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of the Tyrol, by Anne Manning

Title: The Year Nine: A Tale of the Tyrol

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Release date: June 26, 2015 [EBook #49290]

Language: English

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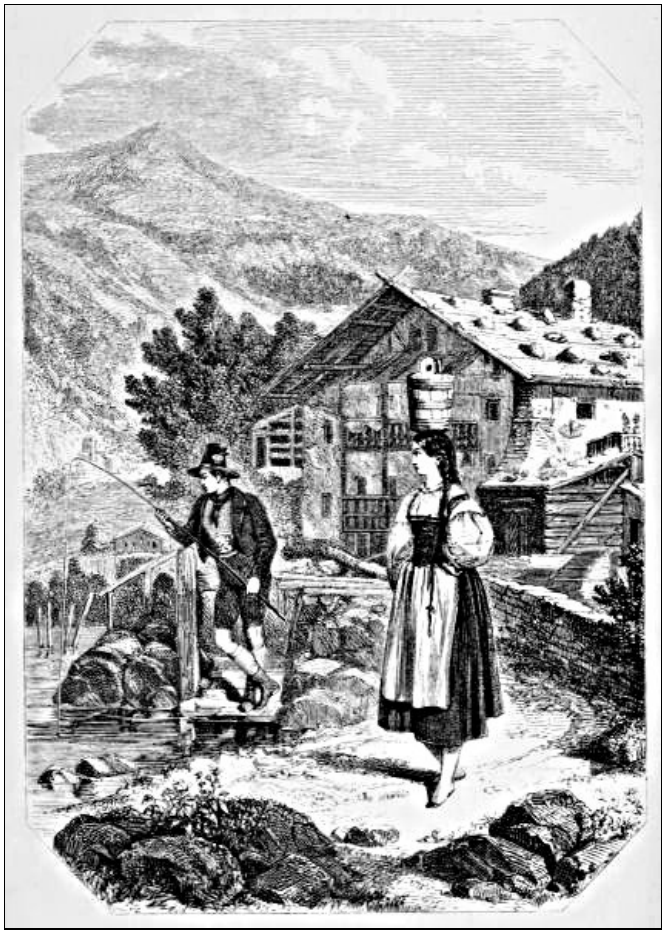

THE YEAR NINE.

A Tale of the Tyrol.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "MARY POWELL."

Pro libertate victi, pro fama victores.

LONDON:
Printed for ARTHUR HALL, VIRTUE, & CO.
25, *Paternoster Row*.
1858.

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THE YEAR NINE.

CHAPTER I.

THE THUNDER STORM.

IT was dusk; and the mountains were reverberating with loud thunder-claps, while the rain helped to swell a turbid river that swept through the valley, and past the door of a small *wirth-haus* or inn, known less by its sign of "The Crown," than as "am Sand," by reason of the strip of sand on which it was built.

A cheerful looking, comely woman, clad in a superabundance of woollen petticoats, was busy at the stove, cooking the supper of a foot-traveller who read a crumpled newspaper at the window; while surrounding the kitchen-table, three or four peasants, who had been driven in by the rain, were hungrily supping milk-porridge from a large bowl common to them all. A [2] pretty girl of sixteen, after adding to their meal a basket of coarse rye-cakes, spread a small table for the stranger, who, as soon as his supper was served, fell upon it with avidity. His hostess, meanwhile, retired to the end of the kitchen, where there was a great meal-bin, and began to set the bread for the morrow's baking, closely watched, all the time, by two little girls with long braids of hair hanging down their backs.

"The thunder still rumbles," said a man who was quietly smoking near the stove. He was about forty years of age; his person was strong and manly, with slightly rounded shoulders; his full, dark eyes beamed with gentleness; his clustering, deep brown hair fell low on his broad forehead, and continued round his face in a beard that became coal-black towards the chin. He looked kind and enduring rather than impetuous, and not unaptly represented the image of strength in repose.

He wore a close-fitting grass-green coat over a scarlet waistcoat, on which hung a rosary and crucifix between his green, embroidered braces; black knee-breeches, scarlet stockings, and laced half-boots. The quiet self-possession of his manner bespoke him the *wirth*, or master of the inn.

"The thunder still rumbles," said he.

"Aye aye, Sandwirth," answered one of the peasants, grinning; "better to be [3] under cover than half-way between this and St. Martin's."

"Father," said a lad, running into the house, "two men are coming hither. And I think," added he eagerly, under his breath, "the tallest of them is Joseph Speckbacher."

"Hist!" said his father, laying aside his pipe, while he glanced furtively at the stranger.

At the same time, the rustics, having finished their supper, departed, without caring for the skirt of the storm, which they pronounced clearing off, though large drops continued to fall heavily.

"Those labourers seem content with homely fare," said the traveller, pushing aside his plate.

"They don't taste meat once a fortnight," said the Sandwirth, "and yet you see what strong, active fellows they are. Shall you take a bed here, sir, to-night?"

"No, I would sooner go on, if it were not for the storm."

"It will soon blow over," said the Wirth.

"Perhaps you have a book to lend me, meanwhile?"

"Oh, yes," said the girl Theresa, bringing him one with alacrity.

"This? Hum! the 'South German Plutarch,'" muttered the traveller—"I doubt if I shall not drop asleep over it."

And, laying his legs up on a wooden stool, he began to turn over the leaves. [4]

Two men here came in, panting and laughing. "What a storm!" cried one, laying his conical hat with its drenched feather on the table. "How are you, Anderl?" extending his brown muscular hand to him.

"Well; praised be Jesus Christ!" said the Sandwirth, reverently; to which the two others replied with seriousness—

"For ever and ever, Amen!"

It is the usual Tyrolese ejaculation, when a new comer enters the house. There is something simple and solemn in it, when spoken reverently, which it always is.

"How is your good Maria?" said the Sandwirth's wife, coming forward. "And your little boy, Anderl's namesake?"

"Well, both of them, thanks to God; though Maria has now three youngsters on her hands. But, Sandwirth, have you heard the news? The Archduke—"

"Hist!" again said the Sandwirth softly, laying his hand on the other's breast; and indicating by a wary glance of his eye, the presence of the stranger. The other replied by a look. His companion, a younger man, gave a gesture of impatience, and whispered, "Is he going to stay?"

"All in good time," said the Sandwirth cheerily. "We are just going to sup, and you will join us. One thing at a time will last the longer." [5]

"Aye, Anderl, that is always your word," said his wife, good-humouredly, as she placed about four pounds of boiled bacon on the table. "You never could bear to season eating with business."

"Have you a good horse to sell, just now, Sandwirth?" said the younger and shorter of the newly arrived, by way of general conversation.

"How should I have a horse to sell?" returned the Wirth, dragging a heavy wooden bench towards the table. "I know no more of selling horses, Franz, than you do of selling brandy."

At which they all laughed, as a capital joke. The family and their two friends then sat down to their homely meal.

"So you are going to give us a shooting-match on Sunday," said the young man whom the Wirth had called Franz.

"Ye—s," said the Sandwirth reluctantly; "but I don't altogether like it."

"You don't? And why not, Sandwirth?"

"I doubt it's being quite right."

"Why, it brings you plenty of custom!"

"Aye, Franz; and, in your eyes, that settles the question; but I doubt if it be a good way of spending the Sabbath. If I were a maker of laws, which I'm never likely to be, I'd put down Sabbath-breaking." [6]

"But, Sandwirth," said the taller man, in a peculiarly full, rich, earnest voice, "the Sandwirths, your ancestors, used to give Sabbath shooting-matches on this very spot. Look at the glorious old targets hanging like trophies on your wall. I remember, the first time I ever came in sight of this house was on a Sunday afternoon, and the sharp, quick, rattling reports of the rifles echoed among the hills. You yourself stood umpire among a knot of young fellows in green jackets and red sashes; and your grey-headed father sat at a long table covered with hammers, screw-drivers, powder-flasks, ramrods, and everything that could be wanted."

"He did so, Speckbacher. You bring the scene before me." And the Wirth's deep-set, large dark eyes seemed dwelling on some far-off picture.

"You yourself hit the bull's eye twice, Anderl!"

"I did so, Joseph. 'Twas the day that I told old Gasper, who called me a beardless boy, that if he lived long enough, he should see my beard reach my girdle; and he laughed and said, when that day came, he would give me two oxen."

"So that's the reason you wear a beard!" cried Franz. "But, Sandwirth, surely such a match as that we have been speaking of, was fine sport! I call it play, not work; and therefore no breaking of the Sabbath." [7]

The Sandwirth, however, would not retract.

"Play like that," said he, thoughtfully and impressively, as though he weighed every word before he spoke it, "is often as fatiguing as work; and it

sometimes leads to quarrels, and to taking God's holy name in vain. Anyhow, it is not *rest*; and God bade us *rest*, mind you, on the Sabbath-day."

"Pleasure *is* rest," said Franz.

"No, pleasure is often the hardest of work," said the Sandwirth.

"That's true, too," said Speckbacher, as if a sudden light streamed in upon him.

"Well, I know, to lie on my back with nothing to do but twiddle my thumbs, would to me be the hardest work of all," said Franz.

"I wonder," said Speckbacher, after a short pause, "if such are your views, that you mean to have a Sunday shooting-match at all."

"I've a purpose," said the Wirth in a low voice; and then, in a louder key, as he rose and went towards the door, "I am going forth to look at the weather, sir," said he. "The storm has, I think, overblown; but if not, and you like to pass the night here, my wife shall prepare you a bed."

"By no means; if the weather is really clearing up," said the traveller, "I shall yet push on; for it is not late." [8]

"The clouds have rolled off, and the valley is sparkling in the last sun-gleam," said the Wirth.

"Very well. How much to pay?"

"Fifty kreutzers," said the hostess.

"Can you change me this zwanziger?"

While the good woman was mustering change, the traveller rested his chin on his knuckles, and attentively surveyed Speckbacher.

He was undeniably one of Nature's chieftains. His height was uncommon, and his lofty carriage of the neck and head, when excited, worthy of one of the old Greeks. But often that gallant head drooped, and a look of deep depression shaded his countenance. There was something intrepid in his mien; he was one from whom you would never expect to hear a lie, or a sentiment that was base. His language was homely, but energetic; his features were good, his hair and eyes coal-black. His age might be thirty-five.

Franz was full ten years younger, and had tolerable features, but a kind of rakish, good-for-nothing air that was rather repelling.

"Why won't you have anything to say to me?" he was asking Theresa. "You seem to be knitting all your wits into that blue worsted stocking. If Rudolf, now, were here, you'd brighten up directly."

"But as he isn't, there's no occasion for it," said Theresa, carelessly, and continuing to knit with all her might. [9]

"What a pleasant voice you have, Theresa! I wish you would sing us a song."

"That's likely, isn't it?" said the girl.

"Come now, do."

"Thank you, I am going to take my little sisters to bed." And she moved away from him. He looked after her with a mixture of admiration and pique.

Just as the traveller, after some inquiries about the roads, was about to depart, two more men hastily entered. The first was a Capuchin friar, of stalwart make, with the hood of his brown woollen gown pulled so forward that nothing could readily be made out of him but a thick, flowing beard of the hue that partial mothers are apt to call auburn, though others often pronounce it red.

"The peace of God rest on this house, through Jesus Christ our Lord!" said he.

"For ever and ever!" meekly responded the rest.

The Capuchin's companion was a light, active young mountaineer of three-and-twenty, brown as a nut, and well becoming the picturesque national costume. As soon as Theresa, who was just leaving the kitchen, saw him, she reddened very much, and hastily withdrew.

"How the Passeyr is swollen already!" said the Capuchin. [10]

"Is the water out?" cried the traveller, suddenly. "Then I don't know that I've any mind to go on."

"Pooh, pooh!" said the Sandwirth, rather impatiently, "the river cannot have overflowed its banks. You see it has not hindered these foot-travellers. However, sir," changing his tone to one more conciliatory, "if you will oblige us with your company, you shall have as good and clean a bed as any in the Tyrol, though I cannot promise you a flounced pillow and satin damask

coverlet, such as you might get at Botzen."

"No, no, I'll take my chance," said the man of indecision. "Is there any one here that will see me through the valley?"

"You cannot well miss your road, sir; but my boy Johann shall start you on it, if you will."

"Thank you; I will give him a few kreutzers."

"No need, sir, thank you."

And the Sandwirth saw him out, and gave him some encouragement about the weather, and watched him off; and then returned laughing. The others laughed too.

"Gone at last!" exclaimed Franz. "I thought he never would make up his mind."

"Now for business," said Speckbacher, looking eager.

"I have hardly spoken to Father Joachim yet," said the Sandwirth, approaching the Capuchin, and kneeling. "Your blessing, father!" [11]

The Capuchin, before blessing him, threw back his hood, thereby revealing a frank, determined, intelligent countenance. He was by no means an old man; probably a few years younger, even, than Speckbacher, and apparently his equal in strength.

"Anna, is there still any supper left?" said the Sandwirth, rather apprehensively.

"Certainly," replied his wife; "I hope Father Joachim will never find our larder quite empty. Johann caught a trout weighing three pounds, this morning."

"Draw in, Rudolf," said the Sandwirth cheerfully to the young mountaineer; "and don't sit at that awful distance, my lad, as if you were not one of us."

Rudolf bashfully obeyed. At the same time, Theresa, who had tucked up her little sisters with considerable expedition, re-entered, and began sedulously to assist her mother in preparing Father Joachim's supper. She had not been absent many minutes, yet had contrived to slip on clean white full sleeves under her trim violet velvet bodice—a circumstance which did not escape the vigilant eye of Franz.

[12]

CHAPTER II.

THE INN KITCHEN.

"WHO was that stranger, Anderl?" said Father Joachim.

"A flat-faced Bavarian, I think, father," said the Sandwirth: "cunning as a fox! He took note of every word we said."

"You said nothing incautious, then, I hope?"

"Nothing whatever, father; we talked of shooting-matches and Sabbath-breaking."

"Good. Now then—here is a bag of money."

"For what, father?"

"For laying in stores of various sorts; which you, as an innkeeper, may do without suspicion. You may, perhaps, even contrive to conceal some ammunition."

"Doubtless, father; though this is not a particularly good hiding-place."

"You will be at some expense too about your shooting-matches."

"You think them quite justifiable, father?"

[13]

"Quite, my son. I think, in this instance, the end will justify the means. This will be a holy war; and the meetings, ostensibly for sport, will cover our arrangements. None among us are traitors, but some may be indiscreet, and these must not be trusted, but quietly sent away to the mountain châlets. This will be mortifying, but they will still be of service, for some must keep our flocks and herds, or how can the others be spared to fight? There must be one common purpose among us, without heart-burnings or jealousies."

"There must. There shall."

"It is easy to say there must,—there shall,—but are you yourself, Hofer, willing to co-operate with Martin Teimer, or perhaps even occasionally to be subordinate to him? There has been some coldness, I think, between you?"

"On my side, none," said the Sandwirth, after a little hesitation; "I bear him no ill will, nor do I know why he should bear any to me. The man's an able man; more so than I; and has already been raised from a private to a major in the militia, though, just now, he only keeps a tobacco-shop, which is no better, I take it, than keeping a wirth-haus. That's neither here nor there. I'll co-operate with him, or serve under him, whenever it needs."

[14]

"This is the spirit that must reign among us all," said Father Joachim. "We must exemplify the Scripture rule, 'Let each esteem other better than himself.' 'Him that is greatest among you, let him be your servant;' if by being so, he can be of the most good. Do you go with me, my children? Can you submit to this? Will you be content?"

"We will!" was simultaneously responded. The two young men spoke lowest: Rudolf, from the modesty natural to him; Franz, because he thought the requirement rather hard.

"Then listen to me. Prepare for action. In a few days we shall rise."

"Hurrah! hurrah!"

And short, loud, abrupt shouts burst from the men's lips. The next instant, their glowing eyes were fixed on the Capuchin in profound silence.

"Yes, my children,—here is the proclamation," continued Father Joachim, drawing a paper from his bosom; "hear it—

"'To arms, Tyroleans! To arms! The hour of deliverance is at hand. Your beloved emperor, Francis, calls on you to arm in a most holy cause, which, after a long and treacherous peace, stands forth like a rock in the deluge, the last remaining defence of the liberties of Europe!

"'You must now either rise while Napoleon is busy in another part of Europe, attempting to load the Spaniards with a foreign yoke, or wait till he

has accomplished that project, and returns to crush Austria, the only remaining obstacle to his aim at universal power. [15]

"'Your choice is made! Then look up to us! Everything is already in motion. You will again see at your head your beloved Archduke John, to whom every inch of the Tyrol is known and endeared, and whose greatest pain is ever to be separated from you.

"'It is impossible that a separation between Austria and Tyrol, like that of 1805, can again take place—a separation so bitterly felt! Bavaria declared that the Tyrolese should not only retain their ancient rights and freedom, but that their welfare should be promoted in every possible manner, and "that no iota of their constitution should be changed."

"'How your honest hearts rejoiced at this royal promise! But how has it been kept? You have seen your abbeys and monasteries destroyed, your church property confiscated, your churches profaned, your bishops and priests banished. Your knights and nobles have been stripped of their old, hereditary honours; your cities and courts of justice, your industrious citizens and tradespeople, have alike had their interests sacrificed; heavy taxes have been imposed, and no mercy has been shown towards those who could not pay them.

"'Tyroleans! when you recollect all this,—when you consider the treacherous conduct of the Bavarians, and remember that you have never taken the oath of allegiance to them,—you will have but one thought, one purpose; and your lips will alone utter the word Deliverance!'" [16]

"God save the emperor!" ejaculated the Sandwirth.

"And bless our cause!" added Speckbacher, deeply moved.

"It will be comparatively easy," said Father Joachim, "for Bavaria to penetrate our country as far as Innsbruck; but, from that point, our enemies will find themselves in a complete network of defiles, ravines, gorges, and valleys—"

"From which, if we let them escape, we shall be fools!" cried Speckbacher.

"They are many, and we are few, my son."

"They fight for kreutzers, and we for freedom, father."

"True; and therefore I believe we shall win the day, but it will be a hard-fought one. From Carinthia the foe will approach us through the valley of the Drave; from Italy through the valley of the Adige. We must hem them in, and cut them off, before they effect a junction. No time must be lost in fortifying the mountain passes. On the 9th of April, a division of Austrian troops will advance—"

"God be thanked! Under the Archduke John?"

"Under General Chastelar and Baron Hormayr. You look disappointed, Hofer; but they are good men and true.—Directly they begin to march, the Tyrol must rise. You must ring your alarm-bells and kindle your beacons; send messages to every dwelling within reach, and billets inscribed '*'Tis time*' to those afar off. Saw-dust scattered on the rivers will be a signal to the men lower down the valleys that you are in arms. The foe will probably endeavour to reach the Brenner by way of Brixen—" [17]

"He must be intercepted!"

"Undoubtedly. Who will lead the men of the Passeyrthal over the Jauffen? Andreas Hofer, will *you*?"

A deep red flush rose to the Sandwirth's temples. He rose; and, in a low, firm voice, replied—

"I will."

"Let us make some memoranda, then, of men and places—"

Some humble writing implements were placed on the table; and Hofer, after trying the point of a stumpy pen on his thumb, offered it, with a crumpled piece of paper, to Father Joachim, who, however, produced his own pocket-book, while the Sandwirth and Speckbacher reckoned up to him the number of men they thought they might muster. Rudolf presently went round to Theresa, and whispered, "Can you give me some bits of wood? I might be cutting some billets and inscribing them." [18]

She mutely nodded, went out, and returned with her apron full. He took out his clasp-knife and quietly set to work; and Franz, after a lazy fashion, helped him.

"Five thousand strong," at length said the Capuchin.

"There or thereabouts," said Hofer. "Speckbacher must count up the men

about Halle."

His little boy here stole up to him.

"So, Johann," said his father, in a lowered voice, while Speckbacher reckoned up the men of Halle, "you set the stranger on his way. Did he say anything to you?"

"Only asked a heap of questions about the shooting match, father."

"Humph! Nothing else?"

"Only about Speckbacher—"

"What of me?" hastily said Speckbacher, overhearing him.

"Only who you were. I said you took wood to the salt-works."

"Humph! Was that all?"

"He asked me about Franz."

"What did you tell him?" said Franz.

"Oh, nothing—I only said you sold horses; and sometimes brandy."

"You might have let that alone, youngster," muttered Franz, looking a little annoyed; while the others laughed. [19]

"What said you of me, my little man?" inquired Father Joachim, without pausing from his writing.

"What *could* I say, father, but that you were Father Joachim, of the Capuchin convent at Brixen, and that we all loved your reverence dearly?" said Johann.

"You told him my name, then," muttered Father Joachim.

"Did you say anything of Rudolf, Johann?" said Theresa softly, with a little pull at her brother's hair.

"I said he was a goodish sort of a fellow," said Johann doggedly; "and that I believed he came here to look after *you*."

"I'll pay you for it!" whispered she indignantly; and giving him a little push, she hastily went out; Rudolf furtively looking after her.

"My little lad," said the Capuchin gently, "you must learn more discretion, or you will be a child all your life. Well, Hofer, I think these will be enough?"

"Enough and to spare," said the Sandwirth; "with God's blessing."

"Children, let us ask it."

Every knee was bent in prayer, while Father Joachim fervently invoked the aid of the God of battles. This concluded the conference. Solemnized, and with burning hearts, they retired to rest; while the Bavarian traveller carried the very little he knew to the best market for it. [20]

A lovely April morning succeeded this eventful night. Scarcely had the sun begun to gild the mountain-tops, when Theresa stood beside the river with her milk-pail on her head, inquiring of Rudolf, who was fishing in the shade, how many trout he had caught for Father Joachim's breakfast.

Carrying a pail or pitcher on the head gives the neck an erect, noble carriage—reining it up, as it were: and Theresa, in her short, scanty grass-green petticoat, and black bodice laced with scarlet, might have stood for the Princess Nausicaa, as her laughing black eyes looked down on the young fisherman from beneath their long lashes.

"There's a wary fellow under that yellow stone," answered Rudolf; "I caught a gleam, just now, of his bright back-fin."

"I don't believe you did—I dare say it was only the water that sparkled. I would undertake to milk all the cows in the Passeyrthal, before you caught fish enough for dinner."

"Try me," said he, leaning back on his elbow to look up full at her. "Though I have but a four-acre farm, it's in full cultivation, quite productive enough for you and me, with a good wooden cottage on it, too. I'll catch you a fish for dinner every day." [21]

"What nonsense, Rudolf, you do talk!"

"No nonsense at all. I'm quite in earnest; but you do love to cut up a poor fellow."

"No, I don't," said Theresa, looking down, though she could not bend her head. "Shall you come to the shooting-match on Sunday?"

"To be sure I shall. The match will be only a feint."

"Do you like the prospect of war?"

"Certainly—Don't you?"

"If my father does not get hurt, nor—nor one or two friends—"

"Martin Teimer, I suppose."

"What care I for Martin Teimer?"

"Franz Raffel, then!"

"Rudolf, how *can* you be so stupid?"

"Speckbacher—"

"Certainly, for one. We all love dear Speckbacher."

"Theresa! What wild tales they tell of him! They say that, being early left his own master, it soon ceased to be sufficient excitement to him to follow the roe or wage war with the lammergeyer from morning to-night, in the most savage, inaccessible places, so that he at length left his home altogether, and joined a set of lawless companions who dwelt among the caverns; supporting himself with his rifle when it was successful, but at other times joining predatory parties into the Bavarian dominions." [22]

"Something I have heard of this," said Theresa, in a low voice; "but Maria Schmeider reclaimed him—"

"No, he was checked by the sudden and terrible end of one of his companions—"

"At any rate, he has been one of the best of husbands, and most honest of men, ever since he married; and their little cottage at Rinn is the scene of perfect happiness—"

"There is a touch of romance in him, still, however. Franz told me just now, as we returned from mass, that on their road yesterday, through thunder and lightning, Speckbacher gave him such wonderful descriptions of the salt caverns near Halle, that it seemed like a fairy tale."

"Very likely," said Theresa. "I have heard him speak of them to my father, and say how he should delight to take him through them. My father liked the idea, but I confess it would make me shudder. All sunlight is excluded; you begin by plunging down three hundred steps that seem as though conducting you to the very centre of the earth; the red light of your torch falls on murky subterranean lakes, beneath towering walls of sparkling salt. How horrible, should one fall into one of those lakes! Speckbacher says there are no fewer than forty-eight caverns, and that some of the galleries connecting them are three leagues in length. He called it a capital place for hide and seek." [23]

"Aye, or for storing brandy, as that scamp Franz said," muttered Rudolf.

"Much obliged," said Franz, sauntering up. "Hope I'm no interruption."

"None at all," said Rudolf, watching his trout.

"Listeners never hear good of themselves," said Theresa tartly.

"I didn't know you were talking secrets, or I wouldn't have intruded," said Franz, throwing himself on the grass. "So I'm a scamp, am I?"

"Well, I'm sorry I used the word, and that's truth," said the good-natured Rudolf.

"I suppose you think it, though," said Franz, jerking a stone into the river.

"Oh, don't trouble the water!" cried Theresa, hastily. "How can you be such a spoil-sport?"

"Spoil-sport, am I?" said Franz doggedly. "Well, perhaps I am. Now I know my titles and designations. Franz Scamp Spoil-sport."

"Better take care not to deserve them, then," said Theresa pettishly. "If you stay out here much longer, we shall breakfast without you."

And pitching her voice, which was both sweet and clear, rather high, she went towards the house, singing one of the popular national airs in praise of liberty. [24]

Franz followed the songstress into the house; and Rudolf, who, having exchanged his worm for a smaller one, (for trout loathe large baits,) was just going to try his luck again when little Johann, running up to him, and looking on for a minute with very round eyes, exclaimed—

"Why, you mustn't do that!—Why, that's father's pet trout, that feeds out of his hand and weighs fifteen pounds! Why, that trout has lived under that stone twenty-eight years! Father'll be finely angry with you, I can tell you, if you think of eating that trout! Why, he'd as soon eat me!"

[25]

CHAPTER III.

THE SHOOTING MATCH.

SUNDAY afternoon presented a busy scene at the *wirth-haus*. Groups of gaily-dressed peasants were standing about, many talking fast and eagerly, others quietly, and a little apart. Here stood a woman in an extinguisher-shaped black worsted cap, with her massive arms akimbo, talking to another apparently strong enough to build a house, who wore a globular cap of fur; while, between them, stood a third in a grass-green gown, very short-waisted, and with three rows of red binding round the skirt, her head covered by a gaudy handkerchief, tied under the chin. They looked worthy compatriots of the women of the Vorarlberg, who, during the Thirty Years' War, drove a Swedish division out of the Lechthal, and killed them to a man. There was more of the lioness that might be roused to defend her cubs, in them, however, than of the *poissarde*; they had hard hands, strong arms, kind hearts, and firm wills.

The young girls, who were mostly sunburnt, and pleasant-looking rather than pretty, had bestowed considerable attention on their hair, which was [26] braided in long shining tails, tied with gay ribands, and surmounted in some cases by jaunty little straw hats, rather bigger than daisies, and wreathed with primroses, blue hyacinths, and anemones. Among the young men and lads, red sashes, green jackets, and blue stockings were rife; each had his tall, conical hat with gold cord and tassels, flower, or feather; his rifle, plated buckles, and flower in his button-hole. They did not seem to have much to say to the young girls, for flirtation is very little countenanced in the Tyrol.

The target was set up at a distance of two hundred and fifty paces. There were the benches, the beer-tables, and the long board on tressels, covered with balls, powder-flasks, and everything likely to be wanted for the sport. The rifles that were to do such goodly service were heavy and clumsy, with triggers so delicate as almost to be set off by a gust of wind. Theresa actively assisted her mother in waiting on the company. Johann sidled up to little Anderl Speckbacher and got him off to a bank, where they could watch the shooting, their arms round each other's necks. The two little girls held their mother's apron as long as they could, and finally found themselves some juvenile companions.

Franz was very smart; but, somehow, his clothes always looked as if they had been made for somebody else; and were worn with a slouching air, as if [27] he felt too fine for his company. On the other hand, Rudolf's glossy suit of green velveteen fitted without a crease, and he did not seem to think either of himself or his dress, but to have alert, disengaged attention for whatever was going on.

Talking to Hofer and Speckbacher was a man of thirty, with piercing blue eyes, a bold but not prepossessing countenance, indicative of great sharpness, and stooping a little, neither like a mountaineer nor a soldier, though he had been a militia captain and major. This was Martin Teimer, who had come from Clagenfurt to talk over the rising with his compatriots. He had been appointed by General Chastelar, chief of the peasants of the Upper Innthal, and seemed rather inclined, his two companions thought, to plume himself on it. These three men had an eye to everything that was going on around them; and now and then separated and mingled among the groups, speaking to men here and there, till, in time, they had had a short private colloquy with every man on the ground; returning to each other from time to time, and comparing notes.

Meanwhile, the rifles were in full action: now circle one, now circle two was hit, now the bull's eye; and even without looking round, it was easy to tell by the cheerful, the triumphant, or the moderated acclamations, what had been [28] the rifleman's success.

Speckbacher, returning from one of these progresses, observed to Hofer, "I don't much like that youth, Franz Raffel; he is shallow, vain-glorious, and

given to talk. He would be better among the châlets."

"Thither he shall go, if we can get him," said Hofer; "but he is somewhat slippery to get hold of; half his time, he is skulking about, smuggling brandy across the frontier; and as we want a good store of it just now, I at present make him useful."

"Rudolf is worth a score of him," said Speckbacher; "and I think your pretty Theresa thinks so too. I would not discourage that youngster, Anderl, even if Martin Teimer were to come forward—"

"Of a surety, no," said Hofer, quietly. "The lad is a good lad. We shall see what stuff he is made of this summer; and, if he quits himself well, he shall have Theresa at the end of it. You and I were little more than two-and-twenty when we took our brides to church; and Theresa is already nearly as old as her mother was. But we have other matters in hand just now. I see one or two together whom I want to speak to, only Franz is within earshot of them. Do you draw him off."

Speckbacher immediately went up to him, and asked whether he could let him have some brandy; and Hofer joined a couple of elderly men, who were [29] just sitting down side by side on a bench under a tree.

"There hasn't been such a match as this a good while," one was saying; "but, dear me, what matches we used to have when I was a lad! I'm not more than fifteen or twenty years older than that marksman who is taking aim now, but I don't believe he'll hit the white. Crack! Well, they're making a piece of work about it—I suppose he's hit the bull's eye."

"Here comes one that can do more than that," said the other. "Anderl! you have not shot, to-day."

"Boys' play," said Hofer with indifference.

"But you could show them what a man can do."

"Brag, neighbours? No good of brag. Besides, these lads shoot well, many of them. There was some good shooting before you came."

"People always say that of everything," said the other. "I've no spirit for these things now."

"Ah, things will befall shortly, that will put you in spirits."

"What mean you, Sandwirth? Is anything going to happen?"

Hofer nodded.

The two men put their heads close to his, and looked eager.

"We shall rise, soon." [30]

"*Rise?* What, the Tyrol?"

Another nod.

"Under whom?"

"Nobody in particular. All of us under God."

They lifted up their hands and eyes.

"But is it certain? How do you know?"

"Of some one that knows. Quite certain."

"*Himmel!*—Did you get us together to-day to tell us this?"

"Yes."

"'Tis time!" cried one of the men in an impassioned under-tone. "Why should we be turned over from one master to another like a flock of sheep? How did the King of Bavaria guarantee our ancient rights and usages? With a piece of sheepskin. None of his promises have been kept: our representative States have been suppressed, our public funds seized, our Church property confiscated; and, as though this were not enough, taxes have been imposed upon us. The Emperor is afraid of France; but are *we*?"

"Not one of us, as we shall presently show them," said Hofer. "Buonaparte is already in the field against our Emperor, but we shall be quickly down upon him. Communications have been opened with the Archduke John, who is immediately going to effect a powerful diversion. Troops are about to march [31] to our assistance."

"Why, neighbour, if you were to speak this out, every Tyrolese would rise directly!"

"True; but the moment, though close at hand, is not quite come. In a day or two, perhaps, you will receive a little billet inscribed '*'Tis time*'—the whole country will be up directly!"

"Come, I'll try *my* hand at the rifle this moment!" cried the old man, throwing aside his stick, and hastening towards the crowd. He was known and respected—they made way for him.

"Old Spickbart is going to try a shot!" cried Franz to Rudolf—"What sport! I'll bet you a quart of brandy he don't hit the target at all!"

The good man's hand shook so that his ball only hit the outer circle.

"I'll try again," said he.

"Yes, do," said the Sandwirth kindly; and looking round him as he spoke. There was not a smile, except on the face of Franz.

"You and I used often to shoot together," said Hofer. "Now then. Don't be in a hurry."

This time Spickbart hit the bull's eye. He was much applauded, and looked greatly elated.

"Ah, I thought I could!" said he, wagging his head. "The fault was only in my hand; not in my eye.—Now, you, Hofer."

"No, no," said Hofer. [32]

"Oh yes, Sandwirth! Please, Sandwirth!" cried many voices.

"You silly boys," said he, looking about for his own rifle; "what do you want me to play with you for?"

A feather from some hat lay at his feet. He picked it up and gave it to Rudolf.

"There, go and hold it up fifty paces beyond the target."

"Rather you than me," said Franz with a shrug, as Rudolf walked off.

"I'm not a bit afraid," said Rudolf.

He had no need to be. Crack went the rifle; puff went the feather. There it lay, in two little fragments; Rudolf's finger and thumb unhurt.

"Well—that was the coolest thing!" ejaculated Franz, as the hills rang with acclamations.

"Yes, he's cool enough, that lad; without any brag," said Hofer, quietly putting down his piece.

"Franz was not thinking of *him*," said Speckbacher, grasping his friend's hand.

"I *was*," said Hofer softly. "I've tested the boy."

Speckbacher gave him a quick look.

"He stood fire well."

"Yes, and expects no notice taken of it. Did it never occur to you that William Tell's little son was as brave as William Tell?"

"Never till this minute! Do you hear that, Anderl?" [33]

Speckbacher's little son pressed his hand, and then stroked it, looking up in his father's face.

"I should not have minded having the apple set on my head for *you* to shoot at, father."

"Would not you, my little boy?" And Speckbacher's brown hand fondly stroked the boy's brown curls.

The sun was now nearly set. Hofer, as the best shot, was carried round the ground, with flags, songs, and garlands; and another target added as a trophy to those on his already honoured walls. He and Speckbacher had pretty well ascertained whom they could depend on; a few more earnest words spoken, and they were all on their way to their homes.

Hofer re-entered the house, with his hand on Rudolf's shoulder.

"Here's a young fellow, now," said he cheerfully to his wife, "who had faith that I would not blow his right hand to pieces, and disable him for life, just out of brag."

"Of course you would not, Sandwirth," said Rudolf. "What good would it have done you?"

"Ah, my boy, I might have attempted something I could not achieve!"

"You? No! you'll never do that."

"Well, I hope not. How well everything has gone off to-day! I am so glad Spickbart hit the bull's eye." [34]

"I am so glad you hit the feather," said his wife.

"Oh, there was nothing in that. Poor Spickbart is getting in years, and a little shaky; but there's a man's true spirit in him yet."

"What a bustle and noise there has been; I'm glad it's over."

"So am I, Anna. But it has been a very important meeting."

"A few of the girls wanted to get up a dance; but I knew that would never do."

"You were quite right. Let us dance when the day is won, not before."

"Art weary, man?"

"A little, dear. Open a fresh bottle of beer."

She did, and sat down close opposite to him, looking at him affectionately with her large brown eyes.

Rudolf and Theresa were talking in low, lover-like tones, at the door, under covert of the balustraded gallery. The young ones were at play.

Franz presently lounged in.

"I'm going now, Sandwirth," said he, approaching Hofer, whose hand was locked in his wife's. "Any commands?"

"Only about the brandy."

"Oh, yes, we talked that over before. You shall have it."

"What impression has this day made on you, Franz?" [35]

"Well—it's been very hot, for the time of year."

"I was not thinking of the weather. Have you had a pleasant afternoon's sport?"

"Well, no—there was too much business mixed up with it. Sport is one thing, and business another. Besides, I only hit the bull's eye twice, and Rudolf hit it five times; whereas, the last time, you know—"

"Yes, I remember."

"So that, altogether, you see—No, it was a poor match, I call it. Sport's sport, and business is business; isn't it, Sandwirth?"

"I can't gainsay that. Well, Franz, I'm afraid you don't look forward with much pleasure to a busy campaign this summer."

"I hope to do my duty as well as other people," said Franz, looking down. "What must be done, must. Of course, we shall none of us like it."

"Do you call that speaking like a bold, hearty young man? Why, you ought to rouse up at the sound of the war trump!"

"Oh, yes, of course; so I do."—yawning.

"Thou'rt sleepy, lad," said Anna, rather contemptuously.

"No, I'm quite awake," said Franz.

"Now," said the Sandwirth, "there will be plenty of different kinds of work to do this summer; so that all people's tastes may be suited. There will be [36] plenty of fighting; those who are active and stirring, and fond of their country, will like that. There will be plenty of message-carrying from one post to another; this will be attended with occasional risk, and will require much activity and dexterity, and will be equally honourable and useful with the other. There will be plenty of hard labour, felling trees, rolling stones, making barricades, carrying ammunition up precipitous heights; this will be as useful as the others: plenty of night-watching; this will be fatiguing rather than dangerous, and as useful as the others. Then, while so many are away from their herds and their flocks, some will be absolutely needed to look after the stock; and these will be as useful as the others. Which of all these various posts will best suit your fancy?"

"Well, that requires consideration," said Franz, pulling a wooden stool to the table, and sitting down opposite to Hofer. "Let me see. First, there's fighting. You know, Sandwirth, that I've dealt so long in foreign brandy, that I know a little what danger is—"

"Of course; and therefore—"

"And therefore, if I don't choose fighting, people can't say I'm afraid. Can they, now?"

"Whether they can or no, is little to the purpose."

"Just so. Well, then; as to the message-carrying; that, as you say, is useful, [37] but dangerous; to which I may add vexatious."

"I don't know why it need be."

"Don't you? Why, I look upon it as one of the most plaguy, uninteresting, abasing employments a fellow can undertake; and without getting any credit by it."

"Let it pass, then. There are plenty whom it will suit very well."

"Oh yes! Well, then, let me see. What comes next? Oh, manual labour. Felling trees, and so forth. Do you know, Sandwirth, my mother asked me, last Christmas, to chop up a billet of wood for the fire, and I hit myself such a blow on the left hand with the axe,—here, just at the fleshy part of the thumb,—that I carry the mark of it, as you may see, to this day. And my mother said it *might* have brought on lock-jaw!"

"Did she, though?"

"Death in three days," said Franz solemnly. "These handicraft jobs, you see, require practice. They amount almost to trades. Now, a trade requires an apprenticeship; and I've never had one to a woodcutter: so that, altogether, I might do myself more hurt than anybody else."

"Many people do."

"That's considered then. Well, what comes next? Night-watching. Oh, yes, I would not at all mind taking my turn at that, though I'm a dreadful one for falling asleep." [38]

"A sleepy sentinel would not be of much use."

"No; only everybody must sleep sometimes; and they that work hardest sleep soundest."

"Just so."

"As for carrying provisions up the hills, little chaps like your Johann are equal to that, I think."

"I should hope so."

"—Which they are not with regard to looking after stock. That's a man's business. As you said, it's just as useful and honourable as the others—"

"I said useful, though not honourable,—"

"No, you didn't *say* it, you know—I knew what you meant. And it isn't every one that understands stock, or would be for taking the trouble of it."

"No, indeed! You're quite right there."

"So that, as I *do* understand it, and don't mind the trouble of it,—why, to oblige *you*, I'll undertake it."

"Thank you heartily, Franz! You will indeed oblige me very much!"

"Come, that's cordial!" said Franz, as Hofer held out his hand to him. "I'm quite glad I've decided as I have."

"So am I. I hoped you would get round to it, but did not know how to propose it."

"Oh, I'll do it; and do it well. Bless you! you mightn't have had a head of cattle left!" [39]

"And then where should we be?"

"There's no knowing," said Franz, with a sapient shake of the head. "Well, good night."

The voices at the door had been perfectly silent during this dialogue; and Hofer had once or twice heard a stifled laugh.

Franz, however, pre-occupied, and quite self-satisfied with what he considered a masterly piece of tactics, walked off.

"What a deal of trouble that young fellow has saved me, to be sure!" muttered Hofer. Then, raising his voice, "Now, then, dear children, come in and sing the vesper hymn."

[40]

CHAPTER IV.

WOLFSTHRUN.

PERCHED on a certain height not far from Sterzing, stands a certain old castle, one of the many that crest the Tyrolese mountains, and which, on investigation, too often disappoint the traveller by proving either desolate ruins, or garrisoned to overflowing by Austrian soldiers. But the castle in question was both habitable and inhabited; a good and even luxurious breakfast was spread in the lofty hall, which combined the adjuncts of modern civilization with the romantic architecture of feudal times; and a fine-looking military man, perhaps turned fifty, sat reading despatches, while his daughter, a young lady of eighteen, poured out coffee for him and a young cavalry officer, who was already attacking the potted game.

"This seems an admirable proclamation of the Archduke's," said the Baron, at length throwing aside his papers and beginning his breakfast. "You will soon have plenty to do, Gerhardi."

[41]

"I hope we may," said Colonel Gerhardi. "Our just and numerous complaints will lie before the tribunal of the world. The Archduke calls it a holy war, and so do I. So great a power as Napoleon Buonaparte's cannot be opposed alone, and therefore all the nations ought to make common cause against him."

"Ought and will are two things," said Baron Sternach drily. "I should embark in this war with much more readiness than I do, if I saw our way safely and victoriously out of it; but if, after a fruitless though brilliant struggle, we are reduced to make inglorious conditions of peace, it would have been better to leave the matter alone."

"Ah, papa, don't throw cold water on us!" cried Hildegarde. "Why should not we be the liberators of Europe? As soon as the rising once takes place, I know you will take part in it as warmly as any."

"Certainly; for the danger of the brave is always less than that of the coward; even if duty and discipline have no influence. My only fear is lest we rush hastily into an unconsidered struggle with a foe whose power, hitherto, nothing has been able to withstand."

"The tables will turn on him, some day, sir, you'll see," said Colonel Gerhardi.

"I hope I may see it. All we have to do, just now, is to obey our superior in command; and he gives the word to advance. Did you ever chance to see Hofer?"

[42]

"Yes, Baron; I have seen him twice. He was one of the peasant deputies to the States once, I think? A plain, homely, honest-hearted fellow, seemingly. We didn't think much of him."

"Not as much, perhaps, as he deserved. I saw him in the year 1805, when he was chosen from his native valley as deputy to the Archduke John; which showed that the Tyrolese already looked upon him with considerable confidence, though he could not have been much turned of thirty. And he was summoned again by the Archduke, you know, to Vienna, this January, which shows that he saw some ground of reliance in him."

"As a matter-of-fact witness, I should suppose, Baron. He would tell the Archduke exactly what was the state of popular feeling, and how many fighting men could be depended on, without the least hesitation or exaggeration. I conclude him to be a man of strict truth; who would neither speak disparagingly of a rival, nor praise him insincerely to curry favour. This struck me with regard to what he said of Martin Teimer. Hormayr put it to him closely: was Teimer a reliable man, or was he not? Hofer spoke very briefly of him; he would not dispraise him, even by an inuendo: neither would he say more in his praise than he felt. Baron Hormayr noticed this to us afterwards, as if Hofer were jealous of him; but I did not think him so. I

[43]

thought he spoke the simple truth."

"And few there be that speak it," said the Baron. "Well, we shall soon see what is in them both. Hormayr is a sensible, gentlemanlike man, and good officer."

"A little wanting in ardour, don't you think, Baron?"

"Pooh, pooh, you young fellows have too much. You think to carry things by a *coup-de-main*."

"That's what Buonaparte did, sir, many times in Italy. We were continually too slow for him."

"Well, well, we shall not be, now. We begin to-morrow; and that is near enough at hand even for *you*, I should think."

"You are not afraid of leaving my cousin here, Baron?"

"Why should I be? Women and children will be respected. I mean her and her aunt to be very useful to us; for I expect that this empty old castle will be filled with wounded men, and Hildegarde must tend them like the heroines of old song."

"Ah, that I gladly will," cried Hildegarde. "As soon as you and Adolph ride off, I shall summon the servants, tell them what is to be expected, and superintend their immediate preparations for the reception of the sick."

"The strong-rooms and dungeons must be looked to also," said the Baron; [44]
"for we may expect many prisoners."

"Ah, papa! don't put any of them down into those dark holes full of newts and toads, only fit for the barbarous times!"

"Certainly not; but we must provide for their security, nevertheless, or they may seize the castle and put *you* into one of the dark holes, instead."

"Ugh!—I am sure I should not live through the night! My hair would turn quite white. Why, Adolph, you have no idea what terrible stories are told of those dungeons—"

"Old wives' tales—"

"*True* tales. Bones have been found. Human hair sticking to the wall. Stains of blood!—"

"Well, well, we are not going to repeat those things. You may pet your prisoners as much as you like, so long as you do not let them run away, nor run away with them."

"With *one* of them, papa, I suppose you meant to say. Well, I accept your *carte-blanche*; but you must leave me the cellar-key."

"To treat the captive knight like the fair, Saracen?"

"Sick men require wine, papa. And I must have beef and mutton, and bread and beer, in unlimited quantities, for those who are well."

"Nay, Hildegarde, as my fortune is not unlimited, I see it will be to my [45]
interest to effect a very speedy exchange of prisoners—if the enemy have the good luck to make any. But here are we reckoning on the captured and wounded before the battle is fought!"

And, hastily despatching his breakfast, the Baron collected his papers together, and went away to give various orders.

"I hope the campaign will be a short and a brilliant one," said Hildegarde anxiously. "I shall so long for papa to return."

"My mother will soon join you," said Adolph. "But if you are in the least fear —"

"Oh no! All my fears are for him; I have none for myself. There is nothing I shall more gladly do than help to nurse the poor men who have been wounded in fighting for our liberties. Terrible gashes and amputations, indeed, I do not feel quite equal to. If we could get a medical man to remain in the castle,—"

"Why should not you? Some of the Capuchins are very clever. Father Joachim Haspinger has been an army chaplain, and is preparing for service again. He is as good, I am told, at setting a limb as at breaking a head. His reputation and influence among the peasantry are immense. What a pleasant day that was, Hildegarde, when we visited the Capuchin convent at Brixen!"

"Yes; and, do you know, we had another very pleasant excursion in the [46]
Passeyrthal after you had rejoined your regiment. A storm came on, and we took refuge in Hofer's Inn, *am Sand*. We did not see him; but his wife and pretty daughter were very attentive to us.—Ah! the horses are coming round," said Hildegarde, interrupting herself; and her eyes filled with tears as her father returned to take leave of her; but she brushed them away, and kissed

him with a smile. She accompanied them to the gate.

[47]

CHAPTER V.

"'TIS TIME."

DING-DONG, ding-dong! Clang!—go the little and great church bells. Bang! go the cannon; crack, crack! the rifles. The Tyrol is up!

The night of the eighth of April was dark and gloomy. General Chastelar and Baron Hormayr passed it in riding through the Austrian troops to give the necessary orders for the intended movement, and to see that everything was in a state of preparation. The stillness which reigned around was only broken by the measured tramp of many feet, the hollow rattle of artillery, the lumbering of ammunition-wagons, and now and then a clear-toned voice issuing a brief order.

Hofer and Martin Teimer, during this wakeful night, were busy in the Sandwirth's kitchen, drawing up a general order to this effect:—

"On the 11th of April General Chastelar will arrive at Innsbruck, and General Hiler at Brixen.

"The Archduke John directs the men of Pusterthal to occupy the pass of Mulbach, and the Rittnern that of the Kuntersweg, that we may be possessed [48] of the strongest position before the Bavarians are alarmed, and attempt to fly from Brixen to Botzen.

"Kolbe, by order of the Archduke, is to command at Kuntersweg, take charge of prisoners, and protect the persons and papers of those Bavarian officers who have been distinguished for their inveteracy against the Austrian government and the Tyrol from all injury and ill-treatment; but on no pretence to allow them to proceed from Ritten to Botzen. At Kaltern Joseph Morandel is chosen commander by the Archduke, and has received orders what to do. Count Arzt commands at Nonsburg, and Baron Hormayr is Commissary-General.

"Given at Sand, in Passeyr, on the 9th of April, 1809.

"MARTIN TEIMER,
"ANDREW HOFER, *Publican*."

While it was yet dark, Teimer was hastening over the mountains to Oberinthal, to join the Austrians; and Hofer to the muster-ground of the men of Passeyr, appointed on the shooting-match day. With dawning light, the eagerly-watching peasants, lower down the rivers, saw sawdust floating on the surface of the Passeyr and the Inn, and understood the signal; while, [49] among the hills and mountains, billets, inscribed "'Tis time!" flew from hand to hand, from house to house, like the fiery cross: and men hastily caught up their rifles, buckled on their shot-belts, and poured forth.

At three o'clock in the morning the Austrian advanced guard was in motion. Chastelar and Hormayr harangued their troops, inciting them to ardour; and before the march had lasted a couple of hours, the thunder of distant guns and the tumultuous din of alarm-bells resounded through the valleys. Innumerable fires were discovered on the heights; and as Chastelar's division advanced up the Drauthal, thousands of men, women, and children came forth to meet it, waving green boughs, and pressing forwards to kiss the hands and even the feet of their deliverers. The force consisted, in all, of sixteen battalions of foot, and three squadrons of horse.

Meanwhile, Hofer, at the head of five thousand strong, was crossing the Jauffen, to intercept the enemy between Brixen and the Brenner.

On reaching the muster-ground, a succession of short, abrupt, hearty cheers had greeted him. He said little more than "Are we all ready, brothers? Then no time is to be lost;" but his look was as gay as a bridegroom's, and they started forth like guests hurrying to a wedding.

Passing the little village of St. Leonard, they struck up to the old Castle of [50] Jauffen; and then began to climb a steep and stony path resembling the dry bed of a torrent, being strewn with boulders; shaded here and there with

walnuts and budding elders. Presently the path ran along a precipitous slope, high above the valley, and occasionally crossing chasms on most insecure-looking bridges of poles, carelessly laid across, that required Tyrolean nerves to tread in confidence. These men thought nothing whatever about it, unless the idea occurred how easily they could pull the loose poles after them if the enemy were behind.

The last village on their ascent was Walten. Up to this point they had chatted and occasionally sung a verse or two of some patriotic song; but now they must husband their breath; there would not be another rood of level ground. Now pastures, now fir-woods, here and there a lonely cottage, but still ascending. They get beyond the straggling pines, to bare, thin turf, with the rock frequently forcing itself through it. Here and there are cool, bubbling springs, at which many slake their thirst.

Poles, to guide the winter traveller, are next reached; then, a tall cross, in passing which each man reverently crosses himself. And now they are on the topmost ridge.

[51] They look around from their seven thousand feet elevation with a feeling of satisfaction. This is not the Jauffen, but above it; the amphitheatre of rocky peaks around and below them, and the wild glaciers of the Oetzthal and Stubagerthal, are familiar to them all; yet not so much so as to have lost their power of impressing the imagination. They stand a few minutes, silent and serious, in the felt presence of the God who made the mountains. The Tyrolese are deeply religious: the scenes around them continually bring them into communion with the God of nature; and the perils by which they are environed, as constantly remind them of their dependence on the God of redemption.

Onward again they go, down to a turfy little level where Hofer bids them halt. It is now nearly noon; each man has brought a rye-cake or two; they make their frugal meal, and drink water from the spring. Hofer has a bottle of beer, which he shares as far as it will go.

After this temperate repast, the five thousand resume their march. Among the firs once more; then another rude cross; then a little oratory in the rock, with a carved and painted representation of the Saviour on the crucifix in a railed recess, with seats and kneeling benches in front. Still downwards leads their path, towards Sterzinger Moss, between banks covered with wild strawberry blossoms.

[52] Hereabouts they fell in with several peasants from the neighbourhood of Mauls and Mittelwald, who seemed in great excitement. Hofer immediately stepped on to meet them. "What is going forward, brothers?" cried he.

"Much," replied one of them eagerly. "A French column has taken possession of the bridge of Laditch, and the Bavarians have seized the bridge of St. Lorenzen. Both are being furiously contested for, and it would be well if we could get up with them in time to be of assistance to our men at either place; but here is another detachment of Bavarians close upon us."

"Never mind; we'll beat them first, and help the others afterwards."

"Are you Hofer's men?"

"Yes; that is, I am Hofer. We are all brethren. Where are the Bavarians?"

"In the Valley of the Eisach. They are this side Sterzing already."

"All the better! Never fear!"

"Fear! Certainly not—even our women and girls are not afraid. See, they are driving our hay-wagons, and singing and shouting as they come. We could not wait for them, but they will soon be up with us; and the wagons will afford us excellent cover, with the advantage of height, for firing on the enemy; besides being moveable barricades."

[53] "Capital! He was a clever fellow who thought of it."

"A woman thought of it—my daughter Margaret!"

"Excellent!—Well, we have no time to lose."

"No, we shall see them directly. They are under Colonel Dittfurt, who wants to join General Kinkel."

"He shall not, if we can help it.—Brothers! there is little to say. These two forces must be prevented from meeting. One of them is close upon us. Prepare for immediate action."

"They're coming!" screamed a woman, standing up on the top of a wagon, piled high with hay; and her little boy immediately hitting the horses nearest him with a stick, they pulled forward with a jerk which overset the woman on the hay, and made some hundreds of men laugh. It has a curious effect when

a multitude of voices utter a "He-he-he!"

Hofer saw at once where to dispose the wagons in the defile; not an unnecessary direction was given, for he was ever a man of few words; often a look, a gesture sufficed; and the Tyrolese obeyed him as the Roman legion obeyed Cæsar in Britain—"*at a word, and at the moment*."

Soon, those who were in the rear heard the crack of rifles in front. It would seem as though the Bavarians were taken by surprise; for at first they fell [54] back, returning only a few scattered shot; but presently they recovered themselves and began a continuous fire of musketry. As the defile, however, would only permit a small body of them to enter it, their superiority of numbers was of no advantage to them in a *coup-de-main*, and only availed in filling up the ranks of those who were constantly shot down. Four-fifths of their bullets were wasted on rocks, trees, and brushwood; while their ambuscaded foes, entrenched behind trusses of hay, tree-stumps, and heaps of stones, securely picked them off and hardly threw away a shot.

Margaret, quick-witted lass, danced and capered at the top of her father's wagon, crying and almost screaming, "Never mind the Bavarian smoke-pellets!"

Towards evening, a strong detachment of French afforded a diversion in favour of the Bavarians, and assailed the Tyrolese from the other end of the defile by an incessant fire, for some time without effect. At length, overpowered by numbers, they were beginning to give way, when at this critical moment Colonel Gerhardi, the "Adolph" who had breakfasted at Wolfsthrun, appeared on the heights with between two and three hundred light horse, and immediately charged the enemy, shouting loudly. In a few minutes the firing of the French and Bavarians ceased; the Tyrolese uttered [55] exclamations of joy and thankfulness, some fell on their knees to bless Heaven, while others cheered on their allies.

The Bavarians retreated towards Sterzing, with considerable loss of killed, wounded, and prisoners; while the French division fled in the opposite direction. Hofer and his men spent the night on the heights; and with dawning day were again attacked by the Bavarians, who rallied on Sterzinger Moss; but the Tyrolese sharpshooters, sheltered by the rocks, made dreadful havoc amongst them, and the artillerymen were several times shot away from their guns.

At length, the Tyrolese made a desperate charge, armed with spears, pitchforks, scythes, axes, and any implements they could muster; while others on the verge of the heights, hurled down masses of rock on their opponents. After some hours, the Bavarians gave way; and having lost several of their best officers and above two hundred and forty men killed and wounded, threw down their arms and surrendered.

The old castle of Wolfsthrun had been prepared, as well as circumstances permitted, for the reception of wounded men and prisoners, by Hildegarde Von Sternach; and she was not a little glad that Adolph's mother had already joined her, when a messenger from him informed her that five hundred and [56] eighty prisoners were being brought up to the castle.

Hofer and his companions, like hungry men as they were, were meantime devouring their remnant of rye-cakes with abundance of Spartan sauce, and slaking their thirst at the springs. At this moment, Rudolf came panting up to Hofer, whom he had found with no small difficulty.

"Sandwirth!" exclaimed he, "what a night you must have had! So have we, but we kept possession of the bridges; and General Chastelar opportunely came up to us just as the French received reinforcements from Mantua. You bade me let you know how things were going, or I would not have left, for the men of Innthal were about to attack them in front, while the men of Whippthal fell on them from the rear."

Another Tyrolese here came up, and said, "I've been looking out along the Sterzing road, Sandwirth, and met a man who told me that a strong force of Bavarians is trying to reach Innsbruck, under General Wrede; but the peasants swarm the rocks and impede their march, having broken the bridges, and blocked up the roads with felled trees. I am sorry to add, that the Bavarians, being much exasperated, are committing every sort of excess."

"No doubt of their being exasperated, brother," said Hofer. "May be, we should feel so in their place; but since we see how ugly it is in them, do not let [57] us, who have not the same excuse, be tempted to the smallest pillage, cruelty, or violence; otherwise God will cease to bless us."

How fared it, meanwhile, with Speckbacher? He was sharpening a coulter outside the stable of his little cottage at Rinn, which stands amidst a clump of larch and beech-trees; when Maria his wife smilingly came up to him to show

him that his youngest infant had just cut its first tooth, and to ask him if it did not remind him of a pearl upon a rose-leaf. Just then, his rustic servant Zoppel put a little slip of wood into his hand, bearing the inscription roughly endorsed, "'Tis time!"

Down went the coulter; he kissed wife and infant, and hurried into the house, followed, wherever he went, by his little son Anderl, who wistfully eyed him as he took up his rifle.

The last word having been spoken cheerily, Speckbacher sped on his way, watched only for a minute by Maria, who felt a tear glistening in her eye and did not wish him to see it. So she re-entered the house.

Meanwhile, the little boy ran after him.

"Father! let me go too!"

"You? you little rogue! No, no, not this time. You must stay at home and take care of your mother."

"But she doesn't want taking care of, father!—Besides, there's Zoppel.—Do let me go!" [58]

"When you are a bigger boy, you shall, I promise you."

"Perhaps there will be no fighting *then*."

"All the better."

"Please let me go, father!"

"What good could a little chap like you do?"

"Take care of you, father!"

"Ha, ha! Capital! I hope to take care of myself, dear boy."

"But, father, you want me to be brave, like you, when I come to be a man. How can I be, unless I look on, and see what brave men do?"

Speckbacher felt his throat swell. He turned about, took the boy in his arms, lifted him up from the ground, and kissed him several times.

"There," said he. "Go home now, like a good boy. Another time."

There was a tear on the little boy's cheek as he stood watching the retreating figure—a tear that had not fallen from his own eyes. He brushed it off—looked at it—and then trotted away into the brushwood; from whence, as he kept running along, he could get glimpses of his father, himself unseen. Once he saw Speckbacher pause and look back; perhaps to see if his little boy had obeyed him and gone home. After that, he never looked back again; he pressed forward to the things that were before him. [59]

The young boy still went on; his short, quick steps keeping pretty well up with his father's strides. Children that walk much with their parents generally step out well. Now and then he had to force his way among the bushes, or go a little way round; for which he made up afterwards by running. He had no settled purpose, except just to keep his father a little longer in sight.

At length he grew tired and thought he must give up. Just then a man joined Speckbacher and stopped him to speak to him, pointing towards Halle. Anderl sat down and had a long rest. When Speckbacher went on again, the little boy felt refreshed, and was able to follow him with ease. Presently some men came running down the hills by various paths, and joined Speckbacher. They all walked on very fast. Afterwards they reached a vast body of men, who shouted when they saw Speckbacher till the hills rang again. When he came up to them they had a long parley, frequently pointing towards Volders and Halle; and they finished by all walking off together in that direction, with Speckbacher at their head.

The little boy now thought he could not turn back; it was too exciting to be resisted; and, as he had now had a second good rest, he trotted on again, keeping up with them as a little dog does with a spirited horse. [60]

By and by the men halted. They sat down on the grass near a spring, and pulled out some rye-cakes and began to eat. This was their supper. The sun was going down, and they did not want to fall on the Bavarians, in Volders, till dark. Anderl did not know this. He was surprised, and a little afraid, to find himself alone, so far from home, when night was drawing on; but he never thought of leaving his father. To look on and see some thousand men eating while he was fasting, was rather tantalizing; however, he did so very patiently; and when, after a long rest, they renewed their march, he saw one, who had been talking in preference to eating, leave a rye-cake behind him. As soon as they were sufficiently in advance, Anderl ran down and seized the cake, pursuing his way while he ate it.

The men were now getting among the trees, overhanging a road, and

moving stealthily so as not to be easily seen. Anderl was startled by a church-clock striking quite near him; and could imperfectly make out white buildings here and there, a river, and a bridge. Presently a discharge of fire-arms was heard in advance. Some horsemen dashed along the road, and were shot down. Others dashed after them, and shared the same fate. Others again and [61]
again filled up the road, maintaining a fire that would have been destructive had it not, as little Anderl observed, been expended on bushes and trees. Presently a bullet nearly hit him; only, *as it did not*, he picked it up and put it in his pocket. At last he had collected quite a little heap, regardless of the shot that whistled round him.

By and by he observed that his father, towards whom he had crept with the instinct of affection, ceased firing, though the enemy was not yet silenced. What could be the reason? It struck him that he must have expended all his bullets; which, indeed, was the case. So he ran up to him with his handkerchief, which was now quite full of them, and plucked him by the sleeve, saying, "Father, here are some more to go on with."

It would have been worth a world to you to see Speckbacher's start!

"*You* here?" said he, in amaze.

"Yes, father; I could not bear to lose sight of you, so I kept running on till the firing began; and then, when I saw how the Bavarians wasted their bullets, I picked up as many as I could. If you'll use these, father, I'll soon bring you some more."

Speckbacher could not speak. He caught him to his heart, gave him a hug, held him there a moment, and then set him down.

"Off with you into cover, you young rogue," said he; "never mind any more [62]
bullets."

And, handing a few of them to a comrade who stood close by, he said, with a choke in his voice, "These will hit the mark, surely, considering how they have been brought!"

That night Speckbacher and his companions drove the Bavarians out of Volders. At daybreak they were at the gates of Halle.

[63]

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST SUCCESS.

THE warm spring sun is shining on a valley watered by more than one winding river, and with green pastures dotted with cows and sheep peacefully feeding. It is closed in by hills green to their summits, with only a few patches of snow in their hollows. Behind these soar craggy and fearful rocks, above which wheel one or two vultures, and high overhead the kingly eagle; who perhaps discerns some human quarry in the depths below. Dead bodies must certainly be lying here and there in the gorges; for now and then carrion crows, sated with their impure repast, rise slowly on their flapping wings, and fly heavily away.

In the sunniest and prettiest part of the valley is a little village of some dozen whitewashed huts, that look clean and comfortable at a distance. The village is surely deserted! not a creature seems in it except an old purblind woman, sitting outside her door on a stone; and she is straining her cracked voice in vain efforts to make herself heard.

[64]

"Hannes!—Lenora!—Franz!" cries she, quite in a rage: and then pausing, as if spent,—"Why doesn't somebody answer? They've all gone away and left me, I do believe! Here's a condition to be in! Suppose now my clothes had caught fire, or the French were to come, or a wolf, or an evil spirit—precious help I should have! This is the way we old folks are treated, as soon as ever we can't slave for other people any longer. Hallo! some of you! Am I to split my throat? You'll come home and find me dead some of these days. Dear me! they won't mind; it's no use spending my breath. The village is asleep or dead, I think; I can hear a crow caw a mile off!"

When the peevish old woman became quite quiet, she heard a footstep slowly approaching her; and presently a man lounged up to her.

"Why, Franz, that must be you!" cried she; "I know your step, you always drag your feet along the ground so."

"So would anybody's feet," said Franz, "if they were as tired as I am."

"Why, what has tired you?—lying under a hedge, watching the cows."

"Don't you go to believe, mother, I've been wasting my time like *that*. The cows are competent to take care of themselves."

"What have you been doing, then?"

[65]

"What have I been doing? Why, now, there's a question! Why, the world's turned upside down, I think; and you sit here, blinking in the sun, and know nothing about it."

"How am I to know anything if you all run away and leave me? What's happened?"

"What's happened! Why, Speckbacher has taken Halle!"

"No!—"

"—Has, though—That's one thing. When you've given over disbelieving that, I'll tell you something else."

"Well, say thy say, tiresome boy."

"Hofer's in Innsbruck!"

"The Sandwirth? What, prisoner?"

"Prisoner! No, mother, quite the other way. We've turned out the Bavarians!"

"What, out of Innsbruck?"

"Aye, out of Innsbruck. Twenty thousand of us got together on the heights about the city—"

"Thou must needs have a finger in the pie, I warrant thee!—"

"Well, I thought, as there were so many of us, I might as well see what turned up. Well, first we cut off all their retreats, by girdling them in all round, blocking up the roads, and breaking down the bridges. Then, we opened a brisk fire on the Bavarians who were posted on the upper bridge of the Inn, and drove them from their guns."

"What then?" [66]

"Then we rushed on, waving our hats, and shouting, 'Long live the Emperor!' striking down some of the enemy with the butt-ends of muskets, throwing others over the bridge into the water, and following the rest into the city like a swarm of bees. We soon made them feel we could *sting*, too. You never heard such a cracking of rifles in your life. Five thousand shooting-matches at once?—Pshaw, nothing to come near it. Then such a smoke! Then such a noise! Every one for himself and all the world else—hallooing, shouting, capering, as if they had no end to their strength, and sounding the pig-call in derision."

"I'll warrant them!"

"General Kinkel and his men were garrisoning the town; but what could they do, you know, mother? They knew the ways of the city, however—the streets, passages, gates, and so forth—better than we, so they were soon inside the houses, peppering down upon the Tyrolese from the windows. Well, now you'd surely think, that as we had the advantage of them in the open ground, the Bavarians would now have the advantage of us from the houses. Not so, mother. How it was, I know not, but they could not keep their own: our sharpshooters picked off every man-jack that showed but the tip of his nose at the windows; so at length they threw down their arms—"

"They *did*?"

"And cried for mercy!—Didn't we make an uproar then! However, there was [67]
still a good bit of fighting; here and there were strong posts they wouldn't give up, and stout hearts that wouldn't give in. At the barracks, I believe every man was shot down. At last, they—the Tyrolese, I should say—got to the house of the Bavarian Commander-in-Chief—Kinkel, that is,—and were calling to him to surrender, when up comes Colonel Dittfurt—"

"Who's he?"

"Oh, mother, you ought to know by this time. He it was, you know, that was the principal cause of the Tyrol being separated from Austria, and that lately said, 'With two regiments of cavalry added to his infantry, he would cut every one of us ragamuffins down.'"

"Ah, no good ever comes of brag."

"Well, I don't know about that," said Franz, running his fingers through his rough hair; "but no good came of it to him this time, at any rate. He had already got two bullets in his body, they say; but as soon as his house was attacked, he rushed forth, waving his sword over his head. A third ball then struck him near the heart; blood came out of his mouth, and down he came upon his knees. Some of our men hastened up to take him prisoner; he turns about his head, and faintly calls to his men, 'You dogs, don't be cowards,' or something to that purpose; and evidently did not even then give in. Whizz! [68]
comes another bullet, which hits him in the head, and lays him along the ground."

"Well, Franz, he died like a soldier—"

"Mother, he isn't dead yet—Don't you hurry me—We then captured him and carried him off to the guard-house—"

"*You?*"

"Not exactly I, but our people. And there, as he lay, ready to die from loss of blood, says he to one of our fellows—Rudolf, in fact,—'Who is your leader, young man?'—'We've none in particular,' says Rudolf,—which was true enough, only he needed not to have exposed us so, just then, for no good, to a man of the Colonel's quality, who, of course, thought it very despicable of us. If I'd been Rudolf, I'd have clapped a dozen names together, mother, and said 'that's our commander.'"

"Then thou wouldst have been a fool, Franz,—and thou art little better. Well, is that all?"

"No—'We've no chief in particular,' says Rudolf—the ninny!—'We all,' says he, 'fight for God,' says he, 'and for our Emperor, and our fatherland,' says he. 'One for all, and all for one,' says he."

"Ah, as long as folks will do that last," said the old woman, sighing, "they're sure to win the day. But their evil tempers, and evil passions, and piques, and private interests, tugging at their hearts like so many evil spirits, part them [69]

asunder; and then the Evil One laughs!"

"Well," said Franz, "all that's beyond me; and you can't expect a young fellow just come from such a stirring scene, to be much in the humour for preaching: but, however, you haven't heard all yet. Colonel Dittfurt could not make this out—(no wonder!)—it would have made him think very small of us, if he had. 'Well,' says he, 'I can't believe that, young man; for I've *seen* your Commander-in-Chief,' says he, 'frequently rallying you to-day,' says he, 'and rushing past me on a milk-white horse,' says he. Well; when that got about, somebody wiser than the rest said dying men could often see further than others into the spirit-world; and that, 'twas very likely, one of the saints, of a martial turn, had really headed us, though invisibly; and that therefore it was most agreeable to reason to suppose it was St. James."

"St. James? why St. James?" said the old woman slowly. "Was he a fighting man?"

"There you pose me," replied Franz; "but, you see, he's the patron saint of the city!"

"Ah, that explains!" said his mother. "And did the Colonel die upon that?"

"Oh no, he's lingering now, but quite given over; and has a priest with him. Father Donay—you know him, mother?"

"No, I don't." [70]

"You know *of* him then, and that's much the same—almost as good."

"Or almost as bad, Franz. I don't know any good of him."

"Why, now, didn't he get me out of a scrape, when I'd like to have been shot?"

"By telling a lie, Franz."

"Fiddlestick, mother! 'A charitable fraud,' he called it, mother."

"Well, Franz, he'll take his payment out of you, some day or other, 'tis my opinion, if he finds you can be of any use to him."

"If I can be of any use to him, certainly I will, out of gratitude, mother. One good turn, you know, deserves another."

"And one bad turn—I mean one bad or deceitful or treacherous action to screen a companion is often followed, in due course, by that companion being asked, nay, commanded, to do some dirty trick in return."

"Well, mother, you will have your say. But I was going to tell you, that Martin Teimer joined us just as Dittfurt fell, and helped us well; and as soon as it was known that the Commander-in-Chief was captured and mortally wounded, the Bavarians lost all heart, and laid down their arms to a man. So, then we had jolly work!"

"Ah, don't tell me all about the slaying and slaughtering!" [71]

"Why, there was *none*, mother! A Tyrolese kill a captured foe in cold blood? —Oh, fie!"

"All about the sacking and pillaging, then—"

"Well, a few of the Jews' houses were attacked; but to no good; for Father Joachim and the Sandwirth made our fellows refund everything they had thought lawful spoil—"

"Ha, ha!"

"Oh, come, it was no joking matter. I think a Christian might fleece a Jew, without much harm done. However, others thought differently; and 'tis a certain fact, mother, that one of our fellows, who had carried off the heavy iron door of a Jew's strong room before the stir was made by the Sandwirth, and got clear of the city with it, walked fourteen hours, that is to say all last night, with that great heavy iron door on his back, thinking it mighty clever to get it safe to his cottage."

"What did he mean to do with it?"

"I doubt if he knows, any more than I do. However, he had been at home an hour or so, and was telling his wife, who had just been confined, all about the day's work, with great glee; when—in walks the priest. 'What have we here?' says he, stumbling over the iron door. As soon as ever he heard how it was come by,—'Now you go,' says the priest, 'and carry that door all the way back again. The commandment says, Thou shalt not steal, without saying of Jew or Christian; take it back this minute! It will be a suitable penance; for believe me, my son, thou hast sinned.' So the poor fellow heaved it up again, though his back was half broken already, and trudged away with it, as meek as a lamb; and when I met him, he was half way to Innsbruck." [72]

"He'll come back with a lightened heart, as well as lightened shoulders, Franz."

"What know I?" said Franz with indifference. "After such a hard day's fight as we'd had, I think we might have had a few pickings. And there were the simple fellows that had never been in Innsbruck before, rambling in great parties about the streets, staring and making their remarks about everything, and crowding into the cathedral to see the emperor Max's great monument with those grim iron giants of dead kings to guard it—and women and girls pouring out of the old part of the city, to give us cakes, and cream-cheeses, and wine, and bread, and beer—whatever came first to hand, and laughing and chattering, and praising us, and saying what a glorious day!"

"Well, it *was* a glorious day," said the old woman reflectively.

"So much, done so quickly!" continued Franz. "Why, mother! the town was ours by eleven o'clock! How surprised some of the men looked when they [73] heard the clocks strike!—They had just then discovered and laid hold of the Imperial Eagle on the emperor Max's tomb; and, after tying a lot of red ribands round its neck and legs, they set it up aloft and carried it through the streets, shouting and singing, and saying they'd always be true to it. Meantime, another lot of fellows had come upon the pictures of our Franzel[A] and Hannes,[B] and had hauled them down and were carrying *them* about, too, triumphing and making merry and crying they would shed their last drop of blood for them!"

"What a pity our Franzel was not there to hear it," said his mother; "it would have warmed his dear heart."

"They set the pictures against a sort of arch," pursued Franz, "and put lighted candles round them, and bawled 'Long live the Emperor!' There was a good deal of foolery in it."

"They were in mad spirits at their success, and no wonder," said the old woman; "especially if they had made free with the contents of the brandy-shops."

"No, mother, no.—Not one of them was drunk, nor the least inclined that way—I saw many of them drinking water, as if they could have drunk the sea dry; and others smacking their lips after a bottle of beer, or munching a rye- [74] cake as if it were a feast for the emperor. Towards nightfall, they were completely tired out; numbers lay down to rest, in the streets, and were asleep in a moment; some on straw, some without it; while others prepared to camp out all night in the orchards. I thought I might as well be walking homewards as that, and so I started off: no doubt the Bavarians will be down upon them with reinforcements to-day or to-morrow."

"And then they'll lose all they've won," said the old woman. "Well, that will be a pity."

She sat musing upon it, while Franz went in-doors, and presently came out again, devouring a great rye-cake, and a lump of cheese. He sat down on an inverted milk-pail, and, while he continued eating, he watched a girl who was coming up from the valley with a long hazel wand in her hand.

She was dressed in a short, scanty petticoat of bright grass-green, with a black bodice that was laced in front over a chemise with short full sleeves of snowy whiteness. On her head she wore a small black, sugar-loaf hat, with a gay riband tied round it. Her appearance, at a distance, was excessively picturesque; but when she drew near, she proved to be very plain, with thick ankles, a thick waist, and large, red, coarse hands.

"Here comes Lenora," said Franz, at length; speaking with his mouth full.

"Soh!" said the old woman, with a kind of snort, "she is vouchsafing to [75] return home at last, is she? She might have come to look after me in the course of this long morning, I should think. But girls now are not what girls used to be."

It would appear from this speech, that Lenora ought to have joined the couple who were seated outside the cottage, with the penitent air of one who had neglected her duty; but, on the contrary, she took up quite another tone.

"So, Mr. Franz!" shouted she, in a voice that would have filled St. Paul's, "you're come back again at last, are you, sir, after leaving me these twenty-four hours to do your work!—you might, at any rate, have had the civility to tell me you were going; but no, not you!"

"What's the matter now?" said Franz, doggedly.

"What's the matter?" repeated Lenora, still chafing; "why, have not I, in addition to my own work, had to do every bit of man's work that has been done about the place? Who, but for me, would have watered the horse, turned

out the cows, sheep, and goats after milking, and a hundred things besides? As I was driving our sheep to pasture, Gaspard looked over the hedge, and 'Do the same for me, my good girl, will you?' says he, 'for I'm off with my rifle.' So there was I with two flocks of sheep on my hands, besides the cows and the [76] goats; and, not knowing exactly how many sheep Gaspard had, I counted them twice very carefully, and, the second time, I missed one. So I wasn't by any means sure whether I had counted them wrong the first time, or whether one had strayed; but somehow I thought one had strayed, because I fancied I remembered that the number was an odd number, and now it was even; and also that I had remarked a weak-eyed, rather ill-looking ewe, that had something particular in its bleat. Well, I could see nothing of this ewe, so I made sure it had strayed; and, as it belonged to a neighbour, I was even more sorry for it than if it had been my own. So I sought it here, and I sought it there; first in all the likely, and next in all the unlikely places; and, meanwhile, the sun was scorching hot, as if it had been August. At last I got to the pass where one of your cows pitched over last spring—"

"That was a good way off," muttered Franz.

"Truly it was," said the girl, with self-pity; "however, there I trudged; and just as I had got to the brink of the ravine I heard that queer-sounding bleat. I looked down, and there was the ewe, who had toppled over and fallen into the upper part of a thorn-bush, from which she could not get out. So I had to scramble down, get hold of her, and lay her across my shoulders, climb up the bank again, and carry her all the way back. Such a weight she was! All this [77] trouble you might have saved me."

—"Lenora!"—

"Well?"

"We've taken Innsbruck!"

"No!"—

He had to tell his story all over again.

[78]

CHAPTER VII.

INNSBRUCK.

PICTURE to yourself an old cathedral-town in the midst of a valley about three miles across, hemmed in by magnificent mountains six to eight thousand feet high, from whose summits the wolves are said to look down into the very streets. The city stands on a deep, impetuous river—the Inn; and hence its name, Innsbruck, or Inn's Bridge.

This city is but of moderate extent; but few towns of its size contain, in the modern part, better and handsomer buildings; and its suburbs are remarkable for cleanliness and elegance. The old part of the city is picturesque enough: there you may see tumble-down old houses nodding with age, having rickety outside staircases leading to old, rickety wooden galleries or balconies; crumbling walls kept together with old timbers nailed outside in various quaint fashions; upper floors overhanging lower ones, and supported with rows of carved brackets, or by poles imbedded in the pavement below; [79] antique gables, fantastically decorated, with grotesque heads on the spouts between them.

Many of these antiquated streets have low arcades, which afford capital shelter to women who sell fruit, cakes, cheeses, sausages, and get through a great deal of gossip. The shops are homely and primitive, with very few outward allurements to attract customers. They are mostly in the "general" line, and deal indifferently in groceries, medicines, straw-hats, coarse thread, ready-made garments, and old rags and bottles.

In these dwellings a great many generations have been born and brought up; have eaten, drunk, slept, talked over the news of the day, thought the world was coming to an end because of some matter which the next generation thought infinitely unimportant and succeeding generations have forgotten altogether;—marketed, made good bargains, bad bargains, grown poor, grown well-to-do in the world, fallen sick, got well again, gone to weddings and funerals, gone to church at six o'clock in the morning, made friends, made enemies, been disappointed in friends, lived down the slanders of enemies, found life a very hard battle, sometimes won it, sometimes not, resolved never to be deceived again, or to do a wrong or foolish thing any more, found that cheerfulness is a salve for many reverses, and contentment a great set-off against straitened means, remembered how much better [80] everything was in their young days, grown old before they were aware of it, ailed a little, dropped aside and out of sight, except of the priest, doctor, and one or two old friends,—in short, been, and done, and felt, and enjoyed, and suffered, just like the rest of the world.

If the spiders could talk, doubtless they would be able to tell you many interesting stories of these people; for the human heart is the same all over the world, but its experiences are infinitely various; as various as human faces.

At the court-end are the triumphal arch built by Maria Theresa; the Neustadt, a fine wide street, with a fountain in the centre; the town-hall, the theatre, and the spacious palace assigned as the residence of the governor of the Tyrol. These buildings are surrounded by public pleasure-grounds, well planted, and extending to the fine chestnut avenue on the banks of the river, which is a favourite resort of the townspeople in fine weather.

The market-place, too, is very gay. There you may see old women in red jackets and witch-like hats, squatted behind a small spread of eggs, butter, salad, onions, lettuces, &c.: young girls, in tight-laced purple bodices, and short, full, snow-white sleeves, arranging baskets of peaches and apricots; children, with brown, ruddy faces, offering for sale large nosegays of [81] rhododendrons, harebells, cowslips, anemones, lilies-of-the-valley, honeysuckles; or little heaps of small bright scarlet strawberries; men, unloading ox-wains of fire-wood, or shouldering little sacks of corn, steering

their way amid piles of coarse earthenware, spread on the ground.

But the chief glory of Innsbruck is its churches; especially its *Hofkirch*, or Cathedral, the wonders of which are hardly to be sufficiently explored in a single day. Here is the famous tomb of the Emperor Maximilian the First, who died in 1519: and who is represented at the top of the tomb, kneeling, with his face towards the altar. Round the sides of this tomb, which is about six feet high and thirteen feet in length, are a wonderful series of what have been poetically called "pictures in marble"—exquisite carvings, that is, in Carrara marble, of various events in the Emperor's life. Guarding this tomb, as it were, in stern and solemn array, are eight-and-twenty colossal bronze statues of famous princes, warriors, and chieftains; including our own king Arthur. "When the gloom of evening," says Inglis, "begins to fall among these dark-visaged and gigantic kings and knights, the effect is almost terrific."

Round and about this wondrous tomb, with looks of simple surprise and admiration, strayed many of Hofer's rustic companions on the famous 11th of April, as well as Hofer himself. When his heart heaved within him as he gazed [82] on the effigies of those mighty men of renown, he little thought that, in times to come, times not far distant, travellers from distant lands would flock to that old church, to see—not the eight-and-twenty champions, nor the kneeling emperor,—but, the presentment of a humble, heroic Tyrolese peasant, with face upturned to Heaven, one hand grasping the national banner, the other holding the barrel of the rifle slung from his shoulder. "We know what we are," said poor Ophelia, "but we know not what we shall be."

Even in the gladness of that day, there was a heaviness at his heart. His companions were shouting, singing, and waving their feathered hats round the Imperial eagle as they carried it through the streets—*he* was standing, lonely, in the church; kneeling; praying.

It was not a long prayer, but a hearty one; a prayer such as God loves. "O God! I thank Thee for this day's success, but I know not whither it will lead. Oh, guide us, guide us, for Thy goodness' sake, O Lord, in Christ Jesus!"

It *was* a success. Eight thousand French and Bavarians had laid down their arms, and surrendered at discretion, with their eagles, colours, and munitions of war; while only twenty-six Tyrolese had been killed, and forty-two wounded. Hofer personally knew some of the twenty-six, however, and felt a manly [83] sorrow for them: *only* twenty-six dead men may leave behind them a good many sad hearts.

The enemy's cavalry took to flight, but were stopped and made prisoners by Speckbacher, in the meadows near Halle.

Meanwhile, our friends in the green jackets, who were perambulating the streets of Innsbruck, assembled themselves together in front of the Palace, and amused themselves by shooting down the Bavarian lion from over the entrance; after which their patriotic souls were vexed by seeing the hated blue and white stripes of Bavaria decorating sundry buildings; whence a great cry for paint-pots arose, and they ransacked the oilmen's shops for all their stores of black and yellow paint, and with hog's hair brushes and ladders, set themselves diligently to work to efface the enemy's emblems and substitute the Imperial colours.

Some others of these merry hearts thought nothing wanting but a little good music; and, as all the instruments they were able to muster among themselves, proved to be two fifes, two fiddles, two rusty iron pot-lids, and a few Jews'-harps, they did not scruple to impress the Bavarian band into their service, and make them patrol the city playing triumphal tunes in honour of their own defeat.

There were likewise certain native ballad-singers of the itinerant order, [84] who turned a good many pence, that is to say kreutzers, this day, by vocalizing on their own account, at tavern-doors and in public places, to the great delight of the Tyrolese, who sat on benches and on door-steps, listening to them while they quaffed hot coffee in thick ale-glasses, or tasted for the first, and perhaps last time in their lives, iced rum and water.

Others of them were not too tired to get up a game of bowls in the market-place, which excited immense merriment among themselves, and crowds of townspeople at the windows, with whom they talked as comfortably as if they had known them a hundred years. Just as they had had enough of it, Punch very opportunely made his appearance, and kept them amused till it was dark. Then they lay down on the ground, in and about the town, and slept soundly all night.

Hofer thought he should like to see a play. So, to the theatre he went, where, on asking what there was to pay, the money-taker with a bow replied, "Nothing." So he walked into the boxes, and picked out the very best place; where his remarkable dress and person drew on him the attention of every

one in the house.

But if they thought a good deal of him, he was very little aware of it; for there were a great many things to employ his attention. In the first place, [85] there seemed to him a great waste of wax lights; half the number would have been quite sufficient. In the second place, the ladies' dresses appeared to him a great deal too low, too short, and too scanty: he hardly liked to look at them, and was very glad to see no other Tyrolese in the house. In the third place, the orchestral music, when it struck up, quite took him by surprise: he had a sensitive though untutored ear, and a tender heart; its dying falls and gradual swells, its minors, its concords, its plaintive and its impassioned strains, nearly overpowered him.

Luckily, the curtain drew up, the music ceased, and the play began. Hofer could not understand much of it. But, on the whole, he thought it funny, and concluded it clever,—and did not know whether he should ever care to go to a play again.

"They seem to make very light of swearing," thought he; "I have frequently heard them take God's holy name in vain. Some of their dresses, also, are immodest, and as for their music, it makes a man's heart like cream-cheese. The story, too, by what I can make out of their acting, is of two young persons who deceive their parents very much, tell many lies, and think only of their own selfish wishes; yet they are rewarded and applauded at the last, while the [86] old people are laughed at for having been ill-used. So that, altogether, I am glad to see none of our dear Tyrolese here to-night, for it would soften and demoralize them."

With these reflections, the thoughtful father of a family quitted his seat at the end of the performance, and stood about in the lobby, looking rather bewildered and uncertain which was his way out; while many smart townspeople of the upper classes looked at him with curiosity and interest as they passed. Our English readers may wonder that, after such a day of stern realities, people could be found with minds sufficiently disengaged to enter a theatre;—but our continental neighbours are as fond of their play as—what shall we say?—an Englishman of his dinner. Both parties *can* go without it, if there be some stringent necessity; but never from inclination.

Hofer was not quite so new to Innsbruck as the generality of his comrades. He had never passed a night there, indeed, but he had occasionally, though rarely, gone thither on business connected with his trade, which had brought him into some slight acquaintance with a brother innkeeper, by name Michael Stumff, whose sign was the "Goldener Adler."

As Hofer stood in the lobby of the theatre, spoken to by none, though gazed on by many, a pretty looking young woman, with a respectably dressed young [87] man for her companion, came up and accosted him.

"So you have come to see our theatre, Sandwirth," said she, frankly. "Do you not know who I am? I am Alouise Stumff, Michael Stumff's daughter."

"Ah, Alouise! I did not know you at first," said Hofer, looking pleased, and holding out his brown hand to her rather red one.

"Are you going to spend the night in Innsbruck, Sandwirth?" said Alouise, who addressed him with perfect ease and a little affability, as if it were kind of her to take notice of him. "My father will be very glad if you will take a bed at his house."

"That will suit me well," said Hofer, in his plain, homely manner. "I was considering where to bestow myself. So I will go home with you, if it please you, Alouise."

"Come along, then," said Alouise briskly. "This young man is a neighbour's son, Sandwirth, Leopold Mayer; we are very old friends."

When they reached the "Goldener Adler," Michael Stumff was surprised and rather pleased to see his old acquaintance.

"Why, Sandwirth, this is an unexpected honour," said he. "You are kindly welcome."

"Praised be Jesus Christ," said Hofer, reverently using the greeting [88] customary among the Tyrolese; but, perceiving that the other did not respond "for ever and ever, Amen," he after a pause, continued:

"Unexpected enough, it may be, Michael Stumff; but an honour I cannot think it. However, I am glad you say I am kindly welcome."

"How can you be otherwise," said Stumff, "when you have performed such a glorious work this day, leading the men of Passeyr on to victory?"

"Oh no, oh no," said Hofer, "there was no leading in the case. We were all just as equal as so many sheep. God was our shepherd."

"The Bavarians were more like sheep, to my thinking," said Stumff, with a jovial laugh. "They *did* run, to be sure!"

"Better for both parties that they should save us the necessity of shooting them," said Hofer. "However, I don't expect we've seen the last of them."

"I was just going to ask you, Sandwirth—(let us have supper, Alouise)—Surely you don't think them put down with one day's drubbing?"

"Surely, no," said Hofer; "I look to see them again in a day or two, or at furthest, by the end of the week, and then with God's blessing, we'll drub them again."

"And shall you all keep together here, in Innsbruck, till then?"

"We cannot. This is a busy time with us in the field; we must plough and sow." [89]

"But, directly your backs are turned the enemy will come back! Besides, what are you going to do with all your prisoners?"

"I'll think of it on my pillow," said Hofer. "Now, supper."

For he was true to the saying his wife quoted of him. "One thing at a time will last the longer." And besides, the Wirth of the "Goldener Adler" was not Speckbacher; and he had no mind to tell him all his plans before he had digested them.

"Well, and so you've been to the play," said Stumff, slicing away at a ham, and hospitably loading Hofer's plate. "How did you like it?"

"Some things I liked; others I liked not."

"What did you like?"

"The house was beautiful as a dream—but where was the good of it? Directly the play is over all melts away, like a day's frost!"

"*All?* what?"

"Why,—the impression."

"Oh! well, but we can renew the impression every night; and we do not want it all day."

"Truly no," said Hofer. "And I doubt its being good to renew it every night."

"Why?"

"Too softening and enervating."

Stumff laughed a jolly laugh. [90]

"Did not you like the music, Sandwirth?" cried Alouise.

"Too much," said he, sighing. "It made my heart ready to burst."

"The dancing, then?"

"Not at all."

Alouise smiled. "Oh!" said she, "you are getting too grave and steady, at your time of life; but you would have liked it when you were young."

"Perhaps I should—perhaps I should not; but that would not have made it good or bad."

"Then, the ladies' dresses, Sandwirth?"

"Ah!" with a grimace.

Stumff laughed. "What of them?" said he.

"Too little dress—too much exposure."

"Why, there's no satisfying you, Sandwirth."

"Oh, yes," said he, smiling. "One play has satisfied me—I don't want to go again."

"Your daughter would like it," said Alouise, decisively.

"I should not wish to give her a taste for such things," said Hofer. "She is perfectly content as she is."

"And that's more than I can say of *my* girl sometimes," said Stumff, with a smile and a shrug, as Alouise left them for a few minutes.

"I wonder," said Hofer, after a short silence, "that you let *her* go to the theatre." [91]

"I should be considered quite a bear, not only by her, but by all Innsbruck, if I denied her," said Stumff. "No, no, Sandwirth,—we town-folks are not quite the same with you village-folks,—it does our girls no hurt, I believe—or, if it does, we can't help it. And now, as you seem tired, I'll show you your bed.

What! you must take your dearly-beloved rifle along with you, hey? Ha, ha!"

[92]

CHAPTER VIII.

STILL SUCCESSFUL.

WHEN Michael Stumff came down to breakfast the next morning, he looked round for his guest in vain.

"Where's the Sandwirth?" said he to Alouise.

"Half way to the Brenner, I suppose," said Alouise. "Why, father, you must have slept heavily, if you did not hear the uproar this morning! The alarm-bells began to ring before it was light, and a dozen country fellows came running down the street, bawling 'Sandwirth! Sandwirth!' Open flew the Sandwirth's window; he gives a *jödel*[1] that might be heard a mile off, which makes them stop short. 'Here I am, my boys,' cries he, 'what's the matter?' The next moment they were all under his window. 'Speckbacher took Halle yesterday!' cries one. 'Hurra!' cries Hofer. 'But the French and Bavarians are coming down upon us from the Brenner,' cries another. 'Aha! then we'll go to meet them,' cries Hofer; 'I'll be with you this minute.' And his door flew open. [93] I just popped my head out of mine, and said, 'Sandwirth, I'll be down directly, if you will wait for some breakfast.' 'No time, thank you,' replied he, running along the gallery. 'Just one cup of coffee!' cried I. 'No, dear; we are going to breakfast on gunpowder,' says he, laughing: and so off. Dear me, it quite set my heart a-beating; it was all in such a moment. Who knows? Perhaps the Bavarians may be masters of Innsbruck again, before nightfall, father?"

"There's no knowing, child."

"I don't know that I could have done less than ask the Sandwirth home, father, when I saw him last night, standing about, in the lobby, looking quite puzzled."

"Certainly not, child. The poor, simple fellow"—said Stumff, with an air of complacent superiority—"would have come to mischief of one sort or another, for he knows as little as a child. A brave, honest heart, and a good marksman, Alouise; and when you've said that, you've said all. Give me my breakfast quick, child, that I may go out and look about me a little."

Alouise poured out his coffee, and gave him a slice of bread, and then hurried to the house door, calling eagerly to one or two persons who were hurrying along, to ask them what was going forward. They only replied, [94] "Atzwanger is turning out the armed burghers," and ran off; and her father, with his mouth full, soon followed, bidding her take good care of the house. So there was she, alone in the midst of bustle, feeling solitude doubly lonely, till at length she called to a little boy who was cleaning knives, and said,—

"Dolf, run down to the gates, and bring me word what is going on."

When he was gone, she thought he would perhaps not return; and felt more solitary than ever, till the young man who had escorted her to the theatre dropped in.

"We're in a fine mess," said he. "Here are the Bavarians coming back."

"Aye—what shall we do? Perhaps they will get possession of Innsbruck again."

"Very likely. For my part, I hope they will."

"Oh, Leopold! How can you be so unpatriotic?"

"Why, you see, Alouise, Buonaparte is sure to get the better of us in the end, so he may as well beat us at once and have done with it."

"Perhaps he won't beat us in the end."

"Oh, yes, he will."

"That's no argument. Why don't you go and help fight?"

"Thank you, I'm not that way inclined. I told Atzwanger I'd sprained my [95] trigger-finger. What's all that hammering about, up stairs? Are you putting up defences?"

"Oh, no! A poor lame man lodges in our attic, who is amusing himself by making a barrel-organ, with a curious set of dancing automatons at the top. His whole heart is in it. He thinks the Tyrolese war nothing in comparison. Indeed, I doubt if he knows there is one."

"Oh, come!"

"Well, I'll take him up his breakfast, and hear what he has to say about it; and you can hear what I say and what he says, if you prick up your ears."

Leopold went to the foot of a dark, steep back-stair, up which Alouise tripped, with a coffee-pot and some bread; and after she had tapped at the door he heard the following dialogue:—

"Come in!"

"I've brought you some breakfast, Martin."

"Thank you; though I am almost too busy to eat it."

"How are you getting on?"

"Take care! don't tread on that barrel!"

"I don't see one."

"Not a beer-barrel, but an organ-barrel."

"Oh, I see; well, do you know what a bustle we were in, yesterday?"

"Chimney-sweeps?"

"Chimney-sweeps! no! Why, the Tyrolese took Innsbruck, and drove out the Bavarians!" [96]

"You don't say so! Soho! hum! A pretty piece of work. I'll hear all about it presently, or the glue will get cold. I'm afraid, you see, Alouise, that this glue is not strong enough; which is the reason why the woodwork will not stick. Soho!—poor Tyrolese!"

"Poor Bavarians, you mean! Why, the Tyrolese won the day!"

"Oh, did they so really? Well, now,—humph!—poor fellows!"

"And we had one of them to sleep here, last night."

"Really, really! By the bye, are you anything of a mechanician?"

"Not in the least."

"Then it's no use asking you the thing I want to know. Hum!—poor Innsbruckers—poor Tyrolese, I mean."

"But, Martin, we Innsbruckers *are* Tyrolese."

"To be sure, to be sure—who doesn't know that? This tiresome glue! That was just what I was saying."

"That? What?"

"Well—now you puzzle me—I think this will stick, at last."

"Well, I see you don't take any interest in the matter, so I won't waste your time. Perhaps the Bavarians will have recovered possession of the town before bedtime." [97]

"Perhaps so, perhaps so—nothing more likely."

She ran down stairs, laughing. "Just the old story," said she to Leopold; "every man thinking his own affairs of more importance than those of all the world besides. How now, Dolf?" to the boy, who ran in glowing and panting.

"There's fine work, mistress. They're barricading the gates with casks and wagons, and closing all the houses. May I go back?"

"No, no, you must not leave me."

"I'll bring you word every ten minutes how things are going on.—It's so jolly!"

"Well, Dolf, if you will promise me very faithfully indeed to do that, you may go; and I'll give you a cake at supper-time besides. But mind you keep an eye, if you can, on my father."

Away scampered the boy; and Leopold prepared to go too.

"Don't you go," said Alouise. "I shall be afraid."

"Oh, very well," said he, stretching himself and yawning. She gave him an old newspaper, which he began to pore over; but on returning to the kitchen after a short absence, she found him gone.

"That's just the way," said she to herself, pouting; "much he cares for my safety, in spite of the pretty things he said to me last night. I suppose Nannette will be off next, if I do not go to look after her." [98]

Nannette was stretching her head out of one of the upper windows, so intent on catching all she could of the distant uproar, that she was not aware of her mistress's presence till Alouise gave a smart pluck at her dress. However, Alouise had no sooner set her to scour the bedrooms than she herself went up to the very top of the house, which had, like many of the dwellings in the Tyrol, a sort of open story or penthouse raised over the flat roof, from whence she could descry a little, but not much, of the stir near the gates.

Dolf returned once or twice to report various successes, including the capture of General Wrede, and, towards nine o'clock (for they are early people), numbers of men running through the streets, waving their hats and shouting, proclaimed the day to be won by the Tyrolese.

In consequence of a letter which Martin Teimer had compelled General Kinkel to write to the Bavarian commander, General Wrede himself, accompanied by a French officer, had ridden to the gates, with so strong a guard, that the Tyrolese, considering them aggressors, drove them back with great loss, and took the General and his companion prisoners. The [99]
discomfited fugitives carried back to their lines such a formidable account of the strength and fury of the Tyrolese, that the French and Bavarians were thrown into the greatest consternation, especially the latter, who had lost their principal officer.

Martin Teimer, accompanied by Baron Taxis and Atzwanger, the leader of the armed burghers, and also by several Tyrolese leaders, repaired to the French lines, where they were courteously received by Colonel Bisson, who protested he intended no injury to the town, and merely wished to carry his troops unmolested to Augsburg. He made no stipulation for the Bavarians. Teimer, inspirited by his capture of Wrede, would hear of nothing short of the surrender of the whole army, to which Bisson a little impatiently replied that he would rather sacrifice every man under his command.

Teimer, without deigning a reply, returned to the Tyrolese, who immediately opened a deadly fire on the enemy. Their shouts and impetuosity so petrified the French grenadiers that for a while they stood motionless without returning a shot. The French officers conjured Bisson to surrender on honourable terms to Teimer, whom they recalled for the purpose, and Bisson at length most reluctantly countersigned the following articles, which the reader may decide whether honourable or not.

[100]

> "In the name of Francis the First, Emperor of Austria, the French and Bavarian troops at Steinach and Wiltau, agree to the following terms:—
>
> "First. That they shall immediately lay down their arms.
>
> "Second. That the whole body of the eighth division shall surrender to the Austrian troops at Schwatz.
>
> "Third. That any Tyrolese who have been made prisoners shall be set free.
>
> "Fourth. The officers of the French and Bavarian army shall be set free, with their swords, baggage, horses, &c., untouched.
>
> "Given by me for his Royal Highness Archduke John, at Innsbruck, April 13, 1809, at half-past eight in the forenoon.
>
> "MARTIN TEIMER,
> "*Major and Authorized Commissioner*.
>
> "Countersigned,
>
> "ARMANCE,
> "VARIN,
> "BISSON,[C]
> "*&c. &c.*"

The prisoners thus made, were marched to Schwatz, and thence to Salzburg, under the escort of *women*; as men could not be spared for the [101]
occasion. The success of this day (achieved before nine o'clock in the morning) was undoubtedly mainly owing to Martin Teimer; as General Chastelar, though pushing on from Sterzing, did not arrive in time to be of any use. Buonaparte, however, provoked at the issue of the day, and not stooping to such ignoble prey, at present, as Tyrolean innkeepers and tobacconists, issued an act of outlawry against "the person named Chastelar, styling himself a general in the Austrian service," charging him (without the least ground) with the massacre of prisoners; and sentencing him, if caught, to be tried by martial law, and, if found guilty, to be shot in twenty-four hours.

Meanwhile the worthy general was thinking it no scorn to entertain Hofer and Martin Teimer at his table, and talk over the events of the day. The Tyrolese are temperate and abstemious to a proverb; but these mountaineers had fought hard and were hungry; they probably had never heard the Wise King's injunction, "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee; and put a knife to thy throat if thou be given to appetite;" and therefore drank the sweet and ate the fat with relish that was too little disguised to escape the satirical notice of certain junior officers, by whom it was afterwards turned against them. After all, they ate and drank but moderately, and were much fuller of their success than their dinner; yet they [102] spoke but moderately too, and in simple phrase; and their censors decided them to be phlegmatic. The good-natured Chastelar pushed the wine towards them and bade them drink to the Emperor.

[103]

CHAPTER IX.

HOME.

ANNA Hofer was kneeling before the crucifix in the corner of her kitchen, praying as fervently as if she had been privileged to own a purer faith; and, with every bead that ran through her fingers, letting fall a tear far more precious than a pearl of great price. What opportunity had she had of living under a better dispensation? Romanism was the only form of Christianity the Tyrolese were acquainted with; and while, among their invaders, infidelity was rampant, the simplicity and fervour of their piety made them, as far as in them lay, champions of the Christian faith.

Anna, then, knelt before the crucifix, wrestling in prayer, with groans and sighings that could not be uttered. Judge of her revulsion of feeling, when a beloved voice close to her said, "Anna!"

"Oh, my good man, is't thou?" And she cast herself into his arms. "What, then! is the war over, husband?"

[104]

"Dearest woman, no! But we have a little breathing space; for a little while our enemies are scattered, and the men of Tyrol too. As soon as they make head again, we shall swarm about them like bees. Meanwhile, we must plough, and we must sow."

"I *have* sown our field, Anderl. It was ploughed already."

"Dear wife—" and he kissed her. "How hast thou sown it?"

"That which was buckwheat, with barley and rye; and that which was barley and rye, with buckwheat."

"Right. Where's Theresa?"

"Looking after the horse. The children are keeping the cows, goats, and sheep. Here comes Theresa."

Theresa flew up to her father, and embraced him; then overwhelmed him with a thousand questions.

"One at a time will last the longer," said he; and drawing her to his knee, with his wife close beside him, he rehearsed to them in detail what has here been recounted more briefly; interjecting warm praise of Chastelar, Hormayr, and Martin Teimer.

"See here," continued he, pulling forth a paper, "what a beautiful letter our dear Emperor has written us:—

"'My dear and faithful Tyrolese!'—"

[105]

—"No! does our Franzel really say so?" interrupted Anna, eagerly leaning over his shoulder, to satisfy herself. "How beautifully expressed! A petty commandant, look you, would hardly be so affable!"—

"'My dear and faithful Tyrolese! Since the sacrifices which the unfortunate year 1805 compelled me to make, when I was obliged to separate from you, my heart has been constantly with you, my honest, affectionate children!'"—

"*That*'s warm from the heart, anyhow!" muttered Anna.

"'As a last proof of my affection, I stipulated for the preservation of your Constitution; and it gave me the greatest pain to see this—this'"—

"Institution," suggested Theresa.

"No, nonsense—'This stipulation disregarded, which I had made for your advantage; but, alas! at that time I was unable to assist you, and could only lament your fate in private.'"—

"Poor dear man! doubtless it cost him many a secret tear," interjected Anna.

"'When a new cause again obliged me to draw my sword, my first thought was to become again your father. An army was put in motion to effect your deliverance; but before it could meet our common enemy, you had by your gallantry struck a decisive blow, and proved to the whole world, as well as myself, what you are ready to do to become again a part of that kingdom [106] under which for centuries past you have lived contented and happy—'"

"Beautiful, beautiful!" ejaculated Anna. "What golden words!"

"There's some more, mother," said Theresa.

"'Your efforts have touched my heart—I know your courage; I am ready to meet all your wishes, and to count you amongst the best and most faithful subjects in the Austrian dominions. It will be my earnest endeavour to prevent our being again separated: millions, who were long your brothers, will be eager to draw their swords in the cause! I trust, therefore, in you; and you may rely on me. So, by God's assistance, Austria and the Tyrol will be again united as they were in former years.

"'Francis.
"'Scharding, *April 18, 1809*.'"

"Dear, dear, dear, only think of an emperor like him to write in that way to a poor man like thee, Anderl," said Anna.

"Not to me in particular," said Hofer; "to all my weapon-brothers as well."

"At any rate, he could not speak more fair, nor more handsome—dear Franzel! Do let me look close at his letter with my very own eyes. Why, now, the dear Emperor spells Tyrol with two l's, as you do, Anderl, sometimes; but he writes a deal better," nudging him with her elbow.

"As an emperor is likely to do," said Hofer, his good white teeth gleaming [107] right merrily through his black beard. "Why, now, I copied that letter myself, and it's my own handwriting: so a precious one you are to have a cut at me!"

"You? Why, you told me it was the Emperor's!"

"Aye, his words, but not his penmanship. Why, think you there was a man of us all that would not get a copy of it, if he could?"

"Oh well, I thought his hand wondrous like thine, man. Don't you believe you took me in! Why, didn't I find out the two l's?"

"Aye, but you thought them the emperor's!"

"Never mind! the sense is the thing. This letter deserves to be framed and glazed; aye, framed in gold: and since we can't afford that, I'll paste it against the wall."

"Well, that's not a bad notion. Is dinner ready?"

"Yes, father," said Theresa, slipping from his knee, and hastening to spread the table. "You've dined with a many strange people, I suppose, since you went away."

"That have I, girl,—with General Chastelar and Baron Hormayr; but great folks eat so fast and talk so fast, there's no taking one's comfort. They snatch away your plate before 'tis empty, bob a dish under your nose, and whisk it off [108] if you look at it twice before you help yourself."

"A good way of having a dinner for next day," said Anna, laughing.

"Aye, aye; and when I and the men of Passeyr got to Botzen, where Baron Hormayr and all his staff came out to receive us with honour, he uncovering his head and letting his hair blow about in the wind,—I warrant you, General Marschall refused to sit down to table with a humble man like me; just as if a guest wasn't good enough for him that was good enough for Hormayr!"

"Well! to think of that!" cried Anna indignantly. "I hope the Baron told him a piece of his mind."

"No, no; he had too much temper and sense," said Hofer. "He just made a little grimace to me behind his back, and I took no umbrage; only it showed the nature of the man."

"What a good thing Baron Hormayr is not of his sort," said Theresa.

"Oh, the general has his merits, after all," said Hofer, stroking his beard. "He is a good fighting man, but his pride is so great, that not even his own soldiers like him. See, dear women, how evil a thing pride is."

"And what is being done now, Anderl?"

"Much. The regular troops are assisting the Tyrolese to hem in the enemy [109] in the Lower Tyrol. The *landsturm* from Meran and the Vintsghaw are advancing on the right side of the Etsch; and those of Etsch and Fleims are keeping the passes of Rochetta and Bucco di Vela. Baron Hormayr and Martin

Teimer want General Chastelar to attack the enemy in the Lower Tyrol at once; but he's too slow, too slow. By not coming up in time, he let us take Innsbruck without him: and Martin Teimer won all the glory of making Bisson and Wrede lay down their arms."

"Martin Teimer is no favourite of mine," said Anna, pouring out the porridge.

"Ah, he has done good service, nevertheless. General Chastelar finds fault with our training, calls us round-shouldered, and who knows what?—and wants to drill us a little. He won't be able to turn a wild lark into a piping bulfinch, though, it's my opinion. As long as we beat the enemy, what does it signify how we do it? He is doing real good service, however, by giving muskets to those who have no fire-arms, but only spears and such like of their own manufacture. Now, then, where are the children?"

Theresa went to the door to give a jödel, which would answer the purpose of a dinner-bell; but, changing her purpose, returned, saying, "Father, here is a young, olive-coloured man, who looks something like a soldier, coming up to the house; in quest, apparently, of you." [110]

Almost at the same instant, the young man stepped in, taking off his cap and saluting Hofer in a foreign accent as Signor Andrea.

"*Come sta?*" returned Hofer, who rather piqued himself on a smattering of Italian. "*Sedete voi. Andiamo pranzare—Fate lo stesso.*"

"*Mille grazie*," returned the youth, who, however, preferred his own German to Hofer's Italian. "The Signor Barone has sent me, Giuseppe Eisenstecken, with the desire you will accept me as adjutant."

"What want have I of an adjutant?" inquired the Sandwirth. "What are you to do?"

"*Che vi piace*," returned Giuseppe, spreading out his hands; "I am quite at your service."

"But, my good lad, I don't want your services; so where's the good?"

Giuseppe raised his eyebrows; then replied, "A little training, the Signor Barone thought, would be desirable for your men, and some small knowledge of tactics for their chief."

"Ah, my dear youth, you mean to flatten our backs, I suppose, and turn out our toes; but when you have lived as long in a mountainous country as I have, you will find it more convenient, clambering about among the crags, to round your shoulders and turn your toes in. Meanwhile, do as we do—*nulla ceremonia!*—dine first, and talk afterwards. One thing at a time will last the longer." [111]

The young adjutant looked at first as if he hardly knew how to take this; but at the same instant, three rosy children ran in and flew into their father's arms. While Hofer was embracing and kissing them, Giuseppe looked on with some sympathy; then, drawing a stool towards the table, he prepared to accept the Sandwirth's invitation.

"So Baron Hormayr sent you to me?" said Hofer presently. "Well, I wonder he said nothing about you when I saw him."

"He has written," said Giuseppe, taking a note out of his cap.

"Why didn't you tell me that before?" said Hofer. "Were you keeping it for dessert?"

"You said one thing at a time would last the longer."

Hofer smiled, as he opened the note. "Well," said he, when he had read it; "it seems I had hardly need to come home. Here am I wanted again at head-quarters, to receive orders for immediate action. We must put off our drilling, my good friend, till another time. Why is this recall?"

"Since you left, we have received news of the Archduke John's having won a brilliant victory at Sacile."

"Aha! Our beloved *Hannes*! Heaven be praised, I am ready to return immediately to the camp." [112]

"Immediately?" said his wife, a little startled.

"Not till I have dined and had an hour's sleep."

"One thing at a time will last the longer, Signor Andrea."

"Just so, Signor Giuseppe. But come, tell me about our Hannes' victory."

"He defeated Eugene Beauharnois on the 15th, and compelled him to retire to Caldiero. That is all I know."

"Hum! Not even how many men were slain?"

"No. The news had but just arrived."

"Humph!"

"You seem to have a good many targets."

"Ah, those are my coats of arms," said the Sandwirth, supping his porridge.

"They seem to have been hit in the bull's eye pretty often."

"Pretty often."

"By you?"

"By me."

"At how many paces?"

"Three hundred."

"You must be a pretty good marksman."

"Goodish; there are plenty as good or better in the Tyrol. Did you hear that verse one of our men made the other day? General Marschall had observed [113] that we only beat the enemy by chance. On which, our youngster observed—

> "'Tis but by chance,' doth Marschall say,
> 'The Tyrolese have won the day.'
> What then? I'd rather win by chance
> Than, with much skill, be beat by France!

For where's the good of tactics, you know, master Giuseppe, if they that have them are beat by the unlearned?"

Giuseppe seemed engrossed in the merits of his dinner. "I should like to see you fire at a mark, Signor Andrea," said he at length.

"Pooh, pooh! we have other things in hand, brother. The way is long and steep. Are we going to be sent into the south, think you?"

"To Trent, I conclude, but I only conjecture."

Hofer asked a few more questions, but he was not a great talker at meal-times, though he ate with great moderation. As soon as dinner was ended, he took his hour's sleep, woke up fresh and strong, and told his new adjutant he was ready for the journey.

At every house or village they passed, he found messengers to despatch to the men in the fields and call them back from their husbandry to resume their rifles. These came running along after him, some swinging their coats on as they ran, others tightening their belts, others with their weapons not slung [114] but in their hands; all cheerfully obeying the summons without murmuring at being disappointed of their rest.

On Hofer's arrival at the camp, General Chastelar instantly appointed him to the command of the right wing, consisting of the men of Passeyr and of Etschthal. Almost at the same moment, expresses arrived to announce the disorderly retreat of the French and Bavarians on the news of the Archduke's victory, and of their destroying the bridges of Lavis and Lorenzen.

"What are we to do, Hofer, without these bridges?" said the General.

"I must think," said Hofer.

He thought so long, that Hormayr impatiently whispered to Chastelar, "He is falling asleep—what a dunderhead he is!"

But the good man was thinking to the purpose; and, knowing the ground and the men who were on it, he sat down and wrote two or three short notes, and gave them to the General, saying:

"If you will send them, these will do."

"Had you not better go yourself?" put in Baron Hormayr.

"Why?" said the Sandwirth. "I cannot be in two places at once. If I were at Lavis, I could not be at Lorenzen. These will do."

"Perhaps they will," muttered the General to the Baron, who shrugged his [115] shoulders. "See the notes sent off."

"He knows when he's in good quarters, I believe," said Hormayr aside, as he passed the notes to his inferior officer.

But others, of less note than a Roman centurion, may have moral force enough to be able to say to one man go, and he goeth; to another come, and he cometh; to another, do this, and he doeth it.

Chastelar showed a vague sense of this when he replied in an equally low tone to Hormayr, "It matters little—his *name* will be enough."

How was it that that name came to be enough? The name of another poor,

honest man would not have done as well.

On the following day, the 22d of April, the enemy evacuated Trent without firing a shot; and Hormayr took possession of the town the same evening.

The ancient city of Trent! Few need to be reminded of the famous Council of purple cardinals, princely bishops, mitred abbots, sandalled monks, and learned doctors, assembled there by Charles the Fifth, and prolonging their sitting for eighteen long years.

"What a market," exclaims a writer, warming with his subject, "the city must then have had!—what cooks!—what convoys of sleek mules laden with [116] luxuries!—and how, in their distant and regretted residences, all the old housekeepers of those perplexed and provoked absentees must have busied themselves in the preparation of savouries, and potted meats, dried fruits, and delicate conserves, and in the regular and never-failing despatch of supplies from the well-stored cellars."

Trent is now said to be as dissolute a little capital as any in Europe. The simplicity of ancient manners, if it ever did exist there, is no longer to be found. Even the characteristic honesty of the Tyrolese has disappeared, and extortion and cheatery are of common occurrence.

This was not the locality Hofer would willingly choose for his *landsturm*. Fortunately, they were not long exposed to its influence. On the 24th, General Chastelar advanced towards Trent, while Hofer took possession of the ground between Trent and Roveredo. On the same day, Chastelar, after his fatiguing march, was drawn into action by Baraguay d'Hilliers, who, with a superior force, was victorious, but reaped no advantage from it. He had already abandoned Trent, and he now, immediately after the battle, forsook Roveredo, and quitted the country entirely.

Chastelar had scarcely taken up his quarters in Roveredo, when he heard of the Austrians' reverses in Germany and Italy. The north of the Tyrol was now [117] left deserted, at the mercy of the enemy; and he resolved immediately to return to it; invited thereto by a note written by the Archduke John in pencil on his knee, from the battle-field.

"Do not let our misfortunes make you uneasy. We have done our duty, and will defend the Tyrol to the last drop of our blood.

"JOHN.
"30th April."

Thus ended this eventful month.

[118]

CHAPTER X.

GUERILLA WARFARE.

THE rifles were soon in full action again. In the course of a few days not a single town in the Tyrol remained in the occupation of the French but Kufstein.

Then came a reverse. The Austrians under Chastelar were defeated at Worgl. This was on the 13th of May; and six days afterwards the Bavarians burned Schwatz; while the flames of seventeen other towns and villages made the heavens appear a vast sea of fire.

In a certain mountain-pass several men were vigorously felling down enormous larch-trees, evidently for purposes of warfare, under the direction of Father Joachim, who was zealously instructing them where to place the trees with most effect; how to intermix them with huge masses of rock, filling up the interstices with earth and brushwood; and how to secure the whole mass from toppling over till the right moment, by means of cords and chains. [119] In the midst of this exciting work a little boy came trotting up to the good Capuchin.

"Father bade me find you," said he, panting, and looking up at him with his clear, soft, black eyes, "and tell you and the men you are wanted."

"What! to fight?"

"Father says the enemy are to be found at Berg Isel. He and Hofer and Teimer will all meet there, and they want you all to join them."

"We will come!"

And away ran little Speckbacher, sitting down and sliding down the mountain-side wherever it was not too rough, and getting on with amazing celerity. Many of the men laughed, and followed his example.

The child led the way, and an hour's fast walking brought them within earshot of the rifles, the continual report of which showed that the engagement had begun. It was a severe and fatal one; but the loss was almost entirely on the side of the enemy, who were triumphantly defeated.

Little Anderl again hovered about, to see the issue of the fight. He was now a regular and accredited messenger among the Tyrolese, and was allowed by his mother to go forth and bring her tidings of his father, on condition of his keeping as much out of danger as he could reasonably be expected to do.

On the present occasion, he had climbed a tree at some distance, and out of [120] the direction of the firing, from whence he got a good general idea of the success of the engagement, without being close enough to see the dreadful features of its details. He now slid down from his perch, but, instead of pursuing his father, paused when he had run a little way; and after watching the retiring foemen till they disappeared, prepared to run home and tell his mother. A squall of wind and rain had come on, and a flock of sheep rushed wildly past him.

Just then, he heard a groan close by him; and, looking round, saw a Bavarian soldier who had been shot down among the long coarse grass and underwood. The poor young fellow did not look above twenty; he had a boyish, simple face; his leg was bleeding fast, and he had turned very white.

"Even such a little boy as I am could kill that Bavarian," thought Anderl; "but I could not have the heart to do it, even if the Sandwirth had not said we must never hit a man when he is down.—Are you in much pain?" said he, approaching him with pity.

"I'm bleeding to death, I think," said the Bavarian; "will you help me, you little chap? or are you going to hurt me?"

"Oh, no! Shall I tie up your leg with your handkerchief? Mother would do it

better, but I won't hurt you, if I can help it."

"Thanks, thanks! Oh, get me some water!" [121]

Anderl knew where there was a spring, and he ran and brought some in his hat.

"It is raining very hard," said he, "and there is shelter not far off: do you think you can crawl to it?"

"Well, I'll try—it's so forlorn to be left to die here. You're not taking me to people that will knock me on the head?" added he quickly.

"Oh, no! Not to any people at all, only to a shepherd's deserted hut scooped out of the rock. Edge yourself along this way, on your elbow and the side that isn't bleeding. I know it will hurt you, but you mustn't mind that."

Following the advice and guidance of the humane little boy, the young Bavarian, with a good deal of wincing, and some additional effusion of blood, wormed himself along to the rude little cavity which Anderl had dignified by the name of a hut. It contained, however, a rough bed of fir branches, a stool and table of rude construction, and a little hidden store of rye-cakes and cheese.

"And now," said Anderl, after having good-naturedly settled him on the rustic couch, and put the food within his reach, "I'll fetch you some water; and then I must leave you, or my mother will fancy I've come to harm."

"I hope the owner of the hut will not return, though," said the Bavarian [122] wistfully. "You couldn't get me a musket, could you? I dare say mine is down among the grass."

"Why, now, how can you expect it?" said the boy. "Here have I had mercy on you, our enemy; and you want me to give you the means of shooting one of my friends!"

"But I'm so defenceless," suggested the Bavarian.

"Your safety lies in that," said Anderl. "If any of our men should come and be unexpectedly saluted by you with a shot, of course he would be tempted to return your fire pretty effectually; but if he finds you lying helpless as I did, he will have compassion; because the Sandwirth told us this very morning, that none but a coward would harm a fallen foe."

"Come, that's one comfort," said the young soldier. "Must you go?"

"Aye, that I must, but I'll come and look after you in a day or two, if I can."

"Oh! I may be dead before that."

"Why, your leg has left off bleeding already, and you have plenty to eat! What have you to do but to lie still and get well? I don't think you are very brave!"

This unexpected rebuke made the colour mount in the young Bavarian's face; and Anderl, after looking at him for a moment, turned away; and taking [123] a beechen bowl from a nail in the wall, sallied forth to the spring and filled it to the brim with water. "There, now," said he, smiling, as he placed it beside the soldier, "do you feel all over red-hot coals?"

"No; what do you mean?"

"Why, Father Joachim says, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.'"

"Why, *I* am not your enemy, you little boy! What harm have we ever done one another?"

"I've done *you* none, certainly; but you have been killing my friends; and would gladly have killed my father!"

"Who is your father?"

"I must not tell you that. However, I may tell you that he is—oh, such a brave man! and so good! Every one loves him."

"Hofer, I suppose?"

"No, not Hofer; but I must not tell you any more, so now good bye. I don't think any one will come near you—unless it should be the hill-sprite."

"Who is the hill-sprite?"

"Well, I can't justly say; but he haunts the hill-top; and when the herdsmen have gone down into the valley for winter, he takes possession of one of their deserted châlets,—to be more snug and comfortable, I suppose, while nobody else wants it; and, sometimes, when a herdsman has gone back again for [124] something he has forgotten, he has found the hill-sprite already settling himself in the châlet, and arranging his ghostly pans and pails."

"Hum! And are you going to leave me to the mercy of this hill-sprite?"

"Oh, he won't hurt you. You got here first; and if he looks in and sees you, he'll go away. Shall you be frightened?"

"That depends. If he wears a green jacket and red sash, and carries a rifle over his shoulder, very likely I shall be."

"Not if he does not point it at *you*. Besides, it wouldn't go off."

"I shan't understand his language."

"Why, you understand *mine*. But he doesn't talk at all, only makes a dismal noise, and keeps smiting his hands. I advise you to say your prayers, and then you won't think of him any more."

Away went Anderl, with a very unfavourable impression of Bavarian courage. Meanwhile, the wounded soldier felt very lonely without his little companion; and weak from the loss of blood. A good deal of what courage he had, had certainly ebbed away with it; for he was presently sadly scared by a sudden, rushing, unaccountable sound of many small feet, which he thought must be those of a legion of hill-sprites rather than of one.

It only proceeded, however, from the flock of sheep, who, having remained [125]
under the hill while the spring storm lasted, were now returning to the sweet short grass higher up.

A couple of days afterwards, Anderl, who had often thought of the Bavarian, made up a little packet of cakes and cheese, and set off on a walk of several miles to see after him.

"The gate was there, but not the lad!"

Anderl looked about, but could find nothing of him. The food was eaten, and he was gone.

It was best for all parties that he should have made off. After a night's good sleep, he had awoke sufficiently refreshed to make a hearty breakfast of what would have fed a temperate Tyrolese for two or three days; and then, examining his wound, he found himself able to bind it up sufficiently well to admit of his moving slowly, with a good deal of limping.

He was very desirous of going down the ravine, to hunt for his musket, but hardly felt equal to it; and the sound of men's voices among the trees decided him on keeping on his present level, and making off as fast as he could.

Fear enabled him to do this better than he would otherwise have thought possible; and he made considerable progress along the mountain-side, till he [126]
began to be uncertain of his bearings, and to fear that he might be penetrating into the enemy's country instead of getting out of it. Besides, he was by this time very tired and very hungry; and it was therefore with considerable though not unmixed satisfaction that he descried a lone hut. Though lonely, it might not be unoccupied; therefore, he approached it with extreme caution.

On close investigation, however, there appeared no signs of life. Made bold by hunger, he raised the latch; went in and found the hut empty—empty of inhabitants, that is, but not of stock; for it appeared to be a kind of little shop or store, containing medicines for man, horse, and cow; cheap crockery and cutlery; sieves, tubs, and pails; household and agricultural implements; and a few rolls of green cloth, canvas, and calico; such goods as the peasantry were likely to want during the long winter months, without finding it convenient to go to a town for them. Every article was ticketed with the price; there was a till for the money, and a book wherein to enter what had been purchased. These good, honest people could rely upon not being defrauded by one another!

It struck the Bavarian; though not so much as it would strike us. He opened the till; there was a little heap of kreutzers in it,—and shut it up again. He [127]
looked into the ledger, and read such entries as these—

"Walter Landauer; a Dutch hoe (so many kreutzers).
Adolf Winkel, three yds. green cloth.
Madeline Weiss, 2 yds. scarlet ribbon.
Ditto. 1 oz. coarse white thread.
Ditto. 1 small hair sieve.
Jerome Brinkel, a brush of hog's hair bristles."

and so forth.

The Bavarian began to look about for something to eat. He found unroasted coffee in the berry, tar, turpentine, oil, black and yellow paint, and cobbler's wax; none of which articles, separately or conjointly, promised a very desirable repast, even if there were a fire lighted by which to cook them. At length he came to a small canister of sugar-plums and poured its contents into

his pocket, that his mouth might not be altogether unemployed, if he could find nothing better to fill it.

Just then he heard a loud exclamation of surprise; and, with a guilty start, he turned about and met the great, round, wondering eyes of a stout, thickset girl, who looked as if she were not quite sure of his not being the hill-sprite.

His start, and the uniform he wore, seemed to undeceive her; for she accosted him with an ejaculation tantamount to

"Well, I'm sure!—"

"Pretty maiden, does this shop belong to you?" said the Bavarian. [128]

"No more than it does to you!" said she, planting herself boldly in the doorway. "How durst you come here?"

"I am a wounded man—don't you see?" (pointing to his bandage) "and a stranger. Women always have pity on the unfortunate."

"How do I know you're unfortunate? You are a thief! you were eating Hans Steffan's sugar-plums!"

"Because I was starving."

"Were you?" relenting a little.

"I can't think what I shall do."

"What do you want to do?"

"To get out of the Tyrol as quick as I can."

"You may do that in a few hours, if you look sharp."

"But I am wounded, and cannot walk fast."

"Humph—poor fellow! And you are hungry?"

"As a hunter."

"Humph!—Well,—here's some bread and cheese I was carrying to my father; you can have it, and I will fetch him some more. And now I advise you to be off as fast as you can—*I* will pay for the sugar-plums. That is, supposing you have no money."

"Not a kreutzer."

"Well; here are a couple of kreutzers for you. Now, off." [129]

"Which way?"

"Right towards that old tower on the distant hill. When you reach it you will get a distant view of Innsbruck, which of course you will keep clear of, as we have re-taken it!"

"Have you!"

"That have we. Now depart."

"Gracious maiden, permit me—" He saluted her on the cheek.

She watched him down the hill, and then turned on her heel, with an ejaculatory "Humph!—what manners!"

[130]

CHAPTER XI.

TYROLESE COURTSHIP.

A YOUNG man is busily examining the water-worn rocks along the edge of a Tyrolese stream. Now and then he strikes them with a large sledge-hammer, eagerly snatches up something alive, and pops it into a basket. A wild *jödel* from a mountain-side, half a mile off, makes him look up, and discovers the face of our old, but not very respectable, acquaintance, Franz.

The wild cry was uttered by a girl, who, in course of time, drew near him, knitting as she came along; for a Tyrolese woman never is idle.

"What are you about there, Franz?"

"Can't you see, Theresa? Look at that nice basket of fish."

"How can you be about such nonsense, when every man deserving the name of a man is up in arms? I am quite ashamed of you!"

[131]

"Well, Theresa, you are not over-polite; but don't you know that some must plough, and some must sow, and some must handle the mattock and hoe?"

"Well, all I can say is, I think it very contemptible of you!"

"Why, now, Theresa, I call that very unkind! Do you know I was catching these smelts on purpose for you?"

"I would not give a pin for them; I am not dainty in my eating, and if I were, we have plenty of good trout in the Passeyr, to be caught at our own door."

"These would fetch a good price in Innsbruck market, I can tell you!"

"Then you had better carry them to Innsbruck market. Only, take care none of our Passeyrers ask you where you have been these three days."

"Why, Theresa, how bitter you are! You've never had a civil word to say to me since I beat Rudolf at bowls."

"*You?* Ha, ha, ha!"

"I *did*, though!"

"Very likely you might; but I have forgotten all about it. People that attend to nothing but hammering stones for smelts, and playing bowls and ninepins, are likely to excel in such things."

"I do attend to a precious lot of things besides—"

[132]

"What? Oh, looking after the cows, and smuggling brandy, and selling bad horses for good ones—well, you do all that, I allow."

Franz did not answer her for a few minutes, but leapt actively from rock to rock along the stream; darting here and there on a smelt, and coming back with his hands full.

"There!" said he, throwing them into the basket; "perhaps your mother will accept them of me, if you won't; so I'll carry them to her, and we can walk along together. I've a word or two to say to you."

"What is it?" said Theresa, pursuing her knitting, and stepping out at a good pace.

"All that you said just now," rejoined he, after a short silence, "about my getting brandy, and selling horses, and looking after cows,—to which you might have added doctoring them when ill,—is true enough, Theresa; and what is more, it has put a goodish bit of money into my pocket."

"Very likely," said Theresa; "but what of that? Money is not the thing of most consequence in the world."

"Well, *I* almost think it is."

"It is of much consequence, certainly, Franz, in *this* way, I grant you,—the

way it is employed,—whether good or evil. If it enables (and inclines) you to be generous and helpful to your poor old blind mother, and your hard-working sister, it is an instrument of good; but if you only hide it in a hole, it is of no [133] good at all; and if you spend it in betting and drinking, it is worse than no good, for it is downright evil."

"All that is very well to say,"—began Franz.

"Nothing is very well to say, unless it be true," interrupted Theresa.

"But it's quite certain," continued Franz, "that money is a real good, whether or no: and for this plain reason—that it gives you *power*."

"Power of some sort," said Theresa.

"Almost endless power," returned Franz, warming with his subject. "Why, now, how could Buonaparte carry on this war without money?"

"Without wit, rather," said Theresa. "I never heard that he was very rich to start with, but quite the reverse; the thing was, *he had a clever head, and made use of it*. He was very pains-taking, very resolute; and that has made him so powerful; not money."

"It has put him in possession of money, without which he could not pay his troops," argued Franz; "and if they were not paid, they would not fight for him."

"Not they! I believe you there," said Theresa. "They have not the motives for fighting that we poor Tyrolese have; and that is why we so often beat them."

"Well, but, Theresa, when I began to speak about money, I did not mean to [134] get into this long argument. What I was going to tell you,—(in confidence, you know,)—is that I've a goodish bit of money underground, in a pot—"

"Then, there it will rot!"

"No, it won't! It will increase!"

"What! like a grain of corn? Franz, I wonder how you can tell such stories!"

"I didn't say like corn. It will increase, because I shall put more to it."

"Oh! that's one way—"

"Yes, and that one way will suffice. Why should we try a dozen roads, when one leads to the mill? Now, Theresa, listen to me. I've had a dream—"

"Humph!"

"And I dreamed that I was in a certain spot, which I shall not now disclose; and that I saw a cloud of golden dollars floating in the air before me, just out of my reach—"

"I should think so!"

"Why, that's the beauty of it!" cried Franz, highly excited.

"Is it?" said Theresa, looking mystified.

"Yes; because it's a known thing among the wise ones, that when gold pieces glitter before you in that way in the air, the spot they hover over is where hidden treasure is to be found."

"Who are the 'wise ones?'" [135]

"Oh, there are many old people that can tell about dreams."

"A good many," said Theresa, dryly. "Well, Franz, I hope you won't go wasting your time digging for this hid treasure. You had much better hoe potatoes."

"I don't think so," said Franz; "and I hope you won't think so, if I tell you my motive."

"What motive?" said Theresa.

"That I may be rich enough to marry you."

Theresa turned very red, and then burst out laughing.

"Franz," said she, "don't deceive yourself about that, for *I'll* not deceive you! I would not marry you if you were made of money. I must have a husband of quite another sort—"

"Rudolf, in short," cried Franz, angrily.

"We are not talking of Rudolf," returned Theresa, turning yet redder. "There are some people that never can believe you don't like them, without it's being the fault of somebody else, instead of their own. If I had never seen any other young man in the world, Franz, I should not choose to marry you."

"Oh, come, now, Theresa!—"

"It's the truth! You have not those qualities which I love."

"What are those qualities?" said Franz, very crustily. [136]

"Spirit; self-denial; temperance; a modest opinion of yourself; generosity; truth; charitable feelings towards others."

"I don't believe there's a fellow with all you want under the sun," said Franz, aiming a stone at that luminary. "If you'd mentioned one thing, I might have tried to acquire it for your sake; but such a lot of them,—no, thank you! the reward wouldn't be worth the trouble: and besides, I know I could not accomplish it; so there's no use in trying."

"But, Franz, what a bad case you make out for yourself, if you own you are deficient in all these things."

"I'm not! I've as many of them as anybody else; but what you want is perfection, and that's what's not to be found. You may *fancy* you find it, if a fellow pleases you in something else,—white teeth, or black eyes, or a smart jacket, or nobody knows what; but he won't *be* perfection any the more for all that. And I'm just as honest and fair-dealing as other people, and just as much liked, and not at all intemperate; and as for spirit,—ho! if Rudolf stood here between me and the edge of the cliff this minute, wouldn't I tip him over it, that's all!"

"Franz, you think to intimidate me, but you only fill me with disgust. What [137] good could you hope to reap by such a dreadful piece of cruelty? On the contrary, nothing would ever prosper in your hands afterwards. Do you remember those two young men, both in love with the same girl, who went out together one day to take an eagle's nest? One returned, the other did not: the fact was, one had let down his companion from the top of the cliff to the nest, and then drawn up the rope, and left him to starve, or be torn to pieces by the parent-birds. Think what a miserable end he himself came to afterwards!"

"Ah, there's no knowing what a fellow may be driven to, when he's jealous," said Franz, after a pause—"It's best not to make him desperate."

"He had better not allow himself to become desperate."

"Well, Theresa, here we come to two paths,—one leads to the Wirthhaus, the other does not; which shall I take?"

"Whichever you like; it is quite indifferent to me. The path is yours as much as mine."

"If I take the path to the Wirthhaus, I shall still try and hope to make myself agreeable to you. If I take the path to the left, I shall renounce you for ever!"

"You had better, then, take the path to the left."

"Fish and all?" holding the basket a little towards her, but as if his elbow [138] were tied to his side.

"Fish and all," said Theresa, without intermitting her knitting.

"Then farewell, Theresa, for ever!" cried Franz, in a tone intended to be fiercely tragic. "You have had your last chance of me!" And shouldering his smelts, he strode off.

He was in a very tempestuous state of mind; and many things Theresa had said had cut him more deeply than she thought; but to no good purpose. When a stone came tumbling upon him from the mountain-top, he shook his fist savagely, and muttered, "Even the little people" (*i. e.* fairies) "are against me!"—and then, considering that if he provoked them, they might lead him a weary dance after the hidden treasure, he muttered a spell supposed to have a propitiating effect.

As the pass widened, he beheld from the height on which he stood, Innsbruck, white and nest-like, basking in the valley afar off, and turned in his mind whether it were worth his while to carry thither the fish we have called smelts for want of an English name for them.

"But no," thought he, "the Sandwirth is again in the town, and I don't care to see him just now, Theresa thinks his luck uppermost, I fancy, and believes he will be made a great general or governor, and that he will marry her to [139] Rudolf, and make him a great man too. She has her own dreams, though she laughs at mine. No, I'll not go; some of my speaking-acquaintance might put the saucy question she spitefully suggested; and even if I got a zwanziger or more for my smelts, it would be very great trouble for very little money. My time will be much better and more pleasantly employed in digging for the pot of gold; for when I've got that, I may pay zwanzigers for smelts myself, if I like; and meantime, I'll sup on those I've caught myself, and eat them with plenty of brown bread and butter—thin brown bread and thick yellow butter—as yellow as a cowslip! aye, that's it!"

Rejoicing that Theresa had not accepted the smelts, since she had not accepted himself, this worthy son of Tyrol wended his way home. How he would have licked his lips if he had been told the story related by Bridel, of that golden age when cows were so large and yielded such abundance of milk, that they were milked into reservoirs or ponds, from which the cream was afterwards skimmed by a man in a boat, (a butter-boat, of course!) which boat, once upsetting, the man could not be found for a long time afterwards, till, at length, his body was discovered sticking in the immense mass of cream, like a smothered fly!

Before Franz reached home, he encountered Lenora in the cow-pastures. [140] She was knitting with all her might, which did not hinder her eyes from roving over hill and valley, and noting the smallest movement within their range. Consequently, she soon espied her brother, whom she saluted with a shrill *jödel* that let him know he was recognised; otherwise he would gladly have gone a little out of his way to escape the interview, as she was one of those who not only do their own duties vigorously, but insist on other people doing theirs.

"Come here, Franz," cried she, as soon as he drew near. "You have not done a stroke of work to-day. To-morrow you must look after the stock."

"Well, the day after to-morrow, I will."

"Why not to-morrow? I want to take my mother to the shrine of St. Kummernitz, to try if it will do her eyes any good, and I can't look after her and the cows too."

"But there's going to be a peasant-play, to-morrow,—Joseph and his Brethren, and I'm wanted to play one of the brethren."

"Truly, I think there might be a better time of year than this for a peasant-play, when we are short of hands at every kind of work. Who has proposed such nonsense?"

"Leopold Strauss is going to marry Bianca Gessner—the play is only going to be got up by her bridesmaids and a few of the bridegroom's friends—"

"But you are not one of them, and we are not related to the bride." [141]

"No, but all his friends are gone to fight, and they can't make up the party without me—"

"Well,—I should think it no great honour to go, under those circumstances; but you will do as you like. The day after to-morrow, then, I may rely upon you —"

"You may rely upon me—"

"You promise me faithfully—"

"I promise you faithfully. And, Lenora, I have bought a new ribbon for my hat: do tie it round for me, there's a good girl—you can tie a bow so much better than I can—and let me have a nice nosegay."

"Nonsense; you can gather your own nosegay. I shall soon have all your things to look up for the châlet—the cows' bells must be rubbed up, and their straps embroidered; you might and ought to have cleaned the bells and trappings yourself, if it were not for this wedding, which no way concerns you."

"Who knows, Lenora? I may pick up a rich wife at it—Bianca has six sisters, who are going to play the six youngest brethren, and I shall have plenty of opportunities of making myself agreeable!"

"You? Why, you have always talked of meaning to marry Theresa Hofer!"

"She won't suit me," said Franz contemptuously; "I may do better for myself [142] than that, I fancy."

"I doubt it very much. More likely, you don't suit *her*."

"That just shows how much you know about it. You girls think you may have anybody you like!—Well, don't let us talk any more of this nonsense; but come and cook these smelts for supper; and then I'll give you my hat to trim."

"That's just like one of your givings: here—give me your hat, and do you drive in the cows."

Franz would have liked her to do *both*, but he knew that was too much to expect; so he gave her the hat and the basket of fish, and prepared to collect the herd.

When Lenora reached the cottage, she found rather a pleasant-looking man talking to her mother.

"Here comes Lenora, I can tell, though I can't see," said he. "Lenora, I am telling your mother she is better off than I am, for she is only almost blind, but

I am quite; and yet I contrive to find my way by myself from Meran to Innsbruck every summer, to tune the pianos."

"Ah, there must be a special providence over you, Karl," said Lenora compassionately, "or you would come to some hurt."

"I know there must be," said he devoutly. "However, now and then, some good Christian soul meets me and leads me by the hand along some difficult [143] pass; but they are sent by God."

"You should marry, Karl," said the old woman, "and then your wife would lead you."

"Who would marry a poor blind fellow like me?" said Karl, rather sadly. "No, no; I must be content with chance kindnesses."

"Well, you are sure to be welcome, wherever you go," said Lenora cheerfully. "And you shall have a dainty supper to-night, for Franz has caught some delicate fish."

"Your mother tells me she's going to St. Kummernitz's shrine, for the benefit of her eyes," said Karl. "I never heard St. Kummernitz was particularly famous for that."

"Oh, she's famous for everything," cried the old woman, in a sort of ecstasy; "dear blessed Saint! she cured me once of the toothache!"

"You're a bit of a heretic, I fear," said Lenora gravely. "You have been too long at Geneva."

"Well, certainly, this saint of yours seems to have rather an incredible legend. Your mother tells me, she was a famous opera-dancer some thousand years or so ago, and was so persecuted by the admiration her personal charms called forth, that she prayed she might be made less attractive. On which, rather to her dismay, a beard began to sprout from her chin, accompanied by a very bushy moustache over her upper lip, which effectually [144] extinguished the ardour of her lovers; and though she has been dead so many years, the beard continues to grow to this day!"

"Well, and what of that?" cried the old woman.

Karl smiled; but the entrance of Franz caused a change in the subject of conversation.

[145]

CHAPTER XII.

BERG ISEL.

WHAT a horrible place is Halle! Enveloped in a dense atmosphere of smoke, the sunbeams vainly endeavour to pour more than a sombre light into the sooty streets, in which houses, people, and everything else, have, unavoidably, an air of griminess inseparable from a large manufacturing town; and the amusing spectacle is too often seen of some honest fellow walking along in the mistaken belief of having a clean face, while, all the time, a black has settled on his nose.

It was towards the close of the merry month of May. The struggle at Berg Isel had taken place on the 26th, and on the following day a man was to be seen rapidly skirting the mountains that bound Halle to the north, along the edge of a ravine, in the depths of which brawled an impetuous torrent. His green coat and red sash might have been those of any Tyrolese; but his dark beard showed him to be no other than Hofer.

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He stepped out, mile after mile, along the steep path towards the famous salt-mines. Huge masses of rock, hanging over his head, seemed suspended by little short of a miracle; dark pine-forests clothed the rugged cliffs, cascades dashed from innumerable heights, some close by the path, others heard thundering above; the foaming torrent was here and there spanned by bridges of snow, while huge, unmelted avalanches lay in its bed.

As Hofer proceeded, he came up with a tall, dark, athletic man, going towards the mines. When he got close to him, he grasped his shoulder. The man started, turned round, and joyfully embraced him.

"Praised be the name of our Lord!" said he.

"Amen, and Amen!" said Hofer, raising his hat. "Brother, what a dance you have led me! They told me in Halle you had just delivered a load of wood, and I should find you here. But what? can you spare leisure to carry wood in these times?"

"A contract must be fulfilled," said Speckbacher. "I contracted, before the war broke out, to supply the works with a certain quantity of wood in a certain time. This has been my last journey, I am happy to say—my man Zoppel will drive the oxen after to-day, and the contract expires within a week."

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"That is well, for there is plenty for you to do. We expect to make head against the enemy to-morrow, and you must join us with the men of the lower Innthal."

"Surely. Where are we to march?"

"On Innsbruck."

"Capital! Teimer joins us, of course?"

"With the men of the upper Inn. I shall occupy Mount Brenner, ready to drop down on the city. The regulars, under General Buol, will be higher up. Father Joachim will head the peasants on Berg Isel."

"Come, we ought to succeed this time. I hope we shall not only take the city, but keep it better than we did before. Father Joachim has sent me an amulet, to keep me from harm. Do you think there's anything in it?"

"Well—what know I? This I know—the Lord of hosts has protected you and me, my friend, through many dangers, thus far, without e'er an amulet; so I hope He will continue to do so henceforth."

"Well—yes. Maria wished me to wear it, so I thought it would do no harm—it makes her easy, you know."

"There's something that would make me easy, my brother, if you will yield to me—let us seek the blessing of God in prayer."

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"Certainly, if you wish it."

They were just in front of a rude cross, sculptured on the face of the rock. The two men knelt, and fervently prayed aloud, each in turn, for some minutes. Hofer rose, looking comforted.

"I'm all the better for that," said Speckbacher, heartily.

"How can it be otherwise, brother? God has bidden us cast our care upon Him; it is our own fault if we do it not."

They proceeded on their way.

"I wonder if Chastelar ever kneels down and prays as we have just done," said Speckbacher presently.

"There's no saying, brother; I should hope he does. There seems to me to be little praying in camps. Men touch their hats as they pass a picture or a crucifix—that is pretty nearly all; outwardly, at least, which is all we can judge from. But sure I am, that those who prayed often—from the heart, look you,—would not take God's holy name in vain."

"How the French curse and swear, Hofer! and yet they say, many of them, there's no God. They laugh at us for praying for success, because they say they have it without."

"Pity, brother, they have not something better to laugh about. Ah, God *does* give his foes success sometimes, and deprive his children of it; but not [149] because He does not hear and answer prayer. He never permits their success, and our defeat, save for our good. Why now, has He not said He will try us seven times in the fire? First, may be, He tests our courage; well, we prove to have it: then our love; well, we have some, though it were to be wished we had more. Then, our faith; very little is found. Into the fire we must go. By and by, our unfaithfulness is somewhat purged away. Well, but then, may be, he tries our submission; finds it very poor. Into the fire with us! After that, our patience. Oh, perhaps a great, thick scum boils up to the top of the pot, and shows how far from perfection we are yet. Instead of setting us aside to cool, he stirs up the fire hotter and hotter, never minding our boiling and bubbling, so long as we don't boil over. Well, supposing fused metal had the feelings of a man, just fancy its state! At last the scum parts! the pure, bright silver appears!—he stoops over it, sees in it *his own face*,—takes us to heaven!"

"Oh me! I don't believe I could stand all that!" cried Speckbacher, turning pale. "You might, but I couldn't!"

"God only knows our hearts," replied the Sandwirth. "You and I may lie stark and stiff before another night; but what then? we shall be with Him."

"May it please Him, we shall," said Speckbacher, devoutly crossing himself. [150]

"Sandwirth," cried he, after a pause, "what a life mine has been! Oh, when I think of the sins of my youth, I see what a long, long chain must be let down from heaven, to draw me up to it! What could you expect from me, poor little orphan as I was at seven years old, but that I should go astray like a youngling of the flock, whose mother has fallen over the cliff? My relations were severe: I had no happiness in the house: so I sought it out of it. Evil companions fell in my way, and tried to make me as wicked as themselves. They feared no God; what wonder they feared no man? We robbed, we gamed, we drank; we sang, told jolly tales, and made merry; but I never was happy.

"One day we were on a predatory expedition. I had separated a little from the rest, when I heard an inexpressibly mournful cry; it seemed to say, 'Oh, woe, woe, woe!' I stood fixed to the spot; my blood ran cold: at length I hurried on to join my comrades, and begged them to turn back to hearken to a cry of distress in the wood. They treated it with indifference, and said we must push on, there was no time to lose. I, however, lingered; then turned back. Following the sound, which became more and more lamentable, I suddenly almost toppled over the edge of a tremendous cliff, seven hundred feet high! It took me so by surprise that I shrank back, appalled and [151] breathless. Half way down hung a miserable man, one of our company whom we had not missed, whose clothes, as he fell, had been caught by some projection in the rock, and who was nearly doubled in half, his head towards his toes, with horrible death beneath him. I shouted, 'Don't fear! I'll run for aid!' and did so, without knowing whether he heard me or not. But when, after a long run, I came in sight of my comrades, they were in the hands of justice, and I was the only one that escaped. I flew back to the edge of the cliff. The poor wretch's slight support had given way, and he lay, a mangled mass of bones and blood, at the bottom. When I came to myself,—oh, Hofer, can you wonder I was another man?"

Speckbacher's feelings here so overcame him that he leant against the rock a moment for support.

"Doubtless the hand of the Lord was in the event, brother," said Hofer. "To the one He showed judgment, to the other mercy."

"Mercy? Yes, what mercy! He drew me into the way of the Schmeiders, a family of piety and of love. Soon I felt their softening influence; at length I became their inmate. The old man had known my father; he interested himself in getting me employed in supplying wood to the salt-works. After a time, he saw a growing affection between Maria and me: he did not discourage it; he [152] told me I should marry her. I told him how bad I had been; he would not recall his promise, but fixed a time, and said that if I continued steady till then, we should be united. And so we were. Ah! God be praised!"

Some men, coming from the mines, here approached and passed them, which changed the subject of conversation.

"Has General Chastelar forgiven the men of Halle for drubbing him yet?" said Speckbacher.

"Why, he cannot be expected to forget it very readily," said Hofer. "It was a bad business, and did them no credit, I think. The poor general had had his turn of ill luck, and could hardly have been better pleased at his defeat than we were; but did that authorize a set of angry fellows to waylay him with cudgels, and thump him so that he was obliged to keep his bed two days? No, no, I say."

"I can't help laughing at it, though," said Speckbacher; "it was taking the law so into their own hands. His ardour for us was already beginning to cool; and, for my part, I think he has done us very little good, from first to last. But here we are. I was on my way to the superintendent; but you have never seen the mines: would not you like to do so?"

"Very much."

"Come this way, then—I will find you a miner's overcoat and staff. They will [153] give us flambeaux."

Hofer presently found himself descending the noted three hundred steps, with considerable excitement, and a little trepidation. He seemed entering a new world, the withdrawal of daylight from which gave it something inexpressibly dismal. The interminable galleries and caverns, the unfathomed lakes, the dim lights, the hollow, unearthly sounds, sensibly affected his imagination; and when they now and then came up to a solitary miner, with his little candle, constantly striking his axe into the wall before him, a profound feeling of pity towards him oppressed his kind heart.

"It is wonderful! truly wonderful!" ejaculated he, as they once more emerged into the warm sunlight; "but I am very glad to find myself out of it. I could not help thinking of poor wretches in the bottomless pit."

"Hofer! when you were comparing the true believer, just now, to metal molten over the fire, I could not help thinking that their foes are like the crackling sticks in that fire, that help to heat the silver. They are *unintelligent agents*; they make a great blaze, and shine very bright, for a little while. How soon they become extinct!"

"Ah! I never like to think of it,—it melts me with sorrow. If the true believer has such a hard fight of it, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? [154] Brother, let us leave such matters to the God who made those salt caverns. I thought, before I entered them, they would afford me a good opportunity for some more talk with you about to-morrow; but when I was once within them, the God of nature made me hold my peace."

"Here is a niche, Anderl, where we can sit and talk our fill. It seems to me we shall very likely fall short of powder and bullets—what can we do?"

They sat down and arranged, as well as they could, the plans for the morrow. But they were, after all, unskilled tacticians, as far as science went: men rather of deeds than words, who felt a certain consciousness of what they themselves could do, and what they could expect from one another. However, before they parted, they had decided their own parts in what proved to be the most important struggle that occurred during the Tyrolean war.

On the morning of May 29th, both parties were prepared to try their strength—the Bavarians with all the advantages of regular training and skill; the Tyrolese armed with valour and love of their freedom and their country. Seventeen thousand peasants, badly accoutred for war, scantily provided with ammunition, and headed not by one but by several chiefs, were supported by a thousand Austrian regulars, sixty or seventy horse, and five pieces of cannon.

General Deroy opposed them with eight thousand Bavarian infantry, one [155] thousand cavalry, and twenty-five cannon.

Hofer slept overnight at a little tavern called the Spade, a short distance from Innsbruck. He and his men began the day with a hearty meal, which some who had three or four good meals every day of their lives, afterwards

called "carousing:"—and on this splendid carouse of bread, cheese, and beer, the brave men, commending their good cause to Heaven, started forth to the field. Speckbacher, however, had opened the day on the bridge of Halle, which was obstinately contested, but which he carried; and the engagement then became general. The peasantry led by Father Joachim poured down from the Iselberg, and attacked the Bavarians with fury, while Teimer fell on them from the rear.

"The Bavarians," says a writer, "had every advantage on their side, except their numbers." We may add, and except their cause. They had passed the night quietly in and about Innsbruck, had an ample supply of provisions, while the Tyrolese had only their little meal-bags; and were well armed, while many of the Tyrolese were provided with nothing better than pitchforks or scythes. Under all these circumstances, it is surprising, says the above-quoted chronicler, that the Bavarians suffered themselves to be brought to action; or [156] that, being engaged, they should sustain a defeat. Yes, very surprising, no doubt; and equally surprising that Baron Hormayr returned no answers to Hofer's repeated and urgent missives, during several previous days, to advance to support the Tyrolese: and that when, somewhat tardily, he moved from his quarters at Landeck, he only proceeded to Imst, where he lay in bed for a sore throat. He had taken a chill.

Meantime, Speckbacher, with six hundred men, having carried the bridge, had thrice dislodged the Bavarians from the farm of Rainerhof, twice been driven out, and the third time triumphantly taken it: earning for himself from the other side the questionable title of the Fire-devil. The owners of the farm were in it all the time. A girl named Lisa, seeing Speckbacher's lips dry and parched, exclaimed, "That brave man shall not die of thirst if I can help it"—and carrying out a small cask of wine into the midst, she began to dispense its contents in a mug, first to him and then to his comrades, when a bullet struck the cask and made a small orifice near the spiggot. Thrusting her thumb into the hole, she cried, laughing, "Come, men, drink fast, or it will run out quicker than I can stop it!"

Father Joachim, flying about the field, shouting to his men and brandishing aloft his huge ebony crucifix, performed, it is said, prodigies of valour and [157] generalship. He was humane, too, binding up wounds, whispering brief absolution into the ears of the dying; and once, at least, narrowly escaped death himself, for a Bavarian was about to run him through the body with his bayonet, when he himself was brought down by a rifle.

Hofer did not come up till some hours later, but then turned the fortune of the day. Somewhat after him arrived Martin Teimer, on the heights of Hotting; on seeing whom, the Bavarians advanced with great resolution on the Iselberg. The Austrians, under Colonel Ertel, who were somewhat dispersed, drew up in haste to receive them, supported by a large body of Tyrolese, and the Bavarians maintained the contest for some time with great gallantry; but the Tyrolese sharpshooters among the rocks thinned their ranks so formidably that their destruction would have been inevitable, had not the peasants fallen short of ammunition. An officer with a trumpet was therefore despatched to the Bavarian commander, advising him to lay down his arms; and, as he had just heard that one of his outposts had been carried by the Austrians, he conceded a suspension of hostilities for twenty-four hours, and, under cover of the night, effected a precipitate retreat, leaving the Tyrolese complete masters of the field.

"Aha," said Speckbacher, shaking his fist at some ammunition-wagons [158] which now, rather too tardily, loomed large in the distance,—"had you come up a little sooner.... But, no matter—Innsbruck is a second time ours!"

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE LATTER END OF A FRAY, AND THE BEGINNING OF A FEAST.

THE loss of the Tyrolese amounted to sixty-two killed and ninety-seven wounded; of their friends the Austrians, twenty-five killed and fifty-nine wounded. Of the Bavarians were reckoned two thousand five hundred killed and wounded, including several officers.

The engagement had lasted till seven in the evening. At nine the Bavarians retreated to Kufstein under favour of the darkness. At four o'clock the next morning, the victorious peasantry flocked indiscriminately into Innsbruck, shouting and singing, without any order, but yet without the least offence in their demeanour or proceedings. At nine o'clock Hofer marched in at the head of the men of Passeyr; and with Father Joachim at his right hand. By this time the city was full to overflowing—

> "You would have thought the very windows spake,
> So many greedy looks of young and old
> Through casements darted their desiring eyes
> Upon his visage;"

—for, certainly, the impression prevailed among the good people of Innsbruck [160]
that he was the great man of the day, and so it continued to do.

Michael Stumff, beaming like the sun, stood on the threshold of his house to catch a glimpse of the Sandwirth as he passed, vaunting much his familiarity with him to those who were willing to listen; and extolling his valour because it enhanced the honour of his acquaintance.

"Yes, yes," he repeated, wagging his head, "there's more in him than you'd think, for as homely as he looks. Why now, Chastelar,—we've had General Chastelar among us, though now, I'm sorry to hear, he has quitted the country,—and Hormayr—we've had Baron Hormayr among us too, of whose doings or misdoings at this present occasion, I suppose we shall shortly have his own account,—both of these have been counted noteworthy men,—to say nothing of our own Baron Taxis—but, to my mind, there's not a greater man among 'em all, in spite of his homely bearing, than my honest friend the Sandwirth. Ah, here he comes!—nay, not yet—How the bells are ringing! and yet there's such a din, clang, and confusion, they scarce can be heard. Here he comes, then!—yes, yes, the green jackets walking six or eight abreast—there's *he*, look you, neighbour!—there's my old ally the Sandwirth!—many a pot of beer have he and I shared together! And now, see you, he has a feather [161]
in his hat, and a sword at his side, and pistols in his belt. Hurra! hurra! I say, Sandwirth!—(Nod at him, Alouise—I'll catch his eye.) Hurra! hurra!—"

The churches received them. As many as could enter them, crowded the aisles; the rest hung about the doors. After victory and thanksgiving, naturally came feasting. Wounded men were more slowly brought into the city, and hospitably received; and numbers of escaped Tyrolese prisoners came panting back to their friends at intervals throughout the day.

The Bavarians had pretty well consumed the edibles of Innsbruck, but the damage was being repaired as fast as was possible by supplies from the country. Every house had its table spread with such things as came to hand, for the refreshment of all comers. At the inns and public rooms, dances were got up; and those who had fought overnight might now be seen cutting tremendous capers and taking wondrous leaps, with some fair partner of equal agility. But, flirting? none; the Tyrolese eminently cultivate decorum, and know how to be merry and wise. If you choose your partner, it is for the entire evening; and often proves to be your partner for life.

Late in the evening Baron Hormayr arrived at the Taxis Palace. His throat was very sore, and he was very hoarse, and not a little vexed at having had no [162]

share in the glory of the day. Flinging himself on a sofa, he desired Hofer might be instantly sought, found, and sent to him.

In due course, the Sandwirth presented himself.

"So here you are, Hofer!" cried the Baron, feverishly shaking up the cushion under his head.

"Here we are, baron—in Innsbruck—"

"Aye, aye, I suppose you are all mightily pleased. If I had not had the worst cold I ever had in my life, I should have been up with you—(Just ring for a tisane—) Regularly knocked up at Imst, my good fellow—could only dictate my orders in a whisper; and fretted to death at not being able to lead the attack at Scharnitz. Well, and so—O, you've got on Chastelar's sword and pistols, I see."

"The sword and pistols the general gave me, baron."

"Aha! Made a good show! hey?"

"Helped to do good service, I hope."

"No doubt, no doubt. The people adore you, Hofer! And yet you haven't been much of a fighting man—what makes them like you so?—hey?"

"I do not justly know, baron, save that they know I love them. Love kindles love, you know."

"Aye, aye—well, but how went the day? Eisenstecken and you, I suppose, helped Colonel Ertel in winning the day?"

"Well, baron, Eisenstecken is a good lad, but I should have said Father [163]
Joachim, Speckbacher, and I won the day, helped by Colonel Ertel. But, since it is won, it's no matter."

"Just so, you all did your best, my good friend—"

"We were quite at a stand-still at one time, for powder and bullets."

"Hofer! what a shocking want of ammunition there has been throughout this campaign! General Buol has been in a wretched state, without either ammunition or money. There he has remained, on the Brenner with twenty-three hundred men, and actually not a cartridge!—"

"Our men were making cartridges all day long, for three days before the battle. You know, baron, the Tyrol has few resources in itself; we have few powder-mills, and the frontiers are now so watched that it is exceeding difficult to get any into the country, even when we have any money to pay for it, which generally we have not."

"No, and then you waste so much in *feux-de-joie* and such nonsense, at every rustic wedding and merry-making; every petty success. Why, I can hear your sharpshooters peppering away now!"

"Because yesterday's was not a petty success. Forgive them, baron. Every
time we fight you a Berg Isel, you may afford us a *feu-de-joie*. However, the [164]
lads are wasting their powder now, I acknowledge; and, when I go hence, I will stop it."

"Do so; and—just give me that carafe of iced water and the goblet; I'm so thirsty!—Have some wine, Hofer?"

"No, baron, I thank you."

"Tell them, Hofer, for goodness' sake, to husband what little ammunition they possess, for they don't know how important it is."

"Oh yes, they do, baron! They knew, yesterday, when their own was spent; and luckily, the Bavarians' was exhausted too!"

"Ha, ha!"

"Speckbacher has a little boy, who runs into the thick of the fight, picks up bullets, and brings them to his father to use again."

"Ha, ha! Cool!—Where's Speckbacher now?"

"At the heels of the Bavarians."

"Where's Major Teimer?"

"At the heels of Speckbacher."

"Ho!—Well, Hofer, you'll just speak to your men—and to-morrow I'll put forth a proclamation—I'd dictate it to-night, only my head aches ready to split—telling every true Tyrolean, whose heart, and so forth,—had better show his love of his country by abstaining from feu-de-joieing, and by hunting up, without delay, all such arms, rifles, muskets, swords, cavalry saddles, and
what not, as can be found, and bringing them with all speed to head-quarters. [165]
Bless my heart! what a number of precious lives might be taken by the

ammunition these silly clodhoppers are now wasting!"

"I'll go to them at once, baron. And, if you'll take my unworthy advice, you'll go to bed, and drink something hot."

"Thank you, thank you,—I believe I shall, or something cold, for I'm very feverish—you see one eye is quite bunged up already. Good night. I'm sorry you won't take a glass of wine, though. Let me see you in the morning."

Hofer assented, with a gesture, and withdrew. "Poor man! poor gentleman, I mean," thought he. "He seems much afflicted at having a stuffing in the head; almost as much as at not having won yesterday's battle. Well, well! we must each do what we can, we are but as God made us."

Here he was joined by Giuseppe Eisenstecken, who had been drinking iced champagne, and seemed very cheerful.

"*Sanvird*," said he, clapping his hand familiarly on Hofer's shoulder, "what reward do you think I have hit on for my work of yesterday?"

"What reward have I thought of for myself or Speckbacher?" said Hofer. "Our success is reward enough for us all, I think."

"Ah, basta! I have been a good adjutant to you, *Sanvird*. Without me the day would not have been won—" [166]

"Oh, indeed! I have yet to learn it."

"*Sanvird*, you have a daughter—"

"Three."

"Ah! Two are children—your Theresa is ... *bella, bella veramente*!"

"I have not now to learn that," said Hofer, laughing and shaking him off; "but you had better think of something else, my lad—you and she have nothing in common."

"Oh, I'm aware I am not common," said Giuseppe, "but any little advantage I may have of birth—"

"Hold, there, my boy. We Hofers have been Sandwirths of repute for many generations. Good night, now. I am very tired, and am going to bed; and I advise you to do the same."

Eisenstecken stared, shrugged his shoulders, and walked off to the theatre.

When the news of the victory of Berg Isel spread through the valleys, which it did like wildfire, much rejoicing and festivity ensued. The darling passion of the mountaineers is for music and dancing. Every cottage has its violin or guitar; and the Tyrolese not only sing, but have a gift of improvising verses, rough indeed, and with little pretension to polish or harmony, but not destitute of wit and satire, nor without occasional touches of pathos. These [167] accomplishments were brought into play at a national festival given in honour of the victory of Berg Isel. The chief merit attained or aimed at, is a quickness at repartee; each party in the impromptu dialogue striving to make the other ridiculous. Sometimes when the cut is very unexpected, the person assailed is bereft of presence of mind; and his or her confusion affords abundant amusement to the audience.

Theresa, Rudolf, and Franz were all good at this pastime—Rudolf the best, because Theresa's bashfulness often restrained her, and Franz's satire scarcely ever rose to the value of wit. At the rustic merry-making at *am Sand*, all three were present; and Franz, nettled by Theresa's rejection of him, assailed her with several such stinging impromptus, that were no impromptus at all, having been prepared beforehand, that Theresa turned the tables on him, with a true woman's malice, for cowardice on the day of battle, and invented such a number of absurd reasons for his keeping out of harm's way, that hearty laughter resounded on all sides; and Franz, smarting more than he showed, secretly resolved to have his day of revenge.

Meanwhile, the ground was clearing for wrestlers. Almost every Tyrolese wears a thick silver or iron ring on the little finger of the right hand, to use in [168] the pugilistic encounters they call *robeln*; and a fist so armed can inflict cruel wounds. Franz, irritated by Theresa's sarcasms, felt a burning desire to inflict some disfiguring hurt on Rudolf; and, though rather afraid of trying his strength with him, the evil desire predominated, and he challenged him to a match. But Rudolf happened to have no mind for it; and as soon as Franz clearly made out this, he never ceased pestering Rudolf, and twitting him with his backwardness, till Rudolf, at length losing patience, told him that if he did not desist, he would pitch him into the Passeyr.

Such a wicked expression came into Franz's face, on this, that it made Theresa's blood run cold; and she hastily interrupted the strife by exclaiming, "The miracle-play is just going to begin. Franz, are not you to be the

Philistine?"

The subject was David and Goliath. Rudolf was David, and Franz (on stilts) Goliath. The subordinate parts were filled by other peasants. Rudolf came in, driving a real donkey, supposed to be laden with the ten cheeses for his brethren's captain; and he questioned about the fight, and answered his brother's rebuke very effectively. Franz mouthed the defiance to Israel extremely well, and straddled and swaggered about like a very Goliath. The Passeyr was very handy to represent the brook that supplied the pebbles; and Rudolf, though he slung the stone near enough to his antagonist to make [169] Franz swerve his head considerably to one side, was at pains not really to hit him. Franz did not know this, however; he thought the pebble was slung unreasonably and maliciously close; therefore, when Rudolf ran up to his prostrate body to make believe to sever his head with the Sandwirth's own sword, Franz hooked his foot round his rival's ankle, and suddenly brought him with violence to the ground. This was so unexpected a catastrophe, that a cry, mingled with laughter, arose from the audience. But Rudolf was not to be so baffled; he clasped his arms strictly round his foe, who already was under him, and writhing, struggling, and rolling, they twisted one another about till Rudolf finally got his antagonist to the water's edge, and soused him in the Passeyr. Whereupon there naturally ensued a clamour of laughter and applause; and the victor was tumultuously greeted; while the drenched giant slunk moodily out of sight.

Rudolf now triumphantly mounted the stilts, and strode round the green; but Hofer, who had played King Saul, and who liked a joke as well as any one, aimed a large turnip so well at the right stilt, that Rudolf was suddenly laid prostrate. As his encumbrances effectually prevented his rising, (the ends being seized by several little boys, and big ones too,) he lay quite at the mercy of the public, especially of Theresa, who sang a requiem over him, much in [170] the style of "Who killed cock robin?"

Who killed poor David?
Can this be he who late was seen
The pride of every village-green?
Alas, poor David!

Who fetched him down?
On lordly stilts we saw him stride
A season brief, too swollen with pride—
Alas, poor David!

Take warning, all with pride elate,
Behold this hapless youngster's fate;
A turnip vile has cracked his pate.
Alas, poor David!

It was remarked that as soon as Theresa began to sing, the prostrate victim lay quite still; and as soon as she ceased, he declared in a loud voice that since he was dead, he was determined to be buried. "Four proper youths and tall" immediately stepped forward, and raised him, stiff as a log, on their shoulders, then bore him with decent solemnity to the dust heap.

After this deportation, Rudolf seemed to think himself exonerated from further communication with any of his fellow-mortals, except Theresa, with whom he was seen, by those who thought it worth while to look after him, in earnest conversation at the dairy-door.

[171]

CHAPTER XIV.

TROUBLED WATERS.

FOUR men, two of whom wore the brown serge gowns of Capuchins, might have been seen, on the fourth of June, sitting on the bank of a foaming river, and presently rising in stilts from the pebbly bed of the river itself, sounding their way in advance, as they crossed it, by the aid of long poles. These were Hofer, Eisenstecken, Father Joachim, and Father Peter, on their way to Rattenberg, where they were to meet Hormayr, Baron Taxis, the engineer Hauser, and the chiefs of the lower Innthal. At this time, the Inn was so swollen by recent and heavy rains, as to be both difficult and dangerous to cross; but the bridges had all been destroyed during the warfare, and our friends had only this hazardous mode of fording the river.

"I'm going!" cried Father Peter, in alarm, as the running water, flashing in the sun, dazzled his eye.

"Why, brother, didst never walk on stilts before?" cried Father Joachim, catching him by the arm, and heartily laughing. "Shame on you for a faint [172] heart. Steady, steady. Don't upset *me*, though, good brother."

"Or I may chance to get a rap on the head with that staff," muttered Father Peter. "There! I'm out of the perilous waters at last,—the most dangerous voyage I ever undertook."

Saying which, he scrambled out on the other bank, giving a lurch, however, as he did so, which entangled his stilt in one of Father Joachim's, and nearly gave him a ducking. The excellent Capuchin turned exceedingly red, but suppressed his wrath, if he felt any, merely observing, "Thou deservest a crack on the pate most assuredly, good brother!"

Then, having burst into a jolly laugh, that made the hills ring again, he suddenly stopped short, wiped his eyes, and went on, silent as night; till at length he said to Hofer—

"A laugh is worth a zwanziger now and then. Or else, it makes my heart sore to pass along this valley, only a few weeks ago in the highest possible state of cultivation, and diversified with villages in the neatest order; now presenting on every side a spectacle of ruin and desolation."

"*Eheu*," sighed Father Peter, in response, "'*Incenderunt igni sanctuarium tuum; in terra polluerunt nominis tui.*'"

"Nevertheless, brother," rejoined Father Joachim, "'*Lætabitur justus in* [173] *Domino, et sperabit in eo, ut laudabuntur omnes recti corde;*' which, if we interpret for the benefit of the unlearned, is as much as to say, the righteous shall, notwithstanding, rejoice in the Lord and put their trust in Him; and all they that are true of heart shall be glad."

"The Bavarians may trust in their chariots and horses," said Hofer, "but we will trust in the Lord our God."

"Ah, I wish we had some more horses, though," broke in Eisenstecken, "for we are miserably deficient in cavalry."

"What on earth should we do with cavalry?" cried Father Joachim. "Why, our very want of it makes us respected the more, because our successes can only be attributed to our natural intrepidity and resolution."

"Pardon me, father; our successes can only last among the hills, we cannot compete with the enemy in the plains."

"Never mind that," interposed Father Peter, setting aside an objection that could not be answered. "Let them keep their plains to themselves, as long as we have our hills."

While talking in this desultory fashion, they came up with one of those rustic processions so common in the mountains, when the cows, having

exhausted the pastures in the valleys, are driven up the hills for the summer. [174] The tinkling of bells, and rustic sounds of music which accompanied it, could be heard far off. First came the *senner*, or milker, at the head of the cows, with ribbons of many colours bedecking his hat and shoes, and a long staff in his hand, with which he gesticulated in a theatrical manner. Immediately after him marched the principal cow of a herd amounting to some hundreds, belonging to different farmers; her head and neck were decorated with immense garlands of the gayest flowers, interspersed with knots and streamers, pink, blue, and yellow, and bearing a deep-toned bell suspended by an embroidered strap. The other cows succeeded, each adorned with smaller bells, streamers, and garlands, and quite aware of their subordinate dignity. Then came the *galleter*, driving the heifers and calves, and having in his charge the fetters and halters of the whole herd. Then followed the goat-keeper, with a long train of goats; then the *schäfer*, or shepherd, with his numerous flocks of sheep; and lastly, the *sandirne*, or pig-driver, with his unruly herd.

When the *senner* in advance of this procession came near enough to be recognised, he proved to be Franz, who was a good herdsman enough, and being never very fond of either smuggling or fighting when they threatened much danger, was very glad to get a safe, and, in the eyes of mountaineers, honourable, employment for the rest of the summer. He enjoyed the pomp [175] and circumstance of the procession amazingly, and hardly less so the prospect of occasional long, lonely hours of luxurious idleness which were sure to follow, when lying at full length on thymy banks watching his charge.

Lenora had trimmed his hat and shoes with the greatest taste, helped him to furbish up the bells, and provided him with many little comforts. As soon as he saw he was recognised by acquaintance, his self-importance increased ten-fold. He attitudinized, strutted, and flourished his staff, till he made, as Giuseppe contemptuously observed, quite an ape of himself. Hofer, pitying him more than he deserved for the inglorious life he was going to lead, spoke a few kind words to him, and the priests gave him their blessings.

There is, or was, a good old inn, in the quaint little old-fashioned town of Rattenberg. In the best room of this inn, the three barons were already awaiting the Tyrolese, and chafing a little at their not having arrived first.

"Here they come at last," muttered Baron Hauser; "four of them, and we have only ordered covers for six."

"Who is the fourth?" said Baron Hormayr, looking up from his papers; "Teimer, perhaps."

"No; two Capuchins, Hofer, and a tall, swarthy youth—"

"Oh, Eisenstecken—I forgot the second Capuchin—he may be of use, but he [176] is not equal to Father Joachim. Well, Hofer, here at last, man!"

"The Inn was turbid, baron, and the bridges broken."

"Ha! how did you ford it?"

"On stilts."

"Ha, ha! that made you late, I suppose."

"And wet, too," said Father Joachim, shaking his gown.

"Ha, ha! Capuchins on stilts! The idea is amusing."

"I don't know what to say to that," said Father Peter bluntly, "unless you find amusement in the discomfort of your fellow-creatures."

"Pardon, good father. Hungry men are apt to be captious, and I feared our fish would be spoilt; here it comes,—let us hope for the best."

Father Joachim said grace, and they fed like hungry men as much as heroes. After the dishes were removed, which was not in less than an hour, they began to talk of business.

"We want a map," said Baron Taxis; "Hauser, have you one?"

Hauser produced a map, but it was too small, and proved to be incorrect. Hofer eyed it with contempt.

"I can draw a better map than that," said he, dipping his finger in his glass, [177] and making various small slops on the table. "This is Hobranz, and this is Kempten; here are our men of the Vorarlberg, and here the Bavarians."

"You have made Kempten too large in proportion to Hobranz," said Baron Hauser, superciliously.

"The position is the question, not the size," said Hofer; which was so undeniably the case, that the baron did not reply to it.

"Well then, here is Fuessen," said Hormayr. "The men of Vorarlberg must

try to effect a junction with Teimer somewhere hereabouts; and Major Dietrich, advancing by Ettal, will assist the communication; while you, Taxis, will advance towards Clagenfurt; and Leinengen towards Trent. We shall muster little short of thirty thousand men, regulars and Tyrolese; and if this movement succeeds, my judgment is, that it will lead to the entire liberation of the Tyrol."

The discussion lasted long; and the council broke up, animated with sanguine hopes of success. In a few days the scheme was attempted. Unfortunately, Martin Teimer, by some mistake, overshot his mark, and being ignorant of the country, strayed away from the men of Vorarlberg, and fell in with a detachment of the enemy, by whom he was nearly made prisoner. Meanwhile, the Vorarlbergers, whose eagerness had made them begin the fight early in the day, were disappointed of Teimer's expected support; and [178] only owing to their great intrepidity and coolness, were able to retire in good order: which was all they had to console them for not winning a brilliant victory. Count Leinengen was threatened with bombardment in Trent, and Hormayr and Hofer were hastening to his relief, when they learnt that the enemy had retired. A few subsequent skirmishes in the mountains had no result of importance.

Suddenly the news reached the combatants of the decisive battle of Wagram, one of the most brilliant fields ever won by Buonaparte, and disastrous in its effects on the Austrian cause. All further resistance being abandoned by the vanquished, they were glad to conclude the armistice of Znaim, by which they agreed to evacuate the Tyrol.

Words cannot describe the trouble and indignation of the Tyrolese, when this news, which they at first refused to believe, was fully confirmed. Eisenstecken, and a party of his companions in arms, rushed into the little cottage which gave Hofer temporary shelter, and passionately implored him to be their chief, and prevent the Austrian troops from leaving the country.

With mild and pacifying words he assured them how wrong and fruitless this would be. They then besought him at least forcibly to detain the Austrian [179] ammunition, and attempt the liberation of their country without the assistance of those who were deserting them.

Hofer demurred about the ammunition, but declared himself ready to obey the call of his countrymen, and appointed a time and place for deciding on what should be done. His listeners heard him joyfully, and hastened away to spread the glad tidings; Eisenstecken not hesitating to attempt to draw off from their allegiance as many of the Austrian privates as he could.

Meanwhile, Hofer, summoned by Hormayr to resign his command, required twelve hours for deliberation. Part of this interval was spent in grave and sorrowful consultation with his fellow chiefs, and much of it in deep and fervent prayer.

At the end of the time, "We have fought for the rights of Austria," said he —"we will now fight for our own."

This decision was hailed by the Tyrolese with transport. Attachment and loyalty to the house of Austria had ever been their prominent characteristics; they had been incited to rise by the Emperor himself, and had fought for him faithfully and well. Deserted by him, their independence was now at stake; and while despotism crushed the liberties of nearly all Europe, this handful of heroic mountaineers resolved to free themselves or perish.

The Tyrolese flocked to Hofer's standard the instant it was raised; the [180] Austrian troops in the Vorarlberg deserted their leaders and enthusiastically joined the insurgents. Many of the Austrian troops who had begun to march homewards, were persuaded by the Tyrolese to turn back. Nearly the whole of Taxis's corps deserted him, and quietly marched to Hofer, deaf to threats and entreaties. Hofer, who had declared himself willing to fight under Leinengen as a simple soldier if his countrymen preferred it, found himself unanimously elected Commander-in-Chief.

Poor Baron Hormayr was in a pitiable state of mind; annoyed beyond measure at the armistice, yet with every feeling of a disciplinarian outraged by the extremely irregular conduct of the Tyrolese and the insubordination of his own troops. Looking upon Hofer and Speckbacher as the magicians by whom alone the storm could be quelled, he sent for the former, and earnestly, importunately besought him to think well of what he was about before he refused to lay down his arms.

But Hofer was immoveable. He had deliberated in great trouble on what was right and necessary; and having besought divine direction, his conviction was now unshaken as to the duty of maintaining the cause, whether successfully or not. In his previous summons to Hormayr, he had been taken by surprise, had been very irresolute, had shifted from foot to foot, played [181]

with his pistols and sword, spoken absently, and betrayed all the marks of vacillation. He had had time to ponder and to pray; and now Hormayr might as well have tried to move Mount Brenner.

As for Father Joachim, he had gone off, in a fit of desperation, to his convent at Brixen, where he shut himself up in his cell, rolled on the ground, smote himself on the breast, and tore handfuls out of his bushy red beard.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GORGE OF THE EISACH.

THE Baron, vexed and provoked, next tried his rhetoric upon Speckbacher. Now, Speckbacher was like the Passeyr in a high wind up-current, "driven to and fro, and tost." He had of late been very unprofitably spending his time in endeavouring to reduce the strong fortress of Kufstein, and was a good deal humbled at finding it too hard a nut for him to crack. Therefore, when Baron Hormayr, with all his force of elocution, painted the hopelessness of the Tyrolese cause, and the certainty of their making things considerably worse for themselves if they were vanquished—Speckbacher lost his spirits and became convinced that the case was desperate. Hormayr, seeing his advantage, then hinted on Speckbacher's being particularly and personally obnoxious to the Bavarians as a formidable insurgent chief, observed on the desirableness of a temporary withdrawal from public notice, and finally offered him a seat in his own carriage if he would accompany him into Austria. Eisenstecken was on his way thither already. Speckbacher's [183]
heart hovered over his cottage among the beech-trees; but he was desponding and irresolute; a few coaxing words settled the matter—he would but make a hasty visit to his home and return, if the Baron would be so kind as to wait for him.

The Baron would do so by all means, but hoped he would be quick; so off sped Speckbacher at a swinging pace, but with a heavy heart.

Arrived at his cottage, what should he see but his little boy at the threshold, intently watching the farm-servant, Zoppel, making him a toy rifle. Directly he looked up and saw his father, he joyfully cried out, ran towards him, and clasped his knees; then seizing him by the hand, dragged him towards the house, capering as he went.

Maria, meantime, had come to the door with a child in her arms and another holding her apron.

"Home at last," said she with fond reproach.

"Home; soon to depart again," said Speckbacher, entering the house.

"No doubt," said she, pouting a little, as she gave him the baby to kiss; "that's what we must expect as long as the war goes on; however, you know, we talked that all over and counted up the cost at the beginning, and decided not to mind it."

"We did," said Speckbacher in a melancholy tone.

"So you must not mind," pursued Maria cheerily, "if I do give you a grumpy [184]
word or a pouting look now and then, because it is over in a moment; for I assure you, I remember all you said to me too well to think seriously of minding it at any time."

"But, Maria! Don't you know there has been an armistice proclaimed?"

"Between whom?"

"The French, Bavarians, and Austrians."

"To be sure I do," said she with curling lip; "but what have *we* to do with that?"

"Oh, what a question!" groaned Speckbacher.

"It hardly amounts to one, I think," said Maria. "Why, have not all the Austrian soldiery deserted to us, and is not the Sandwirth Commander-in-Chief?"

"My dearest Maria, Baron Hormayr has been using all his influence with us both to forbear from shedding blood in a hopeless case. And he has promised to take me with him in his own carriage to Vienna to be out of the way a little, till the affair has blown over.

"What, and give up the cause?" cried Maria in blank dismay.

Her look smote her husband to the heart.

"Then you don't approve of it?" said he, inquiringly.

"Why, *do you*?" [185]

"Well, I don't know—Eisenstecken has given it up for one—"

Maria dropped the baby into the little wooden cradle on the dresser, and began to furbish a brass skillet very vigorously.

—"But, if you don't," faltered he, "neither shall I; for, if my life is worth nothing to *you*, to me it is not of the value of a kreutzer."

"O Speckbacher!" cried she, suddenly flinging her arms about his neck.

"Well, what now?" said he; his eyes beginning to grow misty.

"How *can* you say such things?" sobbed Maria. "Not worth a kreutzer, indeed! You, the best Tyrolese that lives!—the father of a family—a married man—a responsible person—known and beloved by all—to talk of not being worth a kreutzer!—"

Here Anderl increased the effect by beginning to weep aloud, and with perseverance.

"Well," said Speckbacher, in a stifled voice, and drawing her very close to him, "you seemed to think I was deserting the cause—"

"Yes, only—no—that is—If Baron Hormayr says right,—and he ought to know,—why, the cause is deserting *you*, not you it—at least—Ah, it is not so! O Speckbacher, I am pulled two ways! why have you made me think the cause [186] so important all along, if you are going to forsake it now?"

"Why, so it is—"

"Then, why desert it?"

"Because, dear, they say it's hopeless. I wish you would not use that uncomfortable word 'desert.'"

"I will not—I feel persuaded that a brave man may forsake a hopeless cause —nay, I think he owes it to those who love him. What sleepless nights have you given me, Speckbacher! But now, if I think you are safe, my rest will be sweet."

"I declare I know not what to do," cried Speckbacher, tossing his arms upwards, and then starting up and pacing the room in an agitated manner,— then, throwing himself into a seat,—"I'll be guided by you."

"Then go with the Baron," said Maria, after a moment's pause—"yours is too precious a life to be thrown away. When I felt it useless to remonstrate, and my mind was convinced besides, I wound myself up to a sort of false composure; but now, that has all dissolved away; the necessity for it is gone, and I can only see you, hear you, think of you as the dearest of husbands, the best and tenderest of men."

Speckbacher wept. But his wife was firm. She packed up a little supply of linen for him, bade him remember the Baron was waiting, kissed him [187] cheerfully, and watched him till he was out of sight. Speckbacher trod much more heavily on his way back than when he came. Dejected, solitary, slow, dragging a lengthening chain as he went, he tardily returned to the Baron, who was getting fidgety.

"Your adieux took you a long time," said he, rather peevishly.

Speckbacher made no reply, but silently followed him into the carriage, and they drove off towards Sterzing.

Baron Hormayr felt it would not do to neglect his companion; and, being a man of considerable information and address, he began an agreeable conversation with two aides-de-camp, who were of the party, relating several anecdotes likely to interest Speckbacher, and beguile the way. Nothing could win from the dispirited Tyrolese, however, more than a divided attention. He assented absently to questions that were put to him, sometimes quite at cross purposes; and so clearly betrayed his dejection, that Hormayr at length ceased to waste his time on him, and entered into discussions exclusively interesting to himself and the aides-de-camp.

The road was at this time winding up a steep hill, and proceeded very slowly; being choked with stones and brambles that had been cast across it during the recent contest. Every inch of ground had been a scene of struggle; [188] to Speckbacher it was mournfully suggestive. Suddenly there appeared on a rocky path immediately above the road, a man in green with a red waistcoat, who gave a gesture of surprise when he saw them. It was Hofer.

Stretching out his arms to Speckbacher, he cried in heart-rending tones, while tears fast coursed his cheeks,—

"Ah! my friend! my comrade! my brother! whither are you going? they are carrying you to ignominy! Return, ere it is yet too late! Return, my friend! my brother!"

"Drive on!" cried Baron Hormayr passionately to his coachman, while Speckbacher buried his face in his hands. But, close his eyes as he would, he still saw the gestures, and heard the plaintive tones of the man on the rock.

His resolution was taken.

On reaching Sterzing, where some trifling delay occurred, he slipped away from his companions, and, procuring a horse, rode at full speed after Hofer, while the Baron and his party waited for him in vain. After a fruitless search, Hormayr perceived himself outwitted, and pursued his journey in no very good temper; though, being on the whole a kindly disposed man, he soon ceased to be annoyed, and even made a joke of it.

Meanwhile, Speckbacher, spurring along the mountain road, came up with [189] Hofer on the Brenner, and hastily threw himself off his horse, leading it towards him. Hofer, hearing his approach, turned about, and seeing who it was, paused, stretching out his arms to him. When they met, they mutely embraced.

"Escaped! Thank God!" said Hofer.

"Thank God," said Speckbacher, "I feel I've done right."

"Rely on it. The wonder to me, brother, is, that you could ever have been over-persuaded. What! is our love of our country a mere dream? How many have already laid down their lives for it! For my part, I can die for freedom, but I cannot live a slave. Will Austria, think you, be angry in her heart, that we continue the defence of the cause? On the contrary, she will secretly rejoice in every success. Are you not certified of it?"

"Yes."

"Every nation in Europe but one will rejoice in it. The English will sympathize with us, so will the Swiss, so will the Italians, so will the Northern nations. They will sympathize with us in our success, because we deserve it—and, should we prove unfortunate, they will sympathize with us all the more!"

"Hofer, go on talking—"

"First, let us pray, brother. Oh, how much we have to pray for! First, our [190] country,—that our poor, dear Tyrol may be delivered from all her enemies; then for our emperor,—that he may look kindly on us; and surely for our beloved Archduke John, whose heart is ever with us. Then for ourselves. Oh, we have much need to ask for direction,—we are poor, unskilled men, pitted against the cleverest man in the world; and how can we hold our ground without supreme aid? Then for our wives, children, and homes. See how much there is for which to pray."

Speckbacher reverently uncovered his head, and knelt. It was not the first time they had thus sought heavenly guidance together. They arose strengthened, calmed, and resolved.

On the second of August Father Joachim issued forth from his cell. He heard that Lefevre, Duke of Dantzic, had seized Innsbruck, and had boasted that the Capuchin's red beard should get well pulled; on which he grimly observed, "The Redbeard may be too strong for him yet." From that hour Father Joachim was known as "The Redbeard."

He met, by appointment, Hofer, Speckbacher, and their three worthy weapon-brothers, Martin Schenk, Peter Kemmater, and Peter Mayer. These men had all pledged themselves to free the Tyrol, or perish. Peter Mayer was he, who being afterwards shot by order of Beauharnois at Botzen, removed a [191] small crucifix from his heart, and handed it to a bystander, as the soldiers were preparing to fire, "lest," as he quietly observed, "it should turn the shot."

Hofer's indecision was gone. "I have received an invitation," said he, gaily, "from the Duke of Dantzic, to deliver myself up to him before the 11th. I have sent him word he may expect me, with ten thousand sharpshooters."

It was decided that Father Joachim should open the campaign. The general rising took place on the fourth of August,—a day to be much remembered.

The post to be contested was a bridge across the Eisach, which the enemy were resolved to pass, and the Tyrolese were resolved they should not. Father Joachim had prepared a tremendous barrier to their doing so. He had caused enormous larch-trees to be felled, on which were piled huge masses of rock, and heaps of brushwood and stones, the whole being held together by strong cords, and thus suspended over the precipice.

At one end of this fearful avalanche he stationed Rudolf, knife in hand, ready to cut the ropes the moment he received instructions from a comrade named Heisel, who commanded a view of the scene of action far below.

When the enemy began to enter the pass, they found themselves only opposed by small bodies of Tyrolese, who continued to fall back after [192] desperate but short attacks; and they began to think that though many warnings had been given them of the danger of this pass, they should find its difficulties exaggerated, and clear it without much loss.

Suddenly an old man, at least eighty years of age, with hair as white as snow, but with the fire of youth in his dark eyes, levelled his piece from behind an almost inaccessible crag, brought down his man, reloaded his piece, and continued his deadly fire, never wasting a bullet, yet without receiving the least hurt in return. His execution was so fatal, that a couple of Saxons were detached, and privately sent round by a circuitous path to seize him. As soon as they rushed upon him, he shouted "Hurra!" shot the first, seized the second in his arms, and, crying "In God's name!" precipitated himself with him into the abyss below. The combatants looked on for a moment aghast.

The next instant, however, the word "Forward" was given in a voice of thunder, and the invaders impetuously advanced, eager to get out of this dreadful place. But there seemed to be fighting, or some other obstacle, in front; the van did not advance, and the body of troops, jammed together between those who came on from behind, and those who did not or could not proceed in front, came to a stand.

Everything was so still at this awful moment, that a crow could be heard [193] cawing in the air, high aloft. This dread pause was broken by a clear voice far up above, but immediately over them, crying—

"Heisel! shall I cut yet?"

"Not yet," replied another voice, that came wildly through the air.

The Saxons, who heard these ill-omened words, were occupying a little basin, about two hundred and fifty paces across, hemmed in by rocks, except where the narrow road crossed a bridge. The day was intensely hot, and they were almost stifling. Suddenly they beheld flames in advance; the covered bridge had been set on fire!

"Shall I? Shall I?" cried the eager voice.

"Now then!" shouted the other. "In the name of the holy Trinity!"

"Forward!" almost shrieked the officer in command; but it was in vain.

"*Heisel, cut loose!*" A few quick ringing strokes of an axe were followed by a thundering crash, as though the very hills were giving way, and down rushed rocks, trees, and masses of earth, darkening the air, and the next instant burying the affrighted Saxons in heaps, or sweeping them down into the river.

Cries of agony and wild despair echoed the next instant through the defile, mingled with hoarse shouts and the tramp of cavalry. A trooper dashed madly [194] along the bridge; but before he could gallop over it, the burning beams gave way under him, and he was swept with them down the river. Some of the Saxons attempted to force a passage; others to ascend the rocks; but, weakened in numbers, and daunted by the formidable nature of the warfare, they finally gave way and retreated up the valley of the Eisach, while the Tyrolese harassed them with scattered shots, and finally retired to Brixen.

[195]

CHAPTER XVI.

THE THIRD VICTORY OF BERG ISEL.

THE numbers of the peasantry accumulated during the night. Hofer and Speckbacher were on the Jauffen, and thousands flocked to their standard. The rage of the Duke of Dantzic, when he heard of the defeat of the Saxons in the gorge of the Eisach, was extreme. He refused to believe the road impassable, and sent Count Arco in a carriage, with only two outriders, to install himself governor of Brixen. The count came back more quickly than he went. The duke, foaming with rage, set out on the foolish journey himself; declaring he would date his despatches "Botzen" before he was a league out of Innsbruck. "Better wait till we are there," suggested one of his officers.

He told the innkeeper's wife at Sterzing that "he was going to chew up the cursed peasants;" but he did not get as far as the Saxons had done. The rear of his detachment was attacked by a body of Tyrolese with great fury, and completely routed; they tore the dragoons from their horses, and killed them [196] with the butt-ends of their muskets. The whole division dispersed; and the duke made the best of his way to Innsbruck, which he ignominiously entered, disguised as a common trooper. And thus his hopes of chewing up the peasantry were, for the season, defeated.

Seventeen hundred Bavarians, advancing from Landeck towards Prutz, with the design of falling on the rear of Hofer's troops near Sterzing, were intercepted by a body of Tyrolese, who, after an obstinate fight of several hours, compelled them to retreat with great loss. At break of day the peasants recommenced their fire; but, finding the Bavarians would not answer it, a pause of several hours ensued, at the end of which the Tyrolese, impatient of inaction, mustered to the number of about three hundred, armed with pitchforks, pikes, and scythes; and shouting loudly, precipitated themselves towards the enemy.

The Bavarians, terrified at such formidable and unusual weapons of war, instantly hoisted a white flag, and unconditionally surrendered. About nine hundred men and two hundred horses thus fell into the hands of these three hundred Tyrolese, the rest having fallen or escaped. Of the peasants, only seven were killed and four wounded. Perhaps it was on this occasion that they drove their prisoners into a large cavern, threatening to shoot those who [197] endeavoured to escape.

Thus, without the help of the Austrians, the Tyrolese were successful in almost every encounter with their enemies; and these successes inspired them with the most confident hopes of effecting the liberation of their country.

And now the Tyrolese drew together to fight their third victorious battle of Berg Isel. Their numbers amounted, at the utmost, to eighteen thousand, including about three hundred Austrian volunteers; while the Duke of Dantzic found himself at the head of twenty-five thousand disciplined troops, with forty pieces of artillery. But his men were unwilling to fight; the Tyrolese were burning to begin.

Hofer commanded in person, and took up his quarters, as he had done in May, at the little inn of "the Spade," at Schönberg; where the bed on which he slept is shown with fond reverence to this day. The right wing was commanded by Speckbacher, under whom the brave Count Mohr led on the peasants of the Vintsghan.

Father Joachim came up with the main body during the night; and, learning where Hofer was, immediately repaired to him.

The tired Sandwirth was soundly sleeping when a vigorous hand shook him by the arm, and he started up, looking a little bewildered, till he recognised [198] the Capuchin.

"Is it break of day, father?" said he, rubbing his eyes. "I'm ready."

"Arise, and follow me," said Father Joachim briefly.

Hofer, in some surprise, rose, hastily dressed, girt on his sword, and mutely obeyed. The Capuchin went out into the open air, looked up a moment at the stars, and then strode forward without speaking a word. After a time, they found themselves in a little country churchyard, with garlands, crosses, and little vessels of holy water over many a rustic grave. The Capuchin walked on towards a large crucifix; and then pausing and addressing his companion, said in a low voice, "Let us pray; but not too loudly, for we are close to the Austrian lines."

The next moment they were murmuring—

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Then Father Joachim poured out his soul in prayer and supplication—in Latin? Oh no!—There are emergencies when the stanchest Roman Catholic must, if he pray at all, make his petitions in the words that come first. Father Joachim's were strong and simple.

The action commenced at six o'clock the next morning, August the 12th. [199]

The plan of attack very much resembled that of the 29th of May.

"The good old plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can;"

—in other words, that the Bavarians should take Berg Isel if they could dislodge the Tyrolese, and that the Tyrolese should not only keep their own, but drive their enemies completely off the field and make themselves masters of the bridges and approaches to Innsbruck.

No capital blunder seems to have been committed on either side. For several hours, the struggle raged with fury. The bridge of the Sill was contested with great bravery by both sides; but at length the Bavarians gave way, and were to be seen flying in every direction. The Tyrolese only had fifty killed and a hundred and thirty-two wounded. The Bavarians estimated their own loss at five thousand; and seventeen hundred wounded fell into the hands of their victors. In a few days the enemy had quitted the country, committing every excess as they retreated.

On the 15th of August, Hofer, having a third time delivered his country, made his triumphal entry into Innsbruck. His wife and children were in a [200] balcony to watch his entry. The old streets echoed with the continuous tramp of thousands of feet, and the merry peals of church bells were drowned in the shouts. He looked grave, not elated, and directed his steps, as before, to the Imperial Church; where, just before he crossed the threshold, the multitude renewed their acclamations. He lifted up his hand and finger in admonitory action.

"Hist! Now, prayer; not shouting.—One above—"

These simple words were heard by all. After the service, he proceeded to the Imperial Palace, which thenceforth became his home while he remained in Innsbruck. Here, his family, terrified and elated, clustered round him. He embraced them with emotion, then quitted them and went out on the balcony, to address the crowd below. And thus, in simple phrase, he spoke—

"Now, God salute you all, my beloved Innsbruckers! Because you would have me, whether or no, your Obercommandant, so am I bound to you. But there are some here who are no Innsbruckers. All that will be my weapon-brothers, must be ready to fight for God, for our emperor, and our fatherland, like brave and honest Tyrolese. Those who will not do that, should rather go directly home. My real weapon-brothers will not forsake me; neither will I forsake you, so true as I am called Andreas Hofer. Now I have spoken to you— [201] you have spoken to me: so God preserve you all."

For the multitude, according to their wont, were so fond of hearing their own sweet voices, that even these few sentences had been frequently interrupted by—

"Save you, Hofer! Hurrah!—We're all true weapon-brothers. And those that are not shall be ducked in the Inn. Long live the Emperor. Hofer for ever. Hurrah!"

The Sandwirth kept his family with him only forty-eight hours. He had a very great dread of the allurements of what, to him, appeared a very luxurious capital. So Anna and Theresa, having strayed about the city with the children, visited the Hoffkirche, the market, and the public walks, and enjoyed the

female privilege of a little shopping, contentedly retraced their way home on mules; for there are none but mule-paths to the Passeyrthal.

And now, certain barons, counts, and colonels in the Austrian service, who had seen a little of Hofer during the late campaign, amused themselves greatly by what they termed his "ridiculous" assumption in taking up his quarters in the imperial palace; and diverted one another with their imaginations of the banquettings and entertainments he would give. They [202] quoted the proverb about setting a peasant on horseback, and made humorous allusions to Sancho in Barataria.

The table-expenses, however, of this gluttonous man and winebibber, during his abode in the imperial palace, were just one florin a day. And if his elevation to a post of authority was as unexpected as Sancho's, his decisions in matters of justice and good order were as remarkable for plain sense. These, he made known to his loving countrymen by sundry homely proclamations, which were most exquisitely relished by the colonels, counts, and barons aforesaid, but taken in sober earnest by the people for whom they were intended. All these began with "Beloved country-folk," and "In the name of God, the Emperor, and the fatherland."

One of them enforced a strict restitution of all unlawfully obtained property: another prohibited every species of plunder, and enjoined a better observance of the Sabbath: and directed that taverns and dancing-rooms should be closed on that holy day. Another dissuaded from music, except in moderation; another recommended women not to wear their dresses too low, too scanty, or of too thin materials, (in all which the fashionable classes flagrantly offended in 'the year nine,') lest the valiant mountainers should be [203] led astray by their attractions. All which was delightful to the counts, colonels, and barons.

But the first proclamation of all could afford no food for ridicule. It called upon all the inhabitants of the Tyrol to observe a day of general thanksgiving to Almighty God for blessing their cause and delivering their country. It need not be said that it met with universal and devout acceptance.

Truly it seemed as if the day had been won.

Hofer never affected the least departure from the form of government established in the country by Austria. No step was taken by him but in the name of the Emperor, which the people gladly obeyed. He levied taxes to enable him to carry on the war, issued a coinage of twenty-kreutzer pieces, divided the mountaineers into companies, and, as far as was in his power, carried the ancient system of government into effect.

One day, about this time, Hofer was cogitating over a proclamation to the South Tyrolese, who were taking some little advantage of the absence of their commander, when one of his lieutenants suddenly entered, and said abruptly,

"Sandwirth, here's Eisenstecken!"

"I cannot see him," said Hofer, reddening; "he deserted us in our need."

"But he says he *must* see you—he's very sorry; and he has a special [204] message from the Emperor; and—in fact, here he is!"

In came Eisenstecken, looking still redder than Hofer; but he walked straight up to him, held out his hand, and said,

"Don't bear malice, Sandwirth; I did wrong, I own it. I was faint-hearted, and threw up a good cause as lost—many's the regret it has cost me! But, come, I have been punished enough!"

Hofer, after a few moments' pause, held out his hand to him, saying,

"I believe you, my lad. Why, every success of ours must have been gall and wormwood to you! Speckbacher chose the better part."

"He did, indeed, Obercommandant."

"Pish, lad! call me Sandwirth."

"Well, Sandwirth, I am an accredited agent from the Emperor, to express his sympathy with you, which he shows by sending a golden chain and medal to be publicly conferred on you, and which you are to wear for his sake."

Hofer's face glowed with pleasure. To be thus remembered by his Emperor, and approved by him in the sight of all! It was not the medal that was so much to him, but what it typified.

It was resolved to connect this expression of the Emperor's approbation with the celebration of a solemn fast, which was fixed for the 4th of October. [205] On that day, the Abbot of Wilten performed high mass in the imperial church of the Holy Cross; the aisles resounded with strains of heart-rending music, the air was faint with incense; all the pomp and ceremonial of the Romish

Church was invoked to add impression to the service; and at its conclusion, Hofer, kneeling before the tomb of Maximilian, surrounded by those armed bronze giants in dread array, received from the Abbot's hands the testimonial of his sovereign's favour amid the acclamations of his countrymen. Tears coursed his cheeks, as he breathed a secret prayer that he might never disgrace this badge of merit.

Eisenstecken, whose heart had often burned within him of late, at sundry ridicules of Hofer among those who had failed to support him, now looked on him as a man who had won a difficult game, and respected and esteemed him accordingly. Of this he shortly gave a very noteworthy proof, by requesting a private interview with the Sandwirth, and asking his concurrence in a purpose he had much at heart. Hofer shook his head upon it when he learnt its nature, but he spoke with perfect kindness; and the event was, that Giuseppe was presently seen, extremely well dressed, riding out of Innsbruck on a little ambling pony.

It was yet early, and the young man rode on to breakfast at Schönberg. He and his little pony had then five leagues of constant ascent up the Brenner. [206] After this tough pull, which placed him about six thousand feet above the majority of mankind, he reached the margin of the Eisach, which he followed till he came to a romantic little town, overhung by a picturesque old castle.

Here the pony was knocked up; so the young man, having refreshed himself by a good dinner, started for the Passeyrthal alone and on foot, by-paths that he now knew very well.

The call to the cows was resounding through the valley, when he came in sight of *am Sand* in the warm glow of the setting sun. He sprang upon a little knoll, to contemplate it more attentively; and, lo! just beneath him, on the grass, sat a young girl knitting, while beside her fed seven sheep and three goats.

"Theresa!" cried he, half doubtfully.

She looked up at him in surprise. The next moment he was beside her.

"Oh, is it you?" and an innocent blush mantled on her cheek. "You bring news of my dear father?"

"He is well; he sends his dear love to you all."

"Come to the house—my mother will be so glad to see you! She will have a thousand questions to ask."

"First,—are *you* glad, Theresa, to see me?"

"Certainly; very glad, indeed! Come in, by all means. I ought to have driven [207] home the sheep and goats already, but thought I would finish off my knitting first."

And, collecting her little flock, she alertly led the way to the house; while Eisenstecken could hardly make up his mind whether to detain her or not.

"See," said he, offering her a flower, "here's a pretty little thing I gathered on the mountain."

"Ah, don't touch it!" cried Theresa, shrinking from it in dismay. "It's the thunder-rose!"

"Thunder-rose!—what's that?"

"Whoever gathers it will be unlucky—whoever accepts it will be unlucky. Please, throw it away."

"Certainly, I will," said Eisenstecken, looking discomfited, and flinging it as far from him as he could. "I hope it will not be verified in my case."

"I hope not. Let us think of something else."

He gladly changed the subject, and talked of what was doing in Innsbruck; feeling the moment an unpropitious one for saying what was hovering on his lips.

Anna Hofer welcomed him kindly. There was another person present—a young, wounded soldier, sitting at the door, whom Giuseppe would fain have not seen there. It was Rudolf.

Nothing that the house afforded was too good for the adjutant who brought [208] glad tidings of the Sandwirth. Trout, roast chicken, pastry, were heaped upon his plate,—the best bed prepared for him, the best pillow-case and coverlet placed upon it,—all very hospitable and satisfactory; only—only there was that handsome young soldier, with his arm in a sling, receiving quieter but quite as flattering attentions as himself, and exchanging many a soft tone and softer glance with the smiling Theresa; all of which combined to make poor Giuseppe fume with jealousy, and kept him awake half the night. A few hours' dreamless sleep, however, restored him; he sprang up, full of ardour and self-

confidence, and followed Theresa to the fountain. There he told her—what he had better not have told to any one—for she was sorry, but steadfast, and confessed to him her heart belonged to somebody else, and could not be reclaimed.

The young man felt it very bitterly; he would not break bread in the house again, nor cross the threshold. He trudged back over the mountain, and when he saw a thunder-rose, he stamped upon it, saying, "Ah, you wretch! it was owing to you."

At the inn where he had put up, he ate a pretty good breakfast, mounted his little ambling pony, and prepared to re-cross the Brenner, in a very bad humour. As luck would have it, he picked up a comrade on the road, whose [209] cheerful talk beguiled the tedium of the ascent. They dined together, supped together, slept at Schönberg, and the next day Eisenstecken had recovered his spirits.

[210]

CHAPTER XVII.

REVERSES.

IN the streets of London, about this time, might be seen two sunburnt Tyrolese, rather bewildered at the strange sights and sounds around them, accompanying an Englishman to Lord Sidmouth's office.

Their names were Müller and Schonecher: their errand was soon told, in earnest, homely phrase. England was the home of the free. England was rich and sympathetic; the Tyrolese were fighting for liberty, but they were poor; they could not even muster enough money to buy gunpowder for their rifles. The present lull could not be expected to last long, for the enemy were already marching on South Tyrol. Would not generous England help them?

Of course such a question as this roused the British soul; and the deputies were received as we are wont to receive the latest comers, with hospitality and distinction. They were feasted, they were praised, they were encouraged; but—nothing more was done for them. People sated their eyes with gazing at [211] them, their ears with hearing them, and then—one man went to his farm, another to his merchandise; saying Government should take it up; and Government said it was dangerous, and thought it had better be done by private subscription. And so, nothing was done at the time; and when the grant of thirty thousand pounds was afterwards announced to them by Lord Sidmouth, it was too late—the war was ended.

The war burst out afresh in October. General Peyri, at the head of six thousand men, advanced upon Trent, summoning the Tyrolese to lay down arms. Twelve hundred Tyrolese and Austrians met his advanced guard at Ampezzo, and were repulsed with great loss. A sharp action took place at Lavis, in which the French were victors, and many Tyrolese fell; but they rallied under Eisenstecken, who drove the enemy back to Trent, and re-occupied Lavis for some time.

A dismal reverse awaited Speckbacher in the pass of Strub, where he was completely defeated, with the loss of three hundred brave men. His dear little boy, now just eleven, was hanging over him as he lay terribly wounded on the field, and trying to suppress the large tears that blinded him, while he made a kind of *turniquet* for his father with his twisted handkerchief, when a French soldier came up, and laid his hand on the little fellow's shoulder. [212]

"Ah, cruel!" cried Speckbacher, half starting up on his elbow, and sinking back again as the blood welled from his wounds. "Spare my child!"

"*Il faut étrangler les petits louveteaux*," replied the captor hoarsely; and unaware of the value of the wolf he was leaving behind him, while he dragged away its young.

Speckbacher groaned, and closed his eyes. "Maria!" faintly murmured he—that name, so sacred to a Catholic, made him feel for his crucifix. He pressed it to his lips, but could not utter even "ora"—hollow sounds, like the humming of innumerable bees, rang in his ears; he became insensible.

When consciousness was restored, he found himself in his own dear home, with Maria ministering to him. Directly she saw him recognise her, she began to shed tears; but, like a brave woman as she was, dashed them away.

"Where's Anderl?" asked Speckbacher faintly.

"I don't know, dear—hanging about somewhere, looking after you—he will soon find where you are, rely upon it."

Speckbacher *could* not; he knew more of his fate than she did, but said nothing. What a heavy day it was to him! He mourned for himself, he mourned [213] for the men he had lost, he mourned for his country, and he mourned for his dear little boy, marching to a French prison. He could talk to his wife of all but the last, but she would not let him—he was weak from loss of blood, and she insisted on his silence, and on his hearing her talk to him.

She told him that the Tyrolese, as soon as they saw him cut down, without

being able to rescue him, retreated in disorder to the heights of Melek, from whence they afterwards fell back to Innsbruck, fighting as they went; that Rudolf had found him lying insensible, and borne him off the field, and that Father Joachim had bound up his wounds, and sent him home in a bändl (or low cart on two fore-wheels), well cushioned with trusses of straw, and in charge of two men.

When Speckbacher saw her performing her various little domestic duties thoughtfully, yet cheerfully, and then remembered Anderl, his heart sank within him.

Maria could not account for the nervous fever that consumed him. His wounds were well dressed, and she thought he ought to be doing better than he was.

The next morning, after a dreamy, light-headed night, Speckbacher, in a half stupor, heard, or seemed to hear, a voice, a little way from the cottage, somewhere about the stables, say cheerily—

"Hallo! here I am!" [214]

"So I see," grumbled, or seemed to grumble, Zoppel, in return; "what account hast thou to give of thyself?"

"I've been taken prisoner, and run away. Does any one know anything of father?"

"Ay, surely; he's ill in bed, as bad as can be."

"Oh, how glad I am that he's at home! I left him all in a bath of blood. Zoppel!" (in an eager, under-voice,) "has mother fretted much about me?"

"How should she? She never wist harm had come nigh thee."

"Heaven be praised! Father, then, did not tell her! then, I'll not, Zoppel. I'm so hungry."

"Go in-doors, boy, bless thee, and get something to eat."

"I think I must." And Speckbacher, whose hearing was quickened by fever, presently could distinguish the boy's stealthy footsteps in the adjoining room. Meanwhile, his wife, waking, and leaning over him to peer into his face, and see how he fared, perceived a bright smile on his lips, though his eyes were shut.

"You're shamming," said she cheerfully; "what art smiling so about, Speckbacher?"

"Thoughts of my own," said he, smiling still.

"Come! tell me."

"Look into the kitchen, Maria; I think Anderl has come back." [215]

"Ah, the young rogue, trust him for that!"

She did not dress one bit the faster; and, when she entered the kitchen, greeted her boy just as usual. He sprang in to his father, gave him a bright, intelligent look, kissed him, and then laid his head beside him on the pillow.

"Mother knows nothing," whispered he. "How capital of you, father! Are you getting better?"

"Yes, dear boy: now you are come home, I shall get well very fast."

He did get well very fast; and was soon up and doing, fighting with the enemy at Waldrung, where he nearly fell into their hands.

The overwhelming force of France and Bavaria was dispersing the Tyrolese in every quarter. In the midst of this struggle, in which the mountaineers were so willingly pouring out their life-blood, Austria concluded a treaty of peace with France, and the Tyrol was made over to Bavaria!

Conceive the feelings with which a revolted slave, escaped back to his native chieftain, would find himself consigned by him to the slave-dealer again! Conceive, moreover, that the native chief had, in the first instance, hired the slave to return to him, and had openly or secretly encouraged him all along!

Eugène Beauharnois published a manifesto, promising the Tyrolese pardon [216]
and peace if they would immediately lay down their arms. In consequence of this, many hundreds of peasants, stunned at their fate, submitted at once, while those who still continued in arms were bereft of spirit and hope.

Hofer, for a few days, was paralysed. He left Innsbruck, now nearly deserted by his men, and returned to the Passeyrthal, to consider what was to be done in this strait.

As he approached *am Sand* by the little winding road among meadows that

nearly passes the church, he heard a loved voice on the other side of the hedge; and another, neither loved nor lovely, but of unpleasant quality, alternating with it. They were not close to him, but drawing nearer, and every word, through the clear air, was distinguishable.

"I don't think so, father."

"You will find it so, daughter. And if Hofer has any sense in his head, he will do as I say. It is decreed by Providence that the French shall be victorious; and if he opposes that decree, he will find himself knocking his head against a stone wall. He might even do this and welcome, if his own head only were concerned; but when his refusing to lay down arms, or to call on his countrymen to do so, compromises their safety, it is nothing short of selfish cruelty."

"Can it be so?" thought Hofer, pressing his hand to his brow, in painful [217]
reflection, as the voices now retired from him. He sat down under the hedge to try to settle his mind; but he could not. While thus sadly engaged, his faithful dog flew up to him, and leaping gladly upon him, prevented him from further reflection; so he rose and walked towards *am Sand*. Just outside the house stood Theresa, and the companion he had heard talking with her, a priest,—of a very different sort from Father Joachim. This man, with whom Hofer had had some previous acquaintance, had a narrow brow, a cunning eye, and something subtle in his gait and voice. As for Theresa, it could be seen by a very slight motion of the back of her neck, that she was displeased with him, and would not assent to what he said.

"Ah! here's father!" joyfully exclaimed she, as she turned round and saw Hofer. Running to embrace him, she hastily whispered into his ear, "Here is a tiresome, cunning French priest, who wants to unsettle us all."

Hofer's reverence for the church made him give a respectful reception to Father Donay, who, while supper was preparing, drew him into the gallery running round the first floor of the house, and there talked to him long and earnestly.

"Is the soup nearly ready, mother?" said Theresa impatiently.

"Nearly, child." [218]

"Then I shall call them in, for it will be quite ready by the time they are seated, and I don't like that priest to talk to my father. He's a bad one!"

"Hush, child!—"

"He *is*, mother, I can tell you.—Father! supper's ready!—"

Hofer came in, looking gloomy, and began unlacing his boots, saying his feet had swollen. Theresa drew off his boots, and tenderly chafed his ankles. There was a subdued, glittering light in the priest's stealthy eye.

"Thou hast lost thy relish, may be, Anderl, for country bread and cheese," said Anna, smiling.

"When I do, I hope the first mouthful of it will choke me," returned the Sandwirth, vehemently cutting up the loaf in huge slices.

"Cincinnatus, returned to his plough," observed Father Donay ironically.

"I don't know aught of Saint Senatus," remarked Anna, after a moment's thought; "is he in our calendar, father?"

"No, my good woman,—no, daughter, no—A good Roman—"

"That's to say a good Catholic, I suppose," said Anna: but the priest did not answer her—his mouth was full of soup.

Hofer could not get on with his bread and cheese. He sank sorrowfully back [219]
in his chair, and covered his eyes with his hand.

"Take courage, son," said Father Donay; "consider what a noble sacrifice thou art about to make—"

"What sacrifice?" cried Anna hastily.

"The sacrifice of his will, daughter; the hardest sacrifice man or woman can make."

"Something more than that," groaned Hofer.

"What's that?" cried Anna sharply. "Your will was always a good one—why should you give it up?"

"For the good of all—Hist, dear; these are not women's affairs—"

"No, no, better change the subject," said Father Donay.—"Tell me the meaning of those targets on the wall."

"Boys' playthings, of old, father," said Hofer sadly. "Dangerous ones, too."

During Father Donay's short stay at *am Sand*, he never ceased urging on his host the imperative duty, as a Christian patriot, of sacrificing his own views, interests, and safety to the safety of his countrymen; and even to place himself in the hands of General Drouet.

Regulus could not have been more willing than Hofer was to devote himself for the common cause; and, with his judgment obscured by Jesuitical casuistry, he drew up a proclamation to his countrymen, advising them to lay down their arms, and consider their cause as lost. [220]

The proclamation was received with despair by Speckbacher; with disgust by a Tyrolese named Kolb. He, meeting the Sandwirth near Sterzing, whither he had accompanied Father Donay, and where the unfortunate proclamation had been penned, hotly remonstrated with him, and declared his conviction that the document which contained the intelligence of the peace was a forgery. Hofer was confounded, and hastened home to re-digest his thoughts; while Kolb proceeded industriously to spread the impression of the forgery among the other chiefs.

Speckbacher and Rudolf were at *am Sand*, impatiently awaiting him.

"My friend, what is this you have done?" said Speckbacher. "You have given boldness to the vile and base, and discouraged those who were ready to die for their country. It matters little whether we and our weapon-brothers live a few years longer, but it matters a good deal whether their descendants, generation after generation, shall be freemen or slaves. You say, 'We cannot maintain war against the invincible forces of Napoleon.' Who made them so, pray? In the majority of instances we have not found them invincible, as long as we had powder and bullets. 'Entirely abandoned by Austria,'—why, so we have been all the summer, but what success we have had! 'A power of a superior order guides the footsteps of Napoleon.' O Hofer, Hofer! that *you* should write that! It smacks of Father Donay, certainly. 'It is the immutable decree of Divine Providence which decides victories and the condition of states.' Doubtless it is, in a large way of speaking; but Divine Providence takes into account the actions of men possessed of free will, which it foresees, but does not prevent. And as we have free will, if those wills are bent on freeing the land, under the blessing of God, from its enemies, doubtless it *will* be freed!" [221]

"Speckbacher, you make my heart burn!"

"*Let* it burn, Anderl. Take up your pen and write something better—something that will rejoice us."

"I hoped to do this from the first, but feared to bring the blood of my countrymen on my head—"

"Your countrymen are ready to shed it,—not on *your* head. Your cause is the cause of all."

"You are sure I am justified."

"Certain. Write!"

Hofer sat down, flushing deeply; and wrote quickly. The next day the following proclamation was dispersed among the Tyrolese. Many wept over it; many rejoiced.

"I felt inclined to lay down my arms, prevailed upon by men whom I considered friends to my country, but who, as I now have reason to suppose, are its enemies: I therefore call on you, brethren, to rejoin me. Were we to surrender to the enemy, we should soon see the youth of the Tyrol dragged away from their homes, our churches and convents destroyed, divine worship abolished, and ourselves overwhelmed with lasting misery. Fight, therefore, in defence of your native country; I shall fight with you and for you, as a father for his children." [222]

The Tyrolese rose to arms immediately, and the enemy was defeated with great loss. Generals Rusca and Baraguay d'Hilliers were despatched into the Pustherthal on the third of November, and on the following day were gallantly encountered by the Tyrolese, who were, however, driven back. Rusca eagerly pursued them to Mulbach Clause, where he met with most determined resistance; and, in his endeavour to penetrate into Hofer's own valley,—the Passeyrthal,—he was repulsed with the loss of two thousand men, in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

This warfare raged throughout the month of November, with various success; but the conquest of the country became inevitable, though the peasantry might retain possession of particular passes and fastnesses.

Early in December, the struggle was over. The peasantry were scattered; Father Joachim had escaped to the Grisons; Peter Mayer was shot; Speckbacher, who was the last to lay down arms, found himself deserted; [223]

Hofer had disappeared.

[224]

CHAPTER XVIII.

DANGER.

IT has been snowing all night. The Passeyrthal is mantled in a garment of white; at first not thicker than the fleece of a young lamb, but now ankle-deep; and there is more snow above, ready to fall.

A young girl, with drooping head and careworn mien, is issuing from *am Sand* with her milk-pail, and making her way to the cow-house, while it is yet scarcely day-dawn. Suddenly she stumbled over a man, bending down to the ground, and so intently engaged in measuring a foot-print on the snow, as not to have been aware of her vicinity. Instantly her voice is raised in shrill indignation.

"You pitiful priest! You mean, sneaking man! You may measure that foot-print as long as you will, for it was not made by father! You base, wicked Frenchman!—"

"My pretty girl—"

"Call me so again if you dare! Oh, you wretch! it isn't the first time you've tried the power of your sweet words with me! Caitiff priest! Some of these [225] days your frock will be pulled off; aye, and your mask first! Oh, you wicked, wicked man!"

Donay was actually petrified by her objurgations. He slunk away; but still, with an eye to his original purpose, in the track of the footsteps he had been measuring. Theresa, white with rage, was standing like a statue, watching his retreating form, when she found a strong arm thrown around her, and drawing her into the cow-house. Rudolf was shaking with suppressed laughter.

"Theresa! let the old hound follow the false scent," said he. "What do you think I did? I found this fellow lurking about, overnight; so I got a pair of the Sandwirth's old laced boots, put them over my own, and trudged right away with them to the edge of a steep bank, where the snow has drifted to the depth of seven or eight feet! Then I crawled along to the top of the hedge, without minding scratches, shovelling the snow about, here and there, so as to leave no track by which I could be traced, and returned in my own boots. Into that pitfall he'll go! Ha, ha, ha!—And serve him right!"

"Quite right," said Theresa, between laughing and crying; "but, you see, he has got the measure of father's foot."

"But that won't hinder his being led astray. And I shall deceive them all, [226] rogues as they are, over and over again, as you'll see, with this precious pair of old boots. Two parties of spies have been buried under avalanches already. And though they go peering and prowling about every dwelling and outhouse in the valley, asking their sly questions, 'Where's *Sandvird*? when was he last seen?' they always get the same stupid, indifferent-like answer, 'I don't know.'"

Rudolf drawled this out in such ludicrous caricature, that Theresa could not help laughing heartily. "But it is too shocking to laugh about," said she, checking herself with a deep sigh. "Poor father!"

"I am convinced he will escape them, Theresa. He is not a sanguine man; but when we parted, he said with such steadiness, 'I trust in God, in my faithful brothers, and in a certain nook in Passeyr,' that I believed him."

"How did mother bear up?"

"Oh, bravely. We travelled quite silently, for more reasons than one. Our voices might have been heard—they might have brought an avalanche down upon us from the Oetzberg—and our hearts were heavy. When we got to the châlet, however,—(it lies very high up, quite among the glaciers!) we found it situated in a kind of little kessel,[D] so as to be very unlikely to be discovered. A thicket of pines shelters it; there is a little pool or pond near the door; a [227]

stable below, a loft above, in which Johann and I slept—or rather, he whimpered himself to sleep, but I lay awake, thinking matters over."

"No wonder!—Ah!—" (sighing.)

"Well, I thought it was no good to stay there till it got too light, especially as it was snowing, which would prevent my retracing our track if I delayed, and effaced mine along with it if I were quick. The Sandwirth was serious, but quite calm and hearty. Your good mother offered me some breakfast, but I would not diminish their little store."

"That reminds me, Rudolf! They will soon be in want of food!"

"Soon, but not just yet. I think we may leave them alone another week."

"Oh, only think if their stock should fall short! Cold, peril, and famine *too*!"

"Well, then, at the end of this week, which will be in four days, I will start off with a fresh supply if I *can*."

"If you *can*?"

"Yes, Theresa; remember everything does not depend on me; the weather may be tempestuous, the search more vigorous and less easily baffled; but what man *can* do, I *will* do, rely upon it."

Theresa rewarded him with a grateful look, and then began to milk the cow. [228]
He stood by her the while.

"How everything has changed, Theresa!"

"Changed *indeed*—"

"*I* am not changed."

"Nor I."

"The winter, with its snows and its ice-blasts, is not more different from the summer, with its ripe fruits and sunshine, than the prospects of the Tyrolese now are, from what they were a few months, even weeks, ago!"

"No. Still I am glad we tried to free ourselves, though it did not please God to give us success. We can feel self-respect. Even our enemies must, I think, reluctantly respect us."

"Not they! Mark you, Theresa: I believe that when people lose self-respect, they also lose by degrees even the perception of what is respectable. Sometimes, o' nights, such big, swelling thoughts fill my head,—I think, 'Surely, what we have done, this Anno Domini Nine, will *live*? people will talk of it hereafter, when we have long been dead and buried?' And then I think, 'Ah, no! See how the emperor,—"our Franzel," as we used fondly to call him, who was most of all beholden to us, and who put us up to what we did,—'see how he has fallen off from us, like a snow-drift from the hill-side, that the river in the ravine below sweeps away for ever! See how it's the fashion already— [229]
how it was the fashion, even while we were winning glorious victories—for the Austrian counts and barons to look down on us, with a contemptuous pity, as a set of honest-hearted loggerheads!'—I say, you sir!" shouted Rudolf, interrupting himself, as he caught the twinkle of an eye gazing in upon them through a chink between the logs; and rushing out, he collared the spy, and gave him a good shake.

"Why, how now?" cried the intruder, who proved to be Franz. "What's this for?—what have I been a doing?"

"Spying and prying," said Rudolf, bluntly.

"Spying and prying?" quoth he. "Why, what have I come this long way all across the snow for, but to ask after the Sandwirth, and to offer Theresa a root of the gems-wurz, which, if he eats before sunrise, will make him bullet-proof? There now!"

And Franz drew himself up like a man aggrieved.

"Thanks," said Theresa, carrying her milk-pail towards the dairy; "but how am I to get it to him?"

"Oh, *you* know where he is!" said Franz, insinuatingly.

"No, I don't," said Theresa, who therein, as far as her personal acquaintance with the locality was concerned, spoke the truth.

"Will you like me to look for him, then?" said Franz, slily. [230]

"No, I should not," answered Theresa, very quickly; adding, "I don't want you to meddle at all in our affairs."

"Well, certainly, one has not much encouragement to do so, except for good-will," said Franz, following her into the house, and putting his cold hands on the stove to warm them; "they're likely to do what I am doing now—

burn their fingers."

Rudolf's mother, who had come to be a companion to Theresa in her parents' absence, now poured out the porridge, and summoned the family to breakfast. Theresa said to Franz, "You'll join us, I suppose?" to which reluctant half-invitation, he replied by drawing a stool to the table, and taking his share with the rest.

He pricked up his ears to catch any allusion to the Sandwirth, but none was made. A cloud had settled heavily on them all; but they had already learnt the needful lesson of silence.

Franz, after lounging about in his usual way, left *am Sand*, announcing his intention of going to Meran. Before he had proceeded far, however, some one said "Hist!" and he looked round and saw Donay.

"Well?" said the priest, coming up to him, and walking with him.

"Well," said Franz, "I've been there, and breakfasted there, but to no good. [231]
Theresa wouldn't drop a word that one could lay hold of."

"Ah, there are other things besides words that sharp people can lay hold of," said Father Donay. "For example, I have laid hold of something that certifies to me the Sandwirth has been to his house and from it, within these twelve hours."

"Aye? And yet, father, we've watched that house as a cat watches a mouse!"

"Pooh, pooh!"

"What's your proof?"

"His footprints, my son. One day, at Innsbruck, when your famous Hofer was lodging in the imperial palace, he kept me waiting some time. I left without seeing him; but, before I did so, happening to observe a pair of his clumsy boots lying on the parqueté floor, which they graced as well as *he* graced the palace, I soiled my hands so far as to take their length and breadth."

"That was far-sighted of you, father!" said Franz, with a kind of sympathetic admiration.

"Well, I did not know at the time all that might come of it—I merely amused myself by showing the clumsy proportions to one or two in the camp; but there must have been something pre-ordained—I was but an instrument," said this pious priest. "On coming to *am Sand* this morning, to look about a little, [232]
what should I see but numerous footprints in the new-fallen snow, different from those of any who are supposed to be sleeping in the house, namely, women and children. I dropped on my knees, and—*measured them*! they were Hofer's! I afterwards tracked them across the pastures, full half a mile, till—plump!—into the snow I sank till it was above my head!"

Franz burst out laughing, and suddenly stopped short, as he saw Father Donay turn red with wrath.

"You are rude to laugh," said the priest, with displeasure. "I nearly lost my life, I can tell you! When I floundered out, I found so many foot-tracks that I got confused, and could make none of them out to be Hofer's; yet, whoever it was who had walked up to that spot, must have turned back or gone on, unless, indeed, they could have been smothered in the snow."

"Which he may have been, in the darkness of night," cried Franz.

"Well, I think not; he might have floundered about as I did," said Father Donay. "Life is equally dear to us all, I suppose.—So, now I leave it to you to find where he is, whether there or anywhere else; and, when you do, you know your reward."

"Well, I can't say I like this job," cried Franz, after a pause. "Do you know, father, in a miracle-play, I once played Judas—"

"Well, you've only got to play Judas again," said the priest, with a sinister [233]
smile.

"What, and *hang* myself?" cried Franz, hoarsely. "Why, father, what is it you are asking me?"

"You fool!" cried Father Donay, in a rage, "the cases are not parallel: your allusion is blasphemous. Let me hear no more of it, I pray."

Franz walked on, silent and astounded, doubting which of them were the wickeder man. "The Sandwirth," resumed he, at length, with a choke in his voice, "has never done me a wrong—on the contrary, nothing but good. It is only Theresa—"

"Ah, if you can put up with that girl's scorn, you can put up with anything," said Father Donay contemptuously.

"I *can't* put up with it, and won't!" cried Franz; "but it's making her pay pretty dearly, too, if her father gets shot."

"Don't be such a dolt as to suppose it," said Father Donay pacifyingly; "the worst he and she will get is a good fright. He will be tried by court-martial; probably acquitted, or reprimanded, or sentenced to a short imprisonment, from which, at Austria's intercession, he will be released."

"If I were sure of that—" said Franz, hesitating.

"Why, don't you know I speak with authority? You know my credentials [234]
pretty well," said Father Donay. "I have all but told you who empowers me—"

"And you have promised me absolution, if any unforeseen evil comes of it—" said Franz, still uneasily.

"How should I do otherwise, my son? I will promise it twenty times, if that will make it any stronger."

"No, no—of course it will not. Well, then, I'll think about it, father: and—"

"And, if somebody else should do it while you are only thinking about it, he'll get the reward instead of you."

"That won't suit me at all!" cried Franz. "Why, if I make up my mind to do an ill turn, I may as well do it as not; the sin—that is, the—whatever it is, will be the same—"

"The intention, but not the reward," said Father Donay. "Heaven notes our intentions; man only notes works."

"I wish I were fairly out of *this* work," exclaimed Franz. "If Theresa, now, were to come across me at this moment, she might overcome me with a straw!"

"Truly, I believe you!" said Father Donay, with ineffable scorn; "and men of straw, or men knocked down by straws, are not the men *we pay*."

"Ah!" cried Franz, grinding his teeth, "if you were not a priest, I should [235]
think some evil spirit was within you."

"And I, without any if," coolly replied Donay, "think an evil spirit *is* within you—the spirit of irresolution. Come! no more of this child's play. Are you going to throw away a cup of good milk because there's a cow-hair in it?"

"Not I," cried Franz recklessly. "Nothing venture, nothing have. Give me a fortnight, and I'll hunt him up. When I was keeping the herds up the mountains this summer, I made myself pretty well acquainted with all the nooks and corners of 'em; and I guess the man we are after to be in a certain châlet in a certain spot that I chanced upon one day, when I was seeking for cream o' the moon."

"Cream o' the moon, indeed!" repeated Father Donay, ironically. "Well—if you find him, and enable us to find him, that will be better than moonshine."

"But, father! if I find him, and point out to you the place where he is, you may find him yourselves. I wash my hands of taking him."

"Wash your hands by all means. We'll take him."

"Very well—that's to be all, then?"

"All, and enough." [236]

"Just so. Good bye then, father—here we are at St. Martin—"

"*Benedicite*, my son."

The place of Hofer's concealment, a picturesque little cow-house—nothing better—was about twelve miles from his home, among the glaciers of the Oetzthal, near the Timbler Joch, and in a position that, for many months of every year, the snow made quite inaccessible. The winter of the Year Nine, however, was comparatively mild; and the châlet might be reached with considerable fatigue, difficulty, and danger.

At the door of this cow-house, then, stood the man who—we will not say had strutted his little hour on life's stage, for Hofer had never endeavoured to ape a grandeur that he had not; he was a plain, simple, upright man from first to last. He had attained a great, though brief power, and had not abused it: he had fallen from it, but not into despair.

In the profound loneliness and inaction of his present life, after so stirring a campaign, there might have been a chance of his mind preying on itself, had it not been for the constant sense of danger. His heart did not indeed prey on itself, but feed on itself it did. He mused much on his late career, and on the [237]
anxious question, had he been wasteful of human life or not? At this moment, he was reading, for the twentieth time, a letter which had found its way to him even in this secluded spot—it was from the emperor himself—the beloved

Franzel! strenuously urging him to leave his desolate retreat and take refuge in Vienna, and pledging his imperial word for his safety. Yes, this plain, homely man had thus been sued by his sovereign, and had refused. He would not forsake his family or his country.

His faithful wife had accompanied him, as in love and duty bound, feeling her home to be under whatever roof sheltered the head of her husband. She had her distaff and knitting; and as they sat among the trusses of hay chattering of this and that, many a simple wile did the good woman successfully use to lure her Anderl's thoughts from anxious themes. Now, it was to explain some family genealogy, some intermarriage she professed nearly to have forgotten—then, when he had wondered how she could be so forgetful, she would branch off into correlative domestic histories, harmless jests, recollections of wedding-feasts, baptisms, and burials; then, broach some knotty point, or ask him to recall some old legend or fairy-tale, or local superstition.

Hofer had brought Johann with him partly out of fondness, and to amuse [238]
Anna, partly lest he should be seized as hostage; and partly because he knew the little fellow to be without reticence, and as likely to betray him from heedlessness as an enemy might be from mischief.

CHAPTER XIX.

WINTER ON THE MOUNTAINS.

ON the 22d of January, about two hours before dark, Theresa and Rudolf's mother were busily packing a basket with as much as it would hold.

"When they started, there were four of them," observed Theresa, "and they carried four times as much as can be carried by one; therefore their provisions would last four times as long as they will now, so we must send them the oftener. Meanwhile, they shall have as much as Rudolf can carry. Here's room for a bit of soap: and here's a corner into which I can squeeze a cake for Johann. The brandy—the oil—the bacon—the loaves—the dried chamois,—do you think you can carry anything more, Rudolf?"

Rudolf lifted the burthen, and pronounced it "no weight at all." "However," added he, "there's some difference in a burthen on a level floor like this, and dragging one down the side of a mountain too steep to scale, except in *crampons*; so I think it will do."

"Just this one cheese more, Rudolf." [240]

"Very well. I think that will do."

"Is it not rather too early to start yet?"

"It would be safer, in some respects, to wait longer; but, considering the distance, and other things, I might fail of reaching the châlet if I put it off later."

"Yes, yes. Oh, Rudolf! believe me, I know full well the great dangers you are encountering for my poor parents—"

"Don't name it, Theresa. Even if you were no ways related to them, think you I would not do it for the sake of Hofer?"

"Surely, surely!" cried his mother. "My boy speaks well; but yet, Theresa, I think it were better to go twice, than go overburthened and meet some evil by the way."

"Rudolf," said Theresa, "you will laugh at what I have prepared for you; but see! here is a loose white garment, with a hood, to cover you quite up, which, if you put on when you reach the mountains, will enable you to cross the snow undiscerned."

"Excellent!" said Rudolf, arraying himself in it, to make sure how it looked. "I shall certainly find it useful."

Theresa rolled it up into as small a compass as possible.

"And here are a few lumps of sugar, Rudolf: put one in your mouth when you reach the glaciers—" [241]

"You make too much of me," said he, tenderly.

"And now," said his mother, "let us kneel down and pray."

With an atmosphere of sanctity about him, and a heart full of good purposes, the young man cheerily started on his perilous mission. It was yet light; but as long as he kept among villages and cottages, there was nothing in a man's trudging along, openly carrying a basket. Once or twice, when he fancied a suspicious eye rested upon it, he cried gaily, "I hope you expect as good a dinner to-morrow as I do!" and began whistling.

At length, after a walk of about six miles, he found himself rising above the haunts of men, though not beyond their observation. He now enveloped himself in the white garment, which covered his burthen as well as himself, put a lump of sugar in his mouth, and pursued his way over the frozen snow; looking like a snow-wreath himself. Suddenly he perceived footprints in various directions.

"Some one has been here lately," thought he: "this outer crust has not long been crushed. Yet who, without a purpose, would be here but the wolf or bear?"

Turning the angle of a rock, he ran against a man, who uttered a shriek, [242] and sprang backwards, throwing out his hands, and exclaiming—

"Avaunt, spirit of the mountain!"

Rudolf, instantly perceiving that his extraordinary costume had made him mistaken for something supernatural, would have seized his advantage by rushing past with a flourish of his arms, and a wild, terrific cry; but unfortunately his white drapery fell off.

"Why, it's Rudolf!" exclaimed Franz, relieved.

"Franz!" cried Rudolf, in alarm and displeasure. "What are you about here?"

"What are *you* about, you mean?" retorted Franz. "One question's as good as another. To whom are you carrying that basket?"

"That's no matter of yours!"

"I *know*. You can have but one object, and that's to go to the Sandwirth."

"Look ye, Franz," said Rudolf, boiling over with rage, and setting down his burthen: "this won't do to go any further. Who are you, to interfere with my objects, whatsoever they may be? We'll have it out on this spot. I've got on my wrestling-ring;" exhibiting a very thick silver ring on the little finger of his right hand; "and, if you choose to persist in this matter, we'll try a fall together, and I'll pitch you afterwards into the bottomless lake."

As Rudolf suited the action to the word, by flourishing his fists and [243] bounding towards him, Franz stepped aside in affright. He knew that the loss of an eye, an ear, or a nose, often resulted from these national combats; and his fear of Rudolf's prowess was such, that nothing short of death, to his belief, would ensue to him if he accepted the challenge. As for the bottomless lake,—which was a sullen piece of water in a neighbouring basin, reported to be fed by no springs and have no outlet for its waters; to be uninfluenced by the winds, and, when affronted by having anything cast into it, to blow up little tempests and thunder-storms of its own,—Franz had a profound horror of it, and was at this moment very unwillingly detained in its vicinity.

Therefore, succumbing before Rudolf at once, he querulously cried—

"Saints alive, man! what are you dreaming of? Who wants to be pitched into the bottomless lake? Not I, for one, I can tell you, this cold weather; and as for wrestling, I hope there are better ways of warming one's self than that. I don't care where you're going, not I,—rather you than me, on a January night! You take your course, and leave me alone to take mine; the mountain's free to us both, I suppose." Saying which, he walked off very fast.

Rudolf was terribly vexed. He was pretty sure that Franz was hunting for [244] the Sandwirth, and on the right track, and would probably return and ferret it out. After a few minutes' painful thought, he resolved not to be instrumental to it, if he could help it; and therefore went considerably out of his way, in order that his footprints might lead Franz astray, if he endeavoured to follow the trail.

The worst of it was, that Rudolf thus lost not only time, but his way also. A good deal of snow had fallen since his former expedition, and altered the aspect of the ground, making that appear solid which was unsubstantial, and creating mounds and hillocks out of snowdrifts. Besides, it was growing dusk, and the worst part of his journey lay before him. He thought he recognised a rock, which he might reach by cutting across what looked like an inclined plane. All at once, he felt the snow give way beneath him—he sank with great swiftness into an abyss of great depth, and profoundly dark. He was not hurt —merely shaken by his fall; but his perturbation was extreme, and his first thought, be it said to his praise, was not of himself, but of Hofer. He would be starved to death! Who would ever know, till too late, that Rudolf had never reached him?

The extremity roused him. He began to grope about with his hands, but could feel nothing but rough stones, and, here and there, what felt and smelt like bones. Moving a little onward, he perceived a small speck of white afar [245] off, which, it struck him, was daylight. His eyes, now getting accustomed to the intense darkness, could discern even the faint twilight which, through some fissure, thus attracted him. He cautiously advanced, found his prison resolve itself into some sort of deep cavern; and, advancing to its mouth, saw it guarded by two huge bears! They were looking forth from the cave, without moving, which gave him time to decide on his course before they saw or scented him. Hastily enveloping himself anew in the white garment, and securing his precious basket to him by his red sash, he took a large stone in

each hand, and, uttering a fearful yell, rushed from his retreat, extending his white drapery high above his head.

The bears, who certainly had never beheld such an apparition before, moved off in seeming trepidation; and soon, mending their pace into a clumsy trot, retreated into a neighbouring ravine.[E]

Rudolf, right glad to have dispersed his foes, wandered on amid enormous masses of variously tinted glaciers,—some deep blue, others sea-green, others dirty yellow,—resounding with the hollow roar of unseen waters; and here and there he encountered the dead bodies of stags, and other animals, not in a state of decomposition, but preserved by the cold in a shrivelled condition, like mummies.

Presently the path became a mere shelf, and, turning abruptly, disclosed a [246]
wide reach of valley at a tremendous depth beneath.

An Englishman's head might have spun, but Rudolf began to scramble upwards by what might be called some giant steps; and as these occasioned him one or two ugly slips, he coolly took off his boots, cut his feet with a flint, and let the blood flow from them, that its stickiness might enable his feet to adhere to the rock with more tenacity.

He was presently stopped by a broad and deep ridge of snow, which he found, on sounding, was likely to prove as infirm as that which had deposited him in the bears' cavern. But the trickling of water beneath the ice had made a crevice between the rock and the snow-bank; and along this Rudolf squeezed himself sideways, till he emerged at the foot of a glacier, dirty yellow without, but blue as lapis lazuli within. He painfully climbed another ridge by a zigzag course, and on through a wild glen of dripping, dreary rocks; while the fitful wintry blasts, sounding like the flappings of mighty wings among the crags, alone broke the awful silence.

Night was closing round him; he took many false steps, and repeatedly sank in snow to his waist. He was beginning to feel something like despair, when, lo! in a little rocky cup just below him, there lay the châlet of Hofer!

He could not resist giving a glad hurra and a cheerful whistle, pretty sure [247]
that only the right people would hear him. The next minute, he was at the door, giving the concerted signal; and it was instantly opened by Hofer, with his wife peering anxiously over his shoulder, and Johann pressing closely to her side.

"Rudolf, my dear lad!" cried Hofer, embracing him. Anna embraced him too; and Johann, seeing the basket of provisions, began to cry with joy.

"Fie, Johann!" said his mother, cheerfully; "we are going to have a merry feasting, after all! Only think, Rudolf, this silly child thought we were going to starve!"

"A likely thing we would let you!" cried Rudolf. "Why, I'd eat my own fingers first. Come and see what a heap of good things there are in this basket Johann! Here are some sausages, to begin with; and a seasoned pie; and cheese—oh, what a cheese!"

"That's famous!" said Johann, hungrily; while his mother sought to appease him by immediately giving him something to eat.

A miserable little oil-lamp twinkled in the corner of the stable; there was a cattle-trough, plenty of hay and straw,—nothing more.

"And how goes it with you, Sandwirth?" said Rudolf, seizing his hand, as soon as he had secured the door.

"As well as may be, boy. A little down, of course, now and then, with so [248]
much leisure for thinking of the troubles I helped to bring on our poor country."

"Never think that, I pray you, Sandwirth! You tried to bring us out of them —and *did*. It was only that we were deserted by our natural liege-protectors."

"Well, lad, don't speak against the powers that be. If God had meant us to prosper, we should have done so. His ways are hidden; but they're always good. And our Franzel has written me a noble letter—"

"The Emperor!—*has* he?" cried Rudolf.

"Aye, that he has," said Anna, leaving the basket to fetch the lamp; "do show it to him, Anderl."

"Why, how on earth did it reach you?"

"Eisenstecken knew this place," said Hofer. "He's at Vienna now, and he sent the letter here by a trusty hand—one who knew the mountains." As he spoke, he drew the letter from his bosom, and placed it in Rudolf's hand.

"Amazing!" said Rudolf, eagerly running through it, while Anna held the lamp to enable him to read. "Why, what prevents your accepting it?"

"What should make me accept it?" returned Hofer. "What should such an one as I do at Vienna? No, no!—where the tree was planted, there let it fall. [249] My country has been much to me, and I've no mind to desert my country."

"Your countrymen burn to secure your safety. Dear Sandwirth, reconsider this!"

"My sole thought," said Hofer, calmly laying his hand on the young man's shoulder, "is how to make a good end."

Rudolf looked wistfully at him. He thought he seemed worn and wasted by anxiety and abstinence, and his heart ached for him.

"Come," said he, gaily, "let us have some supper before we talk any more of these matters. I'm hungry enough, I can tell you; and I have plenty of news of one sort and another."

"First about the dear children," said Anna, eagerly. "Theresa—"

"Theresa is an angel," said Rudolf, hastily. "My mother says she never knew any one to come up to her—so thoughtful, and yet so tender."

"Aye, that's just Theresa," said Hofer; "and a good daughter, Rudolf, will make a good wife, I fancy."

"Sandwirth! you won't go from your word?"

"A likely thing I should," said Hofer, heartily.

"Come, let's drink to her," said Rudolf, anxious to get Hofer to take some of the sustenance he so much needed.

A couple of horn cups were filled with brandy tempered with water, and [250] handed round. Cold as the weather was, there was no fire; but they kept themselves warmly stowed among the trusses of hay. In a little while, they grew quite genial. Anna plunged the only knife into the savoury pie, and dispensed its contents. Rudolf told all the news and gossip he could think of, which was listened to with avidity by Anna, and rewarded by many a short laugh from the Sandwirth. Johann lay along on the straw, eating as if he never would be satiated, hearing all, and saying nothing,—quite content with the present moment, especially when, in honour of old customs, Rudolf sang a ballad, and the Sandwirth told a fairy-tale. The story was this:—

> "A young man, who had a fine cherry-tree, laden with fruit, in his garden, had the fruit stolen year after year by the fairies. Not guessing who were the thieves, and anxious to detect the culprits, he one year strewed the ground all round about the cherry-tree with fine ashes, that he might see the pillagers' footprints. Now, the 'little folk,' though a beautiful race, have ugly little webbed feet, of which they are much ashamed; for which reason they wear very long garments. Well, the next morning, the young man got up, and went out to examine the cherry-tree, which he could see at a glance had been stripped during the night. On examining the ashes, he [251] found them covered with the impressions of little webbed feet, as if a flock of geese had crossed them. He guessed the fairies to be the thieves; and they were so angry with him for detecting them, that, though they robbed his garden no more, his cherry-tree never bore fruit again."

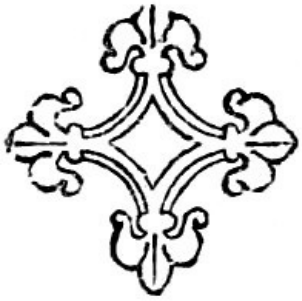
Hour after hour, they continued talking; till Johann, unable to keep his eyes open any longer, crawled up to his straw-bed in the loft, which Rudolf was to share with him.

Rudolf, now that his friend was strengthened and refreshed, referred to the Emperor's letter, and earnestly pleaded with him that the offer of protection should be accepted. He dwelt on the state of Europe,—as far as anything was known of it in the Tyrol,—on the little probability there was that any good would result from continuing to hold out, or from awaiting another rising.

"The spring will come, and find you just where you are," continued he, "unless some degrees worse off. You will have no resource but to accept the Emperor's offer; for every old ruin of a castle in the Tyrol will continue to be garrisoned with French and Bavarian soldiers, who will have so little to do, that their commanders will pursue the search after you, by way of keeping them out of idleness. So, why not give in at once, when you may slip out of the [252] country more safety than when the mountain passes can be again used by other than mountaineers? Your country, your religion demand that you should not throw away a life that may yet be eminently useful; and common sense shows that the most prudent care to take of it will be to quit the Tyrol."

"Ah, yes, listen to him, Anderl!" said Anna, earnestly; and the two argued and persuaded, till at length Hofer gave way, and consented to write to the Emperor, accepting the protection he had so lately declined, and asking for an escort.

Rudolf undertook to speed this missive to Vienna; and after some further talk, which carried them far into the night, he repaired to the loft, where he soon lay in dreamless sleep. The following morning, after another domestic council, and innumerable kind messages and promises exchanged, he, with hearty farewells, sped on his homeward route before it was yet light.



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CHAPTER XX.

THE CHÂLET.

A FEW hours after Rudolf had gone, Hofer was standing at the door of his hut, when he thought he saw a dark object stealthily moving among the firs. At first he took it for some animal of prey, but his next impression was that it was a human creature on all fours; and, as he had certainly been himself seen, he thought he lost nothing by rushing out on the intruder.

A man, creeping along under an ox-hide, started up, and proved to be Franz.

"What do you here?" cried Hofer.

"Why, Sandwirth, can that be you?" said Franz, in seeming astonishment. "Why, how you surprise me! How are you?—How altered you are, to be sure!"

"Very likely, Franz; but the question is, what brought you here to seek me?"

"Nothing brought me—how should I guess where you were?" returned Franz, hardily. "I came to look for a strayed calf."

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"Well—I've sought for a strayed calf too, in my time, but never up this high in deep winter, nor yet on all fours with an ox-hide over me. Franz!—now, don't tamper with an old friend. I've oft had dealings with you, and I've done you many a kindness. You know, my lad, I'm in jeopardy, and you know that if you say where I am, you will get me into trouble—"

"What matter is it of mine?" grumbled Franz. "What good would it do me?"

"As to the *real* good it would do you, I think you would get none; but as to a handful of zwanzigers, I dare say they would give you so much, for the price of your old friend's blood."

"Don't talk in that way, Sandwirth," said Franz, whiningly. "Poor as I am,—and I'm very poor,—I hope I'm not so bad as you think me."

"Well, Franz, as to poor, you have made a good deal of money in your time; and it has always been your way to be with full pockets one day and empty ones the next—"

"But they're *always* empty now, Sandwirth, for I can't do a stroke of business, and my mother's dead, and my sister's married to Karl Hoven, and Karl won't speak to me; so that I'm really what one may call *in want*."

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"Well, boy, well—the case is hard, I grant ye: but bad as it is, you'll make it worse if you take to evil courses. Go to Nicolas Wagner at Botzen—tell him that the last time you saw me, I bade you go to him and say I hoped he would give you some employment. And be mum—do you observe?—as to when that was. Stay, here are a couple of dollars—it's but little I have myself, and I shall perhaps need them shortly, as much as yourself; but you shall have them. Now, go; and forget where or when you have seen me; and according as you are faithful to your old comrade, may your worldly affairs prosper."

Franz looked sheepish, made a movement of his hand towards Hofer's, drew it back, and crept off. Even his gait was that of a caitiff.

"How altered the Sandwirth is!" mused he—"his hair, that was raven black, is now half grey; his beard looks as if it hadn't been trimmed for a month. His face is full of lines and furrows, and he is very thin. Why, he isn't half the bulk he was!—very likely, knows pretty well what it is to want victuals. Well, so do I; and when a man wants victuals, it makes him ready to do things that he wouldn't think of doing when full fed. Why now, these two dollars will keep me four days, I'll say—they won't keep me longer, because, this cold weather, I must drink as well as eat. At the end of that time, I must starve, unless through Father Donay; for, as to Nicolas Wagner of Botzen,—no, I thank ye!

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I'm as good a fellow as he; I won't work under him! Still, I can't be too hard upon the Sandwirth—I'll give him a fair start. He dropped that perhaps he

should soon be as much in want of dollars as myself. Now, as he can't spend them on the mountain-top, that must intimate that he means soon to leave it—very likely, now that he has taken alarm at me, he'll steal off this very night. All the better for us both, if he does. Because all I engaged for, to Father Donay, was to find out where he was. I've done that, and I can lead to the spot; but if, when they reach it, the steed is gone and the stable empty,—why, that won't be *my* fault, I say. Besides, they may soon make out his track and follow it; but meanwhile, my part in the business will be done. Well, but I won't do it while the Sandwirth's money is keeping me in bread. No, no; I'll give him his chance while it lasts, and I'll make it last four days—that will be hon ... hum!—I won't go a-near Father Donay the while, or I shouldn't make it last so long, and he'd get the secret out of me too soon—No, no."

At this instant, Franz—who, while his mind was thus pre-occupied, had unwittingly followed the path by which Rudolf had gone to the châlet instead of that by which he had returned from it—suddenly came upon the two bears, who instantly pursued him; and in his hurry and affright, he was precipitated [257] down a steep acclivity, down which he pitched over and over, till he found himself several hundred feet below his shaggy enemies, bruised and breathless, but not seriously hurt.

The search which was being made for Speckbacher, all this time, was quite as vigorous as for Hofer. Minute descriptions of his person and dress were published, large rewards offered for his apprehension; and every nook and corner eagerly searched for him by cruel and greedy enemies.

Speckbacher, on separating from his comrades, had first concealed himself in the little mountain hamlet of Dux; but his retreat being discovered, he was obliged to retire from the haunts of man, and was hunted from place to place, till at length he found refuge in heights hitherto deemed inaccessible save to the eagle and vulture. Here he underwent incredible sufferings from cold, hunger, and fatigue; but his indomitable nature made him prefer it to submission to the enemy.

When Hofer returned to his châlet after the encounter with Franz, his wife observed, "I really do think, Anderl, it is now time you should cut off your beard. It makes you unlike everybody else; and, therefore, easily recognisable at a distance; whereas, should a spy to whom you were personally unknown, find his way up here, you, without your beard, might easily persuade him you were somebody else."

"No, that would be the hardest thing in the world to me," said Hofer. "He [258] might deceive himself about me; but I could not deceive him. Whenever a man has put to me the question, 'Are you Hofer?' I have never yet said 'No;' and I cannot begin now."

Anna was going to remonstrate; but he smiled rather sadly at her and said —

"It would be to little good, dear—we are already discovered by Franz."

Here Johann burst into a loud fit of crying, and flung himself on the straw; while Anna stood speechless.

"We had better go somewhere else, then," said she, after a moment.

"Where? We dare not descend into the valleys; and if we stray about the mountains, Rudolf will not know where to find us, and we shall perish with hunger. Patience, dear wife! Rudolf may come again in a few days, and we can then concert fresh measures with him; or the emperor's safeguard may arrive in the meantime, and we can then avail ourselves of it."

"Ah, I hope we shall!"

"No doubt of it. Cheer up, Johann! Perhaps you will be staring at the pretty things in the shop-windows of Vienna in another fortnight. Come here, and see me carve this horn, and I'll tell you a story about what I used to do when I [259] was a little boy."

While Hofer amused this wayward little son with one story after another, rewarded therein by beguiling himself of his own heavy thoughts, Anna stood musing, with her eyes wistfully fixed on her husband's rifle.

"It has brought down many a man in battle," thought she; "and why not now, if spies come lurking about him to make a prey of him? He would not do it, I know; but, I declare, if I espy any one prowling about that has no business here, I'll see if I can't manage to hit him myself!"

Just four evenings after his previous visit, Rudolf reappeared. He did not think their provisions could fall short yet; but he was anxious about Franz, and he thought Hofer and his wife wanted cheering up, and would be glad to know the message to the emperor was already on its way; so he started with a fresh-filled basket.

This time he met with no interruptions, and had a prosperous journey; he had also the comfort of finding his friends cheerful and hopeful. They talked about his marriage with Theresa in the spring; the household goods they would start with and those which they must provide; and many a sage maxim of thrifty housewifery did Anna repeat and Hofer laugh at, and Rudolf promise to bear faithfully in mind. The evening, as usual, concluded with prayer. Hofer [260] was now in the habit of praying extempore and with great fervour, after the usual offices of the church; and Anna was wont to go over her beads very devoutly, after which they all joined in singing several simple hymns of a great many verses, and then lay down for the night.

Rudolf, as usual, slept with Johann in the loft. He was tired with his journey, and the evening had altogether been more satisfactory than he expected; yet, somehow, he could not settle to sleep. The conversation respecting his marriage had been too interesting and exciting to enable him to compose himself; add to which, he had a vague fear of some evil impending over the Sandwirth, for which he seemed to have no need.

When he slept by snatches, it was to dream painfully: of Theresa being borne from him by Franz over crackling ice, beneath which they both disappeared—of bears growling over her remains—of the emperor's escort coming too late—of Hofer's hut being attacked at dead of night—of the air ringing with the sharp reports of rifles—of his throwing himself between Hofer and Franz. Rudolf awoke with a start; and smiled to hear Johann talking in his sleep and saying, "Some more soup, mother." Then he lay wakeful, but still, till day began to break, when his quick ear became aware of the [261] measured tread of many men over the snow. Springing to his feet, he shouted to Hofer below,—"The enemy are on us!" and leapt from the loft-window to the ground, followed by the dizzy Johann, when both were immediately seized and bound. The châlet was encircled by sixteen hundred French soldiers, come to capture one unfortunate man.

The next instant, the châlet-door was opened from within; and there stood the mild Hofer, in his red waistcoat and green jacket, with the medal round his neck; his dark eye calmly looking around. His was the first voice that broke the thrilling silence.

"Speaks any one among you German?"

The commandant, Captain Renouard, here stepped forward, accompanied by a gendarme, and said, hurriedly—

"Are you Andreas Hofer?"

"I am."

The clear voice rang through the air. Turning to his wife, Johann, and Rudolf, he said,—"These have offended in nothing; let them not be bound."

Then, addressing those whom he loved so deeply, he said—

"Pray, and be steadfast. Suffer with patience: so will your sins be forgiven."

Their bonds were not unloosed, and Hofer was heavily chained hand and foot. Captain Renouard entered the châlet for a moment, looked around, [262] shrugged his shoulders, saw the noted rifle standing in the corner, and brought it out.

"This is a clumsy piece, after all," said he, handing it to the gendarme, after surveying it somewhat curiously. "Take care! it's loaded!" dodging it in some alarm, as the gendarme handled it carelessly. It would have been singular if he had been shot by Hofer's rifle, after all—the rifle that Hofer would not fire in his own defence.

The word of command was given; the troops closed around the prisoners, and began to descend the mountain. Hofer trod as firmly as when the master of Innsbruck. Anna's face was smeared with tears; but she was too proud to sob, and chide Johann for crying. Rudolf's heart beat wildly. He looked on every side for Franz; but Franz, having brought the party to the verge of the hollow, had prudently decamped with Father Donay, to enjoy such peace of mind as his conscience would permit.

On approaching a village, the French band struck up a lively strain of music, which nearly drove Anna out of her senses; and with loud huzzas, they proclaimed to the people who came rushing from their cottages, that they had captured the famous "General *Sanvird*; le fameux *Birbone*." They were answered with tears, maledictions, and lamentations. Though not permitted to approach the prisoners, the villagers kept up with them, crying aloud in [263] voices that the musicians could not drown—

"Never mind, Sandwirth! They'll bring vengeance on their own heads, Sandwirth! Keep a good heart! They won't dare to touch you! We'll never, never forget you!"

And this in every town and village through which they passed.

On reaching Meran, they were joined by the weeping Theresa. She had been seized and bound at *am Sand*, and the house plundered. The two little girls had escaped and taken refuge with Rudolf's mother.

The only consolation of the unhappy family was that they were together; but at Botzen they were sundered. Here they were received with more courtesy and kindness by General Baraguay d'Hilliers than had yet been accorded them. He would not triumph over a fallen foe, but received the brave and unfortunate captive with a soldier's frankness. He affected to be indignant at his chains, ordered them instantly to be struck off, and appointed him and his family a tolerably commodious prison, where they were treated with as little rigour as was consistent with their safety. Here they enjoyed the last snatch of unrestrained family intercourse they were destined to have on earth; it was embittered from many sources, but yet it had its sweetness. Their friends also had access to them; and many of the townspeople of Botzen [264] came to express their sympathy,—of whom Hofer asked forgiveness for anything they might have to impute to him; but he was only answered by their tears. The French officers, also, did all in their power to show, by their attentions, their sense of the kindness exceeding mere humanity which he had always shown his prisoners.

Some of them were surprised to behold the serenity of his countenance, as he conversed with his family, and gave them various directions concerning affairs small as well as great. There seemed no end to the people to whom he charged them to give messages of kind remembrance; often with some allusion to this one's wedding, or that one's illness, which showed that his head was quite clear enough to keep in view their minute affairs.

At length the hour of parting came, the last embrace was given, the last kiss taken, though not the last tear wept, by many; when he consigned his wife and children, in the companionship of Rudolf, to the appointed escort of French soldiers who were to see them safely to *am Sand*, and restore all the property that had been plundered.

"Sandwirth! I'll never forget you!—You'll soon be among us again!" were the last words that burst from Rudolf, as he clasped his friend in his arms, and then hurried away with tears streaming down his cheeks.

After the heart-breaking separation, one or two officers, with kindly [265] feelings, would have interrupted Hofer's solitude; but he mildly requested to be left to himself. His guards said he prayed; whether he wept, they did not say.

After a short interval of repose, he was sent, under a strong escort, to Mantua, and confined in a prison near the Porta Molina, already crowded by many Tyrolese.

He was speedily tried by a court-martial, which sat in the Palazzo d'Arco. Its president was General Bisson, already embittered against him and his cause by his own defeat. On comparing the votes, a great difference of opinion was found as to the nature of his sentence. The majority were for simple confinement: one or two had the courage to vote for his complete acquittal; but a telegraph from Milan decided the question by decreeing *death in twenty-four hours*,—thus putting the mediation of Austria beyond his reach.

CHAPTER XXI.

TYRANNY RAMPANT, GRACE TRIUMPHANT.

HOFER, though not expecting so sudden a doom, received the announcement of it with fortitude. "Let me see a priest," said he.

Father Manifesti, a dignified and venerable old man, immediately came to him, and remained with him to the hour of his death.

The greater part of the night was spent in devotional exercises; the remainder in conversing on the war; in the course of which, Hofer expressed his firm conviction that the Tyrol must and would eventually revert to Austria. He also penned the following letter to an old friend and neighbour in the Passeyrthal:—

"MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

"It is the will of God, that here, at Mantua, I change a mortal for an eternal state. But, thanks be to God! this step appears as easy to me as if it were to conduct me elsewhere; and He will, doubtless, [267] support me, and conduct me safely to the end, that my soul may join the company of the elect, in that place where it may be permitted to me to implore his mercy towards all those so dear to me here below; those, especially, whose kindnesses have reached me. You, yourself, my very dear friend, and your wife, are included among the latter; and my thanks are yours for the little book, and for many things else. Pray for me!—you and all the dear friends who yet live in the world I am leaving,—pray for me! that I may be delivered from the purgatory where I must otherwise, perhaps, suffer for my sins.

"My very dear wife will take care that mass shall be said, and a requiem sung, in the Chapel of St. Martin, and that prayers shall be put up in the parish churches. The innkeeper will provide meat and soup, and half a pot of wine, for each of my friends and relatives.

"My dear Puhler, go yourself to St. Martin, and tell all to the innkeeper: he will do what is necessary; but do not say a word to any other person of the affair.

"May you, and all whom I leave behind me, be well and happy in this world, till we meet in a better, and praise God for ever. I beg all my friends, and the inhabitants of Passeyr, to remember me in their prayers. Let not my dear wife afflict herself too much on account of [268] my death. I will pray for her, and for all, in the presence of God.

"Farewell, fleeting world! death appears so sweet as to render life unworthy of a tear.

"Written at five o'clock in the morning: and, at nine, I go to God, and the glorious company of the saints!

"Thy beloved in this life,

"ANDREW HOFER,
"Of Sand, in Passeyr.
"Mantua, February 20, 1810.

"In the name and by the help of the Lord I shall undertake this journey."

At the appointed hour, he was led from his prison cell to the bastion near the Porta Ceresa. On his way thither, several Tyrolese threw themselves, weeping, at his feet, and besought his blessing: others pressed their anxious faces against their prison-bars, as though to devour him with their eyes, weeping and praying for him aloud. Hofer paused, and begged forgiveness of them all, if, haply, he had led them astray; assuring them he felt confident they would yet be restored to the protection of their loved emperor Franzel,

for whom he gave a final hurra.

He had already given into Father Manifesti's charge all that he possessed, consisting of five hundred florins in Austrian bank-notes, a silver snuff-box, [269] and two rosaries, entreating him to convey them, with his last words, to his family.

Arrived at the bastion, the commanding-officer ordered his men to halt. The grenadiers formed a square, open in the rear; twelve men and a corporal then stepped forward, while Hofer remained standing in the centre.

The drummer then offered him a white handkerchief to bind over his eyes, and desired him to kneel down; but, to the first, Hofer replied, "I have been accustomed to look into the mouths of cannon;" and to the second, "No! I am accustomed to stand in the presence of my Creator, and in that posture will I deliver up my soul to Him." There was a simple grandeur in his words and mien that unsteadied the hands of his executioners. He gave a twenty-kreutzer piece to the corporal, recommending him to do his duty well, and pronounced the word "Fire!" in a firm voice. But they all fired ineffectually! A firmer hand, at length, proved successful; and Hofer fell—fell, to rise to immortal fame in this world, and eternal happiness in another! Among the numerous crimes of Buonaparte, none stains him with a greater disgrace than this.

Berthier, who was then at Vienna, excited general indignation by the hypocrisy of his affected pity for him, which led him even to assert that his death would give great pain to Napoleon, who would never have permitted it, [270] could he have helped it.

The spot on which he fell is still regarded as holy ground. His body, instead of being left for some time, as is usual, at the place of execution, was immediately borne by the grenadiers on a black bier to St. Michael's church, where it lay in state, watched by a guard of honour, that the people might see that the famous chieftain was actually slain.

The funeral then took place with all the impressive solemnity of the Roman Catholic ritual, as though, by the honour they paid his remains, the French were anxious to compensate for the injuries they had done him while living.

The voice of bitter weeping was heard from *am Sand*. The valleys of the Tyrol were in sorrow. Troops of dejected or indignant peasants were seen hurrying across the mountains, to attend the funeral services in the parish churches of the Passeyrthal. The widow and orphans refused to be comforted. A messenger from the Emperor Francis arrived at *am Sand*, offering the family an asylum in Austria, with money enough to settle themselves, and a pension of two thousand florins. But, no; Anna Hofer could not bring herself to leave *am Sand*. She accepted the pension, and the promise to provide for her son; but she herself would never quit the old walls.

Speckbacher was not immediately aware of Hofer's fall. We left him in his [271] mountain fastnesses, dwelling among perpetual snows, and only approaching the haunts of men when impelled by hunger. On one of these occasions, he was cautiously approaching a group of people, consisting of a man, woman, and some children, near the little village of Volderberg, when it struck him that they appeared to be fugitives like himself, and would probably prove unable to assist him in his need.

On approaching them, O joy! he beheld his Maria, with her children and honest Zoppel. They had been driven from their home, and knew not whither to turn, unless to some humble kinsfolk of Zoppel's. Gratitude for their reunion made them, for a time, insensible to their privations. Zoppel's good cousin made them welcome to some out-buildings, where Zoppel supported them for some weeks by the labour of his hands. Even in this poor refuge, they enjoyed sweet, though sorrowful, communion: Maria had the children to occupy her, and Speckbacher carved chamois-horns delicately, and made those exquisite little bassi-relievi of birds, with feathers fastened on paper, for which the Tyrolese are so famous.

At length his hiding-place was suspected; they withdrew to the ruin of an old castle, perched on a dizzy peak. Here, too, his enemies tracked him; so he [272] was obliged to tear himself again from his beloved family, and seek refuge in a cavern on the Gemshaken, one of the most inaccessible heights of the Eisglet Scherr. Taking advantage of a fearful snow-storm, which answered the purpose of effacing his footsteps, he, aided by Zoppel, succeeded in conveying to this dangerous place a stock of provisions, sufficient to last a temperate mountaineer a fortnight or three weeks. When these were exhausted, he could only depend on the wild animals he caught by stratagem, which he was obliged to eat raw, as the smoke of a fire would have betrayed him to his enemies. Endeavour to realize the terrible condition of this man—his solitude, inaction, exposure to intense cold, miserable food, and perpetual danger! And

yet, though fallen on evil times, he seems to have bated no jot of heart or hope; but, in the true spirit of a man and a Christian, to have endured.

At the close of winter, when the snow began to melt, he had ventured a few paces from his cavern, when an avalanche from the summit of the Gemshaken suddenly descended with an awful noise, and swept him along with it, down a descent of not less than half a league.

Though to escape with life was marvellous, he had not much reason to exult in his good fortune, for he had dislocated his hip; and, finding himself unable to return to his cavern, he painfully crawled towards the little village of [273] Volderberg, which had formerly given shelter to him with his family. He did not reach the cottage of Zoppel's kinsman, Hans, till after dark. Hans, hearing a slight sound outside, thought a wolf was prowling round the cottage, and approached the door cautiously with his rifle. On beholding a man crouching down, he at first took him for a spy, and was half ready to give him the reception he had intended for the wolf; but on hearing Speckbacher faintly say, "Hans, don't you know me?" he became overwhelmed with joy and grief.

"O master! is it you?" cried he. "O master! master!"

"Draw me in, Hans,—draw me gently,—I have broken some bone, I think—"

"Alas! alas! and we knew not what had become of you—my dame and I. We had given you over as lost. And to think of the poor Sandwirth being shot!"—

"Hold!—"

Speckbacher began to cry like a child. His sobs grew deeper and deeper, till they were terrible to hear. The awe-stricken peasants stood beside him, pressing their hands hard together, without venturing to proffer a word. "Tell me how it all was," said he, at length drying his eyes, and then bursting out anew.

Hans told all he had heard; and Speckbacher continued to weep. At length, [274] the good woman of the cottage got him to bed, tended him carefully, and gave him a warm drink in which she had infused a few drops of the steinbock's blood, that rare and sovereign remedy for all hurts in the mountains!

"This will throw you into a violent perspiration and put you soundly to sleep," said she sapiently; "and after twenty-four hours in bed, you will be quite well. The water in which I have bathed your wounds had had the ball that shot the steinbock boiled in it, for that also is of sovereign virtue in cases such as these."

Speckbacher did not lack faith; and, exhausted by sorrow, pain, and fatigue, he soon justified his hostess's prediction by sleeping profoundly, and for many hours. When he woke, it was with a heavy heart. Hans had called in a village doctor to see to the dislocated hip-joint; the case required inaction, but spies were abroad, and Hans did not believe his safety from them could be reckoned on for a moment. When night closed in, therefore, these two faithful men took the tall Speckbacher in their arms, and carried him through by-paths to his own cottage at Rinn, two good leagues off, where they deposited him in the stable.

Zoppel, sleeping in the loft, drowsily called out—

"I say! who's there?" Then, peering down upon them, "Why, Hans! is it [275] you?"

"Hist!" says Hans. "We've brought home your master, and laid him on the straw; and now we must be off, or day will break and we shall be seen, which will spoil all."

"Oh, what joy!" murmurs Zoppel, somewhat incoherently, as he slips on his clothes. He hastened down to Speckbacher, and they had a long talk together, before they could well see one another's faces.

"But, master," says Zoppel, "I can't think how on earth we shall manage, for Hans little guessed we have some Bavarian soldiers quartered upon us, who are lounging in and out all day, expecting you to be hanging about your home. But I know what I'll do! I'll dig a trench for you underneath where the cattle stand, but beyond the reach of their hoofs, and lay plenty of straw in it. Into this I will lift you, and then cover you well up with straw, only leaving you just room to breathe—"

"But, Zoppel, I should like to see my wife first—"

"No, no, master! no!—let her be, I advise ye. Women are soft-hearted, and she would be distressed beyond measure to see you in such a place, and would always be fidgeting about, wanting to make you more comfortable, and the soldiers would naturally ask themselves, 'Why does the woman go so often [276] into the stable?' and so you would be found out. No, no—leave her to me, master; I'll find the right time to tell her you're safe and not far off; but if I

told her *how* near you were, you wouldn't be safe long!"

All this while, Zoppel was digging the trench with might and main; and, as soon as it was finished, he lifted his master into it, and covered him well up: having previously given him a piece of bread and a good draught of milk. It was well he had lost no time in these proceedings; for scarcely had day dawned, when a couple of Bavarian soldiers lounged into the stable to look after their horses, and began to talk to Zoppel while he appeared to be busy cleaning some harness.

Speckbacher remained in this agreeable position seven weeks! *un vivo sepolto*—unable to change his position, and only taking such food as his servant could administer to him thus recumbent. But it was better than the cavern of Gemshaken—here he had bread instead of raw meat, and milk instead of snow-water: warmth instead of cold—society instead of solitude—proximity to his family instead of being beyond all ken of them—knowledge of the affairs of the world without, instead of ignorance and anxiety.

He could hear the hens cluck and the geese cackle; could look into the [277]
oxen's large, patient eyes, without fear of their betraying him; could now and then hear Maria's voice, Anderl's laugh, and the baby's cry. One day Anderl and his little sister had quite a long gossip just outside the stable, within a yard of Speckbacher's ear. At other times, he slily listened to the Bavarians; through whom, as they cleaned their horses, he learned a good deal of news that was not intended for him: among other things, that they were heartily sick of their present life.

His posture became almost intolerably irksome and painful; but it effected one good thing; an entire cure of his dislocated joint; and, when he found himself growing impatient, he thought of Him who was born in a manger.

At length, just as he was beginning to feel he could bear it no longer, the soldiers ran in, began saddling their horses, and, as he gathered from them, were about to depart. In about an hour, Zoppel came in, full of suppressed joy. After carefully securing the door, "I am now going to dig you up," said he, "wash you, dress you, and trim your hair and beard; for if your wife were to see you as you are, she would take you for a wild beast."

Poor Speckbacher was quite a log in his hands; for long inaction had
deprived him of the use of his limbs; and it was not in less than two or three [278]
days that he was able to quit the stable. Meanwhile, however, Zoppel, having finished his task much to their mutual satisfaction, sought Maria, and told her the wonderful secret. The joy of the meeting, when she flew into the stable, need hardly be described.

It was felt, however, that the Tyrol could not shelter him; therefore, as soon as he regained the use of his limbs, he reluctantly gave the children his farewell embrace and blessing, and started at dusk towards the Styrian Alps, accompanied the first league by his faithful wife.

Once across the Alps, he was no longer in danger; and, after a fatiguing and painful journey, he reached Vienna, where he was joined a few months afterwards by his Maria and the children. Here they remained quietly, till the Tyrol reverted to Austria, when they returned to spend the remainder of their days in their beloved country. Speckbacher lived till 1820, when he died at the age of fifty-two, and was buried with military honours. His brave son Anderl was recently, and may be now, superintendent of the iron-works at Jenbach.

Father Joachim, after hiding in various quarters, and leading a life of great peril for nearly a year, at length succeeded in crossing the Bavarian Alps to the Lake of Constance. By way of St. Gall, he reached the abbey of Einsiedeln,
in Switzerland. From thence he passed into the estates of Venice; and, by way [279]
of Friuli and Carinthia, he at length reached Vienna, where he found Speckbacher. He received a golden cross and a sum of money from the emperor, in acknowledgment of his loyal service; and for some years afterwards, he officiated in different cures in Lower Austria.

In 1848, the cry went through the Tyrol, "The Rothbart is up again!" and eager volunteers flocked round the old man, who was once more, as field-chaplain, on his way to the battle-field in Italy. Danger seemed to threaten the empire from that quarter; and the Tyrolese, with their old fidelity, were again ready to fight for Austria.

In 1856, the veteran had quarters assigned him in the imperial summer-palace at Salzberg, with a pension of a thousand florins per annum. There, on fine days, he might be seen, scarcely more than a year ago, sitting under the majestic trees in tranquil meditation. His hair was silver-grey; he was slightly lame, a little deaf, and very chary of his speech: but, if spoken to of *the Year Nine*, his cheek would kindle, his eye would light up, and the old man would speak of his comrades and their stirring deeds as if they were but of

yesterday. His jubilee,—the fiftieth anniversary of his priesthood,—was held last September. Soon afterwards, the venerable Capuchin was gathered to his fathers.

In the autumn of 1810, a wedding-train might have been seen issuing from [280]
the little church of St. Martin, and proceeding to *am Sand*. It was not a gay, but a sympathetic festival, for many of Hofer's companions in arms were there; and, though several spies mingled among them, they were on their guard, and would not be tempted by them to pledge the dangerous toast, "Freiheit Zur Tyrol!" But they drank health and happiness to Rudolf and Theresa, and many an old allusion was safely made, with a sigh, under the breath, and standing apart; and they felt they all loved one another the dearer for having suffered together in a generous though lost cause.

In 1824, a tardy act of justice was done by the Emperor of Austria. The remains of Hofer were removed to Botzen; and thence, in solemn procession, to Innsbruck, where they were interred in the imperial church, on the day following the fourteenth anniversary of his execution. The Tyrolese flocked to join the funeral in astonishing multitudes. The governor of the Tyrol took part in it; the nobles and dignitaries of the land swelled the train; long columns of imperial troops slowly marched to the solemn strains of music that befit a soldier's funeral. Then came the priests in their sacred vestments, with crosier and crucifix borne aloft. On the coffin lay Hofer's hat, sword, gold chain, and medal. Twelve of his brother innkeepers bore the pall, and many of [281]
his companions in arms followed in the procession. The Abbot of Wiltau pronounced the funeral benediction,—a requiem was chanted; and then—they left his perishable remains with all the honours that perishable men have to give.

A monument has since been erected over his tomb, which is not far from that giant-guarded one of the Emperor Maximilian, and excites as much interest, though of a different kind. His statue well represents him in his accustomed peasant-garb, his face turned heavenward, one hand grasping the national banner, the other holding the barrel of the rifle slung from his shoulder. His sword-belt bears his initials, and the date of the Year Nine. The whole embodies your conception of the man.

His name continues to be a dangerous spell. It is spoken under the breath, if spoken at all. Gold cannot buy any memoir of his life in the Tyrol. The German accounts of him are in the highest degree depreciating. His poor relics in the Innsbruck Museum were at one time deemed too exciting to be seen. But his spirit still lives among the mountains: his name will never perish.

It was soon after the statue had been erected, that a couple of men might have been seen attentively gazing upon it. The taller and elder of the two leant strongly on the shoulder of the younger—the likeness they bore one [282]
another bespoke them father and son.

Speckbacher gazed long and earnestly—then dashed away a tear. "'Tis himself," murmured he, in a low, emphatic voice; "as like as stone can be to flesh and blood. See, Anderl! how a plain, homely, upright man may achieve fame! But yet this sinks into nothing, compared with his heavenly reward."

THE END.

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FOOTNOTES

[A] The reigning emperor.

[B] The archduke John.

[1] A wild mountain cry.

[C] Bisson had the command at Mantua when Hofer was shot.

[D] *i.e.*, kettle: a deep circular valley, shut in by hills.

[E] This incident really occurred between the Passeyr and Meran.

Transcriber's Notes:

Obvious punctuation mistakes were corrected.

Variations in spelling remain as in the original unless noted below.

Page 14, "will" changed to "Will."
Page 103, opening quotation mark added.
Page 106, closing quotation marks after "1809" fixed.
Page 187, "fidgetty" changed to "fidgety."
Page 237, "recal" changed to "recall."
Page 262, "chid" changed to "chide."
Page 283, "GEOLOGIGAL" changed to "GEOLOGICAL."
Catalogue of Works, page 2, page 13, "ENFANS" changed to "ENFANTS."
Catalogue of Works, page 9, "dges" changed to "edges."
Catalogue of Works, page 9, "loth" changed to "cloth."

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