

"Yes, those are magic words," replied M. von Schladen, "and they read as follows:

'Who never ate his bread with tears—
Who never in the sorrowing hours
Of night lay sunk in gloomy fears—
He knows ye not, O heavenly powers!'"*

"Ah, she ate her bread with tears to-day. I saw it," murmured Katharine. "But who is she, and what is her name? Tell us, so that we may pray for her, sir."

"Her name is Louisa," said M. von Schladen, in a tremulous voice. "At present she is a poor, afflicted woman, who is fleeing from town to town from her enemy, and eating her bread with tears, and weeping at night. But she is still the Queen of Prussia, and will remain so if there be justice in heaven!"

"The Queen of Prussia!" cried Katharine, holding up her hands in dismay. "She was here and wrote that?"

"Yes, she wrote that, and sends this to you as a reward for your trouble," said M. von Schladen, emptying the contents of the purse on the table. The purse itself he placed in his bosom. Without waiting for the thanks of the surprised woman, he departed, vaulted into the saddle, and followed the queen at a full gallop.

CHAPTER XX.

COUNT PÜCKLER.

PERFIDY and treachery everywhere! Magdeburg, Küstrin, the most important fortresses of Prussia, had fallen. Not only the hand of the triumphant conqueror had brought about their downfall, but the timidity and cowardice prevailing among the Prussians themselves. Magdeburg, although abundantly supplied with ammunition, and garrisoned by more than ten thousand men, had surrendered. Küstrin, Hameln, and a large majority of the other fortresses, had voluntarily capitulated, almost without a show of resistance, on receiving the first summons to surrender; the first cities of

Wer nie sein Brot mit Thränen ass,
Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte
Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
Der kennt euch nicht, Ihr himmlischen Mächte."
GÖTHE.

Prussia were now French; the French were lawgivers everywhere, and the humiliated Prussians had to bow to the scornful arrogance of the victors.

Still, there were at this time of sorrow and disgrace shining examples of courage, of bold energy, and unwavering fidelity—there were fortresses that had not voluntarily opened their gates to the enemy, and that, regardless of hunger and privation, were struggling bravely for honor and victory. As yet Colberg had not fallen; this fortress was courageously defended by Scharnhorst, the skilful and experienced colonel, by bold Ferdinand von Schill, and that noble citizen, Nettelbeck, who by word and deed fired the hearts of the soldiers and citizens to persist in their patient resistance and in the determined defence of the place.

Graudenz had not surrendered to the besieging forces. The commander of this fortress, M. de Courbières, had not yielded either to the threats or the flatteries of the enemy. "If it be true, as you assure me, that there is no longer a King of Prussia, I am King of Graudenz, and shall not surrender," he replied to the bearer of the French flag of truce, who summoned him in the name of the Duke de Rovigo to capitulate.

Silesia also had remained faithful, notwithstanding the action of Minister Count Hoym, who, in a public manifesto, had called upon the Silesians to meet the foe in the most amicable manner in case of an invasion, and to satisfy as much as possible all the demands of the hostile troops. The Silesians, more courageous and resolute than their minister, were unwilling to bend their neck voluntarily under the French yoke; they preferred to struggle for their honor and independence. It is true, the fortress of Glogau had fallen, but Breslau and Schweidnitz were still holding out. Twice had Breslau repulsed Jerome Bonaparte with his besieging troops—twice had the determination of the courageous in the place triumphed over the anxiety of the timid and of the secret friends of the French. At the head of these bold defenders of Breslau was a man whose glorious example in the hour of danger had inspired all—infused courage into the timid, and brought comfort to the suffering. This man was Count Frederick von Pückler. He did not take time to recover from the wounds he had received in Jena. Faithful to his oath, he devoted his services to his country, that stood so much in need of its sons. After a short repose on his estate at Gimmel, he repaired to the headquarters of King Frederick William at Ortelsburg.

It is true, he could not bring him a regiment, or any material help; still he was able to assist him with his ideas, and to show him the means of obtaining efficacious help.

Count Frederick von Pückler believed the king might derive assistance from the military resources of Silesia. He described to him, in ardent and eloquent words, the extensive means of defence retained by this rich province; he assured him its inhabitants were faithful and devoted, and ready to shed their blood for their king. He told his majesty, freely and honestly, that the old civil and military bureaucracy alone was to blame—that Silesia had not long an organized effective system of resistance—that this government had paralyzed the patriotic zeal of the citizens, instead of stimulating it—nay, that, by means of its insensate and ridiculous decrees, it had impeded in every way the development of the military resources of the province. He had not come, however, merely to find fault and to accuse, but, in spite of his sickness and his wounds, performed the long journey to the king's headquarters in order to indicate to his sovereign the remedies by which the mischief might be counteracted, and the country preserved from utter subjugation. He communicated a plan by which new forces might be raised, and be enabled to take the field in a few days. All the old soldiers were to be recalled into the service; the forest-keepers and their assistants were to be armed, and from these elements the *landwehr* was to be organized, and intrusted with the special task of defending the fortresses.

The king listened to the ardent and enthusiastic words of the count with growing interest, and finally Pückler's joyful confidence and hopeful courage filled him also with hope and consolation.

"You believe then that we could really obtain, by these new levies, brave troops for the defence of the fortress?" asked he.

"I am convinced of it," replied Count Pückler. "Ardent love for their fatherland and their king is glowing in the hearts of the Silesians, and they will be ready when called upon to defend the fortresses. Hitherto, however, nobody has thought of appealing to the able-bodied men. Count Hoym has retired to the most remote part of Silesia, and is now wandering about from city to city. The military governor of Silesia, General Lindener, visited all the fortresses and told their commanders that every thing was lost—that it

only remained for them to protect themselves against a *coup de main*, so as to obtain good terms on their surrender."

The king started up, and an angry blush mantled his face for a moment. "If he said that, he is an infamous scoundrel, who ought to lose his head!" he exclaimed, vehemently.

Count Pückler smiled mournfully. "Alas!" he said, "your majesty would have to sign many death-warrants if you punish in these days of terror all who are wavering because their faith and hopes are gone. Possibly, only an admonishing, soul-stirring word may be required to invigorate the timid, and to encourage the doubtful. Sire, utter such a word! Send me back with it to Silesia! Order the governor to accept the propositions which I had the honor to lay before your majesty, and which I have taken the liberty to write down in this paper, and instruct him, in accordance with them, to garrison the fortresses with fresh defenders. Oh, your majesty, all Silesia is yearning for her king; she is longingly stretching out her hands toward you; permit her to fight for you!"

"You imagine, then, that Schweidnitz, and, above all, Breslau, in that case, would be able to hold out?" asked the king.

"I do not imagine it, I am convinced of it!" exclaimed the count. "I pledge my life that it is so; I say that Breslau, permitted to defend itself, would be impregnable; I am so well satisfied of it that I swear to your majesty that I will die as a traitor if I should be mistaken. Sire, send me to Breslau—permit me to participate in the organization of the new levies, and to arouse the zeal and energy of the authorities, and I swear to your majesty the Silesian fortresses shall be saved!"

"Well, then, I take you at your word," said the king, nodding kindly to the count. "I will send you to Breslau. Wait; I will immediately draw up the necessary orders." The king went to his desk and hastily wrote a few lines. Count Pückler stood near him, and smilingly said to himself, "I will defend Breslau as Schill is defending Colberg! Both of us, therefore, will fulfil the oath we have taken!"

"Read!" said the king, handing him the paper—"read it aloud!" Count Pückler read:

"The enclosed proposition of Count Pückler to reënforce the garrisons of the Silesian fortresses deserves the most serious and speedy consideration. Hence, I order you to carry it out without delay, and to save no expense in doing so. The fortresses

must be defended at any price, and to the last man, and I shall cause such commanders to be beheaded as fail to do their duty.

"FREDERICK WILLIAM."

"Are you satisfied?" asked the king, when the count had finished.

"I thank your majesty in the name of Silesia," said the count, solemnly. "Breslau will not fall into the hands of the enemy. I pledge you my head that it will not. I now request your majesty to let me withdraw."

"When do you intend to set out?"

"This very hour."

"But you told me you had arrived only an hour ago. You ought to take rest till to-morrow."

"Your majesty, every day of delay exposes your Silesia to greater dangers. Permit me, therefore, to set out at once."

"Well, do so, and may God be with you!"

The king gazed after the count with a long, musing glance. "Oh," he sighed, mournfully, "if *he* had been commander of Magdeburg, it would be mine still!"

Count Pückler hastened back to Silesia with the king's written order. He visited all the fortresses and saw all the commanders. The king, to give more weight to the count's mission, had instructed the provisional authorities and the chief executive officers of the districts, in a special rescript, to gather the old soldiers at the headquarters of the recruiting stations; he had ordered all the commanders to confer personally with Count Pückler as to the best steps to be taken for the defence of the fortresses, by the addition of the new soldiers and riflemen to the regular garrisons.

Count Pückler, therefore, had accomplished his purpose; he was able to assist his country and to avenge himself for the disastrous day of Jena. A proud courage animated his heart; his eye was radiant with joy and confidence; his face was beaming with heroic energy. All who saw him were filled with his own courage; all who heard him were carried away by his enthusiasm, and gladly swore to die rather than prove recreant to the sacred cause of the country. Every one in Breslau knew Count Pückler, and confided in him. Always active, joyous, and indefatigable, he was to be found wherever there was danger; he encouraged the soldiers by standing at their side on the outworks, by toiling with them, and exposing himself to the balls which the enemy was hurling into the city. He maintained the enthusiasm of the citizens by patri-

otic speeches, so that they did not despair, but bore their sufferings patiently, and provided compassionately for the men standing on the ramparts in the storm and cold, in the face of an uninterrupted artillery-fire. A generous rivalry sprang up among the citizens and soldiers: the former contributed all they had to provide the troops with food and comforts of every description; and the latter vowed in their gratitude to fight as long as there was a drop of blood in their veins, and not suffer the inhabitants, in return for the privations they had undergone, and for the sacrifices they had made, to be surrendered to the tender mercies of the enemy. But this enthusiasm at last cooled. Every one would have borne days of privation and suffering courageously and joyously enough, but long weeks of anxiety and distress deadened the devotion of the besieged.

"Every thing is going on satisfactorily," said Count Pückler, on coming to the governor of the fortress, General Thile, on the morning of the 30th of December. "We shall hold out till the Prince von Pless, who has lately been appointed by the king governor-general of Silesia, arrives with his troops to succor us and to raise the siege of Breslau."

The governor shrugged his shoulders. "There will be no succor for us, and every thing will turn out wrong," he said.

"But the soldiers are faithful, and the citizens do not waver as yet."

The governor looked almost compassionately at the count. "You see none but the faithful, and hear none but the undaunted," he said. "I will show you the reverse of your bright medal!" He took a paper from his desk and beckoned the count to approach. "Just look at this; it is the morning report. Do you want to know how many soldiers deserted last night? Over a hundred, and in order to put a stop to further desertions, the countersign had to be changed three times."

"The deserters are the perfidious, treacherous Poles!" exclaimed Pückler, angrily.

"Yes, the Poles were the first to desert, and, unfortunately, more than half the garrison consists of Poles. They are the old soldiers who were organized in accordance with your proposition, my dear count. They are yearning for home, and long to obtain, in place of the scanty rations they receive here, the fleshpots which the Emperor Napoleon has promised to happy Poland."

"But they need not starve here; they are provided with sufficient food," exclaimed Pückler. "Only yesterday I saw a subscription-paper circulating among the citizens for the purpose of raising money to furnish the men on duty on the ramparts with meat, whiskey, and hot beer."

"How many had signed it?"

"More than a hundred, general."

"Well, I will show you another subscription-paper," said the governor, taking it from his desk. "A deputation of the citizens were here last night and presented this to me. It contains a request to give them, amidst so many sufferings, the hope of speedy succor, lest they be driven to despair. Over two hundred signed this paper. I could not hold out any hopes, and had to dismiss them without any consolation whatever."

"But succor will come," exclaimed Pückler.

"It will not come," said the governor, shrugging his shoulders.

At that moment the door opened, and an orderly entered. "Lieutenant Schorlemmer, in command of the forces at the Schweidnitz Gate, sent me here," he said. "He instructed me to inform the governor that the firing of field and siege artillery was to be heard, and the village of Dürгой was burning!"

"The enemy is manœuvring, and, no doubt, set the village unintentionally on fire. Tell Lieutenant Schorlemmer that is my reply."

No sooner had the orderly withdrawn than the officer in command of the engineers entered the room. "Your excellency," he exclaimed, hastily, "I have just come from the Ohlau Gate. The enemy is hurrying with his field-pieces and many troops from the trenches toward the Schweidnitz road, and the firing that began an hour ago is gradually approaching the fortress."

"The succoring troops are drawing near," exclaimed Count Pückler, joyfully. "The Prince von Pless at the head of his regiments has attacked the enemy!"

The governor cast an angry glance on the rash speaker. "It is true you know all these things a great deal better than old, experienced soldiers" he said; "you will permit me, however, to be guided by my own opinion. Now, I think that the enemy is only manœuvring for the purpose of decoying the garrison from the city. We shall not be so foolish, however, as to be caught in such a manner. But I will go

and satisfy myself about this matter. Come, Mr. Chief-Engineer, and accompany me to the Ohlau Gate. And you, Count Pückler, go to General Lindener to ascertain his opinion. He has good eyes and ears, and if he view the matter in the same light as I do, I shall be convinced that we are right."

Count Pückler hastened away, and while the governor, with the chief-engineer, was walking very leisurely to the Ohlau Gate, Pückler rushed into the house of General Lindener, determined to make the utmost efforts to induce the governor to order a sally of the garrison. But General Lindener had already left his palace and gone to the Taschen bastion for the purpose of making his observations. Count Pückler followed him; he could make but slow headway, for the streets were densely crowded; every one was inquiring why the enemy had suddenly ceased shelling the city.

Count Pückler rushed forward toward the Taschen bastion, and the constantly increasing multitude followed him. General Lindener stood amidst the superior officers on the rampart of the Taschenberg. He was scanning the horizon with scrutinizing glances. The officers now looked at him in great suspense, and now at the open field extending in front of them. Count Pückler approached, while the people, who had almost forcibly obtained admission, advanced to the brink and surveyed the enemy's position. The crowd, however, did not consist of vagabond idlers, but of respectable citizens—merchants and mechanics—who wished for the consolation the governor had refused them—the hope of succor! Gradually their care-worn faces lighted up. They saw distinctly that the enemy had left the trenches. Here and there they descried straggling French soldiers running in the direction of the fight in front of the fortress. They heard the booming of artillery and the rattling of musketry, and they beheld the shells exchanged between the opposing troops, exploding in the air. Keen eyes discovered Prussian cavalry in the neighborhood of the Jewish burial-ground, near the Schweidnitz suburb, and at this sight tremendous cheers burst from the citizens.

"Succor has come!" they shouted. "The Prince von Pless is coming to deliver us!"

All now looked to the general, expecting he would utter the decisive word, and order the garrison to make a sortie. But this order was not given.

General Lindener turned with the utmost composure to

his officers. "I have no doubt," he said, "that the enemy is merely manœuvring for the purpose of drawing us out of the fortress. It is an ambush in which we should not allow ourselves to be caught."

"Your excellency," exclaimed Pückler, in dismay, "it is impossible that you can be in earnest. That is no manœuvre; it is a combat. The long-hoped-for succor has come at last, and we must profit by it!"

"Ah," said the general, shrugging his shoulders, "you think because his majesty permitted you to participate in organizing the defence of the city, and to confer with the commander in regard to it, you ought to advise everywhere and to decide every thing!"

"No; I only think that the time for action has come," exclaimed Pückler. "Opinions and suppositions are out of the question here, for we can distinctly see what is going on in the front of Breslau. I beg the other officers to state whether they do not share my opinion—whether it is not a regular cannonade that we hear, and a real fight between hostile troops that we behold?"

"Yes," said one of the officers, loudly and emphatically—"yes, I am of the same opinion as Count Pückler; there is a combat going on; the Prince von Pless is approaching in order to raise the siege."

"That is my opinion too!" exclaimed each of the officers, in succession; "the succoring troops have come; the enemy has left the trenches in order to attack them."

"And as such is the case," exclaimed Count Pückler, joyfully, "we must make a sortie; prudence not only justifies, but commands it."

"Yes, we must do so!" exclaimed the officers. The citizens standing at some distance from them heard their words, and shouted joyously: "A sortie, a sortie! Succor has come! Breslau is saved!"

General Lindener glanced angrily at the officers. "Who dares advise the commanding general without being asked?" he said, sharply. "None of you must meddle with these matters; they concern myself alone, and I am possessed of sufficient judgment not to need any one's advice, but to make my own decisions!" With a last angry glance at Count Pückler, he left the bastion to return to his palace. Governor Thile was awaiting him there, and the two ascended to the roof of the building to survey the environs.

The fog, which had covered the whole landscape until now, had risen a little, and even the dim eyes of the general and of the governor could not deny the truth any more. A combat was really going on. The smoke rising from the ground, and the flashes of powder from field-pieces, were distinctly to be seen. It was a fact: succor was at hand: a Prussian corps was approaching the city. The two generals left the roof, arm-in-arm, in silence, absorbed in their reflections, and descended to the ground-floor, where a luncheon had been served up for them. An hour later, they assembled the garrison, in order to make an attack, "in case the enemy should be defeated!"

But it seemed as if the enemy had not been defeated. The firing in front gradually died away; the sally did not take place, and in the evening the French recommenced throwing red-hot shot into the city.

"We have been betrayed," murmured the citizens, as they despondingly returned to their homes.

"The general did not want to make a sortie—he had no intention to save Breslau," groaned Count Pückler, when he was alone in his room. "All is lost, all is in vain! The wish of the timid sacrifices our honor and our lives! Oh, my unhappy country, my beloved Prussia, thou wilt irretrievably perish, for thy own sons are betraying thee! Thy independence and ancient glory are gone; conquered and chained, thou wilt prostrate thyself at the feet of the victor, and with scorn he will place his foot upon thy neck, and trample thy crown in the dust! I shall not live to see that disgrace! I will fulfil my oath, and, not being able to save my country, I must die with it! But not yet! I will wait patiently, for there is a faint glimmer of hope left. The Prince von Pless may make another attempt to raise the siege, and the citizens and soldiers may compel General Lindener to order an attack, and not to surrender. That is my last hope."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PATRIOT'S DEATH.

GREAT excitement reigned in the streets of Breslau on the following day. The people were standing in dense groups, and each of them was addressed by speakers, who recapit-