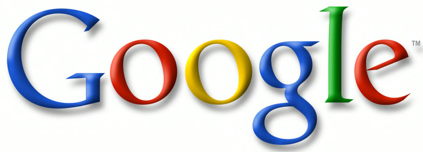

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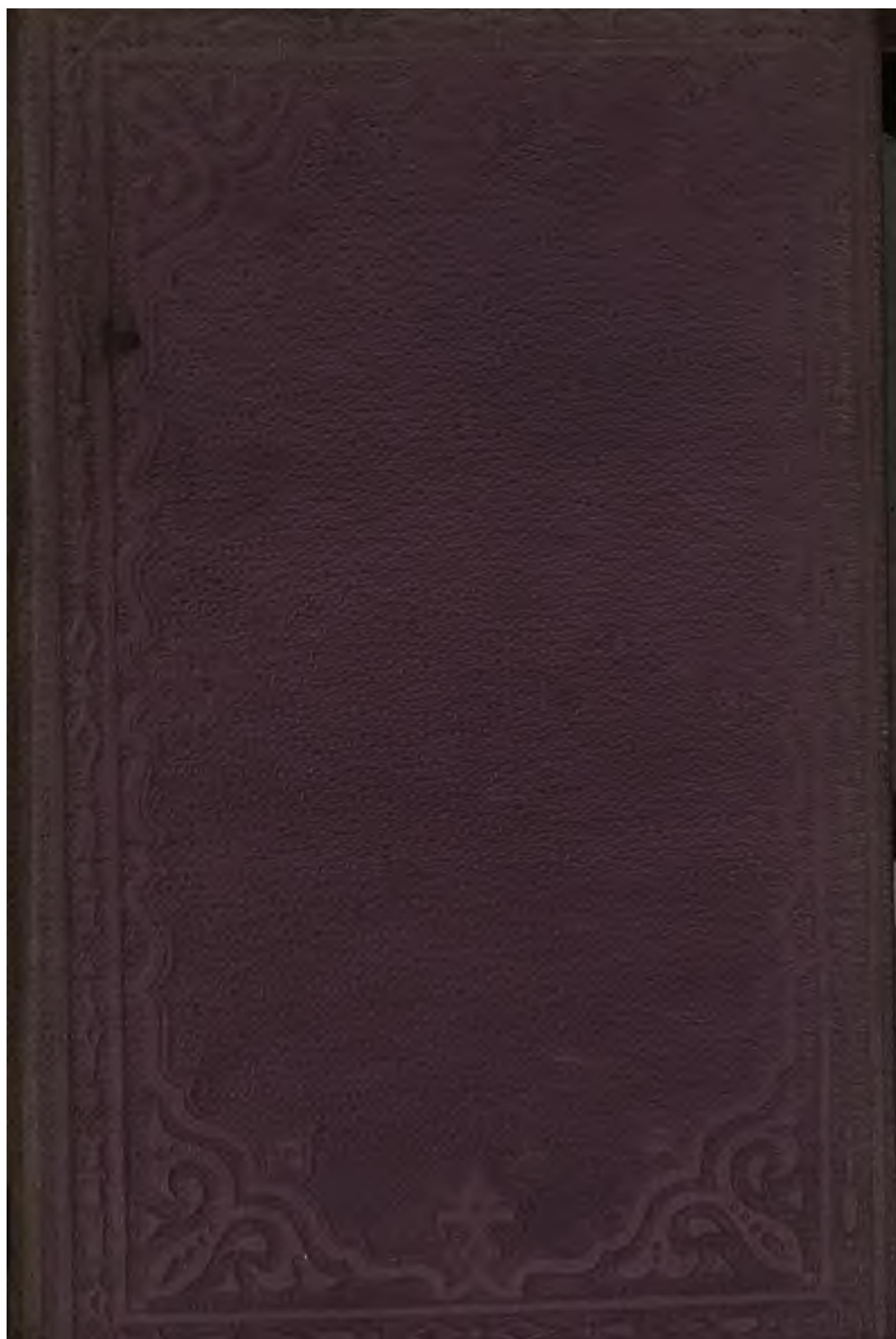

THE INTERRUPTED WEDDING.

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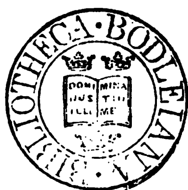
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The Interrupted Wedding.

CHAPTER I.

LES NOCES DU VILLAGE.

IT was a brilliant September morning in the year 1848. A long light wagon, drawn by three spirited little Hungarian horses, stood at the door of a rustic inn, while the driver, in his broad-brimmed hat and tall boots, was busily engaged in mending the harness, which, except a strap across the breast, was entirely of thin cord. Two Magyar peasants in their holiday suits, one of them young and good-looking, were awaiting the completion of the task; and the younger one especially was so urgent in his solicitations that the driver hastily pronounced the job finished, and they scrambled into their places.

A false start and a sudden pull-up produced a roar of laughter from the jolly landlord, and a torrent of reproaches from the peasants. The driver, who was in fact one of the party, leapt out and hastened to repair the harness, declaring, with a droll look, that if they had not been so impatient at first his work would not have required twice doing.

"Have mercy on him, Sandro," cried the publican, "and remember he is a bridegroom on his way to the wedding."

Then, re-entering the inn, he speedily returned with a large bottle in each hand, and presented them to the young man, saying—

"You will find these contain something better than common. No thanks, I pray you! I have pleasure in contributing to your wedding-feast. Remember me kindly to Janos, and tell him I hope he keeps to windward of the Haiduk!"

The young man's brown eyes shone with pleasure as he stretched out his brown hands to receive the present. At the same instant, the fiery little horses, starting off with a bound, nearly signed the death-warrant of the bottles, which the bridegroom grasped by their necks, and never loosed his hold of while the journey lasted.

Away—away ! at full gallop, with little regard for safety ; not over the flat, interminable Puzsta, but along rough country roads, now past deserted iron-works, now through fields of Indian corn and sugar-grass, now skirting savage woods peopled by wolves, and haply bears, and lynxes almost as large as leopards. The fiery little horses never flagged, and reserved their best speed for the last, when they dashed into the village, about fifty miles from Pesth, where lived Susi, Paul's betrothed.

A ruinous old castle, perched on an abrupt hill, overlooked the village street, which was magnificently wide, though magnificent in nothing else. At the upper end of it stood the ancient church, which had known strange vicissitudes during the religious wars, and the curate's wooden house, from which more than one godly minister had been ejected, and his goods tossed after him through the window.

In the centre of the village stood a picturesque little obelisk—the punishing-pillar of the good old times ; characteristically hung with handcuffs, leg-chains, and neck-iron. And if these instruments could have spoken, many a tale might they have told, of pious confessors as well as notorious evil-doers brought under their yoke.

They were grown rusty now, and it had been a pleasant saying of Janos, Susi's father, for which he was destined to pay dearly, that the old Haiduk, whose office it was to apply these instruments of torture when a subject could be found for them, had increased the rust by bedewing it with his tears.

That ominous official, in full fig., was at this moment lounging beside the punishing-post, as if in want of a job. It is needful to say a little more about him. At the time in question, every Hungarian village was a little community in itself, governed by its own elected officers, while the lord of the manor had pretty much the same power over it as the monarch over the country. The chief village officer was the Biro, or judge, generally a respectable man, who received a small salary; his duties were to collect the taxes, furnish the appointed number of conscripts, quarter soldiers fairly among the peasants, supply horses for vorspann (the post), apprehend rogues and vagabonds, settle disputes, and summarily punish trivial offences. He was aided by a notary, two jurassores, a Kis-Biro or inferior judge, and one or more haiduks to do the flogging.

Now, in the glorious days of the last Count

Matthias that had inhabited the aforesaid old castle, our friend the Haiduk had found full employment for his good hazel stick, about the thickness of his finger, which long practice had enabled him to make whistle through the air and bring down on the live flesh with a thud. Sunday morning was the appropriate season selected for this agreeable exercise in a Christian land, as I have read in books of no far-off date that it still is in certain Transatlantic parts. The stick, you will observe, was not very thick, but the Haiduk always brought it down with a will, and waited a minute between each stroke. That was the law of the land: he was to give as much pain and as little real hurt as he could: twenty-five strokes were not to be exceeded; so you see it could not last more than twenty-five minutes; and we all know how soon half an hour is gone.

Well, but old Count Matthias had died, and his son and his grandson had succeeded him, and old ways had gone out and new ways come in. The Haiduk had literally nothing to do; and was obliged to practise in private, on a stuffed sack, to keep his hand in. And young men and boys would say to one another in his hearing, "Shouldn't I like five-and-twenty this cold

morning! It's nothing, when you're used to it! Nothing makes the girls think better of us than our bearing it without flinching." And this was a fact.

It may be imagined how this rasped the old Haiduk. And then came Janos's unfortunate speech about his bedewing the punishing-irons with his tears. And this was the more biting because the old fellow had actually offered himself in marriage to Susi, the pride of the village, and been refused! Consequently, the Haiduk vowed vengeance on Janos and his house.

Was it owing to him, then, or not, that Paul, on another of Count Matthias's estates, was drawn for the conscription when on the point of marrying Susi? I don't say it was, or could be. The Haiduk was very glad of it; and very sorry that the Count, moved by Paul's imploring representations, had procured his discharge. So here the young fellow was back again, in his embroidered jacket and pantaloons and new Hessian boots, dashing up to Janos's door with three horses, and a bottle of wine in each hand! If *that* was not enough to exasperate the Haiduk, what was?

The wedding-guests had already assembled,

inside and outside the house; and they set up a shout of "Eljen!" as the bridegroom triumphantly sprang to the ground, having given his friend Peti the bottles to hold. He hastened indoors and gave a glowing look at Susi, whose soft black eyes met his for a single instant, and then beamed with furtive light beneath the long thick lashes that drooped modestly on her rosy sunburnt cheeks.

Her rich black hair fell in clustering curls on her neck, and was woven behind into two long braids, which hung down her back, but would henceforth be bound round her head under the matron's coif. Over her full white chemise gathered into a band, was laced an embroidered cloth jacket, over a gay coloured skirt, which was not too long to show her yellow morocco boots.

Outside every house was a bench or covered seat, which was occupied on the present occasion by those villagers not invited to the wedding; which, indeed, they certainly would have been, could Janos's cottage have contained them, for his hospitality was boundless. These villagers, as the bridal train approached, all stood up in a long straight row, the men with their hats off, and, as they passed, bowed nearly to the ground.

The Magyars of this village were Calvinists, though Catholicism may be called the prevailing religion of the country, side by side with the Greek Church. The ceremony was conducted by a cheerful-looking minister, who had much more of Luther than Calvin in his appearance. The church was well filled, though neither the Haiduk nor Susi's mother were there. The former was sucking the thumb of envy; and in speaking of him without sympathy, I must not be supposed to condemn punishments altogether, but only their perversion and aggravation. There had always been a barbarous element in the national character, but in the course of centuries it had softened, save in exceptional cases, as perhaps in the Haiduk.

He, therefore, was not at the wedding; and as for Susi's mother, she, with

"Her face o' fire with serving,"

was preparing the feast for her invited guests, whose approach was at length announced by the scraping of a cracked fiddle. The moment Susi was brought over the threshold, her mother darted towards her and strained her to her bosom, and the cheeks of both were wet with tears from the other's eyes as they kissed.

The house only consisted of two large rooms, built at right angles round two sides of a court, and an open corridor on another of the sides; but, the weather being warm, it was much pleasanter to eat in the open air than in-doors; no excuse, therefore, was needful for spreading the feast in the corridor, on long boards supported by tressels, with benches on each side. It consisted, firstly, of a very good stew of meat with vegetables; next, of a kind of home-made maccaroni and vermicelli, called *nudel* and *strudel;* then, a favourite national dish of meat in rich gravy, with plenty of red pepper or *paprika;* then, several broiled fowls, a salad, a sweet pudding, and pancakes. Was this a good dinner, or was it not? Tell me, my friends!

The house-doors remained wide open all the while, both on account of the heat, and to afford a glimpse and odour of the banquet to those less fortunate individuals who occasionally passed to and fro in the distance, always looking hard in. All the time the fiddle played like mad, whether to drown the noise of plates and glasses, or to encourage the banqueters to speak louder and faster, without fear of the sound of their own voices. If this were the end in view, it certainly

was gained, for the chattering was immense; augmented, probably, by a dram of plum-brandy, served all round (to the men) before the commencement of the repast. As it was what is called heady, it naturally got into their heads; and it was kept there, perhaps, by the addition of many subsequent glasses of wine, grown in the neighbourhood, which, to say truth, was a poor vintage. Meanwhile, between every pause, you might hear Susi's mother incessantly talking, as nearly as I can report it, to the following effect:—

"Eat, neighbours, eat! You are eating nothing! So-and-so, what a poor knife and fork you play! When *I* was married, twenty years ago, you should have seen Janos's good father, how *he* ate! It did one's heart good to see him. Come, now, you *must* have this little bit more, or I shall think you don't like my cooking. We thought it too great a liberty to invite the Biro. The notary, poor man, is ill. The Haiduk, you know, we were not likely to ask, because . . . . Yes, yes, I needn't tell you! Peti! are you taking care of yourself? You have come a long way, you know. Paul, you eat nothing. You can look at Susi any day now, and all day long,

if you like, but you won't get such a *gulyas-has* as this, I fancy! Not but what Susi is a very pretty cook; she makes a better pudding than I do, I assure you!"

"And now, neighbours, we'll drink to the health and happiness of the young folks," says Susi's father, standing up, with his hand on one of Paul's bottles. "We've something better than common here, I think you'll say, and we'll pledge one another all round."

And he was going to fill a glass, when a hand was laid suddenly on his arm.

"Stop!" said a harsh voice. He looked round in surprise. It was the Haiduk, who appeared to have been drinking.

"What's the matter now?" said Janos, quickly. "How came you here?"

"I seize that wine! It's smuggled."

"No more smuggled than you!" said Janos, heating. "What business is it of yours? You don't know where you are, I think, and fancy yourself an Austrian exciseman. We are not in Austria, Mr. Haiduk, nor are you a revenue officer."

"I seize that wine—it's smuggled."

"Go about your business, you troublesome fellow."

"My business is to seize that wine," reiterated the Haiduk, positively.

"And my business is to break your head," cried Janos, losing his self-command, and splitting the bottle on the Haiduk's skull.

"O father!" exclaimed Susi.

"Help! help in the King's name!" shouted the Haiduk, at whose voice two other constables rushed in and began laying about with their sticks at haphazard. All was now hubbub and horror. Knives were brandished, plates and glasses flew about, women screamed, men vociferated, some tried to wrest the sticks from the constables, others got thumps that were meant for their neighbours. In the midst of the uproar the Haiduk, who had never once lost sight of his malignant purpose, grasped Susi's father by the throat, and so nearly strangled him, that Paul, unable to stand by any longer, flew to the rescue and felled the Haiduk with a blow on the temple, which laid him senseless on the ground.

"You have done for him now!" said Peti.

CHAPTER II.

THE FOREST.

IT may well be supposed that the fiddle ceased squeaking when the feast became a fray, but had it even shrieked its loudest, it could scarcely have been heard amidst the din. Many of the guests, though their heads were somewhat bewildered, had a wholesome fear of the power which the Haiduk represented; and several voices were raised above concert-pitch for the sole purpose of enforcing quiet. Three dead men, or men apparently dead, lay upon the ground, one of whom was the detested Haiduk; and though his two compeers, who were of less malevolent character, had come too late on the scene to know who struck the first blow (and nobody would be so superfluous as to tell them) they seemed to be bent on committing everybody, and perhaps would have done so, had the

public been agreeable to it. The duty that lay nearest to them, however — which we should always fulfil in the first place—seemed to be that of carrying off their chief, a heavy man at all times, and more so when insensible; and he was stuffed so tightly into his hussar uniform and top-boots, that it was difficult to lay hold of him. At length, however, he was got under weigh; and with a sort of "consider yourselves arrested" to the others, which they obeyed by slipping quietly home, the two minor haiduks bore off their inanimate burthen.

Long before all this had taken place, Paul had found himself dragged by his two friends into an outhouse, where, pale as ashes, and panting for breath, he looked from one to the other as they thus bespoke him.

"You've done it now, Paul! The Haiduk is as dead as a calf, and you had better make for the woods while you can. Here, cut away till better times. You *are* married, so Susi is yours, come what may, and we'll tell her you're hiding till this affair has blown over."

"I can't go!—I won't!"

"But you *must*, so don't be foolish. Here's some money for you, my boy—hark, here come

the haiduks! Here, take these sheepskins, and slip them over your wedding dress, or it will betray you."

Paul mechanically threw on the old sheepskin, and buried his silky black locks under the towering cap, which gave him the air of a good-looking Robinson Crusoe; then, with a look of agony towards the spot where he left Susi, he darted off to the woods. His friends watched him out of sight, and then returned to the scene of action.

All was now quiet. It had been found that the Haiduk's heart was yet beating, but he was still insensible, for in falling, his head had struck the sharp corner of a table, and received a really dangerous hurt; so that while the event was uncertain, Peti and his confederate decided that it was better for Paul to be out of the way. The other haiduks had returned and made two or three arrests, and the matter was now being investigated before the Biro, nearly the whole village affording unsolicited attendance.

But what were the feelings of poor Susi, the bride of an hour, on recovering from her swoon? She had not indeed seen Paul give the fatal blow, having fainted when her father was seized by the Haiduk; she therefore looked about her with a

troubled air at the overturned seats, scattered dishes, and tablecloth half dragged to the ground. When she asked where everybody was gone, her female friends told her an examination was going on before the Biro.

"How sad an interruption to our wedding feast!" said she, sighing deeply. "I suppose Paul will return soon?"

"Yes, no doubt, soon," answered they with well-intended deceit; and Susi, with a depressed air, began to clear the disordered table.

Meanwhile, Paul had plunged into the forest, without very well knowing what he was about, nor where he was going. He really thought he had killed a man, and he felt quite sure he had not meant to do so, but only to punish him for throttling his father-in-law.

"And he deserved it!" thought he, chafing. "I did not mean to do it, but he deserved it. The mean spy!—stealing in to pry about and spoil our sport by saying the wine was smuggled. If rogues will do such things, they must take the consequences."

This was very easy to say; but Paul had a pretty good notion what the consequences would be to himself, if the authorities got hold of him.

As he went over in his mind the details of this sad and unlooked-for catastrophe on his wedding-day, he walked farther and farther into the forest, till at last it occurred to him that he had gone far enough. He had not noticed his course, and as he belonged to a distant village, and did not know the forest, he had not the slightest idea how to find his way out of it.

While pausing to think what he should do next, his ear was suddenly greeted with a simple air, played on a pipe of reeds; and directing his steps towards the sound, he came out on a clearing, and encountered a pretty little boy of about eight years old, brown as a nut, and almost entirely without clothing. He was trilling on his pipe like a little shepherd of Arcady, and he looked shyly up at Paul, through his long tangled locks, without speaking.

A little farther on, Paul discerned some rude gipsy tents, and went up to them. They contained two women and some children; the women absolutely in rags, the children almost bare. The women, seeing him, immediately spoke to one another in their own peculiar language, and then addressed him in the fawning way they adopt all the world over.

"You are welcome, beautiful young nobleman with diamond eyes and bushy locks. Have you come to the poor Czigamy to have your fortune told?"

"O no, good woman. You know nothing about me or my fortune, if you think I am a nobleman, for I am only a poor peasant."

"Don't expect me to believe that," said the gipsy. "The silk robe peeps from beneath the sheepskin."

"Ah, true," said Paul, "I have on my wedding dress, though it is not of silk."

"And you have left your beautiful bride awhile, to know of me whether she will be faithful."

"No, I am sure she will be! I am not afraid of her. But I wish I knew when I should see her again, and how soon it will be safe for me to return to her."

"Give me your hand, my sweet young lord, and I will tell you all about it."

Paul held out his hand rather doubtfully. He had witnessed the squalor and squabbling of a gipsy village, and had no good opinion of the race.

"You must give me a piece of silver to cross

your hand with, or I cannot see the lines," said the woman.

"I have none," said Paul. "O yes, I have though," added he, as he remembered the money that Peti had given, or rather lent him. Peti was but a poor man, and, of course, would expect to have it repaid when better times should come.

When *would* better times come? Could the gipsy tell him?

Paul thought he would try, at any rate. He was glad, just then, of anything to divert him from the dull pain at his heart. Putting his hand into his pocket he took out, not a single coin, but all the money Peti had lent him, glanced at it in a cursory way to ascertain the amount, selected the smallest piece, and put the rest away again.

"That's not enough," said the woman.

"It must be enough," said Paul. "The money is not mine, but lent by a friend at a pinch, and I don't know how long it must serve me."

"Ah, but I know," said the gipsy. "That's only silver, paltry silver, but you'll handle gold before long—before to-morrow night."

"Well, I wish I may; but I wish still more to know when I shall get back to Susi."

"Who's Susi?"

"What! don't you know? Oh, then you can't tell me anything about her."

"Don't snap me up so," said the gipsy sharply. "I know all about Susi—I only asked an idle question."

"Well, then, give me an answer that is not idle."

"You won't see her again for ever so long."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Paul, believing her in spite of himself, and feeling wofully disappointed.

"No, not for a long, long time. She'll have an illness first. And you'll have an illness. You've a friend, a foe, and a journey to go."

"A friend and a foe I have, sure enough! and where am I to journey?"

"Towards the east. Sleep here to-night, and to-morrow start with your face towards the east."

"But that's away from my home."

"Never mind that. Follow your fortune."

"He looks weary," said the younger woman, who had been watching him intently.

"Weary enough," said Paul, sadly.

"Sit down, then, my dainty young squire, and you shall partake of our mean supper. I wish we had royal dainties for your sake."

"Oh, I'm not hungry," said Paul, throwing himself on the ground, "though you are cooking something that smells very good."

"We are cooking a hedgehog—a morsel for a king."

"What a horrid mess," thought Paul. "Besides, I don't like eating with gipsies."

"Call Lillo," said the elder woman; "it is done to a turn."

The girl made a peculiar cry; and a man at some distance, who seemed very busy beside a river, looked up from what he was about, and came towards them. As he approached he eyed Paul with distrust and dislike; and the repulsion was reciprocal, for Paul thought him a very ill-looking fellow. He had a long narrow yellow face, hooked nose, and slouching gait. He squinted, and his mouth was drawn to one side. The women spoke to him in their own language, and seemed accounting to him for their guest. The meal began, and though Paul did not much relish the idea of a gipsy supper, he accepted the invitation to partake of the hedgehog, and did not find it bad.

" You had better throw off that hot sheep-skin," said the younger woman.

" Thank you—I prefer wearing it."

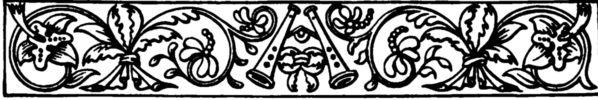
" Your embroidered suit is too good for the forest."

" Indeed it is; but I cannot help it."

" If you take off your jacket, I will take care of it for you."

" Thank you—I prefer keeping it on."

Upon which the man grumbled something in the unknown dialect, to which the others replied; and then they all laughed, which Paul did not much like, for he thought it was at his expense.



CHAPTER III.

A MAN IN A TREE.

"YOU are not going to stay here long, I suppose?" said the man they called Lillo, who seemed an ill-conditioned fellow. "What are you going to do?"

"I want to get out of the wood. What is the name of the nearest village?"

The gipsy mentioned the one he had just left.

"Oh, I don't want to go there—I must keep away from it at present."

"You'll never get out of this forest without a guide; it covers thousands of miles, and contains wolves and lynxes."

"They have not hurt *you*."

"That's as may be," said Lillo, looking at his broken nails.

"Will you guide me out of the wood?"

"Ay, if you'll pay me!"

"So I will, then. Let us be off at once."

"Not so fast. To-morrow will do. I'm engaged to-day."

"I don't believe it," muttered Paul to himself.

"Yes, better stay till to-morrow, my sweet young king," said the woman they called Zabet, cajolingly. "You shall have a bed as soft as silk and sweet as roses, with lace sheets and a golden pillow."

"I believe," said Paul bluntly, "it is easier for you to tell lies than the truth. How can you say you have such things?"

"Wait till morning, my fine sir, and say if I speak true. We are poor, but yet we know a thing or two. For instance, just take a sip of this rare wine—it is Austruch."

Saying which she pulled from a bundle of rags an exceeding dirty flask, which she uncorked with her teeth, and then poured a little thick dark-looking fluid into a horn cup.

"Taste it!" said she, putting it to her lips and making believe to take a little. "It's delicious!"

"No, thank you," said Paul, who saw she did not drink any, and thought it might be drugged.

"I've had enough of wine to-day. If we had only had water at my wedding, I should not be here now."

"Why did not you send for me?" cried Lillo. "No wedding is lucky without a gipsy fiddler."

"How should we know anything about you?" said Paul. "We had a fiddler of our own."

"Tell us all about it," said Lena with a look of interest.

"Why, you see," said Paul, who was bursting to relieve his full heart, "I was going to be married to as good and pretty a girl as there is in this world, and as I was on my way to her a friend gave me two bottles of wine. Well, we went to church and were married, and returned to dinner, and had a lot of good things, beginning, you see, with a taste of zwetchgen all round—and my father-in-law was just going to pledge us in the wine I had brought—when in steps a tipsy haiduk, who takes him by the arm and says, 'I seize that wine—it's smuggled!'"

"*Was* it, though?" cried Lena.

"Of course it was," said Lillo impatiently.

"Not it!" said Paul. "Why should we

smuggle wine when we grow so much of our own?"

"And would not a Hungarian rather send a hundred miles for his wine than buy of his neighbour?" said Lillo contemptuously. "Well, go on. What then?"

"Then blows ensued—the haiduk seized my father-in-law by the throat, and nearly strangled him. I was not going to stand by and see that; so I just gave the haiduk the least little tap; and he had the malice to fall down dead."

"Whew!" said Lillo whistling. "Are you in the habit of giving such innocent taps as that, my little master?"

"No, I'm not; and I should not have done it then if I had not been excited. I did not mean to kill him, and I'm sorry he's dead; but that won't bring him to life again."

"And so you've taken to the woods. Well, you had better cast in your lot among us," said Lena. "We lead a jolly life, and are richer than you think. We will show you where gold and silver grow, and seed-pearl and coral are as plentiful as pebbles."

"Hold your peace," said Lillo to her roughly. "We're one too many already."

"Your life does not seem to me very jolly," said Paul, "and at any rate it would not suit me, for I want to be among my own people, and where work is to be had."

"There's work to be had here," began Lena.

"Be quiet, Lena," said Lillo furiously, and squinting worse than ever, "or I'll make you so."

"If you look and talk like that," said she to him, "I'll guide the youth myself, and never come back."

"Do," said Paul, who was sick of his new companions already; "guide me out of the wood, and I'll give you half my money."

"Nonsense," said Lillo, as Lena half rose from her seat, "you've promised me already, and I've promised you, only I can't take you till to-morrow."

"Why not?"

"Because I'm busy." And to make his words good, he rose and lazily returned to the river. The little boy, who was the only touch of poetry in the group, began to trill on his reed-pipe; and the younger children, who were something like unboiled shrimps wriggling in the sand, began to swarm about Paul, who shook them off

and strolled towards the man, to see what he was about.

"You needn't come here," cried the unsociable gipsy.

"Oh, very well," said Paul, "I'll stay away, then, since you wish it; but I can see what you are doing—you're gold-washing."

There are few rivers in Upper Hungary and Transylvania that do not yield gold, and several of them abound in it, but it did not happen to be the case in Paul's own neighbourhood, and he had heard little about the laws and customs of gold-washers. Gold always affords a tempting bait to those idle speculatists who prefer such precarious gains to steady industry. Gipsies are fond of working in metal; hence, tinkering is their favourite trade, and often covers their less honest avocations, giving them an excuse for applying to frugal housewives to know if they have any saucepans or kettles to mend. At the same time they look about them, and sometimes use their eyes and fingers to bad purpose. And as they often open the way to a little fortune-telling, they use their tongues to bad purpose too.

Where these wild people originally came from

has never been satisfactorily ascertained, though it is generally thought from Hindostan. There are thousands of them in Hungary, where they retain just the same characteristics that distinguish them elsewhere from every other people; and in summer, many of them employ themselves fitfully in gold-washing, but they never grow rich on it.

Paul observed, as he strayed along the riverside, that the gravel was everywhere pierced with small pits and hollows, which had been scooped by gold-finders for the purpose of washing. Some of these excavations were of great antiquity, for the spot had been resorted to by gold-washers in long-forgotten times.

In the adjacent hills lay a much more valuable treasure. Thick veins of coal were to be seen on the hill-sides, lumps of coal lay among the pebbles in the brooks, and were to be seen in the furrows made by the plough. Where people work veins of coal and iron, they commonly grow rich; when they take to gold-seeking, they often enrich others, but they themselves are generally poor.

Paul sauntered on, out of sight of the gipsy, till he came to an elbow or bend of the river,

where the water was surcharged with broken matter that had lodged there during the last flood. As he idly glanced at it, he caught sight of something that made him briskly throw off his sheepskin and jacket, pick his way along some stepping-stones and plunge his arms into the water.

As gold is not traceable in regular deposits in any given place, but lies about in no order, the pursuit of it has the excitement and often the disappointment of gambling. A busy man may labour away close to a great deposit and get little, while another hits by chance on the right spot and turns up a nugget! Of course, this is very aggravating to poor Mr. Labour-in-vain.

While Paul was thus engaged, he happened to look up, and saw something wriggling along the ground, close to his clothes.

"Hallo, youngster," shouted he, "you be off from my things!" On which the little Arcadian, detected but not ashamed, slowly withdrew.

Presently Paul ran up to Lillo, holding out a lump of gold nearly as large as a pigeon's egg, and cried,

"See what I have found! Do you call it much or little?"

The gipsy turned actually green with rage!

"What are you about?" cried he, almost inarticulately. "You've no license! That gold is mine, not yours! Our captain rents this river of Government, and we all pay him tribute for leave to wash. No one else has a right to do so."

"Government again!" cried Paul, with disgust. "How do I know you say true?"

"Everybody knows it except such a gaby as you," gasped Lillo, wielding his wooden scoop like a weapon of offence. "What do you come here for, to pry into our secrets and steal our trade, and eat our best morsels, and force your company on us when we don't want it?"

"As to forcing my company on you, master," said Paul, temperately, "you know very well I lost my way; and I suppose the forest is open to both of us. I came upon your camp by chance; your wife invited me to supper, and I wanted you to guide me out of the forest immediately after it, which you declined."

"You're a serpent! a scorpion! stinging the hand that fed you."

"Nay, nay! what are you saying? I spied this nugget by chance, and picked it up as any

one might have done. I knew nothing of your river laws, not I, and if it be as you say, which it very likely is, for it's just like Government, *I* don't want to defraud it! I'll shy this back again into the water, if you like."

"No, no, give it me, of course," said Lillo, hastily, in a quieter tone. "It's mine, of course."

"Take it, then, and much good may it do you," said Paul, giving it him. "I wouldn't have been bullied out of it, if you had not brought in about Government. However, it will pay you pretty handsomely for my supper, so don't let me hear any more about my eating your best morsels."

Saying which, he turned away, and found Lena standing at a little distance, listening to every word. As soon as he had gone towards the camp, she approached Lillo and had an angry dialogue, Lillo's part in which seemed to be aggravating. At the end of it, she disappeared among the trees and returned no more.

"See, my gracious lord," cried Zabet, coming to meet him, "what a beautiful bed we have made up for your lordship."

In fact, she and Lena had cleared out one of

the cabins for him, stuffed an old bedcase with leaves, and contrived a pillow of rags, wrapped in a fragment of an old yellow curtain.

"I am afraid I shall put you to inconvenience," said he.

"No," said Zabet, "Lena has easily managed it for you by going to another camp."

"I should much have preferred her guiding me out of the wood," cried Paul.

"She could not—my husband would not let her. We could not part with you, dear sir, so soon," said Zabet, cajolingly. "Be content to await his convenience till peep of day. You will sleep like a little pigeon, and dream of your beautiful Susi."

"Ah, don't talk to me of Susi," cried Paul; and more to get rid of them than because he was sleepy, he crawled into his little den, let down the curtain at the entrance, and threw himself on the miserable bed.

It seemed stuffed with stones; and even had its appointments been luxurious, the events of the day had murdered sleep. When he came to think them all over, it seemed to him that if he had not stupidly come so far into the wood, he might have stolen back after dark, and carried

Susi home in spite of a host of haiduks. In his present feverish state, it seemed to him that he could find his way back to the village now, through the darkness, though he had been unable to do so by daylight, and he resolved to make the experiment as soon as he was pretty sure the gipsies were all asleep. For some time, he could hear the indistinct murmur of the woman's voice, the gruff grumbling of Lillo, and the occasional plaint of some of those little shrimps, who so badly wanted boiling with plenty of soap and soda; but at length all became quiet, and when he had given them what seemed a fair allowance of time for settling into a good night's sleep, he softly edged himself to the side of his cabin farthest from his companions, and was just lifting its ragged tilt, when he heard a low, suppressed breathing close to him, and at the same instant felt the prick of some sharp instrument.

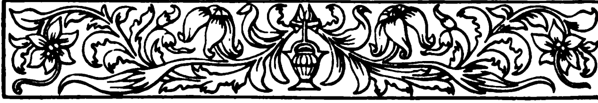
Paul uttered no cry, but contented himself with dealing one of his powerful blows at random, which elicited a smothered groan from Lillo. The next instant Paul was outside the cabin, and running for his life, stumbling continually in the darkness, and making for the yet

darker cover of the trees, under shelter of which alone he could hope to escape his assassin, who knew the ground so much better than he did.

It seemed Paul's destiny, on this unfortunate day, to make a violent use of his fists. This time he had no compunction, for he had struck out in self-defence; with what effect, he could not guess; for, beyond a smothered sound or two, all was quiet. He rather hoped he had stunned the malignant gipsy, whose cupidity, in spite of all the gold he had accumulated, was doubtless excited by the handful of money he had too carelessly shown.

Paul groped onward, not knowing whither he was going, but dreading nothing so much as to find himself again close upon the gipsy camp. He preserved as straight a course as he could, without light of moon or star, and found the trees got thicker and thicker. At length, he thought he must have put space enough between himself and his assailant, and that, whether or no, he should be safer at the top of a tree than at the foot of it. He therefore chose one of convenient girth, and swung himself up till he came to a comfortable fork, well surrounded with leaves; and here, after one or two wriggles, he

righted himself, and obtained a far better position for sleep than he had had in the gipsy cabin. And here, in fact, the tired young fellow presently fell fast asleep, but not till he had muttered a prayer for Susi; and as his eyelids closed there fell from them two warm tears.



CHAPTER IV.

THE TREE'S DEATH-WARRANT.

STIFFENED and unrefreshed, Paul was awakened at day-break by a very ominous sound—a wood-cutter's axe at work on the tree in which he was perched!

Looking down, he beheld a being whose aspect was scarcely human, so begrimed was he with smoke and soot. He was going to cut down the tree to make charcoal of, and, on hearing Paul utter a hasty exclamation just over his head, he looked up, then took a step or two backwards, and appeared, for the moment, paralysed with fear.

Paul plainly saw he meant him no harm, so he scrambled down the tree and stood before him.

"You thought I had slept long enough, I suppose," said he, cheerfully.

The woodman moved his jaws with difficulty;

they seemed as stiff as a rusty bolt. With a prodigious effort he got out the words,—" Did not you see the tree was marked?"

" How should I? I climbed it in the dark."

The charcoal-burner, with another violent effort, got out, " Why?"

" Because I was escaping from a man who tried to rob and murder me."

The charcoal-burner, with renewed effort, said, " Oh!" and seemed to think the subject exhausted, for he was about to renew his work, when Paul said, " I'm lost. Where am I?"

Said the charcoal-burner, after a pause, " In the wood."

" Yes, I know that; but how shall I find my way out of it?"

He pointed to a miserably bad cart-track; and seeing this did not suffice, said, " By the road."

" Where does it lead?"

" To the town."

" What town?"

He then pronounced a name which might well have dislocated his jaws, and which, as you would probably not know how to call it, I shall simply express by the consonants Sznrl.

" Can you give me something to eat? I can pay for it."

And putting his hand into his pocket, Paul found it was empty. Oh, that wretched little Arcadian!

The charcoal-burner comprehended the situation at a glance; and exercise having now had the effect on his jaws that an oiled feather has on a rusty bolt, he spoke more fluently, though in a husky rasping voice, and said—

"You've been robbed. Your pocket's empty. So is your inside."

"That's just it," said Paul. "Can you give a poor fellow a crust? If you can't, never mind."

"Well," said the charcoal-burner, "I've a crust and no more; but you shall have it. My wife brings me a loaf once a week, and this is her day."

Saying which he took from his wallet an exceeding dry untempting crust of maize bread, and offered it him.

"I don't like to take your last mouthful," said Paul.

"Take it, I say, take it," replied the other. "My wife comes to-day."

See how generous this poor fellow was.

"And do you only see her once a week?"

"Only once."

"And nobody else?"

"The man who fetches the charcoal."

"Don't you find it a dull life?"

He shrugged.

"You must want to talk sometimes?"

He looked at Paul as if unable to perceive any sense in such a remark, and then responded—

"It's very fatiguing."

"Oh well," said Paul smiling, "tastes are various—I'm fond of talking, myself, and if I were alone here all day long, day after day, like you, I believe I should talk to these trees."

The charcoal-burner did not think this speech needed a reply, and fell to his work. Paul had got to the end of what he had to say, and what he had to eat; and, putting his hand in his sheepskin pouch, found his handkerchief still in it. On drawing it out, he found, to his inexpressible surprise, one of the corners passed through a gold ring.

"See here!" said he, drawing it off, and looking hard at it all round, "I must have got this among the gipsies! What an unaccountable lot they are! I wish the ring may not turn to dead leaves. There has been jugglery of some sort about it!"

The charcoal-burner eyed it with some curiosity.

"It's pretty," said he. "Don't you know how you came by it?"

"Not in the least. What would you recommend me to do with it?"

"Make money of it."

"But how?"

"Sell it."

"To whom?"

"To a Jew."

"Where shall I find one?"

"At Sznrl."

"Come, you have told me something worth knowing at last," said Paul briskly. "I'll take your advice and go to him. That is, if I can find my way."

"You have only to follow your nose."

Paul hoped that this might be the case. He was strong and active enough, you would have said, to walk all day, but he had a Magyar's characteristic dislike of using his ten toes for that purpose if he could by any possibility travel on a pony or in a wagon. He took a friendly leave of the charcoal-burner and started on his way, wondering much how a man could be so

fond of holding his tongue, but wondering more how he had come by the ring. He feared it might be fairy gold, and wished himself well quit of it; yet it was possible that the gipsy girl might have been angry with Lillo for depriving him of the nugget, and have slipped this ring, unperceived, on his handkerchief, as a compensation. Anyhow, he was determined to sell it, since he had been robbed of Peti's money. He felt unmeasured distrust of the whole race.

His experience of the forest denizens had not made him prefer them to those of the wide open plains, with which he was chiefly familiar, though a wood skirted his native village. The taciturn charcoal-burner had indeed seemed a worthy fellow enough, when he could prevail on himself to open his mouth; but this class of men, passing nearly the whole summer alone in the forest, are an unsocial melancholy race, debarred from the offices of religion and the softening influences of domestic life; and though they are driven home by the severity of winter's cold, it is to spend their time in little else than drinking and sleeping.

The wild primæval forests and the interminable bogs send forth strange children sometimes. There are traditions of an extraordinary creature

found in the Hansag about a hundred and fifty years ago, possessing something of the human form, but with scarcely any other claim to humanity.* He was strong and squat, about three feet high, with webbed hands and feet, and lived on fish and frogs. A peasant-boy found him, and brought him to Esterhaz, where they kept him fourteen months, after which he escaped and was heard of no more. I tell the tale as I find it. The English narrator is inclined to suspect imposition: we all know that facts are apt to be distorted and exaggerated; here, at any rate, is a sample of the strange stories that are told round the winter stove.

Paul was now plodding through thousands of oaks, which, in abundant acorn years, were frequented by innumerable pigs, grunting, grubbing, and gobbling with all their might, and scampering from one tree to another that promised better picking; while here and there, beneath the trees, lay the swineherds, wrapped in their *bundas*,† smoking beside large fires. As yet, however, they were not to be seen; and Paul pursued his way some hours, supplying himself on the road with a formidable cudgel.

* Paget. † Sheepskin cloaks.

At length he saw a figure approaching him in a dress as much like that of a man as of a woman; but a large loaf sticking out of a pouch in front, bespoke her for the charcoal-burner's wife; so, when Paul approached her, he cried, "*Jonapot!*" to which she, after scanning him rather dubiously, and deciding that his face looked more harmless than his stick, replied, "Jonapot," which is to say, good-morrow.

"I guess that I have just parted with your husband," said Paul, "for he told me his wife was going to bring him a loaf."

"Praised be Heaven," then cried she, "that he is alive and well! I thank you for letting me know it."

She seemed a good sort of soul, and more free of speech than her husband, which might naturally be because she had more opportunities of talking.

"What have you and he had to say to one another?" said she. "You look too clean for his work."

"I had little to say, and he less," replied Paul; "but he gave me his last crust, which was very good of him."

"You look too well-dressed to be in want."

"True; but I had lost my way, and fallen among gipsies, who robbed me."

"Ah! they are sad thieves."

"And now I'm on my way to Sznrl, unless I miss it."

"You can't miss it; just follow the track."

"I want to find a Jew; can you direct me to one? A Jew that deals in trinkets."

"Take the second turning on your left, and you will find yourself in the Jews' quarter. I dare say Bar-Simon will serve your turn—his house is newly painted. Good-day."

"Good-day."

It was late in the afternoon when he reached the town, which seemed all astir. Minding his own business, he followed the old woman's direction, and found his way to the Jews' quarter, which was so abominably dirty that a newly painted house in it was quite a curiosity. What the Jews were of old, they are still, except in one thing. When they possessed the only true religion, they used to be always running after the false religions of their neighbours—now, they obstinately cling to their old faith, though there is another which is its crown and completion.

"Come in," said a voice, when Paul tapped

at the door; and, raising the latch, he found himself in a room of the rudest description, with bare walls and an earthen floor, and having a low seat or divan running round it. This was the only room accessible to visitors or customers; the Jew's real abode being in the chambers of his harem, a separate building in an inner court. He was reading when Paul entered; and when he looked up at him, there was a wonderful expression of softness and refinement in his countenance, which afterwards, in the transaction of business, somewhat disappeared from it.

The Bible is a prohibited book in Hungary. Nevertheless, about a year before this time, Bar-Simon, who then lived in another house, was negotiating a bill of exchange with a Protestant traveller of some distinction, who, perceiving in him traces of intelligence, entered into conversation on religious subjects; and finding he had never read the New Testament, produced his own and made him a present of it, begging him to read it with prayer.

The Jew bowed him out very politely, (this anecdote is true,) and then, taking the hated volume in his hand, flung it violently up to the top of a large bureau, where it lodged out of sight.

About a year afterwards, when he had quite forgotten this occurrence, he removed to another house; and on shoving his bureau from the wall, the book that had lodged on it fell to the ground with a loud clap. He picked it up and opened it to see what it could be—opened at the Sermon on the Mount.

"Ah," thought he, "what divine teaching! earth would be heaven if we acted up to this!"

He read on and on, rooted to the spot—at length, sighing deeply, concealed the volume in his bosom. Thenceforth it became his hidden treasure; and though he hardly knew himself to be a Christian, he was in fact much more so than many of the nominal ones around him. His whole character sustained a gradual purifying change.

CHAPTER V.

THE LONGEST WAY ROUND, THE SHORTEST WAY HOME.

THE Jew, putting his book into his bosom, asked Paul what he wanted; and finding he had a gold ring to sell, took out his scales and weighed it. After applying a test, which proved the gold to be remarkably pure, he paid him a fair price for it; and Paul, well satisfied, left the Jews' quarter and went in quest of something to eat. For this purpose he entered a public-house, which proved to be full of people in vehement conversation. There had been a county meeting, and they were discussing what had been said at it. Paul, while satisfying his hunger, heard such sentences as—

"The constitution has been despised."

"It has! it has!"

"We will maintain it."

"We will! we will!"

"Kossuth is the man for us. *Eljen Kossuth!*"

"What does all this mean?" said Paul to a man who was dining at the same table.

The man shrugged his shoulders and said, "It means war, I think. The French Revolution has been like fire set to dry grass; and now it has reached us. Our foolish King * is not the man to put it out. Instead of quieting matters, he has written to our Palatine † that we have no right to a ministry of our own—our money, our army, and our frontier guard must henceforth be given up to Austria."

"And are we going to put up with that?"

"Not if we can help it. A deputation of a hundred noble Hungarians has been sent by the Diet to demand explanation and redress of the King, and we await the result in keen suspense."

Paul raised his eyebrows and twisted his moustache. In fact, the deputies' audience had already taken place; and though the news of their return had not yet reached this little town, yet coming events cast their shadows before. Crowds

* The Emperor Ferdinand, King of Hungary.

† The Archduke Stephen. Palatine, strictly speaking, means a mediator between ruler and ruled.

of idle Viennese had flocked to Schönbrunn to witness as a spectacle what was in fact a very serious national demonstration. The long file of carriages reached the imperial palace at one o'clock. Instead of wearing the brilliant national costume, the deputies were in deep mourning, and they looked anxious and even agitated, for they had just learnt that the foe of their country, Jellachich, Ban of Croatia, but lately accused of rebellion and high treason,* had been reinstated in all his dignities and offices; and they knew too well the favourite imperial policy of setting its dependencies to war against one another.

The Emperor received them, attended by his noble Hungarian guard. In reply to their earnest pathetic remonstrance, he read in faltering accents a prepared speech, evading all their demands. The deeply grieved deputies bowed and withdrew in silence. As they passed their noble countrymen on guard, the latter said to them,—

"As soon as needful, we shall join you in Hungary."

The deputies mounted the red feather in their hats, and returned to the Diet. That very night

* Jellachich had been suspended from his functions by imperial manifesto, June 10, 1848, for refusing to obey orders.

Jellachich crossed the frontier, without the least provocation on the part of Hungary, or respect for its rights: and though it was at first supposed this could not be with the concurrence of Government, it afterwards was too clearly proved that they acted in concert.

Catching somewhat of the excitement around him, Paul's interest was yet chiefly centred on his own affairs; and finding that the man he had spoken to was going to drive a light wagon in the direction he wanted to go, it ended in their arranging that he should be his companion. They slept that night at a wayside inn, and resuming their journey next morning, travelled some hours together, till they came to where their roads divided. They had been sociable companions enough, so they saluted one another cordially before they took their several ways.

The road Paul now pursued on foot was perfectly lonely, and ran, as before, through a thick forest. A sudden heavy storm came on, which in the open country would have driven most pedestrians to seek the nearest shelter; but Paul's sheepskin turned the rain aside, so that he did not even step under cover. He shook off the glittering drops, and speculated as he trudged

along on the degree of danger he should run in going direct to Susi; but thought it might be best to get Janos to bring her home to him. Then he thought how nicely he had arranged everything for her comfort, and how well they should set up house together. Poor fellow! his cottage was humble enough, but it was shaded with acacias and walnuts, and neatly fenced round; and his whitewashed kitchen boasted a ponderous oaken table, a settle against the wall, a large earthenware stove, and a provision-chest for flour, lard, and bacon. The low bedstead in the adjoining room had as yet only a mattress, for the feather-beds were to form part of Susi's dowry, as likewise the bed-linen, which she had deftly and curiously bordered with embroidery in many-coloured threads. While she and other girls engaged in similar tasks had sat round the winter stove, singing many a national song, and telling many an old legend, Paul and other youths had been on the alert to pick up a dropped pair of scissors or a distaff, for it entitled them to a kiss.

As Paul mused on these and many other pleasant things, he was startled from his reverie by hearing horses' hoofs close behind him, and turning round he saw a group of riders, the foremost

of whom was the last person he would have expected to see, being no other than his liege lord, Count Matthias, whom he had supposed in Italy. Beside the Count rode his sister, the beautiful Countess Helena.

Paul bowed to the ground, and was in the act of stepping forward to kiss the Count's hand, when the Countess Helena gave a piercing scream, and, at the same instant, a large wolf sprang on her horse and buried its fangs in the haunch.

A blow from Paul's heavy cudgel, wielded by his two powerful arms, broke the spine of the savage animal, and laid him dead on the ground. The wound of the poor horse, though bleeding profusely, was staunched by the grooms, the Countess's saddle was removed to another horse, and the dismounted groom prepared to lead the wounded horse.

"Paul, my soul!* is it thou?" cried Count Matthias. "I thought you were gone to be married."

"There's a sad story to tell about that, my lord count," returned Paul, going close up to him. "Married we were; but that malicious old Haiduk intruded on the feast, quite stupid

* *Lelkem*—often used between lord and peasant.

with drinking, and pretended the wine was smuggled. A fray ensued, blows were struck, the Haiduk throttled my father-in-law, and I hit the Haiduk, and, to my misfortune and his, killed him; so I have been in hiding ever since."

"This is a very serious affair," said the Count; "you must come up to me in the morning and let me hear more about it. At present I cannot be detained; but there is not a peasant on my estates I should be more sorry to see in trouble than yourself; and, after the service you have just done us, we must do our best to protect you. I will give you a letter to the Biro, if I find it expedient, to ensure you whatever favour the case admits of."

"And accept my best thanks, Paul, for your ready aid—the succour was quite providential," said Countess Helena, giving him her hand to kiss.

The Count and his sister rode forward, while the dismounted groom remained busied in securing the dressings to the horse's wound.

"How surprised I was," said Paul to him, "to see the Count! I did not know he had returned."

" He came back the very day you went away," said the groom, whose name was Moritz. " In consequence of his marriage with the Italian lady, he was allowed to resign his command, and they have been at watering-places and so forth, but now they are going to settle among us and keep quiet. Countess Zilia is a most charming lady, in spite of her being an Italian."

Paul made a face, expressive of his disapproval of her nationality. " Was there no Hungarian lady that the Count could fancy?" said he.

" By the way, I can't make out how it came to pass that *you* went so far for a wife," said Moritz.

" Because I liked her, to be sure," said Paul; " just as the Count liked the Italian lady."

" Ah, my lad, that would have had no weight in the old Count's time! When *he* thought fit to have a bout of weddings on the estate, he would assemble a dozen young men and as many girls in the old hall, and range them in two rows facing one another, as if they were going to dance. Then he would say, 'Thou, Gideon, wilt exactly suit Maresa, and thou, Andras, wilt be an excellent match for Hancsa;' and so on with the rest. Then their banns were put up,

they were married off, and received wedding presents."

"That plan would not have suited me at all," said Paul. "I should have said, 'Count, by your leave, I prefer a girl in another village.'"

"Then you would have got five-and-twenty lashes," said Moritz, "and if your love stood that test, he would have said, 'Go, then, my lad, and marry her;' for he was a kind old gentleman, the old Count, though as positive as Stibor."

"What do you mean by as positive as Stibor?" said Paul.

"Is it possible you don't know that old story?" said Moritz, who was now gently leading forward the horse. "Stibor was a Polish knight in the old times, who, for his good services to our King Sigismund, was rewarded with large estates on the frontier. One day, being diverted with the sallies of his jester Betzko, Stibor exclaimed, 'Wish for what you will, fool, and it shall be granted.' Betzko immediately replied, 'I wish for a castle on yonder rock.' 'Truly, a fool's wish!' exclaimed the bystanders; for the rock, you must know, was of great height, and rose perpendicularly from the valley. 'A fool's wish,

to desire an impossibility!' 'Who calls it an impossibility?' said Stibor, sternly. 'What Stibor wills, Stibor does! Before the year's end, a castle shall stand there, and Betzko shall be its master.'"

"And did he keep his word?" said Paul.

"Ay, believe ye," said the groom. "Forced labour was easy to obtain in those days, happy as we are apt to think them, and workmen were soon to be seen swarming up the steep ascent, which speedily bristled with towers and battlements. This old Stibor was a brutal fellow enough; and he forcibly stopped all travellers who passed through the valley, and compelled their servants and horses to afford a week's service. Thus it came to pass that by the year's end, the knight's promise was fulfilled; the jester's castle was finished, and called The Fool's Wish."

"And the fool's fulfilment, I think," said Paul, "for the knight was nothing short of a fool to make such a promise in the first instance. He reminds me of King Herod."

"Mark what ensued to him," said Moritz. "I have often seen the rock, so the story must be true. Stibor, enraged that a favourite hound

had been hurt by one of his servants, ordered the old man to be pitched headlong from the rock; whereby, of course, he was dashed to pieces. Not long after, when Stibor had been feasting riotously with his boon companions, and had retired to his gardens at the top of the rock to cool himself, he cast himself on the grass to sleep, and an adder bit him in the eye. Blinded and maddened with the pain, he rushed from the spot and toppled over the cliff at the very spot whence his servant had been cast."

"And you have seen the place?"

"Yes, travelling with my master."

"Well now," said Paul, after a little consideration, "I shall ask you, since you know a thing or two more than others, whether those old times you have been telling of were better than these?"

"If I do know a thing or two," said Moritz, meditatively, "it is because my lord count is good enough to talk to me sometimes during our journeys. Better? Well, Paul, we hear people talk of the good old times, but my notion is that the men were not braver, nor the girls prettier, than they are now. As for our liberties—we don't like being ridden over by

Austria, because she has no business with us, and her progress, one may say, is retrograde, even with her own children, and at best we are only treated as step-children. Things really good and useful are withheld from us, and evil practices are unredressed. If it were not for this, look you, I doubt if we should have much call to look into Austria's title. We might let that stand over, since it has gone on so long, in consideration of certain substantial benefits derived. An old tower—'The Fool's Wish,' for instance—might say, 'I don't see, Mr. Ivy, what business you have had to encroach on me in this way, inch by inch, till I am almost hidden;' but the ivy might retort, 'You old rogue, it is I who keep you together! Remove me, and you tumble to pieces!' A great, big tower, however, run up right over against a poor man's little garden of herbs, so as to overshadow it, keep the sun and air from it, and cut off the approach, is no protection, but a downright nuisance. And now you may ask and answer for yourself, is Austria the tower or the ivy?"

"You have made it as clear as day," said Paul, "but for all that, have you a mind to fight?"

"Ah, my lad," said Moritz, smiling, "I've a mind to do whatever my lord bids me; and beloved as he is, we shall all do the same, and follow his lead without troubling ourselves with hard questions. 'Tis the privilege of them that are lowest; a privilege that the great ones envy us sometimes, may be. Those are very far out who fancy it must be lighter work to lead than to follow. Happy those who have only to obey orders!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE ADVANCED GUARD.

THROUGH the wood in the immediate vicinity of Count Matthias's castle, a troop of eighty horse was meanwhile stealthily advancing, under the command of a young German officer, in search of quarters for the night.

It was the advanced guard of the noted Jellachich, Ban or Lord of Croatia, who for purposes of intimidation had crossed the frontier. They had been in the saddle fifteen hours, during which time their horses had not had a handful of fodder, nor scarcely a drink of water; for the peasantry were adverse to them, and would not willingly give them any accommodation. A gipsy, whom they had picked up and compelled to act as guide, professed to have lost his way, and they were wandering pretty much at random.

"This is pleasant!" muttered Baron von Wil-

denheim, the young officer in command. "We have had no dinner, and seem likely to get no supper. I hope this is not going to be the style of the campaign."

He was taking out another cigar, when four Seressans, whom he had sent forward as a scout patrol, rode up to him. The Seressans, who, in the Seven Years' War, were called Pandours, are a wild border race of equivocal reputation, very savage and thievish, not at all addicted to giving quarter, and as ready to shoot a prisoner as if he were a hare. They constitute the frontier gendarmerie, and serve partly on foot, partly on small mean-looking horses, that climb like squirrels and are insensible of fatigue.

These brave uncouth semi-savages are tall and sinewy in person, with meagre faces, sharp features, and long moustaches, not curled upward like those of the Magyars, but hanging downward. A high fur cap covers their long black hair. Their dress consists of wide, dirty white linen trowsers, tied at the ancle, short brown jackets braided with red, a red sash, blue-and-white stockings, and sandal-shoes fastened with thongs: the whole surmounted by a long woollen cloak lined with red, from which they have sometimes obtained

the name of Red-Mantles. They carry pistols, and a long Turkish gun, with which they can hit a swallow as it flies.

Baron Wildenheim had thirty Seressans under his command, and among them was a strong handsome girl, without fear and without reproach, who served with her father and brother. The rest of his corps were Austrian hussars.

It was about ten o'clock at night when the scout patrol rode up to him to announce that they had discovered a large mansion in the wood, and not far from it a village.

The Baron instantly ordered ten men to dismount, steal as near the mansion as they could, to discover whether there were any patriotic troops about, and, if possible, bring in a prisoner.

Presently they returned with a poor frightened milkmaid, all in tears, whom Baron von Wildenheim reassured as well as he could, by promising that no harm should be done her if she spoke truth; and he then asked her whether there were any troops or armed peasants in the neighbourhood. She assured him there were not; and he then desired her to lead him to the mansion. But he did not neglect to send out flank patrols,

for he was beset with dangers, a hundred miles in advance of the main army.

The moon shone brightly as they entered the court-yard of Count Matthias's ancestral castle, which threw deep shadows from its various projections. Not a light gleamed from within it; but a loud baying of dogs showed that their approach was not unmarked by those watchful guardians; and on ringing the deep-toned bell, bolts and bars were withdrawn within, and an old major-domo peered forth, backed by several domestics, all looking a little disturbed at the tramp of horses and clank of swords.

Baron Wildenheim at once accosted him with, "I am an officer of the King, attached to the army of the Ban, and beg to be instantly conducted to your master."

The major-domo, with evident reluctance, admitted him and closed the door behind him, leaving the courtyard full of soldiers. He led him into a spacious ancestral hall, where the dim light of his lamp fell on large pictures on the walls, between which were suspended antlers, skins, swords, muskets, and old plate-armour. Here he left him, and went to deliver his message to the Count.

Baron von Wildenheim was a sunburnt, good-looking young man, though without much expression, unless of a self-satisfied vanity. He did not boast the Hungarian moustache, and was many shades lighter than a Magyar; his light-brown hair was cut close to his head, and his smooth cheeks and chin were of rather too full a contour.

He was evidently in the residence of a nobleman of high rank, and as he always liked to make an agreeable impression, especially where there were ladies, he immediately began to take off his cloak, arrange his hair a little, tighten his sash, and make himself as smart as he could.

The major-domo presently returned, conducted him along a corridor, and then opened the folding doors of an apartment brilliantly lighted with wax candles. I am following the young man's own account of it, so it is his own fault if it is not correct.

Somewhat dazzled, he entered the saloon, where a tall and beautiful lady received him with polite but haughty grace. He was just going to introduce himself, and apologise for his unbidden visit, when she extended her hand with cordiality, exclaiming, "Baron von Wildenheim!"

"Ah, Signora!" cried he, joyfully.

For he and Count Matthias had served together in Italy, and he was well acquainted with the Milanese lady whom the Count had married, but knew not till this moment that he was under their roof.

At the Countess's summons her husband now entered the saloon, and the two friends cordially embraced.

Count Matthias, a noble specimen of the Magyar, and in the very prime of life, was attired *point-de-vice* in the costume which is one of the most cherished Hungarian nationalities; and certainly no European dress has ever yet been devised, at once so manly, so becoming, and so convenient. His *attila*, or frock coat, reaching nearly to the knee, and with a military collar, was nearly covered in front with gold lace. Over this, hanging loosely on his left shoulder, was the *mente*, a somewhat larger coat, lined with rich fur, suspended by a massive jewelled chain; tight pantaloons, and furred ancle-boots with spurs, completed the costume. His shirt-collar had a black ribbon passed under it, having deep gold fringe at the ends. Nor must I omit the sabre, in its richly ornamented sheath, attached to

his waist by a massive gold chain. Such is the dress which many of the magnates constantly wear.

"My dear Count, who would have thought of finding you here?" cried Wildenheim, joyfully.

"Where should I be found but on my own estate?" said Count Matthias. "The proper place, just now, for every Magyar! How *you* come here, is more difficult to understand."

"I am the Ban's advanced guard."

"Jellachich has really crossed the frontier, then?" said Count Matthias, with heightened colour. "I had heard but could scarcely believe it. What a gross breach of faith! And *you*—"

"I and my men have been fifteen hours in the saddle. Can you give us shelter and refreshment?"

"I certainly can, though I frankly tell you I am a Magyar, body and soul, and would already have joined Kossuth, but for the odious idea of fighting my old comrades."

"Ah, don't mention it!"

"What remains, though?" said the Count, contracting his brow. "*You* have begun it.

Directly Jellachich crossed the Drave, but one course remained. However, 'if thine enemy hunger,' &c. How many men have you?"

"Eighty; including thirty Seressans."

"Oh! we can easily provide for such a small party. You are perfectly safe from any surprise while under my protection, and I will give instant orders for the entertainment of your troop."

While this was being said, the Countess Helena had entered, beautiful as the day; and the Count, with an inclination of his head, departed on his hospitable mission, leaving the Baron to the care of his wife and sister.

Both these ladies, (who had just been quitted by dinner-guests,) were of rare beauty, and attired *de rigeur* in the Hungarian costume. It consisted of a tight velvet bodice, laced across the bosom with rows of pearls, a full flowing skirt and train of rich brocade, an apron of transparent lace, and, in the married lady's case, a long, flowing veil of the same material hanging from the back of the head to the ground. The Countess Helena, instead of a veil, had her shining hair braided with pearls. The neck, arms, and waist of both, were richly jewelled.

All this was highly attractive to Wildenheim, who yet had the sense to admire the ladies' personal charms far more than their adornings. Though very hungry and tired, he exerted himself to please; and was soon rewarded by finding himself seated with them at an elegant supper, which enabled him to recruit himself with some excellent tokay. The Count pledged him as hospitably as if they were engaged in the same cause.

"Little did I expect, when we parted in Lombardy," said he, "that you would so soon keep your promise of visiting me in my own castle."

"Right glad am I the opportunity has so soon offered," said Wildenheim lightly. "It was no very pleasant thing to us, latterly, to hear at every turn the cry, '*Morte ai Tedeschi!*'"

"I should think not," said the Countess Zilia, with a scarcely suppressed smile.

"Oh, it was horrid work," pursued he. "The Sardinians were brave and well disciplined, and one did not so much mind falling back before them; but the Italian volunteers in general were a downright cowardly rabble."

"Remember that I am a Milanese," said the Countess, biting her lip. "Let us choose a plea-

santer subject. You cannot be expected to do justice to people who have beaten you. If you do not like us in the field, confess that you like our operas, casinos, and conversazione."

"Ah," said Wildenheim laughing, "I do not wonder that your sex, so fond of supremacy, should delight in a reception where twenty or thirty men gather to pay homage to one woman. For myself, I own, I am greedy enough to prefer having a lady all to myself, or even two ladies."

"Certainly I wonder," said Countess Helena, "how men can be so wanting in self-respect as to submit to do duty as *cavalieri obbligati* evening after evening, in the same salon, to a woman who, nine times out of ten, is both conceited and flimsy. Equally do I wonder how a woman can consent to be the solitary queen of a salon."

"You speak of what you know not, my dear Helena," said Countess Zilia, smiling. "It is charming! delightful! Our resources are kept in full play—we must have an answer for every question, grave or gay; evince or affect an interest in every subject; and if it be too deep for us, escape from it by some happy evasion."

"Happy the husband of one of these 're-

ceiving' ladies!'" retorted Count Matthias. "He is voted 'no company' in his own house, and must either shut himself up in his study, go to his casino, or pay court to some rival queen."

The Countess laughed; but said to Baron Wildenheim, "Conceive my surprise at the conduct of a Hungarian ball, where it is indispensable for ladies to go about in couples; so that, whenever a gentleman ventures to address either of them, there must be a triangular *tête-à-tête!*"

Wildenheim laughed, and Count Matthias observed, "I have been wicked enough to remark, that on these occasions, our beauties take care to pick out very undoubted foils."

"Scandal, I am sure, brother," said Countess Helena.

Countess Zilia seemed amused by some very droll recollection.

"I am charmed with Hungary," said she; "but I must laugh at it now and then. I was never more diverted than by some young officers who came one evening into a ball-room, where, as usual, all the ladies were sitting in rows along the wall, and all the gentlemen talking apart. They marched straight up the room in single

file, faced to the right, stiffly bowed all at once, faced to the left, and bowed again! Then they scattered themselves with the air of men who had done their duty."

"As undoubtedly they had," said Countess Helena.

When Wildenheim was shown to his room, he observed with complacency that the toilette-service was of massive silver, and the walls were enriched by the paintings of Godfrey Mind—sometimes called the Cats' Raphael. As he stretched himself on a luxurious bed, beneath a towering canopy of a former century, he thought what a lucky fellow he was to have chanced on such quarters; what a pity his noble friend was a bigoted nationalist; how *spirituelle* Countess Zilia was, and how beautiful, winning, and enthralling was the Countess Helena. He was very impressible, though his impressions did not last very long.

The next morning, when he talked of continuing his route, Count Matthias said—

"The Hungarian claims a right to detain his guest three days: if, after that, he is willing to remain, it is all the more honour to the host."

And Countess Zilia told him, laughing, how

surprised she had been, on first coming to her Hungarian home, to find the boundless hospitality that was expected of her, and that was commonly exercised among the Magyars.

"Sometimes a carriage-full of people will arrive, uninvited, from a distance, meaning to stay, and even apologize for leaving some of their younger children behind!"

"Oh," said Countess Helena, "I know a Magyar who went on a visit to a country gentleman, and remained with him seven years!"

"My maternal grandfather," said Count Matthias, "whose castle was in a lofty bleak situation, out of the way of ordinary visitors, used to send his servants out into the highways, and literally compel travellers to come in. When they saw a carriage approach, they would go out to it, and importune its occupants to direct their course to the castle. My grandfather awaited them there, and without listening to their excuses, would insist on entertaining them three days, after which, if they wished to proceed, he released them."

"After your quoting such precedents as these," said Wildenheim, "I cannot do otherwise than yield; especially as the course is particularly de-

lightful to myself,"—with a smile and a low bow to the ladies.

"Since you have surrendered at discretion," said Count Matthias, "I will endeavour to make your captivity as tolerable as I can; and will begin by showing you my estate."

Wildenheim would rather have remained indoors just then, chatting with the ladies; but he could only acquiesce with apparent readiness; and in the first place he visited his own men and horses. Thanks to the Count, they were amply provided for and enjoying their seasonable rest.

As they left them, Count Matthias remarked, "Your horses want at least three days' rest to make them fit for anything."

"Severe as was the strain on them yesterday," said Wildenheim, "it was nothing to what they had previously gone through. On one occasion we were thirty-six hours in the saddle, and I was so stiff that I could neither stand nor go."

"What motive occasioned such extraordinary exertion?"

"To ascertain the disposition of the country."

"That is easily ascertained," said the Count, curling his lip.

"Truly it seems so. The common people are absolutely opposed to us."

"You will never make head against them."

"Tut!" said the young German lightly. "You Magyars have at most but eight thousand regular troops. Jellachich has sixty-five thousand. What say you to that?"

"That the disposition of the country is against you."

"You mean, you think there will be a servile war?"

"There is nothing servile about us, Baron."

"A civil war, then. You used to be with *us*, Count."

"I have thought deeper on these things since my marriage. A *civil* war? A civil war is between subjects of the same country. Austria and Hungary are not identical: never have been. A war of independence, if you will."

"If my will were consulted, there would be no war at all," said Wildenheim.

"Just so, in a manner, with me. However, a righteous war may be better than a wicked peace. And war was not declared when Jellachich crossed the border. It was a scoundrelly act."

Wildenheim coloured high, but controlling himself said—

"I believe the Ban is your bugbear. Many of the common people fancy he comes to displace the Palatine Stephen."

"They may err in details. At all events, he comes as an invader."

"Only to promote the cause of order—"

"No, no, Baron, that won't do! If you were a Magyar, you would see these things in the same light that we do. As the matter stands, I cannot expect it."

Meantime, Countess Helena was saying to Countess Zilia—

"How could you press that young Svab to stay? His sentiments are detestable."

With Italian finesse, Countess Zilia replied—

"Every day he remains, we hinder him from pursuing his object."

CHAPTER VII.

MAGYARS AT HOME.

THE Countess Helena had too much integrity to adopt the somewhat Machiavellian policy of her sister-in-law, yet I will not say that the thought that she was serving, however remotely, the patriotic cause, did not make it an easier task to her to render Wildenheim's visit agreeable to him. Had she been Countess Zilia, she might even have aspired to fascinate him so completely as to make him a traitor to his Emperor; but, being what she was, a high-minded, single-hearted girl of nineteen, she only aimed at retarding his journey.

Though the education of the Countess Helena might in some respects be confined, her native worth and ardent spirit atoned for many deficiencies. Though now orphaned, she had been brought up by an excellent mother, who, like

most of the Hungarian ladies, excelled in housewifery, and was considerate to the poor. In Hungary, a lady not only is practically acquainted with cookery, but habitually waits on her guests. If there be a family of grown-up daughters, one will see the dishes sent up, another spread the table, another wait at it, and one perhaps take her place at it, but chiefly to attend to the rites of hospitality. The old Countess had thought no scorn of personally attending to the comforts of her household, and was quite a mother to her peasantry. During a famine, she had fed five hundred of them daily with soup and bread, without distinction of creed —from the Jew to the gipsy; and when the cholera broke out, she had gone from cottage to cottage ministering to their wants, regardless of personal danger.

From the death of this excellent mother, too early lost, Countess Helena became her brother's sole care; and being passionately attached to him, she was his pupil in sundry acquirements that properly belong only to the fast young lady. Thus, she was not only an excellent horsewoman, but could use sabre and pistol; and as we seldom attain excellence in anything without desiring to

put it to the proof, it will be seen hereafter to what these acquirements led the poor young lady. Just now, when the same kind of thing is going on in Poland, it is well to give a real sample of cause and effect.

The peasants adored her; and it was with delight rather than surprise that Paul received an early visit from her and her maid, each of them carrying little presents. Countess Helena again thanked him for killing the wolf, and she expressed the pleasure she should have felt at witnessing his wedding, had it not taken place on the most distant of the Count's estates. There was, in fact, no habitable mansion for the family in the vicinity of Susi's village, though the ruined castle made a sort of rookery for old, worn-out dependents, who lived there rent-free, and had plenty of corn, wine, and oil. Count Matthias had dozens of such old pensioners quartered on different estates, and he made light of his goodness to them, saying the expense of transporting the produce would make it scarcely worth the trouble, and it kept these poor people comfortably.

The castle where the Count now resided was a stately building of the eighteenth century, an-

nexed to an ancient stronghold once occupied by the Turks. It stood out boldly on a balustraded terrace, shaded by lemon-trees and roses, whence two flights of steps led to the flower-garden and park. Little more than a hundred and fifty years ago, a Turkish pacha sat in the fortress of Buda, and ruled over nearly half Hungary; and Count Matthias directed his guest's attention to a tower which the Turks had used as a mosque, and related how his great-grandmother, when a beautiful young widow, had sought and obtained the intervention of Sobieski in driving them out of her heritage.

The Count had much to show Wildenheim that was well worth seeing. His grandfather had been a Magyar of the old type, his father a philo-Anglian, and he himself had not only served in Italy, but visited England, admired its institutions, and studied its system of farming.

On succeeding to the family estates, he determined to put some of his observations into practice. His land consisted of about twenty-five thousand acres, which he resolved to divide between his peasants and himself, and farm his own division his own way; for while they pursued the old system and farmed in common, he

knew he could expect no improvement. The experiment had not been fairly tried yet; and now, alas, it was likely to be interrupted by a fratricidal war.

He had brought an intelligent Italian from Lombardy to superintend the silk-growing department. But this interested Wildenheim less than his stables, containing several running horses under an English trainer. Afterwards they visited the kennels, where were eight couple of young harriers, and a brace or two of pointers; and the Count observed that the woods were well stocked with pheasants and hares, the corn-fields with partridges and quails, and the bogs with wild ducks.

"Ah," thought Wildenheim, "what felicity it would be to possess a place like this, with Countess Helena for one's life-companion! It might tempt one to forswear the army."

Thence they proceeded to the village, which was well built and neatly kept, shaded by a double row of trees. They entered the cottage of a poor widow, who immediately began to bless the Count for having procured her only son's discharge from the army, that he might till her little farm. She added that he was in trouble

now, however, in consequence of a fray on his wedding-day, which had led to his striking the Haiduk and unintentionally causing his death; she could not think how it could have happened; her Paul would not hurt a fly. She hoped the Count would protect the son of the late Count's foster-brother.

Count Matthias said he was willing to do all he could, and had already told Paul to come up to the castle and tell him all about it. Where was he now?

Paul's mother opened the door of the adjoining room. Within it, a brown, well-grown, comely young man was putting on his spurs, which he had just been cleaning.

"Well, Paul," said Count Matthias, "you may come up by and by to tell me your story, and I will see what I can say about it to the Biro. You have everything in order for your bride, I see; even to pictures and a looking-glass."

"Thanks to the Countess Helena," said Paul, surveying them with pride. "She brought them herself this very morning, and also this handsome coffee-pot, and these tumblers."

He showed them his bedroom, store-chest, and

little dairy and cellar, and returned their leave-taking with respectful ease, bowing low to kiss the Count's hand.

"If such be the state of your peasantry," said Wildenheim, after they had visited two or three more cottages, "they have little reason to complain of the Government."

"They are prosperous, not in consequence but in spite of it," said Count Matthias.

"But surely," rejoined Wildenheim, "they had great reason to be thankful for that law of Maria Theresa's which virtually abolished serfdom, and declared the peasant not only at liberty to quit his land when he chose, but to retain it as long as he pleased, on certain conditions."

"On condition of taxation," said Count Matthias, "to meet which, he was endowed with a joint property in the soil. You may call that a master-stroke of policy, if you will, by which half of our land was rendered for ever taxable! Yes, the laws have given the peasant rights, but many of them have an injurious effect on his character. And how are the laws administered? How do the weak suffer from the strong! The soldier is quartered on the peasant, who is obliged to give up to him half his cottage for a kreutzer

a day, and furnish him with fire, cooking, stable-room, and fodder. Moreover, he is obliged to sell him his corn and hay at a fixed price, which is only an eighth of its fair value. But we view these things from different sides."

"Yes," thought Wildenheim, "you *were* an Imperial officer, and you *are* a landed proprietor; which makes all the difference! Would that your case were mine!"

"Wherein lies the spell," said he after a pause, "by which this Kossuth of yours wins all hearts?"

"Mainly in his integrity," said Count Matthias, "though he is felt to possess commanding genius. But genius alone won't carry the day! In the long run there must always be goodness too. Kossuth's race has not long begun, but from the opening of his career, when he used to report the debates, which were circulated in manuscript all over Hungary, we felt what was in him."

"He was imprisoned for mis-reporting the debates, if I mistake not," said Wildenheim carelessly.

"That was the plea—a most false one—on which he was sentenced to a six years' imprison-

ment, after two years had been passed in prison during his trial. The Imperial Government attempted to procure from the lawyers engaged for the defence, a promise of secrecy respecting the conduct of the trial. Not one of them would promise."

"*Esprit de corps*," said Wildenheim lightly.

"Oh, my dear Wildenheim, how *can* you—but let it pass. You were asking in what does the charm of Kossuth consist? Not in his outward man, exactly, though women seem fascinated by his look. His eyes are melancholy when he is silent, and it is only when he speaks that his features light up with animation. The only time I have had the pleasure of a private interview with him, he was plainly dressed in black, for he only wears the full national costume on solemn occasions. He began by saying to me, 'I beg you to be brief, but, for that very reason, to forget nothing;' and while I spoke he occasionally took notes. It has well been said of him that he knows as well how to be silent as how to speak; he understands the art of listening in such a manner as to assure the speaker of his full, undivided attention. The slight and quick motion of the corners of his mouth, the raising

or depressing of his eyelids, betray the degree of interest he feels, and his assent to or dissent from what is said; for Kossuth's face does not mask his soul! His eloquence combines reasoning and feeling, his expressions are neither too high nor too low for his subject; you feel he has said the very thing that ought to be said, and are carried away by it. Travel from one end of the country to the other, my dear Wildenheim, and you will find but one feeling about him! In the loneliest hut on the Puszta as in populous towns the feeling is just the same. Should it even not please God to grant his efforts success, the peasant would still bless his name . . . And *this* is fame!"

"Only the fame of a civilian, after all," said Wildenheim, who did not like this wholesale praise. "There is no reputation, to my mind, like that of a great commander."

"The Ban, for instance," said Count Matthias ironically.

"Well, yes, the Ban. You don't know him personally."

"I do not aspire to that honour. The secret favour of the Court towards him makes amends to his vanity for having incurred the stigma of high treason."

"Jellachich vain? Oh, oh!"

"A squeeze of the hand from an Archduke is a flattery too powerful to resist; and, if report may be believed, he has found the smiles and tears of an Archduchess but too ensnaring."

"Scandal, rely on it," said Wildenheim.

The report to which Count Matthias alluded had been conveyed to him in a private letter from Vienna. His informant assured him in good faith that the Ban had had an interview with the Archduchess Sophia, who had declared to him that he, as the bulwark of the dynasty, must put himself at the head of his Croats to support the Court and suppress the liberties of Hungary. Jellachich, in extreme perplexity, had urged that he could not subvert the constitution of Hungary, which was also that of Croatia; on which, the Archduchess, bursting into tears, fell on the neck of the astonished Ban, exclaiming, "Save the crown for my son, your future lord and master!"*

These tears, added the writer, were too much for the excitable Jellachich, who thenceforth became the servant of the Court. Certain it is, at

* Pulszky's notes to Max Schlesinger's War in Hungary, i. 36.

all events, that by means of his agents, he spread the alarm throughout the frontier, and summoned the wild hordes of Sclavonia, Illyria, and Croatia to arms. From 26,000 to 30,000 of these wild troopers were drawn by the promise of bloodshed and booty to the banks of the Drave, where they were joined by the regular forces. Of these savage tribes, the Seressans and Serbs were most distinguished—the Seressans for their love of plunder, the Serbs for their cruelty.

Count Matthias and his guest continued to talk over the leaders of the day according to their several predilections; praising their special favourites, and good-humouredly tolerating each other's commendations of those whom they looked on as inimical to the real interests of the country.

The two following days passed away very agreeably to Wildenheim. As Countess Helena did not sympathize with him, she preferred singing to talking; and as she had a charming voice, and he could both sing and play very tolerably, they spent the evenings at the piano. Count Matthias, who had received important despatches, was much engaged in his study, but his wife and sister took care he should not be missed; and Wildenheim, delighted with his companions and

himself, threw all the expression in his power into several little love-songs, which he thought must convey to the beautiful Helena the assurance of his entire devotion to her. His case was becoming quite serious! He persuaded himself so, at any rate, if he failed to persuade *her*.

A heavy rain in the afternoon had chilled the air, and the Countesses were mutually of opinion that a fire would be comfortable. Accordingly, the Daraband or fire-maker was summoned, and as the stove was an old-fashioned one, which opened into the room, he had to perform his task under their eyes. The poor fellow was sadly afflicted. At the age of thirty, a severe fall had injured his brain, and left him deaf, dumb, and in some degree idiotic, so that the only employment of which he was capable was heating the stove; and when he wished to express his liking for any one, he always did so by nearly roasting them. His affections were strong, and as he was devoted to Countess Helena, he now brought in double allowance of fuel.

Like the "salvage man" so feelingly portrayed in the "Faery Queene,"* the poor Daraband had no language but a confused murmur

* Book vi. canto 4.

of words without sense, but he was wont to show his reverence and love for his lord and ladies by "creeping like a fawning hound" to their sides and kissing their hands. When violently excited he had been known to articulate distinctly and well, but the power immediately afterwards forsook him.

On the third day the trumpet sounded to horse, and the gallant Baron, actually with a tear in his eye, embraced his generous host, and, according to the permitted custom of the country, kissed the lovely Countesses on the cheek. Helena, half smiling, presented him with a rosebud, which he pressed with fervour to his lips, and then placed next his heart. In another instant he had mounted his noble steed and was following his little troop out of the court-yard. He cast a speaking glance back. Countess Zilia had disappeared—Countess Helena was still in sight; but it was not a case of "*Calypso ne pouvait se consoler.*"

"What is to do now?" inquired she, eagerly turning to her brother. He passed his arm round her without speaking, and drew her into his study.

"I join the troops immediately," said he to

her, in a low impressive voice, "taking with me all my available men. My only anxiety is for you and Zilia."

"*I* shall go with you," said she, promptly.

"No, no, my dear Helena, that must not be."

"For what, then, have you taught me to use pistol and sabre? My place shall be at your side. Zilia *cannot* go, but it will reassure her to know that I am beside you. We have talked it over already, and I have promised her."

He looked at her fondly, and a tear shot into his eye, but he shook his head.

"You would only fetter me," said he, "and add to my anxieties."

"Nonsense, brother, I would do no such thing. See that Seressan girl, Ilyan, how she dashes about with her father and brother, as safely as if she were at home. I have had a long talk with her, and admire her extremely, though she is on the wrong side. She is a very good sort of girl, according to her lights. I shall be your aide-de-camp in action, and your companion and nurse out of it."

"And leave poor Zilia here all by herself?"

"Zilia must by no means be left here, whether with or without me, for we are just in the line

of the Croats' army. They will be here, probably, in a few days."

"I have thought of that, but yet—"

"No, no, brother, *my* place is beside you; and Zilia must be sent out of harm's way, to Aunt Elizabeth—"

At this instant, an old-fashioned family coach, something like a "water-melon cut in half," drawn by four horses, and much encumbered with luggage, lumbered into the court-yard.

"Here *is* Aunt Elizabeth," said Count Matthias, glancing at the equipage through the window; "come to seek refuge, apparently, with *us*."

He hastened out, accompanied by Countess Helena, just in time to assist the stately old lady to descend from the carriage. She was supported on the other side by a much younger nephew, a tall, handsome stripling of seventeen, who accompanied her.

"Oh, my dear Matthias," exclaimed she, "what times are these! Here am I driven, you see, from post to pillar."

"Why, aunt!" he exclaimed, kissing her affectionately, "I thought you were safe within the Theiss!"

"On my way thither, my dear; I am flying

from those vile Croats. Oh, the wretches! You never knew such thieves and murderers! Jellachich is bringing on us all the scum of the border."

"I'm afraid he is. How do you do, Laszlo," to the lad, who was speaking with animation to Countess Helena. "You are all for fighting, I suppose?"

"Indeed I am," said he heartily. "I hope to fight beside *you*."

"We shall be quite a family party," said Helena.

"Yes, yes," said the old Countess, "your uncle insists on his joining, and says he can't begin too early."

"What did you mean by what you said, cousin?" said the boy, looking enquiringly at her.

"You shall know," said she, "all in good time."

She treated him with the good-humoured familiarity of a woman to a lad, and in fact he was no more; but he loved her with a fervour that had all the strength and more than the purity of a much older time. Meanwhile they had entered the salon, and were met by Countess Zilia.

"Zilia and you must be better acquainted, my dear aunt," said Count Matthias. "Her frame is not as strong as her spirit, and I shall be unmanned if I leave her here unprotected, close to what will probably be the seat of war. I think of committing her to your charge."

"And Helena, too, I hope," said the old Countess, looking fondly towards her.

"Helena too, I hope—"

"I have other views for myself, aunt," said she, smiling. "We will talk of them by and by."

Laszlo looked at her as if he would read her soul. The old Countess did not see much in her words, and turned to Countess Zilia.

Later in the morning, Countess Helena was seated alone and busily employed in as charming a lady's bower as a young heroine need have desired. It was on the upper story in an old tower at an angle of the castle, and had a large bow-window projecting from the angle, and looking far and wide on both sides over the valley. Meadows dotted with cattle, fringed with woods, intersected by a river, and backed by volcanic mountains, lay as if on a map below; the view was charming; and within were all the appliances of a lady's boudoir—a guitar rested against

the cabinet piano, and a novel of Baron Josika's lay on the sofa.

"Come in," said she, as some one tapped at the door; and her cousin Laszlo entered.

"Oh," said Countess Helena, looking up, "I thought it had been Barbara, but I am very glad to see you."

"Are you?" said he, in a flutter.

"Do stand up," said she, "and let us measure."

He coloured, and drew himself up to his full height as they stood back to back before the glass.

"I believe I have the advantage of you," said Laszlo.

"Scarcely," said she, knocking the back of her head against his; "I don't think there is a quarter of an inch between us. But, Laszlo, I want to ask a very odd favour of you."

"Pray do!" said he, much flattered.

"Do let me try on your hussar cap."

"Oh, certainly!" and away he ran and returned with the smart cap and its graceful heron plume. She put it on and looked hard at herself in it.

"I have often tried Matthias's," said she, "but this fits me better."

"You look beautiful as an angel," said he, admiringly.

"Oh, I don't care about looking like an angel; but now, Laszlo, if you don't mind it, do let me try on your jacket."

"*Mind* it?" and it was off in a minute. She called Barbara from the next room.

"Barbara, come and stuff me into this thing."

"You will never get it on, Countess, over your dress."

"Oh, yes, I shall; there, you see! If my upper dress were off, it would be just my size. Who is your tailor, Laszlo?"

He told her.

"Well, I shall get you to order me a suit just like your own."

"Helena!"

"I'm quite in earnest. I mean to go with my brother."

"Noble girl!" cried he, with all his young enthusiasm.

"Did not I tell you we would make a family party?"

"Oh, my lady," exclaimed Barbara, who was as faithful to her as Nerissa to Portia, "then let Count Laszlo order two suits, I'll go too, and

be your valet, or orderly, or whatever's the right word."

"Well, Barbara, we will hear what Count Matthias says about it. I do not know that it would be a bad plan."

To Laszlo it appeared perfection. The only addition that could be made to the anticipated charm of the campaign, would be to have his cousin Helena beside him.

Paul had already had a long and serious talk with the Count, who, on considering all the particulars of the case, gave him a letter to the Biro; and also another on private business to a nobleman whose seat lay a little off his road. This letter Paul engaged to deliver, and soon he was once more on his way to Susi, mounted on a wiry little pony without a mite of gloss on its coat, but sure-footed, and that never flagged. Perhaps mounted on such serviceable little animals, the Magyars had originally poured out of Asia into Hungary, when they settled down on the land, and lived under kings of their own free election.

How long it seems since we left the Biro investigating the village fray! and yet only a few days have passed. The Haiduk, being incapable

of giving evidence, there were plenty of others to do it for him, or rather against him, declaring he had been drunk; and as the Biro knew this had lately been too often the case, he was willing to believe, on the testimony of so many witnesses, that he had really on this occasion committed an unprovoked assault. It would not do to dwell too much on the errors of a personage so high in office; the Biro, therefore, merely dismissed the complaint, saying that if the Haiduk proved worse than was thought, Paul, if he could be caught, must be committed.

The Haiduk in twenty-four hours was about again, crying for justice and an example to be made, but a private hint from the Biro to set a better one himself, so subdued him, that he contented himself with looking daggers and whipcord. He was soon afterwards confined to his bed by the gout, which it was thought he would not have had if he had lived on water and water-cresses; and the story went among certain of the village boys (it is amazing what things boys will swallow) that the old man could amuse himself in no better way than by sitting up in his bed, cane in hand, and feebly hitting the pillow.

Poor Susi, meanwhile, was a prey to wearing

suspense, and the object of much commiseration. Paul might re-appear any minute, and yet he never did, so she was constantly on the watch, till she made herself ill with fretting. One morning the curate's wife, hearing she could not eat, brought her a basin of *mamaliga*, or maize porridge, which she had made for her with the nicest care. Having spoken to her in the kindest manner, she went away, saying, "Trust in God, Susi; trust in God."

And those simple words were so spoken that they had the force of a sermon.

Susi, rather than be thankless, took a spoonful or two of the porridge, and was wondering how she should get through it all, when some one raised the latch, and said in a foreign accent—

"Any saucepans or kettles to mend?"

Susi looked up, and saw a gipsy woman with a baby at her back, standing at the door.

"No," said she, "we have nothing that wants mending."

"Any old rags or bottles to sell?"

"No; none."

"Shall I tell you your fortune, pretty lady?"

"No, thank you," said Susi, sighing.

"Let me see your hand, and I'll tell you all

you want to know. I'll tell you when he'll come back."

"Oh! will you?" cried Susi, joyfully.

"You must give me a piece of silver to cross your hand."

"Oh, no, I have none. I did not know you meant to tell my fortune. I thought you had seen him."

"So I *have*," said the gipsy.

"Seen who?" said Susi, distrustfully.

"Ah, you think I don't know, but I *do*. I've seen him you were thinking of—your name is Susi — you are married — your husband ran away."

"Oh, tell me all you know about him," cried Susi, breathlessly.

"Not unless you give me a piece of silver."

"I have already said I have none."

"There's a silver spoon in that porridge."

"It is not mine."

"Never mind that. You can't love him much, if you stick at such a trifle—"

"It's *no* trifle! Go away!" said Susi, indignantly. "If we're poor, we're honest."

"Much good may your honesty do you!" said Zabet, tauntingly. "You'll never see him

again! He's gone to the far east. He has been very ill. He is going to marry a grand lady, ever so rich!"

"I don't believe one word of it," said Susi, closing the door upon her.

The gipsy suddenly changed her tone. "Give the poor gipsy a sup of cold water," said she, fawningly. "I'll bless you for it as if it were wine."

Susi was inclined to say No, but her heart smote her for refusing a cup of cold water even to a gipsy. She took up a mug and was carrying it to the well, when, recollecting the silver spoon, she returned for it and took it with her.

Zabet saw the action and could not misunderstand it. A look of intense malignity crossed her face. The moment the girl's back was turned, she darted forward and threw some dirty-looking powder into the porridge. She had scarcely time to return to the door before Susi came back with the water. She drank it, and loaded her with blessings.

"Your baby may have the porridge, if you like," said Susi.

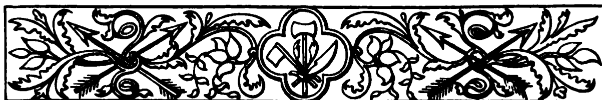
"What, *without a spoon?*" said the gipsy.

" No, no, it's too good for a poor gipsy's baby; and besides, it can't eat *without a spoon.*"

Saying which, she laughed expressively, shrugged her baby higher up on her back, and went away after the caravan of donkeys and tents that was passing through the village.

" I'm glad she is gone," thought Susi, " and I don't believe one word of her wicked sayings."

Nevertheless, they weighed on her spirits, and she could not touch another spoonful of the porridge. She gave it to the cat; and the cat afterwards fell into a declining way, and nearly died; nobody knew why.



CHAPTER VIII.

"HUZDRÁ, CZIGANY!"

WHEN Susi went to return the silver spoon and china basin to the curate's wife, she found the village street in unusual commotion.

Firstly, the gipsies had halted at one end of it, and our old acquaintance Lillo was playing the fiddle, accompanied by the beautiful little Arcadian on his reed-pipe; while Lena, with her brown, well-formed arms raised aloft, clashed a pair of cymbals. It is strangely wild, the gipsy music! One who knows it well has said of it—"Like the chorus of the birds of the fields, they blend discordant notes into strange but magical harmonies. With sudden transitions, their strains of wild excitement modulate into plaintive songs of the deepest melancholy. It is as if brilliant remembrances of a grand past flashed up from amidst the ashes of joy and hope! The blaze

extinguished, nothing remains but the feeble glimmer of regret."

This music, the writer* adds, exactly suits the genius of Hungarian nationality; no Hungarian festival pleases the fancy without the gipsy bands.

On the present occasion, a group of peasants, inspired by the strains, were dancing with might and main; not only with their feet, which is poor dancing, but with the arms, the neck, the head, the eyes, the whole person; now and then exclaiming, "*Huzdrá, Czigany!*" (play up, gipsy!) First, the men caught one another by the hand, forming a ring, and advanced and retreated; then, from time to time, one of them would break away from the others, waltz a round or two with one of the women, and then return to his companions.

Passing this group with a preoccupied air, Susi entered the curate's house, within which, I regret to say, reigned much disorder and discomfort, or what we should consider such, though his wife had been the late Countess's own woman.

He and a knot of village politicians were sitting on the bench under the eaves of his house, talking of public affairs; and the bailiff of the estate

* Madame Pulszky.

was, saying "Our corps of observation is receding before the Ban without firing a single shot—he has it all to answer for. The Diet has called on Kossuth not to quit his post; he has promised that he will not."

The curate's wife, receiving the spoon from Susi, joyfully thanked her, saying,

"I am rewarded for lending it you, for our only other one has been lost or stolen."

As Susi returned home, she passed the *pusta* of her Aunt Erzsebet (Elizabeth) close to where the gipsy was fiddling. It was a two-storied house, larger than any other, and her cousin Wilma stood glowing and panting at the gate, having just been released by her partner.

"Stay and look on awhile, Susi," said she, winding an arm around her.

Wilma was a very handsome girl, tall, slim, and erect, with a firm, elastic step, regular features, large brilliant dark eyes, and rich black hair, braided in two long plaits that hung down her back. Her father was dead; he had been much richer than Janos, and his wealth had been chiefly derived from raising cattle. His brother Imne, an old soldier with a wooden leg, now looked after the stock for the widow, and was

assisted in this employment by the active Wilma, her little brother Mischko (Michael) and three or four large white wolf-dogs. At this time, Erzsebet possessed eighteen useful horses, five mares, and fourteen foals; about forty head of horned cattle, and a good many sheep and pigs. Moreover, the good widow had six hundred florins laid up for a rainy day; and her daughters, Wilma and little Theresa, wore silver crosses on their bosoms.

But what was dearer to Erzsebet than house or land, cattle or florins, had been taken away from her. Istvan, the eldest of her three sons, and the very pride of her life, had been torn from her by the conscription, to fight the Emperor's battles in Italy.

"Have you heard the news?" said Wilma, in a low voice, to Susi, as they stood with their arms interlaced.

"What news?" said Susi, absently.

"That Jellachich has crossed the Drave! We shall have war."

"Oh, I hope not!"

"Susi, what a coward you are! I would as soon fight beside one of my brothers as not."

"What, and *kill* people?"

" In a just and necessary war—in a war of independence."

" I think I would rather give up almost everything for peace and quiet."

" That is very poor-spirited of you. I hate the Svabs, and desire nothing better than the opportunity of paying one of them well out."

Before Susi could reply to this Christian speech, a tremendous cracking of whips was heard rapidly approaching, mingled with loud cries of " *Eljen Kossuth!*" and a couple of rough-riders dashed into the village and up to the inn door, grasping short-handled whips with lashes twenty feet long, to the end of which were attached four or five small leaden bullets, which they possessed the art of twining round the leg of any man or beast they intended to stop.

Everybody, including the dancers, instantly crowded round these men to learn the news; and Lillo, finding his music at a discount, tucked his instrument under his arm and lazily hung about the group; while his wife and sister, seeing every one's attention engaged, took the opportunity of prowling about the deserted houses, and, it may be, of achieving a few thefts.

" How goes the war?" cried the peasants.

" Excellently well," answered the foremost envoy, " that is, we have met with no reverses yet, and everything promises success; but Kossuth sends you word that he wants the sinews of war, which is to say, men, arms, and money."

" Does Kossuth say so to *us?*" said they, highly flattered. " Then of course we will do what we can. As for men, we are all ready; as for money, we have little or none; as for arms, we have only a few rusty old muskets; but we have plenty of scythes, and know how to use them!"

" Anything you like — nothing will come amiss," said the envoy. " Men can but give all they have, and themselves into the bargain."

" And enough too," said one rather less simple than the rest. " Have you any cannons?"

" Oh, hundreds."

" Ah, then we will go with you, and where-ever Kossuth bids us. Cannon give confidence."

And so universal was this feeling among them, says Görgei,* that their first question to whoever presented himself to them as their leader, was, whether he had cannons. If his answer was in the affirmative, they joyfully prepared to

* My Life and Acts.

march; if not, he could scarcely reckon on any considerable number of adherents.

These simple peasants were soon telling, with all the truth and trust imaginable, how much fodder, how many horses, they could supply, and willingly offering themselves into the bargain.

Erzsebet's son Istvan was already serving under Klapka, but her two next sons, Sandro and Laszlo,* came forward and offered themselves; and, as if this were not enough, the patriotic widow voluntarily contributed, without any remuneration, eighteen horses and twenty bullocks and hogs. I am quoting facts.

Old Imne was declared exempt, on account of his age and his wooden leg; but Susi's father, though past fighting, readily undertook to drive one of the store-wagons. All the able-bodied men and likely lads were picked off to swell the *honved* force; and in a few hours the lately bustling village was left to the sole occupation of women, children, and veterans.

Meanwhile, Paul, arriving at the wayside inn where we found him at the beginning of our story, accosted Jancsi, the innkeeper, with these words—

* Ladislaus.

“O thou author of all my woes!”

“Why, Paul! is it thou, man?” cried Jancsi. “What have you been doing with yourself?”

“That's a pretty question to ask,” says Paul. “Hiding, to be sure!”

“And wherefore hiding?”

“There's another reasonable question,” said Paul. “Why, because you got me into all manner of trouble.”

“How did I get you into all manner of trouble?” said the innkeeper.

“Why, by giving me those two bottles of wine. Don't you remember giving them to me?”

“Certes I do,” said Jancsi; “it was not so very long ago, that I should forget it, nor was it wine easy to forget; but you are not very grateful for it, seemingly.”

“How can I be grateful for it,” persisted Paul, “when it was the origin of all my woes?”

“How so, man?”

“Why, the Haiduk came in, just as we were going to drink it, and said it was smuggled.”

Jancsi here went into fits of laughter, and, as soon as he could articulate, with the tears running from his eyes, gasped out,

"So it was!"

"Bad luck to it, then," said Paul indignantly; "how could you play a poor fellow such a trick, except to get him into trouble? It may seem a joke to you, but it's no joke to me, for I killed the Haiduk!"

Jancsi here laughed more than ever, and seeing Paul grow red with wrath, cried,

"He isn't dead!"

"Not dead?" ejaculated Paul. Then, after a pause, he said in quite an altered voice—

"Then, Heaven be praised!"

"Why, you don't pretend to care for a haiduk, do you?" said Jancsi.

"I care for killing one," said Paul. "It was the first life I ever took—or thought I had taken, and the feeling was not a comfortable one, I promise you."

"Pooh, pooh," said Jancsi, more seriously, as he saw a tear in the poor fellow's eye, "we are going to have plenty of this work wholesale. If you had really killed him, it would but have been justifiable homicide."

"Why could not you have let me know he was alive?" said Paul. "It would have been but considerate."

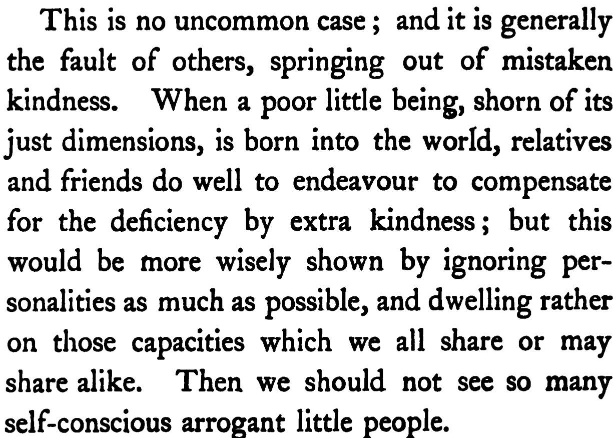
"Why, how were we to know where to find you?" said Jancsi. "You knew where you were yourself, but nobody else did."

"You make quite a mistake there," said Paul, "for I did not in the least know where I was. My mind was in that state that I lost myself completely."

"You must have a comical sort of mind, to be so easily confused," observed a third party, who was seated at his ease on the bench outside the door, listening to the dialogue with an air of amusement that carried a little malice with it.

He was—I will not say *the* Hungarian dwarf, but a Hungarian dwarf who was not without his reputation, though it was chiefly derived from his diminutive proportions. Why any man should be considered great because he is small, is more than I can understand; but certainly this Hungarian dwarf would have flown into a terrible passion with any one whom he had heard prefix an indefinite article to his name. In his own opinion he was The Hungarian dwarf, and no less (or more properly, no bigger). He had travelled over Europe, exhibited himself to foreign potentates, and realized a competence; and

now he was residing in his native village, taking his ease at his inn, and complacently favouring his friends with his illustrious experiences. He also enjoyed the title of Baron, but whether with more title to it than a baron of beef, I am unable to say. Of course it was delightful to listen to a man who could describe interviews with the most celebrated characters in Europe: only the worst of it was, that it was not, "Then Metternich said to me," but, "Then I said to Metternich;" not, "The Duke of Wellington said to me," but, "I said to the Duke of Wellington." His pictures of the past were in artful perspective; for the little figure in front obscured the towering figures in the background.



This is no uncommon case; and it is generally the fault of others, springing out of mistaken kindness. When a poor little being, shorn of its just dimensions, is born into the world, relatives and friends do well to endeavour to compensate for the deficiency by extra kindness; but this would be more wisely shown by ignoring personalities as much as possible, and dwelling rather on those capacities which we all share or may share alike. Then we should not see so many self-conscious arrogant little people.

Paul looked at the dwarf as much as to say, "What call had *you* to speak?" but, at this moment, they heard a sudden irregular discharge of fire-arms; and almost immediately afterwards Paul's friend Peti rushed towards them in great excitement.

"How now, Peti?" said Jancsi.

"What's that firing for?" said the dwarf.

"The fighting has begun in real earnest," cried he. "Hallo, Paul! is that you? Where do you come from?"

"What's going forward?" cried Paul, Jancsi, and the Baron, all at once.

"A cavalry action," replied Peti, "just beyond the hill. Some of the Pesth national guard, splendidly mounted, have fallen in with a detachment of Black-and-Yellows, with ever so many Red-Mantles along with them, and they are going at it famously. You can see them if you like from the hill."

The Baron, while Peti spoke thus, had been seated, almost tailor-like fashion, on a bench, caressing a huge pair of spurs attached to his heels by a curious complication of straps, and of which he was reported to be so fond, as nightly to place them under his pillow; but now he leapt

down from his perch, and inflated his little person till he looked two inches higher than usual, exclaiming—

"*Nemes ember vagyak!* (I am a nobleman!) and overflow with military ardour. Let us hasten, my friends, to the spot."

"By all means," said Jancsi. "I never had the luck to see a cavalry action."

They all set off at their best speed; the Baron, poor little fellow, being scant of breath, was soon distanced by his fleeter companions; but he followed them panting.

"There's a girl among them," said Peti, "who fights like any man."

"Then I'll wager," said Paul, "it's the corps that Count Matthias has just entertained three days. What a shame! They have no sooner left him than they fall on his own people!"

"Ah, that's the course of war," said Jancsi. "Hark to the clash of steel! They're at it hand to hand now, and it sounds like blacksmiths hammering on so many anvils."

"Wait for me," cries the little Baron breathlessly in the rear.

"No, no, Baron; catch hold of my coat tails if you will—I shall never feel the difference."

They soon gained the brow of the hill, from whence they saw the combatants engaged beneath them. Paul recognized Ellen or Ilyan, the Seressan girl, who dashed boldly towards a Hungarian *jurat*, followed by her brother—and, in spite of a sabre-cut across her cheek, seized her antagonist's bridle, disabled his sword-arm, and rode off with him, laughingly exclaiming—

"*Je jedan, brate! ne boisse!*" ('Tis only one, brother! never fear!)

"Well, I never saw anything to match that!" exclaimed Jancsi.

"A spirited woman, on my word," said the Baron with admiration. "Such a female as that could subjugate me."

"To think of a Magyar being taken by a girl!" cried Paul in disgust.

Wildenheim's little troop retreated in good order, and the Hungarians followed them a little way, lightly cantering over the course, and then gave up the pursuit.

"We have kept our ground," said Peti.

"Yes," said Paul; "but I should have liked to see that young Svab's conceit taken down a little more."

"A very pretty skirmish!—very pretty," said

Jancsi complacently. " I would not have missed it on any account."

" I should have liked Wellington to see it," said the Baron grandly. " He would have appreciated our horsemanship."

CHAPTER IX.

CAUGHT.

WHILE this dialogue is going on near Jancsi's hostelry, a solitary figure stands meditatively on the balustraded terrace of Count Matthias's castle. How peaceful the scene! Faint autumn tints of orange and yellow vary some of the greens of the elms, beeches, and oaks, in the park below, and the poplars are thinning a little, while the sombre pines remain unchanged. Busy pigs trotting hither and thither in quest of acorns, industrious labourers tilling the fields with their cream-coloured oxen, are the only signs of life in the distant landscape, which is closed in by the complicated outlines of a chain of mountains. Nearer at hand, water sparkles in the sun, and gravelled walks lose themselves in a little *bosquet*, above which gleam the bright glass and golden pinnacles of a fanciful conservatory.

Helena had never seen her home look more fair, but it filled her with indescribable sadness. The blue-greens of the vineyards coloured the distance, the grapes were gathered;* but there would be no mirthful vintage next year, drawing rich and poor together in celebration of its festal rites. That cool ascent, shaded by interlaced branches, led to a rustic seat where she had often wiled the sultry hours with her book, or indulged in vague dreams of an outer world, better and fairer than world has ever been—she would never do so again! Those dreams and longings were never to be realised.

A graceful figure in negligent morning toilette issued from a glass door opening on the terrace, and laid her hand on Helena's shoulder.

"Dear Helena," said she, "you look so strange in that dress, that I hardly know you. Do you not feel very awkward in it?"

"I do not think of it at all," replied she. "Only the circumstances of the time have made me adopt it."

"Own, however, that you have a secret pleasure in doing so."

"Certainly not, for it would not be true!

* Szabad.

Oh, no, Zilia, I shall be very glad to put these things off again. I have a presentiment this morning that I shall never see this dear place any more." Her eyes filled with tears as she spoke.

"Then, my dear Helena, indeed you must not go," said Countess Zilia, kissing her. "Remain with me and Aunt Elizabeth."

"You must not—unman me," said Helena, faintly smiling at the word. "We have considered the matter already. You know why I go, and that I have devoted myself to my brother and my country. Somehow, I don't feel so sanguine, this morning, of success; and yet, surely, the God of Hungary will protect us! Let us go down to the little chapel, and invoke His blessing."

She alluded to the old tower which the Turks had used as a mosque, but which had since been consecrated for Christian family worship.

"See, here comes Barbara," said Countess Zilia; "what a droll hussar she makes! Well, Barbara, have you made up your kit? What a medley it must contain of hair-pins, strapping-plaster, bandoline, and bandages, to suffice both lady's-maid and army-surgeon!"

Barbara made a military salute, and replied—

"I shall be glad enough, my lady, to have no call for my services in the latter capacity; but it is well to be prepared for the worst; and if Countess Helena goes to look after the Count, why, I must go to look after Countess Helena."

A most inconvenient precedent, by the way; and there can be no doubt that the young lady and lady's-maid were on the wrong tack, going where honour did not call them, and where it was very uncertain that glory awaited them. Very generous, very self-devoted, but a mistake. Woman's mission is to save lives, not to destroy them.

They were moving towards the chapel, when Laszlo rushed towards them, exclaiming—

"The trumpet will instantly sound to horse! Baron Wildenheim's corps is engaged in action with a detachment of our national guard from Pesth, whom we must immediately support."

The ladies exchanged a quick look. Zilia turned pale, but Helena's colour heightened.

"Friends one day, foes the next!" said she. "So be it—I am ready."

All was now confusion and bustle. The Count marshalled his little body of horse, farewell embraces were exchanged, words of faith and hope

spoken, the trumpet sounded, and the little party rode out of the court-yard. Countess Zilia, with eyes full of tears, turned into the chapel.

The skirmish had ended long before the news of it reached Count Matthias, and by the time he gained the spot the combatants had retired in different directions. Instead of returning to the castle, he led his little force to join the "Matyas hussars."

Paul was, meanwhile, pursuing his journey, and going over the same ground he had lately traversed with Peti, but in a very different mood. Then, he was gay and thoughtless as a bird; now, he was full of grave thought and deep feeling, for the events of a few days seemed to have made him an older man.

All at once, a whizzing sound met his ear, and he was suddenly brought up by the long, weighted lash of a whip flung round his horse's foreleg in the way I have already described—a trick he knew well how to play but had never before been played.

The next moment, he found himself seized by two powerful Seressans, who, in spite of his angry protests, began rifling his pockets and passing their hands over his clothes. They got

little money for their pains, but they came to Count Matthias's letters, which they seemed to think must be of importance; and after a few words to one another in their own dialect, they tied Paul's hands, took his bridle in their own, and rode off with him between them.

Here was an unforeseen event! It was impossible to guess in what it might end, and every mile they rode took him farther from Susi.

It was towards dusk when they came up to the outposts of a considerable bivouac. The hum of thousands of voices told him that it must be that of a great army. His captors exchanged laughing remarks with other Seressans, Croats, and Serbs, who were bringing in fuel and fodder. The saddles and bridles of half the horses were taken off, and nose-bags, filled with maize, fastened to their heads.

A little farther on, they came to Austrian troops, unpacking meat, wine, flour, and other provisions from covered wagons; while others were feeding large fires with billets, or preparing the favourite dish of *gulyas-has*, with small squares of beef, vegetables, and red pepper.

The scene was novel and strangely stirring; under different circumstances Paul would have

highly enjoyed it, but in his present predicament it was anything but pleasant. A certain order overruled the confusion through which they passed, and at length they reached head-quarters, and Paul found himself brought into the tent of the commander-in-chief, a tall, muscular, sun-burnt man of truly military bearing; with smooth black hair, high forehead, large expressive hazel eyes, that could be both stern and gentle, and an aspect of great determination. Such was the outward seeming of Jellachich, the famous Ban.

On his staff was Baron von Wildenheim, who was smoking a cigar just beyond the tent.

The Seressans made known to their chief that they had captured a peasant who was the bearer of despatches. They then produced the letters, laid them before him, and fell back.

Jellachich glanced at Paul's hands, to satisfy himself whether he were a real peasant, and then opened the letters, murmuring inaudibly as he read them.

"'*My dear Count*'—hum, hum, hum—'*Some shepherds have surprised a courier from Jellachich*'—hallo—'*with letters directed to Count Latour, and others connected with the Austrian ministry, which plainly evince the understanding that*

exists between the Ban and the Viennese ministry of war.'—(*Aloud*) Here, Wildenheim, step this way, will you? And throw away your cigar, please. Just read what this friend of yours confides to a fellow-malignant. *That's* what came of the despatches! Hundreds of copies of them going to be printed without delay for general distribution! Well, Mr. Emissary (*frowning darkly on Paul*) the most just and fitting reception I can offer you is, that you shall immediately be strung up to the next tree."

"Then it will be the greatest shame that ever was," burst forth Paul, "for—"

"Not a word, fellow. Seressans, take him off."

"Baron Wildenheim! Baron Wildenheim!" cried the poor young man, piercingly, "in the name of your host, Count Matthias, I call on you to save me!"

"Marshal, cannot he be let off?" said Wildenheim, uneasily. "It is true that the master of this peasant, whose face I now recognise, entertained me and my eighty horse three days and nights. We only left him this morning."

"Let the peasant's life be spared, Baron," said Jellachich, calmly, "since you make it a matter

of personal favour, after eating his master's salt; but, at any rate, keep him in close charge, for he must not be turned loose."

"I will see to that," said Wildenheim, to whom Paul directed a grateful look. "I'll answer for it, my lad, you did not know what you were carrying."

"Not a whit," said Paul. "My lord only told me to leave the letter as I went by."

"You are saved that trouble," said the Ban, grimly, with a little motion of the hand, to signify he was to fall back, which Paul gladly obeyed. The Baron gave some directions concerning his safe keeping to the Seressans, who seemed to think it would be much better to finish him off at once; and he then returned to the Ban.

"Wildenheim!" said Jellachich, quickly, "that is really a sad rogue you have begged off—he ought to have been strung up. See! here is a second letter of your Count's, to the magistrate of some village or town, begging him to give the bearer the benefit of any doubt as to his having killed a public officer!"

The Baron did not know what to say to this, so he looked rather foolish and held his peace.

Luckily, some one came in with news of importance, which diverted the Ban's thoughts.

The men were now at supper, and Paul, seated between his guards at one of the watch-fires, had a very good ration given him, for which he had little appetite.

After supper, the soldiers mended their clothes, bridles, and saddles, or, seated round the fires, talked, told stories, sang, or played at cards, and some of them danced ; some sauntered hither and thither, others lay on the ground in pensive attitudes, and as the darkness deepened it lengthened their shadows, which fell in strange, fantastic shapes against the indistinct background of white tents. At every pause in the singing near at hand, fitful snatches of music were heard in various other quarters; and beyond and over all, a ceaseless indefinable hum—the voice of the mixed multitude.

When night closed in, brilliant with constellations, the men settled themselves to sleep. But Paul lay awake for hours, staring upwards at the twinkling stars and bright unwinking planets, listening to the distant call of the patrols.

Near him lay the crouching forms of the Seressans, enveloped in their large red-lined

cloaks, with the hoods drawn over their heads, which gave them a spectral appearance. Beyond them were stretched the white-cloaked hussars, and, not far from them, their horses, some resting as they stood, others neighing and pawing the ground. Now and then the red flame of a watch-fire would suddenly shoot high up into the air, making the scene appear more like a troubled dream than reality. The effect of the whole was, to Paul, inexpressibly mournful.

The soldiers had spoken with confidence, at supper, of a speedy general engagement, in which the Hungarians would inevitably be defeated; and though Paul told himself he did not believe one word of it, it sensibly affected his spirits. What he saw around him gave him a discouraging sense of the overwhelming force that would be brought out against them. Why could not they let him go? How senseless it was to burthen themselves with the charge and keep of a poor fellow who meant them no wrong!

At dead of night he heard the distant tramp of hoofs coming nearer and nearer, and at length a courier at full speed dashed into the camp with despatches for the Ban. They told him of the murder of Count Lamberg.

Trumpets instantly sounded to horse, and the camp was raised. Amid the general bustle which ensued, Paül thought there was a chance of his escaping under cover of the darkness, and summoned his obedient little pony to him by a low whistle. It was overheard, however, by one of the Seressans, by whom he was instantly speared, and left for dead.

Many hours after the camp had broken up, Paul, still insensible, and bathed in blood, was found lying on the ground by some compassionate peasants, who carried him to a light wagon, where they laid him on some hay, and then drove him to the nearest inn.

The last effort of the peace party had been to induce the Archduke Stephen, Palatine of Hungary, to form a new cabinet. He had authorized Count Batthyanyi to do so for him; and Kossuth offered to support him with all his influence. The Austrian ministry had hoped that the governor of the fortress of Komorn would yield it up to Jellachich, but he refused. Their tactics, therefore, were altered. Count Lamberg, an Austrian, was appointed commander-in-chief of all the forces in Hungary, with power to dissolve the Diet.

This was the one drop too much. The Diet immediately held an extraordinary sitting, and the appointment of Count Lamberg not having the royal signature was declared illegal, and he himself an outlaw if he dared to act on it.

Yet Lamberg, seemingly unaware of his danger, ventured to go to Pesth. He there called on a privy counsellor, an old friend of his, who was ill in bed, but whose son begged the Count to escape from the city without delay, through a back door and by back streets.

Lamberg laughed at the idea, and drove in a hackney coach to Buda, on the opposite side of the river. Meanwhile, his arrival was known, and the report that he had come to take possession of the fortress of Buda passed from mouth to mouth.

The Diet had assembled, and Kossuth was making a speech on the necessary defences against Jellachich, when an uproar was heard in the streets. A throng of the lower orders had armed themselves with scythes to defend the citadel. A deputy went out to them, assured them their alarm was groundless, and, to convince them of it, accompanied them himself to the fortress, and

showed them that it was in possession of their own guards.

They returned; and all would have been well if they had not unfortunately met Lamberg in his hackney coach. They dragged him out of it, put him violently to death, and dragged his body about the streets.

Count Batthyanyi, washing his hands of so foul a deed, threw up his trust, and started that night for Vienna.

The Diet passed an instant resolution, expressing their sorrow and abhorrence, and commanded the murderers of Count Lamberg to be apprehended; but they had fled. The Hungarian army rejoiced in their enemy's fall; they were burning for action.

Jellachich learnt, the same night, the murder of Lamberg and the resignation of Batthyanyi. Thinking that now, while the country was in confusion, was the time for striking a decisive blow, he gave orders for a general action the next morning.

To his surprise, the Hungarians awaited him among the vineyards of Sukoró, and began the attack. To his greater surprise, they won the battle. He was obliged to sue for a three days'

armistice, which was granted him by General Moga; and he took advantage of it to effect, under cover of the night, an ignominious retreat. *He* called it "a flank movement." It was immediately after this retreat that Arthur Görgey started into questionable distinction by causing the death of Count Zichy.

Poor Susi! she had more than once said she would rather have any news of Paul than none, but she did not find herself much happier for the first tidings that came to her. One day, his friend Peti suddenly appeared before her, as she was talking to her cousins.

"Well, Peti," said she, sadly, "still no news of Paul."

"No news of Paul?" said Peti, in surprise. "Why, is he not here?"

"No, indeed! We have seen and heard nothing of him since our unfortunate wedding-day," said she, with tears starting into her eyes. "What makes you ask the question?"

"This is unaccountable," said Peti, in perplexity. "I met Paul three days ago at Muntony, on his way here, and he was overjoyed to hear the Haiduk was alive, as he had been hiding on his account, and got lost somehow."

"Oh, what *can* have become of him, then?" said Susi, crying.

"Can't say, I'm sure," said Peti. "The last I saw of him was, that he was on a little black pony, coming here as fast as he could. There had been a cavalry action beyond the hill, and we all—that is, Paul, Jancsi, the little Baron, and I—had been watching it. We saw the Black-and-Yellows and Red-Mantles in full retreat, and then Paul came on here."

"Oh, if there was fighting going on, he has certainly come to harm," said Susi. "Depend on it, he has fallen into the hands of those murdering Red-Mantles! What an unhappy girl I am!"

And she wept unrestrainedly, while Wilma sympathizingly laid her hand on her shoulder, and little Theresa stood looking at her in silent awe and pity.

CHAPTER X.

OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

"*Passa la bella donna, e par che dorma.*"

SOON after the little cavalry action, Baron von Wildenheim's corps made a famous capture. They came upon some honveds escorting four provision-wagons—scattered the honveds and captured the wagons, which proved to contain many acceptable things, including fifty bottles of champagne. These they immediately drank; and then, in very good spirits, they lighted large fires and cooked their suppers.

The curling wreaths of smoke presently drew towards them a party of gipsies. It comprised our old acquaintances Lillo, Zabet, and Lena; for Lillo had given up his summer occupation of gold-washing for camp-following, fiddling to the soldiers, guiding them, and sometimes misleading them. He and his family seemed to thrive on

their gains, for they were in much better condition than when in the forest—cleaner and better dressed. As for Lena, she was a perfect miracle of gipsy gaiety, attired in wonderful contrasts and combinations of colour, as magically harmonizing with one another as the autumnal forest-tints with glimpses of blue sky between the fading leaves; or as Joseph's coat of many colours.

Lena was very beautiful; and not a bad girl for a gipsy without any Christianity or morality. She was not malignant, like Zabet, though with a spice of what the French call malice; and she led a hard life on the whole, poor wretch; camping out in the forest while summer lasted, sometimes pinched with hunger; and performing the meanest chares during the rest of the year for those who looked on her as a sort of pariah, and paid her little enough for her trouble. She was well known at various inns and public-houses as a useful drudge, and had a general cleverness that she sometimes turned to good account. When anything was given her to eat, she never dreamt of sitting down to it with the rest of the household, who would have spurned her, but devoured it as she stood.

Lena's silky black hair was now woven in two long braids, "which graceful fell behind," and her head was encircled by a bandeau of bright blue, while on either temple was a cluster of gay autumnal flowers. Her scarlet bodice, embroidered with black, was laced over a full chemise gathered into a band, above which she wore a twisted, parti-coloured handkerchief.

To the soldiers, enlivened by their good cheer, these promoters of music and dancing could not have arrived more opportunely. They cried, "Play up, gipsy!" to Lillo, who fiddled as he approached; and the little blue-eyed Arcadian, with his looks of limpid innocence, trilled his native wood-notes wild on his reed pipe.

Lillo immediately redoubled his energy; and the hussars, clattering with their spurs, snapping their fingers, and stamping the hard ground, danced with all their might. Lena clashed her cymbals high in the air, and Wildenheim, catching the spirit of the moment, danced several rounds with Ellen the Seressan girl, who in general would only dance with her brother.

Then, as night closed in, their merriment ceased, and they composed themselves to rest. Wildenheim shoved his saddle under his head,

wrapped himself in a woollen coverlet, and lay down by the watch-fire, too full of thick-coming, romantic fancies, immediately to sleep.

Over head was the dark purple firmament, reddened in the distance by some burning village, destroyed by its inhabitants that it might not give shelter to the enemy—such is the course of war. Near at hand, in a wide circle round him, the troopers' horses, covered with warm horse-cloths, were either stretched at full length, or feeding out of their nose-bags, saddled and bridled in readiness for the first alarm. The hussars, who had lately been so joyously dancing, now lay enveloped in their white cloaks; the Seressans in their brown mantles with red linings. To the fiddle, reed pipe, and cymbals, had succeeded the cry of the vedettes, and now and then the howling of wolves. Many a dead horse and unburied hussar had already supplied these fell beasts of prey with a ghastly meal, and a better time for them was coming.

How charming a bivouac! What a pity that so lively a picture should ever have a reverse! But such is the course of war. No more champagne suppers for the advanced guard: very short and uncertain supplies of everything else.

After a few days of pouring rain, the state of the roads became dreadful; and as they penetrated farther into the country, they found it depopulated and laid waste, without food for man or fodder for beast. They became hungry as wolves, but could not eat wolves' food. As Wildenheim still led the advanced guard, a double proportion of difficulties and dangers fell to his lot. He had long forgotten what a bed, what a chair was like—what a towel, what a razor. I am afraid he had not Sir Charles Napier's cake of soap in his pocket. One day, in a deserted homestead, he found a broken looking-glass, and shuddered when he saw himself in it.

"What a monster, what a beast am I become!" exclaimed he (and he thought a good deal of his appearance). "Frightful! hideous! —I should be very sorry to be seen as I am by the Countess Helena!"

In fact, his once smooth-shaven face now displayed a crop of rough little brown curls, like the back of a little lion; his hair, wretchedly cut by a hussar, and destitute of any unguent, stuck out in every direction but the right; his forehead was seamed with a slight cut received some days previously from a honved; and his

once spotless white cloak was now stained and marbled with all manner of colours.

But, worst of all, he was so hungry! A shower of carbine balls from an ambuscade was all the breakfast he had had; and there seemed no better prospect for dinner.

In such a dilemma as this, delicious was the sound of a gipsy's fiddle! The next turn of the road brought them on Lillo's encampment—a crazy tent or two, a pot boiling over a few sticks, a few donkeys, donkey-carts, and ill-looking dogs.

The men instantly clamoured for the contents of the pot, which of course would go but a little way among so many.

"What a shame, you rogues!" cried Wildenheim, "when your commanding officer has had no breakfast!"

"No breakfast, Captain?" cried Lena, opening wide her bright eyes. "Would you like me to get you one?"

"Ay, indeed I should!" said he.

"Follow me, then," said the gipsy-girl.

And, leaping into one of the donkey-carts at a bound, she screamed out something which the donkey seemed to understand, for he set off, full gallop, up a rough bank and over a rough field,

followed by Wildenheim, laughing violently, as fast as his horse would pursue the donkey. One or two hussars followed hard after him.

Away galloped Lena, her hair streaming in the wind, as she looked back now and then, displaying her white teeth in a knowing smile. At the other end of the field they came to the back entrance of a ruinous deserted inn, half burnt down. Before Wildenheim could enter it, Lena was inside, had lighted a fire, and was actually boiling him eggs. He threw himself on a crazy settle, and looked on in amazement, while she, smiling, but in perfect silence, ran in and out, produced now a crumpled table-cloth, now an iron fork, now a pewter spoon, now salt, bread, bacon. Last of all, she came in with a broken pitcher, saying—

"There's nothing but water for you to drink —more's the pity!"

"Never mind," said he gratefully. "You are a capital girl."

Meanwhile the hussars were urgent with her to supply their needs also; but she was very haughty to them, told them there was no more where that came from, they might have their master's leavings. Wildenheim left nothing but

egg-shells. On this the men were out of patience, and told the girl she *must* find them something to eat. She appeared to think for a moment, and then said—

"Well then, wait—wait," and disappeared.

A minute after, they heard the donkey-cart dash out of the court-yard.

"Is she coming back again?" said one of the hussars doubtfully to the other.

"Not a bit of it," said Wildenheim, laughing as he overheard him. "See, she is off into the forest. Now she has quite disappeared."

The hussar growled, and followed his leader.

Afterwards, as Wildenheim followed his little troop through a defile, the snapping of a bough made him look up, and he saw Lena standing on a high bank watching them. He nodded, smiled, and waved his hand; and as he rode onward, indulged in the agreeable persuasion that there was a tear in her eye.

The buoyant joyousness with which he had entered into the war was much damped, and the spirits of his men equally flagged. Jovial songs were now heard among them but seldom, they were too tired or out of sorts. Almost every day they learnt the death of some friend or

favourite comrade on one side or the other. They found the temper of the country different from what they had been led to expect, and became convinced that, even if it were conquered, it could not be retained in subjection unless an army of fifty thousand men were left in it.

More than once, in skirmishing, Wildenheim had found himself opposed face to face to hussars with whom he had formerly served in the same regiment, who were now defending their native country, and with whom it was no use to trifle, as they fought him in good earnest. Once his antagonist was a corporal whom he had himself clothed and trained. Another time he had to shoot an old hussar who had been his instructor when he was a cadet. Another time he crossed swords with a man who had been his favourite servant. They separated without much hurt on either side; but things like these saddened the young Baron's heart.

One day a serious engagement took place between two considerable forces, though it has swelled no page in history. On this occasion the Magyars had a numerous and excellent light cavalry, which made a furious charge on the Austrians, and at length was only compelled to

retreat by discharges of grape, which made fearful havoc among them.

The leader of the Magyar cavalry, a man or tall elegant figure, richly dressed, and mounted on a superb grey horse, distinguished himself on this occasion by his intrepidity; rallying his men again and again, and galloping to and fro with perfect unconcern amid a shower of balls.

It struck Wildenheim that he recognized this heroic figure, but he could not distinguish his features, as they were several hundred paces apart. Twice this officer escaped unhurt the steady fire of the Croat infantry; and when the Austrian guns began to fire with grape, he seemed not even to hear the first discharge, though it almost shook the ground, but to be in pursuit of a light airy figure that had acted as his aide-de-camp, and had now shot forward in advance, sword waved aloft, encouraging the men.

The second fire of grape was more effectual, for Wildenheim perceived the grey horse and its gallant rider stretched on the ground.

At the same time, a general charge took place, and he lost sight and thought of the chivalrous Magyar in the heat of the conflict, which, as usual in Hungary, resolved itself into a number

of single combats, each man hand to hand with another.

While this engagement was only impending, it had been repugnant to Wildenheim to unsheath his sword against many a former comrade ; but directly the trumpets sounded, and the charge began, all this repugnance vanished.

Doubtless, a cavalry action has an inspiration of its own, never to be forgotten by those who have taken part in it. When a well-disciplined troop in close order, horse to horse, flies over the plain like cloud-shadows in a brisk wind over corn, there may be a fascination in it no pen can describe. But when two such clouds meet in fearful collision—the momentary romantic pleasure is soon lost sight of!

It was nearly dark when Wildenheim drew off his troop, which had suffered severely. Excessively fatigued and over-wrought, he was about to stretch himself beside one of the watch-fires, when an orderly came to inform him that a Hungarian officer, dangerously wounded, and taken prisoner, desired to speak to him.

Weary as he was, the Baron complied, and followed his guide to a wattled shed, which was serving for a temporary hospital. It was im-

perfectly lighted by the lanterns of the attendants on the surgeons, who, with shirt-sleeves tucked up, were busily operating on the groaning men around them.

The sight was sickening; the groans of anguish almost worse; and it was only by a strong effort that Wildenheim could muster courage to pass on. At the farthest end of the long building, on a bed of straw, and ashy-pale from loss of blood, lay his gallant friend, Count Matthias!

As the lantern-light flashed on his face and enabled Wildenheim to recognise it, he was struck with grief and compassion.

"Oh, my dear Matthias! is it thus I find you?" exclaimed he, kneeling beside him, and grasping his cold hand.

"I thank you for coming to me, my dear Wildenheim," said the Count, speaking with great pain and difficulty. "I heard you were here, and therefore sent for you . . . I am dying, Wildenheim!—my chest is shattered. How different things seem now—When I am dead, take my pocket-book out of my pocket, and send it to my wife, whose address you will find in it. It contains my will, and other papers."

"I will, I will, my dear Matthias! I hope, however, that you may yet—"

He checked him by pressing his hand, and feebly smiled.

"Don't talk thus—'tis no use . . . I die for my country—and you are faithful to your colours. You would see this war differently if you were born on the soil."

Wildenheim wrung his hand.

"Where is the Countess Helena?" enquired he, after a pause.

"Helena?" exclaimed the Count; and the expiring lamp of life blazed out brightly for a moment. "Where, but with our army? fighting beside me for the liberties of Hungary! Till now, we have never lost sight of one another. It was in pursuit of her, when she too daringly rushed forward, that I met my death-stroke." Covering his eyes with his hand, he faintly murmured—

"Oh, my sister! dreadful will be your grief, when you learn that I have fallen."

A mist gathered over Wildenheim's eyes. The silence was long unbroken, but he frequently squeezed his friend's hand, and felt the pressure

feebly returned. At length, Count Matthias softly said—

"My dear Wildenheim, can you pray?"

"I—I fear—" stammered the young man, blushing scarlet.

"Never mind—my soul lifts itself to God, though not in words."

Another pause ensued. He moaned gently, and a surgeon coming up to him, looked at him attentively, and then at Wildenheim, significantly making the sign of the cross over his closed eyes.

Suddenly, Count Matthias raised his head, looked eagerly round, and then sank back, faintly exclaiming—

"So!—'tis now all over—commend me to my wife;" and with these scarcely audible words he expired.

Wildenheim, with tears in his eyes, obeyed his last injunctions, and took from his breast-pocket his pocket-book, which was so steeped in blood that its contents were hardly legible. He also drew the rings from his fingers, and cut off a lock of his fine black hair, to send to the widowed Countess; then turning to the surgeon, gave orders that his friend's remains should be re-

spectfully interred in a separate grave. After this, he quitted the shed, subdued and solemnized.

Wildenheim had seen many deaths in the battle-field, but had rarely sat by a death-bed; and this one had had nothing that should have attended it—

> "As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,"

and the sacred offices of religion. During the hour he had spent beside his suffering friend, many sobering thoughts had passed through Wildenheim's mind. The Count had been his early comrade; had once saved his life: and for years they had been on cordial terms whenever they were thrown together. Wildenheim had always wished to visit him in his Hungarian home; and now, how had they met and parted! An uncomfortable sense of incompetency had embarrassed him when the Count had asked him if he could pray; and he fancied that, in that awful moment, his friend had been supported against unseen foes by an unseen Friend, whom he himself knew but afar off.

What a blow awaited Countess Helena! Wildenheim caught himself thinking of her amid

the pressure of affairs, as well as in the silent hours of night, and wondering how she would bear it. Surely her brother had been mistaken, in allowing her to accompany him! It made civil war yet more frightful, when women took part in it, not as sisters of mercy, but as combatants.

A few days after this engagement, another skirmish occurred. The Croats were driven back by the Hungarians at the point of the bayonet, but rallied and compelled them to retreat. They also captured some wagons containing wine, bacon, and flour; and being much in want of food, they hastened to light large fires and prepare their suppers. Again the voice of song was heard among them, as though there were no enemy to fear.

Their mirth jarred on Wildenheim's feelings, and he was apprehensive that their carousing might make the vedettes careless of their watch. Taking two Seressans with him, one of whom was the brother of Ellen, he proceeded to inspect the chain of outposts on foot.

He found all the vedettes on the alert, and was returning to the camp, still weighed down by unaccountable heaviness, when, the moon

shining bright, he perceived a figure reclining at the foot of a tree.

"Oh! who or what is that?" exclaimed he, in a kind of panic, as he distinguished the grey dolmany edged with crimson, worn by the Matyas corps. Running up to the figure, he perceived by the long uncoiled hair escaped from its net, and flowing from beneath the crimson *csako*, that it was a woman in the dress of a hussar. He bent over her to see if she were sleeping—the Seressans gently lifted and turned her round—he discovered, what his heart had already told him, that it was the Countess Helena, in the cold stillness of death!

Wildenheim was inexpressibly shocked. He was ready to throw himself beside her and give way to his grief. Controlling himself by a strong effort, he bade the Seressans gently bear the senseless form to the nearest fire, and summon Ellen the Seressan girl to lend her aid, in the faint hope of restoring suspended animation. But it was quite in vain, for life had been long extinct. From a small red wound near the heart, the blood yet oozed in single drops: his only consolation was that her death must have been instantaneous.

Ellen wept bitterly, and the hussars were visibly impressed; for they well remembered the graceful attention to their comfort evinced by the fair young lady of the castle, now slain, probably, by one of their own bullets. The voice of song was checked; each one looked grave and spoke in a subdued voice: perhaps each was reminded of some dear one at home. They dug a deep grave with their handbills and swords: a young hussar placed over it a simple cross made out of the stems of two white maples.

Just as she was, in her grey dolmany and crimson cap, with its glistening heron's plume, her light Turkish sabre at her side, her hands crossed on her bosom, her face composed as if in slumber, with a sweet inexpressible smile on her lips; they carefully wrapped her in a large clean blanket, and, at daybreak, reverently deposited her in the grave. Regardless of caution, Wildenheim had a full salute fired with pistols over it, stood by while it was filled up, and then turned away with a void in his heart which hitherto he had never known.

Within a few days, he had thus lost the two persons dearest to his affections and imagination; both of them ranged against him in this fratricidal

war. He had entered on it full of a young man's notions of glory; but that glory was beginning to drop her painted mask, and show an ugly face behind. It naturally sobered him a good deal.

As for Ellen the Seressan girl, whose father had been disabled in the last combat, she returned with him home.

CHAPTER XI.

RACIDULA.

"You promise her glory; but the name of that glory is *Death*."—Jókai.

HITHERTO, the Imperialists had certainly gained nothing. They had continually been defeated, were miserably off for supplies, and the roads were almost impassable for their artillery. Sixteen or eighteen horses were often harnessed to a single piece, and even then they moved it with difficulty.

But the Hungarians had fallen on evil times too, though, as yet, they were the winning party. Whole villages were nearly depopulated; grass began to grow in the streets; dogs howled incessantly for their masters; evening bells were no longer heard; few chimneys smoked; no fires gleamed through kitchen windows; the inhabitants had disappeared, no one knew where.

firmly persuaded that Austria would be worsted in the contest.

"Our cause is a just one," said he, "and therefore it will prevail."

But sometimes this is said on both sides; and only one can win.

November, with its cloudy skies, had now set in; and as settled rains were impending, Paul, though yet weak, was anxious to start. At length it was arranged that he should do so on the morrow; and he was languidly sitting at dusk in the warmest corner by the stove when the door suddenly opened, and Krumme Andor stumped in, leaning on his staff, saying, as he pointed to a stranger who accompanied him,

"See here, Hancsa! I bring you another charge to make much of, since the former is going away."

Hancsa peered into the face of the stranger, who appeared to be a young fisherman, pale, weary, and dripping wet. The youth sank upon a seat, and on Hancsa's making some friendly inquiries, faltered, and then burst into tears.

"What's the matter now, husband?" said Hancsa, eyeing the new-comer inquisitively;

while Paul thought, "What a pusillanimous fellow!"

"'Tis a woman," returned Andor, with feeling, "who has slipped across the river in boy's clothes. Poor wretch! she must have gone through a great deal, I'm thinking. She's evidently a lady—look at her hands."

This was spoken in the Sclavonish dialect, that the stranger might not understand it. Hancsa continued to eye her narrowly.

"Poor soul," said she at length, "thou art wet and weary. Come with me into the guest-chamber." And she led her away.

When they were alone together, the stranger dried her eyes, and looking up at her, said—

"Yes; I am a lady, as you suppose. Your husband has been so good to me that I am sure you will be the same. But who is the young man by the stove? Is he your son?"

"My son is fighting for Austria, more's the pity," replied Hancsa, "but you may trust this young man, for he is a true Magyar. He was wounded and left for dead by some of Jellachich's vile Seressans; but we have nursed him into health, and he is about to leave us."

"Ah, then, since he is trusty," said the lady,

"I will presently tell you all about myself; but first let me take off these things, for I have the greater part of my own dress underneath, and the rest is in this little bundle."

Hancsa assisted her to take off the fisher-boy's clothes, and silently noticed her finely turned arms as she rolled her thick glossy hair under its net. She appeared to be about forty years of age; her carriage was noble, her countenance expressive; but her dress was only that of a common peasant-woman, for whom, at first sight, she might well be taken.

When they returned to the kitchen, Hancsa hastened to arrange the evening meal, while Paul gave up his seat to the stranger, whom he viewed with curiosity and interest. The lady partook heartily of the supper; and her spirits seemed so much improved by it, that Hancsa felt emboldened to ask her for her story. With a deep sigh she complied.

"You may call me Racidula, if you will," said she, "for that is my travelling name; but my real title is the Baroness von Beck. You are sheltering an unhappy person. I am a Magyar, and a profound lover of my country; it is the only love that is left me. My husband was

slain at the second barricade in the Jägerstrasse, in Vienna, this last October. I have nothing now to live for but my country. I should like to do something effectual for it, and then die."

She looked a little wildly around her as she spoke, and again sighed deeply.

"What can a woman do?" said Krumme Andor.

"Much, my good friend," replied the Baroness. "She can carry information. There are many things happening in Vienna which it is highly important that the Hungarian chiefs should know. I am charged with several messages to them that cannot safely be conveyed in writing. You therefore perceive the value of my mission."

"How have you managed to cross the frontier?" said Hancsa.

"You shall hear," replied Racidula. "I began my journey on foot, dressed as you see me, and reached Wagram the first day, thoroughly exhausted by this new mode of travelling. At Schlosshof, the river is crossed by a single bridge, and over this I intended to pass.

"I approached the outposts, therefore, in as quiet a manner as I could, and was immediately carried before the commandant. He closely

questioned me as to my object in wishing to cross. Having no passport, I told him I was a poor woman, stripped of all means of living, and going to seek an asylum among my relations. His reply was most disappointing: he declared that though he did not in the least doubt my story, he had strict orders to let no one cross, and must insist on my return.

"As I was leaving him in great discouragement, he called me back, and said,

"'Since you assure me you are really a poor woman, and that your only object is to seek out your relations, I will set you forward on your journey, and even put you in the way of earning money, if you will follow my directions. Go, then, into the Hungarian camp, and bring me news of the strength and position of the army. If your information is correct, you may depend on it you shall be well rewarded.'"

"Aha! a spy in the camp!" said Andor, chuckling. "A likely employment for a Hungarian lady!"

"I was so taken by surprise," said the Baroness, "that I hardly knew what to say to him. I replied that being unacquainted with military affairs, my information would be of little value.

'Since that is the case,' rejoined he, 'you had better return whence you came.'"

"Lady," interrupted Hancsa, "how could the commandant possibly take you for what you pretended to be? You don't talk like one of us."

After ruminating a little, she replied—

"I am persuaded he did not suspect me. I returned to Schlosshof, where an old peasant recommended me to go to Marchoff, farther down the river. Well, I reached it the same evening, and then had the mortification of finding it occupied by a detachment of the same regiment! Again I was seized and examined, but having by this time grown a little bolder, I represented myself as an inhabitant of Schlosshof, and so was admitted into the town.

"I went into the first house I came to and asked for a night's lodging. The woman of the house naturally inquired who I was, and whence I came. As I told her my little story, I could not refrain from tears; she listened with the kindest sympathy, and begged me to consider her house my own as long as I wished.

"The Croats had compelled her husband to accompany them and help to transport their baggage. 'Ah,' exclaimed she, 'I shall never

see him again; he will show his dislike of them some day, and then they will hang or shoot him.'

"The poor woman shed tears when she said this; but I cheered her as well as I could, and after a long friendly talk, she made me go to rest in her best bed.

"In the morning I awoke refreshed and strengthened, and found the good woman standing beside me. When she saw how my feet were blistered, she begged me to remain with her till they were healed; and it was with difficulty I prevailed on her to let me go.

"She went out to inquire whether I could have a boat to take me across the river, and presently returned accompanied by a fisherman. He told me that the whole river frontier was occupied by the military, and that therefore he could not attempt the passage. He advised me to try the Hainburg ferry, which I determined to do. My hostess, however, interposed.

"'I am now old,' said she, 'my husband is old also, and we have no children. Do you, my dear lady, consent to live with us! You shall not need to perform any menial office, only such light tasks as are suited to your strength.

You shall want for nothing, and be to us as a daughter.'"

"See here," exclaimed Andor to his wife, clapping her on the shoulder, "a woman as good as thyself!"

Hancsa regarded him with great affection; and Paul secretly thought, "May Susi and I, when we are old, love one another as Andor and Hancsa!"

"Was not she an excellent creature?" said the Baroness. "I thanked her gratefully, but told her I could not accept her kindness. She then insisted on sending a trusty labourer with me, and pressed on me a few florins, which I would not wound her by refusing.

"At the ferry I was again turned back. Jellachich had given strict orders to guard the passages. I returned, therefore, to my good hostess, who renewed her kindness, and remained with her till I made a fresh start.

"This time I went to Marchegg, where the railway crosses the river, hoping I might there obtain a passage. But no! the same regiment had possession of the bridge, which was commanded by a park of artillery. I was again seized and examined, but having become more

expert in baffling such inquiries, I told them I had come from Hoff, and was going to Marchegg. They let me pass into the town.

"The Austrian troops were encamped before it, and the country, as far as the eye could reach, was studded with their watch-fires.

"I inquired for lodgings, and found some in the cottage of a fisherman."

"Lorincz, my dear," interjected Andor, to his wife, who nodded.

"I wanted him," continued Racidula, "to take me across the river, but heard still the same tale —it was prohibited.

"I now resolved to undertake a walk of several leagues to Angern, which I accomplished the next day. Again I met with a repulse.

"At the inn where I put up, they told me there was a sugar-manufactory at Darnkrat, where many Hungarians came daily to their work, who crossed back at night. I thought I might slip across as one of them; but on reaching the place, I learnt that even the sugar-workers were forbidden to cross. My spirits now gave way, and I cried bitterly. I returned to the good fisherman and his wife. When I told them of my disappointment, the fisherman said that provi-

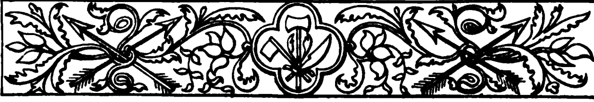
sions had begun to fail the Austrian soldiers, and that large foraging parties were making incursions on the Hungarian side and collecting provisions, which he and others were compelled to carry across."

"My wife knows all about it," said Andor, "for Lorincz is her brother."

"And to you he consigned me," said Racidula. "His wife dressed me in their son's clothes to escape observation; and they bade me affect to busy myself about the tackle of the boat. So here I am on Hungarian soil at last, and oh! how glad of it I am, though I know not what perils and trials await me!"

In saying which, the poor lady never spoke a truer word.

Much desultory conversation ensued, after which they separated for the night.



CHAPTER XII.

LENA AGAIN.

NEXT morning, the Baroness and Paul started on their respective journeys. The former, refreshed by her night's rest, and rejoicing at having crossed the frontier, gratefully bade farewell to her kind host and hostess, and started for Neudorf.

Paul's parting with his adopted uncle and aunt was truly affectionate. They pressed a few florins on him for road-money, and watched him from the door with as much interest as if he had indeed been their nephew.

What a journey it was! The battle of Schwechat had taken place about a fortnight before, on October 28th, when the Hungarians under Moga had been defeated by Windischgratz; and Moga resigning his command, Kossuth bestowed it on Arthur Görgei, a young officer

of remarkable promise. Besides the disastrous engagement at Schwechat many minor skirmishes had taken place with various results, but not counting for anything on the page of history. Yet these left their mark behind on the country; and this little story has nothing to do with great battles, but only outlines the course of war.

In the towns all was hurry and confusion; the piercing railway whistle was incessantly heard, day and night, and trains were filled with soldiers singing warlike songs. But the open country which Paul traversed was a desolate waste; and when he struck into the roads they were a sea of mud, in which many carts, wagons, and horses had been lost.

Hearing at length a heavy trampling behind him, he gained a little height fringed by a thicket, and looked about him. A considerable body of Austrian cuirassiers were advancing in beautiful order across a wide plain; but it was not from them that the trampling proceeded. Wheeling round the hillock on which he stood, a detachment of Hungarians, about half the number of the Austrians, almost brushed him as they swept past. In his fear for their safety he cried aloud; but his words were unheard. The Magyars paused

for a single instant, as if to measure the enemy with accuracy, then advanced towards them at a smart trot, which gradually increased to full speed. The Austrians, concluding they could but be the advanced guard of a much greater force, fell into confusion, wavered, gave way, and let the gallant band literally sweep through them, hurling many to the ground by their impetus, while the main body was dispersed over the plain like froth. It was a grand, but very terrible sight, and cost the Austrians dear, the Magyars scarcely anything. They cantered off the ground in a compact mass.

The excitement caused by this spectacle carried Paul forward some distance farther on his journey without any consciousness of fatigue. At length his weariness made itself felt, and he was much in want of refreshment; but where should he find it? He had yet a long distance to toil over before he reached a wretched-looking inn, where, on entering the long low public room with earthen floor, and walls blackened with smoke, he found it pre-occupied by a detachment of honveds, many of whom were profoundly sleeping in the straw which littered the ground; others were tailoring and cobbling, and mending their saddles

and bridles. One of them was even acting as an armourer, and busily removing notches and other blemishes from sword-blades, having ingeniously contrived himself an anvil from a large block of stone he found in the court-yard.

A savoury smell issued from a large camp-kettle over the fire; but alas, with so many hungry honveds to share its contents, Paul stood a poor chance. He stood wistfully looking in at the door a few moments, and then was turning away, when a woman belonging to the inn observed him and said—

"What do you here, my lad?"

"I am a poor wounded peasant, I am," said Paul sadly, "finding my way home."

"How came you to be wounded?"

"A Seressan speared me."

"Ah, poor fellow!" said she, looking pityingly at his blanched face. "We have not much ourselves, but will give you a mouthful of food and send you away. There are too many in the house already. Here, Lena, give this youth a basin of mamaliga."

The gipsy-girl, as dirty as the ground, looked about her, then took up a wooden bowl, ladled some porridge into it, and gave it to him, saying with a smile that had not a little malice in it—

"How's Susi?"

Paul started; for he had not recognized her at first sight, though her name fell on his ear.

"You ought to know best," said he briskly, "since you tell fortunes."

"You ought to have gone to the east," said she. "We bade you go to the east—instead of which you came westward."

"Ah," said he, "the less you say about it the better. Your reception of me did not do you much credit. By the by, though, did *you* give me that ring?"

Lena, who seemed officiating as scullion, either was or pretended to be too busy to hear him. He finished the bowl of mamaliga with much relish, and offered to pay for it; but his hostess said—

"No, no, my lad; freely accept what is freely given; only take yourself off as soon as you can."

So he obeyed and continued his journey.

Late in the afternoon, as he was growing foot-sore and hungry, he heard the sound of wheels rattling towards him from behind; and presently Lena came up with him in her donkey-cart.

"What!" cried she, laughing in a taunting

manner, "are you no farther than that? What makes you dawdle so?"

"I have been on foot many hours," said he, "and may fairly be tired."

"Step into my cart, then," said Lena, "and I'll give you a lift."

"How do I know you are going my way?"

"Why, there is but this one road!"

"Ay, Czigany, but I don't much want to see any more of your people."

"My people, as you call them, are far enough away," said Lena. "Lillo, who I believe you are afraid of, is acting as guide; and Zabet and the babies are settled for the winter in one of our villages. You may come or not, as you like—I shall not ask you twice."

"I shall like a lift very much," said Paul, scrambling awkwardly into the cart, on which she laughed, and said—

"That's not the way *I* get in—I fly in with a hop, skip, and jump!"

At the same moment she uttered a shrill cry, and off flew the donkey, nearly leaving Paul behind. The mud scattered right and left as they splashed through it, up and down hill, now and then bumping over some great stone and tilting

Paul against the gipsy—for she stood still as a bolt. At length the donkey stopped as suddenly as he had started off, nearly jolting Paul over his head; and then Lena, looking down upon him with the mien of an empress, said—

"You may get out."

"Thank you, gipsy," said he as he obeyed.

"Have you seen Susi yet?" cried she after him.

He shook his head.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Lena; and away dashed the donkey, cart, and gipsy out of sight.

"What a queer body she is!" thought he. "Such a jumble of good and evil! I don't think I much want to see her any more. I wonder if she gave me the ring?"

He found a night's lodging in a poor cottage; and the next day reached Count Matthias's castle, which somehow looked strangely forlorn.

He rang at the gate. After waiting a good while, he saw Walff the porter cautiously spying at him through a little grating. The wicket was then opened and he went in.

"Why, Paul," said Walff, "have you turned up again? Where in the world have you been?"

"I don't wonder at your asking," said Paul. "Is Count Matthias at home?"

"At home? Why, what are you thinking of?" cried Walff. "Don't you know he's dead?"

"Dead?" repeated Paul, changing colour. "My poor, dear lord!" and tears ran down his cheeks.

"Ah, it's a sad business," said Walff, beginning to cry too. "If tears would bring him back, we should have him still among us. You must not upset me, Paul—I've been a good deal tried."

"Why, *you* have upset *me*," said Paul, drying his eyes. "When did he die?"

"In a skirmish with the Black-and-Yellows, of course, in which he made a brilliant figure, killing them by scores."

"That I can well believe. Is the Countess at home?"

"No, he sent her out of harm's way when he took up arms. All our best young fellows went with him; if you had been at home he'd have taken you. When I saw them go off in such goodly array, I regretted being left behind, but I don't regret it now."

"Well, and so—"

"Well, and so some of them have found their way back after this desperate engagement, in which many of them, poor dear fellows, were killed, the Austrians being ten times their number, and mowing them down with grape. Some of these refugees brought home word that they saw my lord wounded and taken prisoner."

"Then why did not they rescue him?"

"Oh, they did all they could, there's no doubt of it. Several laid down their lives for him, but all in vain."

"But if he's a prisoner—"

"I tell you he's *dead*. Who should be his captor but that smooth-faced and smooth-tongued young Svab that put up here with his eighty horse, and was entertained by us for three days!"

"Baron von Wildenheim? Why, he ought to have let him go free!"

"There's no knowing what he might have done, for he never had the choice—my lord's chest was stove in—he got the Baron to send his last will and testament to the Countess, with a lock of his hair, and the particulars of his decease. Which he did; so that's how we come to know it."

"I never heard anything so dreadful," said Paul. "I'm sick of this war. The sights I've seen are past belief. *And* the sounds—*and* the smells! It ought to be a great good that's to be purchased with so much evil. Where's the Countess Helena?"

"She went with the Count."

"Went with the Count?" repeated Paul, looking mystified.

"Ay, in full hussar dress. You never saw so pretty a creature in your life."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear this," said Paul. "War is not fit for a woman. It's a great pity she should go. How could my lord let her?"

"You know how fond they always were of one another; and there was nobody to take care of her here."

"Oh, but nobody would come here."

"You never made a greater mistake," said Walff. "Why, they had hardly been gone three days, leaving us without a single able-bodied man on the estate, when up came a strong division of Black-and-Yellows, sent by Jellachich, who had intercepted a letter of my lord's to one of our general officers, saying that in such and such a hiding-place here, he 'would find what was

sought for.' The Ban, taking for granted it must be a large supply of arms, sent his myrmidons to hunt it up. I thought they would have strung me up to yonder cross-beam for not showing them the hiding-place, which I had never heard of before; and if I had, was it likely I should betray it? However, I knew nothing about it, so there were these wild fellows hunting high and low, stabbing the furniture, pulling down the pictures and books, tearing away the wainscot; till at length, sure enough, they came to a secret deposit, not of arms, but of three heavy iron chests, securely locked, which they took for granted must be what was meant, so they carried them off."

"What was in those chests?" said Paul. "Plate, perhaps."

"Title-deeds, I suspect," said Walff. "But, Paul, I'm sorry to say—"

"How about Countess Helena?" pursued Paul. "It makes me uneasy to think of her. Where is she, now my lord is dead?"

"None of us know. Her uncle was in the same corps."

"What a blow to her the Count's death must have been! It would make her savage."

"And she so gentle! It would crack her heart-strings, more likely, or drive her mad."

Paul sighed heavily.

"But where have you been?" pursued Walff.

"Oh," said he, "I was captured by two Seressans, who carried me into the heart of Jellachich's camp, and took me right up before him."

"Ay, ay," said Walff, eagerly. "What is the Ban like?"

"More like a beast than a man," said Paul. "Why, what do you think? He was going to have me hung for being the bearer of a letter from the Count; just as if I knew the contents."

"Perhaps that was the letter about the secret deposit," said Walff.

"May be," said Paul. "All I know is, that I was ordered for instant execution; but that Baron von Wildenheim fortunately stepped up and said Count Matthias had entertained him and his troop three days, so it would be unhandsome to hang his messenger. Whereon the Ban let me off."

"Come, that was a good job," said Walff. "But—"

"Then," pursued Paul, "though my life was

spared, I was not let go free, but put in charge of the Seressans. So, in the middle of the night, there was an alarm of some sort, and the encampment was broken up; and in the midst of the confusion I thought I might make off; so I just whistled softly to my little pony—like this—and one of those brutes of Seressans speared me and left me dead."

"Left you dead?"

"*For* dead, I said, or meant to say. And some good people picked me up and carried me to an inn, where I've been ever since. They thought I should die, I was so ill, and I'm not my own man yet. But, Walff, I won't stand talking to you any longer now, for I'm impatient to run down to my little place and see how my mother does; and at daybreak I shall be off to bring home Susi."

"Wait awhile," said Walff. "Your mother did not find the place exactly comfortable while you were away, and has gone to stay with your uncle. You must eat and drink before you go."

"Well, I shall not be sorry to do that," said Paul.

So they went into the porter's room, where they had a good meal and a comfortable chat,

though Walff seemed always about to say something which he could not bring out.

After this, he took Paul through the empty reception-rooms, which had a melancholy look of desertion, and pointed out to him the wanton injuries of the soldiers.

"See," said Paul, "here is the Count's cypher, cut with a diamond, on this broken bit of glass. I'll keep it in dear memory of him."

The door of Countess Helena's room stood ajar; her guitar lay on the floor, her drawings and music were tossed around it. Walff sighed as he gathered them up.

"I did mean," said he, "to let them lie there till my lord came back, just to show him the brutality of the wretches; but he'll never come back now—'Meg holt Mattyas, el múlt az igazság!'"*

Paul grasped his hand, and then turned away. The old servant looked wistfully after him.

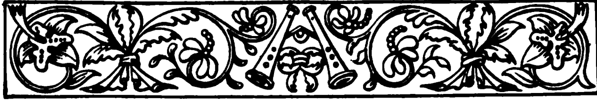
"I tried to tell him more than once," said he to himself, "but it stuck in my throat."

Meanwhile Paul, with long strides, was hastening to his little cottage between the walnuts and acacias—*His* cottage? Alas, Paul no longer

* "Matthias is dead, and justice is gone."

had a cottage. When he reached the spot on which it had stood, he found it reduced to ashes.

Paul threw himself on the ground, and wept aloud.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE HOSTEL.

HE was roused by feeling an icy-cold hand laid on his own, while an inexpressibly mournful voice exclaimed—

"She's gone! oh where? tell me where?"

Paul looked up and beheld with amazement and awe the poor Daraband, whose tongue-strings grief had for the moment loosened.

"Dead! I know it!" exclaimed the Daraband piercingly; and clasping his hands above his head he rushed away.

With a superstitious feeling that the poor idiot might be gifted with some incommunicable key to the Countess Helena's fate, Paul, heavy at heart, but less overwhelmed, sought a neighbour, who received him in the most friendly manner, and detailed to him with many interjections the ruthless conduct of the Croats, who had first

pillaged the castle and then desolated the village. Paul's mother had taken refuge with an aged brother, who lived in one of the Count's deserted castles.

The old peasant gave him a night's lodging; but had no horse to lend him, nor was one to be borrowed in the neighbourhood. On the morrow, therefore, Paul continued his journey on foot, and managed to reach the hostelry of Jancsi, where he accepted a night's lodging of his old friend, and meanwhile related his adventures to him, which Jancsi listened to with gravity, for the war had already made him a sadder man.

"Where is the little Baron?" said Paul at length.

"The Baron," said Jancsi, "is a little pot, and soon hot. He has thrown himself into the war with all his might. 'My figure,' said he, 'is not adapted for infantry service; but I feel that I could serve my country as a cavalry officer, and lead a good charge.'"

"That was very spirited of him," said Paul. "I suppose it hurts a little man to be killed as much as a big one."

"Well, I should think so," said Jancsi re-

flectively. "Who have we coming here? A queer customer. If it were not for his short coat and short beard, I should say he was a Jew."

A tall, dejected-looking old man, a good deal bent, now entered the inn, and, with some hesitation, asked if he could have refreshment.

"That can you, and welcome," said Jancsi briskly. "I have a fine juicy ham in cut."

"My digestion is weak," faltered the old man, "and I would prefer a mess of mamaliga."

Jancsi gave a covert but expressive look at Paul, who did not meet it, being engaged in close and perplexed observation of the stranger. The old man sat down wearily, and removed his large flapped hat, in doing which he unconsciously displaced a brown wig.

"A mess of pottage shall you have, since you prefer it, father Abraham," said Jancsi.

The old man looked offended, but made no reply, and patiently waited for the mamaliga. Presently he asked Paul some question about the road to Pesth, which Paul answered with a preoccupied air. The old man then said no more, but breathed a silent grace over the bowl that was placed before him, and ate it with the appetite of

a hungry man. He gave a deep sigh of relief after it, and then sat quite still and quiet.

"Are you going to sleep here, friend Israel?" said Jancsi presently.

"Why do you address me in that way?" said the old man with displeasure. "You are under some mistake. Twice you have called me a Hebrew. Have I the hair, the beard, the dress of one?"

"This is good," said Jancsi ironically. (We are apt to be so vain of detecting anything, that it sometimes makes us inhuman.)

"You are an insolent man," said the stranger, heating. "Have I done anything to merit this contumely? If I were a Jew I need not be ashamed of it; for the Jews of Hungary, let me tell you, are— However, that's neither here nor there. An inn is common to all; travellers have a right to come and go without being treated in this manner. By my beard, I'm not what you say."

"Oh, Jew, Jew, thy speech bewrayeth thee," said Jancsi.

Instantly the old man changed colour; his eyes shot one angry gleam, but were immediately filled with tears. He covered his face and wept.

"How can you torment him so?" said Paul to Jancsi. "It is not fair; though he *is* a Jew. I remember him now, quite well."

The old man here uncovered his face, and standing up quite erect, said with firmness—

"You say truth—I am a Jew."

"I was sure you were!" cried Jancsi. "Tell *me*, indeed!"—

"I remember you," said Paul, "at Sznrl. Don't you recollect buying a gold ring of me?"

"Ah, now you remind me of it, I do," said Bar Simon. "My sin has found me out. The Lord put you here to convict me of denying my own people."

"Nay, it was I, not he, that knew what you were from the first," put in Jancsi.

"You are rude," said Bar Simon to him, not without dignity.

Jancsi was a little checked.

"But why," said Paul gently, "should you deny yourself?"

"Listen," said the Jew; "I will tell you all about it; for you are a good youth, a civil youth, and we have had previous dealings."

And in what followed he addressed himself to

Paul, not to Jancsi, with whom he was hurt, till his offence wore off.

"At the time you came to me," said he, "I remember you found me reading a book. That book was the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It had been given me about a year before by a Scotchman coming up the Danube from Jerusalem. At that time I despised it: afterwards I read it, was converted, and healed. It was within me as a burning fire: at the last, I spake with my tongue. On the Sabbath it fell to me to expound the portion of Isaiah that had been read. I said, 'This day is this gospel fulfilled in your ears. Be it known unto you that by Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who was crucified, must all men be saved—there is no salvation in any other.' At this word they cried out, 'Cast him out! for it is not fit that such a fellow should live!' And they cast me out of the synagogue. Well, I went to my married daughters; they would have nothing to say to me—my sons-in-law spat on my beard. My trade was ruined; no one would deal with me; and infamous calumnies were spread of me to Jews in other places. I shook the dust off my feet against them, cut off the

beard that my sons-in-law had defiled, discarded the dress of my people, and went to a Christian minister. He said, 'You must be baptized.' So I was baptized. Then I said, 'What can I do? My own people have lifted up their heel against me. My occupation is taken from me.' He said, 'You had better go to Pesth. The good Archduchess of Hungary has formed a mission there for the Jews. There you will find many brother converts to countenance you; and you will be given employment.' So I started on my journey; but oh, what a journey has it been! Whenever I have fallen in with my own people, they have poured contempt on me, and spread an evil report of me among the Christians as a wicked Jew. So, as I came here this evening, I thought, Verily I will conceal what I am—I will pretend I am no son of Abraham. But, directly you saw me, you knew who I was!—and *you*," turning to Jancsi, "charged me with it and said, 'O Jew, *thy speech bewrayeth thee!*' Now, those were the very words of the mocking maid to Peter; and when I had read how Peter denied his Master, and cursed and swore, and declared he was no Galilean, I had thought, 'Here's a pitiful fellow! Verily, had I been in his place,

I would not have done likewise.' Now here, you see, I stand self-convicted. It is not *you*, O man," to Jancsi, "who have convicted me, but I am even convicted by myself. For, directly you said those words, I thought, 'here are the very words that were said to Peter, and I have not had as much temptation to deny I was a Jew, as he had to deny he was a Galilean, and yet I have done so! I have sworn it by my beard! my disgraced beard!—and now what a sinner I am!'"

The old man spoke with so much passion, that both his auditors were sensibly impressed; and Jancsi, laying his hand on his arm, said in a softer tone—

"Take it less to heart. I had no right or reason to be rude, even to a Jew, nor to force a secret from you, especially in times like these, when many just and honest persons are forced to seem what they are not. Your sin lies at my door; and I've so many of my own there already that I doubt it will not inconvenience me much; so cheer up, old gentleman! we'll smoke a pipe together, and have a bottle of wine."

The Jew smiled a little, for the proposal was not altogether disagreeable to him; and yet,

though he no longer accounted himself a Hebrew in religion, he was so by birth, and did not heartily take to Christian ways, nor had his spirits quite recovered their equilibrium. He therefore was more inclined to talk over the state of public affairs, the part the Jews were likely to take in them, the condition of the road he was going to travel, the hands in which he should find Pesth, and the likelihood there was that the foundation of an Archduchess would be respected.

As Bar Simon's wanderings thenceforth led him far away from the other characters of our story, this will be the best place to say that on reaching Pesth he found affairs so unsettled that he was glad to accept an errand to Berlin, for purposes connected with the mission; and when there, after travelling by a circuitous route and encountering many dangers, he resolved to proceed to England the first opportunity, and meantime to learn a trade to support himself, though he was nearly seventy years of age.

As for the Archduchess's mission at Pesth, which had originated in her becoming acquainted with the Scotch minister, Dr. Black, who travelled with Mr. M'Cheyne to see what could be

done for the Jews, it was suppressed by the Austrian Government in 1852; and its unoffending missionaries, their delicate wives and sick children, were forced to make a sudden journey in mid-winter through the whole of Austria.

CHAPTER XIV.

LIFE IN A PUSTA.

WILDENHEIM, still commanding the advanced guard, was meanwhile penetrating into the country, and encountering fresh dangers at every step. Since Görgei had succeeded Moga, and inspired new life into the army on the Danube, the Hungarians were in such spirits that they fought better than ever. Wildenheim found himself hedged in with difficulties; time was lost in forced marches and counter-marches, with no compensating result. At length he found himself engaged in a dangerous skirmish. Several thousand infantry were advancing on his corps at charge-step, and he was obliged to fall back. On receiving reinforcements, however, with a few light field-pieces, he was able to accept the Hungarians' offer of battle.

The ground was so swampy that the hussars

found it impossible to cross it at a gallop. Wildenheim's fine horse bore him, in prodigious bounds, over the swamp, and at length, hit by a ball, made a tremendous leap; but at the same instant Wildenheim experienced a sensation as if a large drop of ice-cold water had passed through his body. He reeled in his seat, and his horse, rushing wildly towards the Magyars, made another frantic spring, then suddenly fell, bearing his master to the ground with him.

What next happened to Wildenheim, after a wound from a bayonet, he knew not, though he was conscious of a dull sound of clashing arms and firing.

He came to himself after an interval of some hours, and found himself beside his dead horse, surrounded by many dead hussars. He knew that his shot-wound was the more dangerous of the two, though the bayonet-wound was the most painful. Luckily, his sash formed a sort of compress, and by being tied tighter, saved the effusion of more blood. Having done for himself the best he could, he reclined his head on his horse, and calmly awaited the event.

Night was coming on, however, and the idea that he might fall a victim to the wolves began

to disturb him. He saw the red glare of a distant watch-fire, but was utterly unable to reach it. At length, to his great joy, the moon arose, and threw its mild radiance over the desolate heath.

All at once, he heard the tramp of several horses, and the clank of sword-sheaths against spurs, and perceived a party of six horse at some distance. They wore glistening helmets, which proved they were not Magyars; he therefore shouted as loud as he could—

"The Emperor for ever!"

On this, they came trotting up to him, and to his lively joy, he saw they belonged to his own regiment.

With great care the men lifted him and placed him in a large horseman's cloak. Then laying hold of the four corners, they carried him in it as in a hammock, and bore him towards the watch-fire.

Scarcely had they given him a little wine, when an alarm was sounded, and they were instantly obliged to mount.

There was no time for hesitation. Wildenheim was wrapped in blankets and placed in a baggage-wagon, which jolted along the rough ground at a rapid pace, excruciatingly painful to him, so

that he frequently groaned aloud. At length he became insensible.

When he returned to consciousness, he found, to his horror, that a surgeon was probing his wounds. After putting him to extreme torture, he extracted a ball; his wounds were then dressed, and he was laid on a heap of straw covered with blankets.

Many hours had again passed, for it was now noon. He was given some broth, made of portable soup, which the surgeon carried about with him; and greatly refreshed by it, he fell into a deep sleep.

He was roughly awakened by the blast of trumpets, the neighing of horses, and the clatter of arms, and again he was placed in the jolting wagon, and experienced agonies of pain. They dared not slacken their pace, for the Hungarians were in full pursuit of them. His wound began to bleed afresh.

At length they reached a straggling village, only occupied by women, children, and a few helpless old men; and here, as Wildenheim, pale and exhausted, was carried into a *pusta* or farm-house, he heard the surgeon, who believed him to be insensible, say softly—

"Another such ride, and 'tis all over with him."

This was not a very comfortable hearing to the young man, who was by no means tired of his life. He heard compassionate female voices about him, but they spoke the peasant dialect of Hungary. Still, there is something soothing in female ministrations to the sick, however humble they may be; and Wildenheim was not mistaken in supposing that he might be the better for them on the present occasion.

He was carried up-stairs, and placed in a clean and comfortable bed, which was a luxury he had not enjoyed for a long time. An elderly woman, of handsome though stern countenance, and great decision of manner, an unmistakeable Magyar in dress and language, moved quietly about him, and brought him well-cooked and palatable food. She appeared to feel that though he was her enemy, she must give him meat and drink, but that she would rather have been exempt from his charge. A young boy and girl occasionally peeped in on him with curiosity, but their mother took sedulous pains to keep the room quiet.

Opposite to Wildenheim's bed hung a little picture in a black frame, surrounded by a green

wreath of moss; it seemed to him to represent a hussar in the uniform of his former regiment.

"Let me look at that picture," said he, languidly.

Dimitri, the army-servant who had charge of him, took it down and handed it to him on the bed. His hostess looked pleased at his notice of it.

"That is the portrait of my son Istvan," said she, "who is serving your Emperor in Italy."

"Yes," said Wildenheim, with a smile, "and I drew that likeness of him."

"*You?*" said she, incredulously.

"Look here—here is my name in the corner."

She fixed her eyes on him as if she would look him through.

"Are *you* the German gentleman who was so kind to my Istvan, and who painted his picture?"

"Indeed I am—only ask Dimitri yonder."

She grasped Wildenheim's hand.

"Oh," said she, "then I owe you much gratitude! You are an excellent man! My Istvan has written much good about you, and how you once saved him from punishment."

In this instance, virtue was indeed its own reward. Wildenheim had really interposed between

Istvan and an Italian sergeant, and prevented very serious consequences. Moreover, he afterwards took the lad aside, showed him how wrong and imprudent he had been, and bade him be careful for the future. Istvan was grateful for this friendly admonition, as well he might be; and now, by a strange chance, Wildenheim was reaping the benefit of it in the house of Istvan's mother, who, when he was sick and a stranger, had taken him in.

From this instant, he was the cherished object of her care—the pet of the family. The dark-eyed little Theresa, who had hitherto only peeped in at the door, now came forward and shyly put her hand in his. Little dainties were offered him which had hitherto been kept out of sight—cakes made of sprouted wheat-ears and called *notis*—and cakes of kukuruz-dough kneaded with buttermilk, and considered delicious.

Meanwhile, the troops were about to move forward; but Wildenheim was quite unequal to another hasty journey in the jolting wagon. He therefore besought his landlady, whose name was Erzsebet, to let him remain under her roof till he was somewhat recovered. She looked reluctant.

"Rely on it," said she, "our honveds will find

you out, and then I shall be blamed for sheltering an Imperial officer."

"Ah, good mother," said he, piteously, "if you turn me out, I know I shall perish miserably. You can form no conception of the horrors of that wagon."

She looked at him earnestly awhile, and then said—

"Be it so, then! You have been kind to Istvan, and I will be kind to you. Besides, you are a German, and of course have no country, so it may be no sin in you to fight against us. If you were a Magyar, and taking part against us, I would rather burn my hand off than save you."

"But remember," she presently added, "you must not betray those who are risking so much in harbouring you; whatever you hear and see among us, you must keep profoundly secret, and not use it against us."

"Of course, of course, my good hostess," said Wildenheim. "I should be a wretch else."

"I on my side," returned she, "promise you that you shall be safe from treachery among us."

The surgeon had already pronounced Wildenheim unfit to travel, and his superior officer had reluctantly consented to his remaining behind.

Wildenheim obtained from him, therefore, a certificate that he was left there on account of severe wounds. The surgeon left with Erzsebet a supply of balsam, sticking-plaster, and medicine, with instructions for their use; everything was done that was in their power to do to leave him in comfort; and his comrades affectionately took their leave of him.

When he heard the last sound of their trumpets, his heart sank, and he felt very much inclined to turn his face to the wall and shed a few tears. To be left thus completely in the power of the adverse party, naturally suggested melancholy thoughts, but he manfully struggled against them, and to aid him in this praiseworthy effort, little Theresa came in to cheer his solitude, and placed herself at his bedside.

"They are all gone now," said she, "I watched them out of sight. To-morrow, sister Wilma and uncle Imne will come back with the cattle."

"Who is your uncle Imne?"

"Don't you know? He's an old man with a wooden leg; and he and Wilma have taken our cattle to the *hansag* (marsh) to be out of the way of your soldiers; but now the soldiers are gone they will bring the cattle back."

"Oho," said Wildenheim.

"Mother could not afford," pursued little Theresa, "to lose any more cattle, for she has already sent Kossuth twenty, besides eighteen horses and twenty pigs."

"That was a great many."

"Oh, we don't mind what we do for Kossuth! Nobody does; nobody on the right side, I mean. You are on the wrong side, are not you?"

"No, I'm on the right side."

"On *our* side?"

"No. Why, I'm on my *own* side, am not I?" said he, shifting the question. "I'm lying on my right side, and if I were to turn over I should lie on my left side, should not I?"

"Oh! was *that* what you meant?"

"Your mother must be rich to have so much stock," pursued he.

"Nothing to what she was once," said little Theresa, shaking her head. "She does not count herself rich *now*. All my brothers are away, fighting—"

"Hark! what is that noise?"

There was a loud cracking of whips and clattering of horses' feet in the court-yard. Little Theresa slipped off her seat and ran out.

"Be sure you come back and tell me who it is," cried he anxiously.

To the impatient young officer she seemed a long time gone; meanwhile the uproar continued.

Presently Theresa came back. "There are about fifty armed *tschikos* below," said she, "come to bait their horses."

"You did not tell them I was here?"

"No. You have been so good to Istvan, that we will take care of you."

"If any one finds out that I am here, you must say I am your cousin."

"But you are not."

"No, but you must say I am."

"Must I, mother?" cried Theresa, fixing her large truth-telling eyes on Erzsebet, who just then came in.

"God forgive us the sin," said Erzsebet, sighing deeply.

Yet she saw no escape from it, if the temptation came. Such is the course of war.

The tramp of heavy feet and the clank of spurs was heard on the stairs.

"Am I betrayed?" thought Wildenheim uneasily.

He slipped his hand towards the pistol under

his pillow, but the innocent tranquil face of the good little girl beside his bed reassured him.

The door opened, and three *tschikos*, or horse-herds, looked in, one of them being quite an old man. They were hale, hardy, honest-looking fellows, in long, wide trousers of coarse white linen, a short white shirt hanging over them, a long coarse white cloak, braided with various colours, and clumsy boots with long rusty spurs.

"*Jonapot, agyaliök!* — good day, cousins!" said the old *tschiko*, heartily. "We heard downstairs that you had a sick cousin lying here, so we thought we would just look in and ask him how he was. How are you getting on, brother?"

"But poorly," answered Wildenheim, in a weak voice, as if talking was painful to him— which, in some degree, it was. So after a few civil hopes that he would soon be about again, the unsuspecting visitors took leave. Besides their long-lashed whips, all of them had arms of one sort or another; the old man a splendid gold-hilted sword, which he had doubtless taken from an Austrian, so that they were sufficiently formidable; and it was not till Wildenheim heard them, some hours afterwards, gallop off, shouting "Eljen Kossuth!" that he felt entirely at ease.

He sank into a gentle sleep, and on waking, perceived beside him, not little Theresa, but a young woman whose singularly beautiful face, drooping downwards, was presented to him only in profile, and struck him by its profound expression of sorrow. Turning round, she perceived that he was awake.

"I know who you are," said he, smiling, "you are Wilma."

"No," replied she, with a sigh, "I am Wilma's cousin. Can I get you anything?"

"I am rather thirsty."

She left the room, and presently a beverage was brought him, not by the sorrowful girl, but by the smiling Theresa.

"Who was that sitting by me just now?" enquired Wildenheim, with interest.

"Oh," said Theresa, "that was my cousin Susi."

"Is she married?"

"Yes, but her husband went away on the wedding-day and has never come back. We fear he must be dead."

CHAPTER XV.

THE RE-UNION.

WILMA returned the same evening. If she did not interest Wildenheim as much as Susi did, he admired her more. She was a genuine Hungarian beauty, firm in carriage, elastic in gait and movement. Her dress, on account of her masculine employment, partook of the Amazon; she wore black buskins, wide, full blue drawers, a short blue petticoat edged with red ribbon, and a tight-fitting blue cloth spencer, with two rows of white buttons. Her raven hair, braided in two long tresses, was tied with the Hungarian colours of red, blue, and green.

"So!" said she, regarding Wildenheim keenly, "you are the Svab* who behaved so kindly to my brother Istvan. See how good comes out of it that you never expected! You are now in the

* A name given by the Hungarians to all Germans.

hands of your enemies, and yet we protect and cherish you, because one good turn deserves another."

"If all the Hungarians were like you," said Wildenheim, "we should stand a sorry chance."

"You do stand a sorry chance," said Wilma, "for you are on the wrong side. The right, and St. Stephen's crown, are ours; and woe be to those who would take them from us."

"We have taken Presburg, however," said he, rather to keep up the dialogue.

"Presburg is not Hungary," said Wilma, curling her lip in fine disdain. "The Magyarok Istene* will never forsake us. At the very moment when all appears lost, He will interpose to save His people. However, I cannot expect this to be admitted by you, who have the misfortune to be a Svab."

Wildenheim found the conversation of this spirited girl a great amusement. Amusement, however, was not her aim, and she would have been indignant had she known how he secretly diverted himself with her high-toned patriotism.

"I wish," said she apart to Susi, "my mother had not taken charge of this Svab. No Svabs

* The God of the Hungarians.

are to be trusted: it is a pity they were ever allowed to set a foot in Hungary. However, he has been kind to our Istvan, so we must make the best of it."

At that instant a strange sound, between a sob, a shriek, and a sudden laugh, was heard without, subsiding into an eager whisper.

"What is that?" said Susi, changing colour.

"I heard nothing," said Wilma.

"Some one is outside," cried Susi, springing to the door. Then, as she saw who was entering, she gave a little cry, and exclaimed, "I knew it was you!" as Paul clasped her to his heart.

They both cried, and then laughed, and then Susi cried again, and Wilma cried a little too; and then Erzsebet and old Imne came in; and such a confusion of tongues arose that Wildenheim, hearing the unaccountable noise, bawled himself hoarse to know what was the matter, without getting any answer. He shouted "Theresa! Theresa!" but no Theresa came. Then he called "Wilma! Susi!"

"Who's that man calling Susi?" said Paul, stopping short.

"Only a lodger of my aunt's—a wounded Svab," said Susi, "never mind him."

"Oh, if he's a Svab, let him hallo," said Paul, unconcernedly. But Theresa, who had now returned, heard the impatient shout, and being very fond of the captive knight by this time, took pity on him.

"What's all the noise about?" said he, feverishly, as Theresa entered. "Any battle lost or won?"

"Oh no," said Theresa, "but Paul is come back, and we are all so glad you can't think! Susi cries and laughs by turns; and Paul is telling his adventures, so I must run away to hear them, and I will tell you about them afterwards."

Off she ran; and Wildenheim muttered something equivalent to "Bother Paul!" He liked to be the first object of interest in the house; and yet, being good-natured in the main, he was glad that poor Susi had regained her husband.

When Theresa re-entered the kitchen, she found, to her chagrin, that Susi had carried off Paul to her own home, where, most opportunely, Janos had just returned from driving the provision-wagon, which was now his continual employment. The burst of joy at the first meeting being now over, a deep happiness blended with thankful seriousness had succeeded; and Janos,

having embraced the young man with emotion, said—

"My soul, you have been so long absent from your bride, that you must marry her over again; or, at least, I will repeat the words that the bridegroom's man said to you after the ceremony."

Then, taking Susi's hand and placing it in that of Paul, he looked him in the face and said with solemnity—

"Young man, honour your bride. It is God's will that she should be your companion and friend, not servant: this our Father in heaven evinced, by making the woman out of the man's rib. If God had meant the woman to be the man's servant, He would have made her out of the man's heel, to indicate that she should be his footstool; but the All-wise made her out of the part next to the man's heart, and therein she should reside."

This was ratified by a general kissing and embracing; after which they all sat down in a very small compact circle, to give Paul the opportunity of relating his adventures, which he did very minutely, though frequently interrupted by exclamations and enquiries, which led to digressions.

"And now," said he, when he had told of the destruction of his cottage, "here am I returned upon your hands, a very different man from what I was on my wedding-morning, weakened by my wounds, and without a roof over my head."

"Why, is not *this* roof over your head?" said Janos, grasping him warmly by the hand. "Never say you are without a home while *we* have one, my soul! Instead of losing a daughter we shall gain a son."

"And to me you are all the dearer for what you have suffered," said Susi, pressing closer to him.

"And as to being weak and wounded," said his mother-in-law, "all the better, since it will keep you and Susi together, for you cannot go soldiering, and there is plenty for you to do, for all our active young men have been carried off, so that there is no one to do the work."

Paul's eyes shone with thankful tears as he turned them from one kind face to another.

"I am almost repaid by you," said he, "for all I have gone through. But *you*, my poor Susi!"

"Oh, Paul! what have I not suffered!"

There was no good in telling him, and there-

fore it was not altogether inopportune that at this instant a great influx of visitors, who had just heard the glad tidings of his return, poured in to offer their congratulations.

Meanwhile Wildenheim, forsaken for the nonce by all his female allies, was fain to content himself with a visit from old Imne of the wooden leg; a handsome old man with white hair and thick moustache, who had been serjeant-major in a hussar regiment and received a silver medal for his bravery.

"Your fighting days are over, my old friend," said Wildenheim to him, "or else I should be sorry to see you on the wrong side."

"Dear me, captain," said Imne, "that is but a benighted way of talking for a fine young gentleman like you. How can it be wrong to fight for one's country, one's constitution, and Kossuth?"

"Kossuth wants to make himself your king, I fancy," said Wildenheim.

"Not he," said Imne. "He's a patriot every inch."

"I suppose you know he's a Protestant?"

"Why, so are we!" said Imne. "The tree can't be a bad one that produces such fruits. I

suppose *you* know, captain, that the Protestant church has stood very high in Hungary, and has had its martyrs?"

"Not I," said Wildenheim. "I believe it has had plenty of heretics, some of whom have deservedly been burnt. You speak of your constitution, I observe—"

"An older one than yours," said Imne. "I'm not a reading man, but yet I know a little of the history of my own country. We have an old chronicle which I took into the marshes with me, and used to read to my niece. There was fine reading, curious reading in it."

"What do you do in the marshes?"

"Raise cattle, sir. We have now only five mares, and fourteen foals too young for military service; but often wounded horses are sent from the army for us to nurse, being unfit for duty at the moment. We have about thirty horned cattle now, and a few hogs and sheep—all the rest have been given to the army."

"It is curious," said Wildenheim reflectively, "that people of your class should be capable of such disinterested patriotism."

"That is one of your Austrian notions," said Imne drily. "Our class, as you express it, are

as capable of it as any other—perhaps more so. Even that little girl who waits on you has given the silver cross, her only ornament, from her neck, in aid of the national cause."

"My good friend, it will be all in vain."

"We shall see, sir! But, captain, I came up here to offer to dress your wound. I'm an old hand. Will you accept my services?"

"Willingly—gratefully," said Wildenheim.

His kind office was performed with such care and dexterity, that Wildenheim felt greatly eased, and expressed his hope that he would continue his attentions daily.

"To-morrow," replied Imne, "I have to drive a wagon so heavily laden with provisions that my small horses can hardly draw it; and, consequently, I shall be absent some days; but on my return, I shall be happy to dress your wounds again."

"You seem to have plenty of provisions for your own soldiers—how is it that ours can never find any?"

"Aha!" said Imne smiling, "you must be a young soldier to need to be told that. We have our places of concealment, of course. There is no need why we should treat the Black-and-Yellows to anything better than *kukuruz.*"

Next morning Wilma brought Wildenheim his coffee, and, while standing beside him, said laughingly—

"I had a nice ride last night—ten miles out and ten miles back."

"How so?" said he, surprised.

"Did not you hear a great whip-cracking and a shrill cry? That was the Government postboy, with despatches to be forwarded immediately. He generally tosses them as he flies by, to little Mischko, who scrambles up on the first foal he can catch, without so much as a halter, seizes it by the mane, and rides to the next *pusta*. Last night, Mischko was out of the way, (listening to Paul's adventures, I suspect,) so as time was precious, I seized a three-year-old that was feeding hard by, threw a halter of rush cords over his head, sprang on his back, cracked my whip, and off like the wind, over the dark heath!"

"Well done!" said Wildenheim admiringly.

"It was such fun," said she laughing. "The foal stood right up on end when I sprang on it, then flung out behind, and played all manner of tricks. The rain poured in torrents, and the night was dark as pitch; but that was no matter."

"Rather a perilous way of conveying information."

"Oh, it must be done, you know. Sometimes we convey intelligence by fire-signals—high poles, with maize-straw fastened about them, which blaze from pusta to pusta. You'll never be up to all our devices. But what will you have for dinner to-day, captain?"

"Well, you know the doctor forbade my having much paprika or bacon."

"What say you to a nice mess of kukuruz?"

He made a face.

"A couple of eggs, then, some kaposta,* and a light pudding. I will make it myself."

"Do, then; and let me have some wine. Is there any news?"

"Plenty, of one sort or another; only one hears so many false reports."

"Another battle of Murr, eh?"

"No, and it was no wonder we lost it, the odds were so fearfully against us. Kossuth has removed the seat of government to Debrecsin."

"Oho!" said Wildenheim with glee, "and left Buda-Pesth for *us*, I suppose!"

* Cabbage.

"You need not glory, captain; you won't keep it long."

"How do you know that?"

"Because you don't deserve to. It's abominable, dreadful, the way your Windischgratz is going on."

"How is he going on?" said Wildenheim with lively interest.

"Packing covered wagons with prisoners, and sending them off, nobody knows where—and treating Kossuth's bank-notes as so much waste-paper, though your Emperor himself sanctioned them."

"Waste paper!—good!"

"Then why do his own officers pay us their bills with them?" cried Wilma. "If that is not scandalous I don't know what is."

"Paying you in your own coin, as the saying is."

"Ah, *you* are on the wrong side, we all know; and can laugh at anything. It's no joke, though."

"And so Kossuth has shifted his quarters to Debrecsin—hum! How is Görgei going on? He seems a smart officer."

"Görgei I don't altogether like," said Wilma.

"I fear he is fonder of himself than of the country."

"What makes you think so?"

"I have my reasons."

"Kossuth and he don't set their horses quite together, do they?"

"I believe Görgei does not obey orders as he should."

"Wants to set up on his own hook, eh? Ah! when once a rebellion begins, there's plenty of *that* work."

"This is *no* rebellion, captain! it's a war of independence."

"Well, but where is Görgei?"

"It is not exactly known."

"Not exactly known? Well, that *is* droll!"

"Not *here*—not known by *us*. You need not take me up so short."

"Does Kossuth know?"

"How do I know what Kossuth knows?" said Wilma evasively. "He knows most things. Pray tell me, captain, if you can, how this Arthur Görgei first started up."

"You ought to know that better than I, with your newspapers and all. Why, first and foremost, he entered the Emperor's noble Hungarian

guard, which only requires high birth and interest, and is an idle life enough. That only lasts five years. So then he entered the Palatinal hussars. Finding or fancying he found himself looked down upon, on account of his poverty, he sold out in disgust, though it obliged him to break off an engagement of marriage. Then he studied chemistry at the University of Prague, lodged in a garret and lived on twopence a day."

"I don't despise him for that," said Wilma. "I honour him for his independence; only I fear he has a proud ungoverned spirit."

"No question of it."

"Well, would you like me to read to you a little?"

"Very much."

So she produced the old chronicle her uncle had spoken of, and read to him about Matthias Corvinus and other Hungarian heroes, till she nearly put him to sleep. By way of lighter reading she gave him extracts from some old files of the *Pesti Hirlap*, or Pesth newspaper, edited by Kossuth, and displaying not a little of his fervid eloquence. Wilma was warm in her admiration of it; and Wildenheim could not

help admiring his genius though he dissented from his politics.

To his surprise, old Imne came afterwards to dress his wounds.

"I thought," said he, "that you were driving the wagon."

"Oh," said Imne, "I put that job off upon Paul."

"So soon parted from Susi?"

"Well, people of our sort must make ourselves useful, and do whatever comes to hand. Susi knows now that he is safe, and is satisfied: her father boards and lodges him for the present, and as he professed himself anxious to be doing something, I told him he might drive the wagon. He didn't much want to; no more did I."

And the old soldier laughed.

CHAPTER XVI.

OFF AT LAST.

DURING the seven weeks that Wildenheim spent beneath this hospitable roof, he received kindnesses that merited his undying gratitude. At length he was strong enough to sit up for a few hours, and walk a little way with weak, unsteady steps, supporting himself with a stick. He had been molested by no domiciliary visits, though honved patrols were frequently in the court-yard. One night several of them remained under his window till daybreak, and kept him awake with loud talking and singing.

When he saw Susi, he was struck with the improvement in her appearance.

"Why," said he, "you look quite like another creature! and yet you have lost your husband again."

"No, not lost," said Susi, brightly, "for I

know now where he is. Till he returned, I did not even know whether he were alive; now I know he is safe."

"Because a man was alive yesterday," thought Wildenheim, "is no proof he must be so to-day." However, he did not trouble her with the remark.

Paul returned out of spirits. He had visited his mother, who was sure the war would end badly, and he had found things worse in his own village than before. The Count's estate had been confiscated; and when his domestic servants learnt this, though the Hungarians are proverbially honest, yet they thought the Austrian Government had so little a right to their dead master's property, that, with the exception of Walff, they took whatever hit their fancy and made off with it. So there was poor Walff, the only retainer at his post, wandering about the despoiled rooms, and making them echo with his lamentations over the evil times on which he had fallen.

As for the estate, it was all going to ruin. At the beginning of the campaign, the Count had taken all the serviceable men and horses, sent his plate to the public treasury, and caused his oxen

and granaries to be placed at the disposal of Government; so that nothing worth having remained; nor was even the land-bailiff at his post, to keep an eye on the property.

When Paul related these melancholy facts, Susi cheered him up by reminding him how fortunate it was that her parents' house was open to him; and she added that she would have been willing to go through the world with him, if they had had no better resource—which comforted him greatly.

There was plenty of employment for him; for when he was not wanted to drive the wagon, he took his turn at looking after the stock, and watching for the fire-signals, which one or another did every night.

It was now mid-winter. Christmas had come and gone, but without poppy puddings, or any of the accustomed cheerfulness—the land was full of blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke. Paul's next business was a painful one enough: helping to bury the dead that strewed the country. He said this was worse even than fighting; and he picked up an old sword and got a fencing lesson or two from Imne. Wildenheim, who was now beginning to walk about a little, came on them

one day when they were thus engaged. He heard Paul say—

"I can now thrust pretty well, but you have not shown me how to parry."

"Leave that to the Black-and-Yellows, my soul!" returned old Imne, laughing heartily. "Let them alone for parrying; we have nothing to do but to thrust!"

Wildenheim bit his lip, and diverted his course.

Another day Wilma came in to him, dressed in her gayest holiday attire, and with a bouquet of beautiful flowers in her hand, that must have come from some wealthy person's greenhouse.

"Oh, what beautiful flowers!" exclaimed he.

"Yes," said Wilma, smiling, "but they are not for you. Some brave honveds are expected to pass through the village, and a dozen of us are going to receive them and present this nosegay."

Wildenheim afterwards viewed the little transaction from his window, himself unseen; and almost wished himself, for the moment, the handsome honved who, as leader of the band, received the flowers from Wilma at the head of her maiden train.

"Had I my choice," said the gallant honved, "between a hundred ducats from Windischgratz, and this nosegay from your hand, I would unquestionably prefer this. Between four eyes, pretty girl, I would certainly thank you with a kiss; but in presence of this formidable assembly, it won't do."

Wilma actually blushed! and, Wildenheim maliciously averred, looked disappointed. He was smarting with envy, and could not forbear saying some very caustic things to Wilma when he next saw her.

"By the way," he remarked, "was not that young honved's nose very much on one side?"

"As straight as your own!—and straighter!" said the indignant Wilma, who had declared just before that she had not looked particularly at him.

"Ah," said Wildenheim, "I see that infantry may be good for something. For the first time in my life I almost wished myself to be a honved, and if I had been, I would not have been deterred by the presence of the deputation."

"Honveds have more manners than Svabs," said Wilma, going out of the room.

These little sparring-matches helped to make

time pass, but his desire to get away from the pusta became daily stronger.

At length he determined to attempt to reach the Imperial army, though the effort was fraught with danger. Each of the family tried in turn to dissuade him.

"Your wounds may yet give you trouble, captain," said Imne, "and you won't like to be laid up among strangers."

"Better cast in your lot with ours," said Wilma, "as so many hussars have done."

"The honveds will kill you, perhaps," said little Theresa.

"My duty and inclination call me away," said Wildenheim.

"Well," said Erzsebet, "you must go if you will, for you are not our prisoner. You have promised you will not reveal any of our secrets, and you will keep your word. For though you are a Svab, and on the wrong side, still you are in other respects a good young gentleman. Go, then, if you will."

"Shall *you* be sorry if I go?" said he, softly, to Wilma.

"You had better not press for an honest answer to that question, captain!" said she. "I

care only for those who love Kossuth and the fatherland."

So he bought of Erzsebet a light covered cart with two horses, which she let him have for eight ducats, on condition that they should never with his consent do service in the Austrian army. She provisioned it with some flitches of bacon, several bags of kukuruz, and a cask of red Buda wine; and it was decided that he should begin his journey the following morning.

Long after he had gone to bed he lay listening to the full rich tones of their voices, as they spoke to one another in their earnest passionate language, as full of melody as the Italian. The Hungarians have been called natural orators, and their tongue is full of melancholy music. Their cause was as yet promising, and they were full of energy and hope; yet now and then their inflections were inexpressibly pathetic.

At daydawn, Erzsebet brought his coffee to his bedside, and spoke to him with the tenderness of a mother.

"We shall probably never see you any more," said she, "and we know not what is in store; but be careful of your life—do not expose yourself to any needless risks; and oh, be compassionate to the Magyars!"

"I will, I promise you," said he.

His travelling-dress was not very handsome; for, to escape suspicion, he had sent away his uniform, his fine shirts, and all his own wearing-apparel, with the hussars. His appearance, therefore, was in no respect better than that of the peasants about him; but in the hem of his wide linen *gatjes*, and in the lining of his old boots, some ducats were carefully sewn, and within the lining of his *bunda* or sheepskin cloak, was concealed a certificate of his being an Imperial officer, whom his major had left behind on account of his wounds, together with a description of his person, to which the major's signature and the seal of the regiment were annexed. His equipment was quite in keeping with the little wagon and small lean horses already at the door; and the whole family were grouped around it to bid him farewell. He took leave of them with real emotion, thanking them most warmly for their kindness; and if Wilma received his kiss with unflattering composure, little Theresa shed actual tears as he kissed her. He hesitatingly offered Erzsebet some remuneration for his board and lodging. She drew herself proudly up, and said with gravity—

"Can you, a Svab, offer payment to a Magyar? For shame, captain! But hold—our country wants money just now—give a ducat for each week you have been here: I will send it to the military chest."

He put the seven ducats into her hand, shook hands all round, and mounted the sack of hay which was to form his seat; seized the reins, smiled a last farewell with glistening eyes, and drove off.

All parted from him with regret except the patriotic Wilma, who expressed herself glad he was gone; and yet perhaps even she set about her day's work rather less cheerfully than usual.

As for Wildenheim, who was very soft-hearted towards women, and very fond of thinking them favourably inclined towards him, he really persuaded himself that he had seen a tear in the corner of Wilma's eye as he left her, and the delusion was agreeable to him.

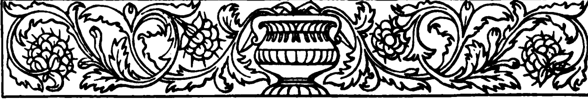
"These poor people!" thought he to himself, as he drove briskly along the ruts towards the south-west, "what a pity it is they insist on bringing themselves into trouble by resisting our paternal Government! Their fine country will

be made desolate, and strangers will devour it before their eyes."

Too true a word—for the war of independence came to an unfortunate stop. But at the time in question, things were not going altogether badly with the Hungarians.

Meantime he jogged on, mile after mile, without meeting a human creature, chewing the cud of many a sweet and bitter thought as he journeyed, and speculating on what the future might have in store for him.

At noon, he halted at a half-destroyed draw-well, and with great difficulty watered his horses by means of his hat, which he lowered by the lash of his whip. Taking considerable credit to himself for this ingenious feat, he refreshed his animals and himself, and then proceeded at a rapid pace.



CHAPTER XVII.

THE LONE HUT.

TOWARDS nightfall, Wildenheim approached a ruinous half-roofless hut, which had the air of being uninhabited; but for aught he knew it might be as well manned within as was once La Belle Alliance; so, like an old soldier, he approached it warily. No one seemed within; the front door, half off its hinges, stood ajar; the room into which it opened had not a vestige of furniture. Wildenheim alighted, and cautiously looked in—then stepped across the room and quietly opened the door beyond.

Within lay a wounded soldier in bed, and beside him a hussar in strangely unsoldier-like attitude, and strangely enough employed; having the little apparatus known as a "lady's companion" beside him, and being engaged in stitch-

ing and backstitching a fine linen shirt that seemed in want of repair.

"Your fingers seem better acquainted with a thimble than a sabre," said Wildenheim.

The pseudo-hussar looked up and changed colour; uttered a soft "hush," and pointed to the sleeping invalid.

"Don't disturb him," said she rising, and coming forward to speak in a whisper, "he's so very ill!"

"And you, my good madam. Are you his wife?"

"Oh no! how should I be? He's a mere boy, a lad of seventeen; but *you*," added she quickly, "you are not what you seem. You are dressed like a peasant, but you speak like an officer. Are you one of us?"

"Oh, undoubtedly."

"We are perishing with hunger; have you anything to eat?"

"Yes, I have food in my wagon, and will bring it in and share it with you if you will let me put up here for the night."

"Oh, do so by all means! I'm so scared at being here all alone with him; and I dare not leave him lest he should die in my absence."

Wildenheim signified by a nod that he understood the situation; and going out he looked about the premises, put up his wagon and horses, and returned, bringing bread, bacon, flour, and wine with him, which the woman was ready to devour with her eyes. She busied herself, without a word, in preparing to cook a supper; and he, sitting down on a rough bench, eyed her operations with some interest. She seemed to be a good-looking woman, about thirty, but probably appeared older than she was, for her face was lined and pinched with care and hunger.

Presently a dish of smoking rashers was set before him, to which he applied himself with keen relish, breaking off great hunches of bread to eat with it, and quaffing the contents of the stone bottle. It must be said, however, in justice to him, that he begged her urgently, in an undertone, to eat with him, but she shook her head, and made signs that she would do so when he had finished. The sight of the food seemed to have relieved her of her anxiety about it; and now she busied herself in preparing some mamaliga for her patient.

"What is the nature of his wound?" said Wildenheim to her in a low voice, when he had

finished his supper, and she was taking a little of what was left with a pre-occupied air.

"He—why, I remember you now!" exclaimed she, interrupting herself, and turning pale as ashes. "You're the Svab that brought your vile Seressans to my master's house, and stayed with him three days! You're Baron Wildenheim, come to betray us!"

She spoke this in such unguarded tones, that the sick youth awoke, half rose up, and looked wildly at them both; but then fell back again without their having perceived that he stirred.

"Who or what are you?" said Wildenheim in surprise. "Did you belong to Count Matthias?"

"I was Countess Helena's maid, and as soon as you were gone, we both joined the Count's troop, which has been scattered and destroyed. O, wicked, wicked men!"

Her bosom heaved, and her face worked with indignation and grief.

"You have killed the best of men," said she vehemently.

"Yes," said Wildenheim with emotion, "he died in my arms."

Her tone and countenance changed.

"Is it possible," said she in a softened voice, "that you were with our dear Count in his last moments? Oh, tell me all about him."

Wildenheim very feelingly complied; and his own tears fell as he saw poor Barbara lay her head on her arms and sob without restraint. The wounded youth, who heard every word, but was too weak to speak, opened his eyes more than once, but was fain to close them again.

"But my dear, dear young lady," said Barbara, almost inarticulately, and dashing the tears from her smarting eyes, "what can have become of her? We have not the least idea."

"Oh, my good woman, that is the saddest story of all."

"What! what?" cried she, starting to her feet and laying her hand on his arm. "What is the story? tell me every word!"

And Laszlo, though in insufferable pain, half rose in his bed, and leant towards them.

"One evening," said Wildenheim in stifled tones, "not long after we had buried Count Matthias—I left the camp to visit the vedettes, and get away from the men's voices—I saw, by the pale moonlight, a figure reclining beneath a tree, apparently sleeping. At my command two

Seressans who attended me gently lifted the figure to see if it were asleep or dead . . . It was"—here his voice faltered—"Countess Helena, beautiful in the sleep of death."

A choking sob burst from poor Barbara.

"Hush," said he, trying to check her violent outburst of grief; "you have awakened your young charge. Your cries agitate him."

She turned her streaming eyes to the bed, and saw that Laszlo had indeed covered his head with the bedclothes; but they heaved as he writhed and sobbed under them—the whole bed thrilled.

Barbara ran to him and laid her hand gently on the surging form.

"Peace, peace, my soul," she said, "your grief will not bring her back—let us hear all we can. What did you then do, sir?"

"I had her tenderly borne to one of our watch-fires; the Seressan girl did all she could to re-animate her, but life had been long extinct, and her death probably painless. She smiled as if in peaceful rest. All night we toiled in digging her grave in the hard ground, and at daybreak we lowered her into it."

"Without one prayer," wept Barbara.

"With only a silent one. I caused a salute

to be fired over her grave; and a light cross to be erected above it."

"That was well done as far as it went; but oh! that her dear remains should be left in unconsecrated ground! Where did you lay them?"

Wildenheim described as well as he could the direction of the grave, and its distance from the scene of the engagement in which Count Matthias received his death-wound.

"As soon as we can quit this desolate place," said Barbara, "we will go and seek for the spot."

Then she approached the bed, which no longer shook, though the young Count still seemed weeping.

"Dear Count Laszlo," said she feelingly, "do not take this dreadful blow too heavily to heart. You know how often she said she should prefer a soldier's grave. And this officer, who, for a Svab, is very good and humane, has really done all that circumstances permitted, and more than most would have done. Her sufferings were short. She is now with her blessed mother. You will get well as soon as you can and avenge her, won't you?"

He could not or would not speak, so as to be

heard, and remained alone with his woe. Barbara shook her head and returned to Wildenheim.

"'Tis no good to try to console him," said she in an undertone; "she was the very breath of his life; and I believe he would have married her some of these days, if she would have waited for him. In action he was always at her side—Count Matthias at the other."

"How came they to be separated just at last?"

"The Count fell in that unfortunate charge, while they swept onward. As soon as they missed him, they searched for him in vain. Countess Helena was in despair—nothing could quiet her. She ventured too near your lines, when we were not at hand, and we lost sight of her. O Baron, this nasty war!"

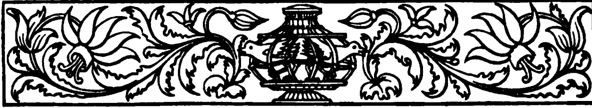
"Women ought not to meddle in it," said he thoughtfully. "It is our work, and you should leave it to us."

She asked him a thousand questions; and, in speaking to one who had known the Count in happier times, and been with him at the last, seemed to lose sight of his nationality. At length she questioned him about himself. Wildenheim at first answered her evasively; but it

ended in his telling her nearly all he had to tell; and it drew them much closer together. Each heard the story of the war told by the other party; and saw softening features in those whom they had hitherto beheld only *en noir.*

They remained talking, in subdued voices, far into the night; and when Wildenheim betook himself to sleep in his wagon, Barbara prepared to watch beside Count Laszlo's couch. He was now her sole object of anxiety, and she declared that as she had put on the uniform solely to be near her dear young mistress, there was nothing she now so much desired as to get safely back among her own people. She was very anxious that Wildenheim should give them a lift, next day, in his wagon, to the nearest inn or pusta; and Wildenheim was not adverse to the scheme, since, if they fell in with Imperialists, his pass would enable him to protect them; whereas, should they fall in with Magyars, Barbara and Laszlo would be vouchers for him.

So next morning, they all set off together, Wildenheim lifting the lad into the wagon quite tenderly; and though he knew by his own former experience that every jolt must give him torture, the brave boy suppressed every groan.



CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GREEN-EYED MONSTER.

THE war was now in its second stage. Its first had been marked by unexpected turns of fortune, that had raised hopes to their highest pitch, and animated to deeds of highest daring. It had now become a business; and reverses as unforeseen as former successes had damped the ardour of some, and filled others with sad forebodings. Yet none, with one exception, thought of giving in: the struggle might be longer than was at first expected, but none would admit it might be unavailing. Their struggle was for legality; and is not right might? The reader may remember, that by the *Bulla Aurea*, the Magna Charta of the Hungarians, the right of resistance is fully acknowledged, in case the King should not observe the terms of the charter.

Everything, from the very first, had turned

out quite differently from what men of forethought had calculated upon—the movements of Jellachich, the capture of Pesth, the repeated defeats of the Austrians, had been beyond the reach of divination. Kossuth was unanimously chosen Governor of Hungary on the 14th of April, 1849; and though, with all his matchless genius, he was but a civilian, there was only one who did not share the universal confidence in him. But Görgei's isolation from Kossuth proceeded from envy, and was rapidly impelling a once noble character to destruction.

Early destined for the army, but abandoning it because he could not endure the reproach of poverty, Arthur Görgei was living in retirement on a small estate, left him by an aunt, when the war broke out. Some one observed to Kossuth that it would be well to make him chemist to the Mint.

"That is no place for Görgei," said Kossuth, who had marked his talent. "Before the year is out, he will be Minister of War."

And the generous Kossuth helped towards the fulfilment of his own prophecy. Görgei was speedily entrusted with the equipment of the National Guards, under Marziani, whose mal-

practices he detected and exposed. He soon afterwards obtained a majority in the National Guards, and was sent to raise levies. His head-quarters were at Csepel, an island in the Danube; and on the plea that his powers were insufficient, Görgei asked and obtained of Count Batthyanyi power to hold court-martials, to adjudicate cases of cowardice, disobedience, and treason.*

He literally used his power with a vengeance. Three mornings after the battle of Sukoró, the following proclamation was placarded on the walls—

"Thus shall it be done to all traitors!—Count Eugene Zichy, formerly lord-lieutenant of the Feger county, convicted of having plotted with the enemies of his country, has been hung by sentence of court-martial, on the isle of Csepel, September 30, at half-past 9 A.M."

Observe the lofty inflexible moral tone assumed. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Görgei had presided at this court-martial. There was no evidence against the old Count, save that a bundle of proclamations had been found in his luggage, which he protested he knew nothing

* My Life and Acts, i. 6, 7.

whatever of, and declared his valet must have put in without his knowledge.

A few days after this startling deed, Görgei, by a brilliant victory, effaced the impression of it. He was made Colonel.

In the battle of Swechat he commanded the van-guard, and exposed himself to the hottest fire. He was made General; and, two days after, Commander-in-Chief of the forces on the Danube. But there was a worm gnawing his heart in the midst of this rapid and brilliant promotion; for there was another greater yet than he! Moreover, Arthur Görgei had no faith in the ultimate success of the war, and was already looking about for a way out of it. Instead of complying with Kossuth's express orders that he should march against Vienna, and end the campaign by a *coup de main*, he lingered on the Vag, and remained in a state of isolation.

The Russians, who were now joining in the war, were concentrating their forces; and the Austrians, profiting by the two months' rest afforded them, recovered themselves, and took the field under Marshal Haynau.

Let us now look in on Görgei, who now sees

his error. It is the third week in June—the Austrians and Russians are closing him in at Komorn.

The bruit of arms and bustle of military preparation showed that an engagement was impending; yet at such an inopportune season, strangely enough, a violin was breathing its sweet vague questionings in Görgei's quarters, while he, abandoning himself to rest, sat apart and silent, his eyes veiled with his hand, plunged in mournful reverie.

The violinist was Ramonyi, a lad of eighteen, whose sweet melodies had often soothed him on the eve of battle. Like David chasing the evil spirit from Saul by his harping, the youth was now alternating from one theme to another, haply to hit the right key-note in his master's troubled mind—now a wild gipsy march, now a grand old hymn—uplifting the soul to heaven, and then dying away in a wail for the dead. Tears that torture rather than refresh are forced from Görgei's eyes, and yet he does not say, "Hold, enough," nor motion impatiently. He will let his heart be wrung, and his vain regrets be fed, by those unnerving strains. Of what is he thinking?

"That will do," he cried at last, but not unkindly. "We must think of war now, Ramonyi. It is curious how, with that little fiddle of yours, you can lead me this way and that—whom no one else can lead."

He smothered a sigh, and immediately proceeded to give orders for the morrow's fight. There were no more signs of softness in Görgei.

"Where is Nagy Sandor?" said he, sternly.

Count Nagy Sandor, the Murat of the Hungarian army, was the object of Görgei's envy and hate. Partly on account of his brilliant soldiership, for Görgei liked no one to eclipse himself. Years before, when the Emperor had been crowned King of Hungary at Presburg, and riding up the Königsberg according to old immemorial custom, had waved his sword towards the four quarters of the world, in token that he took possession of his realm; as the procession came down the hill, with trumpeters, heralds, and courtiers, in all their glory of cloth of gold, embroidery, and diamonds, a cavalier, armed at all points, and mounted on a fiery steed, galloped along the street at full speed—his horse's caparisons edged with gold, himself a mass of diamonds, rare heron's plumes, and

embroidered velvet. This furious cavalier was Nagy Sandor, wielding in his right hand an ivory sceptre, with which he urged on his horse, causing it each time to rear and bound forward.*

This daring soldier had ever, as then, continued to command public attention and admiration, and thus was the subject of Görgei's envy. Moreover, he had openly bearded him at the council-board, and checked his vaunts by saying—

"If anybody is going to play Cæsar for us, I am quite prepared to be his Brutus."

And thus earned Görgei's hate. It is a painful task to show what Görgei was, but the lesson is impressive. Nagy Sandor was daring, self-devoted, and well disciplined, but Görgei could not bear his bluntness, his frankness, nor even his dash. He purposely exposed him, Nagy Sandor thought, to danger.

Was there not, indeed, something ruthless in Görgei? It is said, at any rate, that he ordered the gallant Englishman, Guyon, who was called the Bayard of the campaign, to carry the Pass of Branisko, without believing it could be accom-

* Felix Mendelssohn.

plished. When he had achieved it, Görgei drily remarked—

"We have more luck than brains!"

But now, with all his faults, and they are many, Görgei is arming himself for the battle, and it is fiercely fought. The Austrians fell back, but the Russians kept their ground. Görgei retired within the walls of Komorn.

We must only touch on these things, for this is no place, nor is mine the pen, to do them justice. A bitter disappointment awaited Görgei. Kossuth sent him orders instantly to join General Dembinsky at Pesth, and then attack the Russians.

Nothing could be more unpalatable to Görgei. He neither liked to fight the Russians, nor to act in concert with Dembinsky, who, indeed, was rather too old for his work, and had already been unfortunate in the field. He therefore did not obey orders.

Had Kossuth, upon this, gone at once to Komorn, his popularity was such that he might have arrested and deposed Görgei in the midst of his own troops. But he was too merciful to have recourse to so violent a step, and tried in preference mild yet urgent remonstrances. Finding

these of no avail, he was compelled to depose Görgei, which he did by letter, sending Dembinsky and Meszaros to supersede him.

As these two respectable old officers travelled together towards Komorn, they heard the distant roar of cannon. A fierce engagement was going on. The Austrians and Russians in concert had attacked the Hungarian entrenchments on the south side of the Danube, and Görgei was defending them.

At this moment the unhappy man seemed literally sick of life, and anxious to court death. Instead of the green uniform he usually wore, he put on a scarlet attila and white plume, as if to be the better mark.

"Fear not for yourselves, my lads," cried he to his men, as he rushed into action, "the bullets have only a message for me!"

He threw himself into the very thick of the fight, as if absolutely seeking death; but the balls seemed to hit every one else rather than him—he received only a slight sabre-cut. His heroism inspired his soldiers; they repulsed the enemy; and, returning to Komorn flushed with victory, to find Dembinsky and Meszaros come to supersede the general who had just won back their

hearts, they declared they would serve under none but Görgei. Meszaros himself considered the victory just won a proof that Görgei must be a good man and true.

In the council of war that ensued, Görgei's friend, General Klapka, urged his hastening to Pesth along the north bank of the Danube to join the rest of the forces, before the Russians could reach them. But Görgei, determined to maintain his own isolation, insisted on the south bank, and as his wound prevented his taking the command himself, Klapka undertook it for him.

This movement was unsuccessful, and Görgei had then no excuse for refusing to try the north bank; and as he conducted his men along it, they believed him leading them to join Dembinsky, and little thought he was contemplating an act of the blackest treachery to the whole country. Ah, had he but died at Komorn!

Clouds of dust in summer, and seas of mud in winter—except between one or the other of these, the traveller in Hungary has no choice. Yet nature was now re-asserting her sweet and powerful dominion even over the trampled cornfields, that hid many a tale of blood; and vast tracts admitting of high cultivation that had

never yet known plough or spade, now exhibited the rich and varied green of almost tropical vegetation.

The vivid emerald of the horse-chestnut, and the tenderer hues of the acacia, intermingled their grateful verdure around and above the humble caravanserai of Jancsi, which, to say truth, boasted no other embellishment. With care on his brow, and furrows at the corners of his good-humoured mouth, over which his moustache, instead of curling upward, drooped in a crestfallen sort of way, he might be seen issuing from his doorway, carefully bearing in his arms what appeared a very wizen old-fashioned little child, who was in fact no other than the Baron.

"So! that will do, my friend—gently, gently," said the martial little dwarf, who had done good service under Guyon, and returned slashed and hacked in a pitiable manner. "I believe, Jancsi, my work is done in this world; but oh! how thankful am I that I have been permitted to share in the dangers of this campaign, and, in some degree, to illustrate its glory! If I had your bones and muscles at this moment, wouldn't I let fly at the Russians!"

"My bones and muscles have quite enough

to do in this warm weather," said Jancsi, "in carrying you out and in."

"I wish I were less of a burthen to you with all my heart," said the dwarf, "but a man who has no spring in him is almost like a dead body, and twice his usual weight."

"Don't mention it," said Jancsi. "It does not make a quarter of a pound difference in you, and if it did, I should not feel it."

"Ah, that's the goodness of your disposition," said the other. "'Tis worth while to have bled for one's country, if only to know one's real friends from those who are not. I know not how it is, Jancsi, but I feel very low this morning."

"Have a glass of wine," said Jancsi.

"Oh no, no—that would not reach it—there's something in the wind."

"And yet it's not easterly," said Jancsi.

"I mean the moral wind, my friend—some subtle influence you know nothing about."

"Have a glass of brandy," said Jancsi.

At this instant an empty baggage-wagon was driven up by Paul. He looked older and graver than of former time; not exactly sad, but illustrating Felix Mendelssohn's exclamation of "My

Magyars! These fellows look as if they were all born noblemen, and privileged to live at ease; but looking very melancholy."

The friends greeted with cordiality, and even affection, for trials draw us closer.

"How's Susi?" said the publican.

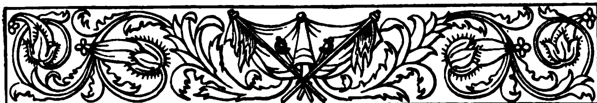
"Well, when I left her," said Paul, "and I am on my way to her again; but we are all racked with suspense about the war. Görgei seems acting so contrary."

"Görgei's coming round now, they say," said Jancsi, "and learning which side his bread is buttered."

"As for coming round, he's going round, and by a precious roundabout way."

"Why, he's coming along the north bank of the Danube, is not he," said the dwarf, "to act in concert with Dembinsky?"

"*He* coming, bless you!" cried Paul; "why, he's cutting all across the country, right towards Arad: I saw his rear-guard myself."



CHAPTER XIX.

THE CATASTROPHE.

IT was even so. The battle of Waitzen, which began on the 14th of July, did not terminate till the 17th, when Görgei broke through the Russian lines and retreated beyond the Theiss. On the 16th there had also been a battle before Komorn. Kossuth, finding it useless to expect Görgei to obey orders, had summoned General Bem from Transylvania, where he could ill be spared, to take the command in Lower Hungary. Immediately on his arrival a general action took place. Bem was defeated, and also disabled by breaking his collar-bone. His ammunition fell short, and the Hungarians had been twenty-four hours without food, so that it was no wonder they were compelled to retreat.

When Kossuth heard of this defeat, Görgei had just reached Arad. He had written for

money and ammunition. Kossuth set out to meet him, but could not find him. At length they got into communication.

The Russians were raising hopes that they would guarantee to the Hungarians the constitution of 1848, with the Grand Duke Constantine for their King. Görgei believed in these reports; Kossuth, after some inquiry into them, was convinced of their emptiness.

"Do you expect, then," Görgei inquired of Kossuth, "to save the country by yourself?"

Kossuth replied—"Not if I am deserted by Görgei."

Görgei rejoined that he both could and would save Hungary, if Kossuth resigned and he himself were declared Dictator.

On this, the generous, unselfish Kossuth resigned his governorship, and proclaimed Görgei Dictator. Meanwhile, couriers, riding in hot haste, brought word that Klapka had defeated the Austrians. Placing himself at the head of the garrison of Komorn, he had driven the enemy from Raab, leaving in their flight immense stores of arms and provisions. The fate of the country trembled in the balance; Görgei's sword would doubtless have turned it; but he did not throw

it into the scale. Already he was in treasonable correspondence with the Russians. On August the 9th, General Haynau defeated the Hungarians at Temeswar. On the 13th, just ten days from Klapka's victory, Görgei, with 24,000 men and an immense park of artillery, surrendered *unconditionally* to the Russians!

It seems like the work of madness. He called his superior officers together, declared the situation of Hungary desperate, maintained that nothing could save it, and avowed his intention to submit to the Russians rather than the Austrians, as the more honourable enemies.

The officers were mute; not one of them ventured to ask on what terms the surrender was to be made. Of course they reckoned on honourable conditions. As for the private soldiers they knew nothing of the nature of the transaction.

Whether Görgei foresaw the fate he was preparing for his brothers-in-arms, and the terrible consequences of his deed to the country at large, only himself could tell. He appeared alternately the sport of hope and fear—sometimes shuddering at himself, and then fancying his deed might have blessed consequences for Hungary.

As file after file of his troops, like simple

sheep, put themselves defenceless in the power of their foes, Görgei perceived the young violinist, Ramonyi, standing beside him, regarding him wistfully.

"What are you going to do now, my boy?" said he sadly. "Are you provided with money?"

"As for money, I have none, general," said Ramonyi; "but, with my violin, I shall make my way through the world."

Görgei immediately emptied his purse; gave him all his gold, untied some golden trinkets hanging to his watch, and gave them to him, saying—

"Take these, my lad, in remembrance of me."

"But this silver key," said Ramonyi, selecting it from the bunch, "was given you by your wife. I must not take that! she would be displeased."

"Take it," said Görgei with emotion. "After what I have done to-day, my wife will no more smile on me!"

The tidings of the direful deed quickly spread; it thrilled all Hungary. Many officers resigned. Kossuth and a band of his friends fled for their lives into Turkey. Austria was indignant at

Görgei for surrendering to Russia; but he was quickly transferred by one party into the hands of the other. As he passed to his new destination crowds of anxious Hungarians gathered about his carriage, and eagerly asked, "What is the meaning of all this?"

"As yet, I may not speak," said Görgei to them. "In a few weeks, all my story will be known—and then the country will bless me."

Never was spoken a falser word! The tale increases in sadness, but I must hurry over it. One fortress after another passed into the hands of the Austrians, though Komorn, held by Klapka, was only betrayed by false promises of an amnesty. When this fortress, the key of the kingdom, had capitulated, all Hungary lay beneath Austria's foot; and now the court-martials began.

On the refusal of the Turkish Government to give up Kossuth and his companions, Russia suspended all intercourse with the Porte. Kossuth soon afterwards claimed the protection of England, as the only choice offered him and his compatriots was between becoming Mahometans and being given up to Austria.

About four thousand Hungarians and Poles

were held captive in the fortress of Widin. General Bem became a renegade. And now began the executions in Hungary.

At Arad, on the 6th of October, Kiss and three other generals were shot. After them, eight other generals and a colonel were hanged. The executions lasted from six to ten o'clock. These unfortunate officers, who behaved like heroes, were doomed to witness the deaths of their comrades till their own turn came.

The same day, Count Louis Batthyanyi was shot at Pesth. His trial had been illegal and cruel. A few days afterwards the noble Hungarian minister Csanyi, the last of his race, was hanged. A file of other distinguished patriots suffered on the same occasion; whose last words are embalmed.

But, as Europe and America expressed horror at these outrages, the Viennese ministry altered its course of proceeding. Instead of exposing its victims on scaffolds, it secreted them in dungeons. The old castle of Grosswardein, for example, inclosed within its numerous cells not only Catholic priests, Protestant clergymen, Jewish Rabbis, Poles, Magyars, Italians, Frenchmen, Wallacks, Croats, and Sclavonians—all for

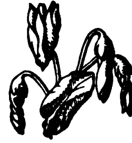
taking part in, or at least sympathizing with, the revolution of 1848—but the young and beautiful Countess Teleki, on the plea of corresponding with her emigrant compatriots. After tedious delays she was tried by court-martial and sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment! This is the latest report I have of her, reader. Can you tell me whether she is in prison still?

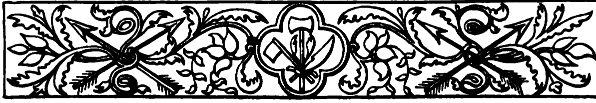
As for the peasantry who had taken part in the war, they were forced into the Austrian ranks, to fight the quarrel of absolutism in Italy, &c. Heavy fines and confiscations drained the country and filled the imperial treasury. Everything was taxed, in a country that once knew not taxes.

If you wish for a glimpse of Kossuth, after his flight into Turkey, he is to be seen under the surveillance of a portly Turk, smoking a long pipe, who is in fact the chief of the police, and who, if Kossuth walks or rides out, sends a Turk with him to see that he comes back. Thus attended, Kossuth does not often go out: he looks pale and harassed—his thoughts are with his country, and with his wife and children who are in captivity. His dinner is brought in—served in an earthen dish, and to be eaten with

an iron spoon. Three common chairs and a deal table comprise the furniture of his room, which is littered with cloaks, papers, bridles, &c. His *char-à-banc* stands in the narrow, mud-walled court-yard; and two hussars are grooming his horses under an open shed.

After dinner, Kossuth is joined by Count and Countess Dembinski. Guyon, the Bayard of the campaign, Meszaros, and Casimir Batthyanyi are not far off: all under surveillance. They speak of the war—Kossuth speaks of Görgei with moderation. He had raised him from nothing, and had laid down supreme power to make way for him—hoping to save the country. But it is not in his nature to speak bitterly of any.





CHAPTER XX.

THE LAST WORD.

SIR," said Jancsi to an American who was making a visit of observation to Hungary, and who was afterwards shut up in Grosswardein for such impertinent curiosity, "if you could only have seen this country four or five years ago! I do not believe there was so happy a land in Europe. Wine, corn, and everything so cheap! —the gentry making improvements everywhere. And now there is a tax upon everything! We have lost our constitution and our rights. The whole country is dead."

"You remind me," said the traveller, with an attempt at pleasantry, "of an epitaph they have in England—'I was well; I would be better; and here I am!' May not that have been the case?"

"No, sir, no!" said a tall, fine-looking Magyar, who stood by, and who spoke in those full rich tones that one so often hears among the Hungarians. "Our constitution, which had survived eight hundred years, was being sapped and undermined before we broke out. Promises were made to throw us off our guard, and then broken; the Ban crossed the frontier when as yet we were at peace. And now we have lost all that a nation can lose. Every step is hemmed by obstructions, and one cannot stir without coming on an Austrian spy."

The plaintive air of Rakotsy, played by an itinerant musician sitting under the hedge, formed a fit introit between the sad retrospects of the Magyars. He who last spoke was the honved whom the reader may remember as complimenting Wilma when she gave him the flowers.

They were affianced now, for circumstances had unexpectedly thrown them together again. He had suffered severely during the latter part of the campaign, and was now a mere wreck, or he would have been forced into the Austrian army. As for Paul, he, as we know, had done no fighting at all, therefore he was now able to reap the inglorious but substantial pleasure of

living at home in ease, having re-built his cottage, and carried Susi home to it.

"But would it not have been better for you all," resumed the traveller, "if you had not risen?"

"My service to you, sir!" said Jancsi, briskly. "Let me set you on fire, and then say, 'It will be much better for you not to burn!' Wait till your own privileges are attacked, and then we'll see how you bear it. Easy it is, no doubt, for a fine constitutional government, like that of the United States or of England, to look on with enlightened composure at the disasters of less fortunate countries. We don't want you to help us, oh no! We never asked it! Only, don't go and say, when we have been trampled and stamped upon, 'Would it not have been better for you never to have risen!'"

Whether this came under the head of contradictory, contrary, inconsistent, subaltern, or sub-contrary opposition, certain it is that it was admitted for very good logic by all the Magyars in presence, however inconclusive it might seem to the traveller.

"All might have gone well with you, my friends," said he, "if Kossuth had been as pre-eminent in a military as in a civil capacity."

"Why now, who ever heard such an un-reasonable remark, sir?" said Jancsi, with hea "A man is not born to be everything; at onc a brewer and a horse-doctor, for instance; or preacher and a scene-painter. I don't mean tha those examples are good ones, but you knov what I mean. Kossuth was the man for th time; and good to the core. He will carry ou love with him wherever he goes; but he warmed a serpent in his bosom when he took up Arthu Görgei."

"And where is Görgei now?" said the tra-veller.

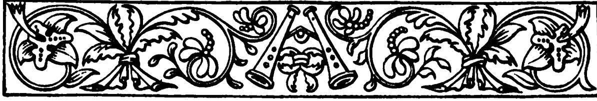
"Where? Why, at Klagenfurt! living on a pension! and writing an account of his own lif and acts!" said Jancsi, with intense disgust. " hope he will begin with Count Zichy."

"Gently, gently, son Jancsi," said a quiet-looking old curate, who was smoking his pip with some dignity. "The moral of our sad tal may be this—that Hungary has sought a cur for her wounds in the sphere of politics, wher she should have sought it in the sphere o Christianity."*

"Hang me if I can understand that," saic

* Merle d'Aubigné.

Jancsi, after a pause, looking hard at the minister as he spoke. "It carries a great sound with it, but I am not at all inclined to admit that Hungary, as a nation, was anyways in fault. However, your reverence is a scholar, and may possibly have the root of the matter."



POSTSCRIPT.

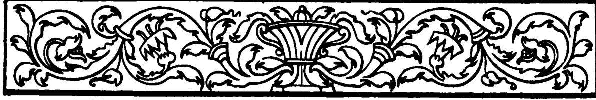
WHEN I was about ten years old, I was taken to see a quaint secluded picture-gallery, shaded by tall old elms, and adjoining an almost monastic foundation. While in this gallery, I was told to go and open a certain door.

I did so, expecting to see more pictures; and was startled and awe-stricken to find myself in a mausoleum of the dead, to which only a sombre light was admitted through amber and purple glass.

In like manner, thinking only to amuse myself and some young people by some picture-sketches of Hungarian manners, I plunged into this little story, and, to my dismay, found I had entered on no child's play, but a solemn tragedy.

My very slight and imperfect sketch has been taken from Max Schlesinger's "War in Hungary," Klapka's "War of Independence," "My

Life and Acts," by Görgei, the Baroness von Beck's "Adventures," Madame Pulszky's "Memoirs of a Hungarian Lady," and Brace's "Hungary." All these books are interesting, and there are also others I have made great use of, notes from which will be found in the following Appendix; especially Baron W—'s "Scenes of the Civil War." Also Jokai's tales, and Szabad's history.



APPENDIX.

1.—*Smuggled Wines.*

"WE had abundance of champagne and Bordeaux, and, as a rarity, some Hungarian wines. I say a rarity, because in many houses not a glass of anything but foreign wine can be obtained. Unfortunately, Hungarian wines are not only good but cheap, and that is enough to prove they cannot be fashionable."—PAGET's *Hungary and Transylvania*, vol. i. ch. 1.

"The sale of wine and the sale of flesh are rights of the lord of the manor; and here we had a striking proof of the annoyance of this custom. In some cases, the inn-keeper pays an annual rent for the exclusive privilege of selling wine in a certain town or village, and of course can then poison the poor traveller with as bad wine and as dear as he chooses. In other cases, as at Szolna, the lord provides the wine, and obliges the inn-keeper to sell it at a certain price."—*Ibid.* i. 106.

"It is very characteristic of the state of commerce here, that there is not a single wine merchant in the country; and when at Klausenburg, we found it difficult to get even a tolerable wine to drink. Every gentleman, nay, every respectable tradesman, grows his own wine, and he would rather send a hundred miles off for it, than give hard cash to buy it of another on the spot."—*Ibid.* ii. 229.

"We had observed in walking through the town (Agram) a great number of gentlemen in full costume, and found they had been attending a county meeting, which had excited great interest from the circumstance of a royal commissioner having been sent down expressly to attend it. It appeared that Government, having found it impossible to check smuggling by means of its officers, on the frontiers of Croatia, had determined to station them at different places within the country, with power to seize suspected goods wherever they might find them. This, however, would have been a gross violation of the Municipal Constitution, which places the whole executive power in the elected officers of the county; and the Croatians declared accordingly that they would not submit to it. In the face of such direct opposition, Government had not ventured to put its plan into execution, and had sent down a commissioner to explain its intentions."—*Ibid.* ii. 512. *Date*, 1835.

Professor Ansted, writing in 1862, says:—"A few days before my visit to one of the out-of-the-way valleys, in which are several small villages, a dispute had arisen during a festival on the occasion of a wedding. The officials accused the giver of the feast of having smuggled some of the drinks in use. It was denied; but the revenue-officer declared the wine should not be used. The peasants refused to give way, and the result was that they were attacked, and several of them killed." —ANSTED's *Short Trip to Hungary and Transylvania.*

II.—*The Gipsies in Hungary.*

"THEY first made their appearance in this country from the East in 1423, when King Sigmund granted them permission to settle. Joseph II. tried to turn them to some account, and passed laws which he hoped would force them

to give up their wandering life, and betake themselves to agriculture. The landlords were obliged to make them small grants of land, and to allow them to build houses at the end of their villages. I have often passed through these *Czigany varos* (gipsy towns), and it is impossible to imagine a more savage scene. Children of both sexes to the age of fourteen are seen rolling about with a mere shred of covering, and their elders with much less than decency requires. Filth obstructs the passage into every hut. As the stranger approaches, crowds of urchins flock round him, and rather demand than beg for charity. The screams of men and women, and the barking of dogs—for the whole tribe seems to be in a state of constant warfare—never cease from morning to night. It is rarely, however, that when thus settled, they can remain the whole year stationary. They generally disappear during summer, and only return when winter obliges them to seek a shelter. They are said to amount to 62,315 in Transylvania, which enumeration is, I suspect, exaggerated. The Austrian Government is, I believe, the only one in Europe that has been known to derive any advantage from its gipsies; but by means of the tax for gold-washing, it must derive considerable revenue from this people.

"They are often taken for soldiers, and are said to make pretty good ones. . . . Their skill in horse-shoeing (they are the best blacksmiths in the country) and in brick-making, renders them of considerable value to the landlord. . . . Of the most simple moral laws they seem entirely ignorant. It is not rare to see them employed as servants in offices considered beneath the peasant to perform. They never dream of eating with the rest of the household, but receive a morsel in their hands and devour it where they can."—PAGET'S *Hungary and Transylvania*, ii. 247.

It is well known that these people have the art of preparing a most insidious poison, for which medical science knows no antidote. The most careful analysis shows it to

consist simply of apparently harmless vegetable matter, a species of fungus. See the *Times*, Feb. 21, 1862.

George Borrow laboured to evangelize these wild people in vain. Yet the benevolent Mr. Crabb, of Southampton, was more successful, and his memory is still cherished among the gipsies. But after his death his schemes for their benefit were suffered to fall to the ground for want of support. There was a romantic account in the *Times*, a year or two ago, of the conversion and death of an interesting gipsy girl near Ipswich. I wrote to the clergyman about it, but he said it had been too highly coloured.

Madame Pulszky says of the gipsy children:—"Some of these little urchins are beautiful; their eyes as purely blue as if the glance of an Eastern heaven had transfused its pellucid colour into them. This peculiarity shines the brighter, because it presents a marked exception to the mystical brilliancy of the black-eyed majority."

III.—*Gold Washing.*

"This branch of industry is almost entirely in the hands of the gipsies. The Government grants a gipsy band the privilege of washing the sands of a certain brook, on condition of their paying a yearly rent, which is never less than three ducats in pure gold for every washer. A gipsy judge or captain settles this matter with the Government, and is answerable for the rest of the tribe, from whom he collects the whole of their earnings, and after paying the tribute, divides it."—Paget, ii. 306-7.

IV.—*Charcoal Burners.*

See Professor Ansted's *Hungary and Transylvania.*

V.—*Jews.*

"THE Jews in Hungary are perhaps more active than anywhere else, from the natural propensity of the peasant to have somebody to deal for him, while he basks, as much as may be, in Oriental ease.

"In spite of firmly adhering to their religion, they readily join with Christians for the furtherance of charitable objects. Among themselves they have never been distinguished by family surnames; but the systematizing Emperor Joseph II. enforced on them that European custom, and German surnames were imposed on the Jews by the public authorities. Neither the Jews themselves, however, nor the people took any notice of this. The former kept to the names they had received in their synagogues; the latter continued to give them nicknames."—*Memoirs of a Hungarian Lady*, by THERESA PULSZKY, vol. i. p. 45-7.

The facts quoted respecting the Archduchess's mission are in BRACE's *Hungary*, p. 134.

VI.—*Hungarian Music.*

"IN our days," says Madame Pulszky, "no one perhaps has more characteristically seized the spirit of this national music than the Jew of Pesth, Mark Rozsavölgyi. This man's talent delighted thousands of loud-tongued admirers; yet, alas, he died in the misery of destitution, almost starved to death."—*Ibid.*

VII.—*The Advanced Guard.*

THE sketch of Baron von Wildenheim's adventures is closely copied from those of a young officer in the Austrian service, in one place designated Baron W., whose letters, published

under the title of "Scenes of the Civil War in Hungary in 1848 and 1849,"* seem to me to bear every mark of authenticity. The unfortunate nobleman whom I have called Count Matthias, he speaks of as "Count St. ——, who once saved my life at Bologna, and who, after his marriage with the fair Marchesa B——, had obtained leave to resign, and retired to his lordship in Hungary." He elsewhere calls this lady "the Countess St. ——."

VIII.—*The Countess Helena.*

"By and by came in his sister, the young Countess Hélène, the most beautiful Hungarian female I had ever seen; and that is saying a great deal.

"St. —— gave me his word of honour that we were perfectly safe from any surprise, and my men were abundantly supplied with wine and meat; and while they made themselves comfortable outside, I found myself in Paradise, between two beautiful and amiable females, opposite to a friend whom I had not seen for a long time, and before a glass of exquisite tokay. All weariness vanished, and we joked and laughed half the night, forgetting the war, Kossuth, and national hatred.

"Two days I rested in St. ——'s mansion, as a little respite was highly desirable for both men and horses. The eyes of the Countess Hélène began to be dangerous for me; but on earth the soldier has no abiding quarters. On the third morning, with a tear in my eye, I pressed St. —— to my breast, kissed the cheek of his wife and his sister—the latter plucked a rosebud for me as a keepsake; my trumpeter sounded to horse, and away we dashed."

The account of the cavalry action is likewise authentic. I delight in the vivid little book, though the writer was on the *wrong side.*

* Second Edition, Shoberl, 1850.

IX.—*The Old Countess.*

COUNTESS HELENA's mother is sketched from life, though from another subject.

"You have visited St. György at a very unfortunate moment," said this Countess to Dr. Paget; "the cholera which set in only two days ago has assumed a very serious aspect to-day. Since yesterday no fewer than four deaths have been reported to me, and I fear we must expect many more."

In fact, the old Countess was their sole physician; and her house was not only their dispensary but their hospital, for she had several brought under her own roof, that they might be better attended to. Several times during dinner her daughter, Countess Julia, was called from table to send medicines to some new patient. In this she was assisted by the steward and the clergyman, who seemed to take an active interest in the fate of the poor sufferers.

"This old Countess," Dr. Paget says, "was a lady of the old school, possessing all that easy dignity of manner which, when united to a warm heart, forms the perfection of the social character; and, though now in the decline of life, exhibiting a regularity and delicacy of features which told she must have been a beauty in her younger days. Nor was their tale belied by the image of those days which for us was reproduced in the person of her daughter."—V. ii. p. 268.

Of her residence, St. György, he says, "Nothing can be more secluded than this valley—nothing more lovely. On one side it is bounded by precipitous cliffs, on the very summit of which we could perceive the ruins of an old castle: on the other are wooded hills; and in the middle, a pretty stream and rich meadows and corn-fields."

He and his companion were perfect strangers to this venerable lady; but her servant, seeing them put about for quarters in Klausenberg, had told them his lady expected

them; and though she could not have done so, not even knowing of their existence, till her servant reported their approach, she received them as welcome guests, and they sat down to luncheon with her as a matter of course.

"As a widow," said she, "my forenoons are pretty well occupied; for in Transylvania we must be farmers, miners, doctors, and I know not what besides. I leave you free, therefore, till the hour of dinner, when I shall expect the pleasure of seeing you again. See," she added, "the bouquet my steward has brought me this morning! It is composed of the heaviest ears of corn he has been able to find this season; and I assure you no hothouse flowers could be half so agreeable to me."

The Countess Julia volunteered to show them the cottages of some of the peasants; and they would have been considered patterns of cleanliness and order in any country. She directed their attention to the quantities of fine bed-linen beautifully bordered with embroidery, displayed in the best bedroom of the cottage.

"This," said she, "is the handiwork of the girls, and intended as their dower; and hard enough they work at it!"

The only book to be seen in the cottage was a large Hungarian Bible, richly bound, and fastened with heavy brass clasps.

Their parting from the Countess was characteristic. The brisk old lady proposed their taking a nearer road than that by which they had come.

"It is rather a rough one," said she, "but it is the one I always take myself; and I do not suppose that, for young men like you, its dangers will be any objection."

This road proved to be up the side of a high and steep mountain, after mastering which, they were promised a continual descent.

"As we turned round to take a last look at the scene we were leaving, we witnessed one of those beautiful effects which

none but the dwellers in mountain lands can ever behold. A storm came roaring up the valley below us, throwing everything into deep shade, except the castle on the hill, which caught a gleam of sunshine, and stood out in bright relief against the black mountains behind it. We paid, however, dearly for the treat; by a sudden veer of the wind, the storm seemed to quit the valley, and, clinging to the side of the mountain, followed our footsteps, overtook us, and beat with such force on the horses that they turned round and refused to move any farther. Flogging made no impression on them—they only kicked and backed; and they had chosen for that operation a ridge of the mountain, from whence one might have slipped into immortality, almost before one was aware of it.

"Our only remedy was to sit still while Miklós mounted one of the horses and went back, to beg the Countess would lend us some oxen to drag us up the rest of the mountain. A peasant, however, who was at work at some distance, and saw our difficulty, took his horses out of the plough, and harnessing them before ours, got us at last to the top."

X.—*Erzsebet and her Family.*

Erzsebet and her children are faithfully copied from Baron W.'s description of them; and if this diminishes my merit, it surely increases the interest of my story. Fact is so much better than fiction, that I preferred copying to inventing, whenever I could.

"She was a genuine Magyar," says he of Erzsebet, "in manner, dress, and language; whose features, which must have been very handsome when she was young, betrayed sullen contempt for us her enemies, and who, with her two children, was as sparing of her words as possible. Notwithstanding this unkind reception, I liked the woman for her

firm, decided manner, her upright carriage, her quick gait, and the great cleanliness and order in her household matters.

"As my Dimitri* informed me, the provisions in the *pusta* were almost entirely consumed; so that the two squadrons which still lay here, could obtain scarcely anything but *kukuruz* for themselves and their horses. I myself was living almost entirely on portable broth, of which the surgeon had left me a packet, with *malais* (*kukuruz*-bread) in it.

"Among the objects in my room, a picture which hung opposite to me in a black frame, adorned with a green wreath of moss, particularly attracted my notice. It seemed to represent a hussar in the uniform of my former regiment. I desired Dimitri to hand it down to me upon the bed. But what was my astonishment when I recognized in it the portrait in water-colours of a hussar of my former squadron, painted by myself some years ago, and at the lower corner of which, my name as the artist was still to be seen!"

All the other particulars of the incident, and the kindness he subsequently received, are just as I have narrated them.

XI.—*The Seressan Girl.*

"THESE women frequently astonish by their courage and their fortitude. In Hungary, we had with us a young Croatian, the daughter of an old Seressan, who was as daring a rider as the best hussar, and who more than once fearlessly joined the men in the charge. A Hungarian *jurat* gave her in an action a cut on the right cheek, which she returned with a severe blow on the arm, seized the bridle of his horse, and took him prisoner." A little farther on, the Baron tells us this action occurred a few days after his visit to the Count. "Here it was, too," he says of the cavalry action near the *pusta* Montony, "that the young Seressan female whom I

* His servant.

have told you of already, made prize of her grey steed. Her brother, when he saw the enemy's horsemen making up to the girl, who dashed on daringly in the first ranks, would have hastened to her assistance, but she called to him laughing, '*Je jedan, brate! ne boisse!*'" A worthy sister of Miss Pustovoydova!

XII.—*Jellachich.*

I AM indebted also to Baron W. for the portrait of the Ban, whom he first saw in a Croatian village near the frontier he soon afterwards crossed. We must make allowance, perhaps, for his somewhat too favourable impressions of his commander.

"The impression," he says, "which this distinguished officer made on me at the very first moment, was most prepossessing, and it has since become stronger and stronger, the more I have had occasion to observe him in all the situations of life—in battle and in cheerful society. He is an extraordinary man; and Austria may deem herself fortunate in possessing him and Radetzky at the same moment."

He draws his character at length, and describes his popularity in Croatia. In conclusion he says—

"The language usually spoken by Jellachich is German; but he also understands Italian, French, Croatian, and has some knowledge of the Hungarian. His voice is soft and pleasing; but perfectly distinct when giving the word of command. He is unmarried, has not much property, lives simply and frugally, applying almost all that he can spare to the support of his soldiers."

XIII.—*The Baroness von Beck.*

THE romance of this poor lady was a riddle to the end. I have gone carefully through the printed evidence about her,

scattered through various numbers of the *Athenæum* from 1850 to 1853, and having balanced the contradictory statements as well as I could, I see no reason to doubt her real claim to the name and rank she assumed, though she probably professed a much greater acquaintance with Kossuth than she really possessed. She seems to have had an engrossing desire for the good of her country, coupled with the harm of its enemies. She also was a hero-worshipper; and before she had ever seen Kossuth, partook of the universal idolatry of him.

"He was," says she truly, "the greatest man of his time—the beau ideal of a patriot and a hero; uniting in himself the grandest genius with the purest principles, and wanting only *success* to consecrate his name among the Tells, the Hampdens, and the Washingtons, who in other lands and ages stood up like him to vindicate the sacred liberties of man against despotism and oppression."

As the share which female enthusiasm and energy have had in the Hungarian and Polish wars of independence has been very remarkable, it is quite worth our while to trace this lady's course a little further.

Having crossed the river, as we have seen, the Baroness's object was to proceed direct to Kossuth and give him the information of which she was the bearer. She therefore directed her course to Neudorf, and thence to Blumenau, on her way to Presburg, where she expected to find him. But at Blumenau she was stopped by a hussar, who demanded her business, and when she said she bore intelligence for Kossuth, he said he was at Pesth, and she had better tell what she had to say to the Government Commissioner Csanyi, who was at Presburg. He offered her a carriage for this purpose, and said he would accompany her.

The Baroness gladly accepted this proposal, and they immediately started. Csanyi immediately admitted her, and was much surprised at the manner in which she had crossed the

frontier. He asked her a thousand questions, but she had no mind to impart all her information to him; she therefore only told him as much as she thought expedient, saying there were things which she could only communicate to Kossuth. He could believe that this might be the case, and therefore said if she would write to him he would place a courier at her disposal. She did so, and then took up her abode at an hotel. After a good night's rest she went to the Cathedral, and offered up her thanks for her preservation through so many dangers.

On returning to the hotel, she found a message awaiting her from Csanyi, who wished to see her immediately. On going to him, she found that General Görgei desired an interview with her. Görgei was a young man of noble extraction, whose talents and bravery had led to his rapid promotion, but he was bitterly envious of Kossuth, although he had drawn him from obscurity, and opened to him the way to fame.

Görgei received the Baroness with the utmost politeness, and examined her very closely. He was surprised at the amount of her information, but doubted its correctness. To test her knowledge he said quickly to her—

"Can you tell me how many pieces of cannon form a battery?"

"Oh, general," said she, smiling, "your motive is so very transparent! I have been acquainted with military affairs from my earliest youth."

He laughed, and was baffled, *for she did not tell him;* perhaps could not.

"Are you acquainted," said he, "with the district occupied by Simonich's corps?"

"Perfectly."

"Are you willing to undertake a mission thither?"

"Quite willing."

"Well, then, I will charge you with one."

"Give me only two days' delay to rest myself, and set my wardrobe in order."

He did so; and on the 15th of November she received her instructions. This mission was easily and comfortably fulfilled. She travelled at first by rail, and then in a post-carriage to her own estate, where she found her people in the greatest alarm, momentarily expecting a visit from Simonich's soldiers. She reassured them, exchanged visits with her neighbours, and then started on her mission. She accomplished it, and travelled post to Presburg, where she gave Görgei the information he had desired, probably as a test. On this, he gave her a mission to Vienna.

She travelled this time in a peasant's cart, with her credentials concealed in one of its planks. As before, she was seized on the frontier, and subjected to a rigorous examination. But the Baroness was now growing hardened; she represented herself as agent for a well-known fruit warehouse. They let her pass. She was stopped and re-examined twenty-six times.

At Vienna she delivered the despatch, which was from Kossuth, into the proper hands, and met with the greatest consideration. Thence she went to Schönbrun, to see Windischgrätz and Jellachich. She handed a letter to the former, who read it, and seemed struck with alarm at its contents.

"I confess," said she afterwards, "it was not without a secret satisfaction that I saw this man taste some of the bitterness of that misery into which, with a remorseless hand, he had plunged myriads of his and my countrymen."

Prince Windischgrätz arose and went into his cabinet to answer the letter, leaving the tall, dark-haired Ban standing with folded arms, and his large hazel eyes fixed thoughtfully on the ground. As he stood thus, the Baroness beheld in him the calumniator of Hungarian honour, the plunderer and destroyer of Vienna; and could hardly, she says, refrain from giving utterance to the disgust and scorn that swelled within her.

Rousing from his reverie, the Ban questioned her as to the number and condition of the Hungarian troops.

"*I represented them,*" says she, "*as double their actual force.*"* .

"The divisions you have not seen," said he, with apparent carelessness, "are probably still stronger."

He evidently desired to draw from her some information respecting the position of the various corps, but she took refuge in pretended ignorance of such matters.

Windischgrätz now returned with his answer to the letter she had brought, which he entrusted to her charge, and he gave her an order, signed by himself, to pass wherever she would, unmolested by the Austrian troops; which of course was of the utmost value to her, but wholly undeserved.

"I took my leave," says she. "My object was accomplished; and the two great generals—conquerors of Prague and of Vienna—were outwitted by a woman!"†

Truly, this does not read pleasantly. And to such a low moral tone, in the course of a few weeks, has espionage reduced a noble lady. Again the course of war.

Well, she goes back again—if we are to suppose her more true to us than she was to them—"and everywhere the Field-Marshal's autograph acted like magic, commanding the utmost attention and respect. No one recognized in the bearer of so potent a missive the poor fruit-woman who had passed through the lines two days before." Her travelling name was Racidula.

The Baroness reached Presburg at four o'clock the next morning, and immediately sent word of her arrival to Csanyi. He was in bed, but instantly got up to receive her communications. They were very important, and included the proclamation of the Emperor Ferdinand's abdication in favour of

* Personal Adventures, &c., by the Baroness von Beck, vol. i. p. 39.

† *Ibid.*

his son Francis Joseph. These, and other papers, he sent off at once to Kossuth.

A few days afterwards he handed the Baroness a letter from Kossuth, accompanying despatches for the Diet at Kremsier, and begging they might be instantly forwarded. Csanyi doubted her ability to execute this mission; but she was now warming in her work, and readily undertook it. She crossed the lines through the help of a Jewess, who entered into her plot with zeal, and helped her to dye her face and hands dark brown.

The Jewess also provided her with the dress of one of those women who perambulate Hungary as public messengers, and gave her an unsealed letter and parcel directed to her daughter, who lived on the Austrian side of the frontier. The Baroness sewed her despatches into the lining of her fur cloak. With a countrywoman for her companion, she advanced boldly into the midst of the Austrian entrenchments—was stopped, searched—and allowed to pass on!

Finally, an omnibus deposited her at Kremsier, the place of her destination, where a man at the gate made a note of the name and appearance of every person who arrived. "I know not what sort of sketch he gave of me," says the Baroness, "but if it were drawn from the papers I showed him, it was calculated greatly to deceive his employers."

In this town the Baroness found herself among several of her own acquaintance. Her appearance among them seemed something supernatural; they listened with astonishment to the adventures she recounted, and even shed tears at the recital of her perils, nor could she restrain her own.

From Kremsier she went on to Olmutz, where the young Emperor Francis Joseph had resided with his parents since their flight from Vienna. She bought a print of him, which was called "The King of Hungary," and a variety of brochures which showed the spirit of the time and place.

Having re-crossed the frontier in safety, she rewarded the

Jewess for her assistance by giving her her fur cloak. She was again in Hungary, and out of danger; but the roads were so broken up with barricades and fortifications that she had to cross the mountains on foot.

On arriving at Presburg, the despatches she brought were immediately forwarded to Kossuth, and she then prepared for a thorough rest. Instead of this, she received a request from Government that she would instantly start for Komorn by the steamer, and there await the arrival of Görgei's troops, when she would be instructed by Csanyi how she might further serve her country.

The steamer left Presburg at ten o'clock the same night. She reached Komorn the next evening, went to bed, and slept two nights and two days!

We must admit that this good lady had not spared herself; she might well be tired. Yet her career was only just beginning. Görgei and Csanyi reached Komorn at the same time. There seemed no immediate want of her services; but one evening, when they were dining together, Csanyi said to her in joke—

"Well, Baroness, what do you suppose the Black-and-Yellows are doing in Presburg now? I should like to know, amazingly."

She was in that state of excitement that it was the most natural thing to her to take him at his word, though she knew he had not spoken in earnest. No more passed; but as soon as he was gone she started off for Presburg, which, being unfortified, had fallen an easy prey to the Austrians. Her papers gave her easy access; she made her observations, and was hardily walking about the town, when who should she meet but young Windischgrätz and Count Thun, who knew her perfectly!

"Well, Baroness, so you are here!" said they. "Just arrived from Schönbrun, no doubt?"

"Where are you lodging?" was the next inquiry.

The poor Baroness was caught. She gave a false address, then said she was going to visit some distant relations; and, to prevent their finding her out, she left Presburg the same afternoon.

She need hardly have said a little later, "It will be perceived that I had learnt a little strategy."

And now she was on the eve of seeing Kossuth. Csanyi begged her to hold herself in readiness to answer an immediate summons to the seat of government at Pesth. She now felt assured that her services were deemed of importance, and was full of cheerfulness at the thought. She reached Pesth, and notified her arrival to Kossuth, who appointed an interview with her the same evening.

She spent the interim agreeably in improvising a suitable dress, with the assistance of two ladies of rank, her friends. At the appointed hour she repaired to the President's official residence.

No other lady was present. The ante-chamber was filled with officers and civilians. They regarded her with evident curiosity; and she would have felt embarrassed, had she not been pre-occupied by the greatness of the occasion.

At length she and Count Thunes, who accompanied her, were conducted through the Ministers' council-chamber into Kossuth's cabinet. As she raised her eyes towards him, she felt profoundly impressed by his noble bearing, and the intelligence, mingled with a deep expression of sorrow, that marked his calm but careworn and singularly beautiful features.

He led her, she says, to a seat; then seated himself and said, "Noble lady, in the name of the Hungarian nation, our menaced fatherland, I acknowledge your patriotism. I give you heartfelt thanks for the great sacrifices you have made, and the services you have rendered the country. Continue to assist me. Help to lighten the overwhelming burthen of government by which I am oppressed. You can do me in-

estimable benefit, for which, I trust, I shall soon be able to convey to you the thanks of a liberated nation."

Such were the words, which she afterwards said, sank into her very soul, and made her feel capable of any undertaking. She could only shed tears while he spoke them. The unexpected eulogy quite overcame her; she would have thought herself richly rewarded with mere approval.

"I left Vienna," said she, "with the firm resolution of consecrating myself to my country. Your great example and the wretched condition of Hungary have not only confirmed this resolution, but strengthened it."

A courier was at this instant announced with despatches from Raab. Kossuth begged the Baroness and the Count to withdraw into the ante-chamber while he read them.

When they were re-admitted, they found his look and manner quite changed. He asked at what number they estimated the Austrian forces? They replied, "About a hundred thousand."

"These despatches," rejoined he, "rate them at a hundred and sixty thousand, against which it will be impossible for Raab to hold out. I would give ten thousand pounds to ascertain the real number and position of the enemy."

"I will undertake to let you know that," said the Baroness, "without any pecuniary reward."

He looked at her in astonishment.

"To be of any use to me," said he, "the information must be obtained at once."

"I will start to-night!"

"Well, then," said Kossuth, "may God preserve you, and bring you safely back to us. I am extremely concerned for your safety."

And so would any humane man have been; but with these words, she says, she felt overpaid. If the reader would know more of her adventures, they must be sought for in her own narrative.

XIV.—*Lena, the Gipsy Girl.*

While writing of Lena, I accidentally came to the description of a real gipsy girl in Paget's "Hungary," which helped me to some truthful touches. Here is his account.

"While the servant was making inquiries and receiving answers which he could not understand, as to the whereabouts of the hostelry, a gipsy girl came out of the house, and hearing the nature of our difficulty, at once took the arrangement of the matter on herself. At a single bound, she threw herself into H——'s wagon, seated herself beside him, and giving her orders to the peasant desired him to drive through the river, up the steep bank, and along the deep road; we being left to follow them to the inn as we could.

"Before we arrived, our gipsy guide had roused the whole house, got the keys of the chambers, unlocked the rooms, and while we were yet joking H—— on his adventure, the heroine of it had already lit the fires, mended the cracked stoves, got the carriage unloaded, laid the cloth, and was cooking the supper ere it was yet ordered. Everything was so quickly done that it had an air of conjuration about it. It was strange to find one whom five minutes before we had never even seen, already our guide, our hostess, our cook, our factotum. Nor was the interest lessened when we had time to observe our mysterious friend. Lila was a pretty gipsy girl of about sixteen, with features more regular than those of her tribe commonly are, but with all a gipsy's cunning flattery on her tongue. She was rather fancifully dressed, for over the Wallack shirt she had a bodice of scarlet cloth embroidered with black. The coloured fillet over her forehead was ornamented with a gay bow in front, and behind each ear was a nosegay of the brightest flowers. Her rich brown hair, parted in front, fell in a profusion of clustering curls on her neck, and fell down the back in the long braided band of maidenhood.

She spoke alternately Wallack, Magyar, and German, as she in turns scolded, directed, and coaxed. Before we ceased wondering at sò pleasant an apparition, a good supper was smoking on the table, and the pretty gipsy by her laughing and talking almost persuaded us that we were supping on ambrosia, while she played the gentle Hebe.

"We could never understand the mystery which seemed to belong to Lila's movements. They told us she was a gipsy of the neighbourhood, who often came into the town, and who was allowed to be about the house as much as she pleased. She had no occupation there, yet she had done everything. The gipsies are generally such rogues that they are scarcely permitted to enter any house, yet everything was perfectly secure with her.

"Our first duty at Hunyad, after taking breakfast, which Lila, dressed more gaily than before, prepared for us, was to visit the old castle, &c.

". . . As we got into the carriage Lila was there to bid us adieu. Her beauty, her good-humour, and her happy way of rendering herself useful, made us quite sorry to part with her. . . . I know that nothing can be more ridiculous than to fancy a gipsy sentimental; and yet, in spite of ridicule, I would swear I saw a tear glisten in the poor girl's eye as we drove off. A few kind words are rarely lost, even on a gipsy." —Vol. ii. pp. 158—171.

xv.—*The Impromptu Dance.*

"A PATROL," says Baron W., "had accidentally picked up five gipsies, with a couple of girls. These people, provided with instruments, played up, and my hussars, clattering with their spurs, and snapping their fingers, danced half the night. . . . . I, too, yielded to the influence of the moment, and danced several rounds with the handsome Seressan girl."

XVI.—*Count Matthias.*

THE deaths of the Count and his sister are given almost verbatim. The Baron says—

"The tempestuous feelings that filled my heart I am not able to describe. Hélène had, as I afterwards learnt, served as aide-de-camp to her maternal uncle, who commanded a considerable Magyar corps, and was shot while acting in that capacity by our soldiers, in the above-mentioned action.

"Thus have I lost, in one week, two individuals so dear to me, and both opposed to me as enemies — and besides them, how many esteemed comrades, on the insurgents' side as well as ours! How many excellent officers have already been snatched from us! How cruelly the brave cuirassier regiments, in particular, have suffered!

"And what has been gained? Nothing! absolutely nothing!"

FINIS.

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