

my head? I tell you, you are deaf, you did not hear well."

"But very well," said Alexandru Voda, "just listen. Their cries are audible here."

In fact, as the soldiers no longer resisted them, the people had begun to clamber up the walls whence they shouted at the top of their voices:

"Give us Motzoc!" "We want Motzoc's head!"

"Oh, miserable sinner that I am!" cried the wretched man, "most Holy Mother of God, do not let me be destroyed. What have I done to these men? Holy Virgin save me from this danger, and I swear to build a church to pray for the rest of my days, I will enshrine with silver the miracle-working Icon from the Neamtzu Monastery. But gracious Prince, do not listen to these common people, to these churls. Command that the guns decimate them. Let them all die! I am a great boyar, they are only churls!"

"Churls, but many of them," replied Lapushneanu coldly: "would it not be a sin to murder many men for the sake of one? Only reflect. Go and sacrifice yourself for the good of the realm, as you yourself said when you told me that the country neither wanted me nor loved me. Rejoice that the people repay you for the service you rendered me, betraying to me the army of Anton Sechele, then destroying me, and taking Tomsha's side."

"Oh, unfortunate man that I am!" cried Motzoc, tearing his beard, for he realized from the tyrant's words that there was no escape for him. "At least let me go and put my house in order! Have pity upon my wife and children! Give me time to confess!" And he cried and screamed and groaned.

"Enough!" cried Lapushneanu. "Do not wail like a woman. Be a brave Roumanian. What can you confess? What can you say to the priest? That you are a thief and robber? All Moldavia knows that. Come! Take him and give him to the people and tell them that this is the way Alexandru Voda serves those who rob the country."

The esquire and the captain of mercenaries immediately laid hands upon him.

The wretched boyar yelled as loudly as possible, trying to protect himself, but how could his old hands shield him from the four strong arms that carried him? He tried to stand upon his feet, but they caught in the dead bodies of the victims and slipped upon the blood which had congealed upon the boards. As last his strength became exhausted, and the tyrant's satellites carried him more dead than alive to the door of the courtyard, and thrust him out among the crowd.

The miserable boyar fell into the arms of the many-headed Hydra, which in a second tore him to pieces.

"See how Alexandru Voda rewards those who rob the land!" said the tyrant's emissaries.

"Long live His Highness the Voda!" replied the crowd. And they dispersed, rejoicing over their victim.

While the unhappy Motzoc was being thus treated, Lapushneanu ordered that the table should be replaced, and the utensils collected; the heads of the murdered were then cut off, and the bodies thrown out of the window. After which, he took the heads and quietly and methodically set them in the middle of the table; he placed the less important boyars below, and the more important above, according to their family and rank, until he had made a pyramid of forty-seven heads, the top of which he crowned with the head of an important Logofat. Then after washing his hands, he went to a side door, withdrew the bolt and wooden bar which secured it, and entered the Princess's apartment.

From the beginning of this tragedy, the Princess Rucsanda, ignorant