

"And was it also by the wish of the king that Gotzkowsky's daughter accepted the homage of the Russian general's adjutant?"

A slight shudder ran through Elise's whole frame, and her cheeks became crimson.

"Ah," cried Bertram sadly, "I see you understand me. You will not tell me the name of your lover—let me tell it to you. It is Feodor von Brenda."

"No, no!" cried Elise, looking around in alarm, and fearful lest some treacherous ear had heard the dangerous secret.

"Yes," said Bertram, "his name is Feodor von Brenda; he serves as a colonel in the Russian army; he fights against our brothers and our king; he is the enemy of our country."

"You have no pity on me," cried Elise, wringing her hands, her eyes streaming with tears. "You wish to kill me with your cruel words."

"I wish to show to the daughter of the noblest and truest patriot, I wish to point out to the young, inexperienced, credulous maiden, to my sister, that she stands at the edge of an abyss. I wish to open her eyes that she may be aware of the danger which threatens her. I wish to draw her back from this abyss which threatens to engulf her."

"It is too late," said Elise, rising proudly and drying her tears. "I know it all, Bertram; I stand at the edge of this abyss with open eyes, conscious of the danger; but I will not, cannot draw back, for my heart holds me fast."

Elise took leave of him with a sad smile, and hurried rapidly down the dark walk which led to the retired and unfrequented parts of the garden.

Bertram looked after her until her pink dress disappeared behind the dark foliage of the hedge.

"She loves him," murmured he, letting his head drop upon his breast, "it is certain she loves him."

CHAPTER IV.

FEODOR VON BRENDA.

ELISE directed her hasty steps toward the now retired parts of the garden. She longed to be alone. Her soul, agitated by painful emotions, required silence and solitude, in order to settle down again gently to rest and peace. Slowly, and with bowed head, she traversed the dark, silent garden-walks. Her thoughts wandered afar off, and she sought some little comfort, some relief from the privations of the present, in the sweet and blissful recollections of bygone days.

"What can keep him?" asked she of herself; and as she thought of him, her countenance assumed a cheerful, almost happy expression. "He swore to brave every danger, every difficulty, in order to let me hear from him; and now, alas! ten weeks have passed, and no news, no token, from him. My God! is it possible that in all this long time he could have found no opportunity to write to me?—or perhaps his love has not survived the test of separation and silence."

At this thought she stopped, as if stunned, and pressed her hand to her breast. A sharp pain shot through her, and her heart seemed to cease to pulsate. But, in a moment, her countenance brightened up, and she murmured, with a gentle smile, "Oh, to doubt his love were a greater treason than to love my country's enemy. Oh, no! Feodor, my heart does not doubt you;

and notwithstanding your silence, I know that your heart answers mine, and that we are forever and inseparably united."

With rapid step and cheerful mind she continued her wandering. She had now arrived at the darkest and most secluded part of the garden. Nothing stirred around her, and there was only heard the rustling of the dark fir-tree moved by the wind, or the melodious note of some bird hidden in the foliage.

The garden, elsewhere so carefully and artistically tended, stretching from the Leipsic Street to the Palisades, which surrounded the town in lieu of a wall at that time, was here overgrown with underwood, protecting the more beautiful parts like a quickset hedge. But this bush was, besides, surrounded by a high wall, running immediately next to the Palisades, and bounding the whole back part of the garden. It was seldom that any one wandered in this neighborhood, and Elise was certain, therefore, that no inquisitive eye could watch her, no treacherous ear listen to her half-whispered words.

She seated herself on a bench under a tree, not far from the wall, and looked up dreamingly and thoughtfully at the patches of blue sky visible through the tree-tops. Her whole soul was sunk in reminiscence. Ah, how often had she sat here, but not alone—not with this painful longing in her heart, but in the fullest contentment of happiness, listening with delighted ear to words spoken by him who sat next to her, holding her hand in his, and gazing on her with looks which made her heart tremble with happiness! Here, on this spot, he had taken leave of her, and since then it had become, as it were, the temple of her recollections, to which she daily made her pilgrimage to offer up her devout, sincere, and ardent prayer of love.

She sat and looked up to heaven, and her ear, dwelling on words which had died away long ago, did not hear sounds which were perceptible on the other side of the wall. It appeared as if some one were striving to climb it, and indeed there could be now seen a hand feeling about, and then a man's figure rising above the wall.

Cautiously spying around, large flashing eyes looked into the garden. One moment the figure rested upon the wall, as if exhausted by the exertion, or listening for some sound. It was a young man, in the garb of a peasant, who sat upon the wall; but the heavy, black mustache little suited this peaceful dress, and his bold air, verging on insolence, seemed to challenge the dangers which surrounded him.

He rested for a moment on the wall, and listened attentively. Then he drew a pistol from his breast, and examined carefully its lock and barrel. He then cocked it, and holding it in one hand, began carefully and noiselessly to descend. With one leap he sprang to the ground; the leaves rustled under his feet, and again he stood motionless in a listening attitude. His glance was as keen and bright as that of an eagle, and it seemed to penetrate the dark foliage. Suddenly a light flashed across his countenance, and a smile of delight played about his lips. He had seen the young girl, who was seated on the bench lost in deep thought, and that he had recognized her was betrayed by his animated expression. Quietly, carefully, he drew nearer, ever and again standing still and listening. Then he stood close behind her at the tree. Again he listens, but every thing is silent and hushed. Now he calls her softly by name, and whispers almost inaudibly, "Elise!"

She started and looked up, but saw no one, and as

she recovered herself, she sighed gently, and said: "I was mistaken, it was only the wind."

But again he whispered: "Start not, Elise; do not utter a word or cry!"

"O God!" murmured she in a low tone, trembling in all her limbs. An ardent embrace, a glowing kiss upon her brow, and a well-beloved voice whispered her name.

"Feodor!" uttered she faintly. Overcome by the sudden violence of her feelings, her head dropped languidly on his breast. Then, drawing herself up, she gazed at him, and her eager, loving look encountered his flashing eye. She was, as it were, fascinated—happy as in a dream, and yet conscious of the most delicious waking.

"Do you know me, Elise? Do you recognize your Feodor in spite of his disguise?"

"Oh, speak again," said she as he ceased. "It is so long since I have heard your voice!"

"Ten weeks have passed," said he, pressing her still closer to his heart, "without my being able to see you or convey to you any information. I could endure it no longer. I said to myself, 'God is the friend of lovers,' and so I disguised myself as you see me, and ventured here."

Elise started up and gazed at him anxiously. Awakening from her ecstasy of delight, she just began to be conscious of the present.

"Good heavens!" she cried, "danger threatens you."

"Death, if I am found here!" said he, solemnly—"death, if it is known in the Russian camp why I came here!"

She uttered a cry, and clung anxiously to him. "You should not have come here," said she, trembling.

"My God, if my father should find you here! It was cruel of you to come."

"It would have been more cruel," said he, smiling, "if, being so near you, I had not come at all. I have watched and yearned so long for this meeting; I have longed so to read in your eyes that you have not forgotten me! Why do you cast them down, Elise?"

"Because, Feodor, you have already read too much in them, more than my father would ever forgive."

"Your father was always kind and friendly toward me, but at that time I was his prisoner, now he regards me only as the enemy of his country; and yet, Elise, my object here is any thing but that of an enemy. It is not only the desire but also the anxiety of love which brings me here. Listen to me—my time is limited, and I am lost if I linger too long; but I had to see you to warn you, to avert the danger which threatens you, and all of you. Listen, therefore. Your father is the most powerful and influential man in Berlin. His influence will go far with the council and the citizens. Entreat him, Elise, to use all his influence to avert a terrible bloodshed from this city."

Elise shook her head seriously and sadly. Her sweet dream was dissipated; she was now no longer the dreaming, loving girl, but a conscious, reasoning, collected woman.

"How can my father do that?" said she, doubtfully.

"He must persuade the citizens to yield without fighting."

"That my father will never do," said she, warmly.

"Yes, he will do it," replied her lover, "when he learns that all fighting is useless. Let him have compassion on his native town, on himself. You are all

lost if you fight. Already twelve thousand of our men, under General Tottleben, stand before the gates. At this moment, while I am speaking, Tschernitscheff, with twenty thousand regulars, is approaching from the other side. Count Lacy, too, with his Austrians, is drawing near. All this tell your father. Tell him, also, that General Tottleben has promised our Empress Elizabeth to take Berlin, if he has to lay it in ruins and ashes. Use all your influence, implore him to do all in his power to persuade the citizens to a peaceful surrender."

"I have no influence over my father," said she, sadly, "and if I had I would not abuse it. Such a surrender, without a fight, would be cowardice."

"But a fight, with the assured certainty of defeat, would be madness. Your father does not know the number of troops massed around Berlin. Do you tell him."

She looked at him mournfully. "And shall I tell him, too, from whom I received this information?"

After a little reflection, he replied: "Yes, if it cannot be otherwise, tell him. Your father will not betray me."

"No, but he will curse his daughter," cried Elise, painfully—"curse her for having had intercourse with our country's enemy, while the Russian cannon threaten our town. No, no, Feodor, it were no use to warn him. My father would not listen to me."

"So Berlin will run toward its ruin, and I cannot prevent it," said the colonel, sadly. "I have done all in my power. I wish to requite your father for all the kindness he has shown me, and for that reason I risked my life in order to warn him."

"Believe me, Feodor, I will never forget you for it," said she, offering him both her hands. "However angry

my father may be, my heart still remains yours. Love does not recognize any national hatred. It yields itself without reserve to him who has won it."

She leaned her head upon his breast, and he imprinted a kiss upon her forehead.

"Thank you for these words," said he; "wherever I go they shall be my talisman."

"Are you going already?" asked she, anxiously.

"I must go, Elise," replied he.

"Oh, Feodor, I dare not bid you stay. I tremble at the thought of my father seeing you," sighed she; "but when, my beloved, when shall we see each other again?"

He looked at her a long time with a steady, piercing glance. He then exclaimed, almost rudely: "You have sworn me love and constancy till death. Do you remember it?"

"I remember it, and never will I be faithless to my vow," whispered she, smiling through her tears.

"You swore to me never to belong to any one but me. Have you forgotten that?"

"No, I have not."

"Well, then," said he, rising, "we shall soon see each other again."

"When, Feodor, when?"

"When Berlin is in our hands," said he, smiling proudly; "when we enter your gates as conquerors."

She shuddered painfully. He saw it, and a hateful, mocking expression passed across his features; but this lasted only a moment, and his changeable countenance appeared again bright and loving. He took Elise's hand and pressed it to his lips.

"Will you, even at such a time, allow me to see you? Will you, faithful to your vow, remember that my Elise

has sworn by God and her love never to turn a deaf ear to my call? Will you expect me?" asked he, coaxingly.

"I will," answered she, in a low voice.

"And I will come," cried he, passionately, "if the way to you leads over mountains of dead bodies!"

She threw herself into his open arms, and nestled like a timid dove on his breast.

"Oh!" cried she, "when danger threatens you, then I think I would like to be a man to share it with you."

He covered her lips and eyes with kisses. "Farewell, farewell, Elise; and if it is God's will, we will meet again."

One last kiss, one last embrace, and he tore himself from her arms and hurried toward the wall. Now he climbs it, and throws his last greetings to her, then descends on the other side.

"He is gone, he is gone!" she shrieked, and, falling on her knees, raised her hands to heaven. "O God, have mercy on me, have pity on my love!"

It seemed as if God did grant her prayer, for a thick veil sank over her eyes, and a swoon robbed her of consciousness.

CHAPTER V.

MR. KRETSCHMER, OF THE VOSSIAN GAZETTE.

THE editor of the *Vossian Gazette*, Mr. Kretschmer, sat at his desk, busily writing. That he was a learned man was seen by his earnest, care-worn forehead, his large, well-powdered wig, and above all by the disorder and confusion which reigned in the whole room. Be-

sides which, Mr. Kretschmer wore a dressing-gown, thickly sprinkled with ink-spots, the official robe of his literary dignity. And whosoever beheld him in this robe, his long pipe in his mouth, filling the room with a thick blue smoke, seated on his high tripod before his desk, could not but believe that Mr. Kretschmer was a learned man.

But more than this, he was a great politician. There-to testified the numerous journals which lay scattered about on the floor, but more especially the nineteen quarto volumes, which stood above on the book-shelf, lettered in gold on the back, "*VOSSIAN GAZETTE*," and under that the number of the year, from 1740 to 1759. The *Vossian Gazette* was then a young, blooming rose, of scarcely nineteen summers. It could still pass for a vigorous, handsome, and perhaps even innocent young maiden; and Mr. Kretschmer was the editor of the *Vossian Gazette*. Had he not, then, a right to be regarded as a great politician?

Mr. Kretschmer was at this moment occupied in writing an article for the next morning's paper, and as he had just received news "by special courier" of another battle, subsequent to that of Liegnitz, which had resulted favorably for the Prussians, he was composing, with the courage of a lion, an extra, which fairly glowed with ardent hatred against the oppressors and cannibals, namely, the Russians and the Austrians; and declared that the salvation of all Germany depended on the supreme dominion of Prussia.

The bold editor of the *Vossian Gazette* in this article called upon the people to fly to arms against the " incendiary oppressors of Freedom and the people's rights," as he called the Russians; he exhorted even the women and girls to fight, and called upon them to grasp the

sword in their tender hands instead of the needle. Finally, he entreated all Berlin, if ever the *incendiary enemy* should approach the gates, rather to let the whole city be destroyed by fire, and bury themselves in the ruins before they submitted to the foe.

Mr. Kretschmer then laid his pen down, and revised with a satisfied look what he had written.

"That will have an effect," said he, rubbing his hands together, delighted. "When his majesty, our heroic king, returns victorious to Berlin, I will send him this sheet of the *Vossian Gazette*, and I know that he will be satisfied with my heroism."

He looked again at the paper. "Beautiful, beautiful!" exclaimed he, with a self-satisfied smile. "My pen has shot nothing less than bomb-shells and grape, and my ink has turned into whole streams of the enemy's blood. And why should I not be bold, it being perfectly safe, since the king must certainly be victorious, and the enemy has no idea of visiting Berlin? Tschernitscheff and Tottleben are quietly encamped on the other side of the Oder; Soltikoff with his army is near Frankfort; and Count Lacy with his Austrians is waiting an opportunity to give battle to our king. Thus, as I said, I can safely exhort the good citizens of Berlin to defend themselves heroically against the infamous spoiler. How beautifully this peroration sounds: 'People of Berlin! rather let yourselves be buried under the ruins of your burning city than submit to an incendiary enemy!'—*Incendiary*," repeated he thoughtfully, "that is rather a strong expression, and if the Russians do come, they will revenge themselves for it; but, pshaw! the Russians are not coming, and I can safely send this article to the press. And, furthermore, did not the king himself stigmatize the Russians as such? Yes, I

remember last year, after the unfortunate invasion of the Russians, he looked down from the steeple in Frankfort upon the devastation of the country, and cried out with angry indignation, 'Incendiaries! incendiaries!' The expression is at least official, and can therefore remain."

Mr. Kretschmer seized the bell-rope, and began to ring violently. Immediately the door opened, and a small boy entered with a portfolio under his arm.

"Devil," said Mr. Kretschmer, majestically, "here is my article; run as fast as you can to the printing-office with it, and impress upon the compositor the necessity of haste, and, above all things, not to make such mistakes as he did lately, when, in speaking of the Russians, he put 'friends' instead of 'fiends,' which was an unpardonable and most treasonable error of expression."

The little boy took the paper and laid it in his portfolio.

"The printer told me to ask you," said he, "if you had written nothing yet for the 'Miscellaneous.' *Spener's Journal* had yesterday such a beautiful 'Miscellaneous,' and told about a woman who had four children at a birth, and a stork which had arrived and built its nest, although it was the month of October."

Mr. Kretschmer frowned. "*Spener's Journal* always has some wonderful news, and amuses the Berlin people with all kinds of stupid gossip," grumbled he. "The rivalry of such a paper is unbearable."

"Well, how about the miscellaneous intelligence?" asked the printer's boy.

Mr. Kretschmer stamped his foot angrily. "Go to the devil!" said he.

At this moment there was heard a loud crying and shouting; and while the printer's boy pitched out of the

door, Mr. Kretschmer hurried to the window to find out the cause of the uproar.

A heaving, noisy crowd filled the street below, and had halted right under the editor's window. In the midst thereof was seen the tall, lank figure of a man, whose extraordinary appearance enchained the attention of the multitude, and excited afresh their shouts and derisive laughter. And, in fact, nothing could be more striking or fantastic than this man. Notwithstanding the cool October weather, his gigantic figure was clothed from head to foot in gray linen, harmonizing strangely with the gray color of his skin and hair, which latter fell in long locks from his uncovered head down on his shoulders, and gave to the apparition the semblance of a pyramidal ash-heap, out of which his eyes shone like two burning coals. Around his shoulders hung a long cloak of gray linen, which, in addressing the multitude, he sometimes threw around him in picturesque folds, sometimes spread out wide, enveloping his long arms in it, so that he looked like an expanded bat.

"Ah! it is Pfannenstiel, our prophetic linen-weaver," said Mr. Kretschmer, smiling, as he opened his window, and exchanged a look of recognition with the man who was gazing up at him.

The linen-weaver and prophet had rapidly acquired some renown in Berlin by his prophecies and predictions. The people believed in his mystic words and soothsayings and mistaken fanaticism. He related to them his visions and apparitions; he told about the angels and the Lord Jesus, who often visited him; about the Virgin Mary, who appeared in his room every night, and inspired him with what he was to say to the people, and gave him pictures whose mystic signification he was to interpret to them. The prophet possessed more than a

hundred of these pictures, given him by celestial apparitions. He had them carefully pasted together, and rolled up always with him. These pictorial sheets, roughly painted on coarse paper, served the linen-weaver in lieu of cards or coffee-grounds, for the purpose of prophesying to the people and announcing the future to them; and the good folks of Berlin believed in these prophecies with firm faith, and listened with devout confidence to the words of their prophet.

Pfannenstiel was in the act of unrolling his pictures, and the multitude, which, just before, had been shouting and screaming, became suddenly silent, and gazed up at the weaver with intense expectation. A breathless silence ensued, and, far down the street, sounded the prophet's loud and sonorous voice. He pointed to the last of his pictures, which, in coarse, clumsy drawing, represented a town, from the houses of which flames arose in the most variegated colors.

"Behold! behold!" cried the prophet, "and fall on your knees and pray! Yes, pray! for I tell you the Holy Ghost appeared to me, His wings dripping with blood, and in His burning and flaming beak He held this picture which I now show you."

"Well, then, how is it that the picture is not burnt too, if the Holy Ghost held it in His burning beak?" asked an impudent shoemaker's boy.

A low laugh ran through the crowd, but this was soon suppressed by angry, threatening voices, commanding silence and quiet.

The prophet turned with an air of majestic composure toward the questioner: "Why was not this picture burnt? Because God wished to perform a miracle, to manifest Himself to me in His glory, and to prove to me that this vision was from Him, and not from the

devil. Yes, indeed, God gave me this picture that we might be warned—not to terrify us. Listen, therefore, to my voice, and learn what God announces to you from my mouth.”

“I would like indeed to hear what the stupid rascal is going to announce to these poor foolish devils,” muttered Mr. Kretschmer, leaning out of the window and listening attentively.

Pfannenstiel continued: “Behold these columns of fire rising from the houses of this town. This town is Berlin, and the fire will burst out of the roofs of your houses. Woe! woe! will sound in your streets, and weeping and lamentation will fill the air. I say unto you, watch and pray! Strew ashes on your heads, and fall down on your knees and pray to God for mercy, for the enemy is before your gates, and ere the sun sets the Russians will enter your town! I say unto you, verily I say unto you, God spoke to me in a voice of thunder, and said, ‘The Russians are coming!’ Fall down and pray, for the Russians are coming!”

“The Russians are coming!” cried the terrified multitude and some among them turned pale. The weeping women folded their hands in prayer; the men looked around timidly, and the frightened children clung to their mothers in dread of the Russians, whose name was synonymous with that of savages and cannibals. Even Kretschmer could not help feeling somewhat terrified. He drew back thoughtfully from the window, muttering with a shudder, “The Russians are coming!”

The people crowded around the prophet in still narrower circles, and in more piercing tones wept and cried out: “What shall we do? What shall we do to be saved? Have mercy, O God! Have mercy on Berlin, for the Russians are coming!”

“Yes, they are coming!” cried Pfannenstiel. “God told me so in the roll of His thunder and the lightning of His eyes; and he said to me: ‘Go and say to the people of Berlin, ‘The Russians are coming!’ and thou shalt see in the same hour how their hearts will shrink, and how cast down they will be; how their eyes will run tears, and their lips utter prayers, for the Russian is the sworn enemy of the Berlin people; and as often as the cry, ‘The Russians are coming,’ sounds through the streets of Berlin, there will be wailing and lamentation in every house and every heart; and they will bow down in timid contrition and abject obedience. Speak, therefore, to them, and say, ‘The Russians are coming!’ that they may become humble and quiet; that the proud word may be silenced on their lips, and that they may submit in peace.’”

“What shall we do?” asked the people. “Help us, advise us, for thou art our prophet.”

Pfannenstiel drew himself up to his utmost height, and an expression of triumphant cunning sparkled in his eyes. “Do you not understand the voice of God? God commands you to withdraw in silence and peace to your own dwellings, to weep and pray. Go, then! Let the word of your mouth and the rebelliousness of your hearts be silent. Go home to your huts, shut the doors and windows, and do not venture out, for without, death and the Russians await you!”

Obedient to the voice of their prophet, the crowd separated in different directions, and dispersed quietly.

Pfannenstiel looked after them with a smile of scorn; then silently rolled up his pictures, threw his gray cloak over his shoulders, and, casting a serious and significant look up at Mr. Kretschmer’s window, strode down the street slowly and with an air of majestic dignity.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COWARDS' RACE.

THE warning sounded loud and threatening in Mr. Kretschmer's ears—"The Russians are coming!" A cold chill ran through him, and he could not prevent an involuntary shudder. But he tried to rouse himself from this despondency, and laughed at himself for this credulous fear.

"This Pfannenstiel is a fool, and I would be a greater one if I believed his nonsense," said he. "No, no, my information is warranted and authentic. The king has had a sharp skirmish with the Russians near Reitwan, and driven them back, and then proceeded quietly to Meissen. Thus there is no ground for anxiety, and I can safely let off my bomb-shells against the Russians."

Mr. Kretschmer felt his courage return and his heart grow warm.

"Now I see the whole game," cried he, laughing. Pfannenstiel wishes the *Vossian Gazette* to take notice of him. He wants to be talked about, and wishes the newspapers to spread his reputation. For that reason he stationed himself right under my window, for that reason he cast such significant looks at me, for that reason he addressed the crowd and poured forth his nonsense right here. Yes, that's it! He wishes to prove to me how great his power is over this people which believes in him, even when he utters the most incredible and unheard-of things. Well, we can help the man," continued he, laughing, as he stepped to his desk. "The desired article for the 'Miscellaneous' is found, and I think that the prophetic linen-weaver, Pfannenstiel, is

well worth more than the four children at a birth and the miserable stork's nest of yesterday's *Spener's Journal*. Let's write it off quickly."

Kretschmer began to write most industriously, when he was suddenly interrupted by a violent knocking at the door. It opened, and a stately old gentleman entered, with well-powdered wig and long queue.

"Mr. Krause, my worthy colleague!" exclaimed Kretschmer, jumping up and hastening toward the old man. But Mr. Krause had no word of greeting. He sank sighing into a chair.

"Do you know the news?" asked he, in a whining tone, folding his trembling hands, and looking at Kretschmer timidly, as he stood before him.

"Know what?" demanded the latter in reply, feeling his heart sink.

"The Russians are coming!" sighed Mr. Krause.

"That is a silly tale," cried Kretschmer peevishly, with an impatient gesture.

"Would to God it were!" groaned Krause; "but the news is, alas, but too true, and it can no longer be doubted!"

"Man of misfortune," cried Mr. Kretschmer, "who told you so?"

"Pfannenstiel."

"Pfannenstiel?" repeated Kretschmer, laughing heartily; "oh, yes! Pfannenstiel prophesied it just now in the streets, under my window. Now don't distress yourself, dearest friend and colleague. That was only a clumsy trick of the scoundrel to get me to write an article about him in the *Vossian Gazette*. I have already gratified his wish."

"You are mistaken," said Krause, mournfully. "I sent Pfannenstiel into the streets, to quiet the people,

and to admonish them to behave peaceably and soberly, even if the Russians should come."

"Oh! you believe in all these dreams of Pfannenstiel?"

"I believe in the truth, and in what I know!" exclaimed Krause emphatically. "Pfannenstiel has for a long time been my agent, and for a considerable stipend, paid every month, informs me of all that happens, is talked and thought of in the town. He is a very useful man, peculiarly suited to this service."

"The approach of the Russians is then town-talk, and nothing more?" asked Kretschmer, who was still anxious to throw doubt on the bad news.

"No, it is a fact," said Krause seriously. "Pfannenstiel is, as you know, not only a prophet, but also a quack doctor, and his herbs and decoctions are certainly often of astonishing efficacy. He always gathers the plants for his mixtures himself, and roams about in search of them in the neighborhood of Berlin for days together. Last evening he was outside the town, on one of these tramps, intending to pass the night sleeping under a tree. He was awoke by the sound of troops marching, and as he looked carefully around, he could plainly distinguish in the bright moonlight the uniforms of the Russian army. It was a long column of many thousand men. They halted not far from the place where Pfannenstiel lay, and he crept carefully nearer. He then ascertained from their conversation that this was only a small division of the army, which had advanced by forced marches from Frankfort, and was commanded by General Tottleben."

"By Tottleben!" cried Kretschmer in dismay.

"Yes, by Tottleben," whimpered Krause, and they both looked in silence on the ground. "Yes, his ven-

geance will be terrible," said Krause, after a long and anxious pause. "Have you not heard," continued he in a whisper—"have you not heard the sad story of what occurred last year in Erlangen? The editor of the *Erlangen Gazette* admitted into his columns an article abusive of our great king. A Prussian officer came in person to Erlangen to call the editor to account. And what do you think he did? He caused the unfortunate and pitiable journalist to be beaten with cudgels, and then gave him a receipt for the bastinado he had gotten."

"Horrible!" cried Mr. Kretschmer, wringing his hands.

Mr. Krause continued: "When a refined Prussian officer can behave in this way, what have we to expect from these rough, uncivilized enemies, the Russians? Oh! they will murder us, for we, too, have ventured to write boldly and energetically against them."

"Yes, you particularly," said Mr. Kretschmer quickly. "Do you recollect the famous article in your paper, in which you called General Tottleben a notorious adventurer, who had deserted to the enemy after having enjoyed the unmerited favor of our king? This was, certainly, rather strong; it might even be called indiscreet."

"Not as indiscreet as your 'Earnest and Confidential Country Talk,'" cried Krause sharply.

"I never avowed myself the author of that pamphlet," said Kretschmer quickly.

"But every one knows that you are, and you never denied it," replied Krause maliciously. "This 'Country Talk' is more than indiscreet, it is foolhardy. In it you nicknamed Maria Theresa, Aunt Tilla; the Elector of Saxony, Brother Osten; the Empress of Russia, Cousin Lizzy; and our king, Neighbor Flink. And don't you remember what words you put into Cousin

Lizzie's mouth, and how you made neighbor Flink ridicule her? Ah, I am afraid you will pay dearly for this piece of boldness."

"It is not quite so bad as your calling Tottleben a notorious adventurer; for the princes are not here, but Tottleben is before the gates of Berlin, and will revenge himself."

"I am afraid our prospects are equally bad, and for that reason I have come to you, that we might consult together as to what we had best do, to avert this threatening blow from our heads."

"You are right," said Kretschmer, drawing nearer to his brother editor. "Let us consider. Above all things, no exciting calls, no appeals to the people to perform deeds of heroic valor. Berlin is too weak for defence; why, then, should we irritate the enemy by useless opposition?"

"You, too, are right," said Krause thoughtfully; "let us rather advise the citizens of Berlin to be quiet; let us wheel boldly round, and speak in our journals with respect and deference of our worthy enemy."

"Besides which, it would be well to consult with some of the principal men who have an influence on the people. For example, let us go to Gotzkowsky," said Kretschmer.

"Gotzkowsky gives a great holiday to his workmen to-day."

"So much the better, for then he can immediately use his influence on his workmen. Come, let us go at once to Gotzkowsky, this Cræsus of Berlin, who bought for our king three hundred thousand dollars' worth of pictures in Italy, without having been paid for them up to this day, and yet is able to take a contract for commissary stores to the amount of eight millions. Let us go

to him; and, hark ye! it would be as well to take Pfannenstiel with us to back us."

"Yes," said Krause, raising himself quickly by the arm of his younger friend, "let us go to Gotzkowsky with Pfannenstiel, and preach mildness and submission to him and his workmen."

They both prepared to go. Suddenly Kretschmer stopped as if struck by lightning, and sank down on a chair stunned. "My article, my article!" moaned he. "I am a lost man!"

"What article do you mean, my dearest friend?"

"The leading article in to-morrow's paper," whimpered Kretschmer. "Oh, it was a beautiful article, full of inspiration, but it is not suitable to the times or the circumstances. I wrote it under the erroneous impression that our armies had gained a victory, and in it I spoke with great contempt of the incendiary enemy."

"My God, what rashness!" exclaimed Krause, clasping his hands in despair.

Kretschmer flew from his stool, and grasped his hat. "My article! I must have my article back. The printer must give it up to me. Wait for me in the street. I come either with my article or not at all."

Bidding Krause a hasty farewell, he hurried out.

CHAPTER VII.

THE INTERRUPTED FESTIVAL.

GOTZKOWSKY had as yet received no intelligence of the danger which threatened the town, and was enjoying the festival in his garden in the midst of his people.

They were all collected on a grass-plot for target-shooting. In the midst of the plot rose a pole with a target. The women and girls were standing around, attentively and curiously watching the men, who, collected under a tent, were shooting with crossbows at the target. Every lucky shot was greeted with a cheer, every unlucky one with derisive laughter; and the prizes which were assigned to the fortunate marksmen only served to increase the joy and merriment of the happy crowd.

Suddenly loud cries of weeping and lamentation were heard from a distance. The people looked at each other with anxiety and alarm. The dismal noise came nearer and still nearer, and then appeared at the entrance gate near by the strange and wild figure of the linen-weaver, accompanied by the two editors, Krause and Kretschmer.

"Pfannenstiel! it is Pfannenstiel, our prophet!" shouted the crowd, while they hastened with joyous laughter and words of greeting toward their beloved seer.

The linen-weaver strode forward with a serious and majestic air, answering the greetings of the workmen with patronizing nods, and from time to time stretching out his hand as if to bless them. The multitude crowded around him, and seemed to look upon the advent of the prophet as part of the programme of the entertainment. But Gotzkowsky hastened toward the two editors with a cheerful smile, bidding them a courteous welcome. They responded to his friendly greeting with a solemn earnestness, and requested a conference with a mysterious and important air. Gotzkowsky looked at them with astonishment; but as he read in their countenances an expression of deep and anxious

concern, he motioned to them and preceded them to a summer-house on the other side of the lawn.

"Here we can talk without being observed," said he, casting a look across at his workmen. "You see my guests are still busy with the scarecrow which you brought here; and what business has this man, indeed, among merry people?"

"He maintains that God ordered him to come to you, to warn you in His name, and call upon you to protect Berlin," said Krause.

"Yes," continued Kretschmer, "and he entreated us to accompany him, trusting to our influence with our dear friend."

Gotzkowsky looked at both of the men with astonishment. "Tell me, my worthy friends, which of us is crazy?" asked he, smiling, partly in derision, partly in pity. "I am called on to protect Berlin, and from what?"

"Because the Russians are coming," said Mr. Krause, solemnly.

Gotzkowsky shrugged his shoulders. "That is an idle rumor," said he; "two days ago they were still in Frankfort. You see, therefore, that some wag has amused himself by teasing you and frightening you a little for the thunderbolts which you two, and particularly the *Vossian Gazette*, have launched against the Russians."

Mr. Kretschmer shuddered and turned pale. "I beg you," cried he, "do not speak of it! Good Heavens! the *Vossian Gazette* is the organ of the popular mind, and it is its duty to take each day the exact tone of public opinion. I abused the Russians, therefore, because—"

"Because they were still a hundred miles from Ber-

lin. Oh, yes! we know you, gentlemen of the press. You are full of courage as long as no enemy is in the field, but as soon as you scent him and see the points of his lances, you become quite humble and mild; and when he comes threateningly down upon you, assure him of your respect and swear to him that you love him," interrupted Gotzkowsky.

"You are pleased to jest," said Mr. Krause, casting a rapid glance of hatred at Gotzkowsky; "it is well, indeed, that the rich and powerful Gotzkowsky is so cheerful. I will notice it in my journal. It is news for 'Change, and the funds will rise when people hear that Gotzkowsky has laughed."

Gotzkowsky's countenance became sad and serious. "You may tell the world," said he, "that my lips laugh; but how my heart feels, that you gossips and newspapers know nothing about."

"God be praised," said Kretschmer, ironically, "you are now talking earnestly, and I can request you to listen to our serious representations. It is no idle rumor that I have told you. The Russians are already at the gates of Berlin. They have hurried thither by forced marches. This news is no longer a secret. All Berlin knows it, and it is only accidentally that you have not learned it earlier."

"Oh, Heavens!" sobbed Krause, wringing his hands, "what a terrible fate awaits our unfortunate town!"

Gotzkowsky looked at him with a gloomy frown. "You are, it is true, an old man," said he, "but even old men should, at such a time, possess some manhood. But you, Mr. Kretschmer, are young and hearty; what do you say to this approach of the Russians?"

"I say," replied Kretschmer, sharply, "I say that it

would be madness to excite the wrath of the enemy by resistance. I say, that those citizens who call on the people to fight are rash fools."

"Oh!" cried Gotzkowsky, joyfully, "if there be any such *rash fools*, then all is not lost!"

"Can you comprehend such madness?" whispered Krause, "to wish to oppose an overwhelming force while all our capable men and youths are with the army in Silesia, and we have no troops but the sick and maimed; no artillery save two old rusty cannon?"

"A people willing to fight for liberty," cried Gotzkowsky, "such a people have the strength of a giant even without cannon and bayonets. God has given them hands and paving-stones. If we cannot shoot down the enemy who threatens our liberty, we can beat him down."

"What do you say?" stammered Krause, looking with amazement at Gotzkowsky's glowing countenance.

"I say," said Gotzkowsky, "that you have mistaken your man. I will not advise the brave Berlin people to yield without having at least fought for their freedom."

"But only reflect!" exclaimed Kretschmer, while Krause paced up and down, wringing his hands and moaning in a low tone; "have you forgotten that the Russian generals have proclaimed that the empress has commanded them to leave nothing but air and earth to the inhabitants of every conquered town and province of Prussia?"

"Oh, pshaw!" cried Gotzkowsky, laughing, "they will have to conclude to leave us something more."

"And did you hear Loudon's terrible threat? He has said his soldiers should massacre every one, and not spare even the child in its mother's womb."

"And did you not hear the brave Schwerin's answer

to this Austrian bravado?" asked Gotzkowsky. "He said, 'My soldiers are not with child, neither am I.' Well, our men of Berlin are not with child, and therefore they need not be afraid."

"But you must be afraid!" whined Krause. "It is disgraceful madness not to be afraid. How! You can be so unreasonable as to advise war? But war is the most bitter enemy of prosperity, and threatens property above all things."

"Then shame on the proprietors," cried Gotzkowsky, "if their property is to make cowardly poltroons of them! Liberty is our greatest possession, and all else must yield to it."

At this moment loud cries and sounds of wailing were heard in the garden from the collected workmen, who surrounded the prophet in a dense group, and listened to his prophecies with anxious wonder as he uttered them from a high bench.

Gotzkowsky frowned. "Ah, I understand!" said he, "this good linen-weaver is your accomplice, my brave gentlemen, and as you wish to convert me, so does he wish to convert my honest workmen into old women. Let us see first in what sort of gibberish he preaches his wisdom to these good people."

Without taking any further notice of the two editors, Gotzkowsky left the summer-house rapidly and approached the listening multitude.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LEADER OF THE PEOPLE.

THE inspired prophet stood on a bench, and, as he unrolled his pictures, he endeavored to explain these mystical paintings to his devout gazers and listeners in equally mystical language. Gotzkowsky hastened toward this group, and pressed in silent observation close up to Pfannenstiel's side.

The linen-weaver, wholly possessed by his prophetic god, had in the mean while unrolled another picture, and holding it up high with solemn countenance, exclaimed with a screaming voice: "The day of judgment is at hand, and destiny is at your door! In my dream I saw a face like unto no other face, and I heard a voice, and the voice was like unto no other voice!"

"And yet you heard it! What ears you must have!" said Gotzkowsky, laughing.

The prophet answered calmly, "Yes! for then were seen invisible things, and then were heard inaudible sounds!" And showing a fresh picture to the crowd, he continued: "Look at this picture, which I found this morning on my sheet. It contains the history of your future, and God announced it to me as I sat at my loom weaving. I heard a voice crying, 'Pfannenstiel, my beloved son, dost thou hear me?' And I fell on my knees and answered, 'Yes, I hear.' 'Dost thou know what thou art weaving?' asked the voice. 'Yes,' said I, 'it is linen shirting for the almshouse.' 'No,' said the voice, 'it is a cloth of weeping for the town of Berlin, for the daughters of your fathers will shed tears, and there will be moaning and weeping.'"