

ONE DAY OF GLADNESS.

One day of gladness makes amends
For all the ill misfortune sends,
As one full-leaved and perfect flower
Rewards us for each anxious hour.

Even as the sunshine floods the plain,
And dries all traces of the rain,
So joy upon our path appears,
And leaves no vestiges of tears.

Though sorrow to our side may slip,
And give us close companionship,
While round about deep shadows fall,
One day of gladness brightens all.

With cheerful glow it reaches far
Beyond the light of moon or star,
Shining long after day is done,
Brightly as Norway's midnight sun.

Though we with favoured ones abide
Serenely on life's sunny side,
One day more beautiful and blest
Exceeds in splendour all the rest.

Or when the past is in review,
And cares seem many, comforts few,
How are the troubles that annoy
Extinguished by a gleam of joy.

For all the sorrows of this life,
For all the sufferings and strife,
In bliss that earthly bliss transcends,
The glad hereafter makes amends!

POWDER AND GOLD.

CHAPTER I.

THE UHLANS.

We paused upon the summit of a range of hills, from whence the broad, well-paved highway—bordered on each side with fruit trees and small round beds of mignonette—sloped down into a deep, circular valley. It was a wide-spreading, many-coloured landscape, but dream-like and unsubstantial, as if it did not belong to the actual world—green fields, the moss-covered roofs of village houses, verdant copses, here and there the gleaming water of a river meandering through the valley in the distance; on the opposite shore fields and vineyards and softly rounded hills tinged with hues of deepest violet, while behind them rose the dark blue peaks of distant mountains, over which the evening sky poured a rosy light. And over all a deathlike stillness! Whenever I see a landscape for the first time outspread before me in the gathering twilight, it always seems like a portion of the primeval world, as yet untouched, undiscovered by man, and rouses all manner of vague dreams within me. It is merely the overmastering power of the impression made by Nature, which bids us forget human beings and their history in the vast expanse of the universe.

True, I had now very little time or opportunity for such reveries. We brought plenty of life and activity into the quiet landscape before us. With us war, keen, alert war, entered the peacefully slumbering valley; the impatient snorting of our chargers resounded along the silent, deserted road; bridles and stirrups rattled; sabres clanked against the flanks of our horses, whose hoofs rang on the pavement; while over our heads the black and white pennons of our lances fluttered in the evening breeze.

There were about a dozen men in our party, of which I, at that time sergeant, was in command. Always gay, vigorous fellows, but today excited to almost wild spirits by the glorious autumn weather, they did not grumble because, while the squadron of cavalry to which we belonged was comfortably quartered at a little city about half a mile away, we were compelled to ride a considerable distance further.

We were, so ran our orders, to occupy Chateau Giron. A stone bridge must be crossed which spanned the river, and on the opposite side of the bridge the road we had followed crossed another which led along the upper Oignon to Besançon, while our highway continued straight on to Mompelgard. Chateau Giron, overlooking the bridge arching the little river and the crossing of the two roads, was thus by no means an unimportant post. I had received orders to occupy the place and send out scouts along the opposite shore of the Oignon, while the main body of our army in our rear pushed on to Gray and Besançon. Our division was behind us, in the little city of Noroy, on which place we were to fall back if attacked by a superior force of Franc-tireurs.

That the neighbourhood was by no means free from these bands we obtained a proof that very evening. When we had ridden about fifteen minutes longer we suddenly saw, on reaching the top of a piece of rising ground, a troop of these blue-frocked militia in the valley below. They were too far away for us to see their uniforms distinctly, but the barrels of their muskets glittered in the last rays of the setting sun as they rushed at full speed down an avenue which led from the right-hand side of the highway to a lordly looking building. In the centre of the group was a cloth-covered waggon drawn by two horses, harnessed one before the other. We could see the men constantly urging the animals on to prevent them from slackening their pace. There were about ten or twelve in the party, headed by a horseman in whom one of our Uhlans, who rejoiced in the possession of a field glass, recognized the uniform of a gendarme.

From the anxiety they displayed to get the cart into a place of safety, we supposed it to

contain wounded men—or, perhaps, women and children living in the neighbourhood, who, terrified at the sight of the pennons on our lances, wished to reach some place where they would be protected from the German barbarians. The whole party disappeared among the outbuildings of the mansion.

This manor must be Chateau Giron, the very house we were ordered to occupy. If the flying band should enter and defend it, we had the prospect of a little skirmish before either men or animals could obtain repose. Still, it was not very probable that they would dare to face the dreaded Uhlans. Their flight through the avenue indicated the most abject fear.

We therefore quietly pursued our way, reached the avenue, and entered it. I sent two scouts forward, who, after reconnoitering the chateau, returned with the intelligence that there was no enemy to be seen, and all was apparently safe. Our party halted before the iron-barred door of the castle; a very sulky-looking man in a blue blouse opened it, revealing a turf-grown court, behind which rose the chateau. At the top of the flight of steps stood a group of persons curiously watching our approach, among whom I perceived the tall, slight figure of a young lady and the black robes of a priest.

At the right of the court-yard, in one corner, where a low wall with a small grated door connected the chateau with one of the adjoining buildings, stood a cart, which seemed as if it could be none other than the one we had seen surrounded by the flying Franc-tireurs; but of them no trace remained.

I rode forward to the steps of the castle; the priest, a man still in the prime of life, with sharp features, pale complexion, and that sidelong glance from his dark eyes which rather warns against than inspires confidence, descended to meet me. At the same time I saw the lady turn away and enter the chateau, yet the movement bore no resemblance to flight; she walked across the short space occupied by the broad landing and disappeared within the open doorway as quietly as if our business was an everyday affair which she could easily entrust to other hands.

"What do you desire, gentlemen?" said the priest, pausing on the lowest step and speaking in excellent German, though with something of the Alsatian dialect.

"War, reverend sir," I answered, springing from the saddle, "brings various guests; here are twelve steeds and twelve riders, I myself am the fatal thirteenth; for the horses we want provender and stabling, for the riders food and quarters. I know not how long we shall remain, but hope that it may be long enough to show you what agreeable, unassuming people we are if kindly and cordially received."

The countenance of the priest visibly lengthened during this communication, and became if possible a shade paler. I also observed that the group of persons on the steps above me, apparently servants, betrayed considerable emotion, and whispered together as if terrified. There must have been several among them who understood German.

"Do you expect to be quartered here for several days?" asked the priest in a much lower tone than he had at first spoken.

"You need fear nothing on that account," I replied, "unless you have the company of Franc-tireurs, whom we saw yonder, concealed in the house. In that case, before we take up our quarters, there must be some slight disturbance of the quiet of the household, with which otherwise we should not dream of interfering."

"Oh, no," replied the priest; "that band fled before you, and ran through our gardens to reach the opposite bank of the Oignon; perhaps they have even made the bridge impassable, for their better protection."

"So, so," said I, fixing my eyes steadily upon his face. "Strange, then, that they did not follow the highway directly over the bridge, but chose the very roundabout course through this court-yard and castle."

The priest shrugged his shoulders.

"What did they have in that cart?"

"Their knapsacks, their ammunition—"

"And left them here for safekeeping?"

"Only the cart. They took the cart and two horses from here yesterday morning, and left them on the way back; the contents they divided and took with them."

"Your Franc-tireurs are remarkably honest people," said I; "in a hasty flight before us they do not hesitate to take a roundabout way to replace the cart in the possession of its owner, and are not satisfied to send it under the care of the driver, but accompany it themselves, for greater security, till they see it safely restored."

"It seems to me very natural that they should have taken the circuitous way," replied the priest; "if they had kept to the high road you would have soon overtaken them, while by running through our gardens and groves they were safe from the pursuit of horsemen."

The remark was true, and admitted of no reply. My comrades, who had dismounted long before and looked under the canvas covering of the cart, confirmed the statement that it had been unloaded; nothing was left but a few old muskets with flint locks, some horse blankets, fragments of bread and cheese, old newspapers, a canteen covered with green cloth, and a scarlet military cap.

There was certainly no prize here to trouble ourselves about any further, and we turned to inspect the stables in a low building on the right; over them, in the story above, were four or five rooms for grooms or servants; the man

who had opened the door showed them to us, and after we had ordered the farm horses to be led out and our own brought in, we took possession of them; and really no better little barracks than those in which we found quarters could be desired in case of an alarm—the horses below, the men above, and all close together. For myself and the faithful fellow soldier whom the officer calls his orderly, and the subaltern his "Putzkameraden," I asked permission to select better quarters within the main building, and as soon as we entered the house, found a beautiful, richly furnished reception-room on the ground floor, behind which was a guest-chamber with a curtained bed and a small ante-room adjoining, which I assigned to my companion that he might be close at hand. The priest, who accompanied me, seemed to be very much annoyed by this selection; perhaps he thought it extremely presuming that I should take possession of the room without any further ceremony; but I did not trouble myself about that, and informed him what further hospitality we required.

An hour later a good and substantial supper was served in the large servants' hall near the kitchen. A man waited upon us, for the women servants did not even show themselves for a moment; when we had about finished the meal, after the keenest edge of our appetites was blunted, and the weariness engendered by our long ride began to make itself doubly felt, the priest entered; he approached me, and bowed, and asked, in a low, well-modulated voice, whether we were satisfied, or if we desired anything more. So saying, he drew a chair forward and placed it beside mine at the upper end of the table as if to prepare for a longer conversation.

"We are always satisfied, reverend sir," I replied, "whenever we are received with the kindness manifested by your question. Will you allow me to offer you some wine?"

The priest accepted it, but declined the cigar I proffered.

"You are Uhlans?" said he, casting a searching glance at the honest, fair-complexioned German faces of my twelve comrades.

"You can see that by our uniforms."

"I have never been able to learn from what part of Germany the Uhlans come, nor," he continued with some hesitation, "what religion they profess."

A loud peal of laughter was the immediate response, although I made every effort to suppress it; but the reverend gentleman did not seem at all offended.

"The Uhlans," interrupted a wild young volunteer, who had graduated first in his class a few weeks before, and instantly entered the army, "the Uhlans are a lost branch of the ancient Huns, who retreated to the fastnesses of the Hartz mountains when Attila was defeated in 451; these indomitable bands took refuge with their national deities on the Blocksberg, and there led a wild life—always in the saddle and on the backs of their horses, where they were born, married and died. A wonderful nation, says Tacitus in his Germania—great by its rough virtues. As for their religion, I regret to be forced to acknowledge, with a blush, that they were converted to Arianism under the Emperor Valens. They are all Arians, who, as you are probably aware, do not believe in the divinity of Jesus."

This explanation was given in the most quiet tone and matter-of-course manner imaginable, but was again received with shouts of laughter.

"If," continued this wag in cavalry uniform, without being in the slightest degree disturbed by it, "the circumstance that they, with heretical obstinacy, refuse to accept the decision of the Council of Nice does not render them unworthy of your interest allow me to add, as an additional peculiarity of this primitive people, that among their national characteristics they still retain a wonderful sagacity which converts their lances, apparently provided simply with a smooth point and black and white pennon, into a famous divining rod, which, however, does not remain stationary where a spring of water will gush forth, but where good wine is concealed in the deep vaults of cellars. My comrades will certify that we can do wonders with them in spite of our heresy."

"Farceur!" muttered the priest, "buffoon!" while the rest of the party again burst into peals of laughter.

"Do not take my comrade's jokes amiss," said I; "we sometimes meet in France with such singular ignorance of German customs, and strange ideas of our country, that it is natural to return such assaults with jests."

"I am sorry," replied the priest, "that my question concerning the origin of the Uhlans betrayed such ignorance as to excite the mirth of these gentlemen, but at least I have learned that this primitive nation possesses, besides its warlike capacities, remarkable book knowledge; we are not accustomed to hear our soldiers talk of Attila, Arianism, the Emperor Valens, and the Council of Nice! Are all your comrades equally learned?"

"I cannot answer for that," I replied, laughing; "it is not at all impossible, however, that one or more among us may be president of some university—always excepting myself. The only thing I ever gave to literature was a sufficiently tedious doctor's dissertation."

"Ah! You are a doctor? a doctor—and—a non-commissioned officer! How can that be?"

"He is doctor of laws, non-commissioned officer, baron, and referendary," interrupted the "buffoon," "a man who from the crown of his

head to the sole of his feet is thoroughly loyal—or in the canting, categorical style, 'in his conduct to his native land, king, and'—"

The remaining eleven knights of my round table probably understood very little of this flowery nonsense, which, however, did not restrain them from bursting into fresh shouts of laughter. I saw by the expression of the priest that he was hesitating whether to remain longer as the butt of these jests, or withdraw; but as I wished him to stay in order to obtain some information concerning our hosts, I hastily interrupted the "buffoon" by turning to the abbé with the question—"You are the chaplain, or perhaps a tutor, in this household?"

"You would naturally suppose me to be the chaplain," he replied; but if you desire an explanation of the reason I fill the position of master—"

"The owner of the chateau is absent?"

"He is dead; Herr Kuhn died three years ago."

"Was he a German?"

"A native of Alsace; he had—what do you call it, manufactures?—in the Department of the Upper Rhine. Chateau Giron belonged originally to his wife, who is a French lady."

"And does she live here? I think I saw her on the steps when we arrived."

"You are mistaken," said the priest; "Madame Kuhn is an invalid; she is lame and scarcely able to leave her chair, which is the reason that she was obliged to remain in this unprotected dwelling on the approach of the German troops."

"She will not suffer in consequence; the best protection that she could desire will be afforded her by our consideration for the presence of an invalid lady."

The priest responded by a slight bow.

"And the tall young girl whom I saw?"

"Is Mlle. Kuhn, who has remained here to take care of her mother."

"Ah! that is very brave!"

"That she should do her duty?"

"That she should not fear us—but to be sure, why should she, since she is really a German lady?"

"Ah!" said the priest, smiling: "Mademoiselle Kuhn is a thorough Frenchwoman—was educated in a French convent, and is a very enthusiastic partisan of France, a very bitter opponent of the Germans."

"And you," I interrupted, "who speak German, and therefore must probably be somewhat acquainted with Germany, can you do nothing to make these ladies think more impartially?"

"Can women think impartially?"

"Do you emphasize impartially or think?"

"Both, perhaps," he replied, sipping his glass of wine.

"As Lessing says, 'A woman who thinks is as strange a creation as a man who paints;' but since in France men are accustomed to paint—if not their persons, their conduct and course of action, with fine-sounding phrases, the women might also begin to think!"

"Of what advantage would that be?" said he.

"They will always think as some personal feeling or experience of their heart sways them, and nothing will divert them from that idea or teach them to judge impartially."

"And is Fräulein Kuhn led by any experience of her heart to hold an unfavourable opinion of the Germans?"

His silence seemed to imply that the question was somewhat indiscreet; I therefore continued, more rapidly: "I see that there is nothing better for us Germans to do than to try and make moral conquests, should we remain here long enough."

"If you have that aim in view you will find no very impregnable outer fortifications," said the priest.

"So much the better," I interrupted, laughing, "for then our campaign can be conducted with the most absolute stillness, which of course you must desire for the invalid lady. But are you sure that your Franc-tireurs may not disturb this repose, perhaps to-night? Your sympathies are entirely with them, but for your own sake you should not desire to have this house the scene of a nocturnal surprise and struggle; even if we were crushed by a superior force, our troops would soon be here to avenge us, and the most terrible consequences would ensue for Chateau Giron—it would be destroyed, razed to the ground, and its inhabitants—"

"You may be perfectly at ease on that score," interrupted the priest, looking at me with an expression of evident terror. "We do not think that there are any Franc-tireurs in the neighbourhood, but should such parties appear, we should consider it a duty to you as our guests to warn you of their approach."

"I could ask no more than that," I replied, holding out my hand to the priest, who had risen to take leave.

He took it, and left the room, bowing to the descendants of the Uhlans, who had been talking loudly and noisily together during our conversation.

"You have struck up a great friendship with that suspicious-looking black-coat, Herr Bernold," said one of the Uhlans. "I would not trust him across the street."

"It is the old affinity between the ecclesiastic and the knight!" exclaimed the talkative student. "The nobleman uses the priest as the shepherd does the dog."

"And if you indulge in such improper language towards your commanding officer, my dear Glauroth, I will order you as a punishment