

me will come from above,* and that you cannot intercept. No, it is better to have no watch before the door; we will not draw the attention of troops passing by to this house. I think no one will suppose that this miserable and ruinous barrack, through which the wind howls, is the residence of a king. Come, then, messieurs." He stepped into the hut, followed by the two adjutants, who dared no longer oppose him. "Put out that light," said the king, "the moon will be our torch, and will glorify our bed of straw." He drew his sword, and grasping it firmly in his right hand, he stretched himself upon the straw. "There is room for both of you—lie down. Good-night, sirs."

Frederick slightly raised his three-cornered hat in greeting, and then laid it over his face as a protection from the moonlight and the cold night air. The adjutants laid down silently at his feet, and soon no sound was heard in the room but the loud breathing of the three sleepers.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RIGHT COUNSEL.

HAND in hand the two grenadiers advanced directly toward the battle-field. Before they could approach the enemy's camp they must borrow two Austrian uniforms from the dead upon the plain. It was not difficult, amongst so many dead bodies, to find two Austrian officers, and the two Prussian grenadiers went quickly to work to rob the dead and appropriate their garments.

"I don't know how it is," said Charles Henry, shuddering, "a cold chill thrills through me when I think of putting on a coat which I have just taken from a dead body. It seems to me the marble chillness of the corpse will insinuate itself into my whole body, and that I shall never be warm again."

Fritz Kober looked up with wide-open eyes! "You have such curious thoughts, Charles Henry, such as come to no other man; but you are right, it is a frosty thing." And now he had removed the uniform and was about to draw off his own jacket and assume the white coat of the Austrian. "It is a great happiness," said he, "that we need not change our trousers, a little clearer or darker gray can make no difference in the night."

Charles Henry was in the act of drawing on the coat of the dead man, when Fritz Kober suddenly seized his arm and held him back. "Stop," said he, "you must do me a favor—this coat is too narrow,

*The king's own words.—See Nicolai, p. 118.

and it pinches me fearfully; you are thinner than I am, and I think it will fit you exactly; take it and give me yours." He jerked off the coat and handed it to his friend.

"No, no, Fritz Kober," said Charles Henry, in a voice so soft and sweet, that Fritz was confused and bewildered by it. "No, Fritz, I understand you fully. You have the heart of an angel; you only pretend that this coat is too narrow for you that you may induce me to take the one you have already warmed."

It was well that Fritz had his back turned to the moon, otherwise his friend would have seen that his face was crimson; he blushed as if detected in some wicked act. However, he tore the uniform away from Charles Henry rather roughly, and hastened to put it on.

"Folly," said he, "the coat squeezes me, that is all! Besides, it is not wise to fool away our time in silly talking. Let us go onward."

"Directly over the battle-field?" said Charles Henry, shuddering.

"Directly over the battle-field," said Kober, "because that is the nearest way."

"Come, then," said Charles, giving him his hand.

It was indeed a fearful path through which they must walk. They passed by troops of corpses—by thousands of groaning, rattling, dying men—by many severely wounded, who cried out to them piteously for mercy and help! Often Charles Henry hesitated and stood still to offer consolation to the unhappy wretches, but Fritz Kober drew him on. "We cannot help them, and we have far to go!" Often the swarming Cossacks, dashing around on their agile little ponies, called to them from afar off in their barbarous speech, but when they drew near and saw the Austrian uniforms, they passed them quietly, and were not surprised they had not given the pass-word.

At last they passed the battle-field, and came on the open plain, at the end of which they perceived the camp-fires of the Russians and Austrians. The nearer they approached, the more lively was the scene. Shouts, laughter, loud calls, and outcries—from time to time a word of command. And in the midst of this mad confusion, here and there soldiers were running, market-women offering them wares cheap, and exulting soldiers assembling around the camp-fires. From time to time the regular step of the *patrouille* was heard, who surrounded the camp, and kept a watchful eye in every direction.

Arm in arm they passed steadily around the camp. "One thing I know," whispered Fritz Kober, "they have no thought of marching. They will pass a quiet, peaceful night by their camp-fires."

"I agree with you," said Charles Henry, "but let us go forward and listen a little; perhaps we can learn where the generals are quartered."

"Look, look! it must be there," said Fritz Kober, hastily. "There are no camp-fires; but there is a brilliant light in the peasants' huts, and it appears to me that I see a guard before the doors. These, certainly, are the headquarters."

"Let us go there, then," said Charles Henry; "but we must approach the houses from behind, and thus avoid the guard."

They moved cautiously around, and drew near the houses. Profound quiet reigned in this neighborhood; it was the reverence of subordination—the effect which the presence of superior officers ever exercises upon their men. Here stood groups of officers, lightly whispering together—there soldiers were leading their masters' horses; not far off orderlies were waiting on horseback—sentinels with shouldered arms were going slowly by. The attention of all seemed to be fixed upon the two small houses, and every glance and every ear was turned eagerly toward the brilliantly lighted windows.

"We have hit the mark exactly," whispered Fritz Kober; he had succeeded with his friend in forcing his way into the little alley which separated the two houses. "We have now reached the headquarters of the generals. Look! there is an Austrian sentinel with his bear's cap. Both the Austrian and Russian generals are here."

"Let us watch the Russians a little through the window," said Charles Henry, slipping forward.

They reached the corner, and were hidden by the trunk of a tree which overshadowed the huts. Suddenly they heard the word of command, and there was a general movement among the files of soldiers assembled about the square. The officers placed themselves in rank, the soldiers presented arms; for, at this moment, the Austrian General Loudon, surrounded by his staff, stepped from one of the small houses into the square. The Cossacks, who were crouched down on the earth before the door, raised themselves, and also presented arms.

While Loudon stood waiting, the two Prussian grenadiers slipped slyly to the other hut.

"Let us go behind," whispered Charles Henry. "There are no sentinels there, and perhaps we may find a door, and get into the house."

Behind the hut was a little garden whose thick shrubs and bushes gave complete concealment to the two grenadiers. Noiselessly they sprang over the little fence, and made a reconnoissance of the *terrain*—unseen, unnoticed, they drew near the house. As they stepped

from behind the bushes, Fritz Kober seized his friend's arm, and with difficulty suppressed a cry of joy.

The scene which was presented to them was well calculated to rejoice the hearts of brave soldiers. They had reached the goal, and might now hope to fulfil the wishes of their king. The quarters of the Russian general were plainly exposed to them. In this great room, which was evidently the ball-room of the village, at a long oak-table, in the middle of the room, sat General Soltikow, and around him sat and stood the generals and officers. At the door, half a dozen Cossacks were crouching, staring sleepily on the ground. The room was brilliantly illuminated with wax-lights, and gave the two grenadiers an opportunity of seeing it in every part. Fate appeared to favor them in every way, and gave them an opportunity to hear as well as see. The window on the garden was opened to give entrance to the cool night air, and near it there was a thick branch of a tree in which a man could conceal himself.

"Look there," said Charles Henry, "I will hide in that tree. We will make our observations from different stand-points. Perhaps one of us may see what escapes the other. Let us attend closely, that we may tell all to our king."

No man in this room guessed that in the silent little garden four flashing eyes were observing all that passed.

At the table sat the Russian commander-in-chief, surrounded by his generals and officers. Before him lay letters, maps, and plans, at which he gazed from time to time, while he dictated an account of the battle to the officer sitting near him, Soltikow was preparing a dispatch for the Empress Elizabeth. A few steps farther off, in stiff military bearing, stood the officers who were giving in their reports, and whose statements brought a dark cloud to the brow of the victorious commander. Turning with a hasty movement of the head to the small man with the gold-embroidered uniform and the stiffly-frizzed wig, he said—

"Did you hear that, sir marquis? Ten thousand of my brave soldiers lie dead upon the battle-field, and as many more are severely wounded."

"It follows then," said the Marquis Montalembert, the French commissioner between the courts of Vienna, Petersburg, and Paris, "it follows then, that the king of Prussia has forty thousand dead and wounded, and, consequently, his little army is utterly destroyed."

"Who knows?" said Soltikow; "the king of Prussia is accustomed to sell his defeats dearly. I should not be at all surprised if he had lost fewer soldiers than we have."*

* Soltikow's own words.—See Archenholtz, p. 206.

"Well, I think he has now nothing more to lose," said the marquis, laughing; "it rests with you to give the last *coup de grâce* to this conquered and flying king, and forever prevent—"

The entrance of an officer interrupted him. The officer announced General von Loudon.

Soltikow arose, and advanced to the door to welcome the Austrian general. A proud smile was on his face as he gave his hand to Loudon; he did this with the air of a gracious superior who wished to be benevolent to his subordinate.

The quick, firm glance of Loudon seemed to read the haughty heart of his ally, and, no doubt for this reason, he scarcely touched Soltikow's hand. With erect head and proud step he advanced into the middle of the room.

"I resolved to come to your excellency," said Loudon, in a sharp, excited tone; "you have a large room, while in my hut I could scarcely find accommodation for you and your adjutants."

"You come exactly at the right hour," said Soltikow, with a haughty smile; "you see, we were about to hold a council of war, and consider what remains to be done."

A dark and scornful expression was seen in Loudon's countenance, and his eyes rested fiercely upon the smiling face of Soltikow.

"Impossible, general! you could not have held a council of war without me," said he, angrily.

"Oh, be composed, general," said Soltikow, smiling, "I would, without doubt, have informed you immediately of our conclusions."

"I suppose you could not possibly have come to any conclusion in my absence," said Loudon, the veins in whose forehead began to swell.

Soltikow bowed low, with the same unchanged and insolent smile.

"Let us not dispute about things which have not yet taken place, your excellency. The council of war had not commenced, but now that you are here, we may begin. Allow me, however, first to sign these dispatches which I have written to my gracious sovereign, announcing the victory which the Russian troops have this day achieved over the army of the King of Prussia."

"Ah, general, this time I am in advance of you," cried Loudon; "the dispatches are already sent off in which I announced to my empress the victory which the Austrian troops gained over the Prussians."

Soltikow threw his head back scornfully, and his little gray eyes flashed at the Austrian.

Loudon went on, calmly: "I assure your excellency that enthusiasm at our glorious victory has made me eloquent. I pictured to my empress the picturesque moment in which the conquering Prus-

sians were rushing forward to take possession of the batteries deserted by the flying Russians, at which time the Austrian horsemen sprang, as it were, from the ground, checked the conquerors, and forced them back; and by deeds of lionlike courage changed the fate of the day."

While Loudon, seeming entirely cool and careless, thus spoke, the face of the Russian general was lurid with rage. Panting for breath, he pressed his doubled fist upon the table.

Every one looked at him in breathless excitement and horror—all knew his passionate and unrestrained rage. But the Marquis Montalembert hastened to prevent this outburst of passion, and before Soltikow found breath to speak, he turned with a gay and conciliating expression to Loudon.

"If you have painted the battle of to-day so much in detail," said he, "you have certainly not forgotten to depict the gallant conduct of the Russian troops to describe that truly exalted movement, when the Russians threw themselves to the earth, as if dead, before advancing columns of the Prussian army, and allowed them to pass over them; then, springing up, shot them in the back."*

"Certainly I did not forget that," said Loudon, whose noble, generous heart already repented his momentary passion and jealousy; "certainly, I am not so cowardly and so unconscionable as to deny the weighty share which the Russian army merit in the honor of this day; but you can well understand that I will not allow the gallant deeds of the Austrians to be swept away. We have fought together and conquered together, and now let us rejoice together over the glorious result."

Loudon gave his hand to Soltikow with so friendly an expression that he could not withstand it. "You are right, Loudon; we will rejoice together over this great victory," cried he. "Wine, here! We will first drink a glass in honor of the triumph of the day; then we will empty a glass of your beautiful Rhine wine to the friendship of the Austrians and Russians. Wine here! The night is long enough for council; let us first celebrate our victory."

The Cossacks, at a sign from the adjutants, sprang from the floor and drew from a corner of the room a number of bottles and silver cups, which they hastened to place upon the table. The secretaries moved the papers, maps, etc.; and the table, which a moment before had quite a business-like aspect, was now changed into an enticing *buffet*.

Soltikow looked on enraptured, but the marquis cast an anxious and significant look upon the Austrian general, which was answered with a slight shrug of the shoulders. Both knew that the brave

* Archenholtz, Seven Years' War, p. 237.

General Soltikow, next to the thunder of cannon and the mad whirl of battle, loved nothing so well as the springing of corks and the odor of wine. Both knew that the general was as valiant and unconquerable a soldier as he was a valiant and unconquerable drinker—who was most apt while drinking to forget every thing else but the gladness of the moment. The marquis tried to make another weak attempt to remind him of more earnest duties.

"Look you, your excellency, your secretaries appear very melancholy. Will you not first hold a council of war? and we can then give ourselves undisturbed to joy and enjoyment."

"Why is a council of war necessary?" said Soltikow, sinking down into a chair and handing his cup to the Cossack behind him to be filled for the second time. "Away with business and scribbling! The dispatches to my empress are completed; seal them, Pietrowitch, and send the courier off immediately; every thing else can wait till morning. Come, generals, let us strike our glasses to the healths of our exalted sovereigns."

Loudon took the cup and drank a brave pledge, then when he had emptied the glass he said: "We should not be satisfied with sending our exalted sovereigns the news of the day's victory—it lies in our hands to inform them of the complete and irrevocable defeat of the enemy."

"How so?" said Soltikow, filling up his cup for the third time.

"If now, in place of enjoying this comfortable rest, and giving our enemy time to recover himself, we should follow up the Prussians and cut off the king's retreat, preventing him from taking possession of his old camp at Reutven, we would then be in a condition to crush him completely and put an end to this war."

"Ah, you mean that we should break up the camp at once," said Soltikow; "that we should not grant to our poor, exhausted soldiers a single hour of sleep, but lead them out again to battle and to death? No, no, sir general; the blood of my brave Russians is worth as much as the blood of other men, and I will not make of them a wall behind which the noble Dutchmen place themselves in comfortable security, while we offer up for them our blood and our life. I think we Russians have done enough; we do not need another victory to prove that we are brave. When I fight another such battle as I have fought to-day, with my staff in my hand and *alone* I must carry the news to Petersburg, for I shall have no soldiers left.* I have nothing to say against you, General Loudon. You have been a faithful ally; we have fought, bled, and conquered together, although not protected by a consecrated hat and sword like

*"Frederick the Great."—Geschow, p. 200.

Field-Marshal Daun, who ever demands new victories from us while he himself is undecided and completely inactive."

"Your excellency seems to be somewhat embittered against Daun," said Loudon, with a smile he could not wholly suppress.

"Yes," said Soltikow, "I am embittered against this modern Fabius Cunctator, who finds it so easy to become renowned—who remains in Vienna and reaps the harvest which belongs rightly to you, General Loudon. You act, while he hesitates—you are full of energy and ever ready for the strife; Daun is dilatory, and while he is resolving whether to strike or not, the opportunity is lost."

"The empress, my exalted sovereign, has honored him with her especial confidence," said Loudon; "he must therefore merit it."

"Yes; and in Vienna they have honored you and myself with their especial distrust," said Soltikow, stormily, and swallowing a full cup of wine. "You, I know, receive rare and scanty praise; eulogies must be reserved for Daun. We are regarded with inimical and jealous eyes, and our zeal and our good-will are forever suspected."

"This is true," said Loudon, smiling; "it is difficult for us to believe in the sincere friendship of the Russians, perhaps, because we so earnestly desire it."

"Words, words!" said Soltikow, angrily. "The German has ever a secret aversion to the Russian—you look upon us as disguised tigers, ever ready to rob and devour your glorious culture and accomplishments. For this reason you gladly place a glass shade over yourselves when we are in your neighborhood, and show us your glory through a transparent wall that we may admire and envy. When you are living in peace and harmony, you avoid us sedulously; then the German finds himself entirely too educated, too refined, for the barbaric Russian. But when you quarrel and strive with each other, and cannot lay the storm, then you suddenly remember that the Russian is your neighbor and friend, that he wields a good sword, and knows how to hew away with it right and left. You call lustily on him for help, and offer him your friendship—that means, just so long as hostilities endure and you have use for us. Even when you call us your friends you distrust us and suspect our good-will. Constant charges are brought against us in Vienna. Spresain languishes in chains—Austria chargés him with treachery and want of zeal in the good cause; Fermor and Butterlin are also accused of great crimes—they have sought to make both their sincerity and ability suspected by the empress, and to bring them into reproach. This they have not deserved. I know, also, that they have charged me with disinclination to assist the allies—they declare that I have no ardor for the common cause. This makes bad

blood, messieurs; and if it were not for the excellent wine in your beautiful Germany, I doubt if our friendship would stand upon a sure footing. Therefore, sir general, take your cup and let us drink together—drink this glorious wine to the health of our friendship. Make your glasses ring, messieurs, and that the general may see that we mean honorably with our toast, empty them at a draught.”

They all accepted the challenge and emptied a cup of the old, fiery Rhine wine, which Soltikow so dearly loved; their eyes flashed, their cheeks were glowing.

Loudon saw this with horror, and he cast an anxious glance at Montalembert, who returned it with a significant shrug of the shoulder.

“And now, your excellency,” said Loudon, “that we have enjoyed the German wine, let us think a little of Germany and the enemy who can no longer disturb her peace, if we act promptly. Our troops have had some hours’ rest, and will now be in a condition to advance.”

“Always the same old song,” said Soltikow, laughing; “but I shall not be waked up from my comfortable quarters; I have done enough! my troops also.”

“I have just received a courier from Daun,” said Loudon, softly; “he makes it my duty to entreat your excellency to follow up our victory and crush the enemy completely.”

“That will be easy work,” said Montalembert, in a flattering tone. “The army of the King of Prussia is scattered and flying in every direction; they must be prevented from reassembling; the scattering troops must be harassed and more widely separated, and every possibility of retreat cut off for Frederick.”

“Well, well, if that *must be*,” said Soltikow, apathetically, placing the cup just filled with wine to his lips, “let Field-Marshal Daun undertake the duty. I have won two battles; I will wait and rest; I make no other movements till I hear of two victories won by Daun. It is not reasonable or just for the troops of my empress to act alone.”*

“But,” said the Marquis Montalembert, giving himself the appearance of wishing not to be heard by Loudon, “if your excellency now remains inactive and does not press forward vigorously, the Austrians alone will reap the fruits of your victory.”

“I am not at all disposed to be jealous,” said Soltikow, laughing; “from my heart I wish the Austrians more success than I have had. For my part, I have done enough. † Fill your glasses, messieurs, fill your glasses! We have won a few hours of happiness from the

* Soltikow’s own words.—See Archenholtz, p. 266.

† Historical.

goddess Bellona; let us enjoy them and forget all our cares. Let us drink once more, gentlemen. Long live our charming mistress, the Empress Elizabeth!” The Russian officers clanged their glasses and chimed in zealously, and the fragrant Rhine wine bubbled like foaming gold in the silver cups. Soltikow swallowed it with ever-increasing delight, and he became more and more animated.

The officers sat round the table with glowing cheeks and listened to their worshipped general who, in innocent gayety, related some scenes from his youth, and made his hearers laugh so loud, so rapturously, that the walls trembled, and Fritz Kober, who was crouching down in the bushes, could with difficulty prevent himself from joining in heartily.

The gayety of the Russians became more impetuous and unbridled. They dreamed of their home; here and there they began to sing Russian love-songs. The Cossacks, on the floor, grinned with delight and hummed lightly the refrain.

The wine began to exercise its freedom and equality principles upon the heart, and all difference of rank was forgotten. Every countenance beamed with delight; every man laughed and jested, sang and drank. No one thought of the King of Prussia and his scattered army; they remembered the victory they had achieved, but the fragrant wine banished the remembrance of the conquered.*

Montalembert and Loudon took no part in the general mirth. They had left the table, and from an open window watched the wild and frenzied group.

“It is in vain,” whispered Loudon, “we cannot influence him. The German wine lies nearer his heart than his German allies.”

“But you, general, you should do what Soltikow omits or neglects. You should draw your own advantage from this tardiness of the Russian general, and pursue and crush the King of Prussia.”

“I would not be here now,” said Loudon, painfully, “if I could do that. My hands are bound. I dare not undertake any thing to which the allies do not agree; we can only act in concert.”

A loud roar of laughter from the table silenced the two gentlemen. Soltikow had just related a merry anecdote, which made the Cossacks laugh aloud. One of the Russian generals rewarded them by throwing them two tallow-candles. This dainty little delicacy was received by them with joyful shouts.

“Let us withdraw,” whispered Montalembert, “the scene becomes too Russian.”

“Yes, let us go,” sighed Loudon; “if we must remain here inactive, we can at least employ the time in sleep.”

No one remarked the withdrawal of the two gentlemen. The

* See Prussia; Frederick the Great.—Gebhard, p. 73.

gay laughter, the drinking and singing went on undisturbed, and soon became a scene of wild and drunken confusion.

"We can now also withdraw," whispered Charles Henry to Fritz Kober. "Come, come! you know we are expected."

With every possible caution, they hastened away, and only after they had left the camp of the Russians and Austrians far behind them, and passed again over the battle-field did Fritz Kober break silence. "Well," said he, sighing, "what have we to say to the king?"

"All that we have heard," said Charles Henry.

"Yes, but we have heard nothing," murmured Fritz. "I opened my ears as wide as possible, but it was all in vain. Is it not base and vile to come to Germany and speak this gibberish, not a word of which can be understood? In Germany men should be obliged to speak German, and not Russian."

"They did not speak Russian, but French," said Charles Henry; "I understood it all."

Fritz Kober stopped suddenly, and stared at his friend. "You say you understood French?"

"Yes, I was at home on the French borders. My mother was from Alsace, and there I learned French."

"You understand every thing," murmured Fritz, "but for myself, I am a poor stupid blockhead, and the king will laugh at me, for I have nothing to tell. I shall not get my commission."

"Then neither will I, Fritz; and, besides, as to what we have seen, you have as much to tell as I. You heard with your eyes and I with my ears, and the great point arrived at you know as much about as I do. The Russians and Austrians are sleeping quietly, not thinking of pursuing us. That's the principal point."

"Yes, that's true; that I can also assure the king—that will please him best. Look! Charles Henry, the day is breaking! Let us hasten on to the king. When he knows that the Austrians and Russians sleep, he will think it high time for the Prussians to be awake."

CHAPTER XV.

A HERO IN MISFORTUNE.

THE two grenadiers returned unharmed to the village where the king had at present established his headquarters. The first rays of the morning sun were falling upon the wretched hut which was occupied by his majesty. The peaceful morning quiet was unbroken by the faintest sound, and, as if Nature had a certain reverence for the hero's slumber, even the birds were hushed, and the morning

breeze blew softly against the little window, as if it would murmur a sleeping song to the king. There were no sentinels before the door; the bright morning sun alone was guarding the holy place where the unfortunate hero reposed.

Lightly, and with bated breath, the two grenadiers crept into the open hut. The utter silence disturbed them. It seemed incredible that they should find the king in this miserable place, alone and unguarded. They thought of the hordes of Cossacks which infested that region, and that a dozen of them would suffice to surround this little hut, and make prisoners of the king and his adjutants.

"I have not the courage to open the door," whispered Fritz Kober. "I fear that the king is no longer here. The Cossacks have captured him."

"God has not permitted that," said Charles Henry, solemnly; "I believe that He has guarded the king in our absence. Come, we will go to his majesty."

They opened the door and entered, and then both stood motionless, awed and arrested by what they beheld.

There, on the straw that was scantily scattered on the dirty floor, lay the king, his hat drawn partially over his face, his unsheathed sword in his hand, sleeping as quietly as if he were at his bright and beautiful Sans-Souci.

"Look!" whispered Charles Henry; "thus sleeps a king, over whom God watches! But now we must awaken him."

He advanced to the king, and kneeling beside him, whispered: "Your majesty, we have returned; we bring intelligence of the Russians and Austrians."

The king arose slowly, and pushed his hat back from his brow.

"Good or bad news?" he asked.

"Good news!" said Fritz. "The Austrians and Russians have both gone to bed; they were sleepy."

"And they have no idea of pursuing your majesty," continued Charles Henry. "Loudon wished it, but Soltikow refused; he will do nothing until Daun acts."

"So you sat with them in the council of war?" asked the king, smiling.

"Yes, we were present," said Fritz Kober, with evident delight; "I saw the council, and Charles Henry heard them."

The king stood up. "You speak too loud!" he said; "you will waken these two gentlemen, who are sleeping so well. We will go outside, and you can continue your report."

He crossed the room noiselessly, and left the hut. Then seating himself before the door, on a small bench, he told the two grenadiers to give him an exact account of what they had seen and heard.

Long after they had finished speaking, the king sat silent, and

apparently lost in thought. His eyes raised to heaven, he seemed to be in holy communion with the Almighty. As his eyes slowly sank, his glance fell upon the two grenadiers who stood before him, silently respectful.

"I am pleased with you, children, and this time the promise shall be kept. You shall become subordinate officers."

"In the same company?" asked Fritz Kober.

"In the same company. That is," continued the king, "if I am ever able to form companies and regiments again."

"We are not so badly off as your majesty thinks," said Fritz Kober. "Our troops have already recovered from their first terror, and as we returned we saw numbers of them entering the village. In a few hours the army can be reorganized."

"God grant that you may be right, my son!" said the king, kindly. "Go, now, into the village, and repeat the news you brought me to the soldiers. It will encourage them to hear that the enemy sleep, and do not think of pursuing us. I will prepare your commissions for you to-day. Farewell, my children!"

He bent his head slightly, and then turned to reënter the hut and awaken his two adjutants. With a calm voice he commanded them to go into the village, and order the generals and higher officers to assemble the remnants of their regiments before the hut.

"A general march must be sounded," said the king. "The morning air will bear the sound into the distance, and when my soldiers hear it, perhaps they will return to their colors."

When the adjutants left him, the king commenced pacing slowly up and down, his hands crossed behind him.

"All is lost, all!" he murmured; "but I must wait and watch. If the stupidity or rashness of the enemy should break a mesh in the net within which I am enclosed, it is my duty to slip through with my army. Ah! how heavily this crown presses upon my head; it leaves me no moment of repose. How hard is life, and how terribly are the bright illusions of our earlier years destroyed!"

At the sound of the drum, the king shivered, and murmured to himself: "I feel now, what I never thought to feel. I am afraid my heart trembles at the thought of this encounter, as it never did in battle. The drums and trumpets call my soldiers, but they will not come. They are stretched upon the field of battle, or fleeing before the enemy. They will not come, and the sun will witness my shame and wretchedness."

The king, completely overcome, sank upon the bench, and buried his face in his hands. He sat thus for a long time. The sounds before the door became louder and louder, but the king heard them not; he still held his hands before his face. He could not see the bright array of uniforms that had assembled before the window,

nor that the soldiers were swarming in from all sides. He did not hear the beating of drums, the orders to the soldiers, or military signals. Neither did he hear the door, which was gently opened by his adjutants, who had returned to inform him that his orders had been obeyed, and that the generals and staff officers were awaiting him outside the hut.

"Sire," whispered at length one of the adjutants, "your commands have been fulfilled. The generals await your majesty's pleasure."

The king allowed his hands to glide slowly from his face. "And the troops?" he asked.

"They are beginning to form."

"They are also just placing the cannon," said the second adjutant.

The king turned angrily to him. "Sir," he cried, "you lie! I have no cannon."

"Your majesty has, God be praised, more than fifty cannon," said the adjutant, firmly.

A ray of light overspread the countenance of the king, and a slight flush arose to his pale cheek. Standing up, he bowed kindly to the adjutants, and passed out among the generals, who saluted him respectfully, and pressed back to make way for their king. The king walked silently through their ranks, and then turning his head, he said:

"Gentlemen, let us see what yesterday has left us. Assemble your troops."

The generals and staff officers hurried silently away, to place themselves at the head of their regiments, and lead them before the king.

The king stood upright, his unsheathed sword in his right hand, as in the most ceremonious parade. The marching of the troops began, but it was a sad spectacle for their king. How little was left of the great and glorious army which he had led yesterday to battle! More than twenty thousand men were either killed or wounded. Thousands were flying and scattered. A few regiments had been formed with great trouble; barely five thousand men were now assembled. The king looked on with a firm eye, but his lips were tightly compressed, and his breath came heavily. Suddenly he turned to Count Dolmer, the adjutant of the Grand Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, who had arrived a few days before with the intelligence of a victory gained at Minden. The king had invited him to remain. "I am about to overpower the Russians; remain until I can give you a like message." The king was reminded of this as he saw the count near him.

"Ah," he said, with a troubled smile, "you are waiting for the message I promised. I am distressed that I cannot make you the

bearer of better news. If, however, you arrive safely at the end of your journey, and do not find Daun already in Berlin, and Contades in Magdeburg, you can assure the Grand Duke Ferdinand from me that all is not lost. Farewell, sir."

Then, bowing slightly, he advanced with a firm step to the generals. His eyes glowed and flashed once more, and his whole being reassumed its usual bold and energetic expression.

"Gentlemen," he said, in a clear voice, "fortune did not favor us yesterday, but there is no reason to despair. A day will come when we shall repay the enemy with bloody interest. I at least expect such a day; I will live for its coming, and all my thoughts and plans shall be directed toward that object. I strive for no other glory than to deliver Prussia from the conspiracy into which the whole of Europe has entered against her. I will obtain peace for my native land, but it shall be a great and honorable peace. I will accept no other; I would rather be buried under the ruins of my cannon, than accept a peace that would bring no advantages to Prussia, no fame to us. Honor is the highest, the holiest possession of individuals, as it is of nations; and Prussia, who has placed her honor in our hands, must receive it from us pure and spotless. If you agree with me, gentlemen, join me in this cry, 'Long live Prussia! Long live Prussia's honor!'"

The generals and officers joined enthusiastically in this cry, and like a mighty torrent it spread from mouth to mouth, until it reached the regiments, where it was repeated again and again. The color-bearers unfurled their tattered banners, and the shout arose from thousands of throats, "Long live Prussia's honor!"

The king's countenance was bright, but a tear seemed to glitter in his eye. He raised his glance to heaven and murmured:

"I swear to live so long as there is hope, so long as I am free! I swear only to think of death when my liberty is threatened." Slowly his glance returned to earth, and then in a powerful voice, he cried: "Onward! onward! that has ever been Prussia's watchword, and it shall remain so—Onward! We have a great object before us—we must use every effort to keep the Russians out of Berlin. The palladium of our happiness must not fall into the hands of our enemies. The Oder and the Spree must be ours—we must recover to-morrow what the enemy wrenched from us yesterday!"

"Onward! onward!" cried the army, and the words of the king bore courage and enthusiasm to all hearts.

Hope was awakened, and all were ready to follow the king; for however dark and threatening the horizon appeared, all had faith in the star of the king, and believed that it could never be extinguished.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

THE TERESIANI AND THE PRUSSIANI.

At the splendid hotel of the "White Lion," situated on the *Canale Grande*, a gondola had just arrived. The porter sounded the great house-bell, and the host hastened immediately to greet the stranger, who, having left the gondola, was briskly mounting the small white marble steps that led to the beautiful and sumptuous vestibule of the hotel.

The stranger returned the host's profound and respectful salutation with a stiff military bow, and asked in forced and rather foreign Italian if he could obtain rooms.

Signor Montardo gazed at him with a doubtful and uncertain expression, and instead of answering his question, said:

"Signor, it appears to me that you are a foreigner?"

"Yes," said the stranger, smiling, "my Italian has betrayed me. I am a foreigner, but hope that will not prevent your showing me comfortable and agreeable rooms."

"Certainly not, signor; our most elegant and sumptuous apartment is at your command," said the host, with a flattering smile. In the mean time, however, he did not move from the spot, but gazed with confused and anxious countenance first at the stranger, and then at his large trunk, which the men were just lifting from the gondola.

"Will you please show me the rooms?" cried the stranger, impatiently advancing into the hall.

The host sighed deeply, and threw a questioning glance at the head waiter, who returned it with a shrug of his shoulders.

"I will first show you into the dining-saloon," murmured the host, hastening after the stranger. "Will you please step in here, excellency?" and with humble submission he opened the large folding doors before which they stood, and conducted the stranger into the magnificent saloon which served as dining-saloon and ball-room. "Now, excellency," continued the host, after he closed the door, and had convinced himself by a rapid glance that they were alone,