the triumph of Zoroastrianism.