

oppressor, et; so there ers after me ch. for the d at length, to were de- led. Robert d more col- proceeding to iere Matilda e maiden by to a chair; self, he sat

that one must be calm and quiet by a wounded man's bedside! "Calm shall I be! Calm when our poor Adolf lies at the point of death? He that taught me such sweet songs! Who shall be my minstrel at Wyznaadael now? Who shall help me to break my hawk's neck, be to me as a brother?" And then approaching the bed again, she wept over him as he lay insensible, and at last sobbed out: "Sir Adolf! Sir Adolf! my good brother!"

But no answer came. Covering her face with her hands, she fell back in an agony of grief into a chair. After some little time thus spent, Robert, seeing that she was unable to command herself, and that her presence would be more injurious than useful, took her by the hand. "Come, my child," he said, "leave this chamber till you are somewhat more mistress of your sorrow. But she would not leave the room. "O, no," she replied, "let me stay here, my father! I will not weep any more. Let me care for my brother Adolf. Those fervent prayers which he has himself taught me, will I pour out for him by his bedside."

And thus saying, she took the cushion from a chair, laid it on the ground at the head of the bed, and kneeling on it, began to pray devoutly, while suppressed sobs burst from her breast, and her eyes overflowed with tears. Robert de Bethune remained till far in the night by Adolf's bedside, hoping to see him come somewhat to himself. His hopes were, however, in vain; the wounded man breathed feebly and slowly; nor was there the slightest perceptible either in his limbs or body. Master Roger, too, began to fear seriously for his life; for a slight fever had made its appearance, and the sufferer's temples already began to burn. Those of the nobles who were present at the conference and were not lodged in the castle had already taken their departure, not without a feeling of content at what had happened; for, as true knights, they rejoiced at having an opportunity of once more doing their old prince a pleasure and a service. Such of them as were the Count's guests betook themselves to their bedchambers. Two hours later not a sound was to be heard at Wyznaadael but the call of the sentinels, the baying of the dogs, and the screech of the night-owl.

CHAPTER IV.

The journey which, at the suggestion of Charles de Valois, Count Guy was about to undertake, was a matter of no little risk, both to himself personally and to the whole land of Flanders; for there was only too much reason to believe that the king of France would think all measures good which might secure to him as long as possible the possession of those wealthy provinces. Philip the Fair and his wife Joanna of Navarre, had, in order to provide funds for their reckless prodigality, drawn, so to say, all the money of the realm into the treasury; yet for all this, the enormous sums which they extracted from the people did not suffice for their insatiable wants. His unprincipled ministers, above all Eguerrand de Marigny, daily incited the king to levy new taxes, raising the already exorbitant salt-duty, and laying the most intolerable burdens on all three estates of the realm, regardless of the murmurs of the people and the frequent symptoms of armed resistance. Again and again he expelled the Jews from France, in order to make them pay enormous sums for permission to return; and at last, when every other means was exhausted, he resorted to the plan of debasing the coin of the realm.

This debasement of the coinage was a desperate and ruinous expedient; for the merchants, not choosing to part with their wares for mere worthless counters, left the kingdom; the people fell into poverty, the taxes could not be levied, and the king found himself in a most critical position. Flanders meanwhile flourished by the industry of its inhabitants. All the trading nations of Europe and Asia regarded it as their second country, and carried their goods to its cities, as to the universal market-place of the world. At Burges alone more money and goods changed hands than in the whole of France; the city was, in truth, a very mine of wealth. This did not escape Philip's observation, and for some years he had been occupied with plans for bringing the land of Flanders into his own possession. First he had laid down impossible conditions to Count Guy, in order to drive him into contumacy; then he had arrested and imprisoned his daughter Philippa; and at last he had overrun and seized upon Flanders by force of arms.

Nothing of all this had escaped the old Count's consideration, nor did he in truth conceal from himself the possible consequences of his journey; but his grief on account of his younger daughter's imprisonment was such as induced him to reject no means, however desperate, which might possibly lead to her release. Doubtless, too, the safe conduct promised by Charles de Valois had tended considerably to reassure him. And now the old Count set out, with his sons, Robert and William, and fifty Flemish nobles; Charles de Valois, and a great number of French knights, accompanying them on the journey.

Arrived at Compeigne, the Count and his nobles were sumptuously lodged and entertained by the Count de Valois, until such times as he should be able to arrange for their admittance to the king's presence. This magnanimous prince, moreover, so well used his influence with his brother, that the latter was quite inclined to fall into his views with respect to the Count of Flanders, whom he accordingly caused to be summoned before him, at his royal palace. The Count was introduced into a large and splendid hall, at the other end of which stood a throne, with a canopy of blue velvet wrought with golden lines, and hangings of the like falling on each side to the ground; a carpet, richly embroidered with gold and silver, covered the steps which led up to this magnificent seat. Philip the Fair was pacing up and down the hall

with his son, Louis Franca; behind them followed many French nobles, and among them one to whom the king often addressed his conversation. This favorite was Messire de Nogaret, the same who at Philip's command had ventured to arrest Pope Boniface, with circum stances of special conspiracy.

TO BE CONTINUED.

AN INCIDENT.

I. "A storm's coming, comrade." "Yes, corporal; a terrible storm. I know that 'as' wind will. It will be a very restless night on the sea." "May St. Joseph guard our sailors. The fishermen have all managed to get away."

"Look, it seems to me that I saw a sail there." "It was only the flash of a bird's wing. You can hide from the wind behind the indent of the wall. Good-bye. The guard will relieve you in two hours."

The corporal went away; the sentinels remained on the wall of the small fortress, which was surrounded by the rocking waves. Indeed, a storm was nearing. The sun was setting; the wind was growing stronger; the sunset tinted the sky into a purple hue, and as the same was spreading over the sky, the blue of the sea seemed ever deeper and colder. Here and there the white crests of the waves were already cutting through the dark surface and it seemed as though the mysterious depth of the ocean was trying to look out, ominous and pale from long-suppressed rage.

In the sky, too, a quick alarm was set. The clouds were drifting from the east toward the west, where they turned red, one after another, as though cast by a hurricane into the mouth of a huge red hot oven. The breadth of the gathering storm was already felt over the ocean. On the dark, rippling surface a sail was flashing, like the wing of a frightened bird; it was a belated fisherman, running away from the storm. He had evidently given up hope of reaching the distant shore so he turned his boat toward the little fort.

The main-lard had long disappeared beyond the mist, and the water dust and the twilight of the falling night. The sea roared deeply and slowly, and one wave rolled after another toward the still illuminated horizon. The sail now disappeared, now appeared again. The boat was tacking, overcoming the waves with difficulty, and slowly nearing the island. It seemed to the garrison who looked at the boat from the wall of the fort as if at the darkness and the sea were sternly hastening to bring this solitary little craft to destruction.

A little light appeared in the wall of the fort, then another, and a third. The boat could not be seen any longer, but the fisherman could see the light—a few trembling sparks over the boundless, starlit ocean.

II. "Halt! Who goes there?" The sentinel on the wall called to the boat and aimed his piece at it. But the sea was more terrible than this threat. The fisherman dared not leave the helm, for the waves would instantly hurl the boat against the rocks. Outside, the Spanish gunners with their old muskets were no dead shots. The boat cautiously waited for the breakers, like a floating bird, turned on the very crest of a wave, and then the skipper suddenly lowered the sail. The breaker hurried the fragile vessel ahead and its keel slipped over the cobblestones of the bay.

"Who goes there?" the sentinel shouted again loudly, closely watching the perilous movements of the little boat. "A brother!" replied the fisherman. "Open the gates, for St. Joseph's sake! See, what a storm!" "Wait, the corporal will soon be here."

Shadows began to move over the wall; then a heavy door opened, a lantern flashed, the sound of voices was heard. The Spaniards took in the fisherman; behind the wall, in the bar racks, there was a warm shelter for him for the night. How happy will he be when he recalls in safety the angry roaring of the ocean and the stern darkness, where, but a short while ago, his little boat had rocked!

The door was slammed, as though the fort had locked itself from the sea, over which the first sail had already come, mysteriously coarsening in bursts of phosphoric foam. And the boat which had been brought into the bay rocked measurably, and creaked softly under the blows of the broken but still powerful waves.

III. In the corner tower there was a cell of a Spanish military prison. For an instant the little red light which had flashed from its window was obstructed by the figure of a man who silhouetted against the bars. Some one glanced from there at the dark sea, and went away. The light again began to blink, casting red reflections on the wave tops.

This was Juan Maria Jose Miguel Diaz, insurgent and filibuster. During the last rebellion the Spaniards had captured him, and sentenced him to death; but later, through some one's mercy, he was pardoned. They grant of him his life—they brought him to this island and imprisoned him in this tower. Here they removed his chains, for they were now unnecessary; the walls were of stone, there were iron bars in the window, and beyond the window was the sea. All that he had from his life was that he could look out of his window at the distant shore—and recall things—and perhaps even hope.

At first, during bright days, when the sun shone on the tops of the blue waves, and lit up the distant shore, he would gaze in that direction for a long time, scrutinizing the outlines of his native mountains, of the vague gorges and the scarcely visible dots represent-

ing the distant villages. He could tell the bays, the roads, the mountain paths over which it seemed to him he saw light shadows wandering, and among them was once on so dear to him. He was waiting, hoping that the lights would flash again and the columns of smoke appear in the mountains; that the sails flying his native flag of revolt and freedom would come from there—even from that distant shore. He was preparing for that occasion, and patiently, cautiously, and persistently, he was boring the stone near the rusty grates.

But years went by. All was quiet on the shore, a blue mist hung over the gorges, only a small transport boat stood out near the shore, and peaceful fishermen's boats roamed about in the sea, like sea-gulls at low ebb. By degrees the past began to seem to him like a dream. As in a dream, the pacified shore slumbered in golden mist, and, as in a dream, fantastic shadows of the distant past roamed over it. And when he saw some smoke by the shore, and the military transport boat cutting through the waves, he knew that other prison wardens and guards were coming.

Thus more years passed in this lethargy. Juan Maria Jose Miguel Diaz grew calm and began to forget his dreams. His life, which had been granted him by his enemies, flowed on imperceptibly, dull and monotonous. Even at the distant shore he now looked with dull indifference, and had long ceased boring the grates. What for?

Only when an east wind rose, which was particularly strong in those places, and the waves began to shake the stones on the slope of the little island, sad, vague and blunt, began to stir in the depths of his soul, even as it seemed to him that certain shadows again stood out against the distant, mist-covered shore, and soared over the waves of the sea, and cried loudly, hastily, plaintively, alarmingly. He knew that it was the sea that cried, yet he could not help listening to these cries involuntarily. And a painful, gloomy agitation rose from the depth of his soul.

There was a worn-out path on the stone floor of his cell, from corner to corner, diagonally. He had worn out this stone with his bare feet running back and forth in his cage on stormy nights. At times during such nights he again bored the wall near the iron bars. But on the very first morning when the pacified sea kissed the rocks of the island, carelessly, he, too, calmed down and forgot the moments of his ecstasy.

He knew that it was not the iron bars that kept him there. He was kept there by this wily, now angry, now kindly sea, and also—by the sleepy calm on the distant shore, which slumbered lazily in its mist, and had forgotten that which was stirring in the captive's memory.

IV. Thus more years elapsed, which now seemed only as days. The time of a dream cannot be measured, and his life was by this time all a dream—dull, painful and leaving no trace. But for some time of late strange visions had begun to flash through this dream again. During very bright days he saw the smoke of bonfires on the shore. There was unusual commotion in the fort; the Spaniards were hastily repairing the defects in the old walls which had come during the years of undisturbed peace. Steamboats flying the Spanish military flags were now plying between the shore and the island more frequently than before. Twice he saw monitors with towers just above the water crawling through the sound, like heavy-backed sea monsters, which gazed at them with a dim look in which there was an expression of amazement. Once it even appeared to him as if he saw in the gorges of his native mountains, brightly illumined by the sun that day, white smoke of gun boats, small as pin heads, rising brightly and suddenly against the dark green background, and then softly melting in the light air. Once the monitor moved toward the shore, and several quick reports rang out over the sea. He seized the iron grate and shook it firmly. It rattled and swayed. Rubbish and broken tile fell from where the iron bars were fastened in the walls.

But a few more days went by. The shore again was hushed in calm slumber; the sea was deserted, the waves rolled one over another quietly, peacefully, idly striking against the rocky shore. But this morning the sea began to stir him once more. Several waves had already rolled over the breaker which divided the sound, and on the left side he could hear the stones being swept from the bottom to the slope of the shore. Toward evening the smother of the sparkling foam flushed now and again before his window. The waves had begun their deep, deep and the shore responded with deep dull groans.

Diaz only shrugged his shoulders and decided to go to bed earlier than usual. Let the sea speak as it pleased! Let the belated boat which he had noticed from the window come out as it pleased from this agitated mass of water! A slavish boat from a slavish shore. What had he to do with this boat; with the voices of the sea? He laid himself down on his mat-tress.

When the Spanish guard brought the lantern at the usual hour and put it from the corridor into the hole over the locked door, the light fell on the prone figure, and the pale face with closed eyes. It seemed that Diaz slept calmly; only at times his eyebrows twitched together, and over his face came an expression of dull suffering, as though something had quivered slightly in the depth of his slumbering consciousness, even as those stones trembled in that ocean's depth.

But he suddenly awoke, as if someone had called him by his name. A squall, having rolled over the breaker, struck the wall. From the wind he saw how white heaps of phosphoric foam came flying, and even

altogether. Only his name appeared here and there, engraved by a weak and lazy hand.

Suddenly it appeared to Diaz that he saw a man outstretched upon his bed, sleeping soundly. His bosom rose quietly, tranquilly. Was that he? The same Diaz who had entered here full of power and love of life and liberty?

A new squall was rushing toward the island, howling and roaring. Diaz released his grasp and dropped to the shore again. The sentinel, on the wall, with his back turned toward the wind, and holding his gun with both hands so that the hurricane should not tear it from his grasp was mumbling prayers.

VI. The little boat was moving, scarcely visible in the darkness, approaching that spot where the sea, no longer protected from the wind, was furiously seething. Suddenly, the white sail rose in the air, tossed by the wind, hook, rose, and disappeared. Diaz glanced back at that moment, and it seemed to him that the dark little island rocked and sank into an abyss, together with the even, dead light which had followed him until then. Before him were chaos and fury. His congested soul was overflowing with intense delight. He clutched the helm in a tighter grasp, stretched the sail, and shouted loudly. This was an outcry of irrepressible joy, of boundless delight, of awakened life which had become conscious of itself. Behind him rang out a muffled gun shot, then the roaring of a cannon resounded in the distance. Juan Maria Jose Miguel Diaz, with tightened eyebrows and a firm look, stared forward, his heart still filled with the same delight. He knew that he was free.

The boat rose on the very top of the breaker, trembled, swayed and began to come down. From the wall it was seen for the last time. But the small fort kept sending shot after shot into the raging sea.

VII. Next morning the sun again rose in a clear blue sky. The last fragments of the clouds were still moving in disorderly fashion; the sea had calmed down, rocking as if ashamed of its debauch of the night before. The distant shore, refreshed and washed by the storm, lay clearly outlined in the transparent atmosphere. Everywhere life was laughing, awakened after the stormy night. A small steamboat was cruising along the shore, spreading over the waves a long tail of brown smoke. A group of Spaniards watched it from the wall of the fort.

"He was surely drowned," said one of them. "That was sheer madness. What do you think, Don Fernando?" The young officer turned his thoughtful face to the man who spoke.

Only the stone walls of the fort remained motionless and quiet amidst the general confusion. When it became comparatively quiet one could hear the sounds of the vespers from the barracks, and the drum sounding the retreat. There, beyond the walls, peace seemed to have locked itself in. The little lamp in the corner tower shed an even, unblinking light.

Diaz rose and like a beaten dog, started off toward the light. But the sea is deceitful and terrible. He would enter his quiet cell, would replace the grate, would lie down in his corner on the cot and sleep the heavy but safe sleep of captivity. But he must carefully replace the grate so that the patrol should not notice that it was broken. They might think that he was trying to break out of prison on that stormy night. No, he did not want to run away. Death was awaiting him at sea.

He clutched the cornice with his hands, lifted himself to the windows and passed. The light of the lantern fell on the walls, on the outworn floor, on the mattress which lay in the corner. At the head of the bed was the following inscription deeply cut into the stone: "Juan Maria Jose Miguel Diaz, insurgent. Long live Freedom!" And everywhere on the walls were large and small inscriptions, some deeply engraved, others scarcely visible; "Juan Miguel Diaz, Miguel Diaz."

Then came figures. At first he had marked the time by the day, by the week, later by the month: "Holy Mary, two years already." "Three years. O Lord, save my reason. Diaz, Diaz."

The tenth year was marked by a plain number without any explanation point. Then he had left off counting

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"Yes, he was probably drowned," he said. "But it may be that he is looking at his prison from those mountains. In any case the sea gave him a few instants of freedom. And who knows whether one instant of real life is not worth years of miserable existence?" "But what was that over there? Look!" And the officer gave his field glass to the other one, pointing to the south end of the mountainous shore. White smoke appeared here and there on one of the extreme capes occupied by the insurgents. Not a sound was heard, but the smoke kept appearing and vanishing, strangely enlivening the deserted gorges. A volley rang out in answer from the sea, and when the smoke fell on the sparkling waves, all became quiet again. The shore and the sea were silent.

The officers exchanged glances. What meant this inconceivable commotion among the rebelling natives? Was this the answer to the question as to the fugitive's fate. There was no answer. The sparkling waves laughed enigmatically, rushing upon the shore of the island and breaking against the rocks with a ringing noise. Translated from the Russian of Vladimir Korobenko by Herman Bernstein for The New York Evening Post.

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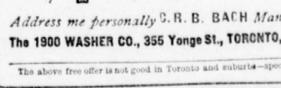
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