

was watching the struggle with breathless suspense. "But we must not incur the disgrace of losing the first battle, for that would discourage our men for all time to come. Come, Ennemoser, run down to them and tell them to try a third time. If they do not, Andreas Hofer will rush all alone upon the enemy and wait for a bullet to shatter his head."

Young Ennemoser, the secretary, sped down the ravine; Hofer pressed his crucifix to his lips and prayed; Eliza Wallner advanced close to the edge of the precipice, and peered down into the plain. Her eyes filled with tears when she perceived the many corpses piled up on both sides of the ravine, but the squares of the enemy likewise had been considerably thinned, and death had made fearful havoc in their ranks.

"Andreas Hofer," she cried, exultingly, "your message was successful. Our men are rushing forward. Do you not hear their cheers?"

"I do, and may the good God grant them success!" sighed Andreas Hofer, stepping close up to Eliza.

They saw the Tyrolese emerging again at the double-quick from the ravine, and rushing upon the enemy, who received them with volleys of musketry and artillery-fire. But, alas! they saw the Tyrolese give way again and retreat, though more slowly than before, to the ravine.

"This will never do," cried Hofer, despairingly. "Our men are slaughtered in this way, and cannot reach the enemy, whose cannon are mowing them down like scythes. O God, show me a way to help our men!"

His eyes glanced despairingly over the plain, as if searching for relief. All at once a bright flash of joy lit up his features.

"I have found a way! I thank Thee, my God!" he exclaimed, aloud. "See, Lizzie, look there! What do you see in the plain yonder behind the ravine?"

"I see there four large wagons filled with hay," said Lizzie; "yes, four wagons filled with hay, nothing else."

"And these wagons filled with hay will save us. They must be driven toward the ravine directly toward the enemy; our sharpshooters will conceal themselves behind them, and will safely advance; and when close enough to the enemy,

they will discharge their rifles, and first pick off the gunners, in order to silence the guns which have made such havoc among our men. Come, Lizzie, we will go down to Sieberer and the other captains, and give them my orders. I hope there will be four lads intrepid enough to drive the hay-wagons toward the enemy."

"There will be!" exclaimed Eliza, enthusiastically.

"It is only necessary for one to risk his life, and drive the first wagon. The other wagons will be covered by the first. But the driver of the first wagon will doubtless be killed, and I shall be responsible for his death."

"He will die for the fatherland," exclaimed Eliza. "Go, Andreas Hofer, descend and tell our men what is to be done, for it is high time for the hay-wagons to come up and cover our men."

"Come, let us go, Lizzie; give me your hand."

"No, lead the way; I will follow you immediately."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE HAY-WAGONS.

ANDREAS HOFER had already descended half the mountain-path with a rapid step, and he did not once look behind him, for he was sure that Wallner's daughter was following him, and he kept his eyes steadfastly fixed on his friends and brethren.

But Eliza did not follow him. She looked after him until the dense shrubbery below concealed her from his eyes; then she knelt down, and, lifting both her hands to heaven, exclaimed, in a loud, beseeching voice: "Holy Virgin, protect me! Grant success to my enterprise for the beloved fatherland!"

She then jumped up, and, quick as a chamois, scarcely touching the ground with her feet, she hastened toward the point where the hay-wagons were standing.

Meanwhile, Andreas Hofer had descended into the ravine

whence constantly new crowds of Tyrolese were rushing forward, although they were driven back again and again by the murderous fire of the enemy. On beholding Hofer's erect and imposing form, and his fine head, with the splendid long beard, the Tyrolese burst into loud cheers, and his presence seemed to inspire them with fresh courage. They advanced with the most intrepid impetuosity. Andreas Hofer called the brave captains of his sharpshooters to his side, and communicated to them briefly the stratagem he had devised.

"That is a splendid and very shrewd idea," said Anthony Sieberer.

"The hay-wagon is your Trojan horse with which, like Ulysses, you will conquer your Troy," exclaimed the learned Ennemoser, Hofer's young secretary.

"I do not know where Troy is situated," said Andreas Hofer, quietly, "but I know where the Sterzinger Moos lies, and what should be done there. For the rest, there are no horses before the hay-wagons, but oxen, and it is all-important that the gunners should not immediately hit the driver of the first wagon."

"But his last hour has surely come, and he may rely on going to paradise to-day!" exclaimed Ennemoser. "But look, what throng is yonder in the ravine, and what causes the women to shout so vociferously? Their shouts sound like triumphant cheers. And the lads now join in the acclamations too, and all are rushing forward so impetuously."

Indeed, the whole mass of men and women assembled in the rear of the ravine rushed forward with loud shouts, like a single immense wave, surging with extraordinary impetuosity up to Andreas Hofer and the captains standing by his side.

All at once this wave parted, and in the midst of all this eager, shouting throng, which took position on both sides of the ravine, appeared two of those broad-horned, brown-red oxen, of a beauty, majesty, and strength such as can be found only in the Tyrol and in Switzerland. Behind these two oxen came the wagon filled up with hay.

But who drove the hay-wagon? Was it really the lovely young girl hanging on the back of the ox—the beautiful creature whose face was radiant with enthusiasm, whose

cheeks were glowing like the morning sun, and whose eyes flashed like stars?

Yes, it was she—it was Eliza Wallner, who, with sublime courage, had mounted the back of the ox, and who now was driving forward with loud shouts and lashes of the whip the two animals, frightened by the crowd and the shots crashing incessantly.

"Eliza Wallner!" cried Andreas Hofer, with an air of dismay, as the heavily-laden wagon rolled more rapidly forward.

She turned her head toward him, and a wondrous smile illuminated her face. "Send greetings to my dear father!" she exclaimed. "Send greetings to him in my name, if I should die."

"I cannot allow her to do it—it is certain death!" cried Andreas Hofer, anxiously. "Let me go and lift her from the ox."

"No, no, Andreas," said Anthony Sieberer. "Let her proceed. The intrepidity of this young girl will fire the courage of the lads; and, for the rest, if lives have to be sacrificed, the life of a girl is not worth any more than that of a lad. We are all in God's hand."

"May God and His heavenly host protect her!" said Andreas Hofer, laying his hand on the image of St. George, which adorned his breast.

"Now, boys," shouted Anthony Sieberer, "do not allow the girl to make you blush. Quick, march behind the hay-wagon, and when you are close enough to the enemy, step forward and shoot down the gunners."

Ten young lads hastened forward, amid loud cheers, and took position in pairs behind the wagon, which advanced heavily and slowly, like an enormous avalanche.

There was a breathless silence. All eyes followed the wagon, all hearts throbbed and addressed to heaven prayers in behalf of the courageous girl who was driving it.

Suddenly a cry of horror burst from all lips. A cannonball had struck the hay-wagon, which was shaking violently from the tremendous shock.

But now a ringing cheer was heard in front of the wagon.

By this cheer Eliza Wallner announced to the Tyrolese that the ball had not hit her, and that she was uninjured.

The cannon boomed again, and Eliza's ringing voice announced once more that the balls had penetrated harmlessly into the closely compressed hay.

Meanwhile the wagon rolled out farther and farther into the plain of the Sterzinger Moos. Even the oxen seemed to be infected with the heroism of their fair driver, and trotted more rapidly toward the enemy, whose balls whistled round them without hitting them.

Suddenly Eliza stopped their courageous trot, and, turning back her head, she shouted: "Forward now, boys! Do not be afraid of the Bavarian dumplings. They do not hit us, and we do not swallow them as hot as the Bavarians send them to us!"

The young sharpshooters concealed behind the wagon replied to Eliza, amid merry laughter: "No, we are not afraid of the Bavarian dumplings, but we are going to pick off the cooks that send them to us."

And with their rifles lifted to their cheeks, five sharpshooters rushed forward on either side of their green bulwark. Before the Bavarians had time to aim at the ten daring sharpshooters, the latter raised their rifles and fired, and the gunners fell dead by the sides of their guns.

The Bavarians uttered loud shouts of fury, and aimed at the sharpshooters; but the Tyrolese had already disappeared again, whistling and cheering, behind the wagon, which was still advancing toward the enemy.

The other hay-wagons now rolled likewise from the ravine. The first of them was driven by another young girl. Imitating the heroic example set by Eliza Wallner, Anna Gamper, daughter of a tailor of Sterzing, had courageously mounted the back of an ox, and drove forward the wagon, filled with an enormous quantity of hay. Twenty young sharpshooters, encouraged by the success of their comrades, followed this second wagon. Behind them came the third and fourth wagons, followed by twenty or thirty more sharpshooters, who were well protected by the broad bulwark which the wagons formed in front of them.

The gunners had fallen; hence the cannon no longer thundered or carried destruction and death into the ranks of the Tyrolese; only the musketry of the Bavarians was still rattling, but they only hit the hay, and not the brave girls driving the oxen, nor the sharpshooters, who, concealed behind the hay, rushed from their covert whenever the enemy had fired a volley, raised their rifles triumphantly, and struck down a Bavarian at every shot.

All four hay-wagons had now driven up close enough, and the Tyrolese, who were nearly one hundred strong, burst with cheers from behind them, and rushing forward in loose array, but with desperate resolution, using the butt-ends of their rifles, fell with savage impetuosity upon the Bavarians, who were thunderstruck at this unexpected and sudden attack.

Loud cheers also resounded from the ravine. The whole force of the Tyrolese advanced at the double-quick to assist their brethren in annihilating the enemy.

A violent struggle, a fierce hand-to-hand fight now ensued. The Bavarians, overwhelmed by the terrible onset of the peasants, gave way; the squares dissolved; and the soldiers, as if paralyzed with terror, had neither courage nor strength left to avoid the furious butt-end blows of the peasants.

Vainly did Colonel von Bärenklau strive to reform his lines; vainly did those who had rallied round him at his command, make a desperate effort to force their way through the ranks of the infuriated Tyrolese. The fierce bravery of the latter overcame all resistance, and rendered their escape impossible.

"Surrender!" thundered Andreas Hofer to the Bavarians. "Lay down your arms, and surrender at discretion!"

A cry of rage burst from the pale lips of Colonel von Bärenklau, and he would have rushed upon the impudent peasants who dared to fasten such a disgrace upon him. But his own men kept him back.

"We do not want to be slaughtered," they cried, perfectly beside themselves with terror; "we will surrender, we will lay down our arms!"

A deathly pallor overspread the cheeks of the unfortunate officer.

"Do so, then," he cried. "Surrender yourselves and me to utter dishonor! I am no longer able to restrain you from it."

And with a sigh resembling the groan of a dying man, Colonel von Bärenklau fainted away, exhausted by the terrible exertion and the loss of blood which was rushing from a gunshot wound on his neck.

"We surrender!" We are ready to lay down our arms!" shouted the Bavarians to the Tyrolese, who were still thinning their ranks by the deadly fire of their rifles and their terrible butt-end blows.

"Very well, lay down your arms," cried Andreas Hofer, in a powerful voice. "Stop, Tyrolese! If they surrender, nobody shall hurt a hair of their heads, for then they are no longer our enemies, but our brethren.—Lay down your arms, Bavarians!"

The Tyrolese, obedient to the orders of their commander, stopped the furious slaughter, and gazed with gloomy eyes at their hated enemies.

There was a moment of breathless silence, and then the Bavarian officers were heard to command in tremulous voices, "Lay down your arms!"

And their men obeyed readily. Three hundred and eighty soldiers, and nine officers, laid down their arms here on the plain of the Sterzinger Moos, and surrendered at discretion to the Tyrolese.\*

On seeing this, the Tyrolese burst into loud cheers, and Andreas Hofer lifted his beaming eyes to heaven. "I thank Thee, Lord God," he said; "with Thy assistance we have achieved a victory. It is the first love-offering which we present to fatherland and our Emperor Francis."

"Long live the Tyrol and our Emperor Francis!" shouted the Tyrolese, enthusiastically.

The Bavarians stood silent, with downcast eyes and pale faces, while the active Tyrolese lads hastily collected the arms they had laid down and placed them on one of the wagons, from which they had quickly removed the hay.

"What is to be done with our prisoners, the Bavarians?"

\* "Gallery of Heroes: Andreas Hofer," p. 31.

said Anthony Sieberer to Andreas Hofer. "We cannot take them with us."

"No, we cannot, nor will the enemy give us time for doing so," replied Hofer. "Anthony Wallner has informed me that a strong corps of Bavarians and French is approaching in the direction of the Mühlbacher Klause. They must not meet us here on the plain, for a fight under such circumstances would manifestly be to our disadvantage. They would be a great deal stronger here than we. But in the mountains we are able to overcome them. They are the fortresses which the good God built for our country; and when the enemy passes, we shall attack and defeat him."

"And shall we take the prisoners with us into the mountains, commander?"

"No, we will not, for we cannot guard them well up there, and they would escape. We will not take the prisoners with us, but convey them to the Baroness von Sternberg at Castle Steinach. She is ardently devoted to our cause, and loves the Tyrol and the emperor. She will take care of the prisoners, and they will be unable to escape from the large tower, the Wolfsturm, on the crest yonder, which you can see from here."

"But who is to convey the prisoners to Castle Steinach? Are we all to march thither and deliver them before advancing farther?"

"No, no, Anthony Sieberer; we have not time for that. We must bury the corpses here quickly, and remove every trace of the contest, in order that the French, on arriving here, may not discover what has occurred, and that we are close by. Only thirty of our men shall escort the prisoners to Castle Steinach."

"Only thirty, commander? Will that be sufficient for three hundred and eighty prisoners? If they should attack our men on the road, they would beat them, for they would be twelve to one."

"That is true," said Andreas Hofer in confusion; "what are we to do to get a stronger escort for the prisoners?"

He stroked his beard nervously, as was his wont in moments of great excitement, and he glanced uneasily,

now here, now there. All at once a smile illuminated his face.

"I have got it," he said merrily. "Look there, Sieberer, look there. What do you see there?"

"The women who have accompanied us, and who are kissing Eliza Wallner and Anna Gamper for their heroic conduct."

"The women shall help our thirty sharpshooters to escort the prisoners to Castle Steinach. Our women have brave hearts and strong arms, and they know how to use the rifle for the fatherland and the emperor. Let them, then, take some of the arms which we have conquered, and, jointly with thirty of our men, escort the prisoners to the good Baroness von Sternberg. Oh, Lizzie Wallner, Lizzie Wallner!"

"Here I am, commander," cried Eliza, hastening to Andreas Hofer with flushed cheeks and beaming eyes.

He patted her cheeks smilingly. "You are a brave, noble girl," he said, "and none of us will ever forget what you have done to-day; and the whole Tyrol shall learn what a splendid and intrepid girl you are. But I wish to confer a special reward on you, Lizzie; I wish to appoint you captain of a company, and your company is to consist of all those women."

"And what does the commander-in-chief order me to do with my company of women?" asked Eliza Wallner.

"Captain Lizzie, you are to escort with your company and thirty Tyrolese sharpshooters the three hundred and eighty Bavarians to Castle Steinach. Your arms you will take from the wagon yonder, which Captain Lizzie drove so heroically toward the enemy. Will you undertake to escort the prisoners safely to Steinach?"

"I will, commander. But after that I should like to return to my father. He must be uneasy about me by this time, and he would like also to know how the Tyrolese have succeeded on this side. Oh! he will be exceedingly glad when I bring him greetings from his beloved Andreas Hofer."

"Go, then, my dear child," said Andreas Hofer, nodding to her tenderly, and laying his hand on her beautiful head.

"Go, with God's blessing, and greet your father in my name. Tell him that God and the Holy Virgin are with us and have blessed our cause; therefore we will never despond, but always fight bravely and cheerfully for our liberty and our dear emperor. Go, Lizzie; escort the prisoners to Steinach, and then return to your father."

Eliza kissed his hand; then left him and communicated Andreas Hofer's order to the women. They received it joyously, and hastened to the wagon to get the arms.

Half an hour afterward a strange procession was seen moving along the road leading to Castle Steinach. A long column of soldiers, without arms, with heads bent down and gloomy faces, marched on the road. On both sides of them walked the women, with heads erect, and proud, triumphant faces, each shouldering a musket or a sword. Here and there marched two Tyrolese sharpshooters, who were watching with the keen and distrustful eyes of shepherds' dogs the soldiers marching in their midst.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CAPTURE OF INNSPRUCK.

GENERAL KINKEL, governor of Innsbruck, had just finished his dinner, and repaired to his cabinet, whither he had summoned some of the superior officers to give them fresh instructions. To-day, the 11th of April, all sorts of news had arrived from the Tyrol; and although this news did not alarm the Bavarian general, he thought it nevertheless somewhat strange and unusual. He had learned that Lieutenant-Colonel von Wreden, despite General Kinkel's express orders, had rashly evacuated his position at Brunecken and destroyed the bridge of Laditch. Besides, vague rumors had reached him about an insurrection among the peasants in the neighborhood of Innsbruck; and even on the surrounding mountains, it was said, bands of armed insurgents had been seen.

"We have treated these miserable peasants by far too leniently and kindly," said General Kinkel, with a shrug, when