

F. M.
1923

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DISARM! DISARM!

L DISARM! DISARM!

ADAPTED FROM THE GERMAN ROMANCE
"DIE WAFFEN NIEDER"
BY THE BARONESS BERTHA VON SUTTNER
BY
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POPULAR EDITION

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

95

Printed in 1914

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BOOK I

1859

CHAPTER I

Girlish fancies—Enthusiasm for heroism—Education—
Entering society—At Marienbad—Love at first sight.

AT seventeen I was a very highly-strung girl. I should hardly realise this to-day, if it were not for the diaries so carefully laid away. In them I find again my long-lost enthusiasms, thoughts, and feelings now utterly forgotten, convictions of which now not a vestige remains, and sympathies which have long been dead and buried. I catch a glimpse of the emptiness and silliness which filled my pretty little head. But, as I painfully learn from my mirror, of the prettiness little trace is left, although the old portraits assure me that it once existed.

I can imagine what an envied little creature the Countess Martha Althaus must have been, pretty, popular, and petted. These quaint little red diaries, however, recorded more of sadness than of joy in her life. I think now, "How could I have been so silly not to realise how singularly blessed I was with privileges?" Perhaps I was

only expressing an unbalanced sentimentality, and I tried to express it in somewhat poetic prose. Imagine my discontent when I wrote :—

O Joan of Arc! heroic, heavenly virgin! If only I too might have waved the oriflamme of France, crowned my king, and died for my fatherland!

Alas! this modest ambition was never gratified.

Again, I longed to be torn in the arena by lions like the Christian martyrs. But the heroics were not for me. I must frankly admit that my life was a commonplace failure, and the glories for which my soul thirsted were for ever closed to me.

Often the little red book exclaimed, "Oh that I had been born a boy!" Then I should have been able to win fame. But feminine heroes are few. How seldom we have Gracchi for sons, and not often may we hope to carry our husbands on our backs through the Weinsberg Gates, or to be a queen and hear the sabre-swinging Magyars shout, "Long live Maria Theresa, our King!" A man need only gird on the sword and dash to fame and laurels, to capture a throne like Cromwell, or a world-empire like Napoleon.

My highest type of manhood was always a military hero. I had slight respect for mere poets, scholars, and discoverers. The heroes of many battles were the object of my adoration and devotion. Were they not the chief pillars of the state,

the makers of history, the builders of empires ? Did they not tower in God-like grandeur over all other heroes, as did the Alps and Himalayas over mere grass and valley flowers ?

From all this it need not be concluded that I possessed an heroic nature. My enthusiasms and passions naturally took their bent from my education and environment. My father was an Austrian General, who had fought under " Father Radetzky " at Custozza, and therefore adored him. I listened untiringly to the unending stories of this campaign. My dear father actually pitied other men who had not had these proud and glorious experiences, and I always regretted that I, being a girl, would never have these magnificent opportunities ; and, having heard some mention of the question of the equal rights of women, I felt sure that the only additional right I should ever keenly desire would be the right to go to war. How charmed I was with the story of Semiramis or Catherine II. when I read : " She made war upon this or that neighbouring kingdom, or she conquered this or that people."

The history books are responsible for this war-like ideal of the young. That the God of Battles has constantly decreed wars stamps itself upon the mind from the first, and one early accepts the belief that war is necessary to regulate nations, and is almost a law of nature, like tornadoes and earthquakes, which from time to time cannot be

avoided. History does not cover up the wickedness, the sorrow, the anguish of it all, but presents it as a part of the inevitable, bringing advantage to the nation, through the sacrifice of the happiness and life of the few. That there is no nobler death than that of the soldier martyr is the clear and unanimous verdict of all our school histories and texts. Long lists of battles are given, and entrancing tales and poems of glory and heroism are told, for must not patriotism be taught, must not every boy grow to be a defender of his country? So he must be made a war-enthusiast early. His spirit must be hardened long before he questions through his natural sympathies why we inflict these horrors and sufferings upon others. Such doubts must be carefully repressed.

History as it is taught aims to warp the inborn, divine impulse to hate barbarism and inhumanity. The tale is so told as to belittle that part of the story which appeals to the sympathies.

And the same books, the same subjects, the same system, encouraging a like admiration for war and military heroics, are given to the girls—delightful pictures for the tender souls, who otherwise are taught that they must be gentle and mild. The frightful stories of carnage and rapine from Bible days, from Macedonian and Punic times down to the Thirty Years' War and Napoleon, repeat the horrors of the thing until the senses become

callous. To read of cities burnt and the people put to the sword with the victims trodden under foot was a keen enjoyment, and to heap one horror upon the other blunted the perceptions till war no longer could be regarded from the point of view of humanity, but was received as something quite special, mysterious, majestic, and sanctified.

The girls could readily see that war alone could give the highest honour and dignity, so they learn all the military and glorifying odes, and they become, like the Spartan mothers of old, the women who present battle-flags and regimental colours, and are the admired and happy belles during the ball season, when they receive the attentions of the brass-buttoned officer's corps.

As a child I had tutors and a governess at home, and was not reared in a convent, as was often the case with children of my position. My mother had died early, and the four children were watched over by an elderly aunt. We spent our winters in Vienna, and our summers on the estate in Lower Austria. Having a good memory and being ambitious, I was the delight of my teachers. Since I was denied the career of an heroic female warrior, I made it my enthusiasm to extol all who had helped to make the world's history through war. I mastered the French and English languages perfectly. I learned all that was considered

necessary for girls in natural history, physics, and astronomy, but in the reading of history I knew no limit. The ponderous records of wars and nations I fetched from my father's library and spent with them my leisure hours.

On March 10, 1857, I celebrated my seventeenth birthday. "Already seventeen" I set down under this date. This "already" was a bit of symbolism, and undoubtedly was meant to signify "and as yet I have done nothing immortal."

The Season was approaching, and it was arranged that I should be introduced into society, but the prospect did not fill me with the keenest pleasure. I felt that my aims were higher than ballroom conquests. I could not have explained to myself what were the triumphs for which I longed. I was hardly aware of the romantic attitude which possessed me. I was full of glowing dreams and aspirations, such as swell the hearts of youths and maidens, and fill them with a longing to work out their ideals in all sorts of ways. It is at this age that the love of knowledge, action, travel, adventure, show themselves, and are perhaps only an unrecognised activity of the soul filled with desire to express itself.

Aunt Marie was ordered to try the waters at Marienbad during the summer, and found it convenient to take me. My coming-out in society was not to take place till the following winter, and

this trip to the fashionable springs gave me a little preliminary practice in dancing and conversation, so that I could wear off some of the shyness before my first season.

Naturally at my first ball I had no eyes for anything but the brilliant military uniforms which were present in such array. But of all the splendid Hussars, Count Arno Dotzky was the most dazzling, and with him I danced the cotillion and several waltzes.

The acquaintance quickly ripened into an attachment, and we were betrothed on my eighteenth birthday, after which I was presented at court.

CHAPTER II

Marriage—The first-born—War rumours—The ultimatum.

AFTER our marriage we took an Italian journey, having been granted a long leave of absence. Retirement from the army was never mentioned between us. We both possessed handsome fortunes; but my husband loved the military service, and I was proud of my elegant Hussar, and looked forward to his certain promotion. He would rise unquestionably to the rank of major, colonel, or even general. Who knew but he might be even called to the highest rank, and add his name to the history of his country, great as a conqueror!

The little red book contains a break just at the happy honeymoon time, and that is a pity. Oh for a little breath of those happy days to come back to me from between the leaves, in which I had wasted so much ink recording odd peevishnesses and bad humours! Still, my memory recalls those joys like an old half-forgotten fairy-tale. What could have been added to my overflowing

heart?—for I had love, riches, rank, health, everything. My dashing Hussar, whom I loved with my whole soul, was a manly, noble-hearted man, with a most cultivated and merry nature. It might have been otherwise, for our acquaintance had been so short, and it was not our own discretion and wise choosing which brought us all this happiness. But the little red-bound book bore no entry for a long time.

Wait a moment! Here I find a joyous event noted—my delight at becoming a mother. A New Year's gift—a son was born to us, the 1st of January 1859. The diary was resumed to note with pride and astonishment this all-absorbing event, as though we were the first to whom such a happiness had ever come. The journal teemed with comments on the mystical and sacred event. The future world had to be informed as to the marvel of "maternal love," it was mine to magnify the office of motherhood. Was it not the greatest theme of art and literature, of song and story?

I cultivated this ideal most carefully, collecting poems, baby songs, and illustrations from journals and picture galleries. As in one direction school books foster and develop an admiration for war heroes, so through my collections I developed from hero-worship to baby-worship. My charming little man was to me the mightiest wonder of the world. Ah, my son, my grown-up manly Rudolf,

the love of you in my maturer years eclipsed in colour the hours of childish wonder and worship. The love of my young motherhood is insignificant in comparison to what I feel for you to-day, even as is the babe himself in swaddlings besides the full-grown man.

How proud the father was of his tiny heir, as he planned for him the sunniest, fairest future. "What shall he be?" This was the great question that we discussed as we hung over the cradle together, and we always decided unanimously—a soldier, of course. Sometimes the mother would protest: "Suppose he should be killed in battle?" "Nonsense," the father would answer; "at the appointed time each one meets his end." Besides, Ruru was not to be the only son, but being the first he must be what his father and grandfather were, the noblest of all—a soldier. So it was settled, and so the joke was persisted in, and on his third-month birthday he was promoted to the rank of a corporal.

On that same day a great foreboding came over me, something that made me fly with a heavy heart to my little note-book. Dark clouds had arisen in the political horizon, and the fears and suspicions were daily growing into comments wherever people met together.

"Trouble in Italy is brewing" was the frequent remark. I had no time now for heroics and

politics, so it hardly touched me. But on the 1st of April Arno said to me:—

“Do you know, darling, it will soon break out?”

“What will break out?”

“The war with Sardinia.”

I was terrified. “My God, that will be terrible. And must you go?”

“I hope so.”

“How can you say that? Hope to leave your wife and baby?”

“When duty calls.”

“Of course we can reconcile ourselves—but to hope—which means desire—to wish for such a bitter duty——”

“Bitter? Why, a jolly, dashing war like that would be glorious! You are a soldier’s wife, never forget that.”

I threw myself into his arms.

“Oh my darling husband. I can be content, and brave besides. How often I have envied the heroes of history and longed to be one of its heroines. What a glorious feeling it must be to go into battle! If I could only be at your side, fight, conquer, or even fall!”

“Such nonsense, little wife; but brave you are. Your place is here by the cradle of our little one, whom you must raise to be some day a defender of his country. Women must keep the fireside

warm. It is to save our homes and wives from the attacks of the enemy and secure peace, that we men must go to war."

Why, I do not know, but these words, or similar ones which I had so often read with enthusiasm, this time struck me as mere shallow phrases. Where was the advancing army—were the barbarous hordes at the door? A political tension between the Cabinets of two nations seemed an intangible enemy. What was the pressing need of protecting wife and child and home? Much as my husband spoke enthusiastically of going to war for that, I failed to see it. Was it a mere burning desire to rush into adventure, with a promise of excitement, promotion, and distinction? "Yet," I concluded, "it is a noble, honourable ambition to delight in the brave discharge of duty."

I poured out my feelings into the little notebook, denouncing Louis Napoleon as an intriguer. . . . Austria cannot long look on. . . . War must come. . . . No, Sardinia will soon give in, and peace be maintained. Thus I commented on the course of events. My husband's eyes sparkled at the continued increase of the danger.

My father also gloried in the prospect, and retold the stories of the Radetzky campaigns, and discussed the impending ones, as to how the enemy would be easily routed, and all the advantages which would be "ours." Of the terrible

sacrifices nothing was said. I was made to feel quite ashamed of my meanness when I found myself thinking thus : “ Ah, how can any victory recompense the dead, the crippled, the widowed ? How would it be if the enemy conquered ? ”

I was contemptuously crushed by my military friends if I ventured such a remark. Was it not most unpatriotic to have the shadow of a doubt about our certain victory ? Is not the duty of a soldier to feel himself invincible, and must not a soldier's wife share this conviction with him ?

My husband's regiment was quartered in Vienna. The view of the Prater from my window promised a wonderful spring. The air was warm and delicious with violets, the sprouting buds seemed earlier than in years before. How joyfully I might have looked forward to the coming weeks of delightful driving, for we had purchased a fine carriage and a four-in-hand team of dashing Hungarian horses—but oh, if only the war-clouds had not hung over all that !

Coming home from a parade on the morning of April 19, my husband broke the spell with the exclamation : “ Thank God, at last this uncertainty is at an end. The ultimatum has been sent.”

“ And what does that mean ? ” I trembled.

“ It means that the last word of the diplomats has been uttered—the last word that precedes the declaration of war. Sardinia is called to

disarm. This she'll not do, and we will soon march over the border."

"Good God! Perhaps she may disarm."

"Then that would end the quarrel."

I fell on my knees. Silently and fervently a prayer cried out in my soul: "Peace, peace!"

"My silly child, what are you doing?" said Arno, raising me. The news had shaken my nerves, and I began to cry.

"Martha, Martha, you make me angry. How can you forget that you are a general's daughter, a first lieutenant's wife, and," he concluded with a smile, "the mother of a corporal?"

"No, no," I faltered, "I scarcely understand myself. . . . I used to thirst for military glory, but now, when I think that on a single 'yes' or 'no' thousands may bleed and die—die in these beautiful days of spring—it came over me that the word 'Peace' must be pronounced, that we must all pray for it, and I fell on my knees."

"To inform the good Lord of the condition of affairs, you dear little goose!"

The house-door bell rang. I dried my eyes. My father came in with a rush. "My children," he cried out of breath, "have you heard the great news—the ultimatum?"

"I have just told it to my wife."

"Tell me, father dear," I asked anxiously, "can the war be prevented by the ultimatum?"

“ I never heard of an ultimatum preventing a war. It would be very wise of the wretched Italian rabble if they would yield and not risk another Novara. Ah, if good Father Radetzky had not died last year, even at ninety he would have routed this foreign scum. And I would have marched with him. But the puppies have not had enough of it. They need a second lesson. We shall get a handsome piece of Piedmont territory, and I look forward to the entry of our troops into Turin.”

“ But, papa, you speak as if the war were already declared, and you were glad of it. Oh, if Arno must also go ! ”

“ That he will, and I envy him.”

“ But think of my terror at his danger ! ”

“ Danger, what of that ? Many a man comes home from war. Look at my campaigns, my wounds, and yet I am alive, for I was not destined to die.”

Such fatalistic notions !

“ And if my regiment should not be ordered out——” began Arno.

I exclaimed joyously, “ Oh, would that be possible ? ”

“ In that case I shall apply for an exchange.”

“ That can easily be settled,” my father assured him. “ A good friend of mine, Hess, commands the corps.”

Admiring both husband and father—yet anxiety sickened my heart. But I must control myself. Was not my husband a hero? And I sprang up and exclaimed, “Arno, I am proud of you.”

Kissing my hands, he turned to my father, “Father-in-law, I am glad that you have trained your daughter to be a brave soldier’s wife.”

TURIN, *April* 26.—The ultimatum is rejected. The die is cast. War is declared.

CHAPTER III

Last hours—Public glad at prospect of war—The sad parting.

THE news was a bitter blow to me, and threw me into despair, although I had been prepared for the catastrophe. Arno tried to comfort me.

“My darling, take courage. Things are not so bad and will soon be over. Then we shall be doubly happy. You will break my heart with your weeping, and make me sorry that I engaged to go. But think, if I remained at home and my comrades went, you would be ashamed of me. I must pass the baptism of fire to feel myself a man and a soldier. Only think how happy you will be to see a third star on my collar, or perhaps even the cross on my breast.”

I leaned on his shoulder and wept the more. Empty stars and crosses were but poor pay for the terrible possibility that a ball might shatter that beloved breast. Arno gently relieved himself from my embrace, saying:—

“Now, dear child, I must go to the Colonel.

Have your little cry, and be brave and cheerful when I return. In this hard hour my dear little wife should not dishearten and discourage me. Good-bye, sweetheart."

His last words helped me to collect myself. Yes, I must not damp his courage, I must inspire his sense of duty. We women must prove our patriotism by our sympathy, and must urge our soldiers to fame on the battle-field.

"Battle-field"—strange how this word suddenly carried its radically different meanings to my mind. First it appealed historically, gloriously, pathetically; then again I shuddered as at some loathsome, bloody, brutal, repulsive thing. I saw the poor creatures hurried to the field, stricken, and lying there with gaping, bleeding wounds, and among them, perhaps!—oh horrible thought!—and a loud cry escaped my lips at the frightful picture.

Betty, my maid, rushed in. "In heaven's name, madam, what has happened?"

I looked at the girl. Her eyes, too, were red with weeping. I remembered her lover was a soldier, and I could have pressed her to my heart as a sister in mutual sorrow.

"It is nothing, child, for they surely all come back again."

"Not all of them, dear lady," she said, the tears starting afresh.

Aunt Marie came in just then and Betty disappeared.

“Martha dear, I came to comfort you,” said she, “and help you to resign yourself in this trouble.”

“So you know it?”

“The whole city knows it, and great joy is felt, for the war is very popular.”

“Joy, Aunt Marie?” I exclaimed.

“Certainly. Wherever the family is not touched there is great rejoicing. But I knew you would be in distress, and therefore I hurried to you. Your father will come soon, not to comfort but to congratulate you. He is beside himself with delight and thinks the prospect for Arno is a rare one. And he is right, for is not war the best thing in the world for a soldier? And you must see it so, my dear. What must be——”

“Yes, you are right, Aunt. I know: the inevitable——”

“What is the will of God——” rejoined my aunt.

And I concluded: “Must be borne with resignation.”

“Bravo, dear Martha, Providence has determined. Providence is all-wise. For each one the hour of death is settled as is the hour of birth, and we can pray fervently for our dear soldiers.”

I did not analyse the contradiction that one might pray to avoid a death that is predetermined.

I had been taught not to reason on such matters, and my aunt would have been quite shocked if I had voiced any such scruples. "Never argue about it" is the commandment in matters of faith. Not to question and not to think was much more convenient and comfortable, so I accepted the suggestion that we should pray, and during the absence of my husband I certainly would pray for the protection of Heaven, and earnestly beg that the bullets might be turned from the breast of my Arno. Diverted, but whither? To the breast of another for whom some praying women also pleaded? And had not my teachers in physics drilled me in the law of infallible consequences, of motion and substance? The whole bewildering, tormenting question . . . away with it! I will not think.

"Yes, dear Aunt," I roused myself to say, "we will pray diligently, and God must hear us. Arno will return to us unhurt and happy."

"You dear child, see how your soul flies to religion in the dark hours. Perhaps God himself sent this trial to renew your faith."

Again this did not strike me as clear. How could God have sent this great complication, dating from the Crimean War, that Sardinia and Austria should break out into grim war for the simple purpose of testing my lukewarm faith? Was my aunt's piety so deep and mine so shallow,

that I should be tempted thus to doubt? To attach the name of God to any statement of cause rather consecrates the matter, and it is not respectful to doubt. My father and husband were both quite indifferent to religious matters, and my reasoning nature found mere dogmas hard to accept. I had gone regularly to Sunday mass, and once a year to confession, and at such hours I was honestly devout as a matter of etiquette with the same correctness as I should have curtsied, if introduced to the Empress. The chaplain himself could not have reproached me, but my aunt's accusation seemed perhaps justifiable.

“ Ah, my child,” my aunt continued, “ in times of happiness and prosperity we are apt to forget our heavenly home, but when sorrow and sickness, fear and death come in upon us, or if those we adore are stricken, then—— ”

In this style she would have continued, had not the door been thrown open and my father rushed in, exclaiming :—

“ Hurrah, everything is decided. The Italian dogs wanted their whipping, and they shall have it, they shall have it ! ”

War was declared. All was excitement. People seem to forget that two sets of men are voluntarily thrown at each other's throats upon the assumption that there is a mighty third power which irresistibly forces them to fight. The whole re-

sponsibility is thrown upon this mysterious element, which regulates the ordained fate of the nations. (At this period of my life I felt no trace of a revolt against war as a system. Because my beloved husband was forced to go and I to remain—this alone was my anguish.)

I consoled myself with all my old convictions that the highest duty of a soldier was to be ready for service. History made it laudable to desire honour and glory through patriotic devotion. It was a peculiarly elevating thought that I was living in a most thrilling epoch. Had not my life been given a share in one of the great events of history ?

Nothing was being talked of but the war. The newspapers were full of it. Prayers were said in all the churches for the success of the army. Everywhere were the same excited faces, the same eager talk. Business, pleasure, literature, art, everything was secondary, insignificant, while the scenes of this great drama were being played on the world's arena. We read the proclamations, so confident of victory ; we watched the troops march through with glitter and clash of arms, and battle-flags waving ; leading articles and glowing speeches were filled with patriotic ardour, appealing to honour, duty, courage, self-sacrifice.

Assurances were made on both sides to the people, that their nation was known to be the

most invincible, each had the only just cause, each had the noblest and most heroic cause to defend. Thus were the people filled with enthusiasm, and the conviction that war was the most glorious, necessary, and ennobling thing.

Every one was encouraged to think that he was a great citizen of a great state for which he must be willing to sacrifice himself. Evils of war were merely regarded as a necessary adjunct, and always "the enemy" alone was found guilty of the evil passions, and the brawling, rapine, hatred, cruelty, and all the other iniquities attached to warfare. Consequently we were doing the world a noble service in punishing these wretched Italians—this lazy, sensual, upstart nation. And Louis Napoleon, with his consuming ambition, what an intriguer ! It was with a storm of indignation that Vienna received the proclamation : "Italy free to the Adriatic."

I uttered slight doubts whether it was so ignoble of Italy to wish to be free, but I was rudely reminded that our enemies were scoundrels. In my study of history I had usually found the writers sympathetic with the struggling nation fighting to throw off a foreign yoke and gain its independence. I felt that Italy was playing this part in the drama before our eyes, but I was quickly and scowlingly given to understand that our government—that is, the nation to which we happened

to belong—could never oppress, but only confer prosperity upon another people, and when they sought to break away from us they were “rebels,” that our control could be no yoke, for were we not always and only and fully in the right?

In early May Arno's regiment was ordered to march. They had to leave at seven in the morning. Ah, the night before—that terrible night!

Arno slept. He breathed quietly, with tranquil happiness upon his features. I set a candle behind the screen, for the darkness frightened me and sleep was impossible. I lay quietly beside him, leaning on one elbow and looking into his beloved face.

I wept and reviewed the cruel fate which was separating us. How could I bear it? Would a merciful Father let us soon have peace? Why could there not be peace always? I pictured him wounded, lying on the damp ground, and all the agonies that would be mine should he never return. I could have screamed and thrown my arms about him, but no, he must sleep that he should be better ready for duty in the morning. I was worn-out with my despair, the clock ticked meaninglessly, the candle flickered low, and I slipped into unconsciousness and dropped on to my pillow in sleep. Over and over again I started in my sleep, my heart palpitating with fear and alarm, and when I thus waked for the tenth or twelfth time,

it was day, the candle had gone out, and there came a loud knock at the door.

“Six o’clock, lieutenant,” said the orderly who came to rouse his master in good time.

The hour had come, the dreaded farewell was to be said; I was not to go to the station, but in our own room the sad parting was to take place, for I knew that my agony would overcome me. As Arno dressed he made all sorts of comforting speeches :—

“Be brave, my Martha. In two months we will be together again, and all will be over. Many come back from wars—look at your own father. Did you marry a Hussar to keep him at home, to raise hyacinths for you? I will write you lively letters of the whole campaign. My own cheerfulness is a good omen, and I am only out to win my spurs. Take care of yourself and the darling Rudolf. My promotions are for him too. How he will love to hear his father tell of the glorious victory over Italy in which he took part !”

I listened to him and felt that perhaps my unhappiness was all selfishness. I would be strong and take courage.

Again a knock at the door.

“I am quite ready; coming directly.” And he spread his arms. “Now, Martha, my wife, my love!” I rushed to him speechless; the

farewell refused to pass my lips, and it was he who spoke the heart-breaking word :—

“ Good-bye, my all, my love, good-bye ! ” he convulsively sobbed, covering his face. This was too much, and I felt my mind going.

“ Arno ! Arno ! ” I screamed, wrapping my arms about him. “ Stay ! Stay ! ” I persistently called, “ Stay, stay ! ”

“ Lieutenant ! ” we heard outside, “ it is quite time. ”

One last kiss—and he rushed out.

CHAPTER IV

Women's co-operation at home—Anxious for news from seat of war—Austria's bad luck—Patriotism and relief work—A friendly visit—The fatal news.

PREPARING lint, reading reports, following on the map the chess-board of the war with my little movable flags, prayers for the success of our side, talking of the events of the day : such were our occupations. All our other interests lagged, one question alone occupied us : When and how will this war end ? We ate, drank, read, and worked with no real concern, only the telegrams and letters from Italy seemed of any importance. Arno was not given to letter-writing, but his short notes always gave me the cheering word that he was still alive and unwounded. Letters were irregular, for the field-post was cut off during an engagement, and then my anxiety and suffering were indescribable. After each battle, the list of the killed filled me each time with fresh terror, as though my loved one had held a lottery ticket, and might have drawn the doomed number.

When, for the first time, I read the list and found no Arno Dotzky among them, I folded my hands and prayed softly, "My God, I thank thee." But with the words still in my ears they suddenly grated upon me. Was I perhaps thanking God that Adolf Schmidt and Karl Muller, and many others had been slain, but not Arno Dotzky? Naturally those who prayed and hoped for Schmidt and Muller would have been glad to read the name of Dotzky instead of those they dreaded to find. And why should my thanks be more pleasing to God than theirs? That Schmidt's mother and Muller's sweetheart should break their hearts, this had made me rejoice? And I realised the selfishness of such thanksgivings, and presumptuousness of our prayers.

On the same day a letter came from Arno :—

Yesterday we had another hard fight, and, unfortunately, again a defeat. But cheer up, darling Martha, the next battle we shall surely win. It was my first great engagement. To stand in a thick shower of bullets gives one a peculiar feeling. I will tell you about it by and by; it is frightful. The poor fellows who fall on all sides must be left in spite of their cries—but such is war. When we enter Turin to dictate terms to the enemy, you can meet me there, for Aunt Marie can take care of our little corporal until we return.

Such letters formed the sunshine of my exist-

ence, but my nights were restless. Often I awoke with the horrible feeling that at the very moment Arno might be dying in a ditch, thirsting for water, and crying out for me. I would force myself back to my senses by imagining the scene of his joyful return, which was much more probable to be my experience than the contrary.

Bad news followed thick and fast. My father was deeply distressed, first over Montebello, then Magenta; and not he alone, for all Vienna was disheartened. Victory had been so certain, that we were already planning our flag decorations and Te Deums. Instead, the flags were waving, and the priests chanting in Turin. There they were thanking God that he had helped them to strike down the wicked "Tedeschi."

"Father dear, in case of another defeat, will not then peace be declared?" I asked one day.

"Shame upon you to suggest such a thing!" he silenced me. "Better that it should be a seven years', even a thirty years' war, so that our side may be the conqueror, and we dictate terms of peace. If we fight only to get out of it as quickly as possible, we might as well never have begun."

"And that would have been by far the best," I sighed.

"Women are such cowards! Even you, whom I grounded so thoroughly in principles of patriotism and love of fatherland, are now quite willing to

sacrifice the fame of your country for your own personal comfort.”

“Alas . . . it is because I love my Arno so well !”

“Love of husband, love of family, all that is very good, but it takes the second place to love of country.”

“*Ought* it ?”

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The lists of fatalities grew apace, and contained the names of several officers personally known to me, among the rest the only son of a dear old lady whom I greatly respected. I felt I must go and comfort her. No, comfort her, I could not. I would only weep with her. On reaching her house I hesitated to pull the bell. My last visit there had been on the occasion of a jolly little dancing party, and Frau von Ullmann, full of joy, had said to me: “Martha, we are the two most enviable women in Vienna. You have the handsomest of husbands and I the noblest of sons.”

And, to-day ? I still, indeed, had my husband, but who knows ? Shot and shell might make me a widow any minute. There was no answer as I stood and rang at the door. Finally a head was thrust out of the window of the adjoining apartment :—

“There is no use ringing, miss, the house is empty.”

“What, is Frau von Ullmann gone?”

“She was taken to the insane asylum three days ago,” and the head disappeared.

I stood motionless, rooted to the spot. What scenes there must have been! What heights of agony before the poor old lady broke into madness!

And my father wished that the war might last thirty years for the welfare of the country! How many more such mothers would there be then?

I went down the stairs shaken to the depths. I started to call on another friend, and on the way I passed the Relief Corps storehouse, for there was then no “Red Cross” or “Convention of Geneva” to distribute supplies, and the people were all eagerly offering comforts for the sick and wounded. I entered, feeling impelled to empty my purse into the hands of the committee. It might save some poor fellow—and keep his mother from the madhouse. I was shown to the room where the contributions were taken. I passed several rooms where long tables were piled with packages of linens, wines, cigars, tobacco, but mostly mountains of bandages, and I thought with a shudder, how many bleeding gashes it would take to use them all—and my father wishing that the war might last for thirty years. How many of our country’s sons would then succumb to their wounds?

My money was received thankfully, and my

many questions were answered, comforting me much to hear of the good being done.

An old gentleman came in, offering a hundred florin bill, and saying: "Allow me to contribute a little toward the useful work. I look on all this organisation of yours as the most humane. I have served in the campaign of 1809-1813, when no one sent the wounded pillows and bandages. There were never enough surgeons and supplies, and thousands suffered a hideous death. You cannot realise the good you are doing." And he went away with tears in his eyes.

Just then there was commotion outside, and throwing open the double doors, the guard announced: "Her Majesty, the Empress!"

From my quiet corner I saw the beautiful young sovereign, who in her simple street dress appeared even lovelier than in her court costume or ball dress.

"I have come," she said gently, "because the Emperor writes to me from the seat of war how useful and acceptable is your work." She examined the rolls of linen. "How beautifully done it is," she exclaimed. "It is a fine patriotic undertaking, and the poor soldiers——" I lost the rest of the remark as she passed into another room, so visibly content with what she was seeing.

"Poor soldiers!" These words sounded strangely pathetic in my ears. Yes, poor indeed,

and the more comforts we sent them the better. But the suggestion that ran through my head was : “ Why not keep them at home altogether ? Why send these poor men into all this misery ? ”

But no, I must shut out the thought, for is war not a necessary thing ? I found the only excuse for all this cruelty in that little word : “ Must.”

I went on my way and passed a book - store. Remembering that my map of the war region was worn to shreds, I stepped in to order one. A number of buyers were there, and when my turn came the proprietor asked : “ A map of Italy, madam ? ”

“ How did you guess it ? ”

“ No one asks for anything else, nowadays.” While wrapping up my purchase, he said to a gentleman standing by, “ It goes hard nowadays with writers and publishers of books. So long as war lasts no one is interested in intellectual matters. These are hard times for authors and booksellers.”

“ Yes, this is a great drain on the nation, and war is always followed by a decline in the intellectual standard.”

For the third time I thought : “ And father, for the good of the country, would have war last thirty years.”

“ So your business suffers ? ” I asked.

“ Not mine alone, madam. Except for the army providers, all tradesmen are suffering untold

losses. Everything stands still in the factory, on the farm, everywhere men are without work, and without bread. Our securities are falling and gold rises in value, while all enterprise is blocked, and business is being bankrupted. In short, everywhere is misery, misery!"

"And there is my own father wishing——" I found myself thinking as I left the store.

My friend was at home. The Countess Lori Griesbach in more than one respect shared the same lot with me. Her father was a general, and like me she had married an officer. Her husband as well as two brothers were in the service. But Lori's nature was very light-hearted. She had fully convinced herself that her dear ones were under the special protection of her patron saint, and she was confident that they would return. She received me with open arms.

"So glad to see you, dear; it is good of you to come. But you look worried. Any bad news?"

"No, thank God, but the whole thing is so terrible to me."

"You mean the defeat? Oh, do not think about that, for the next news must be victory."

"Defeat or victory, war is horrible," I said. "How much better if there never were a war."

"Oh dear, what then would become of our glorious military profession?"

"Then we should not need any."

“What a silly way for you to talk,” she said. “How stale life would be with nothing but civilians. I almost shudder at the thought, but, fortunately, that would be impossible.”

“Impossible ?” I said. “But perhaps you are right, or it would have long ago been changed.”

“What do you mean ?”

“I mean that armies would have long ago been disbanded. But no, one might as well expect to prevent earthquakes.”

“I cannot understand how you can talk so. For I am rejoiced that my Louis has this splendid chance to distinguish himself. And for my brothers, too, it is a good thing, for promotions are so very slow in times of peace. Now they have all opportunities.”

“Have you received any news recently ?” I interrupted.

“Not for some time, but you know how very uncertain the post is. After an engagement they are too tired to write. But my mind is easy, for both Louis and my brothers wear the blessed amulets. Mamma put them round their necks herself ?”

“Can you imagine two armies meeting, when every man wears an amulet ? Tell me ; if the bullets are flying here and there, can they all be deflected into the clouds ?”

“I do not understand what you mean, dear

Martha, and your faith is so lukewarm. Even your aunt complains about you."

"But why can't you answer me?"

"Because you are jesting at what is sacred to me."

"Jesting? Not at all. I was simply suggesting a reasonable argument in things that are above us."

"You well know that it is a sin to argue and trust your own reason in things that are above you."

"Yes, my dear, I will be quiet. You are right. Logic and reason are dangerous. Reflection and research are of no use. All sorts of doubts torment me and I try to answer them, but find only pain. Were I to disbelieve in the necessity of war I could never forgive those who——"

"You mean Louis Napoleon? Oh, what an intriguer he is!"

"Whether he or another . . . but I must try to believe that men do not cause wars, that they break out of themselves like nervous fevers, and the flames of Vesuvius."

"What a state your mind is in! Let us be sensible. Listen to me. Soon both our husbands will come back captains. I shall have a jolly six weeks at a watering-place with mine. It will do us both good after this suspense. You need not think that I have not suffered at all. And it may

yet be God's will that one of our dear ones shall meet a soldier's death—but what is more noble, more honourable, than death in battle for emperor and fatherland ? ”

“ You are talking like the next best army proclamation.”

“ Yet, it would be dreadful—poor mamma—should Karl or Gustav be lost. But let us not think of it. Yes, I shall go and refresh myself at some watering-place. I think I would prefer Carlsbad. I was there as a girl and had a glorious season.”

“ I, too, went to Marienbad, and there I made the acquaintance of my husband. But don't let us be sitting here idly. If you have lincn at hand we can be making bandages. I just came from the Relief Corps and—— ”

We were interrupted, for the footman brought in a letter.

“ From Gustav,” cried Lori, joyfully. She read a few lines and, shrieking, fell about my neck.

“ Lori, my poor dear, what is it? Your husband ? ”

“ Oh God, oh God ! ” she exclaimed. “ Read for yourself.”

I took the letter up. I can recall the contents perfectly, for I afterwards copied it in my diary.

“ Read aloud, for I could not finish.”

I read :—

“DEAR SISTER—Yesterday we had a severe encounter. There was a long list of dead and wounded. Prepare poor mother, tell her Karl is severely wounded, but I tell you the truth—the brave fellow died for his country.”

I stopped to embrace dear Lori, and continued reading, choked with my tears.

“Your husband is safe, as well as I. Had the enemy’s bullet only hit me instead! I envy Karl his heroic death. He fell at the beginning and never knew we were defeated. Oh, how bitter it all is, I saw his fall, for we were riding together. I sprang to lift him up, but one look told me he was dead. The ball must have hit the lungs or heart. His death was surely instant and quite painless. Many others suffered hours of agony and lay long in the heat of battle till death came. It was a bloody day. More than a thousand, friend and foe, were left on the field. Among the dead I found many dear faces, and with the rest, there is poor”—here I had to turn the page—“poor Arno Dotzky.”

I fell insensible to the floor.

CHAPTER V

Early widowhood—Sorrow and solitude—I take up my studies again—Broader conceptions.

“IT is all over now, Martha! Solferino is decisive. We have been beaten.” With these words my father hurried to me one morning, as I was sitting under the linden trees in the garden.

I was back in the home of my girlhood with my little Rudolf. Eight days after the great battle which left me a widow, I returned to live with my family in Grumitz, our country place in Lower Austria. Just as it had been before my marriage, I was surrounded by the loved ones—father, aunt, two growing sisters, and my little brother. Their kindness and sympathy touched my grief-stricken heart. My sorrow seemed to have consecrated me in their eyes and raised me above the ordinary level.

Next to the blood poured out by the soldiers on the altar of their country, the tears of the bereft mothers, wives, and children are considered the holiest libations poured on the same altar. What

was almost a feeling of pride and heroic dignity took possession of me, for to have sacrificed a beloved husband in battle conferred upon me the equivalent of military merit, which grew to be quite a comforting thought, and helped me to bear my sorrow. But then I was but one of many whose loved ones slept beneath the Italian sod.

No particulars were brought me of Arno's death, other than that he had been found dead, recognised, and buried. No doubt the baby and I were his last thought and consolation, and with his last breath he had groaned, "I have done my duty, more than my duty."

"Yes, we are beaten," sadly repeated my father as he sank on to the bench.

"So the victims were a needless sacrifice," I sighed.

"Indeed they are to be envied, for they know nothing of the disgrace which has come upon us. But we shall gather ourselves together soon, though they say that peace must now be concluded."

"May God grant it!" I interrupted. "Though it is too late for my poor Arno, yet thousands of others will be spared."

"You seem to think only of your own sorrow, and that of private individuals. This is Austria's affair."

"But is not Austria made up of individuals?"

"But, my dear child, a state and empire has

a longer and more important existence than an individual. Men disappear, from generation to generation, but the state goes on and on ; it grows in power, fame, and greatness, or it crumbles, sinks, and is lost, if it allows itself to be surpassed or swallowed by other states. Therefore, it is the highest duty of every individual to sacrifice, suffer, and even die, that the existence, the power, and welfare of the state may be perpetuated and increased."

These impressive words remained in my thought, and I noted them in my diary. They were curiously like the sentences in my old school books, whose strong, clear convictions had been quite driven from my mind of late, especially since Arno's death, by the confusion, fear, and pity I had experienced. I once more hugged them to my heart, and found consolation and encouragement in the thought that my darling had been sacrificed in a great cause, and that, in giving up my husband, I had done my share in the service of my country.

Aunt Marie had a different source of consolation ready, however. "Stop your crying, my dear," she would say when she found me crushed anew with my grief. "Is it not selfish to mourn for him who is now so happy ? From up among the saints he is even now looking down and blessing you. The years will pass quickly when you will join him

there. For the heroes of battle heaven prepares a special place of rest. Happy are those who are called from this earth while performing a sacred duty. Next in glory to the Christian martyr comes the dying soldier."

"Then I am to rejoice that Arno——"

"No, not rejoice, that would be asking too much. You must bear your lot and resign yourself. Heaven sends this trial to purify and strengthen your faith."

"And in order that my heart be purified and my faith strengthened my poor Arno had to——"

"No, no, but how dare you question the hidden ways of Providence?"

The consolations which my aunt offered were rather confusing and distracting, but I allowed myself to accept the mystical tangle, and believe that my dear victim was now enjoying heaven as a reward for his agony of sacrifice, and that his memory would be glorified on earth with the halo of heroic martyrdom.

Just before our departure from Vienna the great mourning ceremony had been celebrated in the cathedral of St. Stefan, and I attended. The *De Profundis* was sung for all our warriors fallen and buried on foreign soil. A catafalque had been erected in the centre of the church, lighted with a hundred candles and hung with flags, arms, and military emblems. The grand pathetic requiem

came from the choir and flooded the congregation—mostly women clothed in black and weeping aloud. And not for her own alone, but for the same sad fate of all, each woman wept—for all these poor brave brothers who had given up their sweet young lives for us, for their country, the honour of their nation ! And there in the background stood several regiments of living soldiers, listening to the ceremony—all waiting and ready to follow their fallen comrades without a murmur or fear. These clouds of incense, the swelling voice of the organ, the fervent petitions, the common woe poured out in tears and groans must surely have risen to a well-pleased heavenly ear, and the God of armies and battles must certainly shower down His blessing on those to whom this catafalque was raised.

These were the thoughts that came to me, and which I wrote in my journal when I described the mourning celebration.

Two weeks after the defeat of Solferino came the news of the peace of Villa Franca. My father gave himself no end of pains to explain to me how necessary for political reasons this peace had become. I assured him that it was very joyful news to me to know that there was an end to all this fighting and dying. But he continued at length to explain.

“ You must not for one instant think,” he said, “ that even though in this peace we have made

concessions, we have thereby sacrificed our dignity. We Austrians know perfectly what we are about. It is not the little check we got at Solferino which makes us give up the game. Far from it. We could easily have routed them with another army corps, and forced the enemy from Milan, but, dear Martha, there are other things involved—great principles and objects. We do not cease to push the war further, lest these Sardinian robbers and their French hangman-ally should push into other portions of Italy—Modena and Tuscany—where dynasties are in power which are related to our imperial family; nay, they might advance even against Rome itself, and endanger the Holy Father—the Vandals! By giving up Lombardy we keep Venetia, and can assure the Holy See and the southern Italian states of our support. Thus, my dear, you see, it is only for political reasons and for the sake of the balance of power in Europe——”

“Oh, yes, father, I see it,” I broke in. “It is a pity that they could not have planned it all before Magenta!” I sighed bitterly, and, to change the subject, I pointed to a package of books which had just arrived from Vienna.

“See, father, the bookseller has sent us several things on approval. Among the rest is the English naturalist Darwin’s *The Origin of Species*. He recommends it as an epoch-making book in modern thought.”

“He need not bother me with it,” replied my father. “In such stirring times, who can be interested in such rubbish? How can a stupid book about plants and animals and their origin make an epoch of any importance to us men? The federation of the Italian States, the forming of the German Bund, and the consolidation of Austria—such matters make epochs in history and mark the great strides in human advancement. These things will live in history long after that stupid English book is forgotten. Mark my words.”

I did mark them.

BOOK II
TIME OF PEACE

CHAPTER I

Society once more—Happiness returns—A second marriage suggested—My younger sisters need a chaperone—Baron Tilling introduced—He tells of Arno's death.

FOUR years passed quietly, and my sisters, now seventeen and eighteen years old, are to be presented at court. "Why should I not too return to society?" I thought. Time had done its work and quieted my grief. Despair had mellowed into sorrow, sorrow into melancholy, then came listlessness, and finally I felt a renewing of my interest in life. I woke one fine morning with the realisation that I was a woman to be envied—twenty-three, beautiful, nobly born, rich, the mother of a darling boy, and one of a devoted family. What had I still to ask to make life delightful?

Behind me like a sweet dream lay the short period of my married life. The shadowy past began to swallow up the memory of my desperate love, my handsome Huzzar, my married happiness, my terrible separation and grief. The duration of it had not been long enough to create a close sympathy. Our devotion had been too shortly

cut off to have grown into the friendship and reverence which is often felt by those who have shared years of joy and sorrow. Could I have been indispensable to him when, for no cause, he rushed into the war and left his regiment, which was not called out? Yes, four years made me a different being. My mind had broadened, and knowledge and culture had come to me which, I felt, Arno would have had no sympathy with. If he could come back he would be a stranger to my present spiritual life.

How did it all come about?

One year of widowhood passed in despair, deep mourning, and heart-breaking. Of society I would not hear. Rudolf's education should be my one thought. The "baby" turned into "my son," and became the centre of my hope, my pride, and my existence. To be able some day to be his guide and intellectual companion, I buried myself in the treasures of the chateau library. History, in which my interest had cooled, became my passion again, as well as my consolation, for the account of battles and heroics seemed to relate me to the grand historical processes, for which I, too, had lived. Not that I ever got back the old enthusiasms of girlish days for the Maid of Orleans. Many of the overwrought accounts now sounded hollow and mocking, when I thought of the horrors of war.

Can the priceless gem life be paid for with the tinsel coin of posthumous fame ?

But the history-shelf of my father's library was soon exhausted ; I begged the bookseller to send me more. He wrote :—

I send you Thomas Buckle's *History of Civilisation in England*. The work is unfinished, but these two volumes form a complete whole, and have attracted great attention, not only in England but over the world. They say that the author is introducing a new conception of history.

New, indeed ! Reading and re-reading it, I felt like a creature taken suddenly from the bottom of a narrow valley to the mountain tops and viewing the world for the first time, out, beyond and beyond, to the boundless ocean. Not that I, a superficial mind of twenty, could grasp the book—but, to keep to my picture, I saw that lofty monumental things lay before my astonished vision. I was dazzled, overcome, my horizon moved out into the immensities of life. Though the full understanding only came to me later, yet that one vision I caught even then, that the history of mankind itself was not formulated by wars, kings, statesmen, treaties, greed, cunning, but by the gradual development of the intellect. Court chronicles gave no explanation to underlying causes, nor a picture of the civilisation of the time. Buckle

did not paint war and devastation with a glamour, but demonstrated that the respect for arms diminished as a people rose in culture and intelligence. The lower into barbarism you go, the more war, and he holds even that some day the love of war and its romance will die out of our culture and cease to exist. Just as childhood's wrangling ceases, so must society outgrow its childishness.

How all this appealed to the convictions of my heart, which I had so often dismissed as unworthy and weak! I now felt that these growing ideals in me were an echo of the spirit of the age, and saw that thinkers were losing their idolatry for war, and doubting its necessity. The book gave me the opposite of what I sought, yet how it solaced me, enlightened, elevated, and pacified me. Once I tried to talk to my father about it, but he would have none of it; he refused to follow me to the mountain top, that is, he refused to read the book, so it was useless to discuss it.

During the second year of my sorrow I studied with renewed ardour, and as the mind expanded the old unhappiness disappeared. Buckle had unconsciously given me a taste for the larger world again, and I satisfied my craving to follow out his idea in other authors. The passion for life renewed itself, and the melancholy disappeared. Then the third change was wrought in me. Books alone would not satisfy me. I saw that with all

this reading my longings were not being gratified—life's flowers were still for me to pluck if I only stretched out the hand. So in the winter of 1863 I entered the salons of Viennese society once more, to introduce my younger sisters there.

“Martha, Countess Dotzky, the rich young widow,” thus spoken of, I took my part in the great comedy of the world again. The part suited me, and I was greeted, fêted, spoiled on all sides, much to my delight, after four years of social starving.

The entire family quietly presumed that I would remarry. My aunt no longer referred to my soldier saint above. The future promised meeting might not be so agreeable if a second husband stepped in. Every one except myself seemed to have forgotten his existence. My pain was gone, but his image could never be wiped out. Daily Rudolf's evening prayer closed with: “God keep me good and brave for love of my father, Arno.”

We sisters enjoyed society in the extreme. It was really my first glimpse, too, for I had married so soon that I had missed the gaiety and attentions. My crowd of admirers, however, did not impress me much, for between us there lay a chasm. Brilliant young beaux chatting of ballroom, court, and theatre had not the faintest glimpse of the things which my life was beginning to depend upon. Though I had only begun to lisp in the language

of the higher things of soul and science, yet that was farther removed from these chatterers than Greek or even Patagonian. I had begun to think in the tongue with which men of science would some day debate, and finally solve the greatest riddles of the world.

It was quite certain that in such a circle I would scarcely find a congenial mate, and I carefully avoided all entangling rumours, devoted myself to my boy, plunged into study, kept in touch with the intellectual world, read and relished keenly all the latest things. This barred me from many of the frivolities, and yet I keenly enjoyed the gaiety, the company, and dancing. I longed to open my salon to a few of the upper world of scholarship, but my social position made that impossible. I dared not hope to mix the classes in Vienna. Since that day the exclusive spirit has changed, and fashion to-day finds it acceptable to open its doors to brains of the rarer sort. But at that time it would have been quite impossible to receive except such as were presentable at court—counting at least sixteen ancestors. Our own social set would not have been able to converse with the thinking class, and the latter class would have found it intolerably dull to mingle with a drawing-room full of sportsmen, cloister-bred young girls, old generals, and canonesses. All the talk was a vapid recital of where the last

ball had been and the next one was to be—perhaps at Schwartzenberg's or Pallavicini's; who was the latest adorer of Baroness Pacher, and the latest rejected of the Countess Palfy; how many estates had Prince Croy; was Lady Amalay's title from her father's or mother's side? Could such drivel possibly have interested the intellectual set?

Occasionally an able statesman, diplomat, or man of genius cropped up among us, but they always assumed the frivolous conversation of the rest. A quiet after-dinner chat with some of our parliamentarians or men of mark would have been made impossible almost, for hardly would the conversation turn on some political or scientific subject when it would be interrupted with, "Ah, dearest Countess Dotzky, how charming you looked yesterday at the picnic! And are you going to the Russian embassy to-morrow?"

“Allow me, dear Martha,” said my cousin Conrad Althaus, “to introduce Lieutenant-Colonel Baron Tilling.” I bowed and arose, thinking the introduction meant an invitation to dance.

“Pardon me, Countess,” he said, with a slight smile, showing a perfect row of teeth, “I do not dance.”

“So much the better, for I would like a moment's rest,” I said, reseating myself.

“ I was bold enough to ask for the introduction, for I had some information for you,” he continued.

I looked up at him in surprise. He was no longer young, somewhat grey, and with a serious countenance, but withal a distinguished and sympathetic face.

“ I will not intrude, Countess, but what I have to tell you is not suited to a ballroom chat. If you will fix the hour, I will come to you with it.”

“ I am at home on Saturdays between two and four.”

“ I would rather see you alone.”

“ Then come to-morrow at the same hour.” The Baron bowed and left me. Later, Cousin Conrad passed; I called him to my side and questioned him concerning Tilling.

“ Ah ha ! Has he so impressed you that you are setting an investigation on foot ? He is unmarried, but a distinguished princess of the reigning house has him entangled in her silken web, and therefore he does not wish to marry. His regiment has just been ordered here, but he is no friend of society. I meet him every day at the ‘ Noble’s Club,’ where he always seems absorbed in the papers or a game of chess. I was astonished to see him here, but the hostess is his cousin. After speaking with you he went away immediately.”

“ And he was introduced to no other ladies ? ”

“ No; but do not imagine that it was your beauty

that brought him down at long range, and therefore asked to know you. He merely questioned: 'Could you tell me whether a certain Countess Dotzky, formerly an Althaus, probably a relative of yours, is here to-day? I want to speak to her.' I pointed to you. 'There she sits in the blue dress.' 'Oh,' said he, 'that is she? Will you introduce me?' And I brought him over with no idea that I would disturb your peace of mind."

"Such nonsense, Conrad, as though my peace were so easily ruffled! Tilling! What family is that? The name is new to me."

"So you are interested? Perhaps he is the lucky fellow. I who have tried for three months to interest you in me must step aside for this cold-hearted lieutenant-colonel. Let me warn you, he is without feeling. The Tilling family, I believe, is of Hanoverian origin, although his father was an Austrian officer and his mother a Prussian. Did you note his North German accent?"

"He speaks beautiful German."

"You find everything about him beautiful, no doubt." Conrad rose. "I have heard enough. Let me leave you to dream—I can find plenty of beautiful ladies who——"

"Who will think you charming, Conrad. Indeed there are plenty."

I was uneasy and left the ball early. Surely not to be able to think uninterruptedly about the

new friend, although I found myself doing it! At midnight I enriched the red book with the conversation given above, and added my unpleasant doubts that he might even then be sitting at the feet of the princess. I ended my sentence by envying her—not Tilling, oh no!—for being beloved by some one. My waking thought was once more—Tilling. Naturally; had he not made an appointment for that day? For some time nothing had excited me like this visit.

At ten minutes past two the Baron von Tilling was announced.

“As you see, Countess, I am prompt,” he said, kissing my hand.

“Luckily, for I am overwhelmed with curiosity to know your news.”

“Then, without delay, I will tell you. It is this: I was in the battle of Magenta.”

“And you saw Arno die?” I cried.

“Yes. I can tell you of his last moments, and it will be a relief to you. Do not tremble, for if the finish had been shocking I would not tell you.”

“You take a weight from my heart. Go on, go on!”

“The empty phrase, ‘He died as a hero,’ I will not use. But it will comfort you to know that he died instantly and without knowing it. We were often together, and he was so confident of his safety. He showed me the pictures of his wife and boy,

and insisted that after the campaign I should be his guest. I chanced in the Magenta massacre to be at his side. I will not relate the terrible scenes. The intoxication of the warrior passion had quite seized Dotzky in the thick of the bullet-hail and powder-fog. His eyes were blazing and he was fighting like mad. I, who was sober, saw it all. Suddenly a shell, and ten men—Dotzky among them—fell. He was instantly killed, but many of them shrieked in agony. All but he were shockingly mangled, but we had to leave them, for a charging column came upon us with a murderous hurrah, pell-mell over the dead and wounded. Lucky those who were dead! After the battle I found Dotzky, with the placid smile on his face, a painless look, and in the same spot and position. I have meant for several years to come and tell you, and relieve you of a painful uncertainty. But forgive me if I have recalled torturing memories.”

The Baron rose to go, and I thanked him while drying my tears: “You cannot know what a relief it is to feel that he died without agony. But stay. A certain tone in your remarks has touched a like strain in my thought. Tell me frankly, you too hate war?”

His face darkened: “Forgive me if I cannot stop to discuss the subject. I am sorry, but I am expected elsewhere.”

A cold expression passed over me, and the unpleasant thought of the princess came into my mind. "Then I will not detain you, Colonel," I said coldly, and he left without asking if he might be allowed to come again.

CHAPTER II

After the carnival—Father's dinner-party—Toy soldiers—
Tilling again—The brave Hupfauf—Darwin.

THE carnival over—Rosa and Lilli were still fancy free, and I was feeling that the dancing was growing monotonous. I find all my impressions noted in the red book. Society was not dropped, for Lent brought its rounds as well; sermons and church were quite as popular a meeting-place for the friends as were the opera and ballroom earlier in the season. I was not quite pious enough to suit Aunt Marie, who dragged the girls off to hear all the famous preachers. I spent my evenings by the fire with books, and devoted myself afresh to my boy. I repeated Tilling's story to my father, but he considered it of no importance that Arno died without pain. How differently Tilling had regarded the matter, and I did not repeat his words to my father, for he would only instinctively have despised him for his unsoldierly sentiments. How gladly I would further have discussed the question of war with Tilling, but, alas! he never called, and I only

casually met him in public occasionally. But even those meetings and greetings lingered in my thought.

One morning at breakfast my father handed me a parcel : “ My dear, here is a parcel for you, and I have a favour to ask.”

“ A present and a request,” I laughed ; “ that’s bribery.”

“ Yes. I must have three old generals and their wives to dinner, a stiff, sleepy, tedious affair, and I want you to come to my house and do the honours.”

“ And you evidently wish to sacrifice your daughter, as the ancient father Agamemnon sacrificed Iphigenia.”

“ I added a younger element for your sake— Dr. Bresser, for one ; he treated me in my last illness, and I wish to show my appreciation. I also invited Lieutenant-Colonel Tilling. Ah, you blush ; what is the matter with you ? ”

“ Me ? ” I said, hiding my confusion by hastily breaking open the parcel.

“ It is nothing for you, only a box of lead soldiers for Rudolf.”

“ But, father, a child of four—— ”

“ Nonsense ; I played at soldiers when I was three. My earliest memory is of drums, swords, words of command and marching. That is the way to start the boys to love the profession.”

“But my son shall never be a soldier,” I interrupted.

“Martha, you know it would be his father’s wish.”

“The boy belongs to me now, and I object.”

“What! Object to the noblest and most honourable of all callings?”

“His life shall not be risked in war, he is my only son.”

“As an only son I became a soldier; Arno and your brother also. The traditions of both families require it that the offspring of a Dotzky and an Althaus shall devote his service to his fatherland.”

“His country needs him less than I, and there are other ways of serving one’s country.”

“If all mothers were like you——”

“There would then be fewer parades and reviews, fewer men to slay as food for bullets. That would hardly be a misfortune.”

Much provoked, my father said: “Oh you women! Luckily the young do not ask your permission, when soldier’s blood flows in their veins. But Rudolf will not remain your only son, you will marry again. By the way, what has become of all your admirers? There is Captain Olensky seriously in love with you. Just lately he poured it all out to me, and I should like him as a son-in-law.”

“ I do not care for him for a husband.”

“ How about Major Millersdorf ? ”

“ You may call the whole army roll, but I want none of them.” And I turned the subject :
“ When is the dinner ? ”

“ At five. Come down earlier. Adieu, I must go. Kiss Rudi for me—the future Field-Marshal of the Imperial Army.”

Could the dinner be a “ stiff, tiresome affair,” when the presence of Baron Tilling moved me in such a singular way ? We had no occasion to speak at the table, being separated, and even after the dinner, while serving the coffee in the drawing-room, the two old generals remained my faithful attendants. I longed to speak to Tilling again about the battle-scene, and hear his sympathetic voice. But the circle left no opportunity for me to talk with him. The conversation ran on the usual topic.

“ It will soon break out again,” suggested one old general.

“ Hum,” said the other, “ next time it will be with Russia.”

“ Must there always be a next time ? ” I interrupted, but no one took notice.

“ Italy first,” persisted my father. “ We must get back Lombardy. We should march into Milan as we did with Father Radetzky in '49. I remember, it was a bright sunny morn—— ”

“ Oh ! ” I exclaimed in a panic, “ we all know the story of the entry into Milan.”

“ And the story of the brave Hupfauf, also ? ” asked my father.

“ Yes, and it is most revolting.”

One of the group broke in diplomatically : “ Let us hear it, Althaus.”

My father needed no encouragement.

“ Hupfauf was a Tyrolese Jager, and the best shot imaginable. He proposed to take four comrades to the roof of the cathedral and shoot down on the rebels. The four did nothing but load, and he shot, hitting the mark every time and killing ninety Italians.”

“ Horrible ! ” I exclaimed. “ Each one shot had a mother or sweetheart at home, and had a right to his young life.”

“ My dear, they were all enemies, and that alters the point of view.”

“ Ah, true,” said Dr. Bresser, “ the whole world is turned upside down so long as there is racial enmity, and the laws of humanity will receive but slight recognition.”

“ What do you say, Baron Tilling ? ” I asked.

“ I would have decorated the gallant breast of the man, from the point of view of war ethics, and then put a bullet into his stony heart. He deserved both.”

I gave the speaker a grateful look, and, except

the doctor, all the guests seemed unpleasantly affected, and a short pause ensued in the talk.

The doctor then turned to my father, asking, "Have you read the new work by the English naturalist, Darwin?"

"I know nothing of it."

"Why, papa," I exclaimed, "that is the book you told me would soon be forgotten by the world."

"And, so far as I am concerned, it is forgotten."

"But," continued the doctor, "it has quite turned the world upside down with its new theory of the origin of species."

"You mean the ape theory?" asked the general at the right. "The idea that we are descended from the ourang-outang?"

"Upon the whole," the cabinet minister began, nodding (and when he began thus we all trembled, for he was getting ready for a long discourse), "the thing seems absurd, but we dare not take it as a joke. The theory is powerfully built up on collected facts, and ingeniously worked out. Like all such rash conceptions it will find its followers and produce a certain effect on modern thought. It is a great pity it has been given so much consideration. Of course, the clergy will array itself against the degrading theory that man is derived from the brute, rather than from God's image. No wonder they are shocked and denounce it. But church condemnation cannot prevent the spread

of ideas that come in the garb of science. Until men of science themselves reduce it to an absurdity——”

“What folly!” broke in my father, fearing that his guests might be bored. “One needs only a bit of common-sense to reject the absurd notion that man has descended from apes.”

“Darwin has certainly wakened reasonable doubts, and apes and man do greatly resemble each other,” the minister added, “but it will take some time to bring about a unity of opinion among the scientists about it.”

“These gentry live by disputing,” said the old general to the left, in a heavy Viennese dialect. “I too have heard something about this ape business. But why bother one’s head with the chatter of the star-gazers and grass-collectors and frog-dissectors? I saw a picture of this Darwin, and I could well believe that his grandfather was a chimpanzee.”

The entire company enjoyed the joke.

Then the quieter general spoke: “Can you imagine an ape inventing the telegraph? Speech alone raised men so far above beasts——”

“Pardon, your Excellency,” interrupted Dr. Bresser, “but the art of speech and the capacity for invention were not among man’s original powers. After all, it is the result of evolution and development.”

“Yes, I know, Doctor,” replied the general, “the war-cry of the new school is evolution, but one cannot develop a camel from a kangaroo, nor do we find apes to-day developing into men.”

I turned to Baron Tilling: “And what do you think of Darwin? Are you a follower or an opponent?”

“Although I have heard much of late about Darwin, Countess, I cannot give an opinion, for I have not read the book.”

“Nor have I,” the doctor acknowledged.

“Nor I—nor I—nor I—” came the chorus from the rest.

And the cabinet minister gravely wound up: “The subject is so popular to-day that the expressions, ‘evolution,’ ‘natural selection,’ ‘survival of the fittest,’ have passed into current thought. You find many defenders among those who thirst for new ideas and change, while cool-headed, critical people who insist on proof are found on the other side.”

“There is always opposition to every new idea as soon as it comes up,” said Tilling; “but one must have penetrated into the idea in order to be able to judge. Conservatives assail anything, and often for the weakest and most absurd reasons, and the masses only repeat what they hear. To judge of scientific theories without investigation

is absurd. Even Copernicus was thundered down by Rome——”

“But, as I said before,” interrupted the minister, “not orthodoxy but science itself cries down false hypotheses in our day.”

“New ideas are always objected to in the beginning by the old fogeys who never like to give up their settled dogmas and views,” Tilling replied. “For my part, I shall read the book, and the opposition of the narrow-brained speaks rather for than against its truth.”

“Oh, you brave, clear-thinking spirit!” I silently apostrophised the speaker.

CHAPTER III

A cosy chat with Tilling—We misunderstand each other—
The attachment grows—Countess Griesbach—Jealousy
overcome—Tilling goes away—A touching letter—
Death of Tilling's mother.

THE dinner-party broke up at eight o'clock although my father insisted on detaining them. I politely urged a cup of tea, but each had his excuse and felt obliged to go. Tilling and Bresser had also risen to take leave, but were easily persuaded to stay. Father and the doctor were soon seated at the card-table, while Baron Tilling joined me by the fire.

“I have a scolding for you, Baron. After the first visit you forgot the way to my house.”

“You never asked me.”

“I told you, Saturdays.”

“Pardon me, Countess, if I find regular reception days abominable. To meet a lot of strange people, bow to the hostess, sit a minute, hear the weather discussed, meet a stray acquaintance, venture a stupid remark; a desperate attempt to

start a conversation with the hostess is interrupted by a new arrival, who starts the weather talk again, and then a fresh bunch comes in—perhaps a mother with four marriageable daughters—you give up your chair, and finally in weariness take leave and go. No, Countess, my talent for society is weak at best.”

“I meet you nowhere. Perhaps you hate people, and are a bit misanthropic. No, I do not believe that, for I conclude from your words that you love all men.”

“Hardly that; it is humanity as a whole I love, but not every man, not the coarse, worthless, self-seeking. I pity them because their education and circumstances made them unworthy of love.”

“Education and circumstances? Does not the character depend on heredity?”

“Our circumstances are also a matter of inheritance.”

“Then you do not hold a man responsible for his badness, and therefore not to be hated?”

“The one does not always depend on the other. A man is often to be condemned, though he is not responsible. You also are not responsible for your beauty, and yet one may admire——”

“Baron Tilling,” I said reproachfully, “we began talking seriously, and suddenly you treat me like a compliment-seeking society miss.”

“ Pardon me ; I only intended to use the illustration closest at hand.”

An awkward pause followed. Then I said abruptly :—

“ Why did you become a soldier, Baron Tilling ? ”

“ Your question shows that you have looked into my mind. It was not I, Frederick Tilling, thirty-nine years old, who has seen three campaigns, who chose the profession. It was the ten-year-old little Fritz, who spent his babyhood playing with lead soldiers and toy war-horses. It was this boy, whose father, a decorated general, and whose lieutenant uncle were always asking, ‘ What are you going to be, my boy ? ’ And the boy would always answer, ‘ A real soldier with a real sword and a live horse ! ’ ”

“ My son had a box of leaden soldiers given him to-day, but he shall never have them. Tell me, why did you not leave the army after the little Fritz had grown into the big Frederick ? Had not the army become hateful to you ? ”

“ To call it hateful is saying too much. The condition of affairs which requires that men shall enter the cruel duties of war, that I hate. But if such conditions are inevitable, I cannot hate the men who fulfil these duties conscientiously. If I left the service, would it diminish war ? Another would hazard his life in my place. Why not I ? ”

“Is there not some better way for you to serve your fellows?”

“Perhaps. But I have been taught nothing thoroughly except the arts of war. I think a man can do good and be useful in almost any surrounding, and find opportunity to lift the burden of those dependent upon him. I appreciate the respect the world holds me in because of my position. My career has been quite fortunate, my comrades love me, and I enjoy my success. I have no estate, and as a civilian I could not help even myself. So why should I consider abandoning the military service?”

“Because killing people is repulsive to you.”

“Yes, but in self-defence the responsibility for killing ceases. War is often called murder on a big scale, but the soldier never feels himself a murderer. Naturally the atrocities of the battlefield are revolting to me, and fill me with pain and disgust even as a seaman might suffer during a storm. Still a brave sailor is undaunted and ventures the sea again.”

“Yes, if he must. But must there be war?”

“That is another question. The individual should do his duty, and that gives him strength and even pleasure.”

And so we chatted in a low tone, that we might not disturb the card-players. Neither would our conversation have suited the others, for Tilling

told of the horrors he experienced in war, and I told him of my reading of Buckle, who argued that the war spirit would die out as civilisation advanced. I felt Tilling's confidence as he displayed his inner feelings to me, and a certain current of sympathy was established between us.

"What are you two plotting and whispering about?" my father suddenly called out.

"I am telling the Countess old war stories."

"Oh, she likes that; she has heard them from her childhood."

We resumed our whispered talk. Suddenly Tilling fastened his gaze on me, while speaking in a sympathetic voice. I thought of the princess, felt a sudden stab, and turned my head away.

"Why did your face change, Countess? Did my words offend you?"

I assured him it was nothing, but the conversation became rather strained. At last I rose and looked at the clock, and bade my father good-night. Tilling offered to take me downstairs.

"I fear I have offended you, Countess," he said, lifting me in my carriage.

"On my honour, no."

He pressed my hand hard to his lips, "When may I call?"

"On Saturday——"

"That means not at all." He bowed and stepped back.

I wanted to speak again, but the carriage door was shut. I should have liked to cry tears of spite like a vexed child, to think I had been so cold to one whose warm sympathy I had so enjoyed. Oh, that hateful princess! Was it jealousy? Then it dawned on me with a burst of astonishment—I was in love with Tilling! “In love, love, love,” answered the carriage wheels. “You are in love,” the street lamps flashed at me. “You love him,” breathed the scent of my glove, as I pressed the spot he kissed to my lips.

Next day in the red book I denied it all. I enjoyed a sympathetic clever man, but that is far from falling in love. I would meet him the next time quite calmly, and find pleasure in conversing with him. How could I have been so disturbed yesterday? To-day I could laugh at my silliness.

The same day I called on my girlhood friend, Lori Griesbach, from whose letter I read the news of my husband's death. Through our children we had much in common, and saw each other almost daily, and, in spite of many differences in our nature, we were real friends. Our two boys were the same age, and her little daughter Beatrix, ten months old, we had playfully destined should be some day the Countess Rudolf Dotzky. The conversation ran on dress, our children and acquaintances, the latest English novel, and the like.

As we chatted, I ventured to ask if she knew what the gossips had said about Tilling and the princess.

“Everybody knows there is nothing to it. Why, have you any interest in Tilling? Dear Martha, you are blushing. It is no use shaking your head. Come, confess. How happy I would be to see you in love once more. But Tilling is no match for you. He has nothing, and is too old. Ah, shall we ever forget that sad hour when you read my letter? War is a cruel business for some, and others find it excellent. My husband wishes for nothing more ardently than that he may distinguish himself.”

“Or be crippled or shot dead.”

“Oh, that only happens when it is one’s destiny. Your destiny, my dear, was to be a young widow.”

“And the war with Italy had to be to bring it about,” I added.

“And I hope it may be my destiny to be the wife of a brilliant young general,” said Lori, laughingly.

“So another war must break out that your husband may be quickly promoted, as though that were the simple and only purpose of the government of the world.”

The conversation changed to pure gossip, of Cousin Conrad Althaus and his devotion to Lilli;

of the latest marriage; the last new English novel, *Jane Eyre*; of the misdeeds of Lori's French nurse; of the trouble of changing servants, and all the usual chatter of idle ladies.

"Now, my dear," I broke in, "I must really go, for I have other calls which I cannot put off." At another time I could have been entertained for hours with the tittle-tattle. But to-day my mind was elsewhere. Once more in my carriage, I realised that again there was a change in me, for even the wheels took up the refrain: Ah, Tilling, Frederick Tilling!

When should I see him again? was my one thought, for in vain I went nightly to the theatre, and from there to parties with the one hope. My reception day failed to bring him. Had I offended him? What would I do? I was all on fire to see him again. Oh, for another hour's talk with him! How I would make amends for my rudeness! The delight of such a conversation would be increased a hundred fold, for I was now willing to confess what was becoming more than plain to me, that I loved him.

The following Saturday brought Tilling's cousin for a call, and her appearance made my heart beat. Would she tell me of him who so constantly filled my thought? I could not ask her directly. To speak his name would betray me, for I even flushed at the thought. We talked of indifferent things,

even the weather, and the one name that lay most at my heart I would not mention.

At last, without warning, she said, "Oh, Martha, I have a message for you. My cousin Frederick went away day before yesterday, and begs to be remembered to you."

The blood left my face, and I gasped: "Went away? Where? Is his regiment moved?"

"No; he has hurried to Berlin to his mother's deathbed. He adores her, poor fellow, and I pity him."

Two days afterwards I received a letter from Berlin in an unknown hand. Without reading it I knew it was from him:—

BERLIN, WILHELM ST., 8.
March 30, 1863. Midnight.

MY DEAR COUNTESS—I must tell my sorrow to some one, yet ask myself why do I turn to you? I have no right to do so, but do so by irresistible impulse. You will feel with me, I am sure of that.

Had you known my mother, how you would have loved her! And now this tender heart, this fine mind, and charming disposition, must we put it into the grave—for there is no ray of hope. Day and night I am at her bed—and this is her last night. Such suffering, though now she is quiet, poor darling mother. Her senses are numb and her heartbeat is almost finished. Her sister and the physician are here with me.

How terrible is death and separation! It comes,

but how we resist it when it would snatch a loved one away. What my mother means to me I can never tell you. She knows she is dying.

This morning she received me with an exclamation of joy when I arrived : " Is it you ? Do I see once more my own Fritz ? I feared you would be too late."

" You will get well again, mother," I cried.

" No, no, there is no hope for that, my dear son. Let us not waste our last hours in meaningless words. Let this be our good-bye visit." I fell at her side sobbing. " You are crying, my son, I will not tell you to stop, for it should grieve you to part with your best friend, and I am sure I shall never be forgotten by you. Remember, also, that you have made my life very happy. Except your small childish sickness, or the dread that I might lose you during the time of war, you have given me nothing but the keenest happiness ; you have shared all my burdens with me, and for this I bless you, my darling son."

Another attack came on, and her groans of pain almost crushed my heart. Oh, this last frightful enemy, death ! I remembered the sights of agonized sufferers on the battle-field and in hospitals ! When I reflect that we soldiers sometimes joyously drive others on to death, that we urge full-blooded eager young men on to sacrifice themselves willingly to this terrible enemy, against whom even the weak and broken-down old people fight so bitterly—is it not revolting ?

This night is frightfully long. If only sleep might quiet her. But there she lies, with her lids parted, suffering. Every half-hour I bend over her motionless,

then I come away to write a few more lines to you, and then I go to her again. It strikes four, and one shivers at the unfeeling strides of time as it unrelentingly presses on to eternity, and at this very moment for this one passionately loved mother time must cease—for all eternity. But as the cold, outer world turns dull to our pain, so much the more longingly do we seek to fly to another human heart which we trust and hope may feel some unison of feeling. And so this white sheet attracted me, and therefore I wrote this letter to you.

Seven o'clock in the morning. It is over. Her last words were, "Farewell, my dear boy." Then she closed her eyes and slept. Sleep soundly, darling mother. In grief I kiss your dear hands.—Yours in deepest sorrow,

FREDERICK TILLING.

I have this letter still. Frayed and faded the pages are now. For twenty-five years it has withstood my kisses and tears. It was sent "in deepest sorrow"; I received it "shouting with joy," for though there was not a single word of love in it, yet where was a plainer proof that the writer loved me than that he should turn to me at his mother's death-bed, to pour out his grief? In answer I sent a wreath of a hundred white camellias enfolding a single half-blown red rose—the scentless white flowers for the departed, and the glowing blossom—that was for him.

CHAPTER IV

Conrad and Lilli—Easter ceremonies—Tilling again—A visit and interview—Disappointments and apprehensions—A conversation about warfare—At last, an understanding.

THREE weeks had passed. Poor Conrad Althaus had proposed and been rejected by Lilli. But his courage remained undaunted, and he visited us as before.

Expressing my surprise at his loyalty, I said, "It delights me that you are not offended, and it proves that you are not so serious, for despised love often turns into resentment!"

"You mistake me, dear cousin; I love Lilli to distraction. First I thought it was you whom I cared for, then Rosa, but now I am certain it is and always will remain Lilli."

"That sounds very likely. What if she will not marry you?"

"I am not the first man a girl has married to get rid of him. By-and-by she will realise how faithful and worthy I am, and that will touch her. You will be my sister-in-law yet, Martha, and I am sure you will speak for me."

“ I certainly approve of you, and that is the way a woman should be won. Our modern young men find it too much trouble to strive and win happiness ; they wish to pick it up without struggle, as they snatch a way-side posy.”

Tilling had been back in Vienna for a fortnight without a sign to me. I know I appeared depressed, and could not blame Aunt Marie for reproaching me for my low spirits. She blamed my solitary existence, and urged upon me matrimony and devotions. “ You have quite forgotten it is Easter,” she said.

“ My dear Aunt, I think that both marrying and going to confession should be done from the heart, and not for a remedy for depressed spirits.”

“ Have you tickets to see the foot-washing ? ” she said presently.

“ Papa brought me some, but I do not really care to go.”

“ Oh, but you should go. There is really nothing quite so touching as this ceremony—the exemplification of Christian meekness. Think of it—the Emperor and Empress, in stooping to wash the feet of these poor old folks, show us how small and meaningless is earthly greatness compared with the majesty of God.”

“ To symbolise humility by kneeling one must feel oneself very exalted. This ceremony only

tells this—‘As Jesus is in comparison with the humble apostles so am I, the Emperor, in comparison with these paupers.’ Does that express meekness?”

“What strange ideas you have, Martha. For three years in the country you have read such wicked books that your ideas have all become warped.”

“Wicked books!”

“The other day I innocently mentioned *The Life of Jesus* by Strauss, which I saw on your table, to the Archbishop. ‘Merciful Heavens,’ he cried, ‘how did you get hold of such a vicious work?’ When I told him that I had seen it at the house of a relative, he exclaimed, ‘As she values her soul let her throw the book into the flames.’ Do, Martha, do burn the book!”

“Two hundred years ago would probably have seen not only the book but the author thrown into the fire. That might have wiped it out—but not for long.”

“Give me your answer. Will you burn the book?”

“Why discuss it, dear Aunt? We cannot understand each other in these matters. Let me tell you what Rudolf did yesterday”; and the conversation turned easily on her favourite subject, where we never differed, for in our judgment Rudolf was

surely the most original, dearest, and capable child in the world.

Next day, shortly after ten, dressed in black, we all went to the palace to witness the great ceremony of foot-washing. Our places were reserved among the members of the aristocracy and diplomatic corps. We found ourselves exchanging greeting right and left. The galleries were filled with a mixed crowd, but we felt quite distinctly superior to them as we witnessed this festival which was to stir us with humility.

Perhaps the rest were in a more religious mood, but to me the scene was no more than a mere theatre spectacle. There we were, exchanging salutations, as if from our boxes we were waiting for the curtain. The long table was set expecting the twelve old men and twelve old women who were to have their feet washed by their Majesties.

Suddenly, my eye fell upon Tilling. He was directly opposite us among the general's staff, but he did not see me, and just then the twenty-four old people had taken their places. They were clad in old German costume, wrinkled, toothless, bent, fitting admirably this ceremony of the middle ages. We were the anachronism, and our modern make-up did not harmonise with the picture.

I was watching the face of Tilling, which showed traces of suffering and deep melancholy. How I longed to give him a sympathetic touch of the

hand. And while the spectators sat breathless, awaiting the coming of the grandees of the court, he by chance looked my way and recognised me.

“Martha, are you ill?” asked Rosa, laying her hand on my arm. “You have turned pale and red in the same moment. Look! Now! Now!”

The chief master of ceremonies gave the signal announcing the approach of the Imperial pair—certainly the handsomest couple on the continent. After them streamed in the archdukes and archduchesses, and the ceremony was to begin. The stewards brought in dishes of food, which the royal pair placed before the old people, making it more of a picture than ever—the attire, the utensils, and the processional giving it the festal aspect of an old Renaissance painting.

Scarcely were the dishes set on the table than they were removed again—by the archdukes, who were supposed also to need a lesson in humility. Then the tables were carried out, and the climax-scene of the foot-washing began. The washing as well as the eating was mere pantomime. The Emperor appeared to stroke the feet of each old man with a towel, after the officiating priest had made a show of pouring water over them. Stooping, he glided from the first to the twelfth. The Empress proceeded with the old women in the same way, losing none of her accustomed grace through the stooping attitude.

I was asking myself what could be the state of mind of these old people from their point of view, as they sat in the bewildering company in quaint costumes, with their Majesties at their feet. It must have been like a half-realised dream, half-pain, half-pleasure, confusing their poor heads already so full of the stupor of old age. Perhaps the newness and solemnity brought a complete suspension of thought to their minds. The thing that stood out most clearly, no doubt, was the red silk purse with thirty pieces of silver which their Majesties hung about each neck, and the basket of food they were allowed to take home.

The ceremony over, the greetings, gossip, and polite interchange of compliments began. But my only thought was, "Will he be waiting outside for me?" At last we got to the gate, and there he stood before me with a bow. As he thanked me for the wreath I had sent to Berlin, he took my hand and helped me to my carriage. The words came hard, but with a great strain, I managed to say, "On Sunday, between two and three." Another bow and we were gone.

My little red book revealed my excited anticipations, my most extravagant apprehensions that the meeting would reveal our mutual devotion. While I was writing the bell rang and I recorded myself as palpitating and trembling, for the last line was illegible.

He came. He was very reserved and cold, begged my pardon for having written from Berlin, and said he hoped I would forgive his breach of etiquette since he was so unnerved by his sorrow. He related something of his mother's life and last days, but not a word of what I was looking for, and I became very strained and cold in my manner. When he rose to go, I did not detain him or ask him to come again—a wretched half-hour.

I rushed to the open red book : “ It is all over. I have shamefully deceived myself.” I argued that he would never come again. Yet the world held no second man. Rudolf must now be my sole consolation—would he love me some day as this man had loved his mother ? Oh, it is a foolish habit this diary-writing. What proof it gives one of human fickleness !

A heavenly Easter Monday found “ all Vienna ” on the usual drive in the Prater. The brilliant, dashing corso contrasted sadly with my depressed spirits. Yet I hugged this very sorrow, for was not my heart empty two months ago, where now it had at least something to feed upon ? A quick glimpse of Tilling down the drive, a bow and salute in passing, which I returned warmly, again roused my anticipations.

Some days later, when other guests were calling, Tilling was announced. I almost cried out with surprise and delight, but checked myself, and as

he sat opposite me he calmly announced that he expected to leave Vienna for a post in Hungary.

“What has our poor Vienna done that you leave it?” I asked with an effort.

“Its gaiety jars on me. I am more in a mood for solitude.”

“A jolly, rattling war would be the best thing to shake that out of you, my dear Tilling,” said my father. “But, alas! there is no such cheerful prospect. This peace threatens to last.”

“I protest against the idea that military men should desire war. We are here to defend our country, just as the fire department is here to put out fires, not to wish for them. Both war and fire are afflictions which we do not care to bring upon our fellows. Peace alone is good. It is the absence of the greatest evil. It is the only condition of welfare for humanity. Has the army, from motives of pure personal ambition, a right to desire that the greatest misery and suffering should fall upon the rest? To carry on war that the army may be kept busy and its officers promoted, would be like setting fire to our cities in order that the fire brigade may distinguish themselves.”

Silently I seconded the speaker.

“Your comparison is a poor one,” replied my father. “Fires only destroy, while wars build up the glory and power of a people. How otherwise could a nation extend its territory except through

conquest. Personal promotion is not the gallant soldier's only ambition. It is pride in his race and country that leads him to desire war—in one word, Patriotism."

"Oh, this mistaken love of country!" cried Tilling. "The soldier is not the only one who learns to love the soil upon which he has taken root. That is a passion common to all. For my part, there are other ways than violence to express it. We should be proud of our poets rather than our commanding generals."

"How dare you compare a poet and a soldier?" exclaimed my father.

"I ask the same question. Is not the bloodless crown the better and finer?"

"But," expostulated Aunt Marie, "how can a soldier speak so? What would become of the warlike spirit?"

"At nineteen," answered Tilling, "I was filled with it. After I had seen the realities, the butchery and bestialities of war, my soul was sickened, and every later campaign I entered with resignation and disgust rather than enthusiasm."

"Hear me, Tilling," said my father. "I have been through more campaigns than you, and have witnessed as much of the horror of war, but I never lost my ardour, and went in to the last as an old man with the same zeal as into the first."

"Pardon me, Excellency, the older generation

to which you belong had a more warlike and martial enthusiasm than now exists. The feelings of humanity as a whole have changed. The desire to abolish misery is growing in ever-widening circles, and permeates all society. That spirit in your day had not yet been born."

"What is the use?" retorted my father. "Misery will always be. Neither that nor war can be abolished."

"Pardon me, Count Althaus," said Tilling. "Resignation to all forms of evil was the spirit of the past. As soon as the heart questions, 'Is it necessary?' that heart can no longer endure resignation and must make right the wrong as a sort of expiation. This sense of repentance has become universal enough to be called the *conscience of the age*."

My father raised his shoulders, "That is too deep for me. I only know that we old grandfathers look back on our campaigns with a thrill of pleasure. And, in fact, the very youngest soldier, if asked to-day whether he would like to go to war, would surely answer, 'Willingly—even joyfully!'"

"The boys, of course," answered Tilling. "They have still the school-drilled enthusiasm for war in them. And the old soldier, of course, would answer 'Willingly,' for he must live up to the popular conception of the courageous. If he said honestly, 'Unwillingly,' it would only pass for fear."

“Why, I certainly should be afraid,” said Lilli, with a little shudder. “Think how terrible it must be to have bullets flying on all sides and death threatening you any instant!”

“What you say seems quite natural from a young lady’s lips,” replied Tilling. “But soldiers must repress their instincts of self-preservation as well as their compassion for both friend and foe. Next to cowardice, it is most disgraceful for us to have sentiments or emotions.”

“Only in war times,” said my father, “for in private life, thank God, we also have hearts.”

“Yes, I know. With a sort of children’s sleight-of-hand, we say of every horror when war is on, ‘That goes for nothing.’ Murder is no longer murder. Robbery is no longer robbery, but provisioning. Burning cities are so many ‘positions taken.’ For every broken law of morality, humanity, and decency, as long as the war-game lasts, we snap our fingers and by hocus-pocus transform it into nothing. But when this inordinate war-gambling lifts from the conscience for a moment, and one comprehends the actual depravity of the thing—that wholesale crime has meant nothing—then the human mind can only wish to be delivered from the intolerable depths—even by death.”

“Really,” said Aunt Marie reflectively, “commandments like, ‘Thou shalt not murder,’ ‘Thou

shalt not steal,' 'Love thy neighbour,' 'Forgive thy enemies——' ”

“Go for nothing, too,” repeated Tilling. “For those whose calling it is to teach these commandments are the very ones who call down the blessing of heaven on our murderous instruments and work.”

“And justly,” said my father. “For the God of the Bible is the God of Battles, the Lord of Hosts, who commands us to draw the sword. It is He——”

“Men always decree what they wish as the will of God,” said Tilling. “Even the divine law is waved aside when men begin the great game of hatred. The heavenly law of love goes for nothing when men find it convenient so to interpret the God whom they have set up before them. But forgive me, Countess; I have opened a wearisome discussion when I only came to say good-bye.”

Dearer to me than ever because of the storm of feeling and thrilling emotions he had set in action in my mind, how could I let him go, perhaps never to meet again? With a cold farewell before all these people—it must not end so. Had he gone and closed the door, I should have burst into sobs.

Quietly rising, I said, “I must show you that photograph of which we spoke,” and Tilling, very much surprised, followed me to a table at some distance.

“ I cannot let you go—I must speak to you.”

“ As you will, Countess. I am listening.”

“ Not now. Come to-morrow at this hour.”

He hesitated.

“ I insist. By the memory of your mother, for whom I mourned with you.”

“ O Martha ! ”

The word thrilled me with a flash. It was agreed, and, bowing to the company, he kissed my hand and left.

With what impatience, anticipation, and even anxiety I looked forward to the coming visit! Would he ask me what I wished to say, and would I need to tell him of my love? Would he cross-examine me, and would my pride stand between, and must we part after all? As I was thinking thus he was announced.

“ By your command, dear Countess,” he said. “ I am happy that you invited me in the name of my mother, and I must speak from the heart. I—— ”

“ Why do you hesitate ? ”

“ I find it harder than I thought to speak out.”

“ Where is the confidence you gave me when watching at the death-bed? Have you not the same faith in me now ? ”

“ In that terrible hour I was beside myself. I overstepped my right, and for fear I might do it again, I planned to go away.”

“ You wish to avoid me ? And why ? ”

“ Why ? Why ? Because—because I adore you.”

My emotions turned my head away. Tilling also stood dumb. At last I broke the silence :—

“ And that is why you are planning to leave ? ”

“ That is the reason.”

“ Can the plan be recalled ? ”

“ The transfer is not yet ordered.”

“ Then stay ! ”

He seized my hand—gasping, “ Martha ! ”

In the same instant my father rushed in.

“ Are you at home ? The footman said you were not.” My father glared at Tilling. “ Good-day. After last night’s farewell I am surprised to see you. Martha, there is a family matter I must see you about.”

Tilling arose. “ When can I see you again ? ” he asked in an undertone, taking leave.

I whispered, “ To-morrow, in the Prater at nine on horseback.”

With a bow to my father, who responded stiffly, he left the room.

“ What is this family affair, father ? ”

“ It is this very thing. I only scared your lover away in order to tell you what I think of him. How dare you trifle with the family name and your reputation in this way ? ”

“ Father, my reputation and honour are guarded by my little son. As an independent widow I

have outgrown your authority. I tolerate no lovers, but if I choose to marry after the dictates of my heart who shall hinder ? ”

“Marry Tilling !” he shouted. “Are you mad ? It would be a family calamity.”

“Why, father, you yourself have been offering me a brevet-captain, a captain, a major—while this man is in the rank of lieutenant-colonel.”

“The worse for that, with such treasonable opinions as he expressed yesterday. He wants to resign, I guess, and is hunting a rich widow ? And would you stoop to such a man, you who are the daughter of a proud soldier who fought in four wars, longing to enlist again, and you the widow of a brave warrior who made glorious the field of battle by his sacrifice ? ”

My father was pacing the floor, red-faced, and his voice trembling with excitement. I was moved to the quick by these contemptuous words in attack of the man of my heart. But no words of mine could defend the injustice ; Tilling’s ethical position my father was incapable of understanding, so I remained dumb. My father’s disapproval might trouble me, but I felt I was free to accept the great happiness which lay open before me. Enough joy had come to me in that short hour to swallow any vexation.

CHAPTER V

A ride in the Prater—At last an understanding—The family reconciled to the engagement—Marriage and visit to Berlin—Life in garrison—Christmas at Vienna—Rumours of war.

ON the joy of the next morning, when at nine o'clock I left my carriage at the bridle path of the Prater! There my horse awaited me. I was hardly in the saddle when I realised the tread of a horse behind me. It was the inevitable Conrad, and my greeting was rather cool, for though I could hardly expect to have the Prater to myself, yet I must somehow get rid of this faithful cavalier. Off in the distance I noticed Tilling galloping.

“Ah, dear cousin,” I said, “only last night was I a good ally of yours, and told Lilli what a fine fellow you were, so considerate, so——”

“Now, cousin, what do you want for all this flattery?”

“Only that you whip up your horse and gallop away,” and Conrad, seeing Tilling approach, took the hint, and laughingly flew off.

“ This Althaus again,” said Tilling coming up to my side, his tone being plainly vexed, which pleased me. “ Did he leave at seeing me, or did his horse run away ? ”

“ He went because I sent him.”

“ Countess Martha, the world says he loves his cousin.”

“ He does.”

“ That he courts her persistently.”

“ And not without hope.”

Tilling was silent, and I laughed into his face. “ But I am not the cousin. It is my sister Lilli.”

“ You lift a load from my heart. This man was the reason why I wished to leave Vienna. I could not stay and look on. Besides, I dared not trust myself, for I could no longer conceal my feeling for you, and I feared being made ridiculous and miserable.”

“ But to-day you are happy.”

“ Since yesterday I scarcely know myself, and yet I feared I should suddenly awake and find it all a dream. What have I to offer you ? I have no prospects. To-day I am in the seventh heaven and to-morrow, perhaps, in despair. . . . Pardon me, I am usually cool and prudent, but to-day my feelings are extravagant. You can make me either happy or wretched.”

“ I have doubts too. There is that princess.”

“ Has that nonsense come to your ears ? There

is nothing in it, or would I be wishing to leave Vienna ? ”

“ A stupid jealousy in us both. Would I have asked you to meet me if I had expected my cousin ? ” And I added, “ Yet why have you kept away from me ? ”

“ Because I never dared hope that I could win your love. It was not till you ordered me in the memory of my mother, that I dared speak, though I was eager to dedicate my life to you.”

“ So I have really thrown myself at your head, or you would not have bothered about me ? ”

“ I did not care to be counted with the swarm of admirers.”

“ Oh, they do not count. They only wanted a rich widow—— ”

“ That is the very point which held me back, for I have no fortune. I would rather be miserable all my days than suspected by the world and the woman I loved of having had a low motive in marrying her.”

“ You proud, noble fellow, I could never believe, no never, that a single wrong motive was possible to you.” And we rode on and questioned each other about all our ideals and feelings. It was a blissful hour.

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Direct from the Prater I drove to my father's house. What an unpleasant sensation the an-

nouncement would make, and I wished it over as soon as possible. Father and Aunt Marie were busy over their morning papers, and both were astonished at my early call, and in a riding habit.

“ I have been riding in the Prater, and something happened which you must all know at once. I have promised to marry—— ”

Aunt Marie threw up her hands, and father frowned— “ I can only hope—— ”

“ I have promised to marry the man that I love, and who will surely make me happy—Baron Frederick von Tilling.”

“ How dare you, after what I said yesterday,” shouted my father, springing up.

Aunt Marie shook her head: “ I had rather it were some one else. He is not a match for you, and has such peculiar views.”

“ Our views are alike, and I scorn to look out for any match. Father, dearest father, do not frown so darkly, do not spoil my happiness with your displeasure; be my dear good papa.”

“ But, child,” said my father, softening, “ I only want your happiness. I could not be happy with a soldier who is not a soldier from his heart and soul.”

“ But you do not need to marry him,” remarked Aunt Marie judiciously. “ His soldier notions are of little consequence. But I would be unhappy

with a man who speaks with so little reverence of the Bible and God as he did the other day."

"You, too, my dear Aunt, need not marry him," I interposed laughingly.

"Well," said my father, sighing, "every one makes his own heaven. I suppose he will resign."

"We have not mentioned that at all, and I certainly desire it, but I fear he will not."

"To think," said Aunt Marie, "that you have refused a Prince! and now you are descending in the social scale instead."

"Here I come," I said, "for the first time since Arno's death, to tell you I am happy, and instead of being glad you both drag out reasons for reproach—military service, Jehovah, social scale and suchlike."

But after half an hour's conversation the old folks were somewhat reconciled, and my father agreed to come in the evening to meet his future son-in-law at my house.

All the relatives came at the same time, and I introduced Tilling as my betrothed. Rosa and Lilli were delighted. Conrad cried: "Bravo, Martha. Lilli should profit by your example." My father had conquered his antipathy, or succeeded in concealing it, and Aunt was even full of sentiment. Little Rudolf was presented to his "new papa," who, kissing him, said: "Of you, my little fellow, we two must try to make a perfect man."

During the evening my father suggested his idea that Tilling would quit the service. The latter answered in astonishment.

“Give up my career, when I have no other! One can dislike war and still——”

“Yes, I know—as you said lately, a fireman need not love to see a house on fire.”

“There are other illustrations: Need a physician love cancer and typhus, or a judge enjoy burglary and murder? But what reason could I have for abandoning my profession?”

“You would spare your wife the unpleasant life of the garrison,” said Aunt Marie, “and spare her the anxiety should there be war.”

“Those are good reasons, and I shall try to keep my wife from as many unpleasantnesses as possible. But would it not be most unpleasant to have a husband without a calling? If I resigned, it would count for laziness or cowardice. It did not occur to me, nor to you either, Martha, I hope.”

“Suppose I made it a condition?”

“You would not do that. I should prefer to renounce my happiness. You are rich, I am poor, except for my pay and the hope of promotion. These I cannot surrender without loss of my dignity and honour.”

“Bravo, my son, now I am reconciled. It would be a shame, for you will certainly rise to

the rank of general—you may be a governor or minister of war some day. Your wife may have a proud position.”

The prospect of being a commander's wife had no charms for me, but I was silent. Though I would far rather have retired to one of our quiet estates, yet I approved of Frederick's resolution since it reconciled my father.

“Yes, quite reconciled,” continued my father, “for the daughter of a soldier, the widow of a soldier could never be content with a civilian's costume for always.”

Frederick's glance said, “I know you better,” but aloud he remarked, with a smile: “Yes—maybe she only fell in love with my uniform.”

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In September we were married. My husband had two months' leave, and we spent a week in Berlin, visiting the sister of Frederick's mother. The two sisters had greatly resembled each other, and I was able to realise the beauty of character of the one from the other. Frau Cornelia von Tessau, the widow of a Prussian general, was the mother of an only son, just about to become a lieutenant, and a touching affection existed between them, such as I hoped my son and I might experience some day.

Our wedding tour, extending to the Rhine and to Switzerland, brought many charming revelations.

I discovered many new qualities in my husband. I found him full of liveliness and quick appreciation of everything beautiful in nature and art, and discovered also that he was a perfect master of the French and English languages. Our two months passed only too swiftly, and the first unpleasant moment was when the official paper came recalling us to duty.

We joined Frederick's regiment at Olmutz, where we retired completely from the military circle and devoted our free time wholly to each other. I exchanged the first necessary calls, and soon found I could not endure the usual gossip of the set. We took up a course of scientific reading between us, keeping up the liveliest sympathy in the advanced thought of the world, and the philosophic questions of the day. We discussed the future of our boy, and planned above all that he should not be a soldier.

Christmas took us back to Vienna, the family being quite reconciled to our marriage, for they were compelled to admit that at least we were very happy. Conrad was still a constant visitor, and I could see that he had made some progress with Lilli. Christmas eve was very gay, and above all gifts were showered upon little Rudolf. A lively company had gathered in the drawing-room, among the rest our old friends, the Minister of the Interior and Dr. Bresser.

“ Is it true, your Excellency,” the Doctor asked, “ that another war is threatening ? ”

“ Yes,” answered the statesman, “ there is indeed a dark and portentous cloud on the political horizon.”

I shrank with terror, crying anxiously, “ What ! How ! What can it mean ? ”

“ Denmark has certainly gone too far.”

“ Oh, Denmark ? Then the storm does not threaten us ? ” I said, relieved. “ But the prospect of any war is distressing, yet I am glad it is Denmark rather than Austria.”

“ Never fear,” said my father, to comfort me, “ if Austria is drawn into it, we do not risk anything. In defending the rights of Schleswig-Holstein we do not involve Austrian territory.”

“ Do you imagine, father, that I would consider the question of territories for a moment, when I only fear the one thing, and that is the danger of those I love ! ”

“ My child, you cannot consider the fate of the individual where the fate of the nation is concerned. The men that are lost are of little consequence in comparison to the main question whether our country shall lose or win. I say if we cross swords with the Danes we can only extend our influence in the German Alliance, and it is my dream that the Hapsburgs may recover the German imperial crown to which they are entitled. A war with

Denmark would be a fit opportunity to wipe out the loss of '59 in Lombardy, and who knows, we might even gain power enough to reconquer that province."

I glanced across the room where Frederick was joking with the young people, and a violent pain shot through me. My all would be crippled, or perhaps shot dead. Our child, yet unborn, would be fatherless, all our fresh happiness would be blotted out. All this in one side of the scale, and in the other Austria, and the German Alliance, the liberation of Schleswig-Holstein, with fresh laurels for the army—a lot of new phrases for schoolboy orations and army proclamations. Thousands and thousands of other individuals would have their happiness staked as well as mine, both in ours and the enemy's country. Could it not be avoided, this monstrous thing? If all were to combine, all the wise, the good, and just, could it not be averted?

"Tell me, your Excellency," I asked. "Has it gone so far that the statesmen and diplomatists cannot ward it off?"

"Do you believe, dear Baroness, that it is our business to maintain eternal peace? It would be a beautiful mission, certainly, but impracticable. It is ours to watch the interests of our states and dynasties, and never allow their power to be diminished but strive in every way to main-

tain our supremacy and honour and revenge insults."

"In fact the principle of war is to injure the enemy whether you are right or wrong."

"Exactly."

"And so they hack away at each other. It is horrible."

"But it is the only way out. How else can quarrels be decided?"

"As are the quarrels between individuals."

"By tribunals? But there are none over the nations."

And Dr. Bresser came to my help: "No, savages have not; hence nations in their intercourse cannot claim to be civilised, and it will take a long time before an International Tribunal is constituted."

"We will never get there," interrupted my father. "Such things must always be fought out, for the stronger nations would never submit to arbitration. They will only set themselves right by fighting even as gentlemen do, when they are offended."

"The duel is barbarous and immoral."

"You never will be able to alter it."

"Still, your Excellency, I would never defend it."

"What think you, Frederick?" my father turned to my husband. "Should a man take a

slap in the face and carry the matter to a law court, and get five florins damages ? ”

“ I should not do so.”

“ You would challenge the insulter ? ”

“ Of course.”

“ Aha, Martha ! Aha, Doctor,” cried my father victoriously. “ Did you hear ? Tilling, who hates war, is an advocate of duelling.”

“ No, I do not admit that. But in certain cases I should resort to it, even as I have gone to war under present conditions. Our conduct must correspond to the current notions of honour. Some day the insult will turn back upon the person inflicting it as the disgraced one, and it will be considered immoral to seek revenge, as it is in other questions considered wrong to take the law into one’s own hands.”

“ We will have to wait a long time for that day,” my father broke in. “ As long as an aristocracy exists—— ”

“ That will not be for ever,” muttered the Doctor.

“ Oh, so you would abolish the aristocracy ? ”

“ Yes, the feudal. The future needs no nobility.”

“ But so much the more will it need noble men,” said Frederick in confirmation.

“ And this rare race will quietly take a slap in the face ? ”

“There will be none to offer the insult.”

“And the states will not defend themselves, if attacked by a neighbour?”

“No neighbouring state will offer an attack, as even now our neighbouring country seats do not besiege each other. A nobleman no longer needs troops for his castle.”

“So some day the states will dispense with standing armies? Ha, what will then become of you lieutenant-colonels?”

“What has become of the squires of feudal times?”

BOOK III

1864

CHAPTER I

War imminent with Denmark—New Year's Eve—Return to garrison—The Schleswig-Holstein Campaign—Story of the quarrel.

THE remaining two weeks in Vienna were no joyous time for me. My happiness was again darkened by this fatal prospect of war. Over all my joys there seemed ever to hang some imminent anguish. Are there not sufficient catastrophies in the natural course of events to keep one in a sense of uncertainty? Why should man wilfully add fresh tortures to the category of natural calamities which might at any time beset him? Some people have learned to look upon war as a natural phenomenon like earthquake and drought, but I had ceased to see it so. Instead of resignation I felt only pain and opposition. Why should Schleswig-Holstein and the Danish Constitution upset us? What matter to us if the "Protocol Prince" repealed or confirmed the constitutional law of November 13, 1863? What if the papers did make it the most important matter in the world, should our husbands and sons therefore be shot

down? Should our belonging to the German Alliance necessitate taking up all their quarrels? Had I foreseen two years later how these same German brothers broke into the bitterest enmity, and the Austrians hated the Prussians with a fiercer hate than that which they now entertained for Denmark, I should have realised that all these arguments given out to justify war are mere pretexts and empty phrases.

On New Year's Eve at my father's house he proposed a toast to the hour, and "might it be a glorious one to our arms." I refused to concur. When we returned to the hotel I found myself disturbed even to tears. My husband comforted me: "Do not weep over the bare possibility of war; nothing is yet definite."

"It is the possibility which makes me cry. Were there a certainty I should be shrieking and wailing. Oh that in this first year you should be torn from me by war!"

"Come, my dear Martha, when a child is born to you, you must face the possibility of death like every man on the battle-field. Let us enjoy our life now and not waste it thinking of the death which hangs over every head."

"You talk of Destiny just like Aunt Marie. No, it is the thoughtlessness, cruelty, and folly of mankind! Where is there a necessity of a war with Denmark?"

“ But that is not yet declared—— ”

“ Yes, I know, accidents may still avert the evil ; but it should depend, not on accidents, intrigues, humours, but upon the righteous will of humanity. Do not try to quiet me with evasive words when I know that your whole soul shudders with repugnance. My only consolation is that you condemn with me what brings so much unhappiness.”

“ Yes, yes, dear, I do not hide from you my feelings ; when the disaster happens I will not conceal from you my hate for legalised slaughter. But to-day let us not think of destruction ; let us be happy while nothing separates us. No joy can last for ever. It is not the length of our days, but the degree of the beauty of our days which makes life so blessed.”

And I let myself sink into the sweet rest of the moment and forget the threatening future.

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We returned to the garrison on January 10. There was no longer any doubt of war. In Vienna I still heard of some small hope that the dispute could be settled, but in our military circle this was out of the question. The officers and their wives were greatly, even joyfully excited. Did it mean hope for promotion and distinction, or only a restless desire for action ?

“ Ah, this war will be immensely popular,”

said the Colonel at a jolly supper. "And our own territory cannot suffer."

"It is the noble motive that inspires me," said a young lieutenant. "We defend the rights of our oppressed brothers the Prussians. We cannot be vanquished when we fight together, and it will strengthen the national ties. The ideal of nationality——"

"Nonsense," interrupted the Colonel with severity, "that is humbug to an Austrian. Louis Napoleon rode the same sort of a hobby-horse in '59: 'Italy for the Italians.' Why talk of banding with the Germans when we have the Bohemians, Hungarians, Croats?—our bond of unity lies in our loyalty to our dynasty. The thing which must inspire us is not the nationality of our allies but the good, faithful service we can render our beloved ruler. Long live the Emperor!"

All rose and pledged the toast. Even my quaking heart stirred for a moment with enthusiasm. That thousands could be inspired by one motive, one person, into a desire for self-sacrifice, this is really a lofty sense of love. But to think that through this love the high fulfilment of duty leads men into the most horrible work of the deadliest hatred—War! My heart chilled again at the thought.

My anxiety grew with the succeeding days. On January 16 the allies demanded that Denmark

revoke a certain law against which the Holsteiners had protested asking the protection of the German Alliance, and to do this in twenty-four hours. Denmark refused, and had been expected to refuse, for Austrian and German troops stood massed on the frontier, and on February 1 they crossed the Eider.

So the die was cast and the bloody game began.

A hasty letter of congratulation came from father :—

Rejoice, my children ! We may now repair the defeat of '59 with a few sharp blows at Denmark. When we return conquerors from the north we can again turn our faces southward. With the Prussians as our allies those shabby Italians and the wily Napoleon can do nothing against us.

Frederick's regiment, to the great chagrin of the Colonel and corps, was not ordered north. This brought a fatherly letter of commiseration :—

Such ill-luck, not to be called into the opening to a glorious campaign ! This will rejoice Martha. But you, Frederick, though philosophically opposed to war, must regret it. If you got into the fight, certainly your manly enthusiasm would awaken. To be forced to stay at home is truly hard on a soldier !

“ Is it hard on you to stay with me, Frederick ? ”
The silent answer was enough.

But my peace was gone. The order might come any day. If the campaign would only end

quickly! I watched the newspapers eagerly. I prayed for the termination of the war before my "all on earth" was called. What cared I what became of that little scrap of country? Their rulers were quarrelling only over their jealousies, not over the wrongs of their people, or to better the conditions.

If a number of dogs are fighting over some bones, it is only the hungry dogs that tear each other, but in human history it is the "bones" that have to fight for their devourers.

The Austrians held that they were justified in maintaining the "balance of power." The Danes maintained the opposite principle with equal emphasis. If two States disagree and cannot come to an understanding, why not call in a third Power as arbitrator? Why go on shouting oneself hoarse, and then finally decide by force of arms? Is it not savage? And when a third Power comes in it does not do so judicially, but with blows again. And this is what they call world politics. Why not name it primitive savagery—or parliamentary nonsense—or international barbarism?

I found myself greatly troubled by this mysterious power called "reasons of State," and I began a careful study of history to find out where the historic right lay over which they were quarrelling.

I found the disputed district ceded to Denmark in 1027. So in reality the Danes are right. They

are the legitimate kings. However, two hundred years later it was turned over to a younger house, and it was ranked only as a fief of Denmark. In 1326 Count Gerhard of Holstein received Schleswig, and the Waldemar constitution provided that Denmark should never again claim any ownership. Oh! then, indeed, the right is with the allies! We are really fighting for the Waldemar Constitution of 1326. That is very good, for if these paper securities are not upheld of what worth are they?

In 1448 this constitution was again ratified by King Christian I. So how dare Denmark ever again claim sovereignty? But what has the Protocol Prince to do with the matter? Twelve years later the Schleswig ruler dies with heirs, and the National Assembly met at Ripon (so important to know exactly where these assemblies always convene). Well then at Ripon, in 1460, they proclaimed the Danish king the Duke of Schleswig, and he thereupon promised that the countries should remain together "for ever undivided." Ah, that is a bit confusing; but remember, they shall remain united "for ever." This little "for ever" is chiefly responsible for the historical confusion, for straightway they divide up the provinces among the king's sons, and under later kings they are again reunited. They are hardly together before they are sliced up again. What a tangle! How

can I find my way out, and historically establish the point upon which finally our Austrian countrymen must shed their blood?

Again, I find during the Thirty Years' War, Charles IV. fell upon the duchy. Then a treaty made in 1658 forced the Danish sovereignty to surrender for ever. So we have gotten rid of the Danish feudal lordship "for ever," thank God, and our way is clear again.

But here comes an agreement on August 22, 1721, and Schleswig becomes a dependency of Denmark once more, and on June 1, 1773, Holstein also becomes a simple Danish province. This alters the case again, and, certainly, now the Danes have a perfect right. But hold, not quite—for the Vienna Congress of 1815 declared Holstein a part of the German Alliance. This enraged the Danes, who raised the battle-cry "Denmark to the Eider!" and strove for the complete possession of Schleswig. In the year 1846 King Christian writes a public letter in which he proposed the integrity of the entire state. But the Germans protest. Then the announcement of the complete union is made from the throne, and a rebellion breaks out on the part of the Germans. The Danes win one battle, the Schleswig-Holsteiners the other. Hereupon the Alliance interfered. Prussia took some strategic points, but the struggle continues. At last Prussia and Denmark conclude a peace, so

Schleswig-Holstein now stands alone to fight the Danes, and is defeated.

The Alliance calls the "revolters" to discontinue, and they do. Austria takes possession of Holstein, and the two duchies are separated. What has become of all the paper promises to hold them together "for ever"? It is incomprehensible.

But here comes the Protocol of London, May 8, 1852. (So wise that we know the exact date of these flimsy agreements!) This secures to Prince Christian of Glucksburg the succession to Schleswig. So this is where the "Protocol Prince" originated.

In 1854, after each little duchy had adopted a Constitution of its own, both were again appended to Denmark. In '58 Denmark was compelled to lay down its claim. Now history brings us quite close to the present time, and yet with all this eager study it is not clear to me to whom these two countries should rightly belong. November 18, 1858, the German Parliament passed a "Fundamental Law for the Mutual Relations between Denmark and Schleswig." Two days afterwards the king died and left no heir.

Relying on this two-days'-old law, Frederick of Augustenburg raised his claim and turned to the German Alliance for support. (I had completely forgotten to follow that Augustenburg family.) The Alliance at once occupied and pro-

claimed Augustenburg the duke. But why? Prussians disagreed with Austrians in the proceedings. But why? I cannot understand it to this day.

The London Protocol must be respected. Why? Are protocols things so absolute and supreme that we must pour out the blood of our sons to defend them? Ah, yes, there comes in the mysterious "reason of State." The gentlemen around the green diplomatic table are all wise, and they know how to bring about the greatest security of national supremacy. Of course, the London Protocol of 1852 must be upheld and the constitutional decree of Copenhagen of 1863 must be revoked within twenty-four hours. Yes, Austria's honour and welfare depended upon that. The dogma was a bit hard to believe, but in politics, even more than in religion, the mass allows itself to be led by the rule of *quis absurdum*—to reason about it is forbidden. With the sword once unsheathed, they shout the unquestioning "hurrah" and struggle for victory. Besides, can we not invoke the blessing of Heaven upon our side? And is it not of great consequence to the Almighty that the London Protocol should be maintained, and the decrees of January 13 be revoked? Is it not His duty to see that the exact numbers bleed to death, and that certain villages be destroyed, in order that the family of Gluckstadt or that of

Augustenburg may rule over a certain trifling scrap of His footstool?

Oh what a foolish, cruel, and misguided world, still in the leading strings of infancy! Thus my historical studies left me quite as confused as they found me.

CHAPTER II

The course of war—Hostilities suspended and renewed—My husband departs—The dead baby—Letters from the seat of war—Recovery—Anxiety—Letters—Return of Frederick.

ENCOURAGING tidings came from the seat of war. The allies won battle after battle. The Danes were forced from the entire field, which was occupied by our troops, the enemy barely maintaining the lines. With pins and flags I followed the campaign on the map. If only the butchery might end before Frederick's regiment was ordered into the field! This fear hung over us like the sword of Damocles. I dreaded the night lest the morning would bring the marching orders. Frederick was calm, but he saw what was coming.

"Accustom yourself to face the events, my dear, and cease protesting. I believe the war will continue for some time, for not a large enough force was sent to the front in the beginning, so my regiment will have to join."

Two months and yet no results! Oh, why could not the cruel game be settled in one fight

like a duel ? But no, if one battle is lost, another is offered ; if one position is given up, another is taken, and so on till one side or the other is annihilated, or both exhausted.

On April 14 the last stronghold was taken, and immediately a peace conference assembled in London. Every one was overjoyed and relieved, save, perhaps, some of my husband's comrades, who had hoped to share the glory. Their wives thought it bad luck. But I received the news of "suspension of hostilities" with great joy, and wrote in my diary "Disarm ! Disarm ! For ever." I added despondingly, and in brackets, "Utopia."

The London conference dragged on two months without agreement, and then came the orders to Frederick's regiment to march, with twenty-four hours for leave-taking. The birth of our little child was hourly expected, and it was as if we both awaited death upon our farewell.

We were overwhelmed with the magnitude of the approaching evils. To us it was neither patriotic nor heroic to help hew down the Danes, and in case our parting was for ever, what excuse of state could reconcile us to this terrible sacrifice ? To defend the common cause of humanity might be justified, but to rush into battle with a distant country, throwing away life, and home, and family, because of the mere pledge of princes—it was too infamous ! Why must Austrian soldiers leave

home to help set this petty prince on his petty throne? Why? Why? How treasonable and blasphemous to ask such a question of Emperor and Pope! Neither would or could answer.

The regiment was to march at ten. We had not slept for hours lest we should waste a moment. We strove vainly to comfort each other. In the rays of morning light I realised that my hour had come, and with tears of uncertainty we tore ourselves apart, Frederick desperate lest the next moment might rob him of both wife and child.

The next morning the Olmutz papers contained the following account:—

Yesterday the ——th Regiment left town with flying colours to gain fresh laurels in the sea-girt brotherland. The joy of battle inspired every heart, etc., etc.

I lost my child, and for weeks lay between life and death, dreaming all the agonies of war and torture. In my delirium I cried, “Disarm! Disarm! Help us all for the sake of justice and mercy, help!”

When I regained consciousness, my father and Aunt Marie stood at my bedside.

“Is he alive? Have letters come?” were my first questions. Yes, quite a heap of letters had accumulated. One was marked: “Not to be

opened till all danger is past." From this I take extracts :—

To-day we met the enemy for the first time, having marched through conquered territory until now, with the Danes retreating fast. Everywhere are the ruins and remnants of battle. The landscape is torn with shell and piled with graves. So the victors march on to new victories. To-day we took the enemy's position and leave a burning village behind us. While friend and foe were absorbed in the tumult, I could only think of you, and that perhaps you were lost. The enemy withstood us but two hours, and we did not pursue. We collected our wounded and cared for them as well as we could. The dead, some among them still possibly alive, we buried, but the wounded and injured we must leave behind to bleed slowly to death and starve. And we, hurrah, we must push on into the jolly, dashing war.

Our next will probably be a pitched battle, for two great army corps are about to clash. Then the loss will run into thousands, and the artillery will mow them down. What a strange way of doing things! It would be better if the two enemies each had a weapon, which with one blow would wipe out either side. Perhaps such blasts would tend to put a stop to war. If both forces were equally deadly, then force could no longer be employed to settle disputes, for both disputants would be wiped out.

Why do I write thus to you, when I ought to be glorifying our engagements and triumphs? Because,

like you, I long for the unvarnished truth, and hate the usual lying phrases when death is near. With thousands voicing the opposite, I must speak out before I fall a sacrifice to war,—that I hate it. If every man who feels it would say so, Heaven would hear our cry, and even the thundering cannon roar would be drowned out by the new battle-cry of panting, exhausted humanity: Let us make war on war!

The above was written yesterday. I snatched a few hours of sleep on a sack of straw. In half an hour the field mail is taken. With little rest we are already up for the march,—poor fellows. It is indeed little rest after the bloody work to prepare them for still bloodier sights. I have just returned from looking over the wounded, whom we must leave. How gladly I would have put a bullet into some of them, who must drag out a miserable agonized death. My horse is saddled. Farewell, my Martha, if you are still alive.

One or two letters I found of a later date:—

The day is ours. I am unhurt. The first is good news for papa and the last for you. I cannot forget that for thousands the same day has brought untellable grief.

Another letter:—

Imagine my astonishment. Riding near me at the head of a detachment was Aunt Cornelia's only son, Gottfried. The youngster is beside himself with enthusiasm, but how his poor mother must suffer!

That evening I sent for him to come to my tent. "Is it not splendid," he cried, "to be fighting in the same cause? How lucky I am to be called out in my first year of service! I shall win the cross of honour." "And my aunt, how does she like it?" "Oh, just as all women—she tried to damp my spirits with tears, but I am enchanted, delighted! Awful, I grant, but magnificent. It is gratifying to feel that I am fulfilling man's highest duty, with God's help, for king and country. To meet death so closely, to challenge him face to face, and yet not be touched, it fills me with the glory of the old epics, as if the muse of history were leading us on to victory. I feel such an indignation at the enemy who dares defy us Germans, and it is a thrilling sensation to gratify this hate, to destroy without being a murderer, this fearless exposure of one's life."

So the boy rattled on, and I let him. Was not my first campaign the same experience? Epic? Yes, that is the very word with which we so carefully train our schoolboys into soldiers. We throw it into their excitable young brains, which makes quiet domestic bliss seem stupid nonsense, when they are longing for heroics. With me this attitude has so completely vanished, that I could hardly realise Gottfried's state of mind. I had so early realised it all as so inhuman, that it was no longer a revelation from the kingdom of Lucifer but gross barbarity and bestiality. Only he who is drunk with the passion for blood and destruction can triumphantly split open the defenceless head

of an enemy. I never knew the "joy of battle," believe me, my dear wife, I never did.

Gottfried is delighted that we are fighting together as brothers in the same just cause (as if every cause were not called right by the powers commanding). "We Germans are brothers!" "Yes, that was proved by the Thirty Years' and the Seven Years' Wars," I suggested ironically. Gottfried paid no attention. "Together we will conquer every enemy." "Yes, until the Prussians declare war against the Austrians." "Not to be thought of! Impossible! What, when we have fought and bled together?" "I warn you, nothing is impossible in political matters. The friendships of dynastical rulers are as changeable as the ephemeral fly."

I write this, not because I imagine you in all your ill condition will be able to read it, but because I have a premonition that I shall not outlive this campaign, and I want to leave my convictions behind me. The sincere reflections of honest, humane soldiers should not be falsified or sink into the silent grave with them, unspoken and unrevealed. I have here spoken it, this quiets my conscience, I can die in peace.

This latest letter was five days old—five unspeakable days of dread. Though Frederick was yet unhurt, my anxieties left me no comfort. My father was obliged to return to Grumitz, and Aunt Marie remained to keep me consoled with her orthodox ideas of destiny, providence, and divine mercy—small comfort with so few letters coming

from the seat of war. My father made inquiries, but could get no information, although Frederick was not in the list of the dead. Thus the days dragged on.

One afternoon I lay half dreaming on the sofa, where I had begged to be left alone. My weakness and anxiety had so overpowered my imagination and reasonableness that I was full of fleeting visionary sensations, and springing up in terror at some slight movement in the room, I suddenly thought I saw Frederick in the doorway.

“ Oh, my Frederick, my lost one,” I groaned.

“ Martha, my wife ! ”

What ? could it be his real voice ? then real arms were thrown around me eagerly.

The dream came true, I was enfolded in my husband's loving embrace.

CHAPTER III

Reunion and summer joys—Resolved to quit the service—
Rudolf's training—The end of the war—Conditions of
peace—Fresh cares and ruined fortunes—My husband
remains in the service.

AFTER our first expressions of joy had subsided, Frederick told us how he had been left wounded in a peasant's hut, the regiment marching on and reporting him "missing." This report had not reached us, and when he was sufficiently recovered he hastened home without waiting to write, for the war was practically at an end. We spent the summer again at father's country seat, where the entire family assembled, including brother Otto, home from the Military Academy, and Cousin Conrad, whose regiment lay not far away.

I was determined to persuade my husband to quit the service, for we had grown so one in our feelings and interests that what was mine was surely his also, and why, if new wars were again to threaten, need we go through such horrors again ?

Besides, Rudolf was now seven years old, and it should be our delight, in our retirement, to educate and train this little man according to our highest ideals. He had never been given over to nurses and tutors, for it was my pride to watch every phase of his development. In his growing appetite for knowledge we had never permitted ourselves to tell him a falsehood, but his questions were not always answered fully enough to suit him. He accompanied us on our daily walks, and often his questions demanded the unknowable, so we answered, "We do not know." This did not satisfy him, and he used to put these questions to others of whom he received quite decided answers. One day he remarked triumphantly, "You do not know how old the moon is, but I do. It is six thousand years old—remember that." Frederick and I looked at each other silently, and a whole volume of protest lay in that glance and that silence.

I seriously objected to the soldier games which his grandfather and uncle played with him. Thus the ideas of cutting down the enemy were infused in him without my knowledge. One day Frederick and I came upon him when he was mercilessly beating two puppies with a riding whip.

"You cheating little Italian," he said, lashing the one puppy. And striking the other he called loudly, "You saucy Dane." Frederick snatched

the whip from his hand: "And you heartless little Austrian," he said, laying on two or three blows. Rudolf began to blubber, and the Italian and Dane ran joyfully away.

"I hope you are not angry that I struck your boy, Martha; I hate the lash, but I cannot endure seeing an animal abused."

"Quite right."

"Only people can be hurt, then?" whimpered the boy.

"That is still worse."

"But you went out to beat the Italians and Danes."

"They were our enemies."

"Then one may hate those?"

Turning away, Frederick said: "And tomorrow the priest will tell him that we must love our enemies. Such logic!" Then to Rudolf: "No, it is not because we hate them that we strike, but because they strike us."

"Why do they want to strike us?"

"Because we—no, go and play, Rudi," he interrupted himself, "there is no way out of the tangle. You must never do it again, and we will forgive you."

We often had distinguished visitors from Vienna. They discussed the political situations, and thus I was enabled to follow the entire Danish engagement to the end. After all these victories it must

be decided what would be done with all these Duchies. Would the famous Augustenburg receive his portion ? Not at all, for an entirely new pretender claimed it. It was not enough that there was a "Glucksburg" and a "Gotrop" and whatever other lines of succession to lay claim, but Russia presented a new candidate. Against Augustenburg Russia pitted an "Oldenburg." But finally there were no burgs at all to have the Duchies, but they were to be divided among the allies, and the expenses of the war was to be borne by the defeated. This was hard to understand. The land had been devastated, its harvests trampled under, its sons were mouldering in their graves, and now it must pay the costs. Was not rather some reparation due to them ?

One day I opened the conversation : "What news in regard to Schleswig-Holstein ?"

"The latest news is, that von Beust has addressed a demand to the Assembly, asking by what right the Allies can accept the surrender of these provinces from a king whose sovereignty has not been recognised by them."

"And it is a very reasonable question," I remarked.

"You do not understand these matters, child," said my father. "It is not reasonable, but an impertinent trick on von Beust's part. Do not the Duchies belong to us because we have

conquered them? We should not have concluded peace, but conquered the whole of Denmark and turned it over to the German Alliance."

"Why do that, papa, you are such a patriotic Austrian, what do you care for the German Federation?"

"Have you forgotten that our Hapsburgs were German Emperors once, and may become so again?"

"What if some of the great Germans cherished a like dream?" suggested Frederick.

My father laughed outright: "Imagine a Protestant princeling at the head of our Holy Roman Empire! You have lost your senses."

As Bresser said, "Let us hope that the settling of this affair will not be a source of discord between the powers. For every war has within it the seed of future wars, as one act of violence has led to another since the beginning."

Some days later a bit of news was reported: King William of Prussia visited our Emperor at Schönbrun. They met with embraces, the Prussian eagle was hoisted, and the Prussian national airs were played, with triumphant hurrahs from the people. I was very happy, for it put to shame the evil prophecies that the two powers might get into a quarrel again. My father rejoiced, for he saw in this alliance a means of reconquering our lost Lombardy.

"Will you tell me," I cried out to the assembled

guests one day, "why do not all the European States form an alliance? Would not that be the simplest way?"

The gentlemen shrugged their shoulders, smiled superior smiles and did not answer. I probably had said one of those silly things with which ladies are apt to venture into the realms of higher politics.

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The autumn was at hand; peace had been signed, and Frederick's retirement from the army could now be carried out. But man proposes and circumstances dispose for him. As a sequel of the war many banking houses failed, and with the rest I lost my private fortune. Shot and shell blast not only the ramparts and forts but also the entire social fabric of family and finance.

My kindest of fathers, however, came to the rescue and saw that I should want for nothing, yet the retirement of my husband from the military had become impossible, for we could not entirely depend on my father. Frederick was too proud for that, and so our beautiful castle in the air was shattered. But one comfort remained: there was nowhere a black spot on the horizon, and peace might last for many years.

CHAPTER IV

Lilli and Conrad—Aunt Marie's letter—Rumours of war with Prussia—Negotiations and arguments—My father's New Year's toast—Hopes and fears—The army mobilised—War declared—The manifestos of both sides.

SPRING found me in the neighbourhood of Vienna. Here I could see Frederick daily. My sisters and aunt were off for Marienbad, and from there Lilli wrote me :—

I confess I am beginning to be interested in Cousin Conrad.

And another letter from Aunt Marie :—

MY DEAR CHILD—It has been a tiresome winter in society, and I shall be glad when Lilli and Rosa are married off. They have had opportunities enough. It is a tiresome, thankless task to chaperone two pleasure-seeking girls.

I am rejoiced to hear that you are well once more. [I had suffered from a serious fever.] Your husband had been very much alarmed. But, thank God, your time had not yet come. The service which I had said

at the Ursalines no doubt aided in bringing about your recovery. Kiss little Rudolf for me. Tell him he must learn all he can. I am sending him a few books : *The Pious Child, and his Guardian Angel*,—a beautiful story—and *The Heroes of our Country*, a collection of war stories for boys. We cannot begin too early to teach them such glorious ideals. Your brother Otto was barely five when he first learned of Alexander and Cæsar. It delights me to see how heroic and enthusiastic he is. I am sorry your plan is to stay in Vienna this summer to be nearer Frederick. But you should think of your dear father as well, who would love to have you at Grumitz. Take my word for it, you married people should not be so constantly together, but allow each other some little liberty. That Heaven may protect you all is my constant prayer.

AUNT MARIE.

P.S.—Your husband has relatives in Prussia. (Happily he is not so arrogant as his countrymen.) Please ask him what they are saying there about the present political situation. It is rather critical.

This letter was the first insinuation to me that some complication was in view. Having been ill, I had neglected to keep myself informed on the current news, and I asked my husband : “ You dear Prussian, less arrogant than the rest, what does Aunt Marie mean ? Is there really a political situation just now ? ”

“ Yes, there always is, as there always is weather,

some political situation—which is as changeable and treacherous as the weather. They are still arguing about these complicated Duchies who talk of freeing themselves of these arrogant Prussians—‘rather Danish than Prussian!’ they cry.”

“And what will become of Augustenburg, with his ‘undivided right’ over these Danish Provinces? I studied all this history with the greatest care, and I have taken my stand for the old inherited right which has stood for hundreds of years. I thought I was sacrificing you to help establish this right.”

“It will go hard with your historical claims, my dear Martha,” laughed Frederick. Again I began to study the crisis, and discovered that the Vienna treaty had really settled nothing. Schleswig-Holstein loomed more formidably than before. The old claimants renewed their claims before the Alliance, and no one could guess what they were going to do about it. The two great powers were accusing each other of encroachment.

“Now, what are the arrogant Prussians up to?” was the constant suspicion of Austria as well as of the Middle States and the Duchies. Napoleon III. advised Prussia to annex up to the Danish-speaking border, but Prussia pretended to be unwilling. But at last she formulated her claim thus: Prussian troops should remain in occupation on the defensive, and under Prussian leader-

ship ; a contingent should represent the Alliance ; the harbour of Kiel to be occupied ; postal, telegraph, and customs to be under Prussian control. This angered the Austrian Minister of War ; the jealous Middle States objected, and demanded that their leader be put in possession of the Duchies. This again Austria objected to, and although willing that Prussia should hold the harbour of Kiel, could not tolerate her right to recruit soldiers and sailors. And so the quarrel ripened.

Prussia declared she had no design absolutely to annex, but was planning the best interest of all parties. Under opposition Prussia became even more assertive, and voice after voice was raised against this “insolent announcement,” public sentiment rising daily against Prussia and Bismarck.

The Middle States demanded to know the secret negotiations carried on between the diplomats of the two powers. The two Emperors betook themselves to their country seats, and messages flew between them thick and fast. Several points were agreed upon. The investment should be shared half and half. Lauenburg should fall to Prussia, and Austria in lieu thereof receive two and a half million thalers. I asked myself, what return could such a sum be to offset all the losses, my financial losses, for instance, and in the case of thousands of others their fallen loved ones ? Yet I was rejoiced when a new “treaty ” was signed ;

that sounded so reassuring. Later I learned that these documents generally contain the germ of some future *causus belli*. The breaking of a treaty is only a fresh chance to fly to arms.

The quarrel seemed to be laid aside. The powers occupied the provinces, and I was again obliged to give up my favourite aspiration to see them once more "for ever together undivided," as was decreed in 1460.

But in spite of the treaty, the situation was not relieved. Patient reading of the political press gave me an idea of the shifting condition, but I could hardly believe that war would result. I contented myself with the thought that legal questions could always be settled legally and justly. All these wise ministers, diplomats, judicious councillors, parliamentarians, and polite monarchs, could surely settle such a trivial point. Thus I was actuated more by curiosity than anxiety in my research, which I was carefully jotting into the red book :—

Oct. 1, '65.—Imperial Council at Frankfort adopts the following resolutions : 1. The right of Schleswig-Holstein to control itself must remain in force. The Gastein treaty is rejected as a breach of right to the nation. 2. All officials shall refuse to pay over taxes and loans to the Allies.

Oct. 15.—The Prussian royal edict approved the decision in regard to hereditary claimant, who re-

nounces all right to the throne for the sum of a half million thalers. By the Vienna treaty the duchies were ceded to the Allies, hence there can be no further claim.

Protests were made on all hands. "Prussian arrogance" became a catchword, and all hands declared, "We must protect ourselves against them." "King William would be another Victor Emanuel." "To reconquer Silesia is Austria's secret intent." "Prussia is paying court to France." "Austria is coquetting with the French." Thus tittle-tattle and recrimination was indulged in by the Cabinets of the great Powers quite as seriously as by the gossips at a village tea.

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The entire family returned for the autumn to Vienna.

I was very eager to keep my little Rudolf away from the influence of his grandfather, who was determined to inspire in him military tastes, which were already awakened, probably through a long line of soldier ancestry. My studies of natural science had taught me that such tendencies could be inherited. On my boy's birthday his grandfather brought him a sword. I remonstrated:—

"You know very well that my son shall never be a soldier?"

"Would you tie him to your apron strings?"

Never mind, good soldier blood will tell; let him grow up, and see what profession he chooses—the noblest of all, I am sure—the military.”

“Martha fears he may die in battle,” said Aunt Marie. “As though the same fate might not overtake one in bed.”

“If a hundred thousand fell in battle,” I said, “would the same fate have been theirs in peace?”

Aunt Marie was always ready with an answer, “No, it would have been their destiny to have died in war.”

“Suppose they had been bold enough to refuse to go to war,” I suggested. “Impossible,” shouted my father, and then the old controversy began.

The Greek fable of the hundred-headed hydra illustrates so perfectly the manner of argument between two convinced opponents. No sooner have you sliced the head off one point and started to attack the second, when the first head has grown on again.

The following were my father’s favourite and unconquerable arguments in favour of war:—

1. War was the decree of God Himself (see Bible).
2. Wars have always been and always will be.
3. Without war population would increase too fast.
4. Permanent peace would corrupt, weaken, relax, and degenerate the race.

5. War best develops self-sacrifice, heroism, and fine character.

6. Human beings will always differ in opinions, interests, and desires, hence perpetual peace is impossible.

None of the above wise sayings can be maintained under argument, but each in turn can be set up as a fresh defence when the preceding one topples. For example, obliged to drop argument No. 4 and admit that peace is more apt to secure happiness, prosperity, and progress, my father would agree, "War is an evil, but (arguments 1 and 2) inevitable." Then I would prove that by international agreement and law, war could be avoided; he would acknowledge that it could, but ought not (No. 5). If the argument for peace upsets the claims of Nos. 4 and 5, and shows that war hardens and brutalises men, then he would admit it, but quote No. 3. This argument sounds hugely humane and learned, but is the least sincere of all. Wars are not waged for the benefit of posterity. When you have proved the fallacy of 3 the other returns to 1, and so the trick can be carried on till it becomes a labyrinthal puzzle.

The lovers of war reason in a circle where one can always see and follow, but never catch them. That their arguments often proceed from opposite points of view and nullify each other matters nothing to them, and proves that they are arguing

a position they have not thought out for themselves, but are bolstering up opinions which have been handed on to them. I did not see this clearly at the time I carried on the argument with my father on peace and war, but I always came away from the combat fatigued and dizzy, and I realised later that it came from whirling in this circle which his lack of logic necessitated.

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New Year's eve, 1866. As the first hour of this momentous year struck, we were sitting about my father's table celebrating the engagement of Lilli and Conrad. My father arose and offered his New Year's toast:—

“My dear children and friends: The year '66 begins well, for long have I desired Conrad for a son-in-law. May we hope that this year may bring Rosa her ideal also. And you, Martha, may your husband be promoted to the rank of Colonel. For you, Dr. Bresser, I may wish hosts of patients, although it does not fit in with the spirit of my wishes for health and happiness. And for you, my dear, fatalistic Marie, may destiny bring you the grand prize of a full indulgence, or anything else you may be wishing for. For my Otto, my son, I can only wish him every distinction in his final examination, that he may acquire every soldierly virtue, and some day be an ornament to the army, and a pride to his old father's heart.

And for myself, who knows no greater joy than the welfare and fame of my fatherland, I can only wish that the coming year may bring back to my Austria the province of Lombardy, and—who knows—Silesia also. And may we take back from the insolent Prussian this land which they stole from the great Maria Theresa.”

A chill fell upon the company as my father closed his toast. Truly, none of us felt any pressing need for these two provinces.

“No, father dear,” I replied, “we must not forget that in Italy and Prussia it is also New Year’s Day, and we will wish them no evil. May the year ’66 and all the years to come help us to grow more united and happy.”

“Oh, you fantastic idealist,” said my father, shrugging his shoulders.

“Not that,” said my husband in my defence. “The wish is not one of an enthusiast and dreamer, for science assures us that it must be fulfilled some day. The world has slowly been growing better since the beginning, and it must go on, although we do not note it from year to year. We all know that men are happier, and better, and freer than in the primeval days.”

“If you are so sure of eternal progress, why so often complain of reaction and the relapses into barbarism in our day?” asked my father, tauntingly.

“Because”—Frederick took out his pencil and drew a spiral—“because the movement of progress goes on like this. It continually ascends, although at times appearing to go backwards. This coming year, if war is forced upon us, may be represented by one of these backward curves. Such events hurt civilisation materially as well as morally.”

“How unsoldierly you speak, Tilling.”

“These are universal matters; the opinions of a soldier or civilian have no different weight here, for the truth is always the same. If a thing is red, must one obstinately call it blue because one wears a blue uniform, or black because one wears a black coat?”

“A what?” said my father, who, when the argument went against him, was apt to appear hard of hearing. Since it is difficult to repeat a long argument, the discussion inclined to drop.

Upon our return home, I asked my husband: “What did I hear you say? There is prospect of war? Never, never will I allow you to go into another campaign.”

“How can your passionate ‘Never, never!’ help in the matter? The nearer the fatal day comes, the less possible it will be for me to resign. Immediately after Schleswig-Holstein it would have been possible, but not now.”

“Ah, that unlucky Schmidt & Sons the bankers!”

Again I found myself anxiously following developments in the newspapers and reports. "Be prepared! Be prepared!" was now the cry. "Prussia is preparing!" "Austria is quietly preparing!" "The Prussians claim we are preparing; it is not true, it is they who are preparing." And thus the variations were sounded in my anxious ear.

"Why is all this commotion about armaments," I asked my father, "if neither party plans to use them?" He answered me with the old saying: "In times of peace prepare for war."

Thus each is keeping the eye on the other, and each accuses the other of warlike motives. So again begins the endless circle—the serpent with his tail in his mouth.

On the morning of March 12 my father burst into my room beaming with joy: "Hurrah," he cried, "Good news!"

"Disarmament?" I asked, delighted.

"On the contrary. Yesterday a great council of war was held. We are ready on an hour's notice to send out 800,000 men, and I tell you, my child, Silesia is ours whenever we choose."

"Oh God! Oh God!" I groaned, "must this affliction come upon us once more? Who can be so devoid of conscience that for greed and ambition——"

And my father, denying that it was greed or

ambition, only justice and patriotic ardour which pressed for war, harangued on the subject in his illogical manner, jumbling his arguments together, proving that all wished for peace, but if war came it must be met—until I was quite frantic, and said, beside myself with emotion :—

“ You know well, that not only you, but the whole council want war, then why not say it out frankly ? Why all this falsehood ? Why tell the people they hope for peace when they are madly arming ? Show your teeth and your closed fists, but do not the while whisper soft, false words of reassurance. If you are wildly eager to draw the sword, do not pretend that you are only caressing the hilt.”

He rose to the height of passion, and finally I burst into exhausting tears. My father was so amazed that he did not utter a word.

Now came a time of hopes and fears, ringing the changes on “ Peace is secure,” “ War is certain.” But once this word “ war,” this little seed of thought, finds its way to the front, it seems inevitably to produce—war.

News came that Prussia was arming the Silesian fortresses. Austria disclaimed any intention of attacking Prussia and demanded that the latter should disarm. Prussia declared herself innocent of warlike intentions, but strengthened her standing army, hence Austria felt compelled to continue her

preparations. So the dual game continued, and became a triple game as Italy armed herself with haste.

The excitement became universal and more violent every day. Every newspaper and speech announced that war was in sight. Bismarck was hated and reviled on every side. Letters were received from Aunt Cornelia in Prussia telling that the war was anything but wished, and that Bismarck was no less hated in his own country. She said the army was reported as refusing to go out in a war against brothers; that Queen Augusta had thrown herself at her husband's feet to pray for peace. Had perhaps our beautiful Empress also done the same and with tears begged for disarmament, who knows? Perhaps the Emperor himself wished for peace, but it seemed that not even the throne could stand against the pressure and strain on every side.

On June 1 Prussia declared to the Assembly that she would disarm if Austria and Saxony would. Vienna responded accusing Prussia of planning an attack in concert with Italy. Austria would call the German Alliance to arms and decide the case of the Duchies. Holstein should co-operate. Prussia declared that this broke the treaty, and they moved into Holstein. Bismarck issued a circular letter. The press cried for war and predicted a victory to strengthen the national confidence.

On June 11 Austria proposed that the Alliance should take a hand against Prussia for helping herself to Holstein. On June 14 the vote stood nine to six—accepted. Oh, those three terrible votes! All was over. Ambassadors are dismissed. The Alliance requests Austria and Bavaria to go to the rescue of Hanover and Saxony, who have already attacked the Prussians.

On the 18th, Prussia's war manifesto appeared. On the same date Austria's troops marched out, and on the 22nd Prussia issued her first army orders.

King William said :—

To the last I have worked for peace with Austria, but it was refused.

Kaiser Francis Joseph announced :—

Prussia shows her desire to set might in the place of right, therefore this unholy war of German against German cannot be avoided. Before the judgment seat of history and Almighty God I summon him who has brought this misery down upon our families and country.

The war is always the desire of "the other side." It is always the other one who chooses to overcome justice with might, "German against German makes an unholy war"; quite right to step beyond Prussia and Austria and appeal to Germany. But why not in every war reach to the higher plane,

and recognise it as a war of humanity against humanity? and regard every battle as an unholy contest?

And what good would it do to summon the aggressor before the judgment of History? Has not History always given the right to the victor? The laurels of History have always been placed on the conqueror's brow, and he has been called great and the promotor of civilisation.

And why summon him before the Judgment seat of God? Is He not the same Lord of Hosts who begins as well as ends every war with His unchangeable will? Such contradictions! Are we not expected to consider two opposite principles as equally holy? Are the God of Love and the God of War one God, compelling war as well as justice, demanding national hatred as well as love of humanity?

BOOK IV

1866

CHAPTER I

The Austro-Prussian War—Frederick again to the front—
The Red Cross—Reports and Letters—The Custoza
victory—Austria has reverses in Bohemia—Discussion
of the press.

THE greatest of all human misfortunes was again upon us, and, as usual, the public was jubilant. Regiments marched out (how would they return?) with blessings and good wishes and followed by the shouting rabble of street urchins.

Frederick had been ordered to Bohemia before the declaration of hostilities, when I was still confident that matters would blow over, so I was somewhat spared the agony of parting. When my father came triumphantly with the news, "Now the war is begun," I had been alone a fortnight, and I had made up my mind for the worst, as does a doomed man in his cell when he knows that the death-sentence must come.

I raised my hand imploringly: "Father, one wish! Leave me to myself."

Not being fond of pathetic scenes he hastily

retired, and I, crushed in spirit, wrote in my red journal :—

The death-sentence! A hundred thousand men will be executed. Will Frederick be among them? And for that matter, who am I that I should not perish with them? Oh that I were already dead!

On the same day I received from Frederick these hasty lines :—

My wife! Be brave and do not lose heart. We have been happy. That past no one can take from us even if to-day the decree “it is finished” should be issued for us as for many others. To-day we meet the enemy. Perhaps I shall recognise some of the old Prussian comrades—even my cousin Gottfried. We march upon Liebenau with the advance guard of Count Clam-Gallas. There will be no leisure for letters—at most a line to assure you of my safety. But on this leaflet—in case it be the last—I wish I could put into one single word all the love I bear you. I can find only this : “Martha!” You know what that means to me.

Conrad had also been ordered to march. He was full of ardour and felt enough hatred of the Prussians to make his start a pleasure. Still, parting with Lilli was hard, for the marriage licence had arrived just two days before.

“Oh, Lilli, Lilli, why have you put me off so long? Who knows if I shall ever return?”

Upon his departure her remorse was pitiful,

and she wept bitterly in my arms. I consoled her with the thought that had she been his wife it would have made the parting even harder.

The family now removed to Grumitz, and I joined them, oppressed with the premonition of widowhood. Occasionally in the midst of my dull grief would come the bright thought: "He is alive. He will come back." Then the horror of agony that he might be wounded, perishing for water, or that heavy waggons were rolling over his torn limbs, or that flies were in his open wounds, or, worse yet, that they were throwing him into the trench while yet he lived!

I would spring up with a shriek at this thought.

"Shame, Martha," my father would remonstrate; "you will become insane if you brood in this way. Drive such wicked fears from your mind."

Again he would say, "Your husband is a staff officer, and will not be neglected as a common soldier. Besides, you should think about the grandeur of the result of the war, and not about your own petty nervous feelings."

"Yes, not to think about it. That is always the way we treat human misery. All kinds of barbarity exist because we are trained not to think about it."

The Red Cross was a new organisation. I read Dunant's pamphlet, which urged its necessity. The tract was a heart-rending appeal. He had

hurried to the field of Solferino, and told the world what he saw. Hosts of wounded lying five and six days without help. What could a single man do to save this mass of misery? Many needed only a drop of water or a bite of bread; others were buried still breathing. He spoke out, and for the first time—the world echoed the cry. The Geneva Convention was called and the Red Cross was founded.

Why had not Austria sent delegates? Why is everything new met either with opposition or indifference? The law of mental inertia and the sanctified custom are to blame. My father argued: “The idea is all right, but impracticable!” How could military authority allow private service on the field? And then there were spies! And the expense! Is not war costly enough without it? Volunteer nurses were an unnecessary burden. Tactics came before friendly offices. It was even argued that this unnecessary burden would increase the cost of supplies and bring a rise in prices.

Such is official wisdom! so learned, so prudent, so heartless, and so immeasurably stupid!

The first engagement took place in Bohemia at Liebenau, June 25.

“It is a magnificent beginning,” said my father. “Heaven is with us. Our ‘Iron Brigade’ will reduce these windbags. They will punish these fellows well.”

(However, the next news showed that, after five hours of fighting, this same brigade, forming a part of the advance guard of Clam-Gallas, retreated to Podol. I learned later that Frederick was in this engagement, and the same night General Horn attacked Podol.)

“But,” continued my father, “even better news comes from the south. At Custozza, dear children, we have gained a most glorious victory. I have already said it: Lombardy must become ours. I regard the war as decided. We must send some of our regulars and finish off these Italians, and then it will be easy to deal with these ‘tailors’ apprentices.’ This impertinent Prussian militia is not fit to engage with regular soldiers. They are all from the shops, the bench, and mere rubbish, and they cannot stand against such blood and iron as our men are made of. Hear the good news from the paper this morning: ‘The cattle-plague in Prussian Silesia has broken out in a highly threatening form.’”

“Cattle-plague—threatening! Is this your good news? Nice thing we must accept as pleasure in these war days. However, the black and gold frontier posts will undoubtedly keep the plague from crossing over to us.”

But my father went on reading the pleasant intelligence:—

Fever is raging among Prussian troops. Such

results must necessarily abound in the villages, with the miserable shelter, unhealthy swamp land, and bad treatment. Austrians have no idea how miserably the Prussians handle their men. The nobles do as they please with the common people. Three ounces of salt pork is all that is allowed for each man. They are unaccustomed to forced marches and the hardship of short rations, and are close to starvation.

“The papers are full of startling news. You ought to keep them, Martha.” And I have kept them. This one ought always to do, and when a new struggle is in prospect one should read not the latest news but the accounts of the preceding wars, and weigh how little truth is contained in all these boastings and the prophesying; *that* would be instructing.

CHAPTER II

More and more reverses for Austria—A soldier's abhorrence of war—Poor Puxl—My husband's letter declares that this is his last campaign.

“How extraordinary! Defeat after defeat is ours. First the capture of Podol by moonlight; Clam-Gallas barricaded; the village taken and burned. Then they conquer Gitchin. Oh, those cursed needle-guns, how they mowed down our men rank after rank! The enemy's two great army corps have joined and are even now pressing down against Münchengratz.” Thus my father lamented, telling us the terrible news. But his confidence was unshaken.

“Let them come, every man of them, down into Bohemia, and we will annihilate them yet. We will surround them; the people will rise against them, and when there is no escape, no retreat—hemmed in—we will give them the finishing touch. It is a disadvantage for them to be in the enemy's country, for you have not only the army but the people against you. At Trautenau the inhabitants poured boiling water and oil on to the Prussians.”

A cry of horror and disgust escaped me.

“War is horrible, I grant,” said my father, “but what would you have?”

“Then never again dare tell me that war ennobles a people. Admit that it unmans them, brutalises and turns men into tigers and very devils. Boiling oil! Ugh!”

“Self-defence and righteous revenge are justifiable, Martha. Do you think we should take their needle-guns and bullets without return? Our brave fellows are cut down like defenceless cattle. But we will beat them yet, for we are too numerous and too well disciplined. I acknowledge a few mistakes have been made; we should not have waited, but pushed across the Prussian frontier from the start. Our choice of marshals may not have been altogether wise. But I will not find fault, for the decisive battle is yet to come. We are now concentrating a hundred thousand strong at Koniggratz. There will our northern Custoza be fought and won.”

Frederick was to fight there also. His last letter had said so. I have still in my possession all his hurried little notes, written in pencil, on horseback, in the tent, illegible save to me, and sent whenever he found opportunity to do so. Some came into my hands even after the campaign was over, and I have them as mementos to this hour. They are not the clever descriptions or

careful dispatches of the war correspondent. There are no details of the strategy, no rhetorical pictures of the battle-scenes. Here are some of them :—

A lovely summer night in camp—the ground is covered with exhausted men after a long forced march. Tents have been pitched for staff officers only. In mine there are three beds, and my two comrades are asleep. By the feeble light I am writing to my beloved wife. Puxl lies on my bed. Poor, tired dog! I almost regret that I brought him with me. He is sleeping and dreaming of his lover and master Count Rudolf Dotzky. And I, Martha, am dreaming of you. True, it is a waking dream, but I see you sitting in the far corner of the tent, and I dare not move for fear the image will vanish.

I stepped out a moment. Straggling figures dragged themselves up to our camp fires; they had been left on the road. But many more are still lying in the ditches and corn-fields. The heat of the march was fearful. The brazen sun burned into our brains, the knapsacks and muskets galled our shoulders. None have complained, though many fell from sun-stroke, never to rise again. This June night is clear and enchanting, but nightingales and roses and jasmine are not for us. We hear stamping and neighing horses, voices of restless men, the even tramp of the guard. Later we shall hear the croak of the raven, and smell the powder, blood, and corruption. Astonishing how blind is mankind! Those who curse the

fearful fires that burned the martyrs for the glory of God, even those glorify the battle-field. The torture chambers of the Inquisition fill them with abhorrence, but how proud they are of their arsenals !

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How aesthetically our battle-fields are painted ! Upon a hill-top stands a group of generals ; the field-marshal, with the glass at his eyes, is dictating to his staff as he sits proudly on a white charger. One hand is stretched dramatically toward the smoke-covered plain. Or he is waving his sword and looking backwards, as if saying to those behind, " Follow me, my children ! " Pictures give the magnificent and scenic effects of war without the horrors. They give the superb detail of line and the elevations and landscape, not the flowing blood, the mangled forms, and scenes of disgust. To see only the glitter of arms, the clouds of smoke, the prancing horses, the floating banners, the whirl of action, might inspire a battle-song or an epic, or a masterpiece of painting.

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The village is ours—no, the enemy has it—it is once more ours—finally it is the enemy's, but no longer can it be called a village, nothing but a heap of smoking ruins. The inhabitants (was the village not theirs ?) had abandoned it early—happy for them—for the shot and shell hit all alike, old and young, women and children. One family had remained behind in this place which yesterday we took, lost, retook, and lost again—an old couple with a married daughter in childbed. The husband chanced to be

one of my regiment. "For God's sake, Colonel," he said, as we approached the village, "send me over there to the house with the red roof, for there lives my wife with her crippled old parents. They could not get away." Poor devil, he arrived only to see his wife and child killed by an exploding shell, and the old people buried beneath the debris.

Fighting in the open country is terrible enough, but fighting in the midst of homes and human haunts is ten times more cruel. Crashing timbers, burning buildings, smothering smoke and fumes, maddened animals, every building a fortress or barricade, and every window a gun-hole! There was a breastwork heaped up with corpses, the defenders having used the slain as a rampart to shoot behind. I shall never forget that wall in all my days. One man penned in among the rest was still alive, for I saw him move.

Living still! that is the most horrible condition for the uncared-for wounded. If only some angel, either of compassion or death, might touch these poor wretches with a tender hand!

To-day we had a little cavalry skirmish in the open field. A Prussian dragoon regiment came up, dropped into line, and, with their bridles drawn and sabres over their heads, they galloped down on us. We sprang to meet the attack. No bullets were exchanged. A few paces apart both regiments broke into a thundering "hurrah" (like intoxicated Indians or barbaric Zulus); and so we fell upon each other, horse to horse and knee to knee, sabres swinging and

crashing down upon the men from both sides. We were soon in such a muddle that we could not use our weapons. The horses reared and pranced, clanging their hoofs. Once I fell and saw above me these frightful crashing feet within an inch of my head—it was not a pleasant thing.

Again on the march, with a few skirmishes. Another great sorrow. It ought not to haunt me so when so many are in despair. I should have left poor Puxl at home with his little master, for, as he ran after me, the splinter of a shell tore off his front legs. I heard the mournful howl, but must press on and desert the poor beast, who may not die for twenty-four, no, even forty-eight, hours. “Master, master,” he seemed to cry, “don’t forsake poor Puxl, and his little heart is breaking.” . . . What torments one most is to think that the dying faithful creature misjudged me. It cannot know that when a regiment is flying to attack, leaving behind so many comrades, one cannot command “Halt!” for a little dog . . . and he must have thought me merciless. Many would say, shrugging their shoulders, how can one mind such trifles amidst such great events and such gigantic misfortunes? But not you, my Martha—you will weep for Puxl.

What goes there? A spy? One? No, seventeen. There they came in four rows, four in a row, marching with bowed heads, surrounded by a square of soldiers. Behind, in a waggon, lies a corpse, and bound to it a twelve-year-old boy—the dead man’s son—all condemned to die. I withdraw, but hear the firing

and see the smoke, and I shudder. The boy is dead too.

At last a comfortable night in a bed! A poor little town! Provisions? Yes, taken from the inhabitants on requisition. All they had for the coming month. "Requisition!" It is a good thing to have a pretty name for an ugly act. But a night's sleep and a meal mean a great deal to me just now. When I was about to tumble into bed, an orderly came in and brought me something for which I pressed his hands, rewarded him handsomely, and promised to do something for his family. What the fine fellow brought me gave me the keenest pleasure, and freed me from an anxiety which I had been unable to shake off for thirty-six hours—he had brought me our Puxl. He was alive, beside himself with joy, though badly mangled. Ah, such a scene of reunion! He interrupted his greedy drink ten times to bark with joy. I bound his poor legs and gave him some supper. Finally we both slept, and in the morning when we woke he licked my hand again and again, stretched out his small body, breathed deep—and was no more. Poor Puxl, it is better so.

Another day and its horrors. With my eyes shut it comes to me in frightful pictures. Nothing but desecrating agony! How can some men give their war reminiscences with such delight? Do they lie and paint the scenes in story-book fashion for the sake of heroics? The more horrible things are, the more gloriously do they describe them; the more shocking

the scenes, the more indifferent and easy they make it appear. Writers seldom speak of these horrors with disapprobation, indignation, or rebellion. Some may, perhaps, heave a few sentimental sighs of sympathy, but they are ever ready to sing the glories of war—"Lift your heart to God and your hand against the enemy, ra-ra, Hurrah!"

To-day two pictures impressed themselves upon me. Rocky heights, with *jagers* climbing up them like cats. They were ordered to "take" the height. The enemy was firing down. As the bullets from above struck them, they threw out their arms, dropped their rifles, and rolled crashing to the bottom, and over the rocky projections they were smashed to pieces. The other scene: A rider, a little way from me, was struck by a shell, which ripped the lower part of his body off, disembowelling him. The horse swerved, and carried this mangled, bleeding mass, which at a short distance fell to the ground and was dragged over the stones by the galloping animal.

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An artillery section stands with its wheels sunk deep in the mire of water-covered road. Dripping with sweat and blood from the cruel blows, the horses drag at the sinking guns. One has dropped, but the lash keeps falling on the poor beast, who cannot move. Does not the man see this? Yes, but he is responsible for his guns and must fulfil his duty. The tormented, willing, faithful creature does not understand it, and has made his most desperate efforts. What must it think?—think, as animals think, not articulately,

but insensately ; not in words but in feelings, which are all the more acute because they can find no expression. And with its only expression, a shriek of pain, the poor thing sank ; and that shriek rings in my ears yet, it even haunted my next night's dream. To sense the pain of one artillery horse and then multiply it by one hundred thousand—for that is the usual number slaughtered in a long campaign—gives one some idea of the mass of agony men heap upon these poor unfortunate dumb brutes—these same men who go with pleasure to meet their foes. The men are supposed to know why they go, but the poor beast knows no reason why he is hewn into helpless agony. What anguish they endure—and terror so great that sweat drenches their bodies ! And then the fever of the wounds, the terrible thirst, which is suffered by these miserable, abused one hundred thousand horses ! This was my dream, and I awoke in a fever reaching for my water-bottle.

Another street fight. The crashing timbers and falling walls were the more horrible for the battle-cries, shots, and explosions of shell. From a wrecked house there flew over my head a window-frame, and the chimney fell to dust, stifling the air and stinging our eyes with the plaster dust. Fighting along the narrow lanes and streets, we finally came upon the open market-place. In the middle, on a high pillar, stood a statue of the Virgin Mother, with the Child in one arm, stretching the other in blessing. Here the struggle became one of demons—hand to hand. They

were hacking at me and I was laying about me with terrific force. What I hit I do not know, for in such moments one loses the memory. Yet two terrible pictures remain in my mind : A Prussian dragoon, strong as Goliath, tore one of our officers out of his saddle, and split his skull at the feet of the Madonna. The gentle saint looked on unmoved. Another Goliath of the enemy's dragoons snatched my neighbour, bent him backwards, so that I heard his spine crack, and threw him lifeless under the same blessed lady's outstretched hand.

From the heights we saw again a spectacle. A bridge fell with a train of waggons crossing it. Were they filled with wounded ? I could only see that horses, waggons, and humans sank for ever into the rapid water. It was counted lucky, for it was the enemy's loss : our men had sawed the timbers as a successful strategy. Another picture from this height disclosed our own Khevenhüller's regiment inveigled into a swamp from which it could not extricate itself. While sinking into the morass, the enemy's shell killed them all. But they could not mutter a sound with their noses, eyes, and mouths filled with mire. This, we were told, was a tactical mistake. Any one is apt to err, and what does it matter if a few of the chess-board figures are lost ? That the slime is in their eyes and mouths does not count ; only the mistake is deplored, but the tactitian will make up for it, and may be decorated with orders and promotions yet. Too bad that lately our 18th Battalion should fire

all night upon another one of our regiments till daylight disclosed the error, and sad also that another troop was led into a pond through a conflict in orders, but little things like that will happen to the best players of the game of war.

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I have settled it. This shall be my last campaign. When I come back I quit the service. When a man has learned to look upon war with the horror that it produces in me, it would be a lie and a crime to stay in its service. As you know, I have always gone into battle with repugnance, but this detestation is so increased, this condemnation and decision has become so strong, that all the reasons with which I had held my judgment have ceased to argue in me. Our mutual study of the question has proved to me that the greatest souls in the world share this conception of war with me. Whatever comes, I am determined that at the end of this campaign I shall for ever close my military life. I cannot serve the god of war any longer. I have come to this conviction as some people change their old ideas of religion, which they gradually find have rested on folly and superstition ; and so I can no longer keep up the deception, or kneel to the delusion, that army proclamations and cannon roars are consecrated things. Without any respect for the ritual of the god Mars, with its weird human sacrifices, I abjure for ever the cruel worship.

CHAPTER III

Austria ruined at the battle of Koniggratz—Dr. Bresser with the wounded—I go to the seat of war to search for my husband—The scenes on the way—More horrors described—I meet Frau Simon—A night journey—Am carried back to Vienna exhausted—Return to Grumitz.

THE battle of Koniggratz ended in a terrible defeat which seemed decisive. My father told the news in such a tone as though it had been the end of the world. There was neither letter nor telegram from Frederick. Was he wounded or worse? Conrad had reported himself as untouched. The lists had not yet arrived, but the loss in killed and wounded was reported as forty thousand.

I wept for hours when the third day came without a line. While there was hope, I could still weep; had all been over my woe would have been without expression. My father was terribly depressed, and Otto full of revenge. He wished to join a corps of volunteers recruiting in Vienna. It was reported that the victorious commander of the southern campaign was to replace the defeated marshal of the north.

But no news came of Frederick.

A few days later there was a letter from Dr. Bresser, who was busy in the neighbourhood of the battle, and wrote of the infinite misery and need of help, which was beyond imagination. He had joined Dr. Brauer, who had been sent by the Saxon Government, and a Saxon lady, another Florence Nightingale, was to arrive two days later. She came from the hospitals of Dresden to help in Bohemia. The two surgeons were planning to meet the lady at the nearest station to Koniggratz, and Bresser begged us, if possible, to send quantities of bandages and such supplies to this station, that they might be delivered into his hands. This letter awoke in me a resolution which I did not dare tell my family: I would take the box of bandages myself.

I announced that I would go to Vienna and prepare supplies for the doctor, and so managed to get away without difficulty. I could easily announce from there my real intentions to the family without their interference.

I had some doubts as to my want of experience, but I felt the compelling gaze of my husband fixed upon me, and he seemed to be stretching his arms from a bed of pain, and my only thought was: "I am coming, I am coming."

I found Vienna a mass of confusion. Everywhere my carriage passed vehicles of wounded

men. I made my preparations hurriedly and started for the North Station. Here the crowds of wounded and dying were arriving, and the public crowded in with supplies and looking for friends; there were nurses, nuns, physicians, men and women from every rank, and the officials were busy pushing back the crowds. They sent me off too. But I protested: "I want to take the next train north," but was informed that there were no trains for passengers, in order to keep the lines open for the arrivals of the wounded. Only one train would go out, and that was exclusively for the Relief Corps.

"May I go by that train?"

"Impossible." The voice within kept calling for me to come. I was about to despair when I caught sight of the President of the Relief Corps. I rushed to him: "For pity's sake, help me, Baron S——. You know me! Baroness Tilling, General Althaus's daughter. You are about to send a train to Bohemia. My dying husband needs me there. If you have a heart, let me go with that train."

With many misgivings he finally arranged to put me in the car of a surgeon who accompanied the train. It would be ready in an hour. I could not stay in the waiting-room; everything was turned into a hospital, and everywhere lay and crouched the wretched neglected forms of the mangled and

wounded. And train after train came in with more wounded, and they were as quickly placed and carried away. At my feet was laid a man who gasped unceasingly, making a continuous gurgling sound. I stooped to speak a sympathetic word, but covered my face in horror. He no longer looked like a human being, his under jaw was shot away, and his eyes were hanging from their sockets. He was reeking with decay and corruption. My head sank back against the wall. But the sickening idea came into my head—could it be Frederick? I looked again. No, it was not he.

As they carried the poor gurgling wretch away the regimental doctor said, “He need not go back to the hospital, he is already three-fourths dead.” And with that the agonized creature threw up both his hands in pleading to heaven.

The hour passed, and I started with the two surgeons and four Sisters of Charity and several soldiers. The carriage was hot and filled with a mingled odour of hospital and incense, and I felt deathly sick. I leant back in my corner and closed my eyes.

“Are you ill?” asked the sympathetic young surgeon. “I hear you are joining your wounded husband at Koniggratz. Do you know where to look for him?”

“No, but I expect to meet Dr. Bresser.”

“ I know him. We visited the battle-field together three days ago.”

“ Visited the battle-field ? ” I repeated, shuddering. “ Oh, tell me about it.”

The surgeon told his story, and I put it afterwards into my journal as I remembered it. From there I copy it now. I had remembered it quite accurately, for into every scene my imagination thrust one fixed idea—that there would be found my wounded Frederick, calling for me :—

Behind a little hill the ambulance corps lay protected. Beyond, the engagement had already begun. The very earth and air trembled with the heat and explosions. Clouds of smoke and roaring artillery filled space. Orders came that we should fetch the wounded from the field. It takes some heroism to march into the midst of a battle when none of the fury of the conflict is in the mind to urge you on. The corporal in charge of the relief ordered the men to a point where the enemy had opened fire. Across the open ground they met groups of wounded and slightly wounded dragging themselves and helping each other. One fell insensible, but not from a wound but sheer exhaustion. They explained: “ We have eaten nothing for two days. After an enforced march of twelve hours and a bit of sleep, we were called to the fight unrefreshed.”

The relief patrol push on. Let them look out for themselves, the surgeons were urged on to the more desperately wounded. They might be picked up on

the way back, after help had been rendered to those lying thick in the battle. Everywhere lies a bleeding mass. The wounded swarm about thicker and thicker, creeping and dragging themselves over mounds of corpses, all stretched in mangled positions with the death-writhings still evident—hands clawing the ground, eyes and tongues projecting, teeth gnashed, and mouths gaping as the last breath had been drawn. So they lie, with their limbs and bodies mangled into shapelessness and stiffened with the death-agony.

Down through a little ravine the patrol pushed. Here the dead and wounded were lying in heaps together. The shrieks for help, the begging, weeping, and lamenting, mixed with the cries for water. Alas, the provisions were soon exhausted, and what can a few men do in all this mass of hopelessness? If every helper had a hundred arms they could not do half of the rescue work. But they work like heroes till, suddenly, there comes the signal horn calling to another part of the field, while the broken wretches piteously beg not to be deserted. An adjutant comes in hot haste. Evidently a general has been wounded. The surgeons must follow, begging the poor fellows to have patience for they will return. But the promise was never meant and never believed.

On, on they must follow the adjutant. Cries and groans to right and left are unheeded, and though some of the rescuing party falls, they are left with the rest. Men writhing with horrible wounds, torn by

horses' hoofs, crushed by passing guns, seeing the rescuers, rear themselves and call for help with a last effort. But on, on, over them all!

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So it goes on, page after page, in my journal. One account tells how a shell burst over a group of wounded who had just been bandaged and relieved, tearing them to pieces. Again, it tells how the fighting broke out around the ambulances, a fleeing and pursuing troop sweeping down the wounded, dying, and surgeons, all together; or when terrified riderless horses, maddened with agony, rushed over the wounded on the stretchers, throwing them crushed and lifeless to the ground. Again, the most frightful scene of all is described: A hundred helpless men lay in a farmhouse where their wounds had been dressed, when a shell set the place in a blaze, and their shrieks will ever remain in the memory of those who heard it—and in mine, for I fancied again, while the surgeon spoke, that Frederick was there, and I heard his voice out of the place of torture, and I fell back in my seat.

“Oh, dear lady,” the surgeon exclaimed, “I must not try your nerves.”

But I had not yet heard enough to slake my thirst for the horrible; I would hear more, and I said, “No, no, continue: How was the next morning?” So he continued:—

A battle-field by night is hideous enough, but under the glorious sun the fiendish work of man seems doubly fiendish. What the night made seem ghostly, the daylight revealed as absolutely hopeless. Then one first realises the countless dead—in the streets, the fields.

There is no cannonading, no rattle of musketry, no drums or trumpet-blasts, no flags, no regimentals; the only sound is the low moaning of the poor wretches who are dying without aid. The steaming earth is saturated with red puddles that shimmer, reek, and clot in the sun. Everywhere lie scattered the abandoned sabres, bayonets, knapsacks, cloaks, broken carriages, waggons, and cannon, the half-dead horses staggering up and down and hideously bellowing out their dying shrieks. There is a little hollow into which the wounded had dragged themselves, but it is clear that a battery had driven over them, the hoofs and wheels crushing them into a pulpy oozing mass while still alive—yes, hopelessly alive.

But even more hellish than all this is the certain appearance of that vile scum of humanity, the ghouls which creep in the wake of the battle, to plunder and spoil the dead. They slink among the corpses, mercilessly tearing off their valuables, mutilating and hacking even the living if they still have life enough to defend themselves, snatching out their eyes to make them unrecognisable.

And so they lie, day after day, these poor wretches, for the Sanitary Corps, though they work untiringly,

cannot stop for the hopeless ones who beg that they be shot or stabbed in their helpless misery. From above the carrion crows are watching from the trees, preparing to descend for their dinner. Even the starved village dogs come and lick the open flesh.

Then comes the great interment. They dig long shallow trenches, and the bodies are thrown in helter-skelter, heads up and heads down. Also they heap the bodies into mounds and cover them with a few feet of dirt. Let the rain wash it away, who cares?

“Now, will you hear what happened the next day?”

“Oh, I can tell you that,” I interrupted. “In the capital of the victorious country the reports have arrived. In the forenoon, while the hyenas of the battle-field work round the trenches, the people in the churches are singing “Praise God from whom all blessings flow,” and in the evening, wife and mother of those who have been buried—while yet breathing perhaps—put lighted candles on their window-sill, for the city has to be illuminated for a sign of joy.”

“Yes,” said the surgeon, “such comedy is marked in the cities—and yonder the tragedy continues. . . .”

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What a terrible journey it was! Long after the surgeon ceased to tell his story we caught glimpses from the windows of the effects of the

war. True, there were no scenes of devastation, but everywhere families were hurrying with their belongings, leaving home to go they knew not where, for the cry, "The Prussians are coming," filled them with terror. We passed many trains carrying the wounded to the inland hospitals. The stations were crammed with men waiting to be carried farther. They had been brought by waggons and cots from the field, and were waiting to get either to the hospitals or cemeteries. At every halt the Sisters of Charity in our party immediately busied themselves, but I was useless. The uproar about the stations was like a bewildering dream ; people were running about confusedly, the troops were taking the trains to go farther, the wounded and bleeding were swarming everywhere, and the screams of women added to the frightful conditions. Cannons and baggage waggons rumbled by ; trains followed, carrying the reserves from Vienna. The soldiers were crammed in cattle - trucks and freight - cars—just as cattle are sent to the slaughter—and were they not, I could not help thinking, were they not being sent to the big political shambles where the official butchers seek their profits ? They rushed by on the rattling wheels like the wind, and a howling war - song pealed from the cars. An armed host marching through the fields or roads on foot or horse, with flags flying, has a certain antique touch of the poetic,

more of the movement of free will in it; that the railroad track, this symbol of modernism and civilisation which brings the nations nearer together, should be used to thrust men into the battle to let barbarism loose is a hideous contradiction. And even the clicking telegraph, mastering the lightning to do man's will, to advance his interests, to relieve his anxieties, to bring his life into immediate and close touch with his fellows—to think that it should be used in the service of barbarity! Our boast before the barbarians is, "Behold our civilisation, our railroads, our telegraph lines," and then we debase these things by using them to enforce and multiply our own savagery.

Such thoughts deepened and embittered my sorrow. Happy were they who were simply weeping and wringing their hands, whose souls did not rise up in wrath against the whole hideous comedy, who did not accuse nor arraign any one with the blame—not even that Lord of Armies whom they believed to be the loving author of all their misery!

Late in the evening I arrived at Königinhof, my companions having left me at an earlier station. What if Dr. Bresser failed to meet me? My nerves were quite shattered by the night's experiences, and only my extreme anxiety about Frederick sustained me.

The station in Königinhof was overflowing with

wounded men; they were lying everywhere—in every nook and corner, on the ground, and on the stones. The night was very dark, there was no moon, and only a few lanterns lighted the station. I sank on to a bench, put my luggage on the ground before me, overcome with the desire for sleep. I began to realise the absurdity of my coming. What if Frederick were already at home, or perhaps dead and buried? Oh, to be able to sleep and forget it, and perhaps even never wake again to behold all this world of horror! At least, let me not live on and find Frederick among the “missing.” Was perhaps my boy at home calling for me? What if I did not find Dr. Bresser? What should I do in that case? Luckily I had a little bag with money about my neck, and money always affords some help out of difficulties. And I involuntarily felt for the bag. The fastenings were torn off—it was gone. What a blow! Still, the floods of misfortune on all sides made my loss seem slight to me. I rose to look for the station-master, and suddenly caught sight of Dr. Bresser. In my excitement I fell about his neck.

“Baroness Tilling!” he exclaimed. “What on earth are you doing here?”

“I have come to assist. Is Frederick in one of your hospitals?”

His negative reply was a relief as well as a disappointment. But how could he know of all the

wounded? I would search for myself. I asked for Frau Simon.

“She is here, and a splendid woman—quick, decisive, prudent. She has discovered that the need is the greatest in a near village. We are going there together.”

“Let me go along with you, Doctor.” He tried to dissuade me, but after some argument he introduced me to Frau Simon as an assistant, and in a few minutes we started on our journey in a hay-waggon which had just brought some wounded men to the station. We sat upon the straw, possibly still wet from blood, and started on our long uncomfortable ride. The rickety waggon with its straw-covered boards was pure torture to me, accustomed to springs and cushions. I was sound and well, what must it have been to the mangled and shattered bodies which were carried over rough roads in this waggon? My eyes were heavy; the discomfort and excited nerves prevented sleep, but leaning on the Doctor’s shoulder, half-dreaming, I heard bits of the conversation which my companions carried on half aloud.

They spoke of the lack of surgeons and instruments. Even bread was not to be had, and in many places the water had been so polluted that it could not be used. Every roof-covered space was crammed with wounded men dying and

raving in their last agonies, and in their ravings they blasphemed God.

“Mr. Twining of London must have heard these curses,” said the Doctor, “when he proposed to the Geneva Red Cross that, when the condition of the wounded is hopeless, they should be offered the consolations of religion and then be put out of their agony in the most humane manner, thus preventing them from dying with curses of God upon their lips.”

“How unchristian,” cried Frau Simon.

“Unchristian to give them such gracious relief?”

“No, but the idea that such curses are a sin. The christian God is not unjust, he takes the fallen soldiers to Himself.”

“Mohammed promises paradise to every Turk who slays a christian,” replied Dr. Bresser. “Believe me, dear madam, the gods that are represented as both inciting war and blessing murder are deaf both to curses and to prayers. Look up and see the planet Mars overhead. Every two years it shines there, and is unconscious of its consecration to the god of war. That same blood-red star shone down upon Marathon and Thermopylæ, the curses of the dying were heaped upon it, but it indifferently and peacefully kept its perfect circuit round the sun—even as to-day. Unlucky stars? There is no such thing—man is the only enemy of man—and his only friend.”

But finally sleep overcame me, and it was a relief to get rid of the unendurable images that filled my brain. How long I slept I do not know, but I was suddenly roused as by a shock. But no, it was not a noise or vibration which woke me ; it was a pestilential, stifling odour that filled the air. By the clear light of the moon, which had risen, we saw the cause of the intolerable stench ; a church wall which had served as a breastwork was banked up with countless corpses, from which a black cloud of fluttering ravens rose as we approached, and fluttered back again upon their feast as we passed on.

The driver whipped up the horses, and we jolted madly out of the range of the frightful odour. Terror held my throat like a screw, or I should have shrieked.

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As we arrived at our destination, Frau Simon complained that I should be more of a burden than a help, but I roused all my courage and begged to be allowed to assist. We found ourselves in the middle of the village, at the gate of a chateau which had been deserted by its owners and filled from cellar to roof with wounded men. We got out, and I pulled myself together with all my force. We passed the gate of the chateau, meeting stifled sounds of woe on all sides. Everything was dark, and we had forgotten to bring along

any means of lighting. Some matches from the Doctor's pocket served for a few seconds to give us a flash of the terrible picture. Our feet slipped in the bloody slime, and we could do nothing but add our despair to the multitude groaning and sighing about us.

Frau Simon and the Doctor hurried out to search for the village priest, and left me alone in the dark among these wailing people, and in this stifling odour, shuddering to the bones. But the Doctor returned, saying, "No, you must come with us, you shall not stay in that purgatory." I waited in the open air in the waggon for half an hour, when the expedition came back quite unsuccessful. The pastor's house was in ruins and no light was to be found. We must wait for the daylight, and how many of these miserable creatures would perish after all the hope our coming had wakened in them?

Those three hours seemed endless, marked not by the ticking of the clock, but by the fitful groans and helpless cries of the wounded. At last the day broke. Now for duty. First the frightened, hiding villagers must be found and made to help. Some buried the dead, others cleared the choked wells, everything was collected that would furnish food and clothing. A Prussian surgeon with his staff arrived, and before long some of the general distress was relieved. First we visited the crowd

of wounded in the castle—my husband was not among them; then I went with Dr. Bresser into the village church, where a hundred men, mangled and feverish, lay on the stone floor. I almost fainted with terror as I looked for the one beloved face—it was not there. I sank beside the altar, filled with inexpressible horror. And this was the temple of the eternal God of Love! The niches were full of pious images—saints with folded hands and lifted faces which were crowned with circlets of gold. I heard a poor soldier cry: “O Mother of God, Holy Mother, one drop of water, have mercy!” All eternity he might have called to that painted image. Ah, miserable men, your petitions to God will be in vain till you obey the law of love which He has stamped upon your own souls. So long as hate and murder are not subdued in your own hearts, you can hope for no compassion from Heaven.

Oh, the experiences of that dreadful day! At the sight of one scene, which my pen shrinks to describe, I heard Mrs. Simon exclaim:—

“It is astonishing what human nature can endure.”

What is most astonishing to me is that human beings will bring each other into such situations of agony; that men will not swear before God that war shall cease; that, if they are princes, they do not break their swords; and, if they have no

other power, that they do not, in thought and words and deeds, devote themselves to the one passionate cry, "Disarm! Disarm!"

I remember that in a barn, where we found a heap of wounded and dead who had been forgotten there for more than a week, my poor strength finally forsook me and I swooned away.

When my consciousness returned I found myself in a railway car, Dr. Bresser sitting beside me. He was bringing me home. I had not found my husband—thank God I had not found him among those terrible scenes—and a faint hope took possession of my heart that some news of him was awaiting me in Grumitz.

Whatever the future held for me in sorrow or joy, it would never be able to blot out the memory of the gigantic misery which I had witnessed, and I was resolved that I should cry it into the ears of my human brothers and sisters until they should no longer look upon war as a fatality, but as an unspeakable crime.

I slept nearly the entire way to Vienna; at the station my father met me, embraced me silently, and said to the Doctor:—

"How can I thank you for taking this crazy young woman under your protection——"

"I must be off. Put the young woman to bed. Do not scold her, she has been terribly shaken.

Give her orange-flower water and rest. Good-bye."

We picked our way through the long rows of ambulance waggons and carriages to our own conveyance. I had only one question on my lips, but had not the courage to ask it till we were started: "Any news from Frederick?"

"Not up to yesterday, when I came here in answer to the telegram to meet you," was the reply. "However, when we get home there may be news. How silly of you to give us such a fright! To go right into the midst of those savage enemies and needle-guns—the worst might have happened; but never mind, the doctor said I should not scold you."

"How is my boy, my Rudolf?"

"He is crying for you, and hunting all over the place. But you seem strangely indifferent about the rest of us."

"How are they all? Has Conrad written?"

"The family is all well, and a letter came from Conrad yesterday. So Lilli is happy, and you, too, will see Tilling back all safe and sound. There is nothing good to report from the political centre. Have you heard of the great calamity?"

"I have seen and heard nothing but calamity and misery."

"Oh, beautiful Venice has been given—handed over on a platter—to the intriguing Louis Napoleon,

and in spite of winning the victory of Custoza. Venice as well as Lombardy lost ! But that gives us peace in the south, and Napoleon on our side, and a chance to revenge ourselves yet on the Prussians. But you are not listening, so I will obey Bresser's orders, and see that you rest."

"Martha, Martha, he is here," shouted my sisters from the chateau garden as they rushed to meet us.

"Who ?"

"Frederick."

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It was true. He had arrived the evening before, having been transported with other wounded from Bohemia. A slight bullet wound in the leg was all, and he was never in danger.

But joy was hardest of all to bear. The terrors of the day before did not more completely rob me of my senses. I had to be lifted from the carriage to bed, and for several hours lay in delirious unconsciousness. When I found myself conscious in my own bed, I believed I had only wakened from a terrible dream, and had never been away. My aunt recalled me to realities :—

"Quick, Martha, get up. Frederick is dying with impatience to see you."

"Frederick, Frederick." All these days I had called this name with pain, and now it was with a cry of joy. It was not a dream—I had

been away, had come back, and would see my husband.

Alone I went to his room, and sank sobbing upon his breast :—

“ Frederick ! ”

“ Martha ! ”

CHAPTER IV

Restored happiness—Prussians still press toward Vienna—War practically over—Quiet country life—Military school—My only brother Otto—Description of flying troops—Peace in sight—Victory of Lyssa—Our plans of retirement—Conrad comes home—He describes his enthusiasm for war.

THUS for the second time my beloved husband was restored to me from the dangers of war.

Who was I, that this tide of woe should have passed over and left me safe and happy on the shore, when so many thousands had sunk beneath the flood of misery? Happy indeed were those who were simple-hearted enough to lift up their glance to heaven and express their deep gratitude to the Almighty Guide, and feel that for this special blessing a divine Providence had chosen them. Those who speak such gratitude think they are humble, but they do not realise how arrogant and self-important they really are. When I thought of the poor wretches and the broken hearts and the mourning mothers and wives, I could not be so immodest as to take all this as a favour sent from

God to me. I remembered how our housekeeper swept one day from a closet a swarm of ants. Fate had in just such a way swept over the fields of Bohemia. The poor workers had been ruthlessly scattered, crushed, and killed—only a few were unhurt. In the case of the ants, would it seem reasonable and just to imagine those few remaining ones would send up prayers of gratitude to the housekeeper?

However great was our joy of reunion, I could not unload the burden of sorrow and suffering I had seen. Though I could not help and nurse and endure like those other courageous women, yet I felt a compassion toward my brother men that I could never drown in selfish contentment again. I would settle this account with the world some day.

Yet, though I could not feel triumphant and grateful, I could love with a hundred-fold more tenderness than ever before. “Oh, Frederick, Frederick,” I would repeat with tears and caresses, “have I found you at last?”

“Yes, and you rushed off to find me and nurse me—was that not heroic and foolish of you, Martha?”

“Foolish, I agree. I imagined I heard you call. But heroic, no! If you only could know how cowardly I was in the face of misery! If you had been lying there I could have been brave.

Such horrors as I have seen I shall never forget. Oh, this world is so beautiful, and how can men make it so terrible ? A world in which we two can find such happiness and fill with such unchanging love, how can any one spoil it by stirring up such flames of hate to bring death and agony ? ”

“ I have seen horrible things too, Martha—one thing I shall never forget. Who do you suppose sprang at me during our cavalry engagement at Sadowa ? Gottfried von Tessow.”

“ Aunt Cornelia’s son ? ”

“ Yes ; he recognised me in time, and dropped his sword, which he held ready to sink into my skull.”

“ Where was his duty ? How could he spare his King’s and country’s enemy ? How dare he think first of friend or cousin ? ”

“ The poor boy ! His arm dropped, and suddenly a sabre swung from the officer next to me, who wished to defend my life——” and Frederick covered his face with his hands.

“ Killed,” I asked, shuddering. He nodded.

“ Mamma, mamma ! ” came from the next room, and Lilli appeared with my little Rudolf. I rushed to him, and eagerly pressed him to me. “ Ah, poor, poor Aunt Cornelia.”

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It looked as though the war was practically over. The quarrel with France and Italy ceased

when Austria abandoned Venice. Prussia offered liberal terms, and our emperor was anxious lest Vienna, his capital, should be besieged. Prussia's other German victories, and the entry into Frankfurt, awoke a certain admiration which success always brings, and imbued even the Austrians with the feeling that Prussia might be destined to perform a certain historical mission in her victories.

The words "truce" and "peace" became contagious, and one could almost count upon their coming true, in the same way as war threats gave rise to war. My father admitted that the needle-gun had exhausted our ranks. He did not wish to contemplate a march on Vienna, which meant the destruction of his estate in Grumitz. That would have been too much for even his bellicose spirit. His confidence in Austria's invincibility was sadly shaken, and in common with the rest of mortals he felt it was best to put a stop to the run of luck, for no doubt some day the tide would turn with an opportunity for vengeance. Vengeance follows vengeance! Every war leaves one side defeated with the belief that the next war will give them satisfaction! And so one struggle invites and demands the next—where will it end? How can justice ever be established if in punishing an old wrong another is committed? Can one obliterate ink-stains with ink, or oil-spots with

oil? Yet they say nothing but blood can wash out blood.

At Grumitz a gloom settled over every one. The villagers prepared for the coming of the Prussians, hiding their possessions. Even our family silver was secreted. We read and talked of nothing but the war. Lilli had heard nothing from Conrad for days. My father's patriotism was deeply wounded, and though Frederick and I were blissfully happy in our reunion, yet the unhappiness of the rest affected us painfully. Over a letter from Aunt Cornelia we shed bitter tears for she had not yet learned of her only son's death.

As we sat all together in the evening there was no music or cheerful chatter, no jokes or games, only the repetition of stories of woe and death.

Any possibility of the prolongation of the war filled my brother Otto with enthusiasm, for in that event the seniors of the military academy had been promised to be called into the service. He longed for this privilege—straight from the military school into the battle-field. Just as a girl graduate longs for her first ball, for which she has been taught to dance, and the light and music, so the young cadet welcomes his first engagement in the great artillery dance for which he has been learning to shoot.

Frederick and I had decided that upon the

declaration of Peace he would resign from the army, and that under no circumstances would our son be educated at school where the whole education was bent upon awakening in boys the thirst for military glory. I questioned my brother Otto, and found that in the schools they taught that war was a necessary evil (at least acknowledging, in the spirit of the age, that it is an evil), at the same time the chief incentive to all the noblest manly virtues — courage, endurance, and self-sacrifice. Through war comes the highest glory to men and the greatest progress to civilisation. Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon, conquerors and empire builders, were to be regarded as the supreme types of human exaltation. War's successes and benefits were described in high colours, but its wretched results were piously ignored. There was complete silence as to the barbarity, degeneration, and ruin which it brought.

I remembered my own girlish enthusiasm for war, and could hardly blame my brother that he looked upon a possible call to battle with impatience.

I offered one day to read the report of a retreat of our army, and Otto impatiently said, "I would rather not hear it. If it were the enemy retreating that would be different."

"Retreats are generally passed over in silence," remarked Frederick.

But my father hastily added, "A well-ordered retreat is not a flight. Why, in '49——"

But I knew the old story of '49, and headed it off by beginning to read:—

About four o'clock our troops began to retreat. We surgeons were caring for several hundred wounded, when suddenly the cavalry broke in on us. A general rush brought on tremendous confusion of artillery, cavalry, infantry, and baggage, all joining in the flight. Men, horse, and waggons were mingled together. We were swept from our work. They shouted to us, "Save yourselves!" as the shell burst overhead. We were carried forward by the surging mass, we knew not whither——

"Enough! enough!" cried the two girls.

"The censor of the press should stop such stuff from appearing," exclaimed my father angrily. "It takes away all pride in the profession of war."

"Yes, if they should destroy all joy in war it would be such a pity," I said in an undertone.

"At least," continued my father, "those who take part in a flight ought to be quiet about it—it is no honour. The rascal who shouted 'Save yourselves!' ought to be shot. A coward raises a yell and thousands of brave men are demoralised and run with him."

"And in the same way," responded Frederick, "when some brave fellow shouts 'Forward!' a thousand cowards sweep after him, inspired with

his courage. Men cannot be called either cowardly or brave, for every one has his moments of strength and weakness. When crowded together we move as a herd, dependent upon the mind of our fellows. One man rushes, shouting 'Hurrah!' and the rest do the same. Another drops his gun and runs and the rest follow. In each case it is the same impulse, yet in the one case they are praised for courage and in the other blamed for cowardice. Bravery and fear are not fixed qualities, neither are joy and sorrow: they are merely different states of mind. In my first campaign I was drawn into such a wild confusion of flight. The official reports called it a well-ordered retreat, but it was, in fact, a complete riot. We rushed madly on, without orders, panting and shrieking with despair, the enemy goading us with bullets. This is one of the most horrible phases of war, when men are no longer gallant soldiers but beasts, and hunt each other as prey; the pursuer becomes a blood-drunken savage and the pursued is filled with the delirium of terror like a poor animal at bay. All the sentiments of patriotism, ambition, and noble deeds with which he has been educated for the battle are forgotten—he is merely possessed with the instinct for self-preservation and filled with the wildest paroxysms of terror."

Frederick's recovery progressed, even as the feverishness of the outer world lessened, and daily

we heard more of peace. The Prussians advanced without obstacle, and surely and slowly approached Vienna, passing through the City of Brunn, where they had already been given the keys. But their march was more like a military promenade than an activity of war, and by July 26 the preliminaries of peace were announced.

Another political event of the day was that Austria had, at last, joined the Geneva Convention of the Red Cross.

“Does that satisfy you?” asked my father as he read the news aloud. “You call war barbarism, but you see it also progresses with civilisation and becomes more humane. I am in favour of all these efforts to relieve the wounded. Even from the stand-point of statesmanship it is wiser, for it is well that the sick should be made fit for service again.”

“You are right, papa. The important thing is that they be made useful material for future battles. But no Red Cross can alleviate the agonies I have witnessed. With multiplied men and means they could not conjure away the results of one battle——”

“Not conjure it away, but mitigate it—what we cannot prevent we should seek to mitigate.”

“For what I have seen there is no mitigation. We should turn the rule about: what we cannot mitigate we ought to prevent.”

That war must cease was daily becoming a

fixed idea with me—and that every human being should work to this end. The scenes I had witnessed after the great battle haunted me, especially at night, when I would awake with the most terrible oppression of heart and pricking of conscience just as if I were being commanded to stop it. And only when fully awake would I realise my entire incapacity to stem such a tide—as well might I face the swelling waves of the sea, and command them to dry up.

Frederick and I had made very definite plans for the future. At the close of the war he was to resign, and we would retire to some small country place, and live with his pension and my allowance in a simple way.

Frederick intended to take up the study of international law and science apart from its sentimental and utopian aspect, and make himself capable of grasping the practical side of all these ideas. He felt that the world was coming into a new era of thought, and he desired to lead his life into these lines along with our domestic pleasures.

We had not communicated our thoughts to my father, who had quite other ambitions for our future.

“You will be a colonel at a very early age, Tilling,” he said one day, “and in ten years you will certainly be a general. A fresh war will certainly give you the command of an entire corps,

and you may even reach the rank of commander-in-chief, who knows. It may come to your lot to restore the glory of the arms of Austria, which is for the moment under a cloud. When once we adopt the needle-gun or some more effective weapon we shall soon have the best of these Prussian gentlemen."

"Who knows," I suggested, "we may even make it up with the Prussians and become their allies."

My father shrugged his shoulders. "If women would only keep out of politics! Our honour and our position as a Power of Europe demand that we should punish these insolent braggarts, and take back the states which they have annexed. What! friendship with these dastardly enemies! Never! unless they come and humbly beg for it."

"In that event," remarked Frederick, "we would set our feet upon their necks. Alliances are only sought with those whom we fear or need as a protection against a common foe. In statecraft egotism is the ruling motive."

"Yes, indeed," my father replied, "when that ego represents our own fatherland everything else is secondary."

"We can but wish," replied Frederick, "that communities may adopt the same rules of behaviour as is demanded of individuals, which does away with the law of the fist and the vulgar self-seeking,

and declares that our own interests are best advanced when we are in harmony with the interests of others."

"What's that?" asked my father, with his hand to his ear, but Frederick wisely dropped the discussion.

.

I shall arrive at Grumitz to-morrow at one o'clock.

CONRAD.

The delight with which this dispatch was received by Lilli can be imagined. No welcome is so loving and gracious as that given to him who returns from war. Naturally he would have preferred to return victoriously, to have aided in conquering for his emperor, but it was honour enough to have fought at all—and to be among the fallen was a specially glorious fate. Otto said that in the military academy every one who was left dead on the field was specially inscribed in the roll of honour, and the more ancestors one could boast as having fallen in battle, the prouder were the descendants, and the less value should they place upon their own lives. To show one's appreciation of such ancestors need one actively and passively rejoice in all kinds of bloodshed in war?

Perhaps it is better that so long as war exists there should be plenty that find pleasure and inspiration in it. Alas! this class is daily growing

less, while the armies are daily increasing. Where will it finally lead ?

But Conrad did not think so far ahead, and my brother Otto was his envious admirer—of the hussar uniform, the scar that decorated his chin, which he got in passing through a rain of bullets—all this surrounded him with a halo of glory.

“ I will admit it was an unfortunate campaign, but I have brought back glorious memories of it.”

“ Oh, tell us, tell us ! ” Lilli and Otto cried.

“ The details are gone, but the whole lies behind me like a dream, for powder gets into one’s head in such a strange way. The moment the order comes to march, the intoxication and the fever begin, even at the very moment of suffering the pain of farewell from loved ones. But when surrounded by comrades, filled with the demand of patriotic duty, marching with the bands playing and the flag fluttering, I would not have turned back even to the arms of my sweetheart. Nor would I be worthy of her if I did. One never doubts one is marching to victory. The needle-guns, you say ? Ah, they alone were the cause of our defeat—their bullets fell upon us like hailstones. Also Benedek’s generalship was poor. They should court-martial him. If I were ever general I should play a forward game, ever advancing on the enemy. However, since the Emperor

did not put me in charge, the tactics were not my fault. We officers and soldiers were ordered to fight, and fight we did. And that was the glorious sensation of it. The anticipation, the suspense, waiting for the order to charge—the consciousness that in the next moment we should be creating history—the delight in one's own courage, with Death to the right and left—bidding this awful mystery defiance——”

“Just like poor Gottfried Tessow,” murmured Frederick to me. “Of course it is all from the same teaching.”

Conrad continued eagerly: “One's heart beats higher, one's pulse quickens, there awakes—that is the peculiar ecstasy of it all—there wakes the mad delight in battle, the ferocious hatred of the foe, the blazing passion for one's menaced fatherland—and on we rush, and hewing down becomes a mad revelry. One feels as if transported to another world. Ordinary feelings have changed to their opposites. Life itself is our prey; to slay is the law. The only motives that do not disappear in the conflict are magnificent heroism and self-sacrifice. To this add powder, smoke, and battle-cries. It is a sensation unparalleled—there is nothing like it—except perhaps a lion or tiger hunt, when one stands face to face with maddened beasts.”

“Yes,” Frederick added, “while man was

still subject to attack from two or four-legged savages, to protect his life by killing the latter was a delight. The hereditary thirst for blood has not completely died out of civilised man, and since in Europe we have no longer beast nor barbarism to fight, we create an artificial enemy for ourselves, and the hunt goes thus: You here, have red coats, and over there blue coats. Three claps, and presto, the red coats are changed into tigers and the blue coats become wild beasts to them. Again attention! Trumpets blow, one, two, three; drums beat; now begin; eat each other up. And if 100,000 such beasts eat each other up at X—, history records the famous X— battle. Then the men who clapped their hands assemble about a green table in X—, lay down their maps, rearrange the frontier lines, haggle over who shall pay the bills, sign a paper which figures in history as the Peace of X—. The magicians clap again three times, and order the red coats and the blue coats, ‘Now, dear children, embrace each other again as men and brethren.’ ”

CHAPTER V

The Prussians at Grumitz—Otto gets into trouble—A dinner with friend and foe—Rosa and Prince Henry are engaged—The Prussians leave and cholera breaks out in our midst—Servants are the first victims, then sisters—The lover's suicide—The only son dies, father follows him, cursing war.

THE Prussian troops were quartered everywhere about Grumitz, and the villagers were possessed with terror of the hated enemy, whose name became the synonym of every evil, and when the quartermaster approached to arrange quarters for his men they trembled as if the wolves were upon them. An occasional patriot sent a rifle bullet from some place of hiding after the foe, and his quick execution forced the villagers to suppress their hatred. Much to the surprise of the villagers, when they quartered the soldiers, they found the "enemy" was usually a very good-natured friendly lot, who punctually paid their bills.

I was sitting one morning near a big window in the library, which gave a wide view over the surrounding country. A troop of horsemen

suddenly came in sight. "Prussians coming for quarters," I thought. Seizing the glass, I saw a group of possibly ten surrounding what appeared to be a hunter. If the prisoner had fired upon them there was little hope for him. I ran to the library and called my aunt and father.

"The Prussians, the Prussians!" I exclaimed breathlessly.

"The devil take them," my father exclaimed, while Aunt Marie rushed to make final preparations for the enemy, whom for several days she had expected.

"Where is Otto?" I asked. "We must warn him from speaking out his hatred of Prussia."

"Otto went out early to hunt birds. And how fine the youngster did look in his new hunting-suit. How proud I was of him.

The house was suddenly all in an uproar of loud voices and hasty steps. Franz the footman, pale with terror, flew into the room, and as though he were shouting "Fire!" called out "The Prussians, the Prussians, and, your Excellency, they have a prisoner—your son—who is said to have fired on them."

My father, with an exclamation of alarm, hurried down the steps. His heart stood still. The situation before us was terrible; I dared not think of the conclusion. But it was soon all over, for father returned with Otto with the explanation

that in crossing the field he had stumbled and accidentally discharged his rifle. They had seized him, but learning who he was, had brought him to the house, and had accepted his explanation.

“It would be impossible for an honourable soldier, and the son of a soldier, to act like an assassin,” they said, as they released him.

Later, I asked Otto if he was really innocent.

He answered, “I hope in the future to have plenty of opportunities to shoot a few of them, but never would I be guilty without offering my own breast to their bullets.”

“Bravo, my boy,” cried my father. But I did not share the enthusiasm. Words which tossed about and cheapened human life so boastfully had a most repellent sound to me.

We had as our self-invited guests two colonels and six subordinate officers, and with the cellar full of provisions, and comfortable beds, they were treated with every courtesy given to friends.

The Prussians bore distinguished names, and among them was a Prince Henry of the house of Ruess. Our enemies seemed to be very courtly gentlemen, with the most approved conventional manners of the best society. It is true that in these days we do not war with Huns and Vandals, but it is slightly hard to realise that the other side can possibly stand for the same civilisation as our own.

“ O God, thou who protectest those who trust in Thee, hear us as we pray for Thy gracious mercy. Protect us from the rage of our enemies, that we may praise Thee to all eternity.”

The priest in Grumitz prayed thus daily. Certainly these elegant, gentlemanly fellows could hardly be considered as raging enemies as they took the ladies in to dinner. Perhaps God had this time listened to the prayers of the other side, and had protected them from our “rage”—or perhaps it was the needle-guns which had done it. At any rate it was a queer pious jumble to me. As we chatted with the stately colonel and the tall lieutenant, mention of war was shunned with the greatest caution on both sides. The strangers were treated as though they were guests travelling for pleasure, and the real state of things was never hinted at—that they were quartered with us as conquerors.

The gentlemen enjoyed the soft summer moonlight on the terraces—the same moonlight which so lately had lighted up the mouldering corpses against the churchyard wall. And under this soft light the Prussian Prince Henry lost his heart to our beautiful Rosa; and to our astonishment my father made no objection, so the engagement was announced to the family.

I had believed that my father’s hatred of the Prussians would make it impossible for him to

accept one as a son-in-law, but he separated altogether the individual from the nation. We often hear people protest: "I hate them as a nation, not as individuals." This is quite as sensible as if one were to say: "I hate wine as a drink, but the drops I swallow with pleasure." But popular sayings are not expected to be rational.

Perhaps the possibility of an alliance for his daughter with a princely house flattered my father, at any rate he said yes with apparent pleasure.

But Otto rebelled at the idea: "How would it be should war break out again, and I were obliged to chase my brother-in-law out of the country?" However, he was soon converted to the famous theory of the difference between nations and individuals. I confess I never could understand it.

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How quickly happy surroundings swallow up misery, and how soon are catastrophes forgotten! Gradually the pictures of terrors which I had experienced in the few previous weeks faded from my thought. I realised this and my conscience pricked me at times when the laments of the villagers reached us. Many had lost their worldly goods, others their friends; reports came of financial troubles, and it was even rumoured that the cholera had shown itself among the Prussian troops. One case had also occurred in our village,

but we comforted ourselves that it was of no consequence.

“Do you realise, Martha,” Rosa said to me one day, “what a blessed thing this war has been to me—though I know it is something terrible. I should never have been so happy and met Henry, and he—where would he have found such a love as mine?”

“I wish I might think it with you, Rosa, and believe that your two happy hearts might outweigh the many thousands of broken ones.”

“Oh, we must not think of the individual losses when the war brings such great gain to the conquerors and the whole nation. You should listen to Henry. He says the Prussians have won a grand result, and the entire army is enthusiastic for its generals. This victory has done so much for German civilisation and commerce. He says the prosperity of Germany—I forget the word—its historical mission—but you should hear him talk about it.”

“I should think he would have other matters than politics to talk with you.”

“Oh, he does talk about everything, and I sympathise with it all and am so proud and happy that he has played such a glorious part in this war for his King and country.”

“And carries you off as his booty,” I replied.

The future son-in-law quite suited my father,

and certainly he was a fine young fellow. He gave him his blessing with all manner of protests.

“My dear Ruess, you suit me exactly as a man, as a soldier, and as a prince”—this he repeated in manifold expressions—“but as a Prussian officer, I maintain the right—family matters aside—to wish that Austria may fully revenge herself for this victory which you have snatched from her. Separating politics from personal questions, I hope I may live to see my son take the field against Prussia. Old as I am I would be willing to accept a command to fight William I. and humble the arrogant Bismarck. I acknowledge the military readiness of the Prussian army and its strategic leaders, and would think it quite a matter of course if in the next campaign your own battalion were compelled to storm our capital city, and even burn down your father-in-law’s house, in short——”

I interrupted: “In short, your confusion of sentiments is frightful—your inconsistencies are as intermingled as are the infusoria in a drop of putrid water. You fill one with repugnance through your paradoxical conceptions—to hate the whole and love its parts; to think one way as a citizen and the opposite as a man. No, let us have it the one way or the other. I prefer the savage Indian’s way. He never thought of

anybody as an individual, but wanted the scalp of every member of the other tribe."

"Martha, my daughter, do not give vent to such savage sentiments, they are quite unsuitable to the times, which have grown so refined and humane."

"Rather say that our boasted civilisation is a lie upon our inherited barbarisms. What right have we to claim to be humane until we cast off the savage custom of making war? Do you call your speech to Prince Henry sensible where you assure him that you love him as a son-in-law and hate him as a Prussian; value him highly as a man and detest him as a lieutenant-colonel; that you bless him as a father and in the same breath grant he has the right to fire upon you if necessary? Forgive me, father, but can you talk thus and call it common sense?"

"What did you say? I did not catch a word." The convenient deafness had come on again at the right moment.

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After a few days the guests departed, and all was quiet again at Grumitz.

The marriage of my two sisters had been postponed until October. Prince Henry planned to quit the service, having earned sufficient honours in the glorious campaign. He would retire on his laurels and on his estates.

The two pairs of lovers parted painfully but joyfully, content in the certainty of their future happiness.

Certain happiness? There is in reality no such thing, least of all in times of war, for then misfortunes swarm thick as gnats, and the chance that one may be standing on the spot which may be spared the descending scourge is at best a small one.

True, the war was over and peace concluded. A word had been enough to let loose all the terrors of hostility, and a word should also suffice to relieve us from the results. Hostilities were suspended, but what can suspend the persistent consequences? The seed of future war had been sown, and the fruit of the war just closed ripened still further into want, demoralisation, and plague. To stop and think about it was now useless, for the cholera was raging throughout the country.

One morning the Vienna paper, opened at breakfast, brought the following item:—

The cholera death-rate increases. The military and civil hospitals report many cases of genuine Asiatic cholera. Every measure is taken to stop its spread.

I was about to read these lines aloud, when Aunt Marie exclaimed, as she read a letter from a friend in the neighbourhood:—

“Dreadful! Betty writes that in their house

two persons have died of the cholera, and that her husband is ill."

"Your Excellence, the schoolmaster wishes to speak to you."

The teacher entered, looking pale and bewildered.

"Count Althaus, I must report that the school is closed, for yesterday two children were taken ill and to-day they are dead."

"The cholera!" we cried out.

"There is no doubt. There is great terror in the village, and the doctors who have come from the town say that the horrible disease has taken hold of the entire population."

We looked round in dismay, pale and speechless. Here, again, was the frightful enemy, Death; and each in turn saw his bony hand stretched over the head of some loved one.

"We must go away!" said Aunt Marie.

"Where?" replied the schoolmaster, "for the disease is spreading everywhere."

"Across the frontier."

"Across the frontier——"

"But quarantine will be set up, and you will not be allowed to pass."

"Oh, how terrible! will they prevent people leaving a region of pestilence?"

"Certainly. Healthy neighbourhoods must protect themselves against infection."

“Then we will remain and await God’s will,” answered my father with deep emotion. “You, Marie, who believe so strongly in destiny, I cannot understand why you should wish to run away. You say the fate of every one will overtake him. Yet I would rather have you and the children go away. Otto, you must eat no more fruit.”

“I will write to Bresser,” said Frederick, “and have him send us disinfectants.”

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What happened immediately after this I cannot tell in detail, for this breakfast scene was the last I found in the red book. I must depend upon my memory for the next few days’ happenings.

Terror possessed us all. The sword of Damocles hung over each head, and is it not a horrible thought to feel that one’s friends and even oneself should be so helplessly and uselessly destroyed? In such a case to stop thinking is the better part of valour.

Flee? The idea possessed me on account of the safety of Rudolf. My father insisted upon the family taking flight, and the following day was decided upon. He meant to remain and face the danger with the villagers. Frederick declared he would remain, and I would not leave his side.

The two girls, Otto, and Rudolf, were to go with Aunt Marie—but whither? That was not settled at once. At first to Hungary—and then farther.

The young people busily flew to their preparations and packing. To die just as life was beginning to unfold its happiness to them would be a tenfold death.

The boxes were brought to the dining-room that all might work together. As I brought Rudolf's clothes in my arms my father demanded, "Why does not the maid do that?"

"I do not know where Netti is hiding. I ring and she does not come."

He despatched another servant to find her, who in a short time returned with an anxious countenance :

"Netti is in her room. She is—she is——"

"Speak out!" shouted my father, "what is she?"

"She is—already—quite—black."

A shriek came from every lip. The plague, the horrible plague, was in our very house. What was to be done? Could one leave the poor girl to die alone? But was it not certain death to whoever approached her and those whom this person might afterwards approach? It was as if we were surrounded by murderers or flames, and death grinned at us from every corner and followed every step.

My father ordered the doctor to be fetched immediately. "And you, children, hurry your departure."

“ Oh, I feel so sick ! ” exclaimed Lilli, turning pale and clutching a chair.

We all sprang toward her. “ What ails you ? ”
“ Don’t be silly ! ” “ It is only fear.”

We dared not think, but hurried her to her room, and soon she showed most aggravated symptoms of the dread disease. This made the second case of cholera in the castle in one day.

It was terrible to see her suffer and to be unable to help. Frederick did everything possible to relieve her, but nothing availed. When the attack subsided cramps followed, which seemed to make every bone crack, tearing the quivering frame with agony. The poor victim tried to moan but could not—her voice failed, her skin turned cold and blue, and the breathing difficult.

My father strode up and down wringing his hands. Once I stood before him and dared to say : “ Father, this is war ! Will you not curse it now ? ” But he shook me off without reply.

After ten hours of suffering, Lilli died. Netti died before, alone in her room, for we were all occupied with Lilli, and no servant would venture to approach one who had “ turned black.”

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Meanwhile Dr. Bresser had arrived, and took command of the household, bringing with him every known means of relief. I could have kissed his hand.

The two bodies were carried to a distant chamber, and strictest measures of disinfection were taken. The odour of carbolic acid to this day brings back the memory of those terrible days.

The intended flight was a second time set on foot. On the day of Lilli's death the carriage stood waiting to carry away Aunt Marie, Rosa, Otto, and my son—but the coachman declared himself unable to drive, seized by the invisible destroyer.

“Then I will drive myself,” said my father. “Quick, is everything ready?”

Rosa came forward and said, “Drive on! I must stay and follow Lilli.”

It proved the case. The next sunrise found the second daughter in the vault of death. And in the horror of it all our departure was given up.

In my anguish a sudden scorn seized me for the gigantic folly which had brought on all this misery. When Rosa's corpse had been carried out my father sank on his knees with his head against the wall.

I seized him by the arm. “Father, this is war!” No answer. “Father, do you hear? Will you at last curse war?”

He sprang to his feet. “You bring me back to my duty as a soldier, I must not forget that my entire fatherland offers its sacrifice of blood and tears.”

“What benefit can come to the fatherland

through the suffering and death of its people? What gain through lost battles and the shortening of these young lives? Oh, father, I plead with you—curse war! See from the window the black coffins—they are for Lilli and Rosa, and perhaps there will be a third—and why, why?”

“Because God wills it, my child.”

“God—always God. All that folly and savagery—the wilful sin of man—always hiding under this shield—God’s will!”

“Do not blaspheme, Martha, even while the hand of a reproving God is clearly visible.”

The footman appeared, announcing that the carpenter refused to carry the coffins into the chamber where the dead young countesses lay.

“Then I will see to it myself,” said my father, and he strode to the door.

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The post brought nothing but sorrow—news of the ravages of the pest; love-letters that would never be answered—for Prince Henry knew nothing of what had happened. A letter to Conrad announcing Lilli’s sickness brought him four days later to the castle.

“Lilli!” he cried. “Is it true?”

We nodded. He remained quiet, without shedding a tear, and softly said to himself, “I have loved her all these years. I will go to the churchyard. She waits for me.”

He rushed out, and there upon her grave he shot himself.

The war had carried off many an officer, so the tragedy of this indirect death was quite blunted. Besides, this event was swallowed up by a misfortune which sounded the deepest agonies of all our hearts. Otto, the adored and only son, was in the clutch of the destroying angel. All day, all night, with alternating hope and despair, he suffered.

When all was over his father threw himself upon the body with such a piercing shriek that it rang through the house. We had to tear them apart, and for hours and hours the old man poured out his cries of anguish—giving vent to groans and roars, and rattling shrieks of desperation. His son, his Otto, his pride, his all !

After this outbreak he succumbed to a dumb apathy. He lay as one motionless and unconscious, and was put to bed.

When he came to himself, Frederick and I and Aunt Marie were at his bedside. He could not speak, and was struggling for breath. Then he began to shake and toss about, as if in the last symptoms of the cholera, though he had shown no other sign. At last he uttered one word—"Martha."

I fell on my knees beside him. "Father, my poor, dear father !"

He lifted his hands over my head.

“Your wish—is fulfilled. I curse—I cur——”
He sank back. All was over.

“How dreadful,” said Aunt Marie, after we had buried him, “he died with a curse on his lips.”

“Console yourself,” I answered. “If only that curse would fall from every lip—what a blessing to humanity.”

Such was the cholera week at Grumitz. In seven days ten of our group were taken. In the village over eighty died. Stated thus coldly it makes a scarcely noteworthy report. Told as a story it seems an extravagant tale. But it is neither a dry fact nor an overdrawn romance. It is a cold, palpable, sad reality.

I stood resigned in daily expectation that death would take the rest of us. I actually wept in anticipation of it. Yet in the thought of their deliverance I still had sweet moments. And as this hope and compassion and love still glowed in us as individuals, might it not some day come to dominate the general relations of the whole human family? The future belongs to Goodness.

CHAPTER VI

Summer in Switzerland—Researches in International law—
Seclusion—Frederick enters the peace army—Off to
Berlin—The battle-field of Sadowa—Francis Joseph
weeps for his dead soldiers.

WE spent the remainder of the summer in Geneva, Dr. Bresser having urged us to flee from the infected country and the scene of so much sorrow. The depth of apathy and resignation which had overcome me made flight seem almost useless and distasteful to me; besides, I did not wish to leave the graves of my family. But the doctor conquered my objections when he appealed to my duty as a mother, and begged me to take little Rudolf out of danger.

We chose Switzerland because Frederick wished to become acquainted with the men who had formed the Red Cross society. He wished to be on the spot, and inform himself as to their object and further aims.

He had resigned from the military service, and took a half-year's leave of absence awaiting its acceptance.

I was now rich—very rich. The entire family being gone—all was mine.

“Look, Frederick,” I said, as the notary delivered the title-deeds to me, “what would you say if I should praise the war because it has brought all this advantage to me ?”

“Then you would not be my Martha. I see you are thinking of the heartlessness which can rejoice over material prosperity won by the destruction of another’s good. Individuals are ashamed of such feelings, but nations rather delight in each other’s destruction, and dynasties openly and vaingloriously admit them. Thousands have perished in untold misery—we have ruined them to win for ourselves territory and power. So let us thank Heaven for our victories !”

We lived in quiet retirement in a little villa, close to the shores of the lake. I was still so overwhelmed with what I had passed through that I had no desire to meet strangers. My sympathetic husband quite understood my desire to weep out the sorrow of my torn heart in solitude. It is quite fitting that those who have been so mercilessly thrown out of this beautiful world should have some sacred time allotted them in the memory of those who have been so cruelly robbed of their companionship.

Frederick often went into the city, making his study of the Red Cross. Of this period I have no

daily record, and what Frederick told me of those days has nearly passed out of my recollection. My one impression of this time, given me by every element of our environment, was that of quiet, ease, and the cheerful activity of the neighbourhood. Every one seemed so peaceful and good-humoured. Hardly an echo of the war reached us. It was already alluded to as an anecdote of history which had changed the map but slightly. The terrific cannonading in the Bohemian fields was an interesting episode, a little more than a new Wagnerian opera, perhaps. History had recorded it in its pages, but it was soon forgotten by those who lived outside the stricken boundaries. We saw mostly French newspapers, and they were filled with the latest happenings in literature, drama, music, and the coming exposition. The sharp duel between the Prussians and Austrians was an old story. What happened three months ago and thirty miles away, what is not in the Now and the Here, soon slips out of the memory and loses its hold on the heart.

October found us in Vienna settling the many affairs of my inheritance, and preparing for a considerable stay in Paris. The projected exposition offered Frederick the best opportunity to carry out his idea of calling a congress together with the idea of forming a league of peace.

“The professions of arms I have laid down

through my convictions gained in war. Now I enlist in the army of peace. Truly, it is a small army with no weapons save love and justice, but every great thing must have its small beginnings."

"Ah," I sighed, "it is a hopeless work. What can a single man do against this stronghold, backed by centuries of custom and millions of men?"

"What can I do? I cannot foolishly hope personally to bring about such a revolution. I simply remarked that I would join the ranks of the peace army. I did not suppose as a soldier that I could save my country or conquer a province. No, the single man can only *serve*. Still more he *must* serve. One inspired with a purpose cannot help working for it. He stakes his life for it, even though he knows how little this one life counts. He serves because he must. Not the State alone demands allegiance; sincere, strong convictions also oblige compulsory service.

Before going to Paris we planned a visit to Aunt Cornelia in Berlin. We broke the journey at Prague in order to spend "All Souls' Day" on the battle-field of Sadowa.

War will have its charm so long as historians persist in setting up for the leaders monuments of glory built out of the ruins of battle, and crown the Titans of public murder with laurels. Tear away the mask of glory and show its horror, and

who would be madly ambitious enough to grasp for such fame?

It was twilight when we arrived, and sadly and silently we proceeded to the dread battle-field, filled with depression and grief. The snow was falling, the bleak trees were swaying in the wailing November wind. Tier after tier the graves stretched out before us, but not as in the quiet, restful churchyard. These were not the graves of aged and weary pilgrims of life gone to their eternal rest, but of young men in the height of their youthful vigour, exulting in the fulness of their manhood, full of rich expectation in the future. Violently and mercilessly they had been hurled into the ditch and the dust of the earth shovelled over them. Who counts the broken hearts, the mangled bleeding limbs, the cries of despair, the flooding tears, the hopeless prayers, the agonising pains, the shrieks, the maddening submission to death—all is entombed in the eternal silence.

We were not alone on this burial field. The day had brought many both from the home country and the enemy's country, both sought their loved ones in these acres of death. For hours we had heard the sobs and murmurs of lament, for many mourners had come with us on the train.

I heard a poor, heart-broken father say, "Three sons have I lost—each one more noble and better

than the other—oh, my three sons !” I can hear it yet above all the other lamentings for fathers, husbands, and brothers which were poured out around us.

All about us black-robed figures knelt, and some, with sobs of pain, staggered from place to place hopelessly searching their dead. But few single graves were to be seen, and few were marked by stone or inscription.

Everywhere the earth was heaped up, and we knew that even under our feet the soldiers’ bodies were mouldering.

Many officers and soldiers wandered among the other mourners. Evidently they had shared in the terrible contest, and were now making this pilgrimage to honour their fallen comrades.

We went to that part of the field where the largest number of friends and foes lay entombed together, in one enclosure. To this place the majority of the pilgrims found their way, for here, naturally, they might expect their lost loved ones to be buried. Around this spot they set up their crosses and candles, and here they laid their wreaths and flowers as they knelt and sobbed out their sorrowing hearts.

A tall, slender man, of noble presence, in a general’s cloak, approached this central burial ground. All gave way reverently to him, and in hushed whispers I heard : “ The Emperor.”

Yes, it was Francis Joseph, the ruler of the country, the supreme war lord, and he had come on this All Souls' Day to offer his silent prayers for the souls of his dead children, his fallen warriors. There he stood, with his bowed head uncovered, in agonized and devoted homage before the majesty of Death. He stood long and motionless in profound meditation. I could not turn my eyes from his face. What thoughts were passing through his soul, what sentiments oppressed his overwhelmed heart? I knew he had a good and tender heart. I felt my mind yield to his thoughts, and I felt that I was thinking as he was thinking as he stood there with bowed head:—

“ You, my own poor, brave soldiers—dead . . . and for what? We did not conquer; and my Venice, too, is lost, . . . so much is lost, and all your young lives lost too. And you offered them so devotedly—for me. Oh, if I could give them back, for I never desired this sacrifice! It was for yourselves, your country, that you were led out into this war. Not through me, although I was compelled to give the command. Not for me have my subjects fought. No, I was called to the throne for their sakes, and any hour I would have been ready to die for the good of my people. . . . Oh, if I had but followed the impulse of my heart and never said ‘ Yes ’ when all about me shouted ‘ War ! war ! ’ Yet, could I have resisted? God is my

witness that I could not. What impelled me I do not fully realise, but I know the pressure was an irresistible force outside me—from you—your-selves—my poor dead soldiers. . . . Oh, what have you not suffered? And how sad—how sad it all is! And now you lie here—and on other battle-fields, snatched away by shot and shell and grape and sabres—by cholera and fever. . . . Oh, had I only said ‘No!’ And you, Elizabeth, begged me to! Oh, if I had only said it! The thought that—is unendurable that. . . . Oh, it is a wretched, imperfect world—too much agony—too much woe!”

As I watched him, thinking thus for him, my eyes searching his features—just as I came to the “too much agony, too much woe”—he covered his face with both hands and broke into tears.

So passed All Souls’ Day of 1866 on the Sadowa battle-field.

BOOK V
TIME OF PEACE

CHAPTER I

Visit to Berlin—Aunt Cornelia—Aunt Marie's death—
Vienna again—Politics and conscription.

IN Berlin there reigned an evident spirit of jubilation. Even the useless street-loafer had an air of conscious victory. "We have given the other fellows a good thrashing" seemed to give a certain air of conscious victory to every one. Yet nearly every family mourned for some never-to-be-forgotten dead which lay on the battle-fields of Germany and Bohemia.

I dreaded meeting Aunt Cornelia again, for Gottfried had been her idol, her all; to measure her sorrow, I had only to fancy losing my Rudolf, if he were a young man—no, I did not dare think it out.

With beating hearts we entered Frau von Tessow's house. Even in the entrance the deep mourning of the house was felt. We were led into my aunt's bedroom, which she seldom quitted, except to go to church on Sunday and for one hour each day, which she spent in Gottfried's little study.

Here she took us, and showed us the letter which he had left on his desk :—

MY OWN DARLING MOTHER—I know that you will come here when I am gone and find this letter. We have already parted, and it will please you and surprise you to get these last words, so hopeful and cheerful. Have courage, I shall be back. We are two undivided hearts which hang on each other, and nothing can tear them apart. I prophesy that I shall win stars and crosses in this fortunate campaign, and then come home and make you a grandmother six times over. I kiss your hand, your dear benign forehead, my most adored of all little mothers.

YOUR GOTTFRIED.

When I embraced the dear lady, we both broke into loud sobs. Frederick's eyes were wet as he silently pressed her to his heart. Tears were sufficient words to express all we felt.

Our visit was a most sorrowful one, but Frederick was able to give the poor mother the self-same comfort he had brought to me, in assuring her of the instantaneous and painless death of Gottfried.

We were suddenly called from Berlin by the dangerous illness of Aunt Marie. Upon returning, we found her at the point of death.

“It is my turn now,” she said, “but I am glad. Since my dear brother and the three children were torn away, I have had no delight in life. It has

been a great comfort, my dear Martha, to know that you are happy, and since your husband escaped the dangers of two wars and the cholera, it is evident that you are destined to grow old together. Try to educate our little Rudolf to be a good Christian and a good soldier, that his grandfather in heaven may rejoice over him. I shall constantly pray for you from above that you may live long and contented."

After three days of lingering, this last friend of my childhood passed away, resigned, as she had lived, happy in the hope of heaven. She left her small fortune to Rudolf, and appointed our old friend, the Cabinet Minister, as trustee, and since business affairs kept us in Vienna for some months we saw much of him.

Twice a week he dined with us, and though he had now retired to private life was still fond of discussing politics. Frederick tried to turn the conversation away from political gossip, in which the other revelled upon the subject of the rights of humanity. The old gentleman could not follow Frederick, for he merely saw political science from the stand-point of gaining an advantage, and not of giving right and justice the first place.

I usually sat near by with my needlework, but only listened. The old statesman would hardly think it proper for a woman to mix into such deep subjects. He little realised that I made it my

business to record all these discussions in my notebook.

Frederick made no secret of his opinions, although he realised the thankless part one plays in defending theories which are generally thought to be impracticable and grotesque.

“My dear Tilling, I have an important piece of news to-day,” said the Minister one afternoon with an air of importance. “It is rumoured in government circles that the ministry of war is recommending general obligatory military service.”

“What? the same system which before the war was so ridiculed?”

“Yes, we did have a prejudice against it, but Prussia has shown its advantages. From your enthusiastic moral, democratic, and liberal point of view, it would seem the ideal thing to have every patriot give himself to his fatherland for service, then . . . if we had already introduced conscription, could little Prussia have vanquished us?”

“That simply means that with our added force we would have counterbalanced the enemy’s forces. If conscription were introduced generally how could it benefit anybody? The chess game of war would simply be played with greater numbers. The proportion would be the same, and the decision of victory would cost—instead of hundreds of thousands of slaughtered—millions perhaps.”

“But do you consider it fair that only a small

part should be sacrificed for the benefit of another class, who, chiefly because they are rich, may stay at home? No, indeed; the new law will change all this—every one must serve and none can buy his freedom from it. Besides, the educated and intelligent make the finest material for soldiers.”

“But the enemy will also have the educated class, both sides will suffer by the loss of such priceless material—the intellect from which civilisation is to gain its inventions, arts, and scientific discoveries. Should they be set up as targets for the enemy’s bullets?”

“Pshaw! What can rummaging of the scientists, the dreams of the artists and inventors, help to advance the power of a nation?”

“How can you say that!” exclaimed Frederick.

“Besides, these men need spare but a short period from their research, and a few years of strict discipline will do them good. In the present state of things we must pay the blood tax, and it ought to be equally shared.”

“If through this it could be diminished, something would be gained—but it is only increased. I fully hope the plan fails. No one can tell where it will lead. Each Power will try to outdo the other, and we shall no longer have armies, but armed nations. Men will be drawn more and more into the service; the time will be lengthened,

the costs will increase, and without actual battle and bloodshed, nations will be thrown into ruin, simply through their preparation for war."

"You look too far into the future, dear Tilling."

"One can never look too far ahead. We should think to the end in our undertakings—were we not just now comparing war to a game of chess? It is a poor player who only looks a single move ahead. Let us develop the thought of conscription to the extreme measure—what if, after the limit of number and age has been reached, a nation should recruit its women too? The others would imitate it. And then the children—and the rest would imitate it. And in the armaments, in the instruments of destruction, where would be the limits? Oh, it is a savage blind leap into the dark."

"You are a rash dreamer, Tilling. If war were preventable, it would indeed be a good thing, but since that is impossible, every nation must prepare to win in the 'struggle for existence,' as your new-fangled Darwinism calls it."

"And if I did show you a practical way to wipe out war, you would consider me only a silly faddist, riding the humanitarian hobby, as the war party sneeringly calls it."

"There is no practical means of doing away with war so long as we have to deal with human

passions, rivalries, opposing interests, the impossibility of agreeing on all questions——”

“Such agreement is unnecessary,” interrupted Frederick. “Where differences arise, courts of justice, not the sword, can decide.”

“Sovereign states appeal to such a settlement? Never! Nor would the people.”

“The people? Rulers and statesmen are opposed, but never the people—their love for peace is sincere, while the claim of the diplomats is always hypocritical. More and more the people cry for peace as the standing armies grow, for the halo of self-sacrifice will grow dim when every man must serve. Besides, who are the enthusiasts for the glories and dangers of war? Those who are safely outside them—the politicians, the professors, the stay-at-homes. When their safety is threatened they sing another song. Then more and more every one must look upon it with horror, and that sense will grow when poets, thinkers, lovers of humanity, timid people, when all these will, each from his own special point of view, curse the wretched trade they have been forced into.”

“However, they will be very careful to keep silent and not pass as cowards, or fall out of favour with their superiors.”

“Keep silent? Not always. I have kept silent for many years, but as I speak, soon many will break out. When convictions possess one’s

soul, it speaks out. It took forty years for mine to find expression. It took decades to ripen in me ; perhaps the masses may need as many generations—but the hour will come when they will at last speak out.”

CHAPTER II

New Year's reflections—Distrust between the French and Germans—Quiet again—Paris—Napoleon's plan for disarmament—Frederick's work for peace—A daughter born—Happiness and study—The gay world—War talk again—Repose in Switzerland—Sylvia's illness.

NEW YEAR, '67! We celebrated it alone, my dearest Frederick and I, and as the clock struck twelve, I sighed:—

“Do you remember poor father's toast last year at this very hour? I dare not wish you a happy New Year. Behind the future there often lies concealed so much that is terrible and which mortal wishes cannot avert.”

“Then let us to-night rather look back than toward the future. What you have endured, my poor brave wife! So many loved ones you have buried—and those days of horror on the battle-field in Bohemia!”

“I shall never regret having seen those cruel sights. They make me able to sympathise with my whole soul in your efforts.”

“We must educate our Rudolf to continue in

these ideas. Perhaps in his lifetime these things may come to pass—hardly in ours. What a noise there is upon the streets! They greeted the last New Year with as much enthusiasm—and it brought such frightful suffering. How forgetful men are!”

“Do not scold them for forgetting. Some of our anguish is already passing into the shadows, and I am filled with the happiness of the present—what bliss to have you, my own love. We were not to speak of the future; but what lies before us looks so good—we have love, unity, riches, all that life has to offer. We will travel, see the world and all that is beautiful and wondrous in it. During times of peace the world is so fair—and peace may last many, many years. Yet if war comes you are no longer in it, and Rudolf is safe, for he shall never be a soldier.”

“But if, some day, every man is liable to serve?”

“Oh, nonsense! We shall travel, give Rudolf a pattern education—we will follow our ideals—in working for peace, and we—we will love each other.”

.
The carnival of this year brought with it the usual balls and affairs, from which my mourning kept me. But society as a whole still kept up the mad round of pleasure, although almost every family had sustained its losses. The young

people had plenty of opportunities to dance, even if some few aristocratic houses did remain closed. Those who had returned safely from the battles were the favourites of the ladies, and all conversations were of the past war and the coming of the needle-guns and conscriptions with which to win the future victories. Victories? When and over whom? No one had any idea, but revenge—even if only for a loss at cards—is the universal feeling.

With the coming of spring, once more the “black spot” appeared in the horizon—a “question,” as they called it. This time the question was Luxembourg.

Of what great importance was Luxembourg to the world? I must take up my studies again as I had in the former war, and my investigations led me to the following:—

Luxembourg belonged to the King of the Netherlands and at the same time to the German Bund. (This according to the treaties of 1814–16. Ah, these treaties are themselves the roots of quarrels.) Prussia was privileged to garrison the capital. Now as she (Prussia) had broken with the Bund in 1866, how could she keep this right? That was the “question.” With the Peace of Prague the connection was dissolved. Why did the Prussians maintain their right? An intricate affair, to be sure, and of course the only sensible way to settle it would be to slaughter fresh hundreds of thousands.

Every enlightened statesman would admit that. The Dutch never valued this possession, and King William III. was planning to sell it to France for his own profit. Secret negotiations were on foot. Quite right, secrecy is the soul of diplomacy. The people need not know anything of such differences. If the matter comes to blows, it is time enough for them to shed their blood. The reason for shedding it is of no importance to them.

In March the Prussians were informed that the King had telegraphed his acceptance to France, and German public opinion was outraged. Who is this "public opinion"? Certain editorial writers, perhaps. The Reichstag discussed the question hotly, but Bismarck remained very cool—nevertheless he took occasion to make preparations for war with France, and the latter also prepared.

It was the old tune I recognised, and I feared a fresh outbreak in Europe, with so many leaders to poke the fire. One is amazed at such firebrands; have they no idea how great is their crime?

Years later I heard of a conversation between the Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia with Professor Simon :—

"If France and Holland have already made terms, that means war!"

The Crown Prince answered with intense excitement and feeling :—

“ You have never seen war or you could not utter that word so carelessly. I have seen it, and let me tell you it is the supreme duty to avoid war if there is any possibility.”

This time it was avoided. Luxembourg was declared, by a counsel in London, to be neutral, and Prussia withdrew. Friends of peace breathed again, but many were dissatisfied—not the French Emperor, he wished for peace, but the war party. Many Germans, too, considered the submissive policy wise. But why should not states as well as individuals accept a verdict submissively? Is it not more sensible to bow to the settlement of reason than force? What this London conference attained could always be secured by rulers if they wished to avoid war, and thus accomplish what Frederick III. (The Noble) declared to be their highest duty.

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May found us in Paris, seeing the great exhibition. It was my first visit, and I was dazzled by its brilliancy. The empire was in its highest splendour. Many European rulers were visiting there, and it seemed almost like a great international capitol—this French city which was in three short years to be bombarded by its eastern neighbour.

All the nations were assembled in this great peaceful and profitable pageant of industry—this

productive, not destructive, strife of business. All the riches which art and manufacture contribute to use and beauty were here displayed, and one felt proud of the progressive times one lived in, and how natural it was to feel that never more should all this development be threatened by the brutal processes of destruction. And I breathed easily when I realised that all these royal guests commingled in congratulatory festivities. Certainly they would never again exchange shots with their mutual entertainers and hosts. All this splendid public recognition and congratulatory association seemed like a pledge that an era of unbroken peace and plenty had come. Never again would these civilised nations draw the sword—only barbarians and tartar hordes would be capable of that.

In the midst of it all it was rumoured that the Emperor was seeking the earliest suitable opportunity to present his favourite idea to the Powers for *general* disarmament. The information came from reliable sources.

What government could refuse such a suggestion without unmasking its desire for conquest? What nation would not revolt at such a refusal? The proposal must succeed.

Frederick was not so confident as I.

“First of all,” he said, “I cannot believe Napoleon will ever propose it since the war party

is too strong. Occupants of thrones cannot govern public opinion; they are prevented by their closest advisers. In the second place, one cannot command a great organic body to cease to exist as such. It would set itself in opposition."

"Of what great body are you speaking?"

"Of the army. As a body, it has life and has the power to sustain its existence. As an organism, it is to-day full grown, and if universal conscription is introduced it is on the point of enormous expansion."

"And yet you plan to oppose this thing!"

"Yes, but not by stepping up and crying, 'Die, monster!' Such an institution would hardly respond by stretching itself dead at my command. I will urge war against this monster by introducing another living, though still fragile form, which as it unfolds will finally wipe the other out. It was you, Martha, who introduced me to the ideas of modern scientists. An inexorable law is changing and moving the world, and what is opposed to it must go. Politicians, rulers, and soldiers seem not to have the slightest notion of this truth. A few years ago I was just as blind to it."

We lived at the Grand Hotel, but since I had not laid aside my mourning, we did not seek acquaintances. Of course Rudolf was with us, but he did not make many long excursions with us, for the time had come for him to learn, and

he spent much of his time with his English tutor.

The world which opened to us here was all new to me. There had come together, from the four corners, the rich, the famous—and I was fairly confused by the turmoil, the fêtes, the luxuriousness, all so enchanting and interesting. But I longed for the quiet and peace of home as ardently as one wishes for the gay world when entirely shut out from it.

We kept ourselves outside the hubbub and sought only the acquaintance of the prominent thinkers who could be of benefit not only to our mental life, but also who could help further Frederick in his new idea. We were busy at home collecting what we called a "Peace Protocol," a sort of scrap-book on the history of the peace ideal as it had developed from the beginning. It soon grew into quite a volume. (Since I have carried it down to the present day it has grown into several.) But, as a whole, it is but a small drop as compared to the oceans of war literature which flood our libraries. But when we reflect that in a single acorn is hidden the possibility of a whole oak-forest we need not be discouraged when the history of a new movement can be chronicled in a few pages.

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And now came the fulfilment of a cherished

hope. A girl was born to us. We knew the joy of having a son, and now we should realise the promise of happiness which a little daughter might bring to her parents, and of course our little Sylvia would unfold into a paragon of beauty, grace, and cleverness. Happiness makes us so selfish. Under the fair sky of our domestic heaven all else seemed to evaporate; even the terrors of the cholera faded into a cloud-like dream, and even Frederick slackened in the pursuit of his ideal. No doubt much discouragement as well was the reason for this, for everywhere his plans met with shrugs and doubts, and even pitying smiles and condemnation. The world seems to prefer to be swindled and kept wretched. Every proposed plan to wipe out misery and woe is dubbed "Utopian," and even put aside as childish.

However, Frederick never entirely lost sight of his aim. His studies led him into correspondence with learned men of every type. He planned to write a great book called *War and Peace*.

The winter after Sylvia's birth was quietly spent in Vienna, and the following spring we visited Italy. Our new programme demanded that we should know other countries. Those were lovely days, and I am sorry I kept no note of them in my red book. The next winter found us again in Paris, and this time we plunged into the great whirl. We rented a small furnished

house where we could entertain our friends, by whom in turn we were constantly invited. Our ambassador presented us at court, and we were frequently the guests of the Empress. All the foreign embassies were open to us, as well as those of foreign notabilities. The literary stars of the times were all invited to our home except the greatest of all—Victor Hugo—who was in exile.

In all this fascinating whirl of amusement it is easy to drift into the heartless and thoughtless life, to forget the real problems which lie beyond it all, and even domestic shipwreck is apt to be the result. But we steadfastly kept our hold on the hearthstone, and neither did we forget our deep and universal interests. Every morning a few hours were devoted to the domestic side and to our study, and we succeeded in getting a great deal of real happiness even in the midst of all this round of pleasure.

As Austrians we found much sympathy expressed in Paris, even suggesting revenge upon the Prussians for our defeated army. But such consolations were all rejected, and we assured our sympathetic friends that we desired only peace, for revenge never made anything right. If old blows were wiped out by fresh ones, when would the dreadful business of war cease ?

We assured our friends that we hoped the present peace would never be broken again, and

we were given to understand that this was also the wish of Napoleon III. We were closely associated with many of his intimates, and they gave us the assurance that he actually desired to propose a general disarmament. But the populace was seething with discontent, and many of the imperialists considered it impossible to remove the antagonism against the French throne, except by diverting their attention by a foreign war, a sort of grand promenade against the Rhine. That the Luxembourg matter failed to bring this about was considered unfortunate. But the newspapers continued to say much about the unavoidable war between Prussia and France.

The brilliant season reached even more extravagant heights with the spring-time, and we began to long for rest. We were overwhelmed with invitations to visit the country-houses of our friends. But we refused to think of it, and not desiring to return to Grumitz on account of the unhappy memories, we settled in a quiet spot in Switzerland, and promised our Parisian friends that the following winter would find us in their midst again.

And what a refreshment was this summer with its long walks, its long hours of study, and longer hours of play for the children. But there were few pages in the little red book, which always meant a mind free of care, and peace.

Europe as a whole also seemed tolerably peaceful. There were no "dark spots," and no more talk of revenge. But the only thing which annoyed us was that Austria had introduced conscription; and that my Rudolf, like the rest, must some day also become a soldier was a thing I could not bear to contemplate.

"And yet people dare dream of freedom!" I exclaimed.

"A year of volunteering is not much," said Frederick, trying to comfort me.

I shook my head. "Even a day is too much. To have to pretend for a single day to do willingly what you detest—to live a lie—is abhorrent, and I mean to train my son for the truth."

"Then he should have been born a few centuries later, my dear," replied Frederick. "To be a perfectly true man and a perfectly free one seems impossible in our day. The deeper I go into my studies the more I see it so."

Double time was now possible to Frederick for his work, and in our quiet summer we determined to return the next winter to Paris, not for gaiety, but to devote the entire season to the one object of our lives. We wished to help bring about some practical results, and hoped to be able to co-operate with the plans of the Emperor for disarmament, for we might get his ear through our friends. Through our old friend the Cabinet Minister we

hoped also to get to the ear of the Austrian government. Frederick also had influential relatives at the Berlin Court, through whom such a plan might be brought to the consideration of Prussia.

But our return to Paris was disarranged. Our little Sylvia, our treasure, became seriously ill. These anxious hours filled with fear of death threw everything else into the background. But she did not die. In two weeks the danger was past. Then the winter's cold delayed our departure till March.

BOOK VI

CHAPTER I

Paris in March 1870—War party pushes the Emperor—His plan of disarmament dropped—Our new home in Paris—The French and German question—Menace and rumours again—France makes demands and then threats.

FOREBODINGS? There were none in my mind when we again entered Paris on that beautiful sunny March day in 1870. It was all cheer and promise, but one knows now what horrors were hanging over it all.

We engaged the same little house which we had occupied the year before. The same servants awaited us, and as we drove through the streets on our way home, we met many acquaintances, who were driving at that hour, among them the beautiful Empress, who graciously saluted us in passing. Violets were being sold everywhere, and the air was full of the promise of spring.

This season we were determined to avoid the gaiety; we declined all invitations, seldom went to the theatre, and kept ourselves quite apart,

spending our evenings at home or in the society of a few choice friends.

Our plans regarding the Emperor's scheme of disarmament were at a standstill, for the time seemed not ripe for such an idea. The people were in a turmoil, and the throne itself seemed not on the surest foundations. We grew accustomed to hear that the only safety of the dynasty would be in a fortunate campaign. There seemed no possibility of war, and yet talk of disarmament was dropped for the Bonaparte halo largely depended upon its military glory. Neither Prussia nor Austria responded to our plan. Expansion of the army was everywhere the fashion, and our dream of disarmament fell upon deaf ears.

"The time is not ripe," said Frederick. "I may need to abandon my hope to help personally to hasten the peace of the nations. What I can contribute is small indeed, but from the first hour it dawned upon me, it possessed me with the conviction that it was the one most important thing in the world. I must be faithful."

If for the moment the project for disarmament must be postponed, yet I was content that there was no immediate threat of war. At court and among the people those who believed the dynasty must be rebaptized in blood had to give up all hope of glory in a charming little campaign on the Rhine. There were no French allies, the harvest

had failed, forage was scarce, the army had to sell its horses, the extra recruits had been cut off by legislation, and above all there was nowhere any political complication ; in short, so Ollivier proclaimed from the forum : “ The peace of Europe is assured.”

Assured ! How the word rejoiced me. The papers repeated it, and thousands rejoiced with me. What greater good can be given to the majority of humanity than the assurance of peace ?

The worth of this lulling security, of which the statesmen assured us in June 1870, we all realise now. We might have known then and always in the future that we mistake when we put our innocent trust into the statements of diplomats. How can peace ever be secure when any hour these meddlers can turn up some agitation ? We can never be secure from war until some other means for settling differences is provided.

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In Paris again society scattered itself, but we remained in town for business, since we had decided to buy ourselves a home there ; but many of our friends owned houses in the near neighbourhood of Paris, and we visited them all several times during the early summer. I clearly remember that it was in the salon of the Princess Mathilde that I first got wind that there was a new agitation

in the air. It was said that a prince of Hohenzollern was a candidate for the vacant Spanish throne. It seemed of little consequence who should sit on the Spanish throne, but it cut me to the heart when I heard some one make the remark : " France will not tolerate that ! " I knew what this phrase always meant : " we will not tolerate."

The subject was idly dropped, and none of us realised the fearful result of the doubtful Spanish succession. But the point obtruded itself more and more, privately and in the newspapers. Everybody declared that Prussia wished purposely to provoke war. Yet letters from Berlin assured us that the Spanish throne was not considered a question of any importance.

We were deeply interested in our house and its furnishings, and little realised the approaching storm that began to threaten louder and louder.

On the 19th of July the French declared war against Prussia.

CHAPTER II

War declared—Excitement in Paris—Which side?—We remain in Paris—A little history—First days of war—Paris a fortress—A Republic declared—My husband's fate.

“WAR is declared!” These three words, what do they mean? The beginning of a conflict which is the result of a political intrigue, and, incidentally, a half million of human beings are sentenced to death. Does he who signs such a declaration realise that he is plunging his pen in fire, in bloody tears, and in the poisons of plague and disease?

So on account of a vacant throne seeking an occupant, and unreasonable dissensions between two monarchs, the storm was brought upon us.

I remember the peculiar frame of mind which took possession of me when this war broke out. The whole population was in a ferment, and who could escape the infection? Naturally, according to old custom, the beginning of the campaign was regarded as a triumphant march; that is, of course, a patriotic duty. The “Marseillaise” was heard at every corner. At every theatrical

performance the leading actress or singer—at the opera it was Marie Sass—must appear before the curtain in the costume of Joan of Arc and, carrying the national colours, must sing this battle-song—the audience rising and generally joining in the chorus. Frederick and I realised one evening the might of this popular enthusiasm, and were compelled to rise to our feet—compelled because we were electrified.

“ See, Martha,” exclaimed Frederick, “ this spark which spreads from one to another, uniting the whole mass and making every heart beat higher, is love—— ”

“ Do you believe so ? It is a song inspiring hate.”

“ That makes no difference ; a common hatred is but another form of love. `When two or three or more are bound together by the same feeling, they love one another. When the time arrives for a nobler, broader aspiration than the interests of nationality, namely, the cause of humanity, then our ideal will be attained.”

“ Ah, when will that time come ? ” I sighed.

“ When ? One can speak but relatively. As a length of time compared with our personal existence—never ; when compared with the existence of our race—to-morrow.”

When war breaks out the inhabitants of neutral states divide into two camps ; one siding with this, the other with that party, as if there were a great

stake in which every one had a share. We were unconsciously influenced by our earlier interests. Frederick was of Prussian descent and the German language was my own. The declaration of war had been made by the French on such insignificant grounds—mere pretences—that we must recognise the cause of the Prussians as more justly representing that of defence, since they were forced into the contest. It was inspiring to note with what enthusiasm the Germans, but so shortly before at strife among themselves, now trooped together.

On the 19th of July, in his address from the throne, King William said :—

The German and French nations, both in like degree enjoying the blessings of Christian civilisation and increasing prosperity, are called to a more beneficent rivalry than the bloody one of arms. But the ruler of France, instigated by personal interests and passions, has been able, through misleading statements, to excite the justifiable though excitable vanity of our great neighbours.

The Emperor Napoleon on his part issued the following proclamation :—

Because of the arrogant claims of Prussia we were obliged to protest. These protests have been met with ridicule. Events followed which indicated a contempt for us. Our country has been deeply incensed thereby, and instantly the battle-cry has been heard from one end of France to the other.

There is nothing to be done except to consign our fate to the lot drawn by war. We do not war against Germany, whose independence we respect. We have the most earnest desire that the people who compose the great German nation may be the arbiters of their own destiny. What we desire is the establishment of a condition of things which will insure our present security and make our future safe. We desire a permanent peace, founded upon the true interests of peoples ; we wish that this miserable condition should end, and that all nations use all possible means to secure general disarmament.

What a lesson, what a striking lesson this document is when we consider it in connection with the events which followed. In order to be sure of safety, in order to attain permanent peace, this war was begun by France. And what was the result ? “The Terrible Year” and enduring hatred. No, no ; one does not use charcoal to paint a thing white, not asafoetida to perfume a room, nor war to secure peace.

I could not believe that the war would be a long one. What were they fighting about ? Really nothing at all. It was a sort of grand parade, undertaken by the French from a spirit of adventure—by the Germans as a duty of defence. One might expect a few sabre thrusts, and the antagonists would again shake hands. Fool that I was ! As if the results of war bore any adequate relation

to its cause. The course of it determines the result.

We would gladly have left Paris, for the enthusiasm of the people pained us immeasurably. But the way eastward was blocked; our house was not finished—in short, we remained. All of our acquaintance who could get away had fled, and, excepting a few literary men, we had no visitors. A young writer, the later famous Guy de Maupassant, once expressed my own feelings so perfectly that I entered his words in my journal:—

War—when I think of this word I shudder as if one talked of the Inquisition, or of a distant, horrible, unnatural thing. War—to kill one another, cut each other down! And we have to-day—in our times, with our culture, with our extensive knowledge in the higher planes of development, which we flatter ourselves to have attained—we still have schools to teach men how to kill, to kill in the most scientific manner and as many as possible.

It is wonderful that the people do not rise against this thing, that the whole of society does not revolt at the mere mention of war. He who rules is in duty bound to avoid war, as the captain of a ship is bound to avoid shipwreck. When a captain loses his ship he is required to answer for it, in case it is discovered that he has been remiss in duty. Why should not every government be called to account when it declares war? If the people understood how to refuse to allow

themselves to be killed without just cause, war would cease.

Ernest Renan, also, let us hear from him :—

Is it not heart-breaking to think that all that we men of science have sought to accomplish during the past fifty years is destroyed at a blow; the sympathy between peoples, the mutual understanding, the fruitful, united work? How such a war destroys the love of truth! What lies, what defamation of a nation will from now on, for the next fifty years, be believed by each of the other, and divide them for an incalculable time! How it will retard the progress of Europe! We cannot build up in a hundred years what these men have torn down in one day.

I also had the opportunity of reading a letter which Gustave Flaubert wrote during those first July days to Georges Sand. Here it is :—

I am in despair at the stupidity of my countrymen. The incorrigible barbarism of humanity fills me with the deepest grief. This enthusiasm inspired by not one reasonable idea makes me long to die that I may not witness it. Our good Frenchmen will fight: first, because they believe themselves called out by Prussia; secondly, because the natural condition of man is that of barbarism; thirdly, because war possesses a mystical element which carries mankind away. Have we returned to a war of races? I am afraid so. The horrible battles which we prepare for have not a single pretext to excuse them. It is

simply the pleasure of fighting for fighting itself. I regret the bridges and tunnels that will be blown to pieces, all this superb work of man which will be destroyed. I notice that a member of the Chamber proposes the plundering of the Grand Duchy of Baden. Ah, I wish I were with the Bedouins.

“Oh!” I cried, as I read this letter, “if we had only been born five hundred years later—that would be better than the Bedouins.”

“Mankind will not take so long to become reasonable,” replied Frederick confidently.

It was again the era of proclamations and army orders.

Always the same old song, and always the same enthusiasm and applause of the populace! There was the same rejoicing over promised victories as if they had been already won.

On the 28th of July Napoleon III. published the following proclamation from his headquarters in Metz. I copied this, not out of admiration, but because of anger over its everlasting hollow phrases:

We defend the honour and soil of our native land. We will be victorious. Nothing is too great for the sturdy endurance of the soldiers of Africa, the Crimea, China, Italy, and Mexico. Once more they will show what a French army inspired by a love of country is capable of accomplishing. Whichever way we turn outside our borders we find the marks of the valour of our fathers. We will prove ourselves worthy

of them. Upon our success hangs the fate of freedom and civilisation. Soldiers, do your duty, and the God of Battles will be with you.

Oh, of course, it would not do to leave out "the God of Battles!" That the leaders of vanquished armies have a hundred times promised the same does not prevent the claim of special protection being set up at every fresh campaign in order to awaken the same confidence. Is anything shorter than the memory of a people or anything feebler than their logic?

On the 31st of July King William left Berlin and issued the following manifesto :—

To-day, before I leave to join the army, to fight with it for the honour and preservation of all dearest to us, I proclaim a general amnesty for all political offences. My people know that we were not guilty of enmity and breach of faith. But being attacked we are resolved, as were our fathers, in firm reliance upon God, to endure the struggle for the rescue of our country.

Defence, defence, that is the only dignified sort of death; therefore both sides cry: "I defend myself." Is that not a contradiction? Not quite—for over each a third power rules—the might of the old hereditary war spirit. If they would only defend themselves against that!

“ O Monsieur, O Madame, what news ! ” With

these words Frederick's butler and the cook behind him rushed into our sitting-room. It was the day of the battle of Wörth.

“ A dispatch has arrived. The Prussians are as good as absolutely crushed. The city is being decorated with tri-coloured flags, it will be illuminated to night.”

In the course of the afternoon further despatches proved that the first was false—a manœuvre of the Bourse.

On the 7th of August there was a rumour of disaster. The Emperor hastened from St. Cloud to the seat of war. The enemy had crossed the frontier and was marching inland. The papers could not express their indignation in strong enough terms. I had imagined that the shout *à Berlin!* meant a similar invasion. But that these eastern barbarians should dare the same thing, should march into beautiful and beloved France—this seemed pure, audacious villainy, and must be stopped at once.

The provisional Minister of War published an order calling upon all able-bodied citizens between thirty and forty years of age to enrol themselves in the National Guard. A ministry for defence of the interior was organised. The appropriation was increased from five hundred to a thousand million of francs. It is refreshing to notice how free the authorities are with the money and lives of others. An unpleasant little occurrence dis-

turbed the convenience of the public ; if one wanted to change a bank-note he was obliged to pay a broker ten per cent. There was not sufficient gold to keep the notes of the Bank of France at par.

Now followed victory after victory on the part of the Germans.

The aspect of Paris and its inhabitants underwent an astonishing change. In the place of the proud, boastful, war-loving humour, dismay and vindictive anger appeared. The impression that a horde of vandals was ready to devour the land was widespread. That the French had called down this storm upon themselves they never considered ; or that they had done it to prevent some Hohenzollern in the distant future from conceiving a fancy for the Spanish throne—that they also forgot. The most astonishing stories were told of the ferocity of the invaders, “The Uhlans, the Uhlans!” the words had a sort of fantastic demoniac sound, as if they had talked about the armies of Satan. In the imagination of the people these troops became demons. Whenever a particularly bold stroke was reported, it was at once ascribed to the Uhlans. They were said to be recruited to serve for booty and without pay. Mixed up with these recitals of terror were stories of occasional triumphs. To lie about success is naturally the chief duty of the sensationalist, for, of course, the courage of the populace must be

kept up. The law of veracity—like many other laws of morality—loses its force in times of war. Frederick read to me the following:—

Up to the 16th of August the Germans have lost one hundred and forty-four thousand men, the remainder are on the verge of starvation. The reserves from Germany, the “landwehr” and “landsturm,” are arriving; old men of over sixty, with flint-lock muskets, carrying on one side a huge tobacco pouch, on the other a big flask of brandy, with a long clay pipe in the mouth, are staggering under the weight of the knapsacks, coffee-mills, and packages of elderberry tea. Coughing and groaning, they are crossing from the right to the left bank of the Rhine, cursing those who have torn them from the arms of their grandchildren to thrust them into the clutches of death. The reports we get from the German press of victorious battles are all the usual Prussian lies.

On the 20th of August Count Palikao informed the Chamber that three army corps, which had united against Bazaine, had been thrown into the quarries of Jaumont. It is true no one had the remotest idea where these stone quarries were, or how it happened that the three army corps were kept there. From tongue to tongue the joyful tidings spread, and everybody acted as if they had been born in the region of Jaumont, and, of course, knew all about the quarries. At the same time there was a current report that the King of Prussia

had become insane over the condition of his army.

All sorts of atrocities were reported; the excitement among the population increased hourly. The engagement of Bazaine near Metz was described as if the Bavarians had been guilty of most inhuman barbarity.

“Do you believe this?” I said to Frederick. “Do you believe these stories of the good-natured Bavarians?”

“They are possible. Whether a man is Bavarian or Turk, German, French, or Indian, makes no particular difference; when he takes his life in his hands and fights to destroy others he ceases to be human. All that is awakened and strongest within him is the beast.”

Metz is taken. The report resounded through the city like a shriek of terror.

To me the news of the capture of a fortress brought relief rather than dismay. Were we not probably nearer the end? But after every defeat each side strains itself to the utmost for a fresh trial of strength; possibly the fortune of war may turn. Usually the advantage is first on one side next on the other; on both sides there is certain sorrow and certain death.

Trochu felt himself called upon to arouse the courage of the population by a fresh proclamation, calling upon them with the motto of Bretagne,

“With God’s help for our native land.” That does not sound quite new to me—I must have heard something similar to it in other proclamations. It did not fail of its effect, however; the people were encouraged. Next we were told Paris must be fortified. Paris a fortress! I could scarcely grasp the thought. This city, the lode-star of the whole civilised rich, art- and life-loving world; the radiating point of splendour, of fashion, of the intellect—this city must fortify itself, that is, must be the aim of the enemy’s attacks, the target of bombardment, and run the risk of destruction through fire and hunger? And these people proceeded to the work with gaiety of heart, with the zeal of pleasure, with self-sacrifice, as if they were bringing to completion the noblest, most useful work in the world. Ramparts to be manned by infantry were built with embrasures, earthworks were thrown up before the gates, canals were covered, and surmounted by parapets, powder magazines were built, and a flotilla of barges, carrying cannon, was put upon the Seine. What a fever of activity; what an expenditure of strength and nerve; what monstrous cost of labour and money! If all had only been so cheerfully and nobly devoted to works of true utility—but for the purpose of destruction, which had no object except that of a strategic checkmate, it was inconceivable!

To be prepared for a long siege the city was amply provisioned. But it is the experiences of ages that no fortification has existed which has been impregnable—capitulation is solely a matter of time. Yet fortifications are still erected, they are still provisioned, notwithstanding the mathematical impossibility of maintaining them, in the long-run, against starvation.

The preparations were made on an enormous scale. Mills were erected and stockyards filled; yet the hour must come when the corn would all be ground and the flesh all eaten. But so far ahead as this no one thought. Long before that the enemy would be driven from the country. The entire male force of the city was enrolled in the National Guard, and all possible were drawn from the country. What difference did it make if the provinces were laid in ashes? Such insignificant events were not to be considered when there was prospect of a national disaster. On the 17th of August sixty thousand provincial troops had already arrived in Paris.

With an ever-increasing activity events followed events. All around there was heard but one expression, "Death to the Prussians." A storm of the wildest hatred was gathering—it had not yet broken out. In all the official reports, in all the street disturbances we heard of but one aim—"death to the Prussians." All these troops,

regular and irregular, all these munitions of war, all these busy workmen with spade and barrow, all that one saw and heard, in form or tone, surged and threatened "death to the Prussians!" Or, in other words, it sounds really like the cry of love, and inspires even tender hearts—"all for our country"—but it is one and the same thing.

"You are of Prussian descent," I said to Frederick one day, "how do these expressions of hatred affect you?"

"You asked me the same question in the year 1866, and then I answered, as I must to-day, that I suffer under these demonstrations of hatred, not as a Prussian, but as a man. When I reflect upon the feelings of these people from a national stand-point, I can only regard them as justifiable; they call it the sacred hatred of the enemy, and this sentiment forms an important incentive to military patriotism. They have but one thought—to free their country from the presence of the antagonist. They forget that they caused the invasion by their declaration of war. They did not do it themselves, but it was their government in which they believed. They waste no time in reflections or in recriminations; the misfortune is upon them, and every muscle, every nerve is strained to meet it, or with reckless self-sacrifice they will all go to destruction together. Believe me, there is untold capacity of love in mankind;

the pity of it is that we waste it in the old rut of hatred. And the enemy, the 'red-haired, eastern barbarians!'—what are they doing? They were called out and they invade the land which threatened theirs. Do you remember how the cry, *à Berlin, à Berlin*, resounded through the streets?"

"Now the others march upon Paris! Why do the Parisian shouters call that a crime?"

"Because there is neither logic nor justice in that national feeling whose chief principle is, we are we,—that is, the first,—the others are barbarians. That march of the Germans from victory to victory fills me with admiration. I have been a soldier and know what an inspiration the idea of victory has, what pride, what intense delight. It is the reward for all suffering, for the renunciation of rest and happiness, for the life at stake."

"Why do not the victors admire the vanquished, if they know all that victory means to those who are soldiers like themselves? Why do not the army reports of the losing party contain the sentence: The enemy has won a glorious victory?"

"Why? I repeat, the war spirit and patriotic egotism are the destruction of all justice."

On the 28th of August all Germans were ordered to leave Paris within three days. I had the opportunity to see the effect of this order. Many Germans had been citizens of Paris for ten and twenty years, had married Parisians, but were now

compelled to leave everything—home, business, and property.

Sedan ! The Emperor had surrendered his sword. The report overpowered us. Then truly a terrible catastrophe had occurred—Germany had won, and the butchery was over.

“ It is over,” I cried. “ If there are people who are citizens of the world, they may illuminate their windows ; in the temples of humanity Te Deums can now be sung—the butchery is over.”

“ Do not rejoice too soon,” Frederick warned me. “ This war has long lost the character of a battle game of chess, the whole nation is in arms. For one army destroyed ten new ones will spring out of the soil.”

“ Is that just ? These are only German soldiers, not the German nation.”

“ Why always talk of justice and reason in the presence of a madman. France is mad with pain and terror, and from the stand-point of the love of country her rage is just, her sorrow sacred. Personal interest is not considered, only the loftiest self-sacrifice. If the time would only come when the noble virtues common to humanity could be torn from the work of destruction and united for the blessing of the race ! But this unholy war has again driven us back a long way from the attainment of this goal.”

“ No, no, I hope the war is at an end.”

“If so, which I much doubt, the seeds of future wars are sown and the seeds of hate, which will outlast this generation.”

On the 4th of September another great event occurred. The Emperor was deposed and France was declared a republic. With the destruction of the throne, the leaves were torn out of the book of France which told the story of Metz and Sedan. It was Napoleon and his dismissed generals who, through cowardice, treachery, and bad tactics, had been responsible for all this disaster—but not France. France would now carry on the war if the Germans still dared to continue the invasion.

“How would it have been had Napoleon and his generals been victorious?” I asked when Frederick told me this latest news.

“Then they would have accepted his success as the success of France.”

“Is there any justice in that?”

“Why will you not break yourself off the habit of asking that question?”

My hope that with Sedan the war would end was soon dissipated. The frenzied orations, the atrocious pamphlets which were now made and published and rained down upon the unfortunate Emperor and Empress, and the unlucky generals, were absolutely disgusting. The rough masses held that they could lay upon these few the responsibility for the general disaster. The prepara-

tions for the defence of Paris were carried on with rapidity. Houses which might serve as protection to the approaching enemy were torn down, and the region around the city became a desert. Crowds of country people filled up the already crowded city, and the streets were jammed with the waggons and pack-horses of these people, laden with the remains of their household goods. I had seen the same sight in Bohemia, and now was fated to see the like misery and a similar terror in the beautiful streets of the most wonderful, most brilliant city of the world.

There came at last the news of the prospect of better things, there was the chance that peace might be arranged.

On the contrary, the breach became much wider. For some time past German papers had suggested the retention of Alsace-Lorraine. The former German provinces were to be annexed. The historical argument was not quite tenable, therefore the strategical reason was made more prominent: as a rampart they were absolutely necessary in case of future wars. It is well known that the strategic grounds are the most important, the most incontestible—the ethical reasons must take second rank. On the other hand, as France had lost in the struggle, was it not fair that the winner should hold the prize? In case of the success of the French, they of course would have claimed

the provinces of the Rhine. What is war for except for the extension of the territory of the one or the other antagonist?

In the meantime the victorious army did not halt in its march on Paris—the Germans were already at her door. The consent to the cession of Alsace-Lorraine was officially demanded. In response the well-known reply was given: “Not an inch of our territory—not a stone of our fortresses.”

Yes, yes—a thousand lives—not an inch of earth. That is the foundation principle of the patriotic spirit. “They seek to humiliate us!” cried the French patriots. “We would rather be buried under the ruins of Paris.”

We attempted to leave the city. Why should we stay among a people so embittered by hate that they clenched their fists if they heard us speak German. We had succeeded in making arrangements for departure, when I was seized by a nervous fever of so dangerous a character that the family physician forbade any attempt at removal.

I lay upon my bed for many weeks, and only a dreamy recollection of that time remains. In the careful hands of my husband, and the tender care of my children, my Rudolph and my little Sylvia, all knowledge of the fearful events then occurring was shut out, and when I recovered winter had set in.

Strassburg had been bombarded, the library destroyed; four or five shots a minute were said to have been fired—in all, one hundred and ninety-three thousand, seven hundred and twenty-two.

Should Paris be starved into submission or bombarded?

Against the last the conscience of civilisation protested. Should this rendezvous of all nations, this brilliant seat of art, with its irrecoverable riches and treasures, be bombarded as any common citadel? It was not to be thought of; the whole neutral press, I learned afterwards, protested. The press of Berlin approved the idea, considered it the only way to end the war and conquer the city. No protest availed, and on the 28th of December the bombardment began.

At first greeting it with terror, it was not long before the Parisians chose for a promenade the localities from which one could best hear the music of cannon. Here and there a shell fell in the street, but there was seldom a consequent catastrophe. Rarely could any news from the outside world be obtained, and that only through carrier pigeons and balloons. The reports were most contradictory; one day we were informed of successful sallies, the next, that the enemy was about to storm the city, set fire to it, and lay it in ashes; or we were assured that rather than see

one German enter within the walls the commandant would blow all Paris into atoms.

It became daily more and more difficult to obtain food. Meat was not to be had; cattle and sheep and horses were exhausted, and the period began when dogs, cats, rats, and mice were a rarity, and finally the beloved elephant at the Jardin des Plantes must be served up. Bread was scarce. People stood in rows, hours at a time, in front of the bakers in order to receive their tiny portion. Disease broke out, induced by famine. The mortality increased from the ordinary eleven hundred a week to between four and five thousand.

One day Frederick came into the house from his daily walk in an unusual state of excitement.

“Take up your note-book, my zealous historian,” he cried. “To-day there is wonderful news.”

“Which of my books?” I asked. “My Peace Protocol?”

Frederick shook his head.

“Oh, for that the time is past. The war now being carried on is of so mighty a character that it will drag its martial spirit long after it. It has sown broadcast such a store of hatred and revenge that future battle harvests must grow therefrom; and upon the other side it has produced for the victors such magnificent revolutionary results that a like harvest may be brought about by their haughty martial spirits.”

“What is it that is so important?”

“King William has been proclaimed Emperor at Versailles. There is now really a Germany, one single empire—and a mighty one. That is a new event in the world’s history. And you can easily perceive how this great result will redound to the honour of the work of war. The two most advanced representatives of civilisation on the continent are the ones who from now on for some time to come will cultivate the war spirit—the one in order to return the blow, the other in order to maintain the position won; here out of hate, there out of love; here from a spirit of retaliation, on the other side out of gratitude. Shut up your peace protocols—for a long time to come we shall stand under the bloody and iron sign of Mars.”

“Emperor of Germany!” I cried, “that is indeed glorious. I cannot help rejoicing over this news. The whole barbarous slaughter has not been in vain if a great, new empire has been born.”

“From the French point of view the war is doubly lost. And it is to be expected of us that we should not regard this contest from the one-sided German stand-point alone. Not only as human beings but from a narrower national feeling we should be excused if we regretted the success of our enemies of 1866. And yet I will acknowledge that the union of divided Germany is a desirable thing, and that the readiness with which all these

German princes joined in offering the imperial crown to the gray-haired victor is inspiring and admirable. Only it is a pity that this union was not brought about through peaceful rather than warlike measures. It may be that if Napoleon III. had not made his demand of the 19th of July there would not have been enough patriotism among the Germans to bring about this result. They may well rejoice; the poet's wish is fulfilled—they are a band of brothers. Four years ago they had each other by the throat and knew but one common cause—hatred of Prussia.”

“That word hate makes me shudder.”

“Well it may. So long as this feeling is not regarded as unjust and dishonourable, we shall have no humane humanity. Religious hatred has about disappeared, but national hatreds form a part of the education of the citizen.”

In the quiet of the next few days we had many discussions as to our future. With the establishment of peace, which we could now hope for, we might again dare to think of our personal happiness. During the eight years of our married life there had been no discord, not a discourteous or unkindly word or thought had passed between us; as the years drew on we knew we should grow nearer to each other, and we could look forward to an old age together—the golden evening of our lives—with sure content.

Many of the preceding pages I have turned over with a shudder. It is not without repulsion that I have recorded my visit to the battle-fields of Bohemia and the scenes of the cholera week in Grumitz. I have done it as a duty. I had been told : “ In case I die first take up my work and do what you can to further the cause of peace among men.”

But I have now reached a point when I cannot go on.

I have tried ; many half-written sheets lie on the floor beside me ; but my heart fails and I can only fall to weeping—weeping bitterly like a child.

Some hours later I again made the attempt, but the particulars of the circumstances it is not possible for me to relate.

The fact is enough.

Frederick—my all !—was seized by a fanatical mob who, finding a letter from Berlin upon his person, accused him of being a spy. He was dragged before a so-called patriotic tribunal, and on the 1st of February 1871 was sentenced to be shot.

EPILOGUE

WHEN I again awoke to consciousness peace had been declared, the Commune had been defeated. For months, attended by my faithful Frau Anna, I lived through an illness without knowing that I was alive. The character of my illness I have never known. Those about me tenderly called it typhus, but I believe it was simply insanity.

Dimly I remember that the latter part of the time seemed filled with the rattling of shot and the falling of burning walls; probably my fancies were influenced by the actual events, the skirmishes between the communists and the party of Versailles.

That when I recovered my reason and realised the circumstances of my profound unhappiness I did not kill myself, or that the anguish had not killed me, was owing to the existence of my children. For these I could, I must, live. Even before my illness, on the day when the terrible event occurred, Rudolf had held me to life. I had sunk on my knees, weeping aloud while I repeated, "Die—die! I will die!" Two little arms were thrown

around me, and a sweet, piteous, pleading, childish face looked into mine :—

“ Mother ! ”

My little one had never called me anything but Mamma. That he at that moment, for the first time, used the word “ Mother ” said to me in two syllables, “ You are not alone, you have a son who shares your pain, who loves you above all things, who has no one in the world but you. Do not leave your child, Mother ! ”

I pressed the precious being to my heart, and to show him that I had understood him I murmured, “ My son, my son ! ”

I then remembered my little girl—his child—and resolved to live.

But the anguish was unendurable, and I fell into mental darkness. For years—at longer and longer intervals—I was subject to these attacks of melancholy, of which upon my restoration to health I knew nothing. Now, at length, I have outlived them, and for several years have been free from the unconscious misery, though not from the bitterest, conscious sorrow. Eighteen years have passed since the 1st of February 1871 ; but the deep anguish and the deepest mourning, which the tragedy of that day brought to me, I can never outlive though I should live a hundred years. If, in later times, the days are more frequent when I can take part in the events of the present, can

forget the past unhappiness, can sympathise in the joys of my children, not a night passes when I escape my misery. It is a peculiar experience, hard for me to describe, and which can only be understood by those who have similarly suffered. It would seem to indicate a dual life of the soul. If the one is so occupied, when awake, with the things of the outer world as to forget, there yet remains that second nature which ever keeps faithfully in mind that dreadful memory; and this I—when the other is asleep—makes itself felt. Every night at the same hour I awake with this deep depression. My heart seems torn asunder, and I feel as if I must relieve my agony in sighs and bitter weeping; this lasts for several seconds, without the awakened I knowing why the other is happy or unhappy. The next stage is a sentiment of universal sympathy, full of the tenderest compassion: “Oh, poor, poor humanity!” Then amidst a shower of bullets I see shrieking figures fall—and then I remember for the first time that my best-beloved met such a death.

But in dreams, singular to say, I never realise my loss. It often occurs that I seem to talk with Frederick as if he were alive. Many circumstances of the past—but no sad ones—are frequently alluded to by us: our meeting after Schleswig-Holstein, our joking over Sylvia’s cradle, our walk through Switzerland, our studies of favourite books,

and now and then a certain picture of my white-haired husband in the evening sunset-light, with his garden shears, clipping his roses. "Is it not true," he says to me, smiling, "that we are a happy old couple?"

My mourning I have never laid aside—not even on my son's wedding day. The woman who has loved, possessed, and lost—so lost—such a man must feel that love is indeed stronger than death. With this may exist a longing for revenge which can never grow cold.

But how should I seek revenge? The men who were guilty of the act could not be personally blamed. The sole responsibility rested upon the spirit of war, and this was the only force with which I could attempt—though in a feeble way—to settle my account.

My son Rudolf shared my views in regard to war—which did not, however, prevent his going into camp for the annual military drill, nor would it hinder his marching over the border, should that gigantic European contest break out which we are all anticipating. I might yet live to see the dearest one left to me sacrificed to this relentless Moloch, and the hearth of my old age fall in ruins.

Should I live to experience that and again be driven to madness, or should I see the triumph of justice and humanity, for which all nations and alliances of peoples are now striving?

My red journals are closed, and under date of 1871 I marked with a great cross the record of my life. My so-called protocol—my peace record—I have again opened, and of late have added much to the history of the growth of the international idea of the settlement of the strifes of humanity by peaceful methods.

For some years the two most influential nations of the continent have been watching each other, both absorbed in thoughts of war—the one in arrogant review of past successes, the other in burning hopes of revenge. Gradually these sentiments have somewhat cooled, and notwithstanding, or by reason of, the great increase of our standing armies, after ten years the voices petitioning for peace are once more heard.

To-day there are few to whom this dream of peace seems an impossibility. There are sentinels on every hill, to wake humanity out of its long sleep of barbarism, and to plant the white flag. Their battle-cry is “War against war”; their watchword, “Disarm! Disarm!” The only thing which can now prevent the most appalling disaster to Europe is the universal cry, “Disarm! Disarm!” Everywhere, in England and France, in Italy, in the northern countries, in Germany, in Switzerland, in America, societies have been formed with the common object to educate public opinion, and by the united expression of popular

will to demand of governments that future dissensions shall be submitted to international arbitration, and by so doing to set justice for ever in the place of rude force. That this is not the impossible fancy of a dreamer has been proved by facts. It is not only people of no influence and position, but members of Parliament, bishops, scholars, senators, ambassadors, who stand on the list. To these is added that ever-growing party which will shortly number millions, the party of "Labour" and of the people, upon whose programme the demand for peace is a first condition.

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"Mother, will you lay aside your mourning the day after to-morrow?"

With these words Rudolf came into my room this morning. For the day after to-morrow—the 30th of July 1889—the baptism of his first-born son is to be celebrated.

"No, my child," I answered.

"But, think, surely at such a festival you will not be sad; why wear the outward sign of sorrow?"

"And you surely are not superstitious enough to think that the black dress of the grandmother will bring ill-luck to the grandchild?"

"Certainly not. But it is not suitable to the occasion. Have you taken a vow?"

"No, it is only a quiet determination. But a

determination connected with such a memory has all the force of a vow."

My son bowed his head and urged me no longer.

"I have disturbed you in your work. Were you writing?"

"Yes—the story of my life. I am, thank God, at the end. That was the last chapter."

"How can you write the close of your life? You may live many years, many happy years, Mother. With the birth of my little Frederick, whom I will train to adore his grandmother, a new chapter is begun for you."

"You are a good son, my Rudolf, I should be ungrateful if I had not pride and happiness in you; and I am also proud of my—his sweet Sylvia; yes, I am entering on a happy old age—a quiet evening; but the story of the day is closed at sunset, is it not?"

He answered me with a quiet and sympathetic glance.

"Yes, the word 'end' under my biography is justified. When I conceived the idea of writing it, I determined to stop with the 1st of February 1871. If you had been torn from me for service in the field—luckily during the Bosnian campaign you were not old enough—I might have been obliged to lengthen my book. As it is, it was painful enough to write."

“And also to read,” answered Rudolf, turning over the leaves.

“I hope so. If the book shall cause such pain in the reading as to awaken a detestation of the source of all the unhappiness here described, I shall not have tormented myself in vain.”

“Have you examined all sides of the question, Mother?” said my son. “Have you exhausted all the arguments, analysed to the roots the spirit of war, and sufficiently brought out the scientific objections to it?”

“My dear, what are you thinking about? I have only written of my life. All sides of the question? Certainly not. What do I, the rich woman of high rank, know of the sorrows which war brings to the mass of the poor? What do I know of the plagues and evil tendencies of barrack life? And with the economic-social question involved I am not familiar—and yet these are all the very matters which finally determine all reformation. I do not offer a history of the past and future rights of nations—only the story of the individual.”

“But are you not afraid of your intentions being recognised?”

“People are offended only when the author tries to hide his intentions. My aim is open as the day, and is found in the words on the title page.”

The baptism took place yesterday. The occasion

was made doubly important by the betrothal of my daughter Sylvia and the old friend of her babyhood—Count Anton Delnitzky.

I am surrounded by the happiness of my children. Rudolf inherited the Dotzky estates six years ago, and has been married four years to Beatrice Griesbach, promised to him in their childhood. She is a charming creature, and the birth of their son adds to their enviable, brilliant lot.

In the room looking out upon the garden the dinner was served. The glass doors were open, and the air of the superb summer afternoon streamed in loaded with the perfume of roses.

Near me sat the Countess Lori Griesbach, Beatrice's mother. She is now a widow. Her husband fell in the Bosnian campaign. She has not taken his loss much to heart. On the contrary—for she is dressed in a ruby brocade and brilliant diamonds—she is exactly as superficial as in her youth. Matters of the toilet, a few French and English novels, the usual society gossip—these suffice to fill her horizon. She is as great a coquette as ever. For young men she has now no fancy, but personages of rank and position are the objects of her conquests. At present, it seems to me, she has our Cabinet Minister in hand.

“I must make a confession to you,” said Lori to me when we had congratulated each other upon our grandchild. “On this solemn occasion I

must relieve my conscience. I was seriously in love with your husband."

"You have often told me that, dear Lori."

"But he was always absolutely indifferent to me."

"That is well known to me."

"You had a husband true as gold, Martha ! I cannot say the same of mine. But nevertheless I was sorry to lose him. Well he died a glorious death, that is one comfort. Really it is a wearisome existence to be a widow, more especially as one grows older ; so long as one can flirt widowhood is not without its compensations. But now I acknowledge I become quite melancholy. With you it is different ; you live with your son, but I would not like to live with Beatrice. She would not wish it either. A mother-in-law in the house—that does not go well, for one wants to be mistress. One gets so provoked with the servants. You may believe me, I am much inclined to marry again. Of course, a marriage with some one of position——"

"A Minister of Finance, for instance," I interrupted, laughing.

"O you sly one ! You see through me at once. Look there : do you see how Toni Delnitzky is whispering to your Sylvia. That is compromising."

"Let them alone. The two have come to an understanding on the way from church. Sylvia

has confided to me that the young man will ask my permission to-morrow."

"What do you say? Well, I congratulate you. It is said the handsome Toni has been a little gay—but all of them are that—it cannot be helped, and he is a splendid match."

"Of that my Sylvia has not thought."

"Well, so much the better; it is a charming addition to marriage."

"Addition? Love is the sum of all."

.

One of the guests, an imperial colonel, had knocked on his glass, and "Oh, dear—a toast!" thought all, and discontentedly dropped their special conversation to listen to the speaker. We had good reason to sigh; three times the unlucky man stuck fast, and the choice of his good wishes was unfortunate. The health of the young heir was offered, who was born at a time when his country needed all her sons.

"May he wear the sword as his great-grandfather and his grandfather did; may he bring many sons into the world, who on their part may be an honour to their ancestry, and as they have done who have fallen, win fame on the field of honour. May they for the honour of the land of their fathers conquer—as their fathers and fathers' fathers—in short: Long life to Frederick Dotzky!"

The glasses rattled but the speech fell flat. That this little creature just on the threshold of life should be sentenced to the death-list on a battle-field did not make a pleasant impression.

To banish this dark picture, several guests made the comforting remark that present circumstances promised a long peace, that the Triple Alliance—and with that general interest was carried into the political arena, and our Cabinet Minister led the conversation.

“ In truth ” (Lori Griesbach listened with intense interest), “ it cannot be denied that the perfection which our weapons have attained is marvellous and enough to terrify all breakers of the peace. The law for general service allows us to put into the field, on the first call, four million eight hundred thousand men between the ages of nineteen and forty, with officers up to sixty. On the other hand, one must acknowledge that the extraordinary attendant expenses will be a strain upon the finances. It will be an intolerable burden to the population ; but it is encouraging to see with what patriotic self-sacrifice the people respond to the demands of the war ministry ; they recognise what all far-sighted politicians realise, that the general armament of neighbouring states and the difficulties of the political situation demand that all other considerations should be subordinated to the iron pressure of military necessity.”

“ Sounds like the usual editorial,” murmured some one.

The Minister went on calmly :—

“ But such a system is surety for the preservation of peace. For if to secure our border, as traditional patriotism demands of us, we do as our neighbours are doing, we are but fulfilling a sacred duty and hope to keep danger far from us. So I raise my glass to the toast in honour of the principle which lies so close to the heart of Frau Martha—a principle dear to the Peace League of Middle Europe—and I call upon all of you to drink to the maintenance of peace ! May we long enjoy its blessings ! ”

“ To such a toast I will not drink,” I replied. “ Armed peace is no benefaction ; we do not want peace for a long time, but for ever. If we set out upon a sea voyage, do we like the assurance that the ship will escape wreck for a long time ? That the whole trip will be a fortunate one is what the honest captain vouches for.”

Doctor Bresser, our intimate old friend, came to my help.

“ Can you in truth, your Excellency, honestly believe in a desire for peace on the part of those who with enthusiasm and passion are soldiers. How could they find such delight in arsenals, fortresses, and manœuvres if these things were really regarded merely as scarecrows ? Must the

people give all their earnings in order to kiss hands across the border? Do you think the military class will willingly accept the position of mere custodians of the peace? Behind this mask—the *si vis pacem* mask—glitters the eye of understanding, and every member who votes for the war budget knows it.”

“The members?” interrupted the minister. “We cannot praise enough the self-sacrifice which they have never failed to exhibit in serious times, and which finds expression in their willingness to vote the appropriate funds.”

“Forgive me, your Excellency, I would call out to these willing members: ‘Your “Yes” will rob that mother of her only child; yours puts out the eyes of some poor wretch; yours sets in a blaze a fearful conflagration; yours stamps out the brain of a poet who would have been an honour to his country. But you have all voted “Yes” in order to prove that you are not cowards—as if one had only oneself to consider. Are you not there to represent the wishes of the people? And the people wish profitable labour, wish relief, wish peace.’”

“I hope, dear Doctor,” remarked the Colonel bitterly, “that you may never be a member; the whole house would spit upon you.”

“I would soon prove that I am no coward. To swim against the stream requires nerves of steel.”

“ But how would it be if a serious attack were made and found us unprepared ? ”

“ We must have a system of justice which will make an attack impossible. But when the time for action does come, and these tremendous armies with their fearful new means of warfare are brought into the field, it will be a serious, a gigantic catastrophe. Help and care will be an impossibility. The endeavours of the Sanitary or Red Cross corps, the means of provision, will prove a mere irony. The next war of which people so glibly and indifferently speak will not be a victory for the one and a loss for the other, but destruction for all. Who among us desires this ? ”

“ I, certainly not,” said the minister. “ You, of course not, dear Doctor, but men in general. Our government, possibly not, but other states.”

“ With what right do you deem other people worse and less intelligent than yourself and me ? I will tell you a little story :—

“ Once upon a time a thousand and one men stood before the gate of a beautiful garden, longingly looking over the wall, desiring to enter. The gate-keeper had been ordered to admit the people, provided the majority wished admittance. He called one man up : ‘ Tell me honestly, do you want to come in ? ’ ‘ Certainly,’ he replied, ‘ but the other thousand do not care about it.’

“ The shrewd custodian wrote this answer in his

note-book. He then called a second. He made the same reply. Again the wise man wrote under the word 'Yes' the figure one, and under the word 'No' the figure one thousand. So he went on to the very last man. Then he added up the columns. The result was: One thousand and one 'Yeas' but over a million 'Noes.' So the gate remained shut because the 'Noes' had an immense majority. And that came about because each one not only answered for himself, but felt himself obliged to answer for all the others."

"It would be a noble thing," replied the minister reflectively, "if by general consent disarmament could be effected. But what government would dare to begin? There is nothing, upon the whole, more desirable than peace; but, on the other hand, how can we maintain it; how can we look for durable peace so long as human passions and diverse interests exist?"

"Allow me," said my son Rudolf. "Forty million inhabitants form a state. Why not one hundred millions? One could prove logically and mathematically that so long as forty millions, notwithstanding diverse interests and human passions, can restrain themselves from warring with one another—as the three states, the Triple Alliance, or five states, can form a league of peace—one hundred millions can do the same? But, in truth, the world nowadays calls itself immensely

wise, and ridicules the barbarians; and yet in many things we cannot count five."

Several voices exclaimed: "What? barbarians—with our refined civilisation? And the close of the nineteenth century?"

Rudolf stood up. "Yes, barbarians—I will not take back the name. And so long as we cling to the past we shall remain barbarians. But we stand upon the threshold of a new era—all eyes are looking forward, everything drives us on toward a higher civilisation. Barbarism is already casting away its ancient idols and its antiquated weapons. Even though we stand nearer to barbaric ideas than many are willing to acknowledge, we are also nearer to a nobler development than many dare even hope. Possibly the prince or the statesman is now alive who will figure in all future history as the most famous, the most enlightened, because he will have brought about this general laying down of arms. Even now the insane idea is dying out, notwithstanding that diplomatic egotism attempts to justify itself by its assertion—the insane idea that the destruction of one person is the security of another. Already the realisation that justice must be the foundation of all social life is glimmering upon the world, and from an acknowledgment of this truth humanity must gain a nobler stature—that development of humanity for which Frederick Tilling laboured. Mother, I celebrate the memory

of your devoted husband, to whom I also owe it that I am what I am. Out of this glass no other toast shall ever be drunk"—and he threw it against the wall, where it fell shattered to pieces; "at this baptismal feast of the first-born no other toast shall be offered but 'Hail to the Future!' We must not show ourselves worthy rather of our fathers' fathers—as the old phrase went—no; but of our grandsons' grandsons. Mother—what is it?" he stopped suddenly. "You are weeping. What do you see there?"

My glance had fallen on the open door. The rays of the setting sun fell on a rose-bush, covering it with its golden shimmer, and there stood—the figure of my dreams. I saw the white hair, the glitter of the garden shears.

"It is true, is it not," he smiled at me, "we are a happy old couple?"

Ah, me!

THE END

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