The Headsman's Son.

[CONCLUDED.]

[illegible] flew the [illegible] Gerhard's head. The [illegible] range of [illegible] women and children, with the better class of burghers, uttered curses from all sides; and the crowd pressed upon the scaffold, with shouts and imprecations.—The tumult increased every moment. The attendants had gathered round Gerhard and the executioner to protect the former, and to prevent the frantic efforts of the latter to escape. At this instant, a man in a brown cloak jumped upon the scaffold, seized Gerhard by the arm, and whispered in his ear—

"Quick! Lina conjures you by God, and by her love, to come and speak a word with her—she is standing just below—come quickly!"

He instantly sprang to the right among the crowd, to point out the place to Gerhard where Lina was awaiting him. The latter followed—could he deny a last farewell to his beloved Lina? But he had hardly reached her side, when Franz threw the brown cloak over his shoulders, pressed the broad-brimmed hat upon his head, placed his arm in Lina's and almost pushing them away, whispered:

"Quick!—silent!—and hasten courageously through the crowd, and to the bush behind the second trenches!"

As soon as he saw that Lina obeyed him, and Gerhard went quietly with her, he ran to the other end of the scaffold, and shouted in such a manner that the people thought he must have got hold of the Headsman, and the crowd rushed impetuously round him by this means Lina and Gerhard were able to get away unimpeded. Franz raved meanwhile like a madman.

"Kill him! kill him! here's the man-torturer!—we must have his blood."

The mob pressed round the scaffold. In spite of the vigorous resistance of the attendants, the criminal was freed; and now the people demanded of the former what they had done with the headsman? One of them had observed Franz throw the cloak upon a stranger, and seen the latter leaning on Lina's arm suddenly disappear in the direction of the wood. As the Headsman's new was not to be found, he rightly concluded that the fugitive must be he, and pursued them. At length he saw them disappear behind a copse; with blood-thirsty eagerness he darted upon Gerhard, tore the cloak from him, and the Headsman's red dress glittered beneath it. The fellow swung an iron-shod cudgel in the air, and Gerhard sank to the earth. Still not satisfied, the man would have killed the unfortunate youth on the spot, but Lina threw herself upon him with all the strength of despair, and clung so tightly round him that he could not strike a blow and could only vent his rage in curses.

Happily the clamor of the people around the scaffold prevented these curses reaching them; otherwise Lina would speedily have been surrounded by foes, and others would have been no escape for her or Gerhard. But she could no longer hold out against her opponent—her strength was nearly exhausted, and the only consolation that seemed left for her was to breathe her last upon the dead body of her Gerhard. Suddenly she heard quick steps approaching—she thought herself lost—but no, it was Franz! A glance at Gerhard showed him plainly enough what had passed. With a single spring he stood beside his sister, seized her adversary with a powerful grasp, and dragged him to the ground; then, drawing him away senseless by his legs, he called to Lina:

"Hide Gerhard in the thicket; it he is still alive he is saved! Quick! quick!" Then he dragged off the other man as fast as he could to the scaffold, exclaiming, "Here he is! here is the villain!"

"Kill him! kill him!" cried the people. In an instant the scaffold was deserted. The crowd pressed around Franz, exclaiming:

"The Headsman! the Headsman!"

The unhappy wretch who was taken for the Headsman, fell beating under blows of sticks, stones, and knives; the darkness and the rage of the multitude prevented his being recognized, and his cries were drowned in the shouts and uproar. In a few minutes he had ceased to breathe.

Franz left the crowd, based in the work of revenge, and hastened back to his sister, who was lying beside Gerhard, and praying heaven for mercy on him. A momentary glance showed Franz that there was still life in the motionless body; he ran to a ditch close by, and returned quickly with his hat full of water, which he sprinkled upon Gerhard's face and chest. The latter slowly came to himself. The first object he saw was Lina gazing anxiously on him with tearful eyes. As soon as he had recovered strength they left the spot, and returned cautiously to the city, where Gerhard remained concealed in Lina's house, until the clock of Old Lady's Church struck twelve at night. They, accompanied by Franz, he went to the Headsman's lonely house.

The old man lay stretched upon his sick bed, lamenting his last son, when the chamber door opened and Gerhard rushed into his arms. The feeble old man's eyes—he weep—he inquired, he prayed to know for certain the truth; for it appeared to him only a bright dream. But when Gerhard pressed his hand, and gazed tenderly into his face, the happy father thought he should die with joy.

"O, my son! my son!" he at length exclaimed, "how blest are you! not only rescued from death, but even from disgrace! The curse which was upon us is taken away with death, and you *are* dead to the world!

"And I have shed no blood," added Gerhard, in rapturous delight.

"Then leave Antwerp," continued the old man; "take your Lina, love her well and truly, and may heaven bless you both! Your sons shall not be branded as a Headsman's brood in their mother's lap; you shall not have to weep over them as I have wept over you. My father's and my own savings will free you from want. Take and use them well, and be happy."

The old man's voice died away; his emotion, from joy, had overpowered him. Gerhard could not speak; he wanted words—tears came instead.

Gerhard, the Headsman's son, lived long at Brussels under another name, united in a true and perfect love with his Lina; and when, at length, he was near his last hour, a numerous family stood around his bed, and he closed his eyes in peace, blessing and blest.

SHOCKING MURDER AND SUICIDE.—The *Hollidaysburg Standard* of the 19th records one of the most painful occurrences that ever took place in Blair county. The facts as narrated by that paper are as follows: A farmer named George Pecht, residing between Altoona and Bair Furnace, has, for some time been laboring under partial insanity, caused by religious monomania. His actions however, were never so violent that any restraint was put upon them, and he was suffered to conduct his own business. On Sabbath last, at about 3 o'clock, he was in the kitchen where his daughter, a girl about 18 years of age, was engaged in washing dishes, when he seized an axe and struck her on the forehead with the sharp edge, cleaving her head in such a manner that she died almost instantly. The noise brought other members of the family to the kitchen, who observed Pecht running from the house. Chase was made as soon as possible, but to no purpose, as he ran direct to the forebay of a saw mill, about 20 yards off, and forced himself under the gate, and was drowned before he could be extricated. Pecht always bore a good character, was a temperate man and highly esteemed by all who knew him.

THE QUINCY MYSTERY CLEARED UP.—It turns out that the bodies of the two persons found dead at Quincy were Mr. and Mrs. John Greene, of Zanesville, Ohio! Last summer we reported that they had been drowned while sailing on the Muskingum, as was their custom to do almost daily, taking their books and meals with them. The Ohio papers stated that nothing could be found of them except the man's hat. She was the daughter of John Banks, of Zanesville, where the parents, and friends of both are wealthy and respectable. The deceased couple were very romantic, especially the woman, and were great readers of such pernicious works as the "Coquette" and "Indiana," of George Sand, and believed in the miserable delusions of A. J. Davis and La Roy Sunderland, by which they were led to the murder of their bodies and souls. Their dreadful fate ought to be a warning to all intelligent Americans of both sexes to avoid trashy literature.

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