

had spared him.

"You can save the army!" the general had said—and come what might, the charge must be repeated till the passage was opened,—but how, since the squadron was reduced to a few horsemen.

The captain assembled his Cossacks, and counted them, sixty at most. More than four hundred of their dead strewed the streets of the village, side by side with those of the Turks.

The riderless horses, wandered aimlessly about, few of them having been killed, so well-aimed were the balls that went straight to their mark. And there were no wounded amongst the fallen for the soldiers of the Sultan did not forget the red cross of Mahomet.

Night came, and the last, crimson sun-glow softly tinted the horrible sight, then died out over the battle-field, which would be written as one of defeat for the Russians.

The captain stood silent and desperate, powerless with rage, to find his aims defeated by an enemy that he had, nevertheless, conquered. Suddenly an idea of fantastic origin took possession of his brain. Like a nightmare it seemed, at first, but as his mind cleared, his blue eyes shone strangely, and under his breath he muttered: "We shall renew the charge!"

Turning to his men, he continued: "Go, bring all the dead that lie in the streets, and catch their horses; then place the bodies in the saddle, fastening them securely on the animals by means of the lance-straps."

A shudder passed through the ranks. What did the captain intend doing? Had he suddenly gone mad!—thus to profane the repose of the dead, killed by the enemy! And for a moment they hesitated. "Obey!" said the officer, severely. The Cossacks did as commanded. The horses came readily at call, and on each they fastened a bleeding corpse, upright in the saddle.

A revolting scene! And these men who had so lately evidenced undaunted courage, turned pale in the execution of their frightful task.

"To horse, all!" cried Serge Frithiof, as soon as he saw his former squadron recruited from the dead.

The sixty living Cossacks, their hands dyed with blood, formed at the head of the ranks. "We must charge again!" said the captain. "Think you so, dear commander?" said one of the Cossacks; "with such a company!" "Lead on!" replied the officer; "their horses will follow ours."

The squadron moved on, and the charge recommenced on the road which descended from Karkow to the farm, where the enemy were encamped.

The Turks, who had seen the greater number of the Russian soldiers fall under their fire, had not anticipated any immediate attack, and were greatly astonished to again hear them approaching.

At the cry of the sentinels, they drew up in line of battle and fired on the whole squadron. Forty Cossacks fell to earth; those of the first ranks, who were of the living! But the rest continued the charge, invulnerable.

Captain Serge led on, waving his sword above his head, and the horses advanced with incredible swiftness.

The Turks were bewildered at this inconceivable state of affairs. What demons were these, that turned aside their balls, low-bent in their saddles, without word or cry?

In the failing light their course resembled that of legendary heroes; their number was indistinguishable, and it seemed as though the whole Russian cavalry was approaching; a phantom army!

The foremost line of infantry wavered and broke ranks, the others soon follow-

ing their example, and the Turks abandoned their arms and fled—a complete rout!

The place was undefended, and the way open at last.

Serge Frithiof, who, alone, had been spared from injury, turning, saw his squadron in line behind him, apparently unharmed. So well-trained and docile were the horses, that at his cry of "Halt!" they had remained motionless with drooping heads. Most of their horsemen, too, still retained their upright positions in the saddle, so firmly were the lance-straps fastened.

A few minutes later the village bell rang out a death knell on the night air.

Prince Rouknine, the General, hearing the bell, understood his good Cossacks had well fought, sacrificing themselves for the Russian army, and uncovering his head, wept silently. Then, with his staff, he set forth to Karkow, sore-hearted with the fear of seeing all his brave Cossacks in death. What was his surprise, therefore, as he came within sight, to find the black lines of the squadron drawn up as though for parade! Three hundred horsemen at least, with Serge Frithiof at their head!

Under the moonlight, one of those strange, Oriental moonlights that cast exaggerated reflections, they stood out, clearly defined.

Captain Serge advanced to meet the General. "Karkow is evacuated," he said, saluting.

"You charged on them, then?" "Twice in succession, for the enemy retrenched near a farm, after being driven from Karkow."

"Were many of your men killed, Captain?" "All!"

"Then what soldiers are those on horses?" "Our brave Cossacks, faithful still, in death!"

Approaching, Prince Rouknine saw, by the wavering moonlight, the death-heads that swayed to the motion of the animals, bowed low over their horses' necks.

THE MASTER MIND.

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"Why so?"  
"I threatened to sue him for that five he owes me."  
"Yes?"  
"Ane he asked me to sue him for ten and give him the other five."—Tit-Bits.

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No, Pa.  
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