

them.' Do you conceive now why I placed the king's picture before my store? why I burnt a lamp beneath it? I think this glorious portrait is more deserving of a sacred lamp than the Pope's nonsensical bull."

"You are right, signor," said the stranger, advancing to Cicernachi and shaking hands with him. "Permit me to thank you in the name of my great and noble king whom you have this day defended in so original a manner from the malicious charges of his enemies. I give you my word of honor that the king shall hear of it through me; I know it will rejoice him."

"Ah, signor," said Montardo, laughing, "you forget that you are an honest merchant who does not concern himself about politics."

"I can never forget I am a Prussian," said the traveller; "and how could I forget it?" continued he, laughing. "My whole business consists of Prussian wares."

"Truly you have some very beautiful articles," said Montardo. "You will be charmed with them, Cicernachi; it will be another opportunity to annoy the *Teresiani*. Look at this merchant's fans."

The stranger opened several fans. Cicernachi's eyes sparkled with delight at the sight of the painting. "How many have you, signor?" said he.

"Twelve."

"I take them all, and regret you have not more."

"But Cicernachi, where has all your wisdom gone to?" cried Montardo. "You have not even asked the price; or do you, perhaps, think the stranger gives them to you for nothing?"

"No, no; I forgot it," said Cicernachi, gazing with delight at the fans which the stranger was spreading out before him. "What is their price, signor?"

The stranger was silent for a moment, and then said, in a hesitating manner: "I paid ten francs for each fan in Geneva."

"I give twice that," said Cicernachi, quickly.

The stranger started up hastily, blushing with annoyance. "Sir," said he, "I take from no one a higher price than I gave."

"Ah, signor, signor," cried Montardo, "you have again forgotten that you are but a merchant. No merchant sells his goods for what he gave for them. Remember that."

"I will make a good business with these fans," said Cicernachi. "I give you twenty-four francs, and will ask fifty for them. The ladies of our nobility, many of whom are *Prussiani*, will be delighted to annoy their opponents in so elegant a manner. Are you content, sir?"

"I am satisfied," said the stranger, blushing with embarrassment. "Is this all you have for sale?"

"No, I have something else," said the stranger, opening another package. "As you are *Prussiano*, these neat little coins and medals, with pretty caricatures of the enemies of the king on them, will no doubt please you."

"Ah, let us see them," cried both Italians. They examined with eagerness the medals upon which the enemies of Frederick were represented in various laughable situations and positions.

"I take them all!" cried Cicernachi, enraptured.

The stranger laughed. "I cannot sell you my whole business," said he; "I must retain something. I will give you one of each. You must accept them as a token of my esteem, and must not pay me for them."

"Signor!" cried Montardo, in an imploring tone, "remain at my hotel as long as you please, and when I bring you your bill lay some of these coins upon it, and I shall be richly paid."

The stranger promised; then having received, with visible annoyance, the money for the fans, left the store with Montardo to pay his visit to the Convent Giovanni e Paolo.

CHAPTER III.

THE CLOISTER BROTHERS OF SAN GIOVANNI E PAOLO.

THE Prior of San Giovanni e Paolo had just returned from the second mass celebrated in the beautiful church of his cloister, the burial-place of the great Titiano Vicelli. With his arms folded across his back, he walked slowly and thoughtfully backward and forward, then stood before a large table at which a monk was occupied in unfolding letters and maps.

"This, your worship," said the monk, opening a new paper, "is an exact plan of the region around Mayen; we have just received it, and the positions of the two armies are plainly marked down. If agreeable to your worship, I will read the bulletins aloud, and you can follow the movements of the troops upon the map."

The prior shook his head softly. "No, Brother Anselmo, do not read again the triumphant bulletins of the Austrians and Russians; they pain my ears and my heart. Let us rather look at the map to see if the present position of the army offers any ground of hope."

"I have marked it all out with pins," said Father Anselmo; "the black pins signify the army of the allies, the white pins the army of the King of Prussia."

The prior bowed over the map, and his eye followed thoughtfully the lines which Father Anselmo marked out. "Your pins are a sad

omen," he said, shaking his head. "The black ones surround like a churchyard wall the white ones, which stand like crosses upon the solitary graves in the midst of their black enclosures."

"But the white pins will break through the enclosure," said Father Anselmo, confidently. "The great king—" Father Anselmo stopped speaking; suddenly the door opened, and the father guardian asked if he might enter.

The prior blushed slightly, and stepped back from the table as the sharp eyes of the father guardian wandered around the room and fell at last with a sarcastic expression upon the table covered with maps and plans.

"Welcome, Brother Theodore," said the prior, with a slight nod of the head.

"I fear that I disturb your worship in your favorite occupation," said the father guardian, pointing to the maps. "Your worship is considering the unfortunate condition of the heretical king whom God, as it appears, will soon cast down in the dust, and crush at the feet of the triumphant Church."

"We must leave results, at all events, to God," said the prior, softly; "He has so often evidently lent his aid to the King of Prussia, that I think no one can count confidently upon Frederick's destruction now."

"The Holy Father at Rome has blessed the weapons of his adversaries, consequently they must triumph," cried Father Theodore, unctuously. "But pardon, your worship, I forgot my errand. A stranger wishes to see the prior of the cloister; he has rare and beautiful relics to sell, which he will only show to your worship."

"Our church is rich enough in relics," said the prior.

"Your worship does not attach any especial value to such things," said the father guardian with a derisive smile; "but I must allow myself to recall to you that the Holy Father in Rome has only lately addressed a circular to all the cloisters, recommending the purchase of rare relics to the awakening and advancing of the true faith."

"You, father guardian, must understand that matter best," said Brother Anselmo, sticking four new pins into his map. "I think you brought back this circular about six months since, when you returned to take the place of guardian."

The father was in the act of giving an angry answer, but the prior came forward, and pointing to the door, said, "Introduce the stranger with the relics."

A few moments later the traveller from the hotel of Signor Montardo entered the prior's room. He received a kindly welcome, and was asked to show his treasures.

The stranger hesitated, and looked significantly at the two monks.

"I begged to be allowed to show them to your worship alone," said he.

"These two fathers are consecrated priests, and may therefore dare to look upon the holy treasures," said the prior, with a scarcely perceptible smile.

"I solemnly swore to the man from whom I bought these relics that I would only show them to the most worthy member of your order; he was a very pious man, and bitter necessity alone forced him to sell his precious treasures; he prayed to God to grant them a worthy place, and never to allow them to be desecrated by unholy eyes or hands. As the most holy and worthy brother is ever chosen to be the prior, I swore to show the relics only to the prior. Your worship will surely not ask me to break my oath?"

The prior made no answer; but nodded to the two monks, who silently left the room.

"And now, sir, show your treasures," said the prior, as the door closed behind them.

"Your worship," said the stranger, rapidly, "I have nothing but a letter from the Abbé Bastiani, which I was to give to your own hands." He drew a letter from his bosom, which he handed to the prior, who received it with anxious haste and hid it in his robe; then, with quick but noiseless steps he passed hastily through the room, and with a rapid movement dashed open the door; a low cry was heard, and a black figure tumbled back upon the floor.

"Ah! is that you, father guardian?" said the prior, in a tone of sympathy. "I fear that I hurt you."

"Not so, your worship; I only returned to say to you that it is the hour for dinner, and the pious brothers are already assembled in the hall."

"And I opened the door to call after you, father, and entreat you to take my place at the table. As I am in the act of looking at these holy relics, and touching them, I dare not soil my hands so soon afterward with earthly food. You will, therefore, kindly take my place, and I will not appear till the evening meal. Go, then, worthy brother, and may God bless you richly." He bowed and raising his right hand, made the sign of the cross, while the father guardian slowly, and with a frowning brow, passed through the room. Having reached the opposite door, he paused and looked back; but seeing the prior still standing upon the threshold of his room, and gazing after him, he dashed open the door and disappeared.

"Now, sir," said the prior, entering and closing the door carefully, "we are alone, and I am ready to listen to you."

"I pray your worship to read first the letter of your brother, the Abbé Bastiani."

"Ah! he has told you that I am his brother?" said the prior, eagerly. "He trusts you then, fully? Well, I will read the letter." He opened and read it impatiently. "This is a very laconic and enigmatical letter," said he. "My brother refers me wholly to you; he assures me I can confide entirely in your silence and discretion, and entreats me to assist you in the attainment of your object. Make known to me then, signor, in what way I can serve you, and what aim you have in view."

"First, I will give your worship a proof that I trust you fully and unconditionally. I will tell you who I am, and then make known my purpose; you will then be able to decide how far you can give me counsel and aid."

"Let us step into this window-niche," said the prior; "we will be more secure from eavesdroppers. Now, signor, I am ready to listen."

The stranger bowed. "First, I must pray your worship's forgiveness, for having dared to deceive you. I am no merchant, and have nothing to do with relics; I am a soldier! my name is Cocceji, and I have the honor to be an adjutant of the King of Prussia. My royal master has intrusted me with a most important and secret mission, and I am commissioned by your brother, the Abbé Bastiani, to ask in his name for your assistance in this great matter."

"In what does your mission consist?" said the prior, calmly.

The Baron Cocceji smiled. "It is difficult—yes, impossible to tell you in a few words. Your worship must allow me a wider scope, in order to explain myself fully."

"Speak on!" said the prior.

"I see, by the maps and the arrangements of the pins, that your worship knows exactly the position and circumstances of my royal master, whom all Europe admires and wonders at, and whom his enemies fear most when they have just defeated him. They know that my king is never so great, never so energetic and bold in action, as when he is seemingly at a disadvantage, and overwhelmed by misfortunes. The bold glance of the great Frederick discovers ever-new fountains of help; he creates in himself both power and strength, and when his enemies think they have caught the royal lion in their nets, his bold eye has already discovered the weak spot; he tears it apart, and makes his foes, bewildered with terror and astonishment, fly before him. It is true, the king has just lost three battles! The Austrians and Russians defeated him at Hochkirch, at Künersdorf, and at Mayen. But what have they gained? They have, in these three battles, lost more than the king; they have exhausted their resources—their own, and those of their allies; but Frederick stands still opposed to them, full of strength and

power. His army is enlarged; from every side, from every province, shouting crowds stream onward to join the colors of their king. Enthusiasm makes a youth of the graybeard, and changes boys to men. Each one of them will have his part in the experience and fame of the great Frederick, and demands this of him as a holy right. The king's treasury is not exhausted; the people, with joy and gladness, have offered up upon the altar of the fatherland, their possessions, their jewels, and their precious things, and submit with enthusiasm to all the restrictions and self-denials which the war imposes upon them. They desire nothing but to see their king victorious; to help him to this, they will give property, blood—yes, life itself. It is this warm, enthusiastic love of his people which makes the king so fearful to his enemies; it protects him like a diamond shield, steels him against the balls of his adversaries, and fills his proud, heroic soul with assurances of triumph. All Europe shares this enthusiasm and these convictions of ultimate success with the Prussians and their dear-loved king. All Europe greets the hero with loud hosannas, who alone defies so many and such mighty foes, who has often overcome them, and from whom they have not yet wrung one single strip of the land they have watered with their blood, and in whose bosom their fallen hosts lie buried in giant graves. This has won for him the sympathy of all Europe, and the love and admiration of even the subjects of his great and powerful foes. In France—that France, whose warriors suffered so shameful a defeat at Rossbach, and whose government is filled with rage and thirsty for revenge against this heroic king—even in France is Frederick admired and worshipped. Even in the palace of the king, they no longer refuse to acknowledge his worth and glory. But lately, the young Duke de Belleisle exhorted the Marquise de Pompadour to implore King Louis to prosecute the war with earnestness and ardor, otherwise King Frederick might soon be expected in Paris with his army. The Marquise de Pompadour cried out warmly, 'Good! then I shall at last see a king!' In Germany, his enemies seek in vain to arouse the fanaticism of the people against the heretical king. Catholic Bavaria—the Palatinate—Main—enter murmuringly and reluctantly into this war against this Protestant king, although they wear the beads in their pockets, and the scapular over their shoulders. Even if Frederick the Second is now overcome by his enemies, in the public opinion he is the conqueror, and the whole world sympathizes with him. But public opinion is his only ally, and the sympathy of the people is his only source of revenue, outside of the subsidy from England, which will soon be exhausted. Frederick, therefore, must look after other allies, other friends, who will render him assistance, in so far as

not to unsheathe the sword against him, and to prepare some difficulties for his adversaries, and occupy a portion of their attention. Such friends the king hopes to find in Italy; and to attain this object, I would ask counsel and help of your worship."

"And in how far is it thought that I can be useful in this matter?" said the prior, thoughtfully.

"Your worship has a second brother, who is minister of the King of Sardinia, and it is well known he is the king's especial confidant and favorite."

"And my noble brother, Giovanni, merits fully the favor of his king!" said the prior, heartily. "He is the most faithful, the most exalted servant of his master!"

"In all his great and good characteristics, he resembles his brother, the Prior of San Giovanni, and I hope, in this also, that he is the friend of the King of Prussia!" said the stranger.

"But I fear neither the friendship of my brother Giovanni nor my own can be useful to the King of Prussia. I am a poor and powerless monk, suspected and watched. My offence is, that I have not, like the fanatical priests of the Church, wished for the destruction and death of the great Frederick. My brother is the minister of a king, whose land is neither rich enough in gold to pay subsidies, nor in men to place an army in the field."

"Well, then, we must take occasion to increase the territory of the King of Sardinia!" said Baron Cocceji. "We must give him so large a realm, that he will be a dangerous neighbor to France and Austria. This is the plan and the intention of my king. Upon these points turn the proposals I will make in Turin, for the furtherance of which, I pray your assistance. The King of Sardinia has well-grounded claim to Milan, to Mantua, and to Bologna, by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle: why not make himself King of Lombardy? Unhappy Italy is like unhappy Germany—torn to pieces. In place of obeying one master, they must submit to the yoke of many. The dwellers in Italy, instead of being Italians, call themselves Milanese, Venetians, Sardinians, Tuscans, Romans, Neapolitans, and I know not what. All this weakens the national pride, and takes from the people the joyful consciousness of their greatness. Italy must be one in herself, in order to be once more great and powerful. Let the King of Sardinia take possession of Upper Italy, and he will, with his rightful inheritance, and as King of Lombardy, be a powerful prince—feared by his enemies, and welcomed by his allies."

"And do you think that Naples would look quietly on and witness this rapid growth of Sardinia?" said the prior, laughing.

"We will give to Naples an opportunity at the same time to

enlarge her borders. The young King of Naples has energy; he has proved it. When his father, Don Carlos, was called by right of succession to the Spanish throne, he had himself declared King of Naples, not regarding the right of the Duke of Parma, to whom, according to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, the Neapolitan throne rightly belonged. King Ferdinand is already a usurper! Let him go on, even as successfully in the same path—he has taken Naples—let him take Tuscany and the States of the Church, and, as King of Lower Italy, he will be as powerful as the King of Sardinia. In order that both may obtain possession of these lands uninterrupted and uninjured, will the King of Prussia so completely occupy the attention of Austria and France in Germany and Flanders as to make it impossible for them to interfere with Naples and Sardinia?*

"By Heaven! a great and bold idea; altogether in harmony with the energetic spirit of Frederick," cried the prior. "If the two Italian kings resemble the great Frederick, they will adopt this plan with enthusiasm."

He had risen, and stepped hastily backward and forward, now and then murmuring a few disconnected words; he then drew near the table and stood earnestly regarding the maps.

Cocceji did not dare to interrupt him by word or sound; he watched him, however, closely. At last, however, the inward struggle seemed to be over; he stood quietly before the baron, and, fixing his dark, earnest eyes with a thoughtful expression upon him, he said, softly: "You have confided to me a great and dangerous enterprise. If I did my duty as the unconditional subject of the Pope, and as a priest of the holy Church, of which Frederick is the bitter antagonist, I should arrest you here, as a dangerous negotiator and enemy, and above all, I should give speedy notice of this conspiracy, which not only threatens Clement as head of the Church, but as sovereign of the States of the Church. But—what would you have?—I was not born a priest, and my heart and my spirit have never been able to accommodate themselves fully to the discipline of my order. I have always remained, I fear," said he, with a graceful smile, "the true brother of the free-thinking Abbé Bastiani; and it appears to me, it lies in our blood to love and pay homage to the great and intellectual King of Prussia. I will, therefore, listen to and follow the voice of my blood and of my heart, and forget a little that I am a priest of the only church in which salvation can be found. As far as it lies in my power, I will promote your object. I will give you letters to Turin, not only to my brother Giovanni, but to Father Tomaseo, the king's confessor. He is my most faithful friend, and sympathizes fully with me. If you can

*Preuss, "History of Frederick the Great."

win him and my brother Giovanni, you have won the king, and he will lend a willing ear to your proposals. Your plans are bold, but my brother and Father Tomaseo are daring, undaunted men; the progress of Italy and the greatness of their king lies nearest their hearts. They are both influenced by my judgment, and when you hand them my letters, you will at least be a most welcome guest."

He gave the baron his hand, and listened with a kindly smile to the enthusiastic thanks of the over-happy soldier, whose first diplomatic mission seemed to promise so favorably.

"Be, however, always prudent and discreet, signor," said the prior, laughing. "Play your rôle as merchant; do not lay it aside for one moment while in Turin. Leave Venice as quickly as possible; no doubt the brother guardian, who was sent from Rome as a spy, who watches not only all my actions, but my words and thoughts, has remarked our long interview, and is already suspicious. As he has a *fine nose*, he may soon discover a part of your secret! Do not return to the cloister. During the day I will send you the promised letters by a faithful brother. As soon as you receive them, be off! My best wishes and my prayers accompany you. Without doubt, you are, like your great king, a heretic. I cannot, therefore commend you to Mary Mother, and the saints, but I will pray to God to watch over you."

The prior stopped suddenly and listened! Loud cries of wild alarm forced themselves upon his ear; the sounds appeared to come from directly under his feet, and waxed louder and fiercer every moment.

"It is in the dining-room," said the prior, "follow me, sir, I beg you, we may need your help—some one is murdering my monks!" They hastened from the room with flying feet; they passed through the long corridors and down the steps; the cries and roars and howls and curses became ever clearer.

"I was not mistaken," said the prior, "this comes from the refectory." He rushed to the door and threw it hastily open, then stood, as if chained to the threshold, and stared with horror at the mad spectacle before him.

There were no murderous strangers there playing wild havoc amongst his monks; but the worthy fathers themselves were making the fierce tumult which filled the prior with alarm. The saloon no longer resembled the ascetic, peaceful refectory of cloister brothers. It was changed into a battle-field, upon which the two hosts thirsting for blood stood opposed.

The table upon which the glasses, plates, and dishes seemed to have been thrown together in wild disorder, was shoved to one side, and in the open space the monks stood with flashing eyes, uttering

curses and imprecations; not one of them remarked that the prior and Cocceji stood at the door, astonished spectators of this unheard-of combat.

"Silence!" said the father guardian, making frantic gesticulations toward the monks who stood opposed to him and his adherents—"silence! no one shall dare within these sacred walls to speak of the Prussian heretical king in any other way than with imprecations. Whoever wishes success to his arms is an apostate, a traitor, and heretic. God has raised the sword of His wrath against him, and He will crush him utterly; He has blessed the weapons of his adversaries as Clement has also done. Long live Maria Theresa, her apostolic majesty!"

The monks by his side roared out, "Long live Maria Theresa, her apostolic majesty!"

"She will not be victorious over Frederick of Prussia," cried Father Anselmo, the leader of the opposite party. "The Pope has blessed the arms of Daun, but God himself has blessed the weapons of Frederick. Long live the King of Prussia! Long live the great Frederick!"

"Long live the great Frederick!" cried the monks by the side of Father Anselmo.

The party of the father guardian rushed upon them with doubled fists; the adversaries followed their example. "Long live Theresa!" cried the one. "Long live Frederick!" cried the other—and the blows and kicks fell thickly right and left, with the most lavish prodigality.

It was in vain that the prior advanced among them and commanded peace—no one regarded him. In their wild and indiscriminate rage they pressed him and shoved him from side to side, and in the heat of the battle several powerful blows fell upon his breast; so the poor prior took refuge again at the door near Cocceji, who was laughing merrily at the wild disorder.

The cries of "Long live Theresa!" "Long live Frederick!" were mingling lustily in the bloody strife.

The father guardian was enraged beyond bearing, and his flashing eye looked around for some sharp weapon with which to demolish Father Anselmo, who had just exclaimed, "Long live Frederick, the victor of Leuthen and Zorndorf!" He seized a large tin cup, which was near him upon the table, and with a fierce curse he dashed it in the face of Father Anselmo, and the blood burst from his nose. This was the signal for a new order of attack. Both parties rushed to the table to arm themselves; the cups whizzed through the air and wounded severely the heads against which they were well aimed. Here and there might be heard whimperings and pite-

ous complaints, mixed with curses and frantic battle-cries—"Long live Theresa!" "Long live Frederick!" Some of the warriors crept from the contest into the corners to wipe the blood from their wounds and return with renewed courage to the contest. A few cowards had crept under the table to escape the cups and kicks which were falling in every direction.

Father Anselmo remarked them, and with loud, derisive laughter he pointed them out.

"The *Teresiani* live under the table, no *Prussiano* has crept there. All the *Teresiani* would gladly hide as they have often done before."

The *Prussiani* accompanied these words of their leader with joyous shouts.

The father guardian trembled with rage; he seized a large dish from the table and dashed it at Anselmo, who dodged in time, and then with a powerful arm returned the compliment. It was a well-directed javelin. The tin dish struck the father guardian exactly in the back—he lost his balance, and fell to the earth. The *Prussiani* greeted this heroic deed of their chief with shouts of triumph.

"So shall all the *Teresiani* perish!"

The battle waxed hotter and fiercer, the air was thick with missiles.

"They will murder each other!" cried the prior, turning to the Baron Cocceji.

"Not so, your worship; there will only be a few blue swellings and bleeding noses—nothing more," said Cocceji, laughing.

"Ah, you laugh young man; you laugh at this sad spectacle!"

"Forgive me, your worship; but I swear to you, I have never seen warriors more eager in the fray, and I have never been more curious to witness the result of any battle."

"But you shall not witness it," said the prior, resolutely. "You shall no longer be a spectator of the unworthy and shameful conduct of my monks. I pray you to withdraw instantly; in a few hours I will send you the letters, and if you believe that I have rendered you the least service, I ask in return that you will tell no one what you have seen."

"I promise, your worship," said Cocceji, with forced gravity. "If the people without shall ask me what all this tumult means, I will say that the pious fathers in the cloister are singing their '*Horas*.'"^{*}

Baron Cocceji bowed to the prior, and returned with gay and hopeful thoughts to the hotel of the "White Lion."

A few hours later, a monk appeared and desired to speak with the stranger about the holy relics.

^{*} Baron Cocceji did not keep his word, as this whole scene is historic.

Cocceji recognized in him the worthy Father Anselmo, the victor over the father guardian.

"Will you do me a great pleasure, worthy father?" said he. "Tell me which party remained in possession of the field after your great battle."

An expression of triumphant joy flashed in Father Anselmo's eyes.

"The *Prussiani* were victorious, and I think the *Teresiani* will never dare to recommence the strife; four of their monks lie in their cells with broken noses, and it will be some weeks before the father guardian will be capable of performing his duties as spy; he is sore and stiff, and his mouth is poorer by a few teeth. May all the enemies of the great Frederick share his fate! May God bless the King of Prussia and be gracious to his friends!"

He greeted the baron with the sign of the cross, and withdrew.

The baron remembered the warning of the prior, and hastened quietly from Venice. Already the next morning he was on the highway to Turin.*

CHAPTER IV.

THE RETURN FROM THE ARMY.

It was a sunny, summer day—one of those days which incline the heart to prayer, and bring tears of happiness to the eyes. There are no such days in cities; if we would enjoy them we must go into the country—we must seek them in peaceful valleys, in fragrant forests, where the silence is unbroken, except by the fluttering leaves and the singing of birds. We must understand the eloquent silence of Nature in order to enjoy the holy Sabbath quiet of a summer day; and we must be able to hear the language which the flowers breathe forth, to understand the sighing of the wind, and the rustling of the trees.

Very few can do this, but few would care for it. God has not opened the eyes of the hearts of many of us to this extent; these things are hidden by a thick veil from the many; they cannot see

^{*}This diplomatic mission failed, because of the faint heart of the King of Sardinia. He rejected the bold propositions of Frederick entirely, and said, in justification of himself, that since the alliance between the powers of France and Austria, he had his head between a pair of tongs, which were ever threatening to close and crush him.

Baron Cocceji was not more fortunate in Naples, and after many vain efforts he was forced to return home, having accomplished nothing.—Duten's "Memoirs of a Traveller."

the heavenly beauty of Nature—they do not understand the fairy tale which she is ever telling. This is gentle, idyllic, fairy lore, unsought by the learned. It whispers of roses, of dancing elves, of weeping clouds, of dreaming violets.

Happy are those who listen to these fables, who are not called by the necessities of life to hear the roar of cannon—to find all these sweet and holy songs overpowered by the noise of war, the horrors of bloodshed!

War, destructive war, still held a lighted torch over unhappy Germany; cities and villages were in ruins—even the peace of Nature was destroyed. The valleys, usually so quiet, now often resounded with the roar of cannon. The fields remained uncultivated, the meadows uncared for; there were no strong hands to work. The men and youths were gone, only the old graybeards and the women were in the villages, and the work advanced but slowly under their trembling hands. Unhappiness and want, care and sorrow were in the land.

Even in the once peaceful and happy village of Brünen on the Rhine, misery had made itself felt. Grief and anguish dwelt with the bereaved mothers, with the forsaken brides, and the weak old men; with the useless cripples, who had returned from the war, and who spent their time in relating the dangers through which they had passed, in telling of the sons, the brothers, the husbands, and the fathers of those who listened to their tales—those dear ones who were, perhaps, now stretched upon the battle-field.

But on this bright day no one in the village gave a thought to the beauties of Nature, for a new misfortune weighed heavily upon the hearts of the unhappy inhabitants. They were no longer the subjects of the hero-king, who was so worshipped by all; under whose colors their fathers and sons still fought. The French army, led by the Duke de Broglie and the Count de St. Germain, had taken possession of all that part of the country, and held it in the name of their king. It was declared a French province, and the inhabitants, helpless and forsaken, were compelled to acknowledge the French as their masters, and to meet the taxes which were imposed upon them.

It was a most bitter necessity, and no one felt it more deeply than the old shepherd Buschman, the father of Charles Henry. He sat, as we first saw him, on the slope of the field where his flock was grazing, guarded and kept in order by the faithful Phylax. His eye was not clear and bright as then, but troubled and sorrowful, and his countenance bore an expression of the deepest grief. He had no one to whom he could pour forth his sorrows—no one to comfort him—he was quite alone. Even his youngest son, Charles

Henry, the real Charles Henry, had been compelled to leave him. The recruiting officers of the king had come a short time before the French troops had taken possession of the province, and had conscripted the few strong men who were still left in the village of Brünen.

But this time the men of Brünen had not answered joyfully to the demand. Even old Buschman had wished to keep his son Charles Henry with him. Had he not sent six sons to the field of battle, and had they not all died as heroes? Charles Henry was his last treasure, his one remaining child; his grief-torn heart clung to him with the deepest devotion. To be parted from him seemed more bitter than death itself. When the recruiting officer came into the hut of Buschman and summoned Charles Henry to follow him as a soldier, the eyes of the old man filled with tears, and he laid his hands upon the arm of his son as if he feared to see him instantly torn from his sight.

"Captain" he said, with a trembling voice, "I have sent the king six sons already; they have all died in his service. Tell me truly, is the king in great need? If so, take me as well as my son—if not, leave me my son."

The officer smiled, and extended his hand to the old man. "Keep your son," he said. "If you have lost six sons in the war, it is right that you should keep the seventh."

Buschman uttered a cry of joy, and would have embraced his son, but Charles Henry pushed him gently back, and his father read in his countenance a determination and energy that he had rarely seen there.

"No, father," he said, "let me go—let me be a soldier as my brothers were. I should have gone four years ago, when I was prevented, and Anna Sophia— Ah, let me be a soldier, father," he said, interrupting himself. "All the young men of the village are going, and I am ashamed to remain at home."

The old man bent his head sadly. "Go then, my son," he said; "God's blessing rest upon you!"

Thus Charles Henry went; not from a feeling of enthusiasm for the life of a soldier—not from love to his king—but merely because he was ashamed to remain at home.

He had now been absent several months, and his father had not heard from him. But the news of the lately lost battle had reached the village, and it was said that the Prince Royal of Brunswick, in whose corps Charles Henry was, had been defeated. The old shepherd remembered this as he sat in the meadow this bright summer morning. His thoughts were with his distant son, and when he raised his eyes to heaven it was not to admire its dazzling blue, or

its immeasurable depth, but to pray to the Almighty to spare his son. The peaceful tranquillity of Nature alarmed the old man—she speaks alone to those who have an ear attuned to her voice—she says nothing to those who listen with a divided heart. Buschman could endure it no longer; he arose and started toward the village. He longed to see some human being—to encounter some look of love—to receive sympathy from some one who understood his grief, who suffered as he did, and who did not wear the eternal smile that Nature wore.

He went to the village, therefore, and left the care of his flock to Phylax. It comforted his heart as he passed through the principal street of Brünen and received kind greetings from every hut he passed. He felt consoled and almost happy when here and there the peasants hurried toward him as he passed their huts, and begged him to come in and join them at their simple mid-day meal, and were quite hurt when he refused because his own dinner was prepared for him at home. These men loved him—they pitied his loneliness—they told him of their own cares, their own fears—and as he endeavored to console and encourage them, he felt his strength increase—he was more hopeful, more able to bear whatever God might send.

“We must be united in love,” said Buschman; “we will help each other to bear the sorrows that may come upon us. To-morrow is Sunday; in the morning we will go to the house of God, and after we have whispered to Him the prayers which He alone must hear, we will assemble together under the linden-tree in the square and talk of the old times and those who have left us. Do you not remember that it was under the linden-tree we heard of the first victory that our king gained in this fearful war? It was there that Anna Sophia Detzloff read the news to us, and we rejoiced over the battle of Losovitz. And I also rejoiced and thanked God, although the victory had cost me the lives of two of my sons. But they perished as heroes. I could glory in such a death; and Anna Sophia read their praises from the paper. Ah, if Anna lived, I would at least have a daughter.”

He could speak no more, emotion arrested the words on his lips; he bowed to his friends and passed on to his lonely hut. His little table was spread, and the young girl who served him, and who slept in his hut at night, was just placing a dish of steaming potatoes before his plate. The old man sat down to his solitary meal; he ate only to sustain his body; his thoughts were far away; he took no pleasure in his food. In the middle of his meal he started up; a shadow had fallen across the window, and two loving, well-known eyes had seemed to look in on him. Buschman, as if paralyzed with

delight, let fall his spoon and looked toward the door. Yes, the bolt moved, the door opened, and there stood the tall figure of a Prussian soldier.

The old man uttered a cry and extended his arms. “Oh, my son, my beloved son, do I indeed see you once more?”

“Yes, father, I am here; and God willing, we will never again be parted.” And Charles Henry hastened to the outstretched arms of his father, and kissing him tenderly, pressed him to his heart.

“The thought of you, dear father, has led me here,” he said; “but for you I would not have returned to Brünen; I should have wandered forth into the world—the world which is so much greater and more beautiful than I ever dreamed. But your dear old eyes were before me; I heard your loved voice, which called to me, and I returned to you.”

“God be praised!” said his father, folding his hands, and raising his eyes gratefully toward heaven. “Oh how kind and merciful is God, to give me back my last, my only son, the support of my old age, the delight of my eyes! You will not leave me again. This is not merely a leave of absence; you have obtained your release, the war is ended, the king has declared peace.”

The eyes of the old man were dimmed with tears; he did not perceive how Charles Henry trembled, and that a deep flush mounted to his brow.

“No, father,” he said, with downcast eyes, “I will never leave you again. We have all returned home. It will be bright and gay once more in the village, and the work will go forward, for there is a great difference between a dozen old men and as many young ones. It was most needful for us to return. The corn is ripe, and should have been already gathered. We must go to work. To-morrow shall be a happy day for the village; the whole neighborhood shall perceive that the twelve young men of Brünen have returned. We met a violinist on the way, and we engaged him for to-morrow. He must play for us under the linden-tree, and our fathers and mothers, and sisters and sweethearts must join us, and we will dance and sing and make merry.”

“What a coincidence!” said the old shepherd, with a bright smile. “We had already decided that we would meet together to-morrow under the linden. We wished to sit there and mourn together over our lost sons. To sing and dance is much better, and perhaps the old grayheads will join you.”

“You must dance with me, father,” said Charles Henry, laughing. “I will take no refusal.”

“I will, my son, I will; joy has made me young again, and if Phylax, the old graybeard, does not mind, and will allow me, I

will dance with you, but you know he is always jealous of you. I am sure the whole village will envy you your gay young partner. But now, my son," he continued gravely, "tell me of our king, and how is it that he has declared peace so suddenly, and whether he has been victorious or the reverse."

"I know nothing of the king" said Charles Henry; "I was not near him, but in the division of the Duke of Brunswick."

"I know that, my son; but the duke would not proclaim peace without the knowledge and consent of the king."

"Oh, father, they will compel the king to make peace," cried Charles Henry. "And as for the Duke of Brunswick, he has given up the attack against Wesel and has withdrawn to Westphalia, and the French are in possession of the entire lowlands, which, it is to be hoped, they will retain."

"You hope that?" asked his father, with astonishment.

"Well, yes, father. The French king is now, and perhaps will always be, the lord of Cleve; and, as his subjects, we must wish him success, and hope that he will always conquer the King of Prussia."

"What do you say, my son?" asked the old man, with a bewildered expression. "I fear you are right. The French are our masters now, and, as our king has declared peace with France, we have the unhappiness of being French subjects. May God protect us from such a fate! It would be fearful if we dared not call the great hero-king our king, and, if we should live to see the day when our sons should be compelled, as French soldiers, to go to battle against their king. Only think, Charles Henry, you would not be allowed to wear your fine Prussian uniform on Sundays, and it is so becoming to you, and is as good as new. But how is it, my son, that they have left you the uniform? They are usually taken from the released soldiers and put amongst the army stores."

"We all came home in our Prussian uniforms," said Charles Henry, "but of course we will lay them aside to-day."

"Why to-day?"

"Because we are French subjects, and therefore it is not proper for us to wear the uniform of the enemy, the King of Prussia. That is also the reason why we have returned home. When we learned that Cleve had fallen into the possession of the French, we knew that we were no longer the subjects of the King of Prussia, and we dared not fight under his flag against the French, whose subjects we had become. We considered that, and we thought how much it would injure you all here in Brünen if it were known that your sons were in the army of the Prussian king. Principally on that account we determined to return home, and we left our regiment yesterday morning, which was on the point of marching off

to Minden, and we walked the entire day and half the night. We slept a few hours in a forest, and at the break of day we recommenced our journey. And now, father, that I have seen you, and you know every thing, I will go to my room and take off this uniform, and become a peasant once more." He sought to leave the room hastily, for the amazed, horror-struck expression of his father was most disagreeable to him.

But Buschman placed his hand so heavily upon his son's arm that he was compelled to remain. "Say it is a jest, Charles," he cried, in an excited voice. "It is not possible for my son, the brother of my six hero-boys, to speak thus! It is merely a jest, Charles. You wished to joke with your old father. It is not true that you have deserted the flag of our king; put an end to this cruel jest, Charles Henry, and show me your leave of absence which every honest soldier obtains before leaving his regiment. Do you hear, Charles Henry? Show it to me quickly." He extended his trembling hand toward his son, while with the other he still held his arm in a powerful grasp.

"Father," said Charles Henry, fiercely, "I have no such paper. It is as I told you; we have left the Prussian army because we are no longer the subjects of the King of Prussia, and it is not necessary for us to remain in the service. We wish to become peasants once more."

"You lie! you lie!" cried his father. "You are no deserter—it is impossible that my son should be a deserter."

"No, father, I am no deserter," returned his son, defiantly, as he freed his arm from the old man's grasp. "I am no deserter—I have only done my duty as a subject of the French king. I have left the flag of the enemy, and I am here ready and willing to obey my new master as a true subject. That is all I have to say, father, and I believe when you consider, you will see that I was right, and that you will be pleased for me to take off the Prussian uniform and remain with you." He did not wait for his father's answer, but left the room hastily, as if he feared to be again detained.

The old man arose to follow him, but his feet refused their accustomed office; with a deep groan, he sank upon his chair, and as the scalding tears streamed from his eyes, he murmured: "Oh, my God! my son is a deserter! Why did you permit me to live to see this shame? Why did you not close my eyes that they might not meet this disgrace?"