

The general smiled, as he took Gotzkowsky amicably by the hand. "We will hang them a little lower," said he, significantly. "Come, accompany us to the market-place!"

NOTE.—Count von Tottleben expiated his clemency toward Berlin very dearly. A few months later he was sent to Petersburg under arrest, accused principally of having behaved too leniently and too much in the German interest for a Russian general.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EXECUTION.

THE morning was cold and rainy, the wind howled down the empty streets, rattling the windows, and slamming the open house-doors. Surely the weather was but little suited for going out, and yet the Berlin citizens were to be seen flocking toward the New Market in crowds, regardless of wind and rain.

The Berliners have, from time immemorial, been an inquisitive race, and where any thing is to be seen, there they rush. But this day there was to be a rare spectacle at the New Market.

The editors of the two newspapers were to run the gantlet; and besides, General von Tottleben had summoned the Town Council and Jews thither, to receive his last orders and resolutions before he left Berlin. People were, therefore, very much excited, and curious to witness this double show, and in their eagerness they forgave the hostile general, who had prepared such a delightful entertainment for them, all the terrors of the last few days. Two gentlemen—two learned men—were

to be flogged. That was, indeed, a precious and delightful sight for cold, hungry, ragged poverty, which always takes delight in seeing those whom fortune has favored, suffer and smart.

How often had these shoemakers and tailors worried and fretted themselves over their pot of beer, that the newspaper writers should have had the hardihood and stupidity to write so violently against the Russians, without taking into account that the Russians would one day occupy Berlin, and take revenge on its innocent citizens! It served these newspaper writers quite right that they should be punished for their arrogance. And, besides, the good people would see the Russian general and his staff, and the grand Town Council and the chief magistrate, who, in his golden chain and his robes of office, was to hand over to the hostile general a present of ten thousand ducats. The Berliners were, therefore, quite happy, and delighted to hear the hollow sound of the drum, and the Russian word of command.

A regiment of Russian soldiers marched past the corner of the Bishop Street, toward the market-place. They ranged themselves in two long lines, leaving a lane between them, just wide enough for a man to pass through. Then came two provost-marshals, and walked slowly down the lane, delivering to each soldier one of the long slender rods they carried under their arms.

The Russian soldiers were now armed, and awaited the victims they were to chastise. These were dragged out of the guard-house. First came tottering the gray-headed Mr. Krause, slowly and sadly; then came Mr. Kretschmer, formerly the brave, undaunted hero of the quill—now a poor, trembling, crushed piece of humanity. They stood in the middle of the square, and, bewildered with terror, their help-imploping looks swept

over the gaping, silent multitude, who gazed at them with eager countenances and malicious joy, and would have been outrageously mad if they had been denied the enjoyment of seeing two of their brother-citizens scourged by the enemy's soldiers.

"I cannot believe it!" whimpered Mr. Krause; "it is impossible that this is meant in earnest. They cannot intend to execute so cruel a sentence. What would the world, what would mankind say, if two writers were scourged for the articles they had written? Will the town of Berlin suffer it? Will no one take pity on our distress?"

"No one," said Mr. Kretschmer, mournfully. "Look at the crowd which is staring at us with pitiless curiosity. They would sooner have pity on a murderer than on a writer who is going to be flogged. The whole town has enjoyed and laughed over our articles, and now there is not one who would dare to beg for us."

At this moment another solemn procession came down the Bishop Street toward the square. This was the Town Council of Berlin. Foremost came the chief burgomaster Von Kircheisen, who had recovered his speech and his mind, and was memorizing the well-set speech in which he was to offer to the general the thanks of the town and the ten thousand ducats, which a page bore alongside of him on a silken pillow.

Behind the Council tottered trembling and broken-hearted the elders of the Jews, including those of the mint, in order to receive their final condemnation or release from General Tottleben.

The people took no notice of the Council or of the Jews. They were busy staring with cruel delight at the journalists, who were being stripped by the provost-marshals of their outer clothing, and prepared for the

bloody exhibition. With a species of barbarous pleasure they listened to the loud wailing of the trembling, weeping Krause, who was wringing his hands and imploring the Russian officer who had charge of the execution, for pity, for mercy.

The Russian officer was touched by the tears of sorrow of the editor; he did have pity on the gray hairs and bowed form of the old man, or perhaps he only acted on instructions received from General Tottleben. He motioned to the provosts to lead the other editor to the lane first, and to spare Mr. Krause until Mr. Kretschmer had been chastised. The provost seized hold of Mr. Kretschmer and dragged him to the terrible lane; they pushed him in between the rows of soldiers, who, with rude laughter, were flourishing the rods in their hands.

Already the first, the second, the third blow has fallen on the back of the editor of the *Vossian Gazette*, when suddenly there sounds a powerful "Halt!" and General Count von Tottleben appears, with Gotzkowsky at his side, and followed by his brilliant staff.

With a wild scream Kretschmer tears himself loose from the hands of the provost-marshals, and rushes toward the general, crying out aloud; Mr. Krause awakens from his heavy, despairing brooding, and both editors sink down before the Russian general.

With a mischievous smile, Tottleben looked at Mr. Kretschmer's bleeding back, and asked, "Who are you?"

"I am the *Vossian Gazette*," whined out Mr. Kretschmer, "whom you have accused of such cruel things. Ah! we have suffered great injustice, and we have been represented as worse than we really are. Oh, believe me, your excellency, I have been belied. I never hated Russia!"

"You are both of you accused of libel," said Tottleben, sternly.

"If we are guilty of libel, it is without our knowledge," said Mr. Krause. "Besides, we are very willing to recall every thing. I confess we were in error. We did not know you and your army, and we spoke ignorantly, as the blind man does about colors. Now we are better able to judge. You are the noblest among noble men, and finer soldiers than the Russians, and a chaster woman than the Empress Elizabeth, are not to be found anywhere. Oh, yes, your excellency, *Spener's Journal* is ready to eat its words. Only don't let me be flogged, sir, and I will sing your praises everlastingly, and proclaim to all the world that the Prussian has no better friend than the Russian, and that God has ordained them to be brothers."

"Only don't let us be flogged," implored Mr. Kretschmer, rubbing his sore back, "I promise your excellency that the *Vossian Gazette* shall be as tame as a new-born infant. It shall never indulge in bold, outspoken language; never have any decided color. I swear for myself and my heirs, that we will draw its fangs. Have, therefore, mercy on us!"

The general turned away with a smile of contempt. "Enough, gentlemen," said he, roughly, and laying his hand on Gotzkowsky's shoulder, he continued: "I pardon you, not in consequence of your idle talk, but for the sake of this noble gentleman, who has begged for you. You are free, sirs!" As the two editors were about to break out into expressions of gratefulness, Tottleben said to them, "It is Gotzkowsky alone that you have to thank for your liberty."

They threw themselves into Gotzkowsky's arms; with solemn oaths they vowed him eternal, inviolable grati-

tude; they called him their savior, their liberator from shame and disgrace.

Gotzkowsky smiled at their glowing protestations of friendship, and withdrew himself gently from their ardent embraces. "I did not do it for the sake of your thanks, and personally you owe me therefore no gratitude."

"Gotzkowsky, have you entirely forgotten us?" said a plaintive voice near him. It was Itzig, one of the rich Jews of the mint, to whom Gotzkowsky had promised assistance.

"Ask the general," said the latter, smiling.

"He has spoken for you, and his intercession has freed you from the special tax," said Count Tottleben.

"He has saved us, the great Gotzkowsky has had pity on our wretchedness," cried the Jews, crowding around Gotzkowsky to press his hand, to embrace him, and with tears of grateful emotion to promise him their unalterable attachment.

"You have saved my life," said Itzig, "for I had determined to die rather than pay any more money. For what is life to me without money? If the Jew has not money, he is nobody. In saving my money you saved my life. If ever you should be without money, Gotzkowsky, come to me; I will lend you some at very low interest."

"I will lend it to you gratis," said Ephraim, pressing his hand affectionately in his own.

Gotzkowsky answered sadly: "If it ever came to pass that I were obliged to borrow, you would not remember this day, and I would not be the man to remind you of it."

"Remind us of it," protested Ephraim, "and you shall see that we keep our word. Come to us and say,

'Remember the tax that I freed you from,' and you shall see all that you desire shall be fulfilled."

"God grant that I may never have need to remind you of it!" said Gotzkowsky, pressing back the excited Jews, and approaching General Tottleben.

"You forget, sir, that you summoned the honorable Council of Berlin hither, and that these gentlemen are awaiting your orders."

The general seemed to awaken out of a deep reverie. "Yes," said he, as if to himself, "the German dream is finished, and now I must be a Russian again." He then turned quickly to Gotzkowsky and offered him his hand. "Gotzkowsky," said he, gently and persuasively, "consider it once more—come with me and be my teacher."

"What I can teach you is but little. It is an easy lesson for him who has a heart, an impossible one for him who has none. Learn to love mankind. That is all my wisdom, and my farewell."

The general sighed. "You will not go with me? Well, then, farewell!" And as if to disperse the painful and bitter feelings which assailed his German heart, he turned away and called, in Russian, to his adjutant: "Let us break up, gentlemen. To horse, to horse!"

But in the midst of the confusion of the soldiers, and the tramping of horses, the chief burgomaster made a way for himself. He had to sustain the honor of the Council, and pronounce the beautifully worded oration which had cost him two sleepless nights to compose; he had to place in the hands of the general the offering of Berlin gratitude.

At last he succeeded in reaching the general, and he began his speech. Full and powerful did his voice sound through the New Market, and the delighted people rejoiced over the oratorical talent of their chief mag-

istrate, and gazed with pride and admiration at his golden chain of office—that chain which had gone through so much, had endured so much, without growing pale or dim.

But General Tottleben did not accept the present which the city of Berlin offered him. He said: "If the town believed that its fate was rendered more tolerable by my discipline than it otherwise would have been, let it thank the express orders of my empress. The honor of having been commander of Berlin for three days is sufficient reward for me."

Three hours later Berlin was freed from Russians and Austrians. Gotzkowsky, who had finally succeeded in freeing himself from the tumultuous expressions of gratitude of the Council, the editors, and the Jews, returned to his home, of which he himself says: "My house resembled more a cow-house than a dwelling, having been filled for a while, night and day, with Russians."

CHAPTER XIV.

BRIDE AND DAUGHTER.

At the mere announcement of the approach of the king toward Berlin, the Russian army had left the city and withdrawn to Frankfort. But no inconsiderable number of officers had stayed behind; some of them to organize the withdrawal of the troops, while others, detained by personal affairs, had merely obtained short leave of absence. To the latter belonged Colonel Feodor von Brenda. General Bachmann had given him two days' leave, under the impression that he would avail

himself of the time to enjoy, undisturbed, the society of his bride, the Countess Lodoiska von Sandomir.

The general knew nothing of the difference between the colonel and his betrothed. He did not know that, according to her agreement with Bertram, Lodoiska had not informed Feodor of her arrival in Berlin. But, nevertheless, Feodor had heard of it. The countess's own chambermaid, knowing the liberality of the young count, had gone to him, and for a golden bribe had betrayed to him her presence, and communicated all that she knew of her plans and intentions.

This news detained the colonel in Berlin. The unexpected arrival of his affianced pressed upon him the necessity of a decision, for he was aware of the impossibility of tearing asunder the firm and heart-felt bond which attached him to Elise, to unite himself to a wife to whom he was only engaged by a given promise, a pledged word.

Feodor would probably have given up his whole fortune to pay a debt of honor; would have unhesitatingly thrown his life into the scale if it had been necessary to redeem his word. But he was not ashamed to break the vow of fidelity which he had made to a woman, and to desert her to whom he had promised eternal love. Besides, his pride was wounded by the advent of the countess, which appeared to him as a restraint on his liberty and an espionage on his actions.

She had concealed her arrival from him, and he consequently concluded that she was acquainted with his faithlessness, and nursed some plan of removing the obstacles which lay between her and her lover. His pride was irritated by the thought that he should be compelled to maintain an engagement which he could no longer fulfil from love, but only from a sense of duty. Such a

restraint on his free will seemed to him an unparalleled hardship. He felt a burning hatred toward the woman who thus forcibly insisted on fastening herself upon him, and an equally ardent love toward the young girl of whom they wished to deprive him.

Doubly charming and desirable did this young, innocent, lovely girl appear to him when he compared her with the mature, self-possessed, worldly woman of whom he could only hope that he might be her last love, while he knew that he was Elise's first.

"If I must positively be chained, and my hands bound," said he to himself, "let it be at least with this fresh young girl, who can conceal the thorny crown of wedlock under freshly-blown rosebuds. My heart has nothing more to do with this old love; it has grown young again under the influence of new feelings, and I will not let this youthfulness be destroyed by the icy-cold smiles of duty. Elise has promised to be mine, and she must redeem her promise."

Still full of the passionate and defiant thoughts which the vicinity of his affianced bride had provoked, he had gone out to seek Elise. But to find her had become not only difficult, but almost impossible.

Bertram, who had not thought fit to reveal to Gotzkowsky the forcible abduction of his daughter, had yet quietly arranged his precautions that a repetition of the attempt from any quarter, or at any time, should be impossible.

Under the pretence that the withdrawal of the troops rendered the city unsafe, and filled it with marauders and plundering stragglers, Bertram, secure of Gotzkowsky's approval beforehand, had armed a number of the factory workmen, and placed them as sentinels on the wall, in the court, and on the ground-floor. These had

orders not to let any one enter who was not able to tell the object and purpose of his coming. By this precaution Bertram prevented any attempt of Feodor to climb the wall; and, furthermore he obtained the advantage that Elise, to whom the presence of the sentinels was unpleasant and objectionable, not only did not visit the dangerous, solitary parts of the garden, but withdrew into her own room. In this manner Bertram had rendered any meeting between Feodor and Elise impossible, but he could not prevent his servant, Petrowitsch, from meeting his sweetheart, Elise's chambermaid, on the street.

By means of these a letter of Feodor reached Elise's hand. In this Feodor reminded her solemnly and earnestly of her promise; he now called upon her to fulfil her vow, and to follow him from the house of her father. He adjured her to unite herself to him at the altar as his wife, and to give him the right to carry her abroad with him as his own.

Elise received this letter of her beloved, and her heart during its perusal was moved by unfamiliar emotions. She could not herself determine whether it was joy or dread which caused it to beat so convulsively, and almost deprived her of consciousness. She could have screamed aloud with joy, that at last she would be united to her lover, wholly, sacredly as his own; and yet she was filled with deep grief that the path to the altar would not be hallowed by her father's blessing. Even love, which spoke so loudly and powerfully in her heart, could not silence the warning voice of conscience—that voice which again and again threatened her with sin and sorrow, disgrace and shame. Yet Elise, in the warmth and passion of her heart, sought to excuse herself, and in the pride of her wounded filial love said to herself: "My

father does not regard me; he will not weep for my loss, for I am superfluous here, and he will hardly perceive that I am gone. He has his millions and his friends, and the whole multitude of those to whom he does good. He is so rich—he has much on which his heart hangs! But I am quite poor; I have nothing but the heart of my beloved. His love is my only possession. Would it not be wicked in me to cast this away, and lead here a lonesome, desolate life, without pity or sympathy? If my father loved me, would he have left me during these days so full of danger? After the terrible scene in which I, in the desperation of my heart, offended him, he would at least have given me some opportunity of asking his pardon, of begging him for forbearance and pity. But he seems purposely to have secluded himself, and avoided any meeting with me. He has shut me out from his heart, and withdrawn his love from me forever. And so I am forced to carry my heart full of boundless affection over to my lover. He will never repulse, neglect, or forget me; he will adore me, and I will be his most cherished possession."

As these thoughts passed through her mind, she pressed his note to her lips, each word seeming to greet her, and with Feodor's imploring looks to entreat her to fulfil the vow she had made him. There was no longer any hesitation or wavering in her, for she had come to a determined resolution, and with glowing cheeks and panting breast she hastened to the writing-table, in order to clothe it in words, and answer Feodor's note.

"You remind me of my pledged word," she wrote. "I am ready to redeem it. Come, then, and lead me from my father's house to the altar, and I will be your wife; and wherever you go I will be with you. Henceforth I will have no other home than your heart. But

while I cheerfully elect this home, at the same time I am shutting myself out from my father's heart forever. May God forgive the sins that love causes me to commit!"

But when this note had been sent, when she knew that her lover had received it, and that her decision was irrevocable, she was seized with trembling faintness, with the oppression of conscious guilt; and it seemed to her as if a new spring of love had suddenly burst forth in her heart, and as if she had never loved her father so sincerely, so devotedly, so tenderly, as now that she was on the point of leaving him.

But it was too late to draw back; for in the mean time she had received a second letter from Feodor, imparting the details of a plan for their joint flight, and she had approved of this plan.

Every thing was prepared, and all that she had to do was to remain in her room, and await the concerted signal with which Feodor was to summon her.

As soon as she heard this signal she was to leave the house with her maid, who had determined to accompany her, come out into the street, where Feodor would be in waiting with his carriage, and drive in the first place to the church. There a priest, heavily bribed, would meet them, and, with the blessing of the Church, justify Feodor in carrying his young wife out into the world, and Elise in "leaving father and home, and clinging only unto her husband."

Some hours were yet wanting to the appointed time. Elise, condemned to the idleness of waiting, experienced all the anxiety and pains which the expectation of the decisive moment usually carries with it.

With painful desire she thought of her father, and, although she repeated to herself that he would not miss

her, that her absence would not be noticed, yet her excited imagination kept painting to her melancholy fancy, pictures of his astonishment, his anxiety, his painful search after her.

She seemed, for the first time, to remember that she was about to leave him, without having been reconciled to him; that she was to part from him forever, without having begged his forgiveness, without even having felt his fatherly kiss on her brow. At least she would write to him, at least send him one loving word of farewell. This determination she now carried out, and poured out all her love, her suffering, her suppressed tenderness, the reproaches of her conscience, in burning and eloquent words, on the paper which she offered to her father as the olive-branch of peace.

When she had written this letter, she folded it, and hid it carefully in her bosom, in order to carry it unnoticed to her father's room. He would not be there—for two days he had not been at home; she could, therefore, venture to go there without fear of meeting him. She felt as if she would not be able to bear his gaze—the full, bright look of his eye.

Carefully and softly, with the secret fear of meeting Bertram, whose sad, reproachful looks she dreaded even more, perhaps, than the eye of her father, she crept along the corridor, and finally reached the antechamber, breathing more freely, and glad to have met no one. Every thing here was quiet and silent; her father, therefore, had not yet returned, and she was quite safe from any surprise by him.

She now entered his private room, and crossing this, was in the act of opening the desk of his writing-table in order to deposit the letter therein, when she heard the door of the antechamber open. It was too late for flight,

and she had only time to conceal the letter in her bosom, when the door of the room itself was opened.

It was her father who now entered the apartment. Speechless and motionless they both stood, confounded at this unexpected meeting, each waiting for a word of greeting of reconciliation from the other. But however earnestly their hearts yearned toward each other, their lips remained silent, and their looks avoided one another.

"She shuns me. This is my reception after so many toilsome days of absence," thought Gotzkowsky, and his heart was full of sadness and sorrow.

"He will not look at me, his eye avoids me, he has not yet forgiven me," thought Elise, as she regarded her father's pale, careworn countenance. "No, he does not wish to see me. For the last time, therefore, I will show him obedience, and leave the room." Sadly and softly, with her looks cast on the ground, she took her way to the door on the opposite side.

Gotzkowsky followed her with his eyes. If she had only ventured to raise her looks once more to him, she would have perceived all his love, all the forgiving affection of a father, in his face. But she did not, and Gotzkowsky said to himself, in the bitterness of his heart, "Why should I speak to her?—she would only misunderstand me. I will lie down and sleep, to forget my cares and my sorrows. I will not speak to her, for I am exhausted, and tired to death. I must have rest and composure, to be able to come to an understanding with her."

And yet he regarded her with longing looks as she directed her sad steps toward the door. Now she stands on the threshold; now her trembling hand clasps the bright handle of the lock, but still she hesitates to open

it; she still hopes for a word, if even an angry one, from her father.

And now she hears it. Like an angel's voice does it sound in her ear. He calls her name, he reaches his hand out to her, and says with infinite, touching gentleness, "Give me your hand, Elise. Come here to me, my child—it is so long since I have seen you!"

She turned to him, and yet she dared not look upon him. Seizing his offered hand, she pressed it to her lips. "And do you remember that you have been so long absent? You have not then forgotten me?"

"Forgot you!" cried her father tenderly; and then immediately, as if ashamed of this outburst of fatherly love, he added calmly and almost sternly—"I have much to talk with you, Elise. You have accused me."

Elise interrupted him with anxious haste: "I was beside myself," said she, confused and bashfully. "Forgive me, my father; passion made me unjust."

"No, it only developed what lay hidden in your heart," said Gotzkowsky; and the recollection of that unhappy hour roughened his voice, and filled his heart with sadness. "For the first time, you were candid with me. I may have been guilty of it all, but still it hurts!" For a moment he was silent, and sank his head on his breast, completely overpowered by painful reminiscences.

Elise answered nothing, but the sight of his pale and visibly exhausted countenance moved her to tears.

When Gotzkowsky raised his head again, his face had resumed its usual determination and energy. "We will talk over these things another time," said he seriously. "Only this one thing, remember. I will not restrain you in any way, and I have never done so. You are mistress of every thing that belongs to me except my honor. This I myself must keep unsullied. As a German gentle-

man I cannot bring the dishonor upon me of seeing my daughter unite herself to the enemy of my country—to a Russian. Choose some German man: whoever he may be, I will welcome him whom you love as my son, and renounce the wishes and plans I have so long entertained. But never will I give my consent to the union of my only child with a Russian.”

While he spoke the expression of the countenance of both changed surprisingly. Both evinced determination, defiance, and anger, and the charm which love had laid for a moment on their antagonistic souls was destroyed. Gotzkowsky was no longer the tender father, easily appeased by a word, but the patriot injured in his holiest right, his most delicate sense of honor. Elise was no longer the humble, penitent daughter, but a bride threatened with the loss of her lover.

“You would, then, never give your consent?” asked she, passionately. “But if this war were ended, if Russia were no longer the enemy of Germany; if—”

“Russia remains ever the enemy of Germany, even if she does not appear against her in the open field. It is the antagonism of despotic power against culture and civilization. Never can the free German be the friend of the barbarous Slavonian. Let us hear nothing more of this—you know my mind; I cannot change it, even if you should, for that reason, doubt my love. True love does not consist only in granting, but still more in denying.”

Elise stood with bowed head, and murmured some low, unintelligible words. Gotzkowsky felt that it would be better for both to break off this conversation before it had reached a point of bitterness and irritation. At the same time he felt that, after so much excitement, his body needed rest. He, therefore, approached his

daughter and extended his hand toward her for a friendly farewell. Elise seized it, and pressed it with passionate feeling to her lips. He then turned round and traversed the room on the way to his bedchamber.

Elise looked after him with painful longing, which increased with each step he took. As he was in the act of leaving the room she rushed after him, and uttered in a tone of gentle pleading, the single word, “Father!”

Gotzkowsky felt the innermost chord of his heart touched. He turned round and opened his arms to her. With a loud cry of joy she threw herself on his breast, and rested there for a moment in happy, self-forgetting delight. They looked at one another, and smilingly bade each other good-by. Again Gotzkowsky turned his steps toward his bedroom. And now he was gone; she saw him no more. Father and daughter were separated.

But Elise felt an unutterable grief in her heart, a boundless terror seized her. It seemed as if she could not leave her father; as if it would be a disgrace for her, so secretly, like a criminal, to sneak out of her father's house, were it even to follow her lover to the altar. She felt as if she must call her father back, cling to his knees, and implore him to save her, to save her from her own desires. Already had she opened her lips, and stretched forth her arms, when she suddenly let them fall, with a shudder.

She had heard the loud rolling of a carriage, and she knew what it meant. This carriage which stopped at her door—could it be the one in which Feodor had come to take her? “It is too late—I cannot go back,” muttered she low, and with drooping head she slowly left her father's room in order to repair to her own chamber.