

mand. I know that father will set out to-day, and I shall accompany him, Elza. I am not afraid of death and the enemy; I know that our cause is just, and that the good God will be on our side."

"But, nevertheless, many noble hearts will be pierced for this just cause, and yours, dearest Lizzie, may be among them," exclaimed Elza, tenderly folding her friend to her heart. "Oh, stay here, my darling, let the men fight it out alone; stay here!"

"No, Elza, I must go with them. My honor requires it, and forbids me to stay at our house with Ulrich von Hohenberg, for whose sake my father called me publicly to-day a recreant daughter of the Tyrol, and threatened to disown me forever. I must prove to all the world that I am a loyal daughter of the Tyrol; and I feel, Elza, that it will do me good to contribute my mite to the deliverance of the fatherland. I am not gentle and patient enough to sit quietly at home and wait until dear Liberty looks into my door and says to me, 'God bless you, Lizzie! I am here now, and you also may profit by the happiness which will be caused by my arrival.' No, Elza, I must go with my father, I must help him to find this dear Liberty on the mountains and in the valleys, and must say to her, 'God bless thee, Liberty! I am here now, and thou mayst profit by my strength, and I will help thee that thou mayst rule again over the mountains and valleys of our dear Tyrol.'"

"Oh, Lizzie, you are a genuine heroine!" exclaimed Elza; "I blush to think that I shall not accompany you and fight by your side for Liberty."

"You cannot," said Lizzie, gravely. "You have an aged father who will stay at home, and whom you must take care of; and the poor and sick count upon you, for they know that Elza will always be their good angel. Stay at home and pray for me. But never go down to my father's house, do not inquire for Ulrich, and do not try to have him brought to the castle here. He is under Schröpfel's surveillance, and Schröpfel would shoot him if he should suspect that all is not as it should be. But if God should decree my death, Elza, Ulrich would be free at once, and my father would not injure him,

inasmuch as he was his Lizzie's affianced bridegroom. He would set him free. Ulrich would then come to you, and, Elza, you will tell him not to think that Lizzie Wallner was a bad girl, and that she was intent only on getting an aristocratic husband. You will tell him that my sole object was to save his life, and that I never thought of marrying him. You will tell him also that I forgave him the injury which he did me to-day, and that I shall pray to God Almighty for him. And when you stand before God's altar, and the priest joins your hands, think of me, and do not forget that I loved you, dearest Elza, better than any once else on earth. And now, farewell, Elza; I shall not kiss you again, for it makes my heart heavy."

"Lizzie, Lizzie!" shouted a powerful voice outside at this moment; "Lizzie, where are you? 'Tis time to set out!"

"Here I am, dear father!" exclaimed Lizzie, stepping quickly out on the balcony. "I shall come down to you now. I was only taking leave of Elza. Now I am ready to set out and fight for the dear Tyrol and the dear Emperor Francis!"

"Hurrah, we will do so!" cried the Tyrolese. "We will fight for the dear Tyrol and the dear Emperor Francis! Hurrah! We will expel the Bavarians! Hurrah! the Austrians are coming! Hurrah! the Tyrol will be free again!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BRIDGE OF ST. LAWRENCE.

ANTHONY WALLNER and his men marched all day and all night through the Puster valley, along the road to the Mühlbach pass. His daughter Eliza, and young John Panzl, his friend and sympathizer, walked by his side; and behind him marched the brave Tyrolese, whose force gained strength at every step as it advanced, and who, amidst the most enthusiastic acclamations, appointed Anthony Wallner commander-in-chief of the men of the Puster valley, and John Panzl his lieutenant and assistant.

"I accept the position, my friends," said Wallner, taking

off his hat and kindly greeting the men ; " yes, I accept the position, and will be your commander, and will always lead you faithfully and honestly against the enemy. But will you always follow me? Will you not be afraid of the enemy's fire, and take to your heels before his artillery?"

" No, we will not," shouted the brave men ; " we will stand by you faithfully, and fight with you for the fatherland and the emperor!"

" That is right, men," cried John Panzl, making a leap which drew loud exclamations of admiration from the Tyrolese. " I tell you it is right in you to think so, and therefore I will likewise joyfully accept the honor which you have offered to me ; I will be your second commander, will always obey the orders of our brave commander-in-chief, and assist him and you in driving the enemy from our country, for the glory of God and our emperor. Ah, my dear Tyrolese, I would we could catch the French and the *Boafoks* at length, take them by the neck, and hurl them out of the country. I tell you, after we have done it, I shall dance so merrily with Eliza Wallner, my dear cousin, that the snowy heads of the Gross-Glockner and Venediger will become warm and melt with delight. Lizzie, we two, the most celebrated dancers of the whole Puster valley, will perform a dance in honor of our victory, will we not?"

" We will, Cousin Panzl," said Eliza, smiling. " But before dancing, we must march on and never run back."

" No, never run back," shouted the merry and courageous Tyrolese.

" Forward, then, forward!" commanded Anthony Wallner, and the whole force set out again and marched rapidly across the mountains and through the valleys ; it was received everywhere with deafening cheers, and gained at every step fresh accessions of men, who rushed enthusiastically out of their huts, armed with their rifles, or other weapons, even though they had only wooden clubs, and bravely joined the defenders of the country.

Already they approached their destination ; in the expansive valley below, yonder, lay the town of Brunecken,

surmounted by Castle Bruneck and other ancient and decaying feudal castles ; and behind it, on the way down toward Brixen, in the narrower gorge, bordered on both sides by precipitous mountains, through which the Rienz hurls its foaming waters, they beheld already the small town of St. Lawrence. After reaching St. Lawrence they had only an hour's march to the Mühlbach pass, which, in accordance with Andreas Hofer's orders, the brave men of the Puster valley were to occupy and defend against the enemy moving up from Botzen.

But all at once, right in the midst of the march, Anthony Wallner stood still, and, turning to Panzl, who was walking by the side of the column, gave him a sign to halt. The whole column stopped and listened.

Yes, there was no doubt about it, that was the rattle of musketry at a distance ! And now they heard also the loud booming of artillery, and the ringing of the tocsin at Brunecken and St. Lawrence.

" Now forward, Tyrolese, forward!" shouted Anthony Wallner. " At the double-quick down to Brunecken!"

" Forward!" shouted the men ; and their exclamations were echoed joyously by the women who had courageously accompanied their husbands, and who were ready, like them, to fight for their country and their emperor.

They marched with great speed down the Brunecken. The whole town was in the utmost commotion. Young and old men, women, children—all were hurrying toward the gate leading to St. Lawrence.

" What is the matter?" shouted Anthony Wallner, grasping the arm of an old man, who, armed with a pitchfork, was speeding along at a furious rate.

" What is the matter?" echoed the old man, endeavoring to disengage his arm from Wallner's powerful grasp. " The matter is, that the insurrection has broken out at length. The Bavarians are bent on destroying the bridge of St. Lawrence, in order to prevent the Austrians from crossing it. The whole military detachment left our place some time ago for the bridge, and sappers and miners, who are to blow it up, have arrived this morning from Brixen. But we will not

allow them to do it. They must shoot us all before we permit them to destroy the bridge."

"No, we will not!" cried Anthony Wallner. "Forward, men of the Puster valley, forward to the bridge of St. Lawrence!"

They continued their march through the valley at the double-quick. They heard the rattle of musketry and the booming of artillery more and more distinctly, and now, at a bend in the valley, the most wonderful and striking spectacle presented itself to their eyes.

Yonder at a distance lay the well-known bridge, composed of a single arch, between tremendous rocks; by its side stood two battalions of Bavarian infantry in serried ranks, and on a knoll, close to the bank of the river Rienz, had been planted three cannon pointed menacingly both against the bridge and the people who were moving up to it in denser and denser masses. Captains and other officers were galloping up and down in front of the Bavarians, and encouraging their men to attack these insurgents who were coming up behind, in front, and on both sides of them. The courageous sons of the Tyrol rushed down from all the heights; the tocsin of Brunecken and St. Lawrence had not called them in vain. They came down the mountains and up the valley; they came, men and women, old men and children; and all were armed: he who did not possess a gun had a flail, a pitchfork, or a club. Like a broad, motley river, the crowd was surging up from all sides, and at the head and in the midst of the warlike groups were to be seen priests in holy vestments, holding aloft the crucifix, blessing the defenders of the country with fervent, pious words, and uttering scathing imprecations against the enemy.

And amidst this commotion thundered the field-pieces, whose balls crashed again and again against the bridge; the bells were tolled in the church-steeple, and the musketry of the Bavarians rattled incessantly. But few of their bullets hit their aim. The Tyrolese were too remote from them, and only occasionally a loud scream indicated that a half-spent bullet had found its way into the breast of a Tyrolese. More fatal and unerring were the bullets of the Tyrolese

sharpshooters, who had concealed themselves on the heights on both sides of the valley, and fired from their hiding-places at the Bavarians, never missing their aim and picking off a soldier by every shot they discharged.

Anthony Wallner comprehended the whole situation at a glance. "Boys!" he shouted, in a ringing voice, "we must take the cannon. We must not permit the enemy to destroy the bridge which the Austrians are to cross. Let us attack the Bavarians! We must take the cannon!"

"Yes!" shouted the men, "we must take the cannon!"

And the shouts reached another troop of armed peasants, who repeated it with tumultuous enthusiasm, and soon the men on the heights and in the valley cried, "We must take the cannon!"

Anthony Wallner gave the signal to his sharpshooters, and moved with them into a small forest extending up the mountain near the cannon. The courageous men disappeared soon in the thicket, and, as if in accordance with a general agreement, the other Tyrolese likewise entered the forest. Below, in the valley, knelt the women and children, and before them stood the priests with their crucifixes, protecting them therewith, as it were, from the enemy who was posted on the other side of the valley, and whose ranks were thinned more and more by the bullets of the Tyrolese.

All at once, on the height above the cannon, where there was a clearing, and where the rocks were moss-grown and bare, the Tyrolese were seen rushing in dense masses from the forest. They were headed by Anthony Wallner and John Panzl. Each of them jumped on a projection of the rocks and raised his rifle. They fired, and two gunners fell mortally wounded near the cannon.

The Tyrolese greeted this exploit of their leaders with loud cheers; but up from the Bavarians resounded the commands of the officers; a whole volley crashed, the bullets whistled round the ears of Wallner and Panzl, but none hit them; and when the smoke cleared away, John Panzl was seen to make a triumphant leap in the air, which he accompanied with a shout of victory, while Anthony Wallner calmly raised his

rifle again. He fired, and the gunner at the third field-piece fell dead.

"Now, boys, at them; we must take the cannon!" shouted Wallner, jumping forward, and the Tyrolese followed him down the slope with furious shouts.

"Forward, forward!" shouted the lieutenant-colonel in the valley to his Bavarians; "forward! the cannon must not fall into the hands of the peasants; we must defend them to the last man. Therefore, forward at the double-quick!"

And the Bavarians rushed forward up the slope.

But the Tyrolese had already succeeded in shooting or knocking down all the gunners, and taken possession of the cannon. While Anthony Wallner, at the head of a furious detachment of his men, hastened to meet the approaching Bavarians, and hurled death and destruction into their ranks, John Panzl remained with the others to defend the guns.

A furious hand-to-hand fight now arose; the Bavarians were repulsed again and again by the Tyrolese, and the sharpshooters, posted behind the trees and rocks, assisted their fighting brethren with their rifles, which, aimed steadily, never missed their man. But the Bavarians, who were drawn up farther down in the valley, likewise endeavored to assist their struggling comrades: but the bullets which they fired up the hill frequently struck into the ranks of their countrymen, and not into those of the Tyrolese. Often, on the other hand, these bullets did not miss their aim, but carried wounds and death into the midst of the insurgents. Whenever this occurred a young woman was seen to rush amidst the deadliest shower of bullets into the ranks of the fighting men, lift up the fallen brave, and carry him in her strong arms out of the thickest of the fight to the quiet spot on the edge of the forest, which a protruding rock protected from the bullets of the enemy.

This young woman was Eliza Wallner. Behind the rock she had established a sort of field hospital; a few women and girls had assembled around her there, and taken upon themselves the sacred care for the wounded, while two priests had joined them to administer extreme unction to the dying. But Eliza Wallner had reserved the most difficult and dangerous

part of this work of love for herself. She alone was courageous enough to plunge into the thickest of the fight to remove the fallen brethren; she alone was strong enough to carry them to the quiet asylum, and it was only the joyous enthusiasm inspired by the consciousness of doing good that imparted this strength to her. Her eyes were radiant, her cheeks were flushed, and the face of the young girl, formerly so rosy and serene, exhibited now the transparent paleness, and grave, proud calmness which only great resolves and sublime moments impart to the human countenance.

And the women followed her example with joyous zeal; they washed the wounds of the brave Tyrolese with water fetched from the neighboring spring, tore their handkerchiefs and dresses to make the necessary bandages of them, and closed, with tears of devout compassion, the eyes of those who gave up the ghost amid the blessings of the priests.

From these pious works of charity the women were suddenly aroused by the loud cheers of the Tyrolese. Eliza sprang forth from behind the rock to see what was the matter. Renewed and still louder cheers resounded, for the victory was gained. Anthony Wallner and his men had attained their object. They had succeeded in hurling the three field-pieces from the height into the Rienz, which was rolling along far below in its rocky bed. The earth was shaking yet from the terrific crash, and echo was resounding still with the thundering noise with which the field-pieces had fallen into the Rienz, whose waters had hurled their foaming spray into the air, and were rolling now with an angry roar over the sunken cannon.

This exploit, which excited the transports of the Tyrolese, exerted a contrary effect upon the Bavarians. They had lost their artillery, and with it the means of blowing up the bridge; and now they stood before the enemy uncovered and almost defenceless. In obedience to a loud command uttered by Anthony Wallner, the Tyrolese returned quickly into the forest, and, hidden behind trees and rocks, hit a Bavarian with every bullet, while the Bavarians vainly fired at the well-concealed enemy.

The commander of the Bavarians, Lieutenant-Colonel

Wreden, perceiving the danger and uselessness of a continuance of the struggle, ordered his troops to retreat; and no sooner had the Bavarians received this longed-for order, than they fell back at the double-quick from the bridge and took the road to Sterzing.

This retreat of the enemy was greeted by the renewed cheers which Eliza Wallner had heard; and, both laughing and weeping for joy, she hastened to fold her father to her heart, and thank God that no bullet had hit him.

Wallner embraced her tenderly, and imprinted a kiss on her forehead.

"You have behaved very bravely, Lizzie," he said; "I saw how you carried our poor brethren out of the thickest of the fight. My heart was proud of you, and I should not have wept to-day even though you had fallen in the sacred service of the fatherland. But I thank God that nothing has happened to you, and I beseech you, dearest Lizzie, do not accompany us any farther. I now believe again in you, and I know that you are a true daughter of the Tyrol, although you unfortunately love a Bavarian. Therefore go home; for it is no woman's work that is in store for us; we have a hard struggle before us, and a great deal of blood will be shed before we have driven the mean Bavarians and the accursed French from our beloved country."

"No, father, I shall stay with you," exclaimed Eliza, with eager determination. "I am not able to sit at home and spin and pray when my father is fighting for the country. Mother can attend alone to our household affairs, and Shröpfel will assist her; but you cannot attend alone to the hard work here, and I will help you, dearest father. I will be the doctor and surgeon of your men until you have found a better and more skilful physician. You must not reject me, dearest father, for you would commit wrong against the poor wounded who have no other assistance than what they receive at my hands and at those of the women whom I beg and persuade to help me."

"You are right, Lizzie; it would be wrong in me to send you home and not permit you to assist and nurse the wounded," said her father, gravely. "May God and the Holy Vir-

gin help and protect you! I devote you to the fatherland to which I devote myself."

He kissed her once more, and then turned to the Tyrolese, who, encamped in groups on the edge of the forest, and reposing from the struggle, were partaking of the bread and meat which they had brought along in their haversacks.

"Brethren," exclaimed Anthony Wallner, in a powerful voice, "now let us be up and doing! We must cut off the enemy's retreat to Sterzing. We must also occupy the Mühlbach pass, as Andreas Hofer ordered us to do in the Archduke John's name. The enemy has set out thither, and if he gets before us through the gap of Brixen and reaches the bridge of Laditch, we shall be unable to prevent him from passing through the Mühlbach pass and marching to Sterzing. Hence, we are not at liberty to repose now, but must advance rapidly. One detachment of our men, commanded by my Lieutenant Panzl, will push on quickly on the mountain-road to the Mühlbach pass. The rest of us will follow you, but we must previously detain the enemy at the gap of Brixen; and while we are doing duty, another detachment of our men will go farther down to the bridge of Laditch and destroy it in order to prevent the enemy from crossing the Eisach. Forward, my friends! Forward to the gap of Brixen! We must roll down trees, detach large fragments from the rocks, and hurl them down on the enemy; we must fire at them from the heights with deadly certainty, and every bullet must hit its man. Forward! forward! To the bridge of Laditch!"

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed the Tyrolese, with enthusiastic courage. "Forward to the bridge of Laditch!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE BRIDGE OF LADITCH.

NIGHT had at length brought some repose to the exhausted Bavarians. At no great distance from the gap of Brixen they had halted late in the evening, and encamped on the bare