

She shook her head slowly, thoughtfully. "I do not know if it be love," said she. "I only feel that it must be done—there is no other outlet but this to help us all. Let us speak no more about it—only tell me that you accept it."

"It is impossible, Anna Sophia."

"Only accept it, and all will be right."

"I cannot. It would be an everlasting shame to me."

She pressed her teeth tightly together—her eyes gleamed with anger. "Hear me out," said she. "Go, or stay—whichever you do—I do not remain here! I must away and seek my fortune. I have never been happy, as yet—upon the battle-field I may be. I have nothing to lose, and can therefore win all. Well, say! Am I to be a soldier in your stead?"

"If you really wish it, I must yield," said he, sadly. "You say you have nothing to lose, but I, I have you, and I cannot, will not lose you. And as you would be angry with and leave me if I said 'No,' I prefer saying 'Yes.'"

Anna Sophia gave a cry of delight, and, for the first time, gave Charles Henry a willing kiss. "Many, many thanks, Charles Henry," said she. "Now we will all be happy."

Charles Henry sighed. He could not bring himself to trust in Anna's prophecy.

"And now," said she, eagerly, "how shall we go about it?"

CHAPTER IV.

FAREWELL TO THE VILLAGE.

IN the course of the day, Charles Henry accompanied the other boys to the village, where an officer was to call out the names of those who were drafted. As his name was called out, he did not change countenance—he remained as gay and cheerful as before, while the other boys were gazing sadly, thoughtfully before them. Then the officer handed each of them a ticket upon which their names were printed, and ordered them to go immediately to the nearest city, Cleve, and receive their uniforms. Charles Henry requested a day's leave, as he had various preparations to make for his father, to whom he wished to will the little property he had inherited from his mother. The officer granted him one day. Charles Henry left the house gayly, but instead of turning his steps toward the little hut inhabited by his father, he took the path leading to the old school-house, where his bride lived.

She stood at her door waiting for him. "Well," said she, hastily, "is all right?"

"Yes," said he, sadly, "I am drafted."

She grasped the printed ticket from his hand and hid it in her bosom. "Now," said she, "you have but to bring me a decent suit of clothes."

"My Sunday suit, Anna," said he, smiling. "It is new; I intended to be married in it."

"I shall not hurt it," said she. "There is a merchant at Cleve, whom I know to be good and honest—I will leave the clothes with him, and next Sunday you can walk to the city for them."

"You will not even keep them to remember me by?"

"It is impossible for me ever to forget you, Charles Henry, for I shall bear your name."

"From now on, throughout your whole life, you shall bear it, Anna. For when you return, you will remember your promise, and marry me. You will not forget me when far away?"

"How do I know I shall return?" said she. "A soldier's life is in constant danger. There can be no talk of marriage until this war is over. But it is now time we were asleep, Charles Henry. You and I have many things to do to-morrow; we must arrange our household affairs—you for the sake of appearances, and I in good earnest. Good-night, then, Charles Henry."

"Will you not kiss me on this our last night, Anna Sophia?" said he, sadly.

"A soldier kisses no man," said she, with a weary smile. "He might embrace a friend, as his life ebbed out upon the battle-field, but none other, Charles Henry. Good-night."

She entered and bolted the door after her, then lighting a candle she hastened to her attic-room. Seating herself at her father's table, she spread a large sheet of foolscap before her and commenced writing. She was making her will with a firm, unshaken hand. She began by taking leave of the villagers, and implored them to forgive her for causing them sorrow; but that life in the old hut, without her parents, had become burdensome to her, and as her betrothed was now going away, she could endure it no longer. She then divided her few possessions, leaving to every friend some slight remembrance, such as ribbons, a prayer-book, or a handkerchief. Her clothes she divided among the village wives. But her house, with all its contents, she left to Father Buschman, with the request that he would live in it, at least in summer.

When she had finished, she threw herself upon her bed to rest from the many fatigues and heart-aches of the day. In her dreams her parents appeared to her—they beckoned, kissed, and blessed her.

Strengthened by this dream, she sprang joyfully at daybreak from her couch. She felt now assured that what she was about to do was right, for otherwise her parents would not have appeared to her. She now continued the preparations for her journey cheerfully. She packed all her linen clothes into a small bundle, and then scoured and dusted her little house carefully. Dressing herself with more than her usual care, and putting her testament in her pocket, she left the house.

Anna took the road leading to the parsonage; she wished to go to confession to her old pastor for the last time. He had known her during the whole of her short life; had baptized her, and with him she had taken her first communion. She had confessed to him her most secret thoughts, and with loving smile, he absolved what she deemed her sins. He would not break the seal of confession, and she therefore opened her heart to him without fear.

The old pastor was deeply moved, and laying his hand upon her head he wept. When she had bid him a long and loving adieu, and had wiped the tears from her eyes, she left the parsonage and hastened to the woods, where Father Buschman was tending his sheep. As soon as the old shepherd saw her, he beckoned to her his welcome.

"I did not see you throughout the whole of yesterday, Anna Sophia," said he, "and my heart was heavy within me; there was something wanting to my happiness."

"I will remain with you to-day to make up for yesterday's absence," said she, seating herself beside him and kissing him tenderly. "I could not work to-day, for my heart aches; I will rest myself with you."

"Your heart aches because Charles Henry must leave us," said the old shepherd. "You would prefer his remaining at home, and not being a soldier?"

"No, I would not prefer this, father," said she, earnestly; "would you?"

The old man looked thoughtful for some time, then said:

"It will be a great sorrow to me, Anna Sophia, for he is the last remaining light of my youth, and when he goes all will be dark and gloomy for me. It does me good to see his bright, handsome face; to hear his gay morning and evening song; and when you two are sitting beside me hand in hand upon the old bench at the front of our little hut, my youth comes back to me. I see myself sitting on the same bench with my dear old woman—it was our favorite seat when we were young. When Charles Henry leaves me, I not only lose him, but my whole past life seems to vanish away."

"You would, therefore, prefer he should remain at home?" said Anna, anxiously.

"If it were possible," said he, "but it is not. His king has called him, he must obey."

"But he may, perhaps, be allowed to stay, father, if you will declare that you are too old, too weak to support yourself, and wish the only prop of your old age to remain with you, the authorities at Cleve may, perhaps, grant your request."

The old shepherd shook his head slowly and thoughtfully, and said:

"No, we will not make the attempt; it would be deception, and could bring us no honor. I am not too weak to earn my own living, and it would be a disgrace to Charles Henry if I bought him off from his duty. The world might then think he was a coward, and had not courage enough to fight."

"Do you think it a disgrace for a man to be wanting in courage?" said Anna Sophia, gazing at him as if her life depended upon his answer.

"I think so," said he, calmly; "it is as bad for a man to be without courage as for a woman to be without virtue."

Anna Sophia raised her dark, glowing eyes to heaven with an expression of deep thankfulness. Then giving way to her emotion, she threw her arms around the old shepherd, and, leaning her head upon his shoulder, she wept bitterly. He did not disturb her, but pressed her tenderly to his heart, and whispered occasionally a few loving, consoling words. He believed he understood her sorrow; he thought he knew the source of these tears. She was weeping because all hope of preventing her betrothed from being a soldier was now gone.

"Weep no more, my child," said he, at last; "your eyes will be red; it will sadden Charles Henry, and make it harder for him to say good-by. See, there he comes to join us—do not weep, my child."

Anna raised her head and dried her eyes hastily.

"I am not weeping, father," said she. "I entreat you do not tell Charles Henry that I have been crying—do not, if you love me. I will promise not to be sad again."

"I will be silent, but you must keep your word and be cheerful, so as not to sadden the poor boy."

"I will."

Anna Sophia kept her word. She gave Charles Henry a bright, cheery welcome. While she was joking and laughing with the old man, evening came upon them, and as it cast its shadows about, Charles Henry became more and more silent and sad.

It was now time to drive home the fold; the sun had set, and Phylax had collected his little army.

The old shepherd arose. "And now, my children," said he, "take leave of one another. It is the last sunset you will see together for many a long day. Swear to each other here, in the presence of God and of his beautiful world, that you will be true to each other, that your love shall never change."

Charles Henry looked timidly, beseechingly at Anna Sophia, but she would not encounter his gaze.

"We have said all that we had to say," said she, quietly, "we will therefore not make our parting harder by repeating it."

"It will make parting much easier to me," cried Charles Henry, "if you will swear to be true, and always to love me. Though many years may pass, Anna Sophia, before we meet again, I will never cease to love you, never cease to think of you."

"This will I also do, Charles Henry," said Anna, solemnly. "My thoughts will be with you daily, hourly; your name will be constantly upon my lips!"

Charles Henry turned pale. He understood the ambiguous meaning of this oath, and it cut him to the heart.

"And now, good-night, Anna Sophia," said the old shepherd; "to-morrow evening, when your work is done, I will await you here. We will have to love and console each other. Good-night once more!"

"Good-night, dear father," whispered she, in a voice choked with tears, as she pressed a burning kiss on his brow.

The old man took her in his arms and embraced her tenderly, then whispered:

"To-morrow we will weep together, Anna Sophia."

Anna tore herself from his arms.

"Good-night, father!"—and then turning to Charles Henry, she said: "When do you leave for Cleve?"

"To night, at ten," said he; "I prefer going at night; it is much hotter in the day, and I must be at Cleve at eight in the morning. I will be at your door to-night, to take a last look at you."

"It is all right," said she, dryly, turning from him and hastening home.

Night had come; the village night-watch had announced the tenth hour; no light gleamed through the windows—the busy noise and bustle of day had given place to deep quiet. The whole village was at rest, every eye was closed. No one saw Charles Henry as he passed, with a bundle under his arm, and took the path leading to the old school-house—no one but the moon, that was gleaming brightly above, and was illuminating the solitary wanderer's path.

For the first time he found Anna Sophia's door open—he had no

need to knock. He entered undisturbed with his bundle, which contained the suit of clothes Anna had desired.

Half an hour later the door was opened, and two tall, slenderly-built young men left the house. The moon saw it all; she saw that the man with the hat on, and with the bundle on his back, was none other than Anna Sophia Detzloff, daughter of the old school-teacher. She saw that the one who was following her, whose countenance was so ghastly pale—not because the moon was shining upon it, but because he was so sad, so truly wretched—that this other was Charles Henry Buschman, who was coward enough to let his bride go to battle in his stead! The moon saw them shake hands for the last time and bid each other farewell.

"Let me go a little bit of the way with you, Anna Sophia," said Charles Henry; "it is so dark, so still, and soon you will go through the woods. It is best I should be with you, for it is so fearfully gloomy. Let me accompany you, Anna Sophia."

"I have no fear of the woods," said she, gently; "the stars above will watch over and guard me, the moon will shed her light upon my path, it will not be dark. I must go my way through life alone—I must have no fear of any thing, not even of death. Leave me now, and be careful that you are seen by no one during the whole of to-morrow in my house. No one will go there to-morrow, for I have left word in the village that I am going on a visit to my aunt at Cleve. I have prepared your meals for you; the table is set, and above, in my room, you will find books to read. You can stand it for one day, to-morrow evening you will be released. Farewell, Charles Henry!"

"Do not go, Anna Sophia," said he, weeping and trembling; "I will go. I will force my heart to be courageous! You must stay here."

"It is too late," said Anna; "nor could you do it, Charles Henry. You are afraid of the dark woods, and what comes beyond is much more fearful. We have taken leave of each other, the worst is past. Kiss your father for me, and when at times you are sitting upon the old bench, remind him of Anna Sophia."

"I will obey you," whispered he.

But Anna was not listening to him; she had turned from him, and was hastening down the road.

The moon saw it all! She saw the tears steal slowly from Anna Sophia's eyes, and fall unknown to herself upon her cheek, as she turned her back upon her old home and hastened forward to a life of danger, privation, and want. She saw Charles Henry leaning upon the door of the old school-house, staring after Anna with a trembling heart until the last glimpse of her was lost in the distant

woods. He then entered the school-house and fastened the door behind him. His heart was heavy and sorrowful, he was ashamed of himself; he was sorry for what he had done, but had not the strength to change it; and as he went over Anna Sophia's departure, he was inwardly rejoiced that he himself was to remain at home.

On the morning of the second day after Anna's departure, there was a great stir in the village, there were two astounding reports to excite the community. Charles Henry Buschman had returned from Cleve; they had told him he could be spared for a while. The second report was that Anna Sophia had not returned from her visit. They waited for several days, and as she did not come, Charles Henry went to the distant village where her aunt lived. But he returned with sad news. Anna Sophia was not there, her aunt had not seen her.

What had become of her? Where was she? No one could clear up the mystery. Many spoke of suicide; she had drowned herself in the large lake to the left of the village they said, because her betrothed had to leave her. The old pastor would not listen to this; but when the aunt came to take possession of her niece's worldly goods, he had to bring forward the will Anna had given him, in which she had willed her all to Father Buschman. And now no one doubted that Anna had laid hands upon herself. The mystery remained unsolved. Every one pitied and sympathized with Charles Henry, who had lost all his former cheerfulness since the death of his bride!

CHAPTER V.

THE PRISONER.

Two years had passed since Frederick von Trenck entered the fortress of Magdeburg. Two years! What is that to those who live, work, strive, and fight the battle of life? A short space of time, dashing on with flying feet, and leaving nothing for remembrance but a few important moments.

Two years! What is that to the prisoner? A gray, impenetrable eternity, in which the bitter waters of the past fall drop by drop upon all the functions of life, and hollow out a grave for the being without existence, who no longer has the courage to call himself a man. Two years of anxious waiting, of vain hopes, of ever-renewing self-deception, of labor without result.

This was Trenck's existence, since the day the doors of the citadel of Magdeburg closed upon him as a prisoner. He had had many bitter disappointments, much secret suffering; he had learned to

know human nature in all its wickedness and insignificance, its love of money and corruption, but also in its greatness and exaltation, and its constancy and kindness.

Amongst the commandants and officers of the fortress whose duty it was to guard Trenck, there were many hard and cruel hearts, which exulted in his tortures, and who, knowing the king's personal enmity to him, thought to recommend themselves by practising the most refined cruelties upon the defenceless prisoner. But he had also found warm human souls, who pitied his misfortunes, and who sought, by every possible means, to ameliorate his sad fate. And, after all, never had the night of his imprisonment been utterly dark and impenetrable. The star of hope, of love, of constancy, had glimmered from afar. This star, which had thrown its silver veil over his most beautiful and sacred remembrances, over his young life of liberty and love, this star was Amelia. She had never ceased to think of him, to care for him, to labor for his release; she had always found means to supply him with help, with gold, with active friends. But, alas! all this had only served to add to his misfortunes, to narrow the boundaries of his prison, and increase the weight of his chains.

Treachery and seeming accident had, up to this time, made vain every attempt at escape, and destroyed in one moment the sad and exhausting labors of many long months. The first and seemingly most promising attempt at flight had miscarried, through the treason of the faithless Baron Weingarten, who had offered to communicate between Trenck and the princess.

For six long months Trenck had worked with ceaseless and incomparable energy at a subterranean path which would lead him to freedom; all was prepared, all complete. The faithful grenadier, Gefhart, who had been won over by the princess, had given him the necessary instruments, and through the bars of his prison had conveyed to him such food as would strengthen him for his giant task.

Nothing was now wanting but gold, to enable Trenck, when he had escaped, to hire a little boat, which would place him on the other side of the Elbe—gold, to enable him to make a rapid flight.

Gefhart had undertaken to deliver Trenck's letter to the princess, asking for this money. This letter, written with his own blood upon a piece of linen, had been forwarded through Gefhart's mistress, the Jewess Rebecca, to Weingarten. He delivered it to the princess, and received, through Pöllnitz, two thousand thalers, which he did not hand over to Rebecca, but retained for himself, and betrayed to the king Trenck's intended flight.

This was but a short time before Weingarten's own flight; and while he was enjoying the fruit of this base fraud in security and

freedom, poor Trenck was forced to descend still lower in the citadel, and take possession of that frightful prison which, by special command of the king, had been built and prepared for him, in the lowest casemates of the fortress.

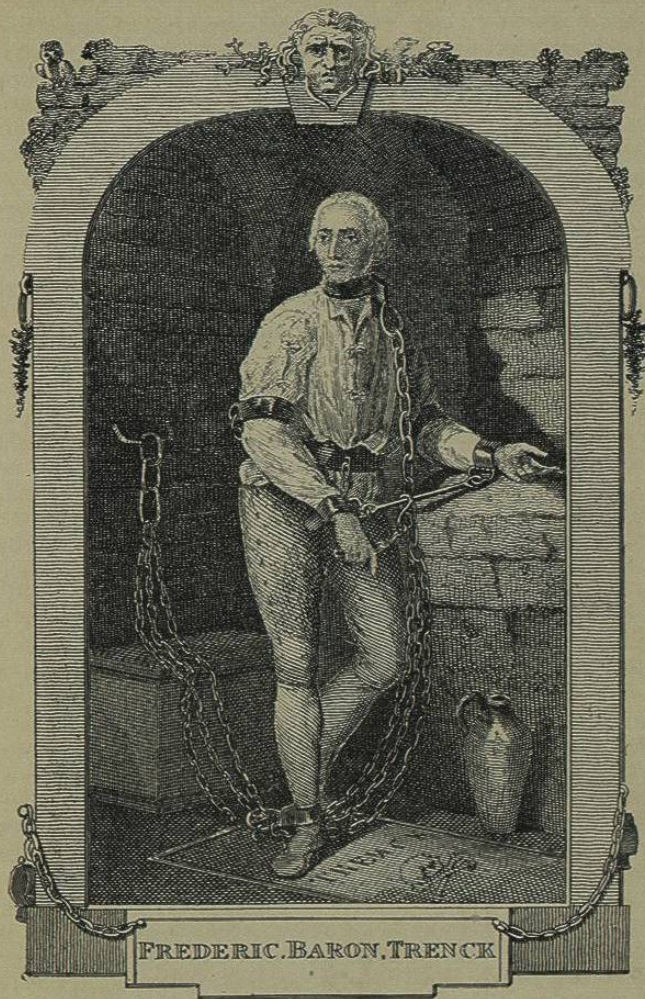
The king was greatly exasperated at these never-ending attempts of Trenck to escape; his courage and endurance made him an interesting and admired martyr to the whole garrison at Magdeburg.

Frederick wished to give to this garrison, and to all his soldiers, a terrible example of the relentless severity with which insubordination should be punished, to prove to them that mortal daring and mortal energy were vain to escape the avenging hand of royal justice.

Trenck, who, in the beginning, had only been condemned to arrest in Glatz for six months, had, by his constant attempts at escape, and the mad and eloquent expression of his rage, brought upon himself the sentence of eternal imprisonment, in a subterranean cell, which, by express command of the king, was so prepared, that neither guards nor soldiers were necessary to his detention. A jailer only was needed, to lock the four doors of the corridor which led to Trenck's cell. It was as little dangerous to guard this poor prisoner as to approach the lion bound by chains and hemmed in by iron bars.

Trenck was indeed manacled like a wild beast. A chain clanked upon his feet, an iron girdle was around his waist, to which hung a heavy chain, fastened to a thick iron bar built in the wall; manacles were made fast to each end of an iron bar, to which his hands were bound. The most cruel wild beast would not have been so tortured; some one would have had pity on him, and mercifully ended his life. But this creature, thus tortured, groaning and clanking his heavy chains—this creature was a man, therefore there was no pity. It would have been considered a crime to put an end to his life; but slowly, day by day, to murder him, was only justice.

The king had made it the personal duty of the commandant, Bruckhäusen, to guard Trenck. He declared that if he allowed Trenck to escape, he should not only lose his place and rank, but take Trenck's place in his fearful cell. This was a frightful menace to the ambitious and harsh commandant, Bruckhäusen, and, of course, led him to take the severest precautions. It was he, therefore, who had bound Trenck, and, whenever he visited the poor prisoner in his cell, he rejoiced in the artistic construction of his chains, and looked proudly upon his work. He saw with delight that Trenck was scarcely able to drag his heavy chains two feet to the right or left, or to raise the tin cup to his parched lips, with his hands thus fastened to an iron bar; and as often as he left the cell, he exclaimed, with an expression of malicious joy:



"I have tamed him forever! he will not escape me!"

But Trenck was not tamed; his courage was not broken. In this crushed and wasted form dwelt a strong soul, a bounding heart; he had been bound in chains thought to be indissoluble. Trenck alone did not believe this; he trusted still in the magic power of his will, in his good star, which had not yet been quenched in darkness.

In the wall to which the chain was fastened, his name was built, in red tiles; a gravestone marked the spot upon which his feet moved, upon which a death's head and the name of Trenck was engraved. Under this stone there was a vault, and when one looked at the moist walls, from which the water constantly trickled, and at the dark cell, which for six months had not been cheered by one ray of light, they might well suppose that the gravestone would soon be lifted, and the vault opened to receive the poor prisoner, upon whose grave no other tears would flow. These dark walls were, as it appeared, softer and more pitiful than the hearts of men.

Trenck was not subdued; the death's head and his name upon the gravestone did not terrify him! It was nothing more to him than a constant reminder to collect his courage and his strength, and to oppose to his daily menace of death a strong conviction of life and liberty.

If his prison were dark, and warmed by no ray of sunshine, he leaned his head against the wall, closed his eyes, and his vivid imagination and glowing fancy was the slave of his will, and painted his past life in magic pictures.

The prisoner, clad as a convict, with his hands and feet chained, became at once the child of fortune and love; the exalted favorite of princes, the admired cavalier, the envied courtier, and the darling of lovely women.

When hunger drove him to eat the coarse bread which was his only nourishment, and to satisfy his thirst with the muddy water in the tin pitcher at his side, he thought of the meals, worthy of Lucullus, of which he had partaken, at the Russian court, by the side of the all-powerful Russian minister Bestuchef; he remembered the fabulous pomp which surrounded him, and the profound reverence which was shown him, as the acknowledged favorite of the prime minister of the empress.

When no one whispered one word of consolation or of sympathy, for all trembled at the ceaseless watchfulness of the commandant—when the rude silent jailer came daily and placed his bread and water before him and left him without word or greeting—then Trenck recalled the sacred, consecrated hours in which love had whispered sweet names and tender words. This love still lived—it watched over and shone down upon him—it was a star of hope.

Why should Trenck despair, when love lived and lived only for him? No, he would not die—he would never be buried under this gravestone. Beyond these thick, damp walls lay the world—the living, active, blooming world. It was only necessary to break these chains, to open the five heavy doors which confined him to his dark prison, and life, liberty, the world, honor, love, belonged to him!

“Is not my will stronger than chains and bolts?” he said. “Has not the spirit wings by which she can take flight, mocking at prisons and at torture?”

His spirit was free, for he believed in freedom: when his chains clanked around him, it seemed to him as if they whispered of speedy liberty—as if they exhorted him in soft, harmonious tones, to cast them off and become a free and happy man.

At last there came a day when he could no longer resist these alluring voices. If he could break these chains the first step was taken, and only the doors remained to be opened. By close observation, he had discovered that the inner door of his prison was of wood. The faithful Gefhart had managed to inform him that the other doors were also of wood. He had also conveyed to him a small, sharp knife, the most precious of all earthly treasures, for with this he hoped to obtain his freedom.

“But the chains!” First must the chains be broken—first must his right hand be free! And it was free. Although the blood was bursting from the nails Trenck forced his hand through the manacle. Freedom greeted him with her first rapturous smile. Alas, the handcuff upon the left hand was too narrow to be removed in this way. With a piece of his chain he broke off a fragment of stone which he used as a file, and in this way he liberated his left hand. The iron ring around his waist was fastened only by a hook to the chain attached to the wall. Trenck placed his feet against the wall, and bending forward with all his strength, succeeded in straightening the hook so far as to remove it from the ring. And now there only remained the heavy wooden chain fastened to his feet, and also made fast to the wall. By a powerful effort he broke two of the links of this chain.

He was free—free—at least to stand erect and walk around his miserable prison. With a feeling of inexpressible joy he raised himself to his full height—it enraptured him to move his arms, so long and painfully confined—he extended them widely and powerfully, as if he wished to clasp the whole outside world to his heart.

Could the commandant Bruckhäusen have cast one glance into this horrible, noiseless cell, he would have trembled with rage and apprehension. The unchained giant stood with glad smiles, and flaming eyes, and outstretched arms, as if adjuring the spirits of the

under-world to come to his assistance. But the commandant lay in careless security upon his soft, white couch; his eyes were closed; they could not pierce the dark cell where a fellow-man, with loudly-beating heart, but silent lips, called rapturously to the fair goddess Liberty, and hastened to clasp her in his arms.

Stepping forward, he sought the door of his prison, and kneeling before it, he took out his knife. He tried to cut out a small piece and to ascertain the thickness of the wall; this was short work—the door opened inside, and it was easy to cut around and remove the lock. It was made of simple oak boards. Once convinced of this, Trenck prudently sought his mattress in order to obtain rest and strength. It was impossible to commence his labor then. The night was far spent, and every morning at eight o'clock the jailer came to inspect him and bring his bread and water. His visit must be over before he could begin his work—he must possess his soul in patience. What were a few hours' waiting to him who had waited long, dreary years?—a fleeting moment, scarcely sufficient to accustom him to his new happiness, to enable him to collect his thoughts and bear quietly the rapturous conviction of approaching freedom.

“Yes, I will be free; this is the last night of my imprisonment.” But while waiting in this dreary prison he could enjoy one pleasure long denied him—he could stretch his limbs upon his bed without being martyred and crushed by his bonds—without hearing the clank of chains. With what gladness he now stretched himself upon his poor couch!—how grateful he was to God for this great happiness!—how sweet his sleep!—how glorious his dreams!

Trenck awaked in the early morning, revived and strengthened. It was time to prepare for the daily visitation—to replace his chains, and take possession of his gravestone. His eyes accustomed to the darkness soon discovered the broken link of the chain, which he hid in his mattress. With a piece of his hair-band he fastened the chain to his feet, hung the second chain to the ring upon his waist, and now it only remained to place his hands in the manacles fastened to the iron bar. He had filed the handcuff from his left hand and that was easy to resume, but it was impossible to force his right hand through the ring; he had succeeded in removing it by a mighty effort the evening before, but it was consequently greatly swollen. He took again his little piece of stone and tried to file it apart, but every effort was in vain. Nearer and nearer came the hour of visitation, and if his right hand were free when the jailer came, all would be discovered. It seemed to him as if he heard already the bolt of the first door. With a last, frightful effort, he forced his hand in the manacle; his fingers cracked as if the bones were

broken; it was scarcely possible for him to suppress a shriek of anguish. But the danger was even at the door, and the blessing of freedom was not too dearly bought even by this anguish; he bore it with heroic fortitude, and though his whole figure trembled with pain, he conquered himself. He leaned back breathlessly and almost unconsciously against the wall; and now the bolt really moved, and the jailer, followed by two officers, entered.

The visitation began. In this small cell, which held nothing but a mattress, a seat built in the wall, and a small table, there was but little to examine. A fleeting glance at Trenck's chains, which were rattling around him, and the search was over, and the jailer and officers left the prison. Trenck listened in breathless silence till he heard the bolt of the fifth door rattling, and now life and movement were in his form and features. It was time to work. But alas! it was impossible. The swollen, blood-red, throbbing hand could not possibly be withdrawn from the handcuff. He must control himself—must wait and be patient. He resolved to do this with a brave heart, in the full conviction that he would attain his liberty.

At last, after three days, the swelling disappeared, and he found he could withdraw his hand without difficulty. The visit was no sooner over, than his chains fell off. For the last time! God grant that for the last time he had heard them clank!

A herculean work was before him, but Freedom was without and awaiting him, and he panted to embrace her. Seizing his little pocket-knife, he stepped to the door and commenced his labor. The first door was not difficult, it opened from within. In half an hour the work was done, and Trenck advanced and extended his hands before him till they encountered another obstacle. This was the second door. But here was indeed a weary task. The door opened on the outside and a heavy cross-bar besides the lock secured it. It was necessary to cut entirely through the door above the bar, and spring over it. Trenck did not despair—bravely, unwearily, he went to work—the perspiration fell from his brow and mingled with the blood which trickled from his lacerated hands. Trenck did not regard it; he felt no pain, no exhaustion. Freedom stood before the frowning citadel, and awaited his coming. At last it was achieved; with trembling hands he lifted the upper part of the door from the hinges and sprang into the outer room.

Here light and sunshine greeted him. Weary months had gone by since he had seen the sun—the soft light of heaven on the fresh green of earth—and now all this was his once more. There was a small window in this corridor, and not too high for him to look abroad. He turned his eyes, filled with tears of the purest joy,

upon the cloudless heavens; he followed with longing eyes the flight of the doves, who moved like a black cloud across the sky and disappeared on the horizon. He inhaled with long-drawn breath the fresh, glad air, which appeared to him laden with the fragrance of all the flowers of the world. He gave himself up for a few moments to this first rapturous enjoyment, then conquered himself and examined his surroundings with a thoughtful, searching eye.

He saw that his prison was built against the first wall of the fortress, and was exactly opposite an entrance, before which stood a high palisade; this he must climb before he could reach the outer wall. But the night was long, and he saw that the guard patrolling upon the wall disappeared from time to time for more than five minutes; he must therefore have some distance to walk before he returned to the same spot. While his back was turned, must Trenck climb the palisade and wall.

Trenck sprang back upon the floor with a glad and happy heart. What he had seen of the free, outer world had given him new life. With cheerful resolution he stepped to the third door. This was constructed like the first, and gave him but little trouble—it was soon opened, and Trenck passed on the other side.

The sun went down, and the twilight obscured his view, as this was completed. And now his strength was exhausted, and his swollen and bleeding hands, from which the flesh hung in shreds, refused their service. With inexpressible despair he looked at the fourth door, which opened from the outside, and it was again necessary to cut through the whole breadth of the door in order to advance.

Worn out and trembling, he seated himself near the door and leaned his aching head against the cool wood. He sat thus a long time, till he felt that his blood was flowing more calmly, and the wild, quick beating of his pulse had subsided—till the pain in his hands and limbs was quieted, and he had won new strength. He then rose from the floor, took his knife, and recommenced his work. He moved more slowly than before, but his work progressed. It could scarcely be midnight, and half the door was cut through. The moon shed her peerless rays through the little window and lighted his work, and showed him what remained to be done. In two hours he would finish, and then remained only the fifth door which opened on the wall, and which Gefhart assured him was not difficult. In three hours the work would be done—in three hours he might stand without, in the fresh, free air of heaven, himself a free and happy man.

With renewed courage and renewed strength, after a short rest, he went again to work. He thrust his knife into the opening and pressed powerfully against the wood. Suddenly his hand seemed

paralyzed—on the other side of the door he heard a light clang, and with a hollow cry of woe, Trenck sank upon the floor. The blade of the knife was broken and had fallen on the other side. Now he was lost! There was no longer hope of escape! He rushed to the window; would it not be possible to escape in that way? No, no! It was not possible to pass through this small opening.

Trenck sank upon his knees before the window and stared into the heavens. His pallid lips murmured low words. Were they prayers?—were they curses?—or was it the death-rattle of dead hopes and dying liberty? At last he rose from his knees; his face, which had been that of a corpse, now assumed an expression of firm resolve. Staggering and creeping along by the wall, he returned to his prison, which he had left so short a time before full of happy hopes. He reached his bed and laid down upon it, holding the broken knife in his hand. Not to sleep, not to rest, but to die! He could think of no other hope—no other way than this. "Yes, I will die!" His life's courage, his life's energy, was exhausted. He had closed his account with the world. Slowly he raised his hand aloft with the broken knife, and collecting all his strength for one last, decisive blow, he bowed and cut the vein of his left foot, then raised his head with a smile of triumph, and stretching out his left arm he forced the stump of his knife deep into the large vein of his elbow. The deed was done! He felt the warm blood flowing from his veins—he felt that with it also was sweeping by the miserable remnant of his buried existence. His thoughts wandered, and a happy insensibility overpowered him, and now his blessed spirit floated chainless and free beyond this drear prison. The necessities of this poor life and its tortures were overcome.

But what was that? Who called his name lightly from without, and made the air of this living grave tremble with unwonted tones?

When this call was repeated the second time, Trenck felt a light trembling in his whole frame. The whisper of his name had called back his fleeting spirit. The godlike dream of release was at an end; Trenck lived again, a suffering, defenceless man. For the third time he heard his name called—for the third time a voice, as if from heaven, rang, "Trenck! Trenck!"

Trenck gathered all his little strength, and replied:

"Who calls me?"

"It is I," said the faithful Gefhart; "have I not sworn to bring you help? I have crept over the wall only to say to you that I think of you—that you must not despair—that help is nigh, even at the door. An unknown friend has sent you a greeting by me; he has given me a roll of gold to be useful in your flight. Come near, I will throw it to you through the window."

"It is too late, Gefhart, all is too late! I lie bathed in my blood; to-morrow they will find me dead!"

"But why die?" cried the fresh, strong voice of Gefhart; "why wish for death, now when escape is possible? Here there are no guards, and I will soon find a way to furnish you with tools. Try only to break your prison—for the rest I will remain responsible."

"Alas, I tried to-night and I failed!" said Trenck. A few tears stole from his eyes and rolled slowly over his hollow cheeks.

"You will succeed better another time, Baron Trenck; whenever I am on guard here I will seek an opportunity to speak with you, and we will arrange all. Do not despair. I must go, the sun is rising, and I may be seen. Do not despair! God will help you—trust fully in me."*

The voice had long since died away, but Trenck listened still for those tones, which seemed like the greeting of one of God's angels; they illuminated his prison and gave strength to his soul. No, no, now he would not die! He felt his courage revive. He would defy fate, and oppose its stern decrees by the mighty power of his will.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRISON BARRICADE.

No, he would not die! With trembling hands he tore his coarse shirt into strips, and bound with it his bleeding veins. When he had thus closed the portals upon death, he seated himself to meditate upon the means of avoiding still severer punishment. He soon arose from his bed, much strengthened by the short rest he had had. With an iron bar that he had forced from his bed he hammered into the wall until the stones, around which the mortar had become loosened owing to the dampness of the cell, fell at his feet. He piled them together in the centre of his cell, and then hastened to barricade the second door he had attempted to force. The lower part of it was still held on by the lock; over the opening at the top he passed the chains several times that he had forced from his limbs, forming a sort of trellis-work, which rendered entrance from without impossible.

When all his preparations were made, when he was ready for the contest, he seated himself upon his strange barricade, and there, wearied out by suffering and anxiety, he fell into a sweet sleep. He was awakened by the sound of many loud voices. Through the iron lattice of the second door he saw the wondering, terrified coun-

* "Frederick von Trenck" Important Memoirs."

tenances of the city guard, who were endeavoring to unloose the chains. With one bound Trenck was beside his door, balancing in his right hand a large stone, and in the left his broken knife. He cried out, in a furious voice:

"Back! back!—let no one dare to enter here. My stones shall have good aim; I will kill any one who ventures to enter this room. Major, tell his excellency, the commandant, that I will remain no longer in chains. I wish him to have me shot down at once! I will thank him for my death, but I will curse him if he forces me to become a murderer. For I swear, before God, I will stone any one who seeks to overpower me. I will die—yes, die!"

It was a fearful sight—this man, thin, wan, naked, and bleeding, who seemed to have risen from the grave to revenge the sufferings of his life. His countenance was ghastly pale, his hair lying in matted locks on his neck; and the long beard, covering the lower part of his face, and falling almost to his waist, gave him a wild, insane look, which was heightened by the fearful brightness of his eyes.

With terror and pity they gazed at the poor unfortunate one whom despair had driven to this extremity; who remained deaf to all their representations, all their entreaties, still swearing that he would kill any one who approached him. It was in vain that the officers besought him in the most tender manner to submit—that the prison chaplain came and implored him, in the name of God, to give up this useless resistance. God's name had no effect whatever upon him. What was God to him—to him on whom no one had pity, neither God nor man; he whom they treated like a wild beast, and fastened in a cage? It was in vain that the commandant ordered the guard to storm the fortified door. Trenck received them with stones, and sent the two foremost ones reeling to the floor, causing the others to fall back in dismay.

Trenck raised his hand with a shout of exultation, armed with another stone, and fixing his wild, triumphant glance upon the commandant, he cried:

"You see it is useless to endeavor to take me while living. Order the guards to fire! Let me die!"

The commandant lacked the power to do as Trenck requested, however willing he may have been to grant his request. Instead of continuing his threats, he withdrew into another chamber, signing to the major to follow him.

Trenck still stood with uplifted arm when the major returned. And now, as the stern, much-feared commandant had left, no one withheld the tender sympathy that was almost breaking the hearts of the lookers-on. Trenck saw it written upon every countenance,

and he to whom a look and word of pity had been so long unknown, felt deeply touched. His expression became milder, and as the major, whom he had known in the other prison, commenced to speak to him in gentle, loving tones, and implored him not to cause his ruin, for all the punishment would fall upon his head, as, through his negligence, Trenck had been allowed to retain his knife—as he finished, Trenck's arm fell to his side, and tears streamed from his eyes.

"No one," said he, gently—"no one shall become unhappy through me, for misery is a fearful thing. I will make no further resistance, if you will swear to me that no heavy chains shall be put upon me—that I shall suffer no unworthy punishment."

The major promised him, in the commandant's name, that if he ceased to resist, no further notice would be taken of the affair.

"Then," whispered Trenck, with a bitter smile, "I must suffer anew—suffer forever."

He approached the door and drew off the chains.

"Now, guards," said he, "the door can be opened. The wild beast has become tame."

Then, with a low moan, he sank fainting upon the floor. He was lifted up and laid upon his bed. Tears were in every eye, but Trenck did not see them; he did not hear their low, whispered words of sympathy and friendship. Death, from whom Trenck had once more been torn, had sent her twin sister, insensibility, to cause him to forget his sufferings for a while.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BATTLE OF COLLIN.

LOST!—the battle was lost! This was the cry of woe throughout the Prussian camp—this was the fearful cry that palsied the hands of those who could not endure defeat.

The Prussians who had defeated the enemy at Losovitz and Prague, were condemned to yield the palm of victory at Collin to their enemy's commander, Marshal Daun. They had fought bravely, desperately for this victory; and when all was over, death would have been preferable to defeat.

The Prussians were beaten, though their king, Ziethen, and Moritz von Dessau—all of them heroes—were in the field. At the first thought of the possibility of losing the battle, there was a fearful panic throughout the army.