

tion of the king, and ordered me to face about immediately and return to my regiment. He added that this was the last order he would issue, for he, as well as General Lestocq, governor of Berlin, had been called, by order of the king, to Königsberg, where both of them were to be tried by a military commission. Here are the papers, major."

Schill glanced over them, and, while reading, his hands trembled. "This is a terrible blow," he said, sighing. "The king proscribes me, and brands me as a traitor and deserter. It is all in vain! Germany is asleep, and our voice will not awaken her; Germany lies in the dust before the French tyrant, and the King of Prussia will punish as traitors those who act courageously! Oh, my country, thou art lost, for thy own princes betray thee!"

He sank despairingly on a chair, and hid his face with his hands. In this attitude he remained, groaning piteously, a prey to his anguish. The adjutants entered the room, but Schill did not notice them. Absorbed in his reflections and forebodings, his mind, as it were, had passed from the contemplation of the present, and beheld nothing but the awful future.

The three young officers, Lützow, Quistorp, and Bärsch, well known for their intrepidity, stood sad and dejected before their brave major.

Suddenly rising from his chair, he said: "I thank you, Lieutenant von Quistorp, for having joined me with your faithful men. Germany will see at least that there are still brave men who do not forsake their country, and if we sacrifice our lives for her, she will at least engrave our names on the tablets of her martyrs. We cannot retrace our steps, my friends; we must advance, though death stare us in the face. This very night we leave Arneburg, and continue our march. We may still succeed in what Dörnberg and Charles have been unable to accomplish. We shall appeal again to the patriotism of the Germans. Perhaps their hearts will practically respond—they may hear our voice and follow us. But if fortune have decided against us, if we succumb without delivering our country, very well! 'An end with terror is better than terror without end!' Before us is honor, and at the worst, a glorious death; behind us, contumely and disgrace. Therefore, forward!"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

SCHILL'S DEATH.

SCHILL was sitting, sad and deserted, at his lonely quarters in Rostock, where, after many adventures, he arrived on the 20th of May. He had succeeded in nothing; fortune had not once been favorable to him. He had intended to turn toward Magdeburg, in hope that its garrison of Westphalian troops would joyously open the gates of the fortress, and declare against King Jerome, who had been forced upon them. But, at a distance of a German mile from the city the columns of the enemy had met him, and an engagement had taken place at Dodendorf. It was in vain that Schill had sent a flag of truce to his German brethren to request them to join him, imploring them not to betray the fatherland for the sake of a French king.

The Westphalians shot the bearer of the flag of truce, and a murderous fire was their only reply. Now began the desperate struggle of brethren against brethren—of Germans against Germans!

Schill was victorious in this battle. He mortally wounded the French commander of the Westphalians, Colonel Vautier; his hussars fought like lions and dispersed the enemy; a hundred and sixty prisoners, several stands of colors, and a large number of small-arms, were the trophies of this brilliant affair. But he was unable to derive any benefit from the Dodendorf victory; fearing lest a larger corps should leave Magdeburg and attack him, he retreated, overwhelmed with grief, for he at last understood that the German soldiers were deaf to his appeals, and that the Westphalians, faithful to their French king, refused to desert him.

Nor had Schill's second victory, the occupation of Dörnitz, been advantageous to him. Moreover, dissensions had arisen among the officers themselves; the regiment, so enthusiastic at first, commenced gradually to lose faith in his ability to succeed in his bold enterprise; the officers insisted on being consulted as to future operations. They refused to yield obedience, and demanded that he should listen to their advice and remonstrances. But resistance rendered him only more determined, and in his obstinacy he fre-

quently rejected prudent counsel, that he might accomplish his own plans. His mind was confused by disappointment, and at length by despair. He was, in fact, unequal to the dangers surrounding him.

Schill was sitting, sad and deserted, at his lonely quarters in Rostock, absorbed in discouraging thoughts, and sighing at the frustration of his hopes. In his hand he held the memorandum-book the queen had presented to him, and read again and again the words she had written: "To brave Major von Schill." Suddenly the door behind him opened, and Lieutenant von Lützow, with his uniform covered with dust, entered the room.

Schill slowly turned his head. "Well, Lützow, have you returned?" he asked. "Were you at Doberan? Did you see the duke?"

"Yes, I was at Doberan."

"And what news do you bring? Bad news, of course! Did you see the Duke of Mecklenburg?"

"No, the duke had given orders to admit neither you nor any of your delegates. He says he will have nothing to do with insurgents and rebels."

"Of course," exclaimed Schill, laughing scornfully, "he is a German prince, and, therefore, cannot adhere to the cause of Germany, but must side with France! Oh, I ought to have known it before. Well, it is all right. What other news do you bring, Lützow?"

"Here, major, is a paper issued by King Jerome of Westphalia. His majesty does you the honor to call you in this proclamation a chief of robbers, a pirate, and a deserter, and commands the military and civil authorities to hunt you down. He also offers a reward of ten thousand francs to him who will bring you dead or alive to Cassel."

"Is that so?" exclaimed Schill, laughing. "Well, M. Jerome attaches a tolerably high value to my head. I am sorry that I am unable to return the compliment. I shall reply this very day to Jerome's proclamation by issuing one to the Germans, and by promising a reward of five dollars for his delivery, living or dead.—What else, lieutenant?"

"The Emperor Napoleon has also issued an edict against Schill and his men. He says in this document: 'A certain Schill, a sort of highway robber, who committed crime upon crime during the last campaign in Prussia, and was rewarded with a captaincy, has deserted with his whole regiment from

Berlin, marched to Wittenberg, and surrounded that place. General Lestocq, governor of Berlin, has declared Schill a deserter, and the King of Prussia has given orders to arrest him wherever he can be found, and to put the insurgent on trial before a court-martial.'"

"Yes," murmured Schill, musingly, "the German patriot has become an insurgent, and is to be punished for what he attempted in the salvation of his country. It was quite unnecessary for the emperor to abuse and revile him who boldly opposed his tyranny; the King of Prussia and the governor of Berlin had already done so. And what else does Napoleon say?"

"He orders a corps of observation to be formed on the Elbe, to be commanded by the marshal, Duke of Valmy, and to be sixty thousand strong."

"Sixty thousand men!" exclaimed Schill. "Ah! it seems M. Napoleon has a pretty good opinion of 'that deserter Schill,' inasmuch as he considers him dangerous enough to oppose to him an army of sixty thousand men. Thank you, M. Bonaparte, thank you for this acknowledgment. It is a delightful balm to the tortured heart of the poor Prussian deserter; it restores his courage. Let us advance undauntedly—we may conquer yet. The Germans may awake and rally round the standard of liberty!"

"Alas, Schill, I am afraid your hopes are in vain," said Lützow, sadly. "I am not yet done with my bad news."

"Not yet?" asked Schill, mournfully. "Proceed!"

"Vienna has fallen!"

"Vienna fallen!" cried Schill, in dismay. "Is that really true?"

"It is. The Emperor Francis and his family have fled to Hungary, and the Emperor of the French has again made his triumphant entry."

"And the Viennese did not even try to defend their city?"

"They did try, but soon laid down their arms and submitted quietly to the conqueror. Napoleon has established his headquarters at Schönbrunn, and issued a proclamation to the Austrians. He calls upon them to be faithful and obedient to him, and disbands the militia of Vienna. A general amnesty is granted to those who surrender their arms."

"A general amnesty," exclaimed Schill, "for the crime they committed in complying with the request of their sovereign to take up arms and defend their country! And what is to be done with those who do not surrender?"

"The houses of both officers and privates of the militia who do not return home within a specified time, are to be burned down, their property confiscated, and themselves tried and punished as rebels."

"Oh," exclaimed Schill, raising his hands, "is there still justice in heaven, or is it also asleep! Is there no ear for our wails, no compassion for our disgrace? What is natural, grows unnatural; honor becomes dishonor; patriotism, rebellion—and Heaven seems to permit it!"

"Yes," said Lützow, with a melancholy smile. "What Ovid said of Cato now becomes true of you: 'The victorious cause pleases the gods, but the vanquished one pleases you!'"

"Yes," murmured Schill, "the vanquished cause pleased Cato! and it shall also please Schill as long as he breathes. It shall please him though his king call him a deserter, and a court-martial pass sentence of death upon him. 'The people of Nuremberg hang none but those they have in custody,' is a proverb often repeated, and I think the people of Königsberg will not shoot a man they cannot catch! I would rather be trampled to death by the horses of the enemy, than pierced by the bullets of my German brethren. The matter is settled, Lützow; let us continue the struggle."

"Continue the struggle?" asked Lützow. "I beseech you, take my advice and do not follow the dictates of courage alone; listen also to those of prudence. It will be utterly useless, Schill; we should husband our strength for better times. We are threatened either by military force, or the rigor of the law. Prussia has drawn up a corps on her frontier to repulse us, if need be, should we come armed; and, if unarmed, she would have us tried by a court-martial. Napoleon's corps of observation is stationed on the boundaries of Saxony and Westphalia, and even the King of Denmark has ordered General von Ewald to march against us."

"The stag has been surrounded, but not yet captured," exclaimed Schill. "There is still a place where he may escape. The King of Sweden has not yet a corps in the field against us, and Stralsund is occupied only by a garrison of scarcely three hundred men, commanded by General Candras. Let us march thither and surprise the fortress. When Stralsund is ours, we are on the sea-shore, and in communication with the British; we have ships in the harbor, on which, if every thing else should fail, we could find an asylum, and hasten to England."

"But suppose we should not take Stralsund?" asked Lützow. "How could we escape? I beseech you, listen to reason, consider our hopeless situation; save yourself—save the poor soldiers who have reposed confidence and hope in you! Let us embark for England. There are well-nigh thirty ships in the harbor of Warnemünde; if they refuse to take us on board, we can compel them."

"No," exclaimed Schill, vehemently. "We shall do just as I said—march to Stralsund and take the fortress. But Lieutenant Bärsch is to seize twenty of the ships at Warnemünde and embark on them our baggage, the sick, and the military chest, and convey them to the island of Rügen. We start to-morrow and take Stralsund. That is my plan, and it must be accomplished!"

And Schill's plan was accomplished. He marched his hussars to Stralsund, and for a moment fortune smiled on him. The French commander, General Candras, preferred to meet the enemy in the open field instead of awaiting him behind the half-decayed fortifications. He marched against Schill with the whole garrison and a battery of light artillery; but the Prussian hussars, with a shout attacked the enemy, and dispersed them, took six hundred prisoners, and made their triumphant entry into Stralsund.

"And here let us conquer or die," said Schill to his officers, who were standing around him. "Friends, brethren! the day of success is at hand, and Stralsund is the first taken. Let us remain here; throw up intrenchments against the enemy, and wait for the succor which England has so often promised."

"Let us not wait for this succor," said one of the officers; "let us meet it."

"Every hour of delay increases the danger," exclaimed another. "If we do not now embrace the opportunity—if we do not start without delay, and meet the English squadron in the open sea, or hasten to the Swedish shore, we must inevitably perish."

"It would be foolhardiness to remain here for the enemy's superior force to attack us," said a third. "To struggle against such odds is folly, and prudent men submit to the decrees of fortune, instead of resisting them in a spirit of childish petulance."

"Let us husband our resources for a future day," said a fourth. "It will come when Germany, which is repudiating

us now, will stand in need of our assistance, and call us to her side. Let us preserve ourselves for more favorable prospects, and a greater probability of success."

Schill looked angrily on his officers. "Is there no one who will raise his voice against these opinions?" he asked. "Is there no one who will reply to the timid and desponding, in the name of honor, courage, and patriotism?"

All were silent; a murmur of indignation was the only reply. "Well, then," exclaimed Schill, ardently, "I will myself speak against you all; I will tell you that it is cowardly to flee from danger, and to think of defeat instead of victory; that it is perfidious to desert our country when in danger, to save one's own miserable life. Accursed be he who thinks of flight and of forsaking the great cause which we are serving! We must hold Stralsund to the last man. We must make it a German Saragossa, and lie dead beneath the ruins of the city rather than surrender. Let us repair the fortifications, throw up new earthworks, and await the enemy behind the intrenchments. This is my resolution; I will not suffer contradiction, but treat as rebels and mutineers those who dare to act contrary to my orders! The soldiers obey me, and I am their commander. But such of the officers as do not wish to participate longer in the struggle; who, instead of remaining true to their duty, prefer to save their lives by flight, are at liberty to do so. I will not prevent them from making their escape; they may embark on one of the ships in the harbor, and flee whither they desire. Let them remember, however, that they will leave their dishonor here, and will not participate in the glory which posterity may grant as the only conquerors' crown to poor Schill and his faithful men. Let such as desire to flee step forth and receive their discharge." A long pause ensued. No one advanced.

"We agreed to serve under the leadership of Major von Schill," at last said the oldest officer, in a grave, solemn voice; "we have sworn to fight under him against the enemies of our country, to remain with him to the last, and to obey his orders. We shall fulfil our oath, and not faithlessly desert the banner which we have hitherto followed. Let Major von Schill consider, however, that he is responsible for the lives of all those who have united their destiny with his own, and that his conscience, God, and posterity, will judge him, if instead of preserving them he should lead them to an inglorious death or captivity. If Major von Schill is unwilling to listen to

prudence—if he refuses to embark and escape with us, we will all remain, and, with him, await our fate. Speak, then, major, will you go with us or remain?"

"I will remain," exclaimed Schill, energetically. "I will await the enemy; I will conquer or die on German soil. Oh, friends, comrades, do not speak to me of flight or submission; Schill does not flee, Schill does not submit! I have tried to arouse my country; I have stretched out my hand toward my countrymen, and said to them, 'I will assist you in shaking the sleep from your half-closed eyes. Rise! and I will lead you in the path of liberty and honor. My arm is strong, and my sword is sharp; unite with me, and let us expel the tyrant!' But Germany did not listen to my appeal; she is still sleeping too soundly, and God did not decree that I should accomplish my task. Perhaps Providence may intend that you and I shall strengthen the cause of liberty by shedding our blood—our death will awaken the sleepers, that they may avenge us. The Germans entertain great admiration for the dead. It is only toward the living that they are cold and reserved. Brethren, let us die for liberty if we cannot live for it. Let us remain united in life and death!"

"Yes, united in life and death!" exclaimed all the officers, and they thronged around Schill to shake hands with him, and to assure him of their fidelity.

Four days of repose and peace followed.—Schill profited by them to repair the decayed intrenchments and fortifications, and made all necessary preparations for an obstinate defence against the approaching enemy.

On the 31st of May, early in the morning, while the major was reviewing his troops in the market-place, wild shouts were heard in the streets. They drew nearer and nearer. Soldiers were rushing toward Schill, and behind them, at some distance, others in red uniforms became visible.

A flash of joy kindled the patriot's face. "The English," he exclaimed, in a loud voice, "see their red coats! The English have landed, and are coming to our assistance!"

"The English are coming!" echoed the exultant soldiers.

"No, no," gasped one of the guards, who had just reached the market-place, "the Dutch are coming—it is the enemy! They surprised us at the Knieper gate, dispersed our infantry, and penetrated into the city. See! their assaulting columns are already advancing! Let every one escape as he can!"

"It is the enemy!" exclaimed Schill, vaulting on his horse.

"Come, brethren, let us meet them. The cavalry will remain here as our reserve. The other troops will follow me to the Triebseer gate!" And he galloped into the narrow street leading to the gate, followed by his men. He was a picture of heroism as he rode at the head of his band, with his hair streaming in the wind, and his countenance beaming with courage. Turning with a smile to Lieutenant Alvensleben, who was riding at his side, "Oh," he said, "it seems to me as though a heavy load had been removed from my breast, and I could breathe freely again. The decisive struggle is at hand, and burdensome life will be resigned with joy. I shall die, my friend, die. Hurrah! forward! liberty is beckoning to me, glorious liberty!"

He spurred his horse and galloped more rapidly, Alvensleben remaining at his side.

"Friend," exclaimed Schill, further on, "when I am no more, defend me against my enemies, and greet my friends! Take my last oath of fealty to the queen, and my last love-greeting to Germany, when she is free. Hurrah! there comes the enemy! Let us sing an inspiring song!" And he sang in a loud voice:

"*Tod du süsßer, für das Vaterland!
Süßser als der Brautgruss, als das Lallen
Auf dem Mutterschooss des ersten Kindes,
Sei mir willkommen!*"

"*Willkommen!*" he cried again, and galloped more rapidly past the Dutch soldiers, who were just emerging from a side-street and cut him off from Alvensleben and his other followers. The enemy, commanded by the Dutch General Carteret, was also approaching from the opposite street. The patriot galloped into the midst of the staff—his sabre flashed, and the general fell from his horse as if struck by lightning. Schill turned when he was unable to penetrate through this body of men obstructing the street. But another battalion had already formed behind him and cut him hopelessly off from assistance. His own men tried to reach him. Shouts, oaths, cries of defiance and fury, with the groans of the dying, rent the air.

Schill saw that he was lost, that he was no longer able to save himself, his faithful men, or his fatherland! There was no escape for him. Death was howling around him on all sides, panting for its prey. Suddenly the column of the enemy opened; he saw the gap, and spurred his horse with a desperate effort, making him leap into the midst of the

enemy. The Dutch soldiers fell back in dismay, and Schill galloped by them into Fähr Street. Forward, as on the wings of a tempest, he hastened to the assistance of his men. A bullet hissed past him—another shot was fired. He wavered in the saddle; the bullet had struck him! A detachment of Dutch soldiers were just coming up the street. The man heading them saw the pale Prussian officer, who was scarcely able to retain his seat.

"It is Schill! it is Schill!" he cried out, rushing forward.

"Hurrah, it is Schill!" shouted the others, aiming their muskets at him. Three shots were fired. The brave Prussian still kept the saddle, but his hand dropped the bridle, and the horse stood still. The Dutch chasseurs surrounded and cut him. He lay helpless on the ground—that herculean man. He was still alive; his eyes, that had so beamed with courage, cast their last glance toward heaven, and his lips, that smiled so sweetly, murmured, "*Tod du süsßer für das Vaterland!*" A powerful sabre-stroke at last ended his life. His enemies despoiled his body, tearing off his decorations, and robbing him of a small crown of pearls and the memorandum-book, both gifts of the queen whom he loved so well, and for whom he fought so bravely. They seized the corpse and dragged it along the street in order to present it to their general. His hands were besmeared with mire; his uniform torn by the brutal grasp of the conquerors, and his gory head trailed along the pavement. He was at last deposited in the vestibule of the city hall, where the meat-merchants of Stralsund trade on market days.

A butcher's bench was the catafalque of unfortunate Ferdinand von Schill, the martyr of German liberty! There he lay, a horrible spectacle, with broken limbs, a face deformed by bruises and sabre-gashes, and his eyes glaring to heaven as if in accusation of the ignominy of his death and the brutality of his enemies.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE PARADE AT SCHÖNBRUNN.

NAPOLEON'S great victory at Wagram had put an end to the war with Austria, and destroyed only too speedily the hopes which the battle of Aspern or Esslingen had awakened in the hearts of the Germans.