

father and the other men that Ulrich never was my betrothed, and that I said so only to save his life. They will forgive me for helping him to escape when I tell them that I never loved him nor would have taken him, because he is a Bavarian, but that I saved him because he is a near relative of my dear Elza. And after telling and explaining all this to the men, I shall go to Elza, give her the flowers, and tell her that Ulrich sent them to her, and that his last word was a love-greeting for her. God, forgive me this falsehood! But Elza loves him, and it will gladden her heart. She will preserve this bouquet to her wedding-day, and she will not notice that I kept one flower from it for myself. It is the flower which he kissed; it shall be mine. I suppose, good God, that I may take it, and that it is no theft for me to do so?"

She looked up to heaven with a beseeching glance; then she softly drew one of the flowers from the bouquet, pressed it to her lips, and concealed it in her bosom.

"I will preserve this flower while I live," she exclaimed. "God strengthened my heart so that I was able to reject him; but I shall love him forever, and this flower is my wedding-bouquet. I shall never wear another!"

She extended her arms in the direction where Ulrich had disappeared. "Farewell!" she cried. "I greet you a thousand times, and my heart goes with you!"

Then she turned and hastily descended the path which she had ascended with Ulrich von Hohenberg.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH.

It was a wondrously beautiful morning in May; the sun shone clear and bright; the birds sang in all the shrubs and trees, and the gay spring flowers exhaled their fragrant odors in all the gardens. Nature had donned its holiday attire, and yet humanity was in mourning; the sun shone clear and bright, and yet the eyes of men were sombre and lustreless,

and instead of rejoicing over the fresh verdure and the blossoms of spring, they grieved, and their hearts were frozen with care and pain.

For the Emperor Napoleon had raised his proud hand again against Germany; he had defeated the Austrians at Ratisbon and Landshut, and made his triumphant entrance into Vienna on the 12th of May, 1809.

For the second time the imperial family, fleeing from the victorious Napoleon, had been compelled to leave the capital; for the second time the foreign emperor occupied the palace of Schönbrunn, and Vienna had to bow again to the will of the all-powerful conqueror. The Emperor Francis had escaped with his wife and children to Hungary, and Vienna, whose inhabitants had at first sworn enthusiastically to defend their city to the last man, and lay it in ashes rather than surrender it to the French, had nevertheless opened its gates already on the 12th of May to the Emperor Napoleon and his army. It had to bow to stern necessity, for during the previous night the Archduke Maximilian, with the weak forces with which he had been ordered to defend Vienna, had evacuated the city, had burned the great bridge of Thabor to prevent Napoleon from pursuing him, and had succeeded in escaping, leaving it to the Viennese to make terms with the conqueror and invoke his clemency and generosity. They had thus been obliged to conceal their rage and exasperation in their hearts, and surrender to the tender mercies of the French emperor; they had opened their gates to the enemy, but not their hearts. Their hearts were filled with boundless rage and shame, which brought wild imprecations to the lips of the men, and tears to the eyes of the women.

Joseph Haydn, the silver-haired octogenarian, had still the heart of a fiery man in his bosom, and his trembling lips cursed the conqueror, the relentless foe of Austria, and called down the wrath of Heaven on the French emperor, who always spoke of peace and conciliation, and always stirred up quarrels and enmities. The latest reverses of Austria had produced a most painful impression upon the aged *maestro*, and the ravishing joy which had illuminated Joseph Haydn's face at the performance of "The Creation," had long since disap-

peared from his careworn and mournful countenance. His eyes were gloomy and dim, and often veiled with tears; and when he played his imperial hymn, as he did every morning, he could not sing to it, for tears choked his voice, and the words, so full of confidence and triumphant hope, seemed to him a bitter mockery.

He led now a very quiet and lonely life at his small house in the Mariahilf suburb, and he did not even leave it, as he had formerly always done, on Sundays, in order to go to mass. The sight of the French uniforms wounded his heart, and he grieved on seeing his beloved Viennese oppressed and humiliated.

"God is every where," said Haydn to his faithful servant Conrad, "and He will hear my prayer even though I should utter it in my quiet closet, and not at church. But to-day, my friend, I will pray to God in the open air. See how gloriously the sun shines, and how blue the sky is! To-day is Sunday. Let us, therefore, put on our Sunday clothes. Conrad, give me the fine ring which the great King of Prussia presented to me, and then come to hear mass in my little garden."

Conrad fetched quickly the Sunday clothes of his master; he helped him to put on the silken and silver-embroidered coat, and put the large diamond ring, which Frederick the Great had one day sent to the great master of harmony, on his finger. Then he handed him his hat and his strong cane, which was adorned with a golden cross-piece, that the tottering octogenarian might lean on it. Joseph Haydn now left the room slowly, his right hand leaning on his cane, his left arm resting on the shoulder of his servant. Behind him walked with a grave step the old cat, an heirloom from Haydn's lamented wife, and hence highly prized and honored by the aged *maestro*. Purring softly, now raising its beautiful long tail, now rolling it up, the cat followed close in the footsteps of its master, through the hall and across the yard to the small garden.

"How beautiful it is here!" said Haydn, standing still in the door of the garden, and slowly looking around at the flowers and shrubbery, the humming bees and flitting butter-

flies. "Oh, how gloriously beautiful is God's creation, and how radiant—"

"How radiant is nature," interrupted Conrad; "how brilliantly the sun shines, and how splendid the lawn looks!"

"You are a fool, old Conrad, to repeat these words from *my* 'Creation,'" said Haydn, with a gentle smile. "I was not thinking of *my* 'Creation' at this moment, but of God's creation. And He certainly knew more about the music of the creation than I did, and—just listen how the nightingale sings in the elder-bush yonder! It is an air such as is to be found only in God's Creation, and, as Joseph Haydn, with all his talents and enthusiasm, never was able to compose. Oh, how sweetly this *prima donna assoluta* of the good God sings, and what divine melodies, modulations, and harmonies she warbles forth, and—But what is that?"

"That is the parrot singing an air from Joseph Haydn's 'Creation,'" exclaimed Conrad, bursting into triumphant laughter. "And just listen, doctor, the *prima donna assoluta* of the good God has become entirely silent, and listens with delight to the divine melodies, modulations, and harmonies of my dear master Joseph Haydn."

"You are a fool, Conrad, despite your seventy years," said Haydn, "to call old Paperl my *prima donna assoluta*, and compare him with the nightingale. But tell me, for God's sake, where did the bird hear that melody? Why, Paperl whistles the great base-air from 'The Creation' as though he were the first singer. Where did he learn it?"

"I taught him the melody, doctor," said Conrad, proudly; "I gave him lessons for three months, and he took pains to learn the melody, for he knew full well that we two were preparing a little surprise and joy for our dear master, the great Joseph Haydn."

"And that is the reason why I have not seen Paperl for so long," said Haydn, nodding his head gently. "I did not wish to inquire after him, for I was afraid the answer would be that the bird was dead and had gone home to my dear old wife."

"Well, I am sure Paperl would never go to her," said Conrad, laughing; "the two could never get along with each

other, and were always quarrelling. Whenever Paperl could catch one of your wife's fingers, he bit it with his thick beak, and she hated the bird cordially for it, and would have preferred sending him to the grave than descending into it herself. But Paperl did not die, and you need not be anxious on his account, doctor. Such parrots live a thousand years. Therefore, I locked him up in my chamber for three months, and taught him the beautiful air, that the bird might whistle it to mankind a thousand years hence, and remind all of the great composer, Joseph Haydn."

"Ah, my dear old Conrad," sighed Haydn, sinking into the easy-chair which Conrad had placed for him under the fragrant elder-bush, "a thousand years hence no one will know any thing about us, and we shall be nothing but dust returned to dust. But God will remain, and His sun will shine a thousand years hence as gloriously as it does to-day; and His nightingales will sing the same wonderful melodies from His creation long after my 'Creation' has been forgotten."

He paused, and clasping his hands devoutly, lifted his eyes to heaven. By his side, on the high pole, its right leg fastened to it with a small silver chain, the parrot sat, and fixed its piercing, sagacious eyes upon him; the cat lay at Haydn's feet, and gazed with philosophical equanimity at the flies which were buzzing from flower to flower, and pricked up its ears attentively whenever a small bird rustled in the shrubbery, or skipped merrily from branch to branch in the fragrant walnut tree. Beside the easy-chair stood Conrad, the old servant, his faithful, honest face turned toward his master with an expression of infinite tenderness, and quite absorbed in contemplating this mild, smiling, and calm octogenarian, whose eyes were looking around slowly, and seemingly greeting God and Nature. In the distance bells were ringing and calling devout worshippers to divine service; their notes resounded tremulously through the air like a solemn accompaniment to the voices of Nature.

"Oh, how beautiful, how beautiful!" murmured Haydn. "Why can I not exhale with this sigh of joy my old life, which is no longer good for any thing? Why can I not die with this prayer of gratitude toward God on my lips, and waft

my soul up to heaven, as that bird yonder is at this moment soaring toward the sun!"

"Oh, sir, why do you talk already of dying?" cried Conrad, anxiously; "you must live yet a long while, a joy to mankind, and honored and esteemed by the whole world."

"And a burden to myself," sighed Haydn. "I am exhausted, Conrad; I have no longer strength enough to live. This unfortunate war crushed to the ground and broke my poor heart.* When Napoleon made his second entrance into Vienna, and our good Emperor Francis had to escape again from the capital, I felt as though my heart were rent asunder, and this rent will never heal again. The misfortunes of my fatherland will cause me to bleed to death! Ah, how dreadful it is that Austria and my emperor were humiliated so profoundly, and that they had to bow to the Emperor of the French! I cannot comprehend why the Lord permits it, and why He does not hurl down His thunderbolts upon the head of this hypocritical French emperor, who throws the firebrand of war into all parts of Europe, who always has pharisaical words of peace in his mouth, and gives himself the appearance of wishing to reconcile all, when he is intent only on setting all at variance. Oh, Conrad, when I think of this Emperor Napoleon, of the innocent blood which he has already shed, and of the many thousand victims which have already fallen to his ambition, my heart swells up in boundless exasperation, and I begin to doubt even the goodness and justice of God!—But hush, hush, my wild heart," he interrupted himself, lifting his eyes with a beseeching glance to heaven. "God will manage everything for the best. He will one day, with a beck of His hand, hurl the French usurper from his throne, and cause Austria to rise great and powerful from her humiliating position. He will protect Germany from the wrongs inflicted upon her by France, and avenge the disgrace which every German has to suffer at the hands of the French. That is the hope which I shall take with me into my grave; that is the confidence I have in Thee, O my God!"

He lifted both his hands toward heaven, and prayed in a

* Haydn's own words.—"Zeitgenossen," vol. iv., p. 36.

low voice. Then he rose slowly from his chair, and turned his head with smiling greetings on all sides.

"Conrad," he said, gently, "I take leave of Nature to-day, for it seems to me as if I never should see again my dear little garden, the flowers and birds, the sun and the sky. Oh, farewell, then, great and holy Nature! I have loved thee passionately all my life, and glorified thee in my works to the best of the power which God imparted to me. Farewell, Nature! farewell, sunshine and fragrant flowers! Joseph Haydn takes leave of you, for his task is fulfilled, and his soul is weary. Come, my old Conrad, conduct me back to the house. I will return to my room. I am tired, ah, so exceedingly tired!"

He passed his arm around Conrad's neck, and, leaning his other hand on his cane, walked slowly and pantingly up the narrow path.

At this moment the nightingale in the elder-bush recommenced its jubilant song, and at the same time the parrot raised its shrill voice, and began to whistle the sweet notes of the air from Haydn's "Creation."

Haydn stood still and listened. "Conrad," he said, in a low voice, "we will now consult an oracle as to my life and death. If the parrot pauses first, I shall die soon; if the nightingale pauses, God will permit me to live a while longer."

He lifted his eyes devoutly to the sky, over whose azure plain white cloudlets were scudding like silver swans, and his lips muttered a low prayer.

The nightingale still sang its wonderful love-songs, and the parrot tried to drown its notes with Haydn's beautiful melody.

Conrad smiled blissfully. "My Paperl has a long breath," he said, "and the nightingale will be unable to cope with him; Rupert will outsing it."

But the nightingale, as if irritated by this rivalry, now seemed to put forth its whole art and strength. The ringing trills were followed by long, sweet, flute-notes, which filled the air like a joyous hymn of tenderness, drowning the voices of all other birds, and the sighing breeze, and seemed

to arouse the flowers from their sweet slumber, till they trembled with blissful transports, and softly raised their flowery crowns toward the blooming elder, in whose dark foliage was concealed the nightingale, Nature's great and yet modest *artiste*.

Yes, all Nature seemed to listen with blissful attention to this wonderful song of the nightingale, and even the parrot could no longer resist the charm. Paperl hesitated, then commenced again, hesitated a second time, and was silent.

Haydn dropped his clasped hands slowly, and turned his eyes from heaven to earth. "I knew it full well," he murmured; "the oracle has decided my fate, and Joseph Haydn's 'Creation' is silenced by God's creation. Come into the house, Conrad; I am cold and tired. But first give me a few of my fragrant friends, my dear flowers. They shall speak to me in my room of the splendor and beauty of the world."

Conrad gathered hastily a full bouquet of roses, pinks, and elder-flowers, dried the tears filling his eyes, and conducted his master carefully back into the house.

He had just seated him in his easy-chair, and placed the embroidered cushion under his feet, when the shrill street-bell resounded in the hall.

"Go and see who is there," said Haydn, holding the bouquet in both his hands, and contemplating it with loving eyes.

Conrad slipped out of the room and returned in a few minutes.

"There is a stranger from Berlin," he said, "who begged me urgently to admit him to Dr. Haydn. Mr. Schmid, the manager of the theatre, is with him, and requests you to see the stranger, who, he says, is a celebrated poet."

"If Schmid is with him, let them come in," said Haydn, mildly; "it will doubtless be the last time I shall see my dear old friend on earth."

Conrad threw open the door, and beckoned the gentlemen, who were standing outside, to come in. The two crossed the threshold softly on tiptoe, and with faces expressive of profound reverence; as if seized with compassion or pious awe, they stood still at the door, and gazed with eyes full of tenderness upon Haydn, who, at this moment, overcome perhaps

by the spring air, had closed his eyes, and not heard the entrance of the visitors.

"That is he," whispered one of the two, a man of a tall, erect form, with a face radiant with understanding and sagacity. "That is he!" he repeated, fixing his ardent eyes on the composer.

"Yes, that is Joseph Haydn," said the other, in a low voice, and an expression of profound grief overspread his broad, good-natured face. "But hush! he opens his eyes."

And he approached Haydn, who held out both his hands to him, and greeted him with a gentle smile.

"Do you come to bid farewell to your old friend once more previous to his death?" he asked, mildly. "Do you wish to take leave of me, my dear friend Schmid?"

"No, I do not come to bid you farewell, but wish you good-day," said Schmid, warmly, "and pray you to receive this gentleman here kindly. It is Iffland, the celebrated actor and poet from Berlin. He had come to Vienna before the French took the city, and after its capture he could no longer get out: they detained him, and it was not until now that, by dint of the most pressing solicitations, he received permission to return to Berlin."

"But I could not leave Vienna without seeing the great Haydn," exclaimed Iffland, in his fine, sonorous voice. "What would the people of Berlin think of me if I had not seen the most illustrious genius of our time?"

"Sir," said Haydn, with a sigh, "look at me, and learn from my weakness how fragile man is with all his glory."

"Man alone is fragile, but genius is immortal," exclaimed Iffland, "and Joseph Haydn is a genius whose glory will never die."

"Let my footman tell you the glory of the nightingale and the parrot," said Haydn, with a faint smile. "The works of man are perishable, but the works of God last forever."

"But the works of man come likewise from God, for it was He who gave him the strength to create them," replied Iffland, warmly. "Did not the great and glorious creations of your genius come just as much from God as the flowers which you

hold in your hand, and the perfumes of which delight you so visibly?"

"Yes, these flowers are beautiful," said Haydn, musingly.

"The bouquet is doubtless a gift from one of the many fair admirers of our *maestro*?" asked Schmid, laughing.

Haydn looked up to him smilingly and shook his head gently. "No," he said, "it is the last souvenir of Nature, to which I have bidden farewell. I worshipped to-day in the open air, and this is the rosary with which I will pray. Ah, I love Nature so passionately!"

"And you have taught those whose eyes and ears were closed against the holy charms of Nature, how to see and hear," said Iffland. "Your 'Seasons' is the most glorious hymn on God's splendid world."

"Yes, the 'Seasons,'" cried Haydn, almost vehemently, "gave me the death-blow. It was so difficult for me to derive enthusiasm from the words of the text. The words said so little, really so very little! Frequently a single passage caused me a great deal of trouble for several days, and I did not succeed after all in expressing the idea I wished to convey to the hearers. The words were a dead weight on my music. Well, it is all over now. Yes, you see, it is all over now. The 'Seasons' is to blame for it, for it exhausted my last strength. I have had to work hard all my lifetime; I had to suffer hunger, thirst, and cold in my wretched attic, whence I had to descend a hundred and thirty steps before reaching the street. Privations, hard work, hunger, in short, all that I suffered in my youth, are now exerting their effects on me and prostrating me. But it is an honorable defeat—it is hard work to which I am succumbing. However, God assisted me. I never felt it more strikingly than this very day, and therefore I am so happy, oh! so happy, that I must shed tears of blissful emotion. Do not laugh at me on this account. I am a weak old man, and when any thing affects me profoundly, I must weep. It was otherwise in former years. Ah, in former years!" He turned his tearful eyes toward the window, and gazed into vacancy. "In former years my mind was strong and vigorous," he sighed, "and when I wrote my 'Creation,' a manly fire filled my heart."

"Your enthusiasm is imprinted on your great work, and it will never disappear from it," said Iffland. "Joseph Haydn's 'Creation' is immortal and full of eternal youth. The Viennese proved it to you on hearing your sublime music the other day."

"But I proved to them that I had become so feeble that I could no longer bear listening to my own music. I had to leave the room long before the performance was at an end."

"You ought not to have gone to the concert at all," said Schmid. The excitement might have been injurious to your health."

"It was injurious to me," said Haydn, "but considerations of health had no right to prevent me from being present. It was not the first time that homage had been rendered to Haydn, and I wished to show that I was able to bear it this time too. Ah, it was a glorious evening, and never did I hear a better performance of my 'Creation.'"

"It was the great composer's apotheosis which the musicians and singers were celebrating," said Iffland, deeply moved.

"It is true the Viennese have done a great deal for me. They are so good, and they love me dearly."

"Oh, the Viennese are not ahead of the people of Berlin in this respect," exclaimed Iffland. "In Berlin, too, every one knows and loves the great Joseph Haydn, and his 'Creation' is likewise recognized there as a masterpiece. It was performed in Berlin quite recently at a charity concert, the receipts of which amounted to over two thousand dollars."

"Over two thousand dollars for the poor," said Joseph Haydn, with beaming eyes; "oh, my work, then, gave the poor a good day. That is splendid, that is the most beautiful reward for a life of toils and privations. But," he added, after a brief pause, "it is all over now. I can no longer do any thing. I am a leafless tree, which will break down to-day or to-morrow."

"The fall of this tree will move the whole of Germany as a great calamity befalling every lover of his country."

"Yes, it is true, much love has been manifested for me,

much homage has been rendered to me," said Haydn, musingly.

"All nations and all princes have rendered homage to you," exclaimed Iffland. "The laurel-wreath, for which we other poets and artists are struggling all our lifetime, and which is generally bestowed upon us only after we are in the grave, was long since granted to you in the most flattering and gratifying manner. Europe has presented you, not with one, but with many laurel-wreaths, and you may look back on your life like a victorious hero, for each of your exploits was a triumph for which you received laurel-wreaths and trophies."

"Yes, I have many souvenirs of my past," said Haydn, smilingly. "I will show them to you.—Conrad, give me my treasures."

Conrad opened the drawer of the large writing-table which was standing close to Haydn, and which contained a great many large and small *étuis*, caskets and boxes.

"You shall see my treasures now," exclaimed Haydn, cheerfully. In the first place, he showed them a beautiful casket made of ebony and gold. It was a gift with which the young Princess Esterhazy had presented the beloved and adored friend of her house only a few weeks ago, and on whose lid was painted a splendid miniature representing the scene at the last performance of "The Creation," when Haydn received the enthusiastic homage of the audience. He then showed them the large gold medal sent him, in 1800, from Paris, by the two hundred and fifty musicians who, on Christmas evening in that year, had performed "The Creation," and thereby delighted all Paris. Then followed many other medals from musical societies and conservatories, and valuable diamond rings, snuff-boxes, and breastpins from kings and emperors. Last, Haydn showed them, with peculiar emotion, the diploma of citizenship which the city of Vienna had conferred on him. It was contained in a silver case, and its sight caused his eyes even now to flash with the most intense satisfaction.

He had placed on the table before him every piece, after showing it to them and explaining its meaning; and now that all the treasures were spread out before him, he con-

templated them with a blissful smile, and nodded to them as if to dear old friends.

"Do not laugh at me," he said, lifting his eyes to Iffland, almost beseechingly. "I am fondly attached to these things, and hence it delighted me to look at them from time to time with my friends. You will say they are the playthings of an old man. But they are more than that to me; on beholding them, I think of my past life, and my recollections render me young again for a few moments. After my death all these things will pass into dear hands, and I hope that, when I am slumbering in my grave, my souvenirs will be carefully preserved and honored if only for my sake."*

"I hope the day is distant when Germany will have to lament the death of her favorite, Joseph Haydn," exclaimed Iffland.

"That day is close at hand," said Haydn, calmly; "I feel to-day more distinctly than ever before that my end is drawing nigh. My strength is exhausted."

"Let us go," whispered Schmid, pointing to Haydn, who had feebly sunk back into his easy-chair, and was leaning his pale head against the cushions.

Iffland fixed his eyes for a long time with an expression of heart-felt grief on the groaning, broken form reposing in the easy-chair.

"And that is all that is left of a great composer, of a genius who delighted the whole world!" he sighed. "Ah, what a fragile shell our body is, a miserable dwelling for the soul living in it! Come, my friend, let us softly leave the room. Only I would like to take a souvenir with me, a flower from the bouquet which Haydn held in his hands. May I venture to take one?"

At this moment Haydn opened his eyes again, and fixed them with a gentle expression on Iffland. "I heard all you said," he remarked; "but I was too feeble to speak. You wish to get one of my flowers? No, you shall have them all."

He took the bouquet, looked at it tenderly, and buried his

* Haydn bequeathed all his trinkets and manuscripts to the Esterhazy family, who had honored him so highly during his whole life.

whole face for a moment in the flowers, and then handed it to Iffland with a gentle smile.

"Farewell," he said; "remember me on looking at these flowers. I would I had known you in happier days, when I should have been able to enjoy your genius and admire your art. You must be a great actor, for you have a wonderfully sonorous and pliable voice. I should like to hear you declaim, even though you should recite but a few verses."

"Permit me, then, to recite the lines in which Wieland celebrated your 'Creation,'" said Iffland; and, advancing a few steps, holding the bouquet in his hand, and fixing his gleaming eyes on Haydn, who gazed at him with a gentle smile, Iffland recited in his full sonorous voice Wieland's beautiful lines:

Wie ström't dein wogender Gesang
In uns're Herzen ein! Wir sehen
Der Schöpfung mächt'gen Gang,
Den Hauch des Herrn auf dem Gewässer wehen;
Jetzt durch ein blitzend Wort das erste Licht entstehen,
Und die Gestirne sich durch ihre Bahnen drehen;
Wie Baum und Pflanze wird, wie sich der Berg erhebt,
Und froh des Lebens sich die jungen Thiere regen.
Der Donner rollet uns entgegen;
Der Regen säuselt, jedes Wesen strebt
In's Dasein; und bestimmt, des Schöpfers Werk zu krönen
Sehn wir das erste Paar, geführt von Deinen Tönen.
Oh, jedes Hochgefühl, das in dem Herzen schlief,
Ist wach! Wer rufet nicht: wie schön ist diese Erde?
Und schöner, nun ihr Herr auch dich in's Dasein rief,
Auf dass sein Werk vollendet werde!"*

* "Thy wondrous song in melting strains
To our mute hearts swift entrance gains;
By magical yet unfelt force,
We see creation's mighty course:
The firmament appears in space—
God breathes upon the water's face.
One flashing word bids primal light appear,
Revolving stars begin their vast career;
Upheaving mountains now are seen,
Tall trees and tender herbage green;

After concluding his recitation, Iffland approached the old man quickly, knelt down before him and imprinted a kiss on his clasped hands. Then, without adding another word, he rose, and, walking backward as if before a king, approached the door, opened it softly, and went out, followed by Schmid.*

"Farewell!" exclaimed Haydn, in a deeply-moved voice, and sank back in the easy-chair. Profound silence now reigned around him; but all at once this silence was broken by a thundering crash, which caused the windows to rattle and shook the walls. The deafening noise was repeated again and again, and rolled through the air like the angry voice of God.

And now the door opened, and Conrad and Kate, the aged servant-woman, rushed into the room. "Ah, master, master, it is all up now, and we are all lost! The Austrians and the French are in force close to Vienna, and the battle has already commenced."

"The battle has commenced!" exclaimed Joseph Haydn, rising from his easy-chair, and lifting his hand to heaven. "The battle has commenced! Good and great God in heaven, protect our fatherland, and grant Austria a glorious victory over her arrogant foe! Do not allow Austria and Germany to succumb; help us to defeat the proud enemy who has humiliated and oppressed us so long! O Lord my God,

Young animals to being rise,
And animate by living cries;
We hear the mighty thunder roar,
And rains in gushing torrents pour.
All creatures struggle into life; and stand
Before our eyes, fresh from their Maker's hand,
The first pair, led by thy sweet tones.
Now waked by inspiration's art,
Enthusiasm stirs our heart.
Who cries not, 'Earth is passing fair!'
Yet far more fair her Maker is,
How perfect every work of his!"

* The whole account of this interview between Joseph Haydn and Iffland is in strict accordance with Iffland's own report of it in his "Theatre-Almanac," pp. 181-207.

shield the honor of Germany and Austria! Protect the emperor!"

And Joseph Haydn walked through the room with the vigor and alacrity of a youth, dropped his hands on the keys of the piano, and began to play in full concords the melody of his imperial hymn, "*Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser!*"

Conrad and Kate stood behind him, singing in a low, tremulous tone; but outside, the booming of artillery continued incessantly, and they heard also the cries of the people who were hurrying in dismay through the streets, and the tolling of all the church-bells, which called upon the Viennese to pray to God.

All at once Haydn paused in the middle of the tune; his hands dropped from the keys, a long sigh burst from his lips, and he sank fainting into the arms of his faithful Conrad. His servants carried him to his couch, and soon succeeded in restoring him to consciousness. He opened his eyes slowly, and his first glance fell upon Conrad, who stood weeping at his bedside.

"The nightingale was right; my end is drawing nigh," he said, with a faint smile. "But I will not die before learning that the Austrians have defeated the enemy, and that my emperor has gained a battle."

And in truth Joseph Haydn's strong will once more overpowered death, which had already touched him with its finger. He raised himself upon his couch; he would not die while Austria was struggling on the reeking, gory field of battle for the regeneration or her end.

Two days followed, two dreadful days of uncertainty and terror; they heard incessantly the booming of artillery; but although the Viennese gazed down from their church-steeple all day, they were unable to discern any thing. Tremendous clouds of smoke covered the country all around, and wrapped the villages of Aspern and Essling and the island of Lobau in an impenetrable veil of mist.

Joseph Haydn passed these days, the 21st and 22d of May, in silent grief and gentle resignation; he prayed often, and played his imperial hymn three times a day.

Thus the morning of the 22d of May had come. Conrad

had gone into the street to ask for news, for the booming of artillery had ceased, and the battle was over. "Which side was victorious?" That was the question which caused all to tremble, and which filled all hearts with intense anxiety.

Haydn's heart, too, was full of grave anxiety, and, to overcome his impatience till Conrad's return, he had caused Kate to conduct him to his piano.

"I will play my imperial hymn," he said, hastily; "I have often derived comfort and relief from it in the days of uneasiness and anxiety; and when I play it my heart is always so much at ease. Its strength will not fail me to-day either."*

He commenced playing; a blissful smile illuminated his features; he lifted his radiant eyes to heaven, and his music grew louder and fierier, and his fingers glided more powerfully over the keys of the piano. Suddenly the door was thrown open, and Conrad rushed in, panting from the rapid run, flushed with excitement, but with a joyful face.

"Victory!" he shouted. "Victory!" And he sank down at Haydn's feet.

"Which side was victorious?" asked Haydn, anxiously.

"The Austrians were victorious," said Conrad, pantingly. "Our Archduke Charles has defeated the Emperor Napoleon at Aspern; the whole French army retreated to the island of Lobau, whence it can no longer escape. Thousands of French corpses are floating down the Danube, and proclaiming to the world that Austria has conquered the French! Hurrah! hurrah! Our hero, the Archduke Charles, has defeated the villainous Bonaparte! Hurrah!"

"Hurrah! hurrah!" repeated the parrot on its pole; and the cat raised its head from the cushion on which it had lain, and gazed with keen, searching eyes at the parrot, as if it had understood Paperl's jubilant notes.

Joseph Haydn said nothing, but clasped his hands and looked rapturously upward. After a pause he exclaimed, in a loud and joyous voice: "Lord God, I thank Thee for not disappointing my firm trust, but protecting Austria and helping her to vanquish her foe. I knew full well that the just cause would triumph, and the just cause is that of Austria; for

* Haydn's own words.—See "Zeitgenossen," vol. iv., third series, p. 36.

France, hypocritical France alone provoked this war, and Austria drew the sword only to defend her honor and her frontiers. The just cause could not but triumph, and hence Austria had to conquer, and France, had to succumb in this struggle. God protect the Emperor Francis! I may lay down now and die. Austria is victorious! That is the last joyful greeting which the world sends to me. With this greeting I will die—ay, die! Death is already drawing nigh. But Death wears a laurel-wreath on its head, and its eye is radiant with triumphant joy. Glory to Austria! Glory to the German fatherland!"

These were Joseph Haydn's last words. He fainted away. It is true the physicians succeeded in restoring him to life, and he breathed yet for six days; but his life resembled only the last feeble flicker of the dying flame, and in the night of the 30th of May death came to extinguish this flickering flame.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE ARCHDUKE JOHN AT COMORN.

THE unheard-of event, then, had taken place. Napoleon had been defeated by the Austrians. The Archduke Charles had gained a brilliant victory; Napoleon had transferred his whole army to the island of Lobau; he himself passed his time in moody broodings at the castle of Ebersberg, and the unexpected disaster which had befallen him, and which at the same time had brought about the death of one of his favorites, Marshal Lannes, seemed to have suddenly deprived the emperor of all his energy. He did not speak, he did not eat; he sat for whole days in his cabinet, staring at the maps spread out before him on his table, and yet forgetting to cover them, as he used to do on conceiving the plans of his campaigns, with the colored pins which represented the different armies. Victory had no longer been able to soften this marble Cæsarean face, but defeat caused his features now to wear an expression of profound anger and grief. Nevertheless, he did not complain,