

37. After these two well-fought fields, the confederates hastened to renew their ancient alliance, which was solemnly sworn to in an assembly held at Brunnen on the eighth day of December.

38. After the battle of Morgarten one canton after another threw off the Austrian yoke, and joined the forest cantons, until nearly all Switzerland was joined in a confederacy. A later war waged by Albert proved disastrous to the Austrian cause, and ended by a further consolidation of the Swiss cantons. In 1386, seventy years after Morgarten, the Austrians made another attempt to bring the brave mountaineers into subjection. An army of nine thousand men, the best trained soldiers of the empire, under the lead of the Archduke Leopold, invaded the country. To these the confederates opposed a force of fourteen hundred. They met in a valley near the lake of Sempach. The Austrians had learned something of Swiss warfare, and knew that they stood no chance in a hand-to-hand conflict with the Swiss, and so they formed their men into squares, with a wall of bristling spears on every side. Upon this solid mass of men the Swiss could make no impression. In vain they charged with the fiery courage which had so often gained them the victory; they could find no vulnerable point in the serried columns, and it seemed that the brave mountaineers must all perish, and leave their homes again to the mercy of the Austrian soldiers. But, when almost in despair, the tide of battle was turned by the acts of a single Swiss soldier, Arnold Winkelried, of Unterwalden. He communicated his plan to his immediate neighbors, and then, rushing forward, he grasped as many of the Austrian spears as he could reach; and, gathering them together, he bowed to the ground with the spears buried in his breast. Into the breach his companions rushed, and with their powerful

swords they soon widened the space, so that the whole Swiss force had room for action. The Austrians were almost annihilated, Leopold himself being slain. The poet Montgomery has given the following version of this event:

ARNOLD WINKELRIED.

39. "Make way for liberty!" he cried;  
"Make way for liberty!" and died.
40. In arms the Austrian phalanx stood,  
A living wall, a human wood!  
A wall where every conscious stone  
Seemed to its kindred thousands grown;  
A rampart all assaults to bear,  
Till time to dust their frames should wear!  
A wood, like that enchanted grove  
In which with fiends Rinaldo strove,  
Where every silent tree possessed  
A spirit prisoned in its breast,  
Which the first stroke of coming strife  
Would startle into hideous life;  
So dense, so still, the Austrians stood,  
A living wall, a human wood!  
Impregnable their front appears,  
All horrent with projected spears,  
Whose polished points before them shine,  
From flank to flank, one brilliant line,  
Bright as the breakers' splendors run  
Along the billows, to the sun.
41. Opposed to these, a hovering band  
Contended for their native land;  
Peasants, whose new-found strength had broke  
From manly necks the ignoble yoke,

And forged their fetters into swords,  
 On equal terms to fight their lords :  
 And what insurgent rage had gained,  
 In many a mortal fray maintained !  
 Marshaled at morn at Freedom's call,  
 They come to conquer or to fall,  
 Where he who conquered, he who fell,  
 Was deemed a dead, or living Tell !  
 Such virtue had that patriot breathed,  
 So to the soil his soul bequeathed,  
 That wheresoe'er his arrows flew,  
 Heroes in his own likeness grew,  
 And warriors sprang from every sod  
 Which his awakening footstep trod.

42. And now the work of life and death  
 Hung on the passing of a breath ;  
 The fire of conflict burnt within,  
 The battle trembled to begin ;  
 Yet, while the Austrians held their ground,  
 Point for attack was nowhere found.  
 Where'er the impatient Switzers gazed,  
 The unbroken line of lances blazed ;  
 That line 'twere suicide to meet,  
 And perish at their tyrant's feet :  
 How could they rest within their graves,  
 And leave their homes the homes of slaves ?  
 Would they not feel their children tread  
 With clanging chains above their head ?

43. It must not ! This day, this hour,  
 Annihilates the oppressor's power ;  
 All Switzerland is in the field,

She will not fly, she can not yield—  
 She must not fall ; her better fate  
 Here gives her an immortal date.  
 Few were the numbers she could boast ;  
 But every freeman was a host,  
 And felt as though himself were he  
 On whose sole arm hung victory !

44. It did depend on one, indeed,  
 Behold him—Arnold Winkelried !  
 There sounds not to the tramp of fame  
 The echo of a nobler name.  
 Unmarked he stood amid the throng,  
 In rumination deep and long,  
 Till you might see, with sudden grace,  
 The very thought come o'er his face,  
 And by the motion of his form  
 Anticipate the coming storm ;  
 And by the uplifting of his brow  
 Tell where the bolt would strike, and how.
45. But 'twas no sooner thought and done,  
 The field was in a moment won.
46. "Make way for Liberty !" he cried ;  
 Then ran with arms extended wide  
 As if his dearest friend to clasp ;  
 Ten spears he swept within his grasp.  
 "Make way for Liberty !" he cried :  
 Their keen points met from side to side ;  
 He bowed among them like a tree,  
 And thus made way for Liberty !
47. Swift to the breach his comrades fly ;  
 "Make way for Liberty !" they cry.

And through the Austrian phalanx dart,  
As rushed the spears through Arnold's heart!  
While instantaneous as his fall,  
Rout, ruin, panic, scattered all:  
An earthquake could not overthrow  
A city with a surer blow.

48. Thus Switzerland again was free,  
Thus death made way for Liberty!

49. In the next fifty years the Swiss were engaged in a war with Austria and another with France, and in both cases they were victorious. But, while they were exhausted by the incessant wars that had been urged upon them, they were threatened with a more formidable invasion than ever. Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, resolved to attach Switzerland to his domain. Crossing the Jura, the duke found himself in possession of Yverdun, it having been betrayed into his hands; but the citadel still held out. Charles, irritated that his progress should be stayed by such a handful of men, offered to let them retire home if they would surrender, but if they still held out he would hang them all! The Swiss, knowing prolonged defense was useless, surrendered. As they marched out of the citadel they were seized, by order of the duke, and all murdered.

50. Aroused by these horrors, an army of twenty thousand advanced to meet the duke at the head of three times that number. In the battle that ensued the Burgundians were entirely defeated, and Charles narrowly escaped with his life. Writhing under his disgrace, and vowing revenge, the duke raised a much more numerous army, and again invaded Switzerland.

x 51. He advanced by the way of the lake of Neufchatel,

and paused a few days to capture the fortress on the banks of Lake Morat. While the siege was going on the Swiss army concentrated, and marched to meet their foes. Thirty thousand men were to fight the battle of freedom against one hundred thousand. It was on Saturday, June 22, 1476. The weather was threatening, the sky overcast, and rain fell in torrents. A vanguard was formed, commanded by John Hallwyl, who knelt and besought a blessing from on high. While they yet prayed the sun broke through the clouds, upon which the Swiss commander rose, sword in hand, crying: "Up, up, Heaven smiles on our victory!" The artillery thundered forth as he spoke, and the whole plain, from the lake to the rocky heights, became one vast battle-field! Toward the main body of the Burgundians the Swiss army poured down with irresistible force and courage; and, clearing all difficulties, they reached the line of the enemy. A fearful slaughter now ensued. The Burgundians were utterly vanquished. The haughty duke, pale and dispirited, fled with a few followers, and never stopped till he reached the banks of Lake Lemman. The rout was so complete that many of the Burgundians, in terror and despair, threw themselves into the Lake of Morat, the banks of which were strewn with the bodies of the slain.

52. The battle of Morat lives in history with the victories of Marathon and Bannockburn. In each, freedom for the nation was secured, and liberty for man was preserved and transmitted. As a deed, the Swiss victory for ever freed a people from a grasping foreign tyrant; and it is a matter of rejoicing to all who love liberty till to-day, and, like other great events, it is the subject of national traditions.

53. According to one of these, a young native of Friburg, who had been engaged in the battle, keenly desirous

of being the first to carry home tidings of the victory, ran the whole way—a distance of ten or twelve miles—and with such overhaste that on his arrival at the market-place he dropped with fatigue, and, barely able to shout that the Swiss were victorious, immediately expired. A twig of lime-tree, which he carried in his hand, was planted on the spot in commemoration of this event; and till the present day are seen, in the market-place of Friburg, the aged and propped-up remains of the venerable tree which grew from this twig. In most of the towns of Switzerland a “tree of Liberty” is preserved, which came from scions of the original tree at Friburg.

Chapter 4  
CHAPTER IV.

BRUCE AND BANNOCKBURN.

1. Six hundred years ago the duty of defending freedom fell to King Robert Bruce and the Scotch. And this is how it happened. The time was during the crusades, when all Europe was marching to the East, and engaging in battle with the Moslems. Scotland had been an independent country for many years, but some of her princes were too weak for those troublous times. The witches that deceived Macbeth seem to have cast a spell upon the prosperity of the country. Clan was at enmity with clan, and one great chieftain waged relentless war with another. The fierce nobles paid little heed to the king, and showed no regard for the rights of the people. It seemed that peace and liberty had departed forever.

2. Alexander III died, leaving no direct heir. The Scottish nobles assembled to elect who should be their king. The choice lay between Robert Bruce and John Balliol. As the nobles could not agree, the matter was referred to King Edward I, of England, who decided in favor of Balliol. The new prince was weak, and, when he resented the interference of King Edward in some of his affairs, he was easily defeated and driven from the kingdom. Scotland was now regarded as a conquered country, and the people were terribly oppressed. The nobles were deprived of their estates, and the poor peo-