

"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.

The Archduke Charles had gained at Aspern half a victory; and the fact that the Austrians had not been beaten—that Napoleon had been compelled to fall back with his army and to take refuge on the island of Lobau, was regarded as a victory, which was announced in the most boastful manner. But if it was a victory, the Austrians did not know how to profit by it. Instead of uniting their forces and attacking Lobau, where the French army was encamped, huddled together, and exhausted by the long and murderous struggle—where the French grenadiers were weeping over the death of their brave leader, Marshal Lannes, Duke of Montebello—where the wounded and defeated were cursing for the first time the emperor's insatiable thirst for conquest—instead of surrounding the French army, or opening a cannonade upon them, the Archduke Charles fell farther back from the right bank of the Danube, and allowed his exhausted troops to rest and recover from the fatigue of the terrible battle that had lasted two days. While the Austrians were dressing their wounds, the French profited by the delay, and built new bridges, procured barges, left the island that might have been a graveyard for them, and reorganized their shattered forces.

On the 6th of July, Napoleon took revenge at Wagram for the two days of Aspern, and wrested again from the Archduke Charles the laurels won at the latter place. Germany was in ecstasies after the battle of Aspern, but she bowed her head mournfully after that of Wagram.

Napoleon was again the master of Germany; and Austria, like the rest of the country, had to bow humbly to his imperious will. The "first soldier of Aspern," brave Prince John of Lichtenstein, was sent to Napoleon's headquarters at Znaim to request an armistice and the opening of peace negotiations. Napoleon, whose armies were exhausted, whose attention, besides, was absorbed by the war in Spain, and who had found out at his late battles what resistance was now beginning to be made in Germany, granted the request, consented to a cessation of hostilities, and that the envoys of France and Austria should agree upon terms of peace.

These negotiations had already been carried on for months, and no conclusion had yet been arrived at. Vienna was still a French city, and the Viennese had to submit to the rule of a new governor, and to the galling yoke imposed on them by a foreign police, who kept a close surveillance over every action—nay, every expression and look. They had to bow to

stern necessity, and to celebrate Napoleon's birthday, the 15th of August, by festivities and an illumination, as though it were the birthday of their own sovereign.

Napoleon was still residing at Schönbrunn, at the palace which Maria Theresa had built, and where she had signed the marriage-contract of her daughter Marie Antoinette with the Dauphin of France. Marie Antoinette had been guillotined, and the heir of the Revolution and of the French crown was dwelling at her mother's palace.

Every morning the French Emperor reviewed his guards in the large palace-yard, and thousands of the inhabitants of Vienna hastened regularly to Schönbrunn in order to see him and witness the parade. These morning reviews had become a favorite public amusement, and, when listening to the music of the French bands, and beholding the emperor (in his gray coat, with his broad brow covered with the three-cornered hat) gallop down the ranks of his troops, followed by the brilliant staff of his marshals and generals, amid shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur*," the kind-hearted citizen sometimes forgot that it was their enemy who was displaying his power, and rejoicing in his ambition; instead of cursing, they admired him and his veterans, whose scars were the signs of many a victory.

Napoleon was but too well aware of the influence which these parades were exerting on the minds of the people; he knew the fascination which his person produced not only on his soldiers, but the public generally, and he wished to profit by it, in order to conquer the civilians after conquering their army. Every one, therefore, had free access, and the subtle invader had always a kind glance and an affable smile with which to win their hearts.

On the 13th of October, as usual, a parade was to be held; and the road leading to Vienna was early covered with carriages, horsemen, and pedestrians, hastening to Schönbrunn. Among those hurrying along the high-road was a man of whom no one took any notice, with whom no one was conversing, and who, while all around were laughing, and speaking of the parade, was pursuing his way in grave silence. His youthful countenance was sad and pale; long, light hair was waving round his oval face. His eyes seemed on fire, and his thin, half-parted lips were quivering as though he were a prey to intense emotion. He was wrapped in a large black cloak reaching nearly to his feet; a small black velvet cap covered

his head. This strange figure looked like an apparition in the midst of the chatting crowd, the elegant carriages, and dashing horsemen. All were too busily engaged with themselves, with the review, which was to be particularly brilliant, and with the emperor, who was not only to be present, but to command the troops.

A few persons referred also to the hopes entertained of a speedy conclusion of peace, and regretted that they had not yet been fulfilled, while others conversed stealthily about the victories of the Tyrolese, and of noble and brave Andrew Hofer, who, with his faithful mountaineers, still dared to resist the French conqueror. The young man listened gravely and silently to all this conversation.

It was yet early when he reached the palace; for the Viennese were anxious to get good places, and to be as near the emperor as possible, and therefore they had set out several hours before the parade was to commence.

The young man glanced with an evident air of disappointment over the large, unoccupied space which lay before him, and on which as yet not a man of the imperial guard was to be seen. "Will there be no parade to-day?" he asked a corpulent citizen of Vienna, who was standing at his side.

"Certainly, sir, there will be one," said the citizen, with a self-important air. "But it is very early yet, and an hour may elapse before the emperor makes his appearance."

"An hour yet!" exclaimed the young stranger, indignantly. "I was told I had to be here early in order to witness the spectacle."

"You were correctly informed, sir. For if you want to see any thing, it is necessary to be here at this hour to secure a good place. Besides, the time you will have to wait will not be very tedious. The various regiments that are to participate in the parade will soon make their appearance; then, come the imperial guards, who form in line, and, finally, the emperor with his marshals. Oh, you ought to hear the shouts, the music of the band, and the roll of the drums when he appears! You will certainly hear the noise, provided it does not make you deaf."

"I think it will not," said the young man, with a mournful smile. "But tell me, shall we be able to see the emperor very near? - From which door will he make his appearance, and where does he generally take his position?"

"He comes generally from the large portal yonder; it is

there that he mounts on horseback; he then rides down the front of the soldiers, and halts a short time just there, where we are standing. Those who desire to say any thing to him, or to deliver petitions, had better do so on this very spot. But come, let us go a little farther into the palace-yard, that we may see better."

"Very well, lead the way. I will follow," said the young man.

"Come, then, sir." And the kind-hearted citizen of Vienna elbowed himself through the crowd.

The young conspirator followed him a few steps, and then halted. Instead of advancing farther he slipped back to his former place.

"No," he muttered to himself, "I must not stand close to, or converse with any one. I must be alone and an utter stranger, so as to cast suspicion on no one else, and not to endanger the lives of innocent persons. The glory of the deed will belong to me alone, if it should succeed; let the penalty be inflicted on me alone, if it should fail." He withdrew farther from the citizen who had spoken to him so courteously, and when he had entirely lost sight of him, he approached the palace cautiously and from the opposite side. "The blow must be struck at once," he muttered. "Every delay will involve me in fresh dangers, and my fate might be the same as that of the two brethren who drew the black balls last year. I drew the lot this time, and must accomplish what they were unable to perform."

The youthful stranger raised his eyes toward heaven, and a solemn earnestness beamed from his countenance. "Yes, I swear it by the memory of Anna, and the tears she will soon shed for me, that I will not, like those two brethren, shrink from striking the blow. I drew the lot, and the president must repair the fault committed by them. I must destroy the tyrant! Heaven, hear my oath and let my plan succeed!" He elbowed himself quickly through the crowd, and approached closer to the entrance of the palace. Once, in the midst of the surging mass, his cloak was accidentally displaced, and something like a dagger-blade flashed from under it; but hastily arranging his cloak he glanced around with an air of uneasiness. No one paid any attention to him, for all eyes were fixed on the imperial guard marching into line with a proud step, conscious that they were the favorites of the greatest general of the age, and the terror of the battle-field.