

standing before, and looked out for a few moments. Some one, perhaps, had passed with whom he was acquainted, for he bowed several times and raised his hand as if he were beckoning. After this intermission, at which the queen and her confessor had looked in amazement, he opened the letter and commenced to read.

It was a demand from Queen Maria Josephine to the Austrian general to do all in his power to ruin their common enemy. "If we are energetic," continued the general, reading in a loud voice, "it will soon be done. At the battle of Collin, God laid his mark upon Frederick; Prussia will have no more victories; her arrogant ruler has sung his last *Te Deum*."

At this moment the bells of the nearest church commenced their solemn chimes, and from the fort behind the castle the thunder of cannon was heard. The queen rose from her seat and rushed to the window.

"What is the meaning of this?" said she, breathlessly. "Why these bells? Why this cannon? What—"

The renewed thunder of cannon drowned her words. She threw open the window, and now all the church bells were joined in one harmonious chant. From beneath the queen's windows there arose a slow, solemn hymn, and as if borne aloft by invisible spirits, the words "*Te Deum laudamus*" were heard by the queen. Her eyes sparkled. "For whom is this *Te Deum*?" said she, breathlessly.

"It is for my master," said General Fink, solemnly—"for the King of Prussia, who at Rossbach, with twenty thousand men, has gained a victory over sixty thousand French soldiers."

A cry of rage, and Maria Josephine fell fainting to the floor.

CHAPTER XII.

CAMP SCENE.

It was a cold winter day, and in the Prussian camp at Newmark every one was occupied making fires.

"Let us get a great deal of wood," said a sprightly-looking, slender young soldier, to his comrades; "our limbs must not be stiff to-day. I think to-morrow all will go off bravely, and we will prepare a strong soup for the Austrians."

"And instead of the noodles, we will send them cannon-balls," said a comrade, standing near him. "But see here, brother, as we are not going to fight this evening, I think we should make use of the time and cook a soup for ourselves. When we have wood enough for a good fire, we will set the kettle over it, and the best of pastimes

will be ready. Shall we do it, comrades? Every man a groschen, and Charles Henry Buschman to cook the noodles."

"Yes, Buschman must cook the noodles; no one understands it so well as he. Charles Henry Buschman! Where hides the fellow? He is generally sticking to Fritz Kober, and they are chatting together as if they were lovers. Buschman! Charles Henry Buschman! Where are you?"

"Here I am!" cried a bright, fresh voice, and a slender youth, belonging to Prince Henry's regiment, stepped forward and joined them. "Who calls me?—what do you want?"

"We want you to cook noodles for us, Buschman; every man pays a groschen, and eats to his heart's content. You shall have them for nothing, because you prepare them."

"I will have nothing that I don't pay for," said Charles Henry, proudly; "I can pay as well as the rest of you, and perhaps I have more money than all of you; for while you are drinking, smoking, and playing, I put my groschens aside for a rainy day."

"Yes, that is true; Buschman is the most orderly, the most industrious of us all," said Fritz Kober, as he nodded lovingly to his young friend. "He does not drink, or smoke, or play; and, I can tell you, he sews like a woman. He mended a shirt for me to-day. A ball had passed through it at Rossbach, making a hole in the left sleeve. I tell you, the shirt looks as if a clever woman had mended it."

"Well, it is a pity he isn't one," said one of the soldiers, with a merry laugh; "perhaps you have a sister at home, Henry, whom you could give to Kober."

"No, comrade," said Charles Henry, sadly; "I have neither father, mother, sister, nor brother. I am alone in the world, and have no other friend but my comrade, Fritz Kober. Will you not give him to me, comrades? Will you tease him because he is the friend of a poor, young fellow, against whom you have nothing to say except that he is just seventeen years old, and has no beard, and his voice a little thin, not able to make as much noise as yourself? Promise me that you will not laugh at Fritz again because he is kind to, and loves a poor, forsaken boy. If you tease him, he will become desperate and run off from me, and then, when I fall in battle, he will not close my eyes as he has promised to do."

"I will never run away from you, darling brother," said Fritz Kober. "We two shall stay together in camp and in battle. You have won me with your soft, black eyes; they remind me of those of my good, faithful Phylax."

"Well, well, Fritz shall do as he pleases," said one of the boys; "but enough with our chatting, let us seek the wood for our fire."

"Wood, wood, let us seek wood," cried all, gayly, and the happy troop separated on all sides. Only Charles Henry remained to prepare the fire. With busy haste he took the kettle, which the soldiers had dragged near, ran to the neighboring market and bought a groschen worth of lard to make the noodles savory, then hastened back to cut the bacon and mix it with the noodles. Some of the soldiers returned empty-handed—no wood was to be found; the soldiers, who had searched before them, had taken it all.

"It would be horrible not to have noodles this evening," said Fritz Kober, furiously. "Who knows but they may be the last we shall eat in this world? The balls may take our heads off to-morrow, and we never could eat Charles Henry's noodles again."

"What you can do to-day never put off until to-morrow," cried one of the soldiers. "We must eat noodles to-day, and we must have wood, even if we have to steal it from the devil's kitchen." And, as he turned around, his eye fell upon a little hut which stood on the other side of the camp. "Boys," he cried, gleefully, "do you see that hut?"

"Certainly; that hut is the king's quarters."

"I am willing the king should occupy the hut; but it is covered with wood, and he does not need that. Come, boys, we will have wood to cook our noodles."

With a hurrah they started forward to the old forsaken shepherd's hut in which the king had taken refuge. They climbed the rook as nimbly as cats, and now the old boards cracked and groaned and flew in every direction, and were received with shouts of joy by the surrounding soldiers. Suddenly a guard officer stepped from the hut, and saw with horror its destruction; he ordered the soldiers to lay the boards as they had found them, and to go off at once. The soldiers mocked at him, and continued at their work quietly.

"We are going to eat noodles," they said, "common noodles, of meal and lard, that we may have the courage to swallow iron noodles to-morrow. To cook noodles, we need wood. We find it here, and we shall take it."

"What!" cried the officer, "I forbid it, and you refuse to obey?—Sentinels, forward!"

The four guards, who, until now, had walked quietly to and fro before the hut, placed themselves at the door and shouldered arms.

"Fire at the first one who dares to touch another piece of wood," commanded the officer. But the wanton soldiers paid no attention to this order; they regarded it as an empty threat.

"Fire," cried one, laughing, "fire is just what we want—without fire, no noodles; and to make fire we must have wood."

"Whew! I have a big splinter in my finger," cried another sol-

dier, who was on the roof, and had just broken off a plank; "I must draw it out and put it back, mustn't I, lieutenant?"

At this question the gay group broke into a loud laugh; but it was interrupted by the angry words of the officer.

Suddenly a mild voice asked: "What is the matter?" At the first sound of this voice the soldiers seemed dismayed; they stopped their work, and their merry faces became earnest and thoughtful. Stiff and motionless they remained on the roof awaiting their punishment; they knew that voice only too well, they had heard it in the thunder of battle. The king repeated his question. The officer approached him.

"Sire, these dragoons are tearing the roof from your majesty's quarters, all my threats are useless; therefore I ordered the sentinels forward."

"What do you want with the sentinels?" asked the king.

"To fire amongst them, if they do not desist."

"Have you tried kindness?" said the king, sternly; "do you think, on the day before a battle, I have soldiers to spare, and you may shoot them down because of a piece of wood?"

The officer murmured a few confused words; but the king paid no attention to him; he looked up at the soldiers sitting stiff and motionless upon the roof.

"Listen, dragoons," said the king; "if you take off my roof, the snow will fall in my bed to-night, and you do not wish that, do you?"

"No, we do not wish it, sire," said Fritz Kober, ashamed, slipping softly from the roof; the others followed his example, and prepared to be off, giving melancholy glances at the wood lying on the ground. The king looked thoughtfully after them, and murmured, softly, "Poor fellows, I have deprived them of a pleasure.—Halloo, dragoons," he cried aloud, "listen!"

The soldiers looked back, frightened and trembling.

"Tell me," said the king, "what use were you going to make of the wood?"

"Cook noodles, sire," said Fritz Kober; "Henry Buschman promised to cook noodles for us, and the bacon is already cut; but we have no wood."

"Well, if the bacon is cut," said the king, smiling, "and if Henry Buschman has promised to make the noodles, he must certainly keep his word; take the wood away with you."

"Hurrah! long life to our king and to our good Fritz Kober," cried the soldiers, and, collecting the wood, they hastened away.

The king stepped back, silently, into the small, low room of the hut. Alone, there once more the smile disappeared, and his counte-

nance became sad and anxious. He confessed to himself what he had never admitted to friend or confidant, that it was a daring and most dangerous undertaking to meet the Austrian army of seventy thousand with his thirty-three thousand men.

"And should I fail," said the king, thoughtfully, "and lead these brave troops to their death without benefit to my country—should they die an unknown death—should we be conquered, instead of conquering! Oh, the fortune of battles lies in the hands of Providence; the wisest disposition of troops, the most acute calculations are brought to naught by seeming accident. Should I expose my army to the fearful odds, should I hazard so many lives to gratify my ambition and my pride? My generals say it will be wiser not to attack, but to wait and be attacked. Oh, Winterfeldt, Winterfeldt, were you but here, you would not advise this, not you! Why have you been taken from me, my friend? Why have you left me alone among my enemies? I can find, perhaps, resources against my enemies, but I will never find another Winterfeldt."*

The king leaned his head upon his breast, and tears rolled down his cheeks.

"How solitary, how joyless life is! how rich I was once in friends, how poor I am now! and who knows how much poorer I may be to-morrow at this hour—who knows if I shall have a place to lay my head?—I may be a fugitive, without home or country. Verily, I have the destiny of Mithridates—I want only two sons and a Monima. Well," continued he, with a soft smile, "it is still something to stand alone—misfortunes only strike home. But do I stand alone? have I not an entire people looking to me and expecting me to do my duty? Have I not brave soldiers, who call me father, looking death courageously in the face and hazarding their lives for me? No, I am not alone—and if Mithridates had two sons, I have thirty-three thousand. I will go and bid them good-evening. I think it will refresh my sad heart to hear their cheerful greetings."

The king threw on his mantle and left his quarters, to make, as he was often accustomed to do, a tour through the camp. Only the officer on guard followed him, at a short distance.

It was now dark, and fires, which were lighted everywhere, gave a little protection against the biting cold. It was a beautiful sight—the wide plain, with its numberless, blazing, flickering fires, surrounded by groups of cheerful soldiers, their fresh faces glowing with the light of the flames. In the distance the moon rose grand and full, illuminating the scene with its silver rays, and blending its pale shimmer with the ruddy flames.

The king walked briskly through the camp, and, when recog-

* The king's own words.—Retzow, vol. i., p. 220.

nized, the soldiers greeted him with shouts and loving words. As he approached a large fire, over which hung a big kettle, the contents of which filled the air with savory odors, he heard a brisk voice say:

"Now, comrades, come and eat, the noodles are done!"

"Hurrah! here we are," cried the boys, who were standing not far off, chatting merrily. They sprang forward joyfully, to eat the longed-for noodles.

The king, recognizing the soldiers who had uncovered his roof, drew near to the fire.

"Shall I also come and eat with you?" he said, good-humoredly.

The soldiers looked up from the tin plates, in which the noodles were swimming.

"Yes, sire," said Fritz Kober, jumping up and approaching the king; "yes, you shall eat with us; here is my spoon and knife, and if you reject it, and are only mocking us, I shall be very angry indeed."

The king laughed, and turning to the officer who had followed him, said as if to excuse himself:

"I must really eat, or I shall make the man furious.—Give me your spoon; but listen, I can tell you, if the noodles are not good, I shall be angry." He took the plate and began to eat.

The soldiers all stopped, and looked eagerly at the king. When he had swallowed the first bite, Fritz Kober could no longer restrain his curiosity.

"Well, sire," he said, triumphantly, "what do you say to it? Can't Buschman prepare better noodles than your cleverest cook?"

"Verily," said the king, smiling, "he never cooked such noodles for me, and I must say they are good; but, now I have had enough, and I am much obliged to you."

He wished to return his plate to Fritz Kober, but Fritz shook his head violently.

"See here, your majesty, no one gets off from us with just a 'thank you,' and you, least of all, sire; every one must pay his part."

"Well," said the king, "how much is my share?"

"It cost each of us three groschen; the king may pay what he pleases."

"Will you credit me, dragoon?" said the king, who searched his pockets in vain for money.

"Oh! yes, your majesty, I will credit you, but only until to-morrow morning, early; for, if a cannon-ball took my head off, I could not dun your majesty, and you would be my debtor to all eternity."

"It would then be better to settle our accounts to-day," said the king; and nodding to the soldiers, he left them.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WATCH-FIRE.

THE officer who had accompanied the king, returned in an hour to the watch-fire of the dragoons, and handed five gold pieces to Fritz Kober, which had been sent by the king to pay for his portion of the noodles; then, without giving the surprised soldier time to thank him, he withdrew.

Fritz looked long and thoughtfully at the gold pieces, which, in the light of the flickering fire, shone beautifully in his hand.

"It is very well—very well that the king kept his word, and paid me punctually to-night," said he to Charles Henry Buschman, who sat near, and with his elbow resting on his knee, watched his friend closely.

"And why so, Fritz?" said Charles.

"I will tell you, Charles Henry. If I fall to-morrow, I will have something in my pocket that you will inherit from me. I declare to you, no one but you alone shall be my heir; all that I have belongs to you. Thunder and lightning! I am rich! it is better I should make my testament; I don't know what may happen to me to-morrow. I have neither pen nor paper; well, I will make it verbally! I will wake some of my comrades, and they shall witness my last will and testament." He reached over to the sleeping soldiers, who lay near him on the ground, but Charles held him back.

"Let them sleep, friend," said he, pleadingly; "it is not necessary you should have witnesses. God, and the moon, and a thousand stars hear what we say to each other; and why speak of your will and your fortune, friend? Do you think I would care for that miserable gold, if you were no longer by my side? Do you think I would use it for any other purpose than to buy your tombstone, and write on it in golden letters?"

"What? a tombstone!" said Fritz Kober, with an astonished look; "and why would you place a tombstone over a poor, simple, unknown fellow like myself, Charles Henry? Many gallant generals and officers fall in battle; the earth drinks their blood, and no one knows where they lie. And with golden letters, did you say, Charles? Well, I am curious to know what you would place upon my tombstone."

"I will tell you, Fritz. I will write on your tombstone—'Here lies Fritz Kober; the most faithful friend, the best soul, the most honest heart; good and simple as a child, brave as a hero, constant as a dove, and true as a hound.'"

"But am I all that?" said Fritz, amazed.

"Yes, you are all that!" said Charles, with a trembling voice. "You have been more than this to me, and I will never forget it. I was a poor, shrinking youth when I came to this camp; I knew nothing—could do nothing. My comrades, who soon found me out, mocked and complained of me, and played all manner of jokes upon me. They ridiculed me, because I had no beard; they mimicked me, because my voice was soft and unsteady; they asserted that I would make a miserable soldier, because I grew deadly pale at parade. Who was it took pity on me, and opposed themselves to my rude, unfeeling companions? Who scolded and threatened to strike them, if they did not allow me to go my own way, in peace and quiet? Who was patient with my stupidity, and taught me how to go through with my military duties creditably, and how to manage my horse? You! you, dear Fritz! you alone. You were always at my side, when others threatened. You were patient as a mother when she teaches her dear little boy his letters, and looks kindly upon him, and is good to him, even when he is dull and inattentive."

"Well," said Fritz Kober, thoughtfully, "one can do nothing better than to be good to a man who deserves it, and who is himself so kind, and pure, and brave, that a poor fellow like myself feels ashamed, and looks down when the soft eyes are fixed upon him. I tell you what, Charles Henry, there is a power in your eyes, and they have subdued me. I think the angels in heaven have just such eyes as yours, and when you look upon me so softly and kindly, my heart bounds with delight. I have dreamed of your eyes, Charles Henry; I have blushed in my sleep when I thought I had uttered a coarse curse, and you looked upon me sorrowfully. I know you cannot endure cursing, or drink, or even tobacco."

"My father was a poor schoolmaster," said Charles Henry; "we lived quietly together, and he could not bear cursing. He used to say, 'When men cursed, it hurt God like the toothache.' He said—'God had not made the corn to grow, that men might make brandy, but bread.' We were too poor to buy beer and wine, so we drank water, and were content."

"Your father was right," said Fritz, thoughtfully. "I believe, myself, corn was not intended to make brandy, and I don't care for it; I will give it up altogether. If we live through this war, and receive good bounty money, we will buy a few acres, and build us a little house, and live together, and cultivate our land, and plant corn; and, in the evening, when our work is done, we will sit on the bench before the door, and you will relate some of your beautiful little stories; and so we will live on together till we are old and die."

"But you have forgotten one thing, Fritz."

"What is that, Charles Henry?"

"You have forgotten that you will take a wife into your little house, and she will soon cast me out."

"Let her try it!" cried Fritz, enraged, and doubling his fist threateningly. "Let her try only to show the door to Charles Henry, and I will shut her out, and she shall never return—never! But," said he, softly, "it is not necessary to think of this; I will never take a wife. We will live together; we need no third person to make strife between us."

Charles said nothing. He looked smilingly into the glowing fire, and then at his comrade, with an amused but tender expression.

If Fritz had seen it, his heart would have bounded again, but he was too much occupied then with his own thoughts to look up.

"Listen, Charles. If nothing comes of our little piece of ground and our house—if my last ball comes to-morrow and carries me off—"

"Stop, stop, Fritz; I will hold my head so that the same ball will carry it off!"

"If you do that, I will be very angry with you," cried Fritz. "You are too young to die, and I will be glad even in my grave to know that you are walking on the green earth. In order to do well, you must have gold; therefore you must be my heir. If I fall, these beautiful gold pieces belong to you; you shall not put a tombstone over me. Buy yourself a few acres, Charles Henry, and when your corn grows and blossoms, that shall be my monument."

Charles took his hand, and his eyes were filled with tears. "Speak no more of death," said he, softly; "it makes my heart heavy, and I shall lose my courage in the battle to-morrow when I think of all you have said. Ugh! how cold it is! My soul feels frosted!"

"I will go and seek a little more wood," said Fritz, springing up, "and make a good fire, and then you shall be warmed."

He hurried off, and Charles remained alone by the fire, looking gravely on the glowing coals; he smiled from time to time, and then he breathed heavily, as if oppressed by some weighty secret. Suddenly he heard a voice behind him.

"Ah! I have found the fire again! Good-evening, children."

"Good-evening, sir king. Comrades, wake up; the king is here!"

"No, no; let your comrades sleep," said the king, softly. "The fire will do me good. I found the right path to the fire, as I said. Your dragoons have uncovered my quarters, and the cold blasts of wind whistle through them and freeze the water in my room. I prefer to sit by the fire and warm myself."

He was about to seat himself on the straw near the fire, when a harsh voice called out:

"March on!—every lazy scamp wants a place by the fire, but not one of them brings a splinter of wood."

Fritz Kober was behind them with the wood; he had found it with great difficulty, and he was angry when he saw a strange soldier in his place by the side of Charles Henry.

The king turned to him quietly.

"You are right, my son!—come on! I will make room for you."

"It is the king!" exclaimed Fritz, turning as if to fly. But the king held him.

"Remain where you are, my son; you brought the wood, and you have the best right. I only wish to warm myself a little, and I think there is room for us all."

He seated himself upon the straw, and nodded to Fritz Kober to take a seat by him. Fritz tremblingly obeyed, and Charles stirred the fire, which flamed up beautifully.

King Frederick gazed at the flickering flames. Charles and Fritz sat on each side of him, and watched him in respectful silence; around the watch-fire lay the sleeping dragoons. After a long pause the king raised his head and looked about him.

"Well, children, to-morrow will be a hot day, and we must strike the Austrians boldly."

"Yes, as we struck the French at Rossbach, your majesty," said Fritz. "Mark me! it will go off bravely, and when we are done with the Austrians we will march to Constantinople."

"What will we do in Constantinople?" said the king.

"Nothing, your majesty, but march there with you, whip the Turks, and take all their gold!"

"Not quite so fast, my son."

"Why not, sir king? We have chopped up the French army; to-morrow we will do the same for the Austrians; and then, why not whip the Turks?"

The king smiled, and said:

"Well, well, but first we must give the Austrians a good drubbing."

"And, by my soul, we will do that," said Fritz, eagerly. "Your majesty may believe me—I will march with you to the end of the earth, and so will my friend Charles Buschman. If we have only a little to eat, we will find water everywhere; so lead us where you will!"

The king's eyes flashed: "By heaven! it is a pleasure to lead such soldiers to battle!" Then turning, with a kindly expression, to Fritz Kober, he said: "Can you write?"

"Not well, your majesty; but Charles Henry Buschman can write much better than I. He is a scholar."

"Is that true?" said the king, gayly, to Charles.

"He will say 'No,' sir king; he cannot bear to be praised. But the truth remains, the truth even when denied—Charles is the bravest and wisest soldier in the army, and if there is justice in the world he will be made an officer."

"You must get your commission first, Fritz," said Charles, indifferently; "you earned it long ago, and if the king only knew all that you did at Rossbach, you would have it now."

"What did he do?" said the king.

"Nothing, your majesty," said Fritz.

"Yes, your majesty," said Charles, zealously; "he hewed right and left until the sparks flew in every direction. Our commander had told us the disgusting Frenchmen wanted to take our winter quarters, and even when Fritz Kober's sword was still whizzing among them, they had the insolence to cry out, '*Quartier! quartier!*'—then was Fritz enraged, and cut them down like corn-stalks, and cried out, 'Yes, yes! I will give you quarters, but they will be underground!'"

"Only think," said Fritz, "they were flying before us, and the impudent scamps, when we captured them, would still twit us with the winter quarters they had intended to rob us of. How could I help cutting them to pieces?"

"But he spared those who cried 'Pardon,' your majesty," said Charles Henry, "he only took them prisoners. Nine prisoners did Fritz Kober take at Rossbach."*

"I suppose the five prisoners you took were men of straw, that you say nothing of them," cried Fritz.

The king looked well pleased from one to the other.

"It appears to me you are both brave soldiers, and the braver because you do not boast of your deeds. Are you always such good friends as to seek to do each other kindly service?"

"Your majesty, Charles Henry is my truest friend, and if you wish to do me a service, make him an officer."

"But he says he will not be made an officer unless you are made one, so there is nothing left for me to do but to promote both! If in the battle to-morrow you fight like heroes, you shall both be made officers. Now, children, be quiet, let me rest a little. I do not

* The Prussians had been told that the Frenchmen intended to take possession of their winter quarters, and this enraged them greatly. When the French cavalry were flying at Rossbach, they used the German word *quartier*, thinking they would be better understood. The Prussians looked upon this as an insolent jest, and gave no quarter.—*Nicolai's Characteristics and Anecdotes.*

want to sleep—cannot you tell me some little story, some pretty little fairy tale to keep my heavy eyes from closing?"

"Charles knows many fairy tales, sir king, and if you command it he must relate one."

"Oh, yes, your majesty, I know the history of a fairy who knew and loved the brave son of a king, and when the prince went into battle she transformed herself into a sword, that she might be always by the side of him she loved."

"Tell me this pretty story, my son."

Charles Henry began to relate. Deep silence reigned about the camp. Here and there a word was spoken in sleep, a loud snore, or the neighing of a horse. The fires were burned down, and the coals glowed like fire-flies upon the dark ground.

The moon stood over the camp and illuminated the strange and parti-colored scene with her soft rays, and called out the most wonderful contrasts of light and shade. Far, far away, in the dim distance, one blood-red point could be seen; it looked like a crimson star in the east. This was the camp-fire of the Austrians. This mighty army was encamped behind Leuthen. The king gazed in that direction with eager expectation, and listened with painful attention to every distant sound.

The silence of death reigned there; no sound or voice was heard. The king, being convinced of this, sank back once more upon the straw, and listened to Charles Henry Buschman.

It was indeed a beautiful fairy tale; so wild and so fantastic that Fritz listened with eyes extended and almost breathless to every word. At last, as the handsome prince was drawing his last breath, the lovely fairy sprang from his sword and brought the dead to life with her warm kisses, Fritz was in an ecstasy of excitement, and interrupted Charles by an outcry of rapture.

"This is a true story, sir king!" cried he, passionately; "every word is true, and he who don't believe it is a puppy!"

"Well, well," said the king, "I believe every word, friend."

Charles Henry went on with his fairy tales; but, notwithstanding the wonders he related, sleep at last overcame his friend! Fritz's eyes closed, but he murmured in his sleep:

"It is all true—all true!"

Charles Henry himself, wearied by the exertions of the last few days, felt his eyelids to be as heavy as lead, his words came slowly, then ceased altogether.

The king looked at his slumbering soldiers, then far away toward the watch-fires of the Austrian camp.

Silence still reigned. The moon showed distant objects in the clearest light, and nothing suspicious or alarming could be seen.

"It was false intelligence which was brought to me," said the king. "It is not true that the Austrians are on the march and intend to surprise me. They sleep!—we will not see them till to-morrow. I will withdraw to my quarters."

King Frederick stepped slowly through the ranks of the sleepers, and gave a sign to the officer and the four soldiers who had accompanied him, but remained at a distance from the fire, to move lightly and awaken no one.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BATTLE OF LEUTHEN.

EARLY the next morning the king left his tent. The generals were anxiously awaiting him. His countenance glowed with energy and determination, and his brilliant eyes flashed with a sparkling light. Inspired by the appearance of their hero, the clouded brows of the assembled generals became clearer. They felt that his lofty brow was illumined by genius, and that the laurels which crowned it could never fade. They were now confident, courageous, ready for the battle, and, although they had at first disapproved of the king's plan of attacking the enemy who had twice overcome them, now that he was in their midst they felt secure of success.

Spies reported that the Austrian army had left their camp at sunrise and advanced toward Leuthen; they spoke much and loudly of the strength of the enemy, and of the eagerness of the soldiers to fall upon the weak Prussian army.

At a sign from the king, Seidlitz approached him, and informed him of the latest rumors.

"It is a fearful army we are to attack," said Seidlitz; "more than twice our number."

"I am aware of the strength of the enemy," said the king, quietly, "but nothing is left for me but victory or death. Were they stationed upon the church-tower of Breslau I would attack them."

Then approaching the other generals, he continued in a loud voice:

"You are aware, gentlemen, that Prince Charles, of Lothringen, succeeded in taking Schweidnitz, defeating the Duke of Bevern, and has made himself master of Breslau, while I was protecting Berlin from the French army. The capital of Silesia, and all the munitions of war stowed there, have been lost. All these circum-

stances are calculated to distress me deeply, had I not a boundless confidence in your courage, your resolution, and your devoted love to your country. There is, I think, not one among us who has not been distinguished for some great, some noble deed. I feel assured that your courage will not now fail in this hour of direst need. I would feel as if I had accomplished nothing were I to leave Silesia in the possession of the Austrians. Against all acknowledged rules of war, I am determined to attack the army of Charles of Lothringen, though it is three times as strong as my own. Notwithstanding the number of the enemy, or its advantageous position, I feel confident of success. This step must be taken, or all is lost! We must defeat the Austrians, or fall beneath their batteries! This is my opinion, and thus I shall act. Make my determination known to every officer. Acquaint the soldiers with the events that will soon occur—tell them that I require unconditional obedience! Remember that you are Prussians!—do not show yourselves unworthy of the name! But should there be any among you who fear to share these dangers with us, they can leave at once, and shall not be reproached by me."

The king ceased speaking, and looked inquiringly at his listeners. Upon every countenance he read determination, courage, and inspiration, but here and there were some whose brows became clouded at the king's last suggestion, and tears were sparkling in old General Rohr's eyes. The king pressed the general's hand almost tenderly.

"Ah, my dear friend," said he, "I did not suspect you. But I again say, that if any amongst you wishes leave of absence, he shall have it."

Profound quiet followed these words. No one approached the king—no sound disturbed the solemn stillness. At a distance, the loud shouts and hurrahs of the soldiers, preparing for battle, could be heard. The king's countenance became clear, and he continued with enthusiasm:

"I knew beforehand that none of you would leave me. I counted upon your assistance; with it, I shall be victorious. Should I fall in this battle, you must look to your country for reward; and now, away to the camp, and repeat to your men what I have said to you. Farewell, gentlemen, before long we will either have defeated the enemy, or we will see one another no more."

And now there arose from the generals and officers loud, joyous shouts.

"We will conquer or die!" cried Seidlitz, whose daring, youthful countenance sparkled with delight. "We will conquer or die!" was repeated by all.

At last the brave words reached the camp, and were reëchoed by

thirty thousand lusty throats. There was universal joy. Old gray-headed warriors, who had followed the king into many battles, who had conquered repeatedly with him, shook hands with and encouraged each other, and warned the younger soldiers to be brave and fearless.

Resting upon his horse, the king had been a joyful witness to all this enthusiasm. At this moment, a troop of soldiers, numbering about fifty, approached him. The commanding officer was greeted with a kindly smile.

"You are Lieutenant von Frankenberg?" said the king. And as the lieutenant bowed in answer, he continued: "General Kleist has spoken of you as being a brave and trustworthy officer. I have therefore a strange commission for you. Listen well! do not lose a word of what I say. Come nearer. And now," said the king, in a low voice, "be attentive. In the approaching battle, I will have to expose myself more than usual; you and your fifty men shall guard me. You must watch over me, and be careful that I fall not into the hands of the enemy. Should I fall, cover my body with your mantle, and carry me to the wagon, which shall be stationed behind the first battalion. Leave me there, and tell no one of what has occurred. The battle must continue—the enemy must be defeated."

When the king had thus made his testament, he dismissed the lieutenant, and advanced toward his body-guard.

"Good-morning!" cried the king, cheerfully.

"Good-morning, father!" was the universal answer. Then the old graybeards, standing beside the king, said again:

"Good-morning, father! it is very cold to-day."

"It will be warm enough before the day is over, boys!" said the king. "There is much to be done. Be brave, my children, and I will care for you as a father."

An old soldier, with silver hair, and the scars of many wounds upon his face, approached the king.

"Your majesty," said he, in an earnest voice, "if we are crippled, what will become of us?"

"You shall be taken care of," said the king.

"Will your majesty give me your hand upon this promise?"

This question was followed by deep silence. All present were gazing anxiously at the king and the old guard. The king advanced, and laid his hand in that of the old soldier.

"I swear, that any of you who are crippled, shall be taken care of."

The old warrior turned with tearful eyes to his comrades.

"Well," said he, "you hear him? he is and will continue to be the King of Prussia and our father. The one who deserts is a rascal."

"Long live our Fritz!" and throughout the whole camp resounded the cry—"Long live our Fritz! Long live our king!"

"Onward! onward!" was the cry, for at the end of the plain the enemy could be seen approaching.

"Forward!" cried the soldiers, falling one by one into their places, as the king, followed by Lieutenant Frankenberg and his men, galloped past them.

A turn in the road showed the Prussians the enormous size of the enemy's army. Silence prevailed for a few moments. Suddenly, here and there a voice could be heard singing a battle-hymn, and soon, accompanied by the band, the whole army was breathing out in song an earnest prayer to God.

A guard, approaching the king, said:

"Is it your majesty's desire that the soldiers should cease singing?"

The king shook his head angrily.

"No!" said he, "let them alone. With such an army, God can but give me victory."

Nearer and nearer came the enemy, covering the plain with their numbers, and gazing with amazement at the little army that dared to oppose them. By the Austrian generals, smiling so contemptuously upon their weak opponents, one thing had been forgotten. The Austrians, confident of success, were not in the least enthusiastic; the Prussians, aware of their danger, and inspired by love for their king, had nerved themselves to the contest. The armies now stood before each other in battle array. The king was at the front, the generals were flying here and there, delivering their orders. In obedience to these orders, the army suddenly changed its position, and so strange, so unsuspected was the change, that General Daun, turning to the Prince Lothringen, said:

"The Prussians are retreating! we will not attack them."

Certain of this fact, they were off their guard, and disorder reigned in their camp. This security was suddenly changed to terror. They saw the Prussians rapidly approaching, threatening at once both wings of their army. Messenger upon messenger was sent, imploring help from General Daun and Charles of Lothringen. The Prussians were upon them, felling them to the earth, regardless of danger—regardless of the numerous cannon which were playing upon them. Daun, with a part of his command, hurried to the aid of General Luchesi, but he was too late; Luchesi had fallen, and terror and disorder were rapidly spreading in the right wing, while from the left, Nadasky had already dispatched ten messengers, imploring assistance from Charles of Lothringen. In doubt as to which most needed help, he at last determined upon the right wing, whose ranks were thinning

rapidly; he sent them aid, and took no notice of Nadasky's messengers. And now the Prussians fell upon the left wing of the Austrians. This attack was made with fury, and the Austrians retreated in wild disorder. It was in vain that other regiments came to their aid; they had no time to arrange themselves before they were forced back. They stumbled upon one another, the flying overtaking and trampling upon the flying. Again and again the imperial guards endeavored to place themselves in line of battle; they were at once overpowered by the Prussian cavalry, who, intoxicated with victory, threw themselves upon them with demoniac strength. Yes, intoxicated—mad with victory, were these Prussians. With perfect indifference they saw their friends, their comrades, fall beside them; they did not mourn over them, but revenged their death tenfold upon the enemy. Those even who fell were inspired by enthusiasm and courage. Forgetful of their wounds, of their torn and broken limbs, they gazed with joy and pride at their comrades, joining in their shouts and hurrahs, until death sealed their lips.

A Prussian grenadier, whose left leg had been shot off in the early part of the battle, raised himself from the ground; using his gun as a crutch, he dragged himself to a spot which the army had to pass, and cried to the comrades who were looking pityingly upon his bleeding limb: "Fight like brave Prussians, brothers! Conquer or die for your king!"

Another grenadier, who had lost both legs, lay upon the ground weltering in his blood, quietly smoking his pipe. An Austrian general galloping by held in his horse and looked in amazement at the soldier. "How is it possible, comrade," said he, "that in your fearful condition you can smoke? Death is near to you."

Taking the pipe from his mouth, the grenadier answered with white, trembling lips: "Well, and what of it? Do I not die for my king?"

Where the danger was the greatest, there was the king encouraging his soldiers. When a column was seen to reel, there was Frederick in their midst inspiring new courage by his presence. The king was the soul of his army, and as his soul was *sans peur et sans reproche*, the army was victorious. Napoleon, speaking of this battle, says: "Cette bataille de Leuthen est propre à immortaliser le caractère moral de Frédéric, et met à jour ses grands talents militaires." And somewhat later, he says: "Cette bataille était un chef d'œuvre de mouvements, de manœuvres, et de résolution, seul elle suffirait pour immortaliser Frédéric, et lui donne un rang parmi les plus grands généraux!"

The victory was gained. The defeated Austrians fled in haste, leaving a hundred cannon, fifty banners, and more than twenty

thousand prisoners in the hands of the Prussians; while upon the battle-field six thousand of their dead and wounded were lying, with but two thousand dead and wounded Prussians. The victory belonged to Prussia. They had all distinguished themselves; the king and every common soldier had done his duty. Frederick, accompanied by his staff, to which Lieutenant Frankenberg and his fifty men did not now belong, passed the bloody, smoking battle-field. His countenance was sparkling with joy—his eyes shone like stars. He seemed looking for some one to whom to open his grateful heart.

He who had given most assistance in the battle was Prince Moritz von Dessau, whom at the battle of Collin the king had threatened with his sword, and with whom he had ever since been angry because his prophecy proved true. But there was no anger now in the king's heart; and as he had, in the presence of all his staff, threatened the prince, he wished also in their presence to thank and reward him. The prince was at a slight distance from him, so busily engaged in giving orders that he did not perceive the king until he was quite close to him.

"I congratulate you upon this victory," said the king, in a loud voice—"I congratulate you, field-marshal."

The prince bowed in a silent, absent manner, and continued to give his orders.

The king, raising his voice, said: "Do you not hear, field-marshal? I congratulate you!"

The prince looked hastily at the king. "How? Your majesty," said he, doubtfully, "has appointed me—"

"My field-marshal," said the king, interrupting him. "And well have you deserved this promotion; you have assisted me in this battle as I have never before been assisted." He grasped the prince's hand and pressed it tenderly, and there were tears of emotion not only in the eyes of the new field-marshal, but also in those of the king.

A fearful day's work was finished—how fearful, could be seen by the wounded, the dying lying pell-mell upon the battle-field amidst the dead, too exhausted to move. But the day had passed. The cries and shouts of the flying enemy had now ceased—the victory, the battle-field, belonged to the Prussians. What was now most needed by them was an hour's rest. Above the bloody battle-field, above the dying, the sleeping, the groaning, the sighing, now rose the moon grandly, solemnly, as if to console the dead and to lead the living to raise their grateful prayers to heaven. And grateful praise ascended above that night—thanks for the preservation of their own and their friends' lives—thanks for their hero's victory.

Side by side, whispering in low tones, lay the soldiers—for the hour seemed to all too solemn to be broken by any loud sound.

No hearts were so full of gratitude and joy as those of Charles Henry Buschman and Fritz Kober. In the pressure of the battle they had been separated and had not again met during the engagement. In vain they had sought and called upon one another, and each one thought of the fearful possibility that the other had fallen. At last they stumbled upon each other. With shouts of joy they rushed into each other's arms.

"You are not wounded, Fritz Kober?" said Charles Henry, with a beating heart.

"I am unharmed; but you, my friend?"

"Only a little cut in the hand, nothing more. How many prisoners did you take?"

"Seven, Charles Henry."

"You will be promoted! You will be an officer!"

"Not unless you are also. How many prisoners did you take?"

"I am not sure, Fritz; I think there were nine. But the captain will know."

"We will both be promoted, the king promised it, and now I am willing to accept it."

"But what is this to us now, my friend?" said Charles Henry; "we have found one another, and I am indifferent to all else."

"You are right, Charles Henry; this has been a fearful, a terrible day. My knees tremble beneath me—let us rest a while."

He laid himself upon the ground. Charles Henry knelt beside him, laying one hand upon his shoulder, and looked at the starry sky; a holy smile glorified his countenance. As he gazed at the moon, tender feelings were at work in his heart. He thought of his distant home—of the graves of his loved parents, upon which the moon was now shining as brightly as upon this bloody battle-field. He thought how kind and merciful God had been to preserve his friend, his only consolation, the one joy of his weary, lonesome life. The solemn stillness by which he was surrounded, the bright moonlight which illuminated the battle-field, the thought of the hard struggle of the past day, all acted strongly upon his feelings. The brave, daring soldier, Charles Henry Buschman, was once more transformed into the gentle, soft-hearted Anna Sophia Detzloff; now, when danger was past, she felt herself a weak, trembling woman. Deep, inexpressible emotion, earnest prayers to God, were busy in Anna Sophia's heart.

Kneeling upon the ground, resting on her friend, she raised her eyes heavenward, and commenced singing in an earnest, impassioned tone that glorious hymn, "Thanks unto God!" Fritz Kober, actu-

ated by the same feelings, joined in the hymn, and here and there a comrade lent his voice to swell the anthem; it became stronger, louder, until at last, like a mighty stream, it passed over the battle-field, knocking at every heart, and urging it to prayer, finding everywhere an open ear.

The moon stood smiling above the battle-field, upon which eight thousand dead and wounded men were lying. Even the wounded, who a short time before filled the air with groans of pain and agony, raised themselves to join in the song of praise which was now sung, not by a hundred, not by a thousand, but by thirty thousand soldiers, thirty thousand heroes, who, after that bloody day had earned the right to sing "Thanks unto God."

CHAPTER XV.

WINTER QUARTERS IN Breslau.

FAINT and exhausted, the king had withdrawn to his room; he was alone. To-day was the twenty-fourth of January, Frederick's birthday, and, although he had forbidden all congratulations, he could not avoid receiving the highest tribunals of Breslau, and also a few deputations of the citizens of this reconquered city. These visits wearied the king; he was grave and out of spirits. Once more alone, he could indulge in the sad memories that came over him involuntarily and forcibly. For here in Breslau he had lately experienced a bitter disappointment; every thing in the castle reminded him of the treacherous friend whom he had loved so dearly, and who had so shamefully betrayed him.

The king was now thinking of the Bishop von Schaffgotsch. An expression of painful gloom clouded his face, he felt solitary and deserted; the cold, silent room chilled his heart, and the snow blown against the window by the howling winds, oppressed him strangely. He was more dejected and anxious than he had ever felt before a battle.

"The marquis cannot travel in such weather," he said, sighing. "and my musicians will be careful not to trust themselves upon the highway; they will imagine the snow has blocked up the way, and that it is impossible to come through. They will remain in Berlin, caring but little that I am counting the weary hours until they arrive. Yes, yes, this is an example of the almighty power of a king; a few snow-flakes are sufficient to set his commands aside, and the king remains but an impotent child of the dust. Of what avail is it that I have conquered the Austrians and the French? I