

that, for many years, he has been subject to fits of convulsive laughter."

General Bachmann smiled. "This is an unfortunate disease for the chief magistrate of a city," said he, "and it seems to me as if the citizens of Berlin did wrong in choosing for their burgomaster a man who laughs and cries indifferently, and to whom the misfortunes of his fellow-citizens apparently serves only for a joke. But you reminded me of my promise, and you shall see that I will keep it."

He beckoned to his soldiers, and ordered them to fetch a litter on which to carry the sick burgomaster home. He then turned, with a smile, to Gotzkowsky, and said: "Sir, the Council of Berlin have cause to be grateful to you; you have saved their chief from death."

Herr von Kircheisen did not laugh now. His features jerked and distorted themselves still, but a stream of tears gushed from his eyes.

With an unspeakable expression he seized Gotzkowsky's hand, and pressed it to his lips, then sank unconscious in the arms of his deliverer.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE RUSSIAN, THE SAXON, AND THE AUSTRIAN, IN BERLIN.

BERLIN was now given up to the enemy, and through the once cheerful and pleasant streets could be heard nothing but screams and shrieks of terror, mingled with the wild curses and boisterous laughter of the conqueror, who, not satisfied with attacking the trembling inhabitants to rob them of their possessions and property, ill

treated them out of sheer cruelty, and took delight in hearing their screams and looking at the contortions caused by pain.

And who was this enemy, who, in scorn of all humanity and civilization, tortured the unfortunate and hunted them down?

They were not Russians, nor wild hordes of Cossacks. They were Austrians and Saxons, who, robbing and plundering, murdering and destroying, violating and burning, rushed through Berlin, filling all the inhabitants with terror and alarm.

General Bachmann kept faithfully the promise he had made to Gotzkowsky, and the Russian army at first not only preserved the strictest discipline, but even protected the inhabitants against the violence of the Austrians and Saxons.

The terrified citizens had one powerful and beneficent friend—this was John Gotzkowsky. Yielding to his urgent entreaty, General von Bachmann's adjutant, Von Brinck, had taken up his quarters in his house, and by his assistance and his own influence with the general, Gotzkowsky was enabled to afford material aid to all Berlin. For those citizens who were able to pay the soldiers he procured a Russian safeguard, and more than once this latter protected the inhabitants of the houses against the vandalism of the Austrians and Saxons.

Contrary to the wish of the Russians, the Austrians had forced themselves into the city, and, in spite of the terms of the capitulation agreed upon with the Russians, had quartered themselves upon the citizens, from whom, with the most savage cruelty and threats of ingenious torture, they extorted all the gold and jewels they possessed.

Berlin was now the open camping-ground of Croats, and Austrian hussars, and Russian Cossacks, and all minds were filled with dread and anxiety.

It is true that even the Cossacks forgot the strict discipline which had been commanded them, and entered the houses, robbing and compelling the inhabitants, by blows of the knout, to give them all they wanted. But yet they were less cruel than the Saxons, less barbarous than the Austrians, who, with scoffing and derision, committed the greatest atrocities. Indeed, it was only necessary to complain to the Russian general in order to obtain justice immediately, and have the Cossacks punished. Eight of them were strung up in one day at the guard-house on the New Market square, as a warning and example to the others, and expiated their robberies by a summary death. But with the Austrians and Saxons it was the officers themselves who instigated the soldiers to acts of revolting barbarity, and who, forgetful of all humanity, by their laughter and applause excited their subordinates to fresh ill-treatment of the inhabitants. Disregarding the capitulation, and listening to their national enmity, and their love of plunder, they pressed forward with wild screams into the royal stables, driving away the safeguard of four-and-twenty men, which General von Tottleben had placed there for their protection, and with shameless insolence defiling the Prussian coat-of-arms pictured on the royal carriages. They then drew them out into the open street, and, after they had stripped them of their ornaments and decorations, piled them up in a great heap and set them on fire, in order to add to the fright and terror of the bewildered citizens by the threatening danger of conflagration.

High blazed the flames, consuming greedily these carriages which had once borne kings and princes. The

screams and fright of the inmates of the nearest houses, and the crackling of the window-glass broken by the heat, were drowned by the joyous shouts of the Austrians, who danced round the fire with wild delight, and accompanied the roaring of the flames with insulting and licentious songs. And the fire seemed only to awaken their inventive powers, and excite them to fresh deeds of vandalism. After the fire had burnt out, and only a heap of ashes told of what were once magnificent royal vehicles, the Austrians rushed back again into the building with terrific outcry, to the apartments of the royal master of the horse, Schwerin, in order to build a new bonfire with his furniture, and fill their pockets with his gold and silver ware.

In the royal stalls a great uproar arose, as they fought with each other for the horses that were there. The strongest leaped on them and rode off furiously, to carry into other neighborhoods the terror and dismay which marked the track of the Austrians through Berlin. Even the hospitals were not safe from their brutal rage. They tore the sick from their beds, drove them with scoffs and insults into the streets, cut up their beds, and covered them over with the feathers. And all this was committed not by wild barbarians, but by the regular troops of a civilized state, by Austrians, who were spurred on, by their hatred of the Prussians, to deeds of rude cruelty and beastly barbarity. And this unlucky national hatred, which possessed the Austrian and made him forgetful of all humanity, was communicated, like an infectious plague, to the Saxons, and transformed these warriors, who were celebrated for being, next to the Prussians, the most orderly and best disciplined, into rude Jack Ketches and iconoclastic Vandals.

In the royal pleasure-palace at Charlottenburg, where

Brühl's (Saxon) dragoons had taken up their quarters by force, they set up a new species of dragoonade, which was directed not so much against the living as against marble statues and the sacred treasures of art. All the articles of splendor, brilliancy, and luxury which had been heaped up here, every thing which the royal love of the fine arts had collected of what was beautiful and rare, was sacrificed to their raging love of destruction. Gilded furniture, Venetian mirrors, large porcelain vases from Japan, were smashed to pieces. The silk tapestry was torn from the walls in shreds, the doors inlaid with beautiful wood-mosaic were broken up with clubs, the most masterly and costly paintings were cut in ribbons with knives. To be sure, it sometimes happened that the officers rescued from the soldiers some costly vase, some rare treasure or painting, and saved it from destruction, but this was not to save the King of Prussia's property, but to appropriate it to themselves, and carry it home with them.

Even the art-collection of Count Polignac, embracing the most splendid and rare treasures of art in the palace of Charlottenburg, did not escape this mania of destruction. This collection, containing among other things the most beautiful Greek statues, had been purchased in Rome by Gotzkowsky, and had afforded the king peculiar gratification, and was a source of much enjoyment to him. In the eyes of some Saxon officers, to whom this fact was known, it was sufficient reason for its condemnation. They themselves led the most violent and destructive of their soldiers into the halls where these magnificent treasures were exposed, even helped them to break the marble statues, to dash them down from their pedestals, to hew off their heads, arms, and legs, and even carried their systematic malice so far

as to order the soldiers to grind into powder the fragments, so as to prevent any restoration of the statues at a subsequent period.

The unfortunate inhabitants of Charlottenburg witnessed all this abomination that was perpetrated in the royal palace with fear and trembling, and in order to save their own persons and property from similar outrage, they offered the enemy a contribution of fifteen thousand dollars. The Saxons accepted the money, but, regardless of every obligation usually considered sacredly binding, they only became more savage and ferocious. With yells of rage they rushed into the houses, and, when the money they demanded was refused them, they stripped the men of their clothes, lashed them until the blood flowed, or cruelly wounded or maimed them with sabre-cuts; and when the women fled from them, they followed them up, and forced them by brutal ill-treatment to yield themselves. No house in Charlottenburg escaped being plundered; and so cruel were the tortures which the inhabitants suffered, that four of the unfortunate men died a miserable death at the hands of the Saxon soldiers.

They were Germans who waged against their brother Germans, against their own countrymen, a brutality and barbarous love of destruction almost unequalled in the annals of modern history. Consequently it seemed but natural that the Russians should be excited by such examples of barbarity, so unstintedly set them by the Austrians and Saxons. No wonder that they, too, at last began to rob and plunder, to break into houses at night, and carry off women and maidens by force, in order to have them released next day by heavy ransom; and that even the severe punishments, inflicted on those whom the people had the courage to complain of to the generals, lost their terror, and were no restraint on these

sons of the steppes and ice-fields, led away as they were by the other ruffians.

Two hundred and eighty-two houses were destroyed and thoroughly plundered in Berlin by the Austrians; the Saxons had devastated the royal palace in Charlottenburg, and the whole town. Should not the Russians also leave a memorial of their vandalism? They did so in Schönhausen, the pleasure-palace of the consort of Frederick the Great, who had left it a few days previous, by express command of the king, to take up her residence in Magdeburg. Eight Russian hussars forced themselves into the palace, and, with terrible threats, demanded the king's plate. Only the castellan and his wife, and a few of the royal servants, had been left behind to protect the place, and the only answer they could make to the furious soldiers was, that the booty which they were in search of had been carried with the royal party to Magdeburg. This information excited their fury to the highest pitch. Like the Saxon dragoons of Charlottenburg, they devastated the Schönhausen palace, stripped the castellan and his wife, and, with shouts of wild laughter, whipped them and pinched their flesh with red-hot tongs. And, as if the sight of these bloody and torn human bodies had only increased their desire for blood and torture, they then attacked the two servants, stripped them of their clothes, cut one to pieces like a beast, and threw the other on the red-hot coals, roasting him alive, as formerly the warriors of her Most Christian Majesty of Spain did those whom, in the pride of their civilization, they denominated "the wild heathen." \*

\* The account of all these cruelties and this vandalism is verified in the original, by reference to Von Archenholz: "History of the Seven Years' War," pp. 194-198.—TRANSLATOR.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE CADETS.

THE day following the occupation of Berlin, a strange and singular procession moved down the Linden Street through the Brandenburg Gate, and took the road to Charlottenburg. Brühl's dragoons and De Lacy's chasseurs rode on each side of the line, which would have excited laughter, if pity and sorrow had not overcome the comical element. It was a procession of children decked in uniform, and having nothing military about them but their apparel, nothing manly but the dress-sword at their side.

This singular little regiment was the "Corps of Cadets," which had been made prisoners of war by the Austrians and Saxons.

The commandant, Von Rochow, did not imagine that the enemy would carry his hard-heartedness to such an extent as to consider these lads of tender age as part of the garrison, and make them prisoners of war in consequence. None of these boys exceeded the age of twelve years (the larger and older ones having been drafted into the army to supply the want of officers), and he presumed that their very helplessness and weakness would be their security, and therefore had omitted to mention them specially in the surrender. But the conqueror had no compassion on these little children in uniform, and pronounced them prisoners of war. Even Lilliputian warriors might be dangerous! Remember the pangs suffered by Gulliver, as, lying quietly on the ground, he was suddenly awakened by a violent discharge poured into him from behind the high grass by the Lilliputians.

To be sure their weapons were only armed with needles—whence we may infer that the Liliputians are the original inventors of the modern Prussian needle-percussion rifles—but, one can be killed by needle-pricks. Count De Lacy feared, perhaps, the needle weapons of the little Liliputian cadets, and treated the poor, delicate, tender children as if they were tough old veterans, accustomed to all the hardships and privations of war. With coarse abuse and blows from the butt of the musket, they were driven out into the highway, and compelled to travel on the soft, muddy roads without cloaks, notwithstanding the severe weather, and only the short jackets of their uniforms. Heart-rending was the wail of the poor little ones from whom the war had taken their fathers, and poverty their mothers—torn from their home, the refuge of their orphaned childhood, to be driven like a flock of bleating lambs out into the desert wilderness of life.

And when their feet grew weary, when their little bodies, unaccustomed to fatigue, gave way, they were driven on with blows from sabres and the butts of muskets. When they begged for a piece of bread, or a drop of water for their parched lips, they were laughed at, and, instead of water, were told to drink their own tears, which ran in streams down their childish cheeks. They had already marched the whole day without food or refreshment of any kind, and they could hardly drag their bleeding feet along. With eyes bright with fever, and parched tongues, they still wandered on, looking in the distance for some friendly shelter, some refreshing spring.

At nightfall the little cadets were camped in an open field, on the wet ground. At first, they begged for a little food, a crust of bread; but when they saw that

their sufferings gave pleasure to the dragoons, and that their groans were to them like a pleasant song, they were silent, and the spirit of their fathers reigned uppermost in the breasts of these little, forsaken, trembling lads. They dried their eyes, and kept their complaints in their little trembling hearts.

“We will not cry any more,” said little Ramin, who, though only twelve years of age, was yet the oldest of the captives, and recognized as their captain and leader. “We will not cry any more, for our tears give pleasure to our enemies. Let us be cheerful, and that perhaps will vex them. To spite them, and show how little we think of our hunger, let us sing a jolly song.”

“Come on, let us do it!” cried the boys. “What song shall we sing?”

“*Prince Eugene*,” cried young Ramin; and immediately with his childish treble struck up “*Prince Eugene*, the noble knight.”

And all the lads joined in with a sort of desperate enthusiasm, and the song of the noble knight rose from their young lips like a peal of rejoicing.

But gradually one little trembling voice after another fell, by degrees the song grew lower and shriller, and became lost in a trembling whisper; then it would rise into an unnatural and terrified scream, or sink into a whining sob or trembling wail.

Suddenly little Ramin stopped, and a cry of pain, like the sound of a snapped string, burst from his breast. “I cannot sing any more,” sighed he. “Hunger is killing me.” And he sank down on his knees, and raised his little arms beseechingly to one of the Austrian soldiers, who was marching beside him, comfortably consuming a roast chicken.

"Oh! give me a bit of bread, only a mouthful, to keep me from starving to death."

"Have pity on us, do not let us starve!"

With similar piteous lamentations, the whole corps of trembling, weeping, starving little cadets threw themselves on their knees, and filled the air with their cries and prayers.

"Well, if you positively insist upon eating, you shall have something to appease your hunger," said the officer who commanded the chasseurs, and he whispered a few words to his corporal, who received them with a loud laugh, and then rode off.

"Now, be quiet, and wait," commanded the Austrian officer. "I have sent the corporal and some soldiers into the village to get food for you. Only wait now, and be satisfied." And the children dried their eyes, and comforted each other with encouraging words.

With what impatience, what painful longing, did they look forward to the promised food! How they thanked God, in the gladness of their hearts, that He had had pity on them, and had not allowed them to die of hunger!

They all seemed revived, and strained their hopeful eyes toward the quarter whence the corporal was to return. And now, with one voice, they broke out into a cry of joy; they had espied him returning, accompanied by soldiers who seemed to be bringing a heavy load.

They approached nearer and nearer. "Form a ring," commanded the officer, and they obeyed in expectant gladness; and around the thickly crowded ring the Austrian officers and the troop of soldiers took their stand. In silent waiting stood the cadets, and their hearts leaped for joy.

"Attention! your dinner is coming," cried the officer.

The ring opened. Ah! now the corporal and the soldiers are going to bring in the dinner.

But no! The dinner came walking along by itself. With a dignified step it marched in and gave utterance to an expressive bleat. It was a *live* sheep, which was to be given to the poor lads who were faint from hunger. An outburst of boisterous laughter from the Austrians greeted the dignified wether, and drowned the cries of the bitterly disappointed cadets.

"A sheep!" they cried, "and what are we to do with it?"—and they began to weep afresh.

"Kill him and roast him!" jeered the officer. "You are brave soldiers. Well, you will only have to do what we often do in camp. Be your own cook and butler; none of us will help you. We want to see what sort of practical soldiers you will make, and whether you are as good hands at cooking as at crying and blubbering."

And the Austrians folded their arms, and looked on idly and with derisive satisfaction at these poor children who stood there with their heads bowed down with helplessness and grief.

At length little Ramin arose. His eyes glistened with fierce defiance, and an expression of noble courage illuminated his pale countenance.

"If the sheep belongs to us," said he, "we will eat him."

"But he's alive," cried the boys.

"We will kill him," answered the little fellow.

"We? we ourselves? We are no butchers. We have never done such a thing!"

"Have we ever killed a man?" asked Ramin, rolling

his large bright eyes around the circle of his comrades. "Have we ever deprived a man of his life?"

"No!"

"Well, then, we will have it yet to do! We hope to be able to kill many an enemy, and to do that we will have to begin with some one. Let us make believe, then, that this wether is the enemy, and that we have to attack him. Now, then, down upon him!"

"Ramin is right," cried the boys; "let us attack the enemy."

"Attention!" commanded Ramin.

The boys drew themselves up in military order right opposite the bleating sheep.

"Draw swords!"

In the twinkling of an eye they had drawn their little rapiers, which looked more like penknives than swords, and which the Austrians had left to their little prisoners of war.

"One, two, three!" commanded the little Ramin. "Attention! Forward!"

Down they charged upon the enemy, who was standing motionless, with staring eyes, bleating loudly. The Austrian soldiers roared and screamed with delight, and confessed, with tears in their eyes, that it was the best joke in the world, and no end of fun to see these poor boys made desperate by hunger.

The first feat of arms of the little cadets was completed, the wether was slain. But now came the question how to dress him, how to convert the dead beast into nice warm roast meat.

They were well aware that none of the laughing, mocking soldiers would help them, and therefore they disdained to ask for help. Wood, a roasting-pit, and a kettle were given them—means enough to prepare a

good soup and roast. But how to begin and set about it they themselves hardly knew. But gnawing hunger made them inventive. Had they not often at home skinned many a cunningly caught mole—had they not often killed and drawn a rabbit? The only difference was that the sheep was somewhat larger than a mole or a rabbit.

Finally, after much toil and trouble, and under the approving laughter of the spectators, they accomplished it. The meat simmered in the kettle, watched by two cadets, two others turning the spit. The work was done; the sheep was converted into soup and roast.

And because they showed themselves so industrious and cheerful, one and another of the soldiers softened their hearts and threw them a piece of bread or a can-teen; and the poor boys accepted these alms thrown at them with humble gratitude, and no feeling of resentment or defiance remained in their hearts, for hunger was appeased; but appeased only for the moment—only to encounter new sufferings, renewed hunger, fresh mockeries. For onward, farther onward must they wander. Every now and then one of them sank down, begging for pity and compassion. But what cared the soldiers, who only saw in the children the impersonation of the hated enemy, to be tortured and worried to death as a sport?

More than twenty of these little cadets succumbed to the sufferings of this journey, and died miserably, forsaken and alone, on the high road; and no mother was there to close their eyes, no father to lean over them and bless them with a tear. But over these poor martyr-children watched the love of God, and lulled them to sleep with happy dreams and gentle fancies about their distant homes, their little sister there, or the beautiful

garden in which they had so often chased butterflies together. And amidst such fancies and smiling memories they dreaméd away their childish souls, beyond the grave, to a holy and happy reawakening.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE EXPLOSION.

GENERAL VON TOTTLIBEN was alone in his chamber—at least he had no visible company; but two invisible companions were there—Care and Sorrow. They whispered to him uncomfortable and melancholy thoughts, making his countenance serious and sad, and drawing deep and dark lines across his brow. He was a German, and was fighting in the ranks of the enemy against his German fatherland. Therein lay the secret of his careworn features, the reading of the suppressed sighs; the broken, sorrowful words which he uttered, as with folded arms and bowed head he paced up and down his room. He was a German, and loved his country, which had repaid his love with that apathy and non-appreciation that have destroyed and killed some of the greatest and noblest men of Germany; while others have taken refuge in foreign countries, to find there that recognition which was denied them at home. General von Tottleben was only a German—why, then, should Germany take notice of him? Because he possessed information, talent, genius. Germany would have appreciated these if Von Tottleben had been a foreigner; but, as unfortunately he was only a German, Germany took no notice of him, and compelled him to seek in a foreign country the road

to fame and distinction. He had gone to Russia. There his talents had been prized and employed. He was now a general in the Russian army, and the alliance between Russia and Austria compelled him to fight against his own country.

But the Russian general still preserved his German heart, this heart so strong in suffering, so unfaltering in its faith, so faithful in its love, so great in hope, humble in its obedience, modest in its desires; this German heart of his was the cause of much suffering to him, for it could not adapt itself to his Russian instructions, and despite his efforts to render it callous, would insist upon overflowing with pity and sympathy. He loved Berlin, for in this city he had passed the best years of his youth. And now he was called on to act as a cruel tyrant, an unfeeling barbarian, to sow broadcast death and destruction in this city, from which he yearned so to win a little love, a little sympathy for her rejected son.

But now his German heart was forced into silence by the exigencies of Russian discipline, and the general had to obey the orders of his superior officer, General von Fermore. His chief had ordered him to exercise the utmost severity and harshness, and imposed upon him the task of scourging Berlin like a demon of vengeance. And yet Berlin had committed no other crime than that of remaining faithful to her king, and of not wishing to surrender to the enemy.

A fresh dispatch had just arrived from General von Fermore, and its contents had darkened the brow of Tottleben with anxious care. He had received orders to blow up the arsenal in Berlin. This noble and handsome building, which rose in proud splendor in the midst of a populous town, was to be destroyed without reference to the fact that the blowing up of this colossal