

husband, be kind and generous—spare yourself, and spare my love!”

“Then you love me in spite of your gloomy forebodings?” asked Napoleon, with a gentle smile. “Oh, I know my Josephine is my most faithful and best friend, and whatever may happen, her heart will always be mine. Let this be our farewell, Josephine! I must go; I must depart this very hour. To-morrow I join my army, and my cannon will soon announce to Germany that the victor of Austerlitz and Jena is demonstrating his right to rule, and at his own pleasure to destroy or create kingdoms.”

CHAPTER XLVI.

FERDINAND VON SCHILL.

A TRAVELLING carriage stopped in front of the house on Frederick Street in which Major von Schill had established his headquarters since his regiment had been sent to Berlin. The horses were wet with perspiration, and the carriage was covered with mud. Every thing indicated that the young man seated in it had made a long and hurried journey, and his exhausted and anxious face induced the belief that the object could not but be highly important. He alighted hastily, and approached the house, in front of which a crowd of idlers were staring at the windows. Addressing one of them, he asked, “Can you tell me whether Major von Schill lives in this house?”

“Yes,” said the man, proudly; “every good citizen of Berlin can tell you that Major Ferdinand von Schill, the favorite of our people and of all patriotic Germans, lives here.”

The young man smiled. “And can you tell me whether Major von Schill is at home?”

“Well, what should we stand here for, if Schill were not at home? We are only here to see and salute him when he appears at the window, and to escort him when he leaves the house. He is always surrounded by a guard of honor, composed of citizens of Berlin, and the cheers never cease wherever he may be. I myself have not yet seen him, for I was ill. But yesterday was my birthday, and my wife presented me with a pipe-bowl with Schill’s portrait; my daughter says he is the best-looking man in the world, and she has bought a

locket with his portrait, which she is wearing on her neck. I have come to see whether the portraits so much in vogue are like him, and whether he is not only the bravest soldier, but, as the girls pretend, the finest-looking man. I will cheer so vigorously as to shake the statues on the arsenal. I suppose you have also come to see him?”

“That is all I have come for,” said the young man, and, turning to the postilion, who had just unhitched his horses, he shouted:

“Postilion, when you arrive at the post-office, order immediately some fresh horses for me and send them hither. I shall set out for home in half an hour!”

He then walked toward the house, elbowing himself through the constantly increasing crowd, and reached the door. After rapidly crossing the hall, he went upstairs. A footman, dressed in a rich livery, who was pacing the corridor on the upper floor, looked inquiringly at the young stranger.

“Does Major von Schill live here?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And is he at home?”

“I am not quite sure—I rather believe he has gone out. He is subjected to visits and invitations to such an extent, that I really do not know whether there are persons with him at present, or whether some of his admirers have taken him to another banquet to be given in his honor. The people of Berlin are perfectly infatuated with my master, and if an angel should appear upon earth, they could not pay more deference to him. The fuss they are making about him has positively made him ill. Day and night he must attend parties, listen, and reply to a thousand speeches, and take wine with everybody; and then, again, the ladies are not the least active in demonstrating his popularity. Oh, the people of this city will certainly kill my dear, good master in this way, and I must see to it that he gets occasionally a little rest, and is able to take a peaceful nap on his sofa. I think I must tell you now, sir, that Major von Schill is not at home. He returned only at daybreak from a ball which the city of Berlin gave in his honor; at noon he will have to attend a banquet to which the governor of Berlin, General von Lestocq, has invited him, and which is in fact another testimonial of the public respect for him. Major von Schill must have some repose, or his popularity will be the death of him. Please return some other time. You cannot see him to-day.”

"But, my friend, I cannot return," said the stranger. "I am not one of the citizens of Berlin, but I am an enthusiastic admirer of Schill, and have travelled three days and nights without interruption, in order to bring important news to him."

"Ah, that alters the case," said the footman. "If you bring important news for my master, I will go and see whether he is at home."

"Do so, my friend, and tell the major that Referendary von Bothmar has come from Cassel expressly to see him."

The footman nodded, and hastened into the room, the door of which he had hitherto guarded with the affection of a friend and the obstinacy of a faithful sentinel. He returned in a few minutes, opened the door, and exclaimed: "The major requests you to come in!"

M. von Bothmar entered. In obedience to the sign the footman made to him, he crossed the anteroom and opened the door of the one adjoining. A fine-looking man in the uniform of a major, with a fresh, florid countenance, and high forehead adorned with a broad scar, came to meet him. It was Ferdinand von Schill, the lieutenant of the queen's dragoons, who, ever since the disastrous battle of Jena, had given such brilliant proofs of his courage and patriotism at Kolberg (and during the guerilla warfare he had afterward entered into on his own responsibility), that the people hoped he would become the savior of the country. The King of Prussia had promoted him to a majority, and conferred on his regiment the honorary distinction that it should be the first Prussian regiment that was to make its entry into Berlin after the French had evacuated the capital.

"Let me welcome you, my dear sir," said Schill, kindly offering his hand to the young man. "You told my footman you had come from Cassel to bring important news to me. You are, therefore, a good German patriot, and I may greet M. von Bothmar as a friend and brother. But let me hear what you bring—glad tidings, I suppose?"

"No, major, but important," said M. von Bothmar.

Schill became uneasy, and a deep blush crimsoned his cheeks for a moment. "You know Dörnberg?" he inquired.

"I know him, and I was also aware of his plan, and of the day and hour when his blow was to be struck."

"Then he has commenced already?" asked Schill.

"Yes, commenced and ended," said Bothmar, mourn-

fully. "Our noble Dörnberg expected too much of the patriotism of the Hessians. He arrived with the legion of his peasants as far as Cassel, and called upon the soldiers to join him in order to expel King Jerome and his French minions. But the soldiers did not listen to him; they obeyed the orders of their officers, and turned their arms against their German brethren, who were soon routed and dispersed."

"This is really dreadful!" ejaculated Schill. "And Dörnberg?"

"Dörnberg succeeded in making his escape; he will probably go to Prague, where the Elector of Hesse is at present residing."

"Well, I am glad that he is at least safe," exclaimed Schill, breathing more freely. "The defeat is a disastrous blow, to be sure, but the good news that we have just receive will afford us consolation for it. The Archduke Charles has gained a glorious victory over the French at Hof."

"Can that be positively true?" exclaimed Bothmar. "During my whole journey I did not hear a word about it. On the contrary, I learned everywhere only the mournful intelligence that Napoleon had put himself at the head of his army, and was advancing victoriously in the direction of Vienna."

"And yet my statement is perfectly true. General Lestocq, governor of Berlin, in joyful commemoration of this victory, issued to-day the countersign of 'Charles and Hof!'"

"Heaven grant that you are correctly informed, and that the general is not mistaken!" said M. von Bothmar, sighing. "Pardon me for not sharing your confidence. The deplorable turn our affairs have taken in Hesse has discouraged me, and then—but I am not through yet with the news which brought me to you."

"Speak, sir,—what else has happened?" exclaimed Schill.

"Excuse me," said M. von Bothmar, "should I assume the semblance of one of your most trusted confidants, and take the liberty of speaking to you about your most secret plans. You intrusted to your faithful friend and follower, Romberg, letters and proclamations to be circulated in Westphalia. Am I right?"

"You are."

"You gave to him private letters for Counsellor von Ledebour, at Bielefeld, and for Colonel von Sobbe, who were to head the insurrection in that part of the country?"

"I did, sir; you are right."

"Well, then, major, Romberg was arrested at Magdeburg; all his papers, letters, and proclamations, were seized, and General Michaud sent him under guard to Cassel."

"Romberg imprisoned! My dear, faithful Romberg in danger!" exclaimed Schill, mournfully.

"No," said M. von Bothmar, solemnly, "Romberg is no longer imprisoned; he is not now in danger."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that Romberg, immediately after his arrival at Cassel, was tried by a court-martial, and that sentence of death was at once passed upon him."

"He has been shot?"

"Yes, Schill, Romberg has been shot."

Schill uttered a cry, and covered his face with his hands. "Oh!" he murmured, "I have lost my most faithful friend, and Germany one of her noblest sons. He was an humble peasant, but the heart of a great patriot was throbbing under his blouse. He was the Andrew Hofer of the North, and his death is a terrible disaster! But I will not complain," added Schill—"no, I will not complain. Blessed are the dead, and who knows how soon we ourselves shall have to bid farewell to life? The storm is threatening us on all sides."

"And it is threatening our noble Schill, the hope of Germany," exclaimed M. von Bothmar. "I have told you that all Romberg's papers were seized, and among them the letters which you wrote to your friends Ledebour and Sobbe. Your proclamations were read by the French authorities, and as they thereby became aware of your plans, they will at once take steps to put a stop to your agitation, and, if possible, put you to death. Would Prussia be powerful and courageous enough to protect you, if the King of Westphalia should charge you with being a traitor and demagogue, and if Napoleon should insist on your punishment?"

"It is true," said Schill, "you point out to me an imminent danger, from which I can only escape by striking immediately. If we give our enemies time to mature their plans, all will be lost. We must, therefore, act at once. We must hesitate no longer, but begin even before my comrades here have learned that Romberg did not succeed in his enterprise. We may be more successful, for God will perhaps be merciful to me: He has decreed, perhaps, that Schill shall first of all break the chains imposed on us by the foreign despot."

"Germany hopes in Schill," exclaimed Bothmar, enthusias-

tically, "and hence I was bold enough to violate the oath of allegiance which I had taken to King Jerome, and disclose to the German hero the danger menacing him. I am a referendary at the department of state in Cassel, and accordingly I soon heard of the danger to which you are exposed. Under the pretext that I intended to enforce tranquillity and obedience among the peasants on my estate, situated a few miles from Cassel, I obtained leave of absence for six days, and hastened hither. I set out from there three days ago, and, thank God! I have found you in time to give you warning."

"Thanks to you," exclaimed Schill, affectionately embracing M. von Bothmar; "you have saved my life, perhaps; at all events, you have rendered an important service to the sacred cause of the fatherland."

"Every one must serve the fatherland in his own way, and according to his ability," said Bothmar, gently; "you are serving it by your heroic arm and soul-stirring example; I am doing so by trying at least to prevent mischief, and to assist my brethren as much as I can. My task now is accomplished! Farewell! and may Heaven grant victory to your patriotic zeal!"

"Where are you going?" said Schill, grasping Bothmar's arm and detaining him. "You must not leave me yet; you must remain here at least to-day, that—but what is the meaning of this bugle-call?"

"It means that the postilion has arrived with horses, and calls me," said M. von Bothmar, smiling.

"What! You have travelled three days and three nights, and are departing so soon?"

"Have I not told you that I obtained leave of absence only for six days? Well, then, three days hence I shall be in Cassel again, and, I believe, I have improved my six days in a highly commendable manner."

"Farewell, noble young man! when we meet again, Germany, if it please God, will be free and happy!"

"Oh, may it be so!" said M. von Bothmar, sighing. "Be prudent, sir, do not endanger your life; remember that it does not belong to you, but to the fatherland, and now farewell! The impatient postilion is sounding his bugle again. Farewell!"

He quickly left the room, but Schill accompanied to the staircase the friend he had gained so suddenly. He returned

to his room and hastened to the window, to wave his hand once more to M. von Bothmar. Loud cheers greeted him as soon as his countenance was recognized behind the window-panes; the crowd in front of the house constantly increased, and when he appeared to the longing eyes of the citizens, they could not suppress their loud huzzas.

"They do me too much honor," said Schill to himself, smiling, and stepping back from the window. "But their love and its boisterous demonstrations are not exactly intended for myself individually. These kind people greet in me the first hope dawning to them after a long period of darkness; and, therefore, I will joyfully indulge them, and I will thank them by brave deeds. Yes, by deeds! The time of procrastination is over. I must hesitate no longer: I must act!"

His servant entered and handed him some letters just brought for him. He opened and read them rapidly. The perfume of the firs, written on rose-colored note-paper, made him smile. "It is the sixth declaration of love that I have received to-day," he said, in a low voice, "and the sixth request for a rendezvous to-night. Oh, women! how innocent in your enthusiasm for poor Schill! You imagine you love me, and do not know that it is the fatherland that you love in me! I will reconquer your country, and bring back that sweet liberty which the tyrant has taken from us. Until then, no Cupid's love! My heart must belong wholly to Germany!"

He read the second letter. "Another painter asks me to sit to him! Why, have not the people already portraits enough of poor Schill? Has not every old citizen my head on his pipe or his snuff-box? Does not every pretty girl wear my scarred face in her locket? I have no time to spare for painters; I must take the field!"

He opened the third; but while he read it, his eyes were sad. "Again the same admonition which I have so often received. Do they doubt my patriotism? Do they believe that I am a traitor, and will suffer the opportunity to pass by without improving it?"

He looked at the letter again, which contained only the following words: "Brutus, thou sleepest, awake!"*

"No," he exclaimed, in a powerful voice, "I do not sleep.

* Schill received almost daily, from various parts of Germany, letters containing nothing but those words. A secret society, extending throughout Germany, seemed to have made it a special duty to instigate Schill to strike the blow, lest the homage he received in Berlin should render him forgetful of his mission.

I am awake, and behold the golden dawn of freedom! O Germany, my arm and my honor belong to thee! To thee—and to her!" he whispered, almost inaudibly. "Yes, to her—the genius of Prussia! For her I will sacrifice my life!"

The door opened again, and the footman entered. "Major, there is another gentleman who desires to see you on pressing business. I wanted to turn him off, but he said it was indispensable for him to see you. He told me he wished to deliver to the major something that would gladden his heart. His name is High-Chamberlain von Schladen, and he said he had just arrived from Königsberg."

"Show him in at once," exclaimed Schill, but, in his impetuosity, he himself led the way and opened the door.

"Come in, Mr. High-Chamberlain, and forgive me for making you wait even a moment," he said, offering his hand to M. von Schladen, and conducting him into his sitting-room. "You come from Königsberg?"

"Yes, major, and I bring you greetings from your friends, from the brethren of the great league, and also from the king and the queen."

"She really told you to greet me in her name?" asked Schill. "Oh, do not deceive me; tell me the truth! Did the queen really tell you that?"

"She did more than that, major," said M. von Schladen, smiling; "she intrusted to me a present for you, which I am to deliver to yourself, and which she made for you with her own hands."

At this moment Schill was a truly handsome man. If the ladies and the painters of Berlin had seen him just then, they would have been transported at his noble countenance, as his black eyes sparkled with joy. "The queen sends me a present!" he exclaimed—"a present which she herself has made!"

"Yes, and on which she inscribed your name with her own hand, that it might be to you a plain and undeniable proof of her favor."

"Oh, give it to me, sir!" exclaimed Schill, stretching out his hands.

M. von Schladen drew a small package, wrapped in paper, from his bosom, and handed it to Schill.

"On my knees will I receive this present from my queen!" exclaimed Schill. "Oh, it seems to me as though she were standing before me, looking at me with that sad smile which

brings tears into the eyes of all who behold her! When I was at Königsberg the other day, it was permitted me to speak to her, and press my lips on her hand. With that kiss I devoted myself to her for my whole life, and she is ever before my eyes, clothed in a sort of divine beauty—as a Madonna holding the Messiah of Freedom in her arms! And the noble queen, to whom I pray every night as to a saint, sends me a present which she has made for me with her own hands? Oh, am I worthy of such kindness; have I done any thing entitling me to such a proof of condescension on her part, and am I thus honored by her who is the guardian angel of Prussia!—whom Napoleon hates, because he fears her zeal and fidelity. As a vestal, she has kept alive the fire of patriotism on the altar of her country. When all despair, she still hopes for the redemption of her people from a victorious but merciless enemy. I will consecrate my life anew to her, though unworthy of the distinguished regard she bestows on me by this present, the work of her own royal hands.”

“Yes, but you are worthy of the favor of our noble queen,” said M. von Schladen, solemnly, “for you are the representative hero of Germany, and Heaven has decreed, perhaps, that you should break the first link of the chain with which the usurper has fettered our country. As soon as that link is broken, it will be easy to break the rest. You, Major von Schill, are the hope of Germany—the hope of Queen Louisa. Take, then, the present which she sends you, worthy champion of the cause of her country!”

He handed the package to the major. Schill, kneeling, took it and unfolded the wrapper. It contained a magnificent memorandum-book, embroidered in gold, and closed with a gold pencil. Schill admired the rich art displayed in the book, and, opening it, looked for the autograph of the queen. He uttered a joyful cry. The queen had written these words, in small, neat characters: “For brave Major von Schill. Louisa.”

Schill pressed his lips on the words, and then, closing the book, put it into his bosom, and rose from his knees. “It will rest on my heart as long as I live,” he said; “its every pulsation belongs to her! And now, M. von Schladen, what is the state of affairs at Königsberg? What hopes are entertained there?”

“Hopes!” exclaimed M. von Schladen, with a mournful smile; “none—only apprehensions.”

“And they do not yet think of bidding defiance to the tyrant, and of recalling noble Baron von Stein?”

“No, they dare not do so. Stein, proscribed by Napoleon, forsaken by his king, who sacrificed him at the emperor’s behest, is living in exile, deprived of his whole property, which Napoleon confiscated; he is without employment, without influence, far from his country, far from his friends. The Emperor of Austria did what the King of Prussia dare not do: he gave an asylum to the proscribed patriot; Baron von Stein is now with his family at Brünn.”

“And the king?” asked Schill. “Does he not feel it as a wound to bow to the tyrant’s behest, and dismiss his noblest and ablest servant?”

“He does, perhaps,” replied M. von Schladen, hesitatingly; “but he does not say so. The afflictions of the past years have broken his courage, and rendered him irresolute and timid. As soon as he received Napoleon’s orders, he dismissed Baron von Stein, without bestowing any token of kindness or gratitude. Every true Prussian deeply felt this treatment; one of the most faithful and upright servants of the king, District-Councillor Scheffner, who has every day interviews with the queen, dared even to write a letter to the king, informing him of the indignation prevailing everywhere. He asked the king to gladden the hearts of all good Prussians, and to give a courageous proof of his royal gratitude toward the eminent minister, by conferring the order of the Black Eagle upon Baron von Stein.”

“And what did the king say to him?”

“He replied that he was very sorry that he was unable to comply with this request. Although he entertained the highest respect for Baron von Stein, and would be glad to confer this exalted distinction on him, it would be highly improper at the present time to make so dangerous a demonstration.”

“Such is the gratitude of kings toward their faithful servants!” exclaimed Schill, in a tone of bitter reproach; “such is the manner in which they reward those who have sacrificed for them their property and life! But we do not struggle for kings and princes; we are serving the adored fatherland; we are fighting for liberty, and the death which we find on the field of honor is an order of the Black Eagle which the great fatherland confers on us! O Germany, one day I shall also receive this honor at thy hands; free Germany will adorn my corpse with it!”

"Oh, what desponding words you are now uttering!" said M. von Schladen, anxiously. "Who can be courageous and hopeful when Schill talks of death?"

"I am not desponding," exclaimed Schill, smiling, "but I have a foreboding that I am to seal my love for Germany with my heart's blood. I am almost glad of it, for friendships so sealed are said to be eternal, and Germany will, perhaps, revere my memory when I die for her.—And Louisa! What says the queen? How does she bear these days of humiliation?"

"Like a heroine! Like a queen whose kingdom is not of this world. Her cheeks are pale, but a spirit of resignation pervades her countenance, and when she turns her blue eyes upward; there is an expression in them that plainly reveals her yearning for a home in heaven!"

"But her health is good?" inquired Schill, anxiously. "She is not ill?"

"That is to say, she is not positively ill, but her whole life is that of a martyr. Her heart is broken; she suffers mentally, while she is not altogether free from physical pain. But she never complains, and, alas! the physicians know of no remedy. There is but one for our smiling, suffering queen, and that is the deliverance of her country!"

"Germany must and shall be delivered," exclaimed Schill, enthusiastically. "Something must be done! We must arouse the sleepers; we must compel them to act!"

"You are right! The nation must wake and rise. That is the opinion of all patriots, as well as of the queen. And we are looking with trusting hearts toward you; we hope that you will give this impetus to our countrymen. It is out of the question to hesitate longer; we must act. Austria is in the field; her people are exultingly marching to vanquish the tyrant, who, with his proud armies, has again penetrated into Germany. The report that the Archduke Charles has gained a victory is as though it were the first herald announcing to us safety and restoration. Hope fills every heart. As soon as Schill unfurls his banner and calls upon his brethren to commence the holy struggle for the liberation of the fatherland, patriotic men from all the states of Prussia and North Germany will rally around him; the enthusiasm of the people will rush like a torrent carrying away the king and his ministers in spite of themselves; their hesitations, fears, and cowardice, will be overwhelmed by the public determination.

The hope of the queen is in Schill's heroic example; it is the hope of Gneisenau, Blücher, and Scharnhorst; it is the hope of all!"

"And it shall be fulfilled," exclaimed Schill. "Brutus does not sleep. He is awake, and ready for action. I swear it by this precious gift of my queen!" He drew the memorandum-book from his bosom. Solemnly laying his hand on it, and raising his eyes toward heaven, he said: "I swear that I will draw my sword now for the fight of liberty—that I will not sheath it until this sacred cause has been carried to a glorious conclusion, unless forbidden by death longer to serve my queen and country!" He pressed the book against his lips, and then opening it read again Louisa's words. As he turned over the leaves, a scrap of paper fell upon the floor. Picking it up, he saw that it contained a single line written in the same small handwriting: "Der König schwankt; Schill, ziehen sie mit Gott!"* "Yes, Heaven is on our side, to fight for Germany and her noble queen!" exclaimed Schill. "I will depart to-morrow!"

CHAPTER XLVII.

SCHILL TAKES THE FIELD.

THE following afternoon (March 28, 1809) Major Ferdinand von Schill proceeded with his regiment through the streets of Berlin to the Halle gate. The people saluted him everywhere with loud cheers and waving of hats.

Schill thanked them more gravely than he had hitherto done, and marched his soldiers out of the gate. No one was surprised at this; all supposed that he only intended to-day, as he had often done, to drill his troops and to encamp near the city. His adjutants, Bärsch and Lützow, were, however, aware of his plans, and had secretly made preparations to carry them into effect.

The regiment took the road to Potsdam. Major von Schill and his two adjutants rode at its head, and patriotic songs from the soldiers resounded along their march. About half-way between Berlin and Potsdam, near the village of Steglitz, the major stopped his horse, and, with a wave of his sword, ordered the regiment to halt; then to move from the road

* "The king hesitates; Schill, march with God!"