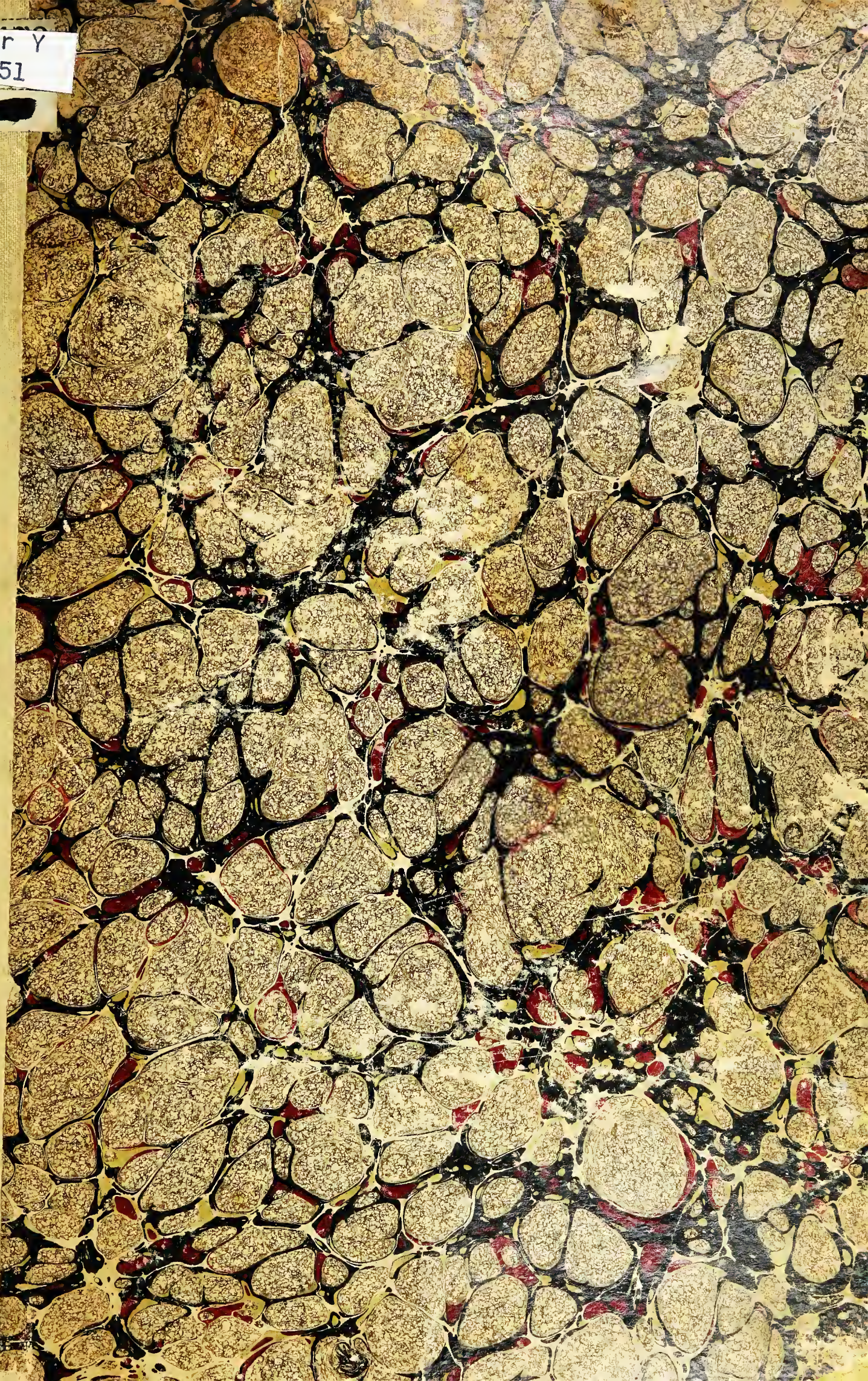


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EKKEHARD.

A Tale of the Tenth Century.

BY JOSEPH VICTOR SCHEFFEL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY SOFIE DELFFS.

TO HER DEAR FRIEND MRS. EMILY CHAMIER THE ENGLISH VERSION OF THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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EKKEHARD.

A Tale of the Tenth Century.

BY JOSEPH VICTOR SCHEFFEL.

PREFACE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

HEINE, that sharp-witted and unsparing critic once said that the relation of translator to author, were about the same as that of a monkey to a human being,—while GOETHE, a man of larger mind and more harmonious nature, compared the translator to a prophet, quoting a verse from the Koran which says: "God gives a prophet to every nation in its own tongue." For sixteen years the following "Tale,"—which since its first appearance has made and held its place, not only in the esteem, but in the hearts of the German reading public, and which has already been translated into several languages,—has waited in vain for an English "prophet" to render it into that tongue, which being that most akin to the German language, is therefore, also the one best fitted for this purpose. It is true that the peculiarity of the style, which in the original is so wonderfully adapted to the matter it treats, as well as the number of old German words, might have proved a not inconsiderable difficulty for any but a German translator, and therefore, it is to be hoped, that the venturesome attempt of a German girl to render the book into English, may be excused. It need hardly be said, that with regard to expression she may often have need to appeal to the indulgence of the reader, but perhaps these defects may at least in some degree be compensated by the strict, truthful adherence to the original, and further it should be observed that great care has been taken in choosing words of Saxon derivation whenever they were to be had. Her love for the book, and her admiration for the writer thereof, have made her spare no trouble in this undertaking, and if she could but hope to win some friends to "Ekkehard" in an English dress, she would deem herself amply repaid for the many hours spent over this work. May her critics "take all in all," and treat her fairly!

Philadelphia, December, 1871.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THIS book was written with the firm belief that neither history nor poetry will lose anything by forming a close alliance, and uniting their strength by working together.

For the last thirty years or so, the bequest of our ancestors has been the subject of universal investigation. A swarm of busy moles have undermined the ground of the middle-ages in all directions, and produced by their untiring industry such a quantity of old material, as to surprise even the collectors themselves. A whole literature, beautiful and perfect in itself; an abundance of monuments of the plastic art; a well organized political and social life, lies extended before our eyes. And yet all the labor and good will spent on this subject, has hardly succeeded in spreading to wider circles, pleasure and interest in this newly won historical knowledge. The numberless volumes stand quietly on the shelves of our libraries. Here and there, well-to-do spiders have begun to spin their cobwebs, and the pitiless, all-covering dust has come too, so that the thought is hardly improbable, that all this old German splendor, but just conjured back into life, may one morning at cock-crow fade away and be buried in the dust and mouldering rubbish of the Past,—like to that weird cloister by the lake, the existence of which is only betrayed by the faint low tinkle of the bell, deep, deep under the waters.

This is not the place to examine how far this result is attributable to the ways and methods of our scientific men.

The accumulation of antiquarian lore, as well as the accumulation of gold, may become a passion, which collects and scrapes together for the sake and pleasure of scraping; quite forgetting that the metal which has been won, needs to be purified, re-melted, and put to use. For else, what do we attain by it? Merely the being forever confined within the narrow limits of the rough material; an equal valuation of the unimportant and the important; an unwillingness ever to finish and conclude anything, because here and there some scrap might still be added, which would lend a new significance to the subject;—and finally a literature of scholars for scholars, which the majority of the nation passes by with indifference and while looking up at the blue sky feel intensely grateful to their Creator, that they need read nothing of it.

The writer of this book,—in the sunny days

of his youth,—once took a ramble with some friends through the Roman Campagna. There, they lit on the remains of an old monument, and amongst other rubbish and fragments, they lay, half hidden by dark green acanthus leaves, a heap of mosaic stones, which united into a fine picture with graceful ornaments, had formerly adorned the floor of a grave. Then, there arose a lively discussion as to what all the dispersed square little stones might have represented, when they were still united. One, a student of archaeology, took up some of the pieces, to examine whether they were black or white marble. A second who occupied himself with historical studies, talked very learnedly about ancient sepulchers;—meanwhile a third had quietly sat down on the old wall, taken out his sketch-book and drawn a fine chariot with four prancing steeds, and charioteers, and around it some handsome Ionic ornaments. He had discovered in a corner of the floor, some insignificant remains of the old picture; horses' feet and fragments of a chariot wheel, and at once the whole design stood clearly before his mind, and he dashed it down with a few bold strokes, whilst the others dealt in words merely.

This little incident may serve to throw some light on the question, how one can work with success, at the historical resurrection of the Past. Surely, this can be done then only, when to a creative, reproducing imagination are given its full rights; when he who digs out the old bodies, breathes upon them the breath of a living soul, so that they may rise and walk about, like the resuscitated dead.

In this sense, the historical novel may become what epic poetry was in the time of the blooming youth of the nations,—a piece of national history, in the conception of the artist, who within a certain space, shows us a series of distinctly drawn, clearly colored figures, in whose individual lives, strivings and sufferings, the life and substance of the time in which they lived, is reflected as in a mirror.

Erected on the basis of historical studies, and embracing the beautiful and important part of an epoch, the historical novel may well claim to be the twin brother of history; and those who, shrugging their shoulders are inclined to reject

the former as the production of an arbitrary and falsifying caprice, will please to remember, that history as it is generally written, is also but a traditional conglomeration of the true and the false, which merely by its greater clumsiness is prevented from filling up the occasional gaps, as the more graceful poesy can do.

All the signs are not deceiving us, our present time is in a peculiar state of transition.

In all branches of knowledge, the perception is gaining ground, how intensely our thinking and feeling has been damaged by the supremacy of the Abstract and of Phraseology. Here and there, efforts are being made, to return from dry, colorless, hyperbolic abstractions, to the tangible, living, glowing Concrete; from idle self-contemplation, into close relation with life and the present, and from hackneyed formulas and patterns, to an investigating analysis of nature, and a creative productivity, instead of mere barren criticism.

Who knows, but our grandchildren may yet live to see the day, when people will speak of many a former colossus of science, with the same smiling veneration, as of the remains of a gigantic antediluvian animal; and when one may avow, without fear of being cried down as a barbarian, that in a jug of good old wine, there is as much wisdom, as in many a voluminous production of dry dialectics.

To the restitution of a serene, unbiased view of things, adorned by poetry, the following work would wish to contribute; taking its materials out of our German Past.

Amongst the vast collection of valuable matter, inclosed in the big folios of the "*Monumenta Germaniae*" by Periz, are the tales of the monasteries in St. Gall, which monk Rappert began, and Ekkehard the younger (called also the fourth, to distinguish him from three other members of the cloister, bearing the same name), continued till the end of the 10th century.

Whoever has painfully tracked his weary road, through the many unsatisfactory dry-as-dust chronicles of other monasteries, will linger with real pleasure and inward delight, over these last named annals. There, one finds, in spite of manifold prejudices and awkwardnesses, an abundance of graceful and interesting tales, taken from accounts of eye and ear witnesses. Persons and circumstances are drawn with rough, but distinct lineaments, whilst a sort of unconscious poetry,—a thoroughly honest and genuine view of life and the world, as well as a native freshness and originality, puts a stamp of truth and genuineness on everything that is told; even when persons and events are not strictly subjected to the laws of time; and when a very tangible anachronism, causes very slight uneasiness to the chronicler.

Quite unintentionally, these sketches lead one far beyond the boundaries of the cloister-wall; painting the life and ways, the education and customs of the *Allemannic* country,* as it then was, with all the fidelity of a picture painted from nature. Times were pleasant then in the south western part of Germany, and every one who prefers a striving and healthy, though rough and imperfect strength, to a certain varnished finish, will feel much sympathy with them. The beginning of church and state,—whilst a considerable roughness, tempered by much natural kindness, still clung to the people in general; the feudal spirit, so pernicious to all later development, as yet harmless, in its first stage of existence; no supercilious, overbearing knighthood, and wanton ignorant priesthood as yet,—but rough, plain-spoken, honest fellows, whose social intercourse frequently consisted in an extended system of verbal and real injuries, but who, under their coarse husk, hid an excellent kernel; susceptible of all good and noble things. Scholars, who in the morning translate Aristotle into German, and go wolf-hunting in the evening; noble ladies, full of enthusiasm for the old classics; peasants, in whose memory the old heathen beliefs of their forefathers still exist, unimpaired and side by side with the new christian creed,—in short, everywhere primitive but vigorous life, and conditions under which one feels inclined without contempt or rational ire, to put up even with sprites and hobgoblins.

In spite of political discord and a certain indifference towards the empire, of which Saxony had become the central point, there was much

courage and valor, inspiring even monks in their cells, to exchange the breviary for the sword, in order to resist the Hungarian invasion; and although there were many elements opposed to science, serious study and much enthusiasm for the classics were preserved.

The highly frequented cloister-schools were full of zealous disciples, and the humane principles taught there, remind one of the best times in the 16th century. Besides this, the fine arts began to bud,—some eminent minds rising here and there above the multitude; a general culture of national history, though mostly dressed up in outlandish garments.

No wonder then, that the author of this book, when making some other researches concerning the first stages of the middle ages, chancing to meet with those chronicles, felt like a man, who after long wanderings through a barren unfertile land, comes suddenly upon a comfortable wayside inn; which, with excellent kitchen and cellar, and a lovely view from the windows, offers all that heart could desire.

So he began to settle down in that cozy nook, and by diligently exploring the surrounding land, to gain the best possible knowledge of the country and people who lived in it.

But the poet meets with a peculiar fate, when trying to acquaint himself with the old Past. Where others, into whose veins nature has instilled some "*agua fortis*,"—as the result of their labors produce many an abstract theory, and a quantity of instructive deductions,—to him appear a host of fantastic figures, that, at first surrounded by floating mists, become always clearer and clearer; and they look at him with pleading eyes, dance around his couch in midnight hours, and always whisper to him, "give us a living form."

Thus it was here. Out of the old Latin cloister-tales there arose, like rocks out of the water, the towers and walls of the monastery of St. Gall. Scores of gray-headed, venerable friars wandered up and down in the ancient cross-passages; behind the old manuscripts sat those who had once written them; the cloister-pupils played merrily in the court-yard; from the choir rose the solemn chant of midnight, and from the tower the clear sound of the bugle announced the approach of visitors. But before all other forms, there arose in dazzling beauty that noble, haughty Dame, who carried off the youthful master from the quiet and peace of the cloister of St. Gall to her rocky castle high over the Bodensee, there to teach and propagate the old classics. The simple account given by the chronicler of that quiet life, dedicated to the study of Virgil, is in itself a piece of poetry as beautiful and genuine as can be found anywhere.

He, however, who is beset by such apparitions cannot exorcise them otherwise, but by doing their will; trying to condense and fix their fleeting shapes. And not having read in vain in the old stories, how "Notker the sturterer," once treated similar visions, viz., by taking a strong hazel wand and therewith belaboring the specters, until they revealed unto him their finest songs,—I also took to my arms the steel pen, and saying good-bye to the old folios which had been the sources of all these visionary fancies, I betook myself to the ground which had once been trodden by the Duchess Hadwig and her contemporaries.

There I sat in the venerable library of St. Gallus; took long rows in little rocking boats over the Bodensee; found a nest for myself under the old linden-tree at the foot of the Hohentwiel, where a worthy old Suabian bailiff has at present charge of the ruins of the ancient fortress, and finally climbed the airy Alpine heights of the Säntis, where the "*Wildkirchlein*" hangs like an eagle's nest over the green valley of Appenzell. There, in the wards of the "*Suabian Sea*," mind and soul filled with the life of by-gone generations, the heart refreshed by warm sunshine and balmy mountain air, I first sketched and then completed the greater part of this story.

That not much has been said therein, which is not founded on conscientious historical studies, can be boldly asserted; though persons and dates have sometimes been dealt with a little freely. The poet, in order to enhance the inward harmony of his work, may occasionally take liberties which would be most blame-worthy, if indulged in by the strict historian. And yet the great historian Macaulay himself says: "I shall cheerfully bear the reproach of having descended below the dignity of history if I can succeed in placing before the English

of the 19th century, a true picture of the life of their ancestors."

Following the advice of some competent judges, I have given in an appendix some proofs and references to the sources out of which I have taken my materials, in order to satisfy those, who might otherwise be inclined to treat the subject as a mere fable or idle invention. Those, however, who do not require these same proofs to believe in the genuineness of the matter, are requested not to trouble themselves further with the notes, as they are otherwise of the little import, and would be quite superfluous, if this book did not go out into the world in the garb of a novel, which is somewhat open to the suspicion of playing carelessly with facts and truths.*

The attacks of the critics will be received with great imperturbability. "A tale of the 10th century?" will they exclaim. "Who rideth so late, through night and wind?" And has it not been printed in the last manual of our natural literature, in the chapter treating of the national novel: "If we ask which epoch in German history might be best suited to combine the local with the national interest, we must begin by excluding the middle ages. Ever the times of the Hohenstaufen, can only be treated in a lyrical style, as all efforts in other directions, are sure to turn out utter failures."

All the scruples and objections of those who prefer an anatomizing criticism, to a harmless enjoyment, and who spend all their strength in trying to force the German spirit into an Alexandrine or Byzantine form,—these have already been well answered by a literary lady of the tenth century, viz. the venerable nun Hroswitha of Gandersheim, who wrote in happy, self-conscious pleasure in her own work, in the preface to her graceful comedies: "If anybody should derive pleasure, from these my modest productions, I shall be much pleased thereat; but if on the contrary, on account of the objectivity displayed therein, or of the roughness of an imperfect style, it should please no one, then at least I myself shall take pleasure in that which I have created."

Heidelberg, February, 1855.

J. V. SCHEFFEL.

CHAPTER I.

HADWIG, THE DUCHESS OF SUABIA.

It was almost a thousand years ago. The world knew as yet nothing of gunpowder or the art of printing.

Over the Hegau there hung a gloomy leaden gray sky, corresponding to the mental darkness, which according to general opinion, oppressed the whole time of the middle ages. From the lake of Constance white mists floated over the meads, covering up the whole country. Even the tower of the new church at Radolfzell was thickly enveloped, but the matin bell had rung merrily through mist and fog like the words of a sensible man, which pierce the cloudy atmosphere, that fools create.

It is a lovely part of Germany which lies there, between the Blackforest and the Suabian lake. All those who are not too strict and particular with poetical similes, may be reminded of the following words of the poet:

"Ah fair is the Allemannic land
With its bright transparent sky;
And fair is its lake, so clear and blue
Like a bonny maiden's eye;
Like yellow locks, the corn-clad fields
Surround this picture fair;
And to a genuine German face
This land one may compare."

—(though the continuation of this allegory might tempt one to celebrate either of the Hegau mountains, as the prominent feature on the face of this country.)

Sternly the summit of the Hohentwiel, with its craggy points and pinnacles rises into the air. Like monuments of the stormy stirring Past of our old mother Earth those steep picturesque mountain-pyramids rise from the plains which were once covered by undulating waves, as the bed of the present lake is now. For the fish and sea-gulls it must have been a memorable day, when the roaring and hissing began in the depths below, and the fiery basaltic masses, made their way, rising out of the very

* These notes, for the greatest part, have been omitted, as being of no possible interest to the English reader.

* The *Allemannic* land or *Allemannia*, as it was then called, consisted of part of the present Württemberg, Baden and Lothringen; where a dialect, called "*Allemannisch*," has been preserved to the present day.

bowels of earth, above the surface of the waters. But that was long, long ago, and the sufferings of those, who were pitilessly annihilated in that mighty revolution, have long been forgotten. Only the hills are there still to tell the weird tale. There they stand, unconnected with their neighbors, solitary and defiant; as those, who with fiery glowing hearts break through the bars and fetters of existing opinions, must always be. Whether they in their inmost heart have still a recollection of the glorious time of their youth, when they greeted this beautiful upper world, for the first time with a jubilant cry, who knows?

At the time when our story begins, the Hohentwiel was crested already by stately towers and walls. This fortress had been held during his life-time by Sir Burkhard, Duke of Suabia. He had been a valiant knight, and done many a good day's fighting in his time. The enemies of the Emperor, were also his, and so there was always work to do. If everything was quiet in Italy, then the Normans became troublesome, and when these were fairly subjugated, perhaps the Hungarians would make an invasion, or some bishop or mighty earl grew insolent and rebellious, and had to be put down. In this way Sir Burkhard had spent his days more in the saddle than in the easy chair, and it was not to be wondered at, that he had gained for himself the reputation of great valor and bravery.

In Suabia it was said that he reigned like a true despot; and in far off Saxony the monks wrote down in their chronicles, that he had been an almost "invincible warrior."

Before Sir Burkhard was gathered to his forefathers, he had chosen a spouse for himself, in the person of the young Princess Hadwig, daughter of the Duke of Bavaria. But the evening-glow of a declining life is but ill matched with the light of the morning-star. Such a union is against nature's laws and Dame Hadwig had accepted the old Duke of Suabia, merely to please her father. It is true that she had nursed and tended him well, and held his gray hairs in honor; but when the old man laid himself down to die; grief did not break her heart.

When all was over, she buried him in the vault of his ancestors, erected a monument of gray sandstone to his memory, placed an ever-burning lamp over his grave, and sometimes, not too often, came down there to pray.

Thus Dame Hadwig lived now all alone in the castle of Hohentwiel. She remained in possession of all the landed property of her husband, with the full rights to do with it what she pleased. Besides this she was lady patroness of the bishoprick of Constance and all the cloisters near the lake, and the emperor had given a bill of feoffment signed and sealed by his own hand, by which the regency of Suabia remained her own, as long as she kept true to her widowhood. The young widow possessed a very aristocratic mind and no ordinary amount of beauty. Her nose however was a trifle short, the lovely lips had a strong tendency to pout, and in her boldly projecting chin, the graceful dimple so becoming to women, was not to be found. All those whose features are thus formed, unite to a clear intellect, a not over tender heart, and their disposition is more severe than charitable. For this reason the Duchess, in spite of her soft beautiful complexion, inspired many of her subjects with a sort of trembling awe.—On that misty day mentioned before, the Duchess was standing at one of her chamber-windows, looking out into the distance. She wore a steel gray undergarment, which fell down in graceful folds on her embroidered sandals; and over this a tight-fitting black tunic, reaching to the knees. In the girdle, encircling her waist, there glittered a large precious beryl. Her chestnut brown hair was confined within a net of gold thread, but round her clear forehead some stray curls played unrestrainedly. On a small table of white marble, stood a fantastically shaped vessel of dark green bronze, in which some foreign frankincense was burning, sending its fragrant white little cloudlets up to the ceiling. The walls were covered with many-colored finely woven tapestry.

There are days when one is dissatisfied with everything and everybody, and if one were suddenly transported into paradise itself, even paradise would not give contentment. At such times, the thoughts wander gloomily from this to that subject, not knowing on what to fix themselves,—out of every corner a distorted

face seems grinning at us, and he who is gifted with a very fine ear, may even hear the derisive laughter of the goblins. It is a belief in those parts that the universal contrariety of such days, arises from people having stepped out of bed with their left foot foremost, which is held to be in direct opposition to nature.

Under the spell of such a day, the Duchess was laboring just now. She wanted to look out of the window, and a subtle wind blew the mist right into her face which annoyed her. She began to cough hastily, but no doubt if the whole country had lain before her bathed in sunshine, she would have found fault with that also.

Spazzo the chamberlain had come in meanwhile and stood respectfully waiting near the entrance. He threw a smiling complacent look on his outward equipment, feeling sure to attract his mistress's eye to-day, for he had put on an embroidered shirt of finest linen and a splendid sapphire-colored upper-garment, with purple seams. Everything was made in the latest fashion; and the bishop's tailor at Constance had brought the articles over only the day before.

The wolf-dog of the knight of Friedingen had killed two lambs of the ducal herd; therefore Master Spazzo intended to make his dutiful report and obtain Dame Hadwig's princely opinion, whether he should conclude a peaceful agreement with the dog's master, or whether he were to bring in a suit at the next session of the tribunal, to have him fined and sentenced to pay damages. So he began his well-prepared speech, but before he had got to the end, he saw the Duchess make a sign, the meaning of which could not remain unintelligible to a sensible man. She put her forefinger first up to her forehead, and then pointed with it to the door. So the chamberlain perceived that it was left to his own wits, not only to find the best expedient with regard to the lambs,—but also to take himself off as quickly as possible. With a profound bow he withdrew accordingly.

In clear tones Dame Hadwig called out now: "Praxedis!"—and when the person thus named did not instantly make her appearance, she repeated in sharper accents, "Praxedis!"

It was not long before Praxedis with light, graceful steps entered the closet. Praxedis was waiting maid to the Duchess of Suabia. She was a Greek, and a living proof that the son of the Byzantine Emperor Basilus had once asked the fair Hadwig's hand in marriage. He had made a present of the clever child, well-instructed in music and the art of the needle, together with many jewels and precious stones, to the German duke's daughter, and in return had received a refusal. At that time one could give away human beings, as well as buy and sell them. Liberty was not everybody's birthright. But a slavery, such as the Greek child had to endure, in the ducal castle in Suabia, was not a very hard lot.

Praxedis had a small head with pale delicate features; out of which a pair of large dark eyes looked into the world, unspeakably sad one moment and in the next sparkling with merriment. Her hair was arranged over her forehead in heavy braids, like a coronet. She was very beautiful.

"Praxedis, where is the starling?" said Dame Hadwig.

"I will bring it," replied the Greek maid; and she went and fetched the black little fellow, who sat in his cage, with an important impudent air, as if his existence were filling up a vast gap in the universe. The starling had made his fortune at Hadwig's wedding feast. An old fiddler and juggler had taught him with infinite pains, to repeat a Latin wedding speech, and great was the merriment, when at the banquet the bird was put on the table, to say his lesson, "A new star has risen on the Suabian firmament, its name is Hadwig. Hail all hail!" and so forth.

But this was not all the knowledge which the starling possessed. Besides these rhymes, he could also recite the Lord's prayer. Now the bird was very obstinate, and had his caprices, as well as the Duchess of Suabia.

On this particular day, the latter must have been thinking of old times, and the starling was to deliver the wedding-speech. The starling, however, had one of his pious moods, and when Praxedis brought him into the chamber he called out solemnly: "Amen!" and when Dame Hadwig gave him a piece of gingerbread, and asked him in coaxing tones: "what was the name of the star on the Suabian firmament,

my pretty one?"—he slowly responded: "Lead us not into temptation." But when she whispered to him to brighten his memory: "The star's name is Hadwig, all hail!"—then the starling continuing in his pious strain, said: "And deliver us from evil."

"What, do birds even become insolent now?" exclaimed Dame Hadwig angrily. "Pussy, where art thou?" and she enticed towards her the black cat, which had long had an evil eye upon the starling, and who crept near softly, but with glittering eyes.

Dame Hadwig opened the cage, and left the bird to its mercy, but the starling, although the sharp claws had got hold of him already, ruffling and tearing his feathers, yet managed to escape, and flew out at the open window.

In a few moments he had become a mere black speck in the mist.

"Well, now, really I might as well have kept him in the cage," said Dame Hadwig. "Praxedis, what dost thou think?"

"My mistress is always right, whatever she does," replied the Greek maiden.

"Praxedis," continued the Duchess, "go and fetch me my trinkets. I wish to put on a bracelet."

So Praxedis, the ever-willing, went away, and returned with the casket of jewels. This casket was made of silver; on it a few figures had been embossed, representing the Saviour as the good Shepherd; St. Peter with the keys and St. Paul with the sword, and around these, manifold leaves and twisted ornaments. Probably it had served for the keeping of relics formerly. Sir Burkhard had once brought it home, but he did not like to speak about it; for he returned at that time from a feud, in which he had vanquished and heavily thrown some bishop of Burgundy.

When the Duchess opened the casket, the rich jewels sparkled and glittered beautifully on their red velvet lining. Looking at such tokens of remembrance, many old memories came floating up to the surface again. Amongst other things there lay also the miniature of the Greek prince Constantine, smooth, pretty and spiritless. It had been painted by the Byzantine master on a background of gold.

"Praxedis," said Dame Hadwig, "how would it have been, if I had given my hand to that yellow-cheeked peak-nosed prince of yours?"

"My liege Lady," was the answer, "I am sure that it would have been well."

"Well," continued Dame Hadwig, "tell me something about your own dull home. I should like to know what my entrance into Constantinople would have been like."

"Oh, princess," said Praxedis, "my home is beautiful," and with a melancholy look her dark eyes gazed into the misty distance—"and such a dreary sky at least, would have been spared you on the Marmora sea. Even you would have uttered a cry of surprise, when carried along by the proud galley, past the seven towers, the glittering masses of palaces, cupolas, churches, everything of dazzling white marble from the quarries of Prokonnesos, had first burst on our sight. From the blue waves the stately water-lily, proudly lifts her snowy petals, here a wood of dark cypress-trees, there the gigantic cupola of the Hagia Sophia; on one side the long-stretched cape of the Golden Horn, and opposite on the Asiatic shore, another magnificent city. And like a golden blue girdle, the sea, freighted with its innumerable ships, encircles this magic sight,—oh, my mistress, even in my dreams far away here in the Suabian land, I cannot realize the splendor of that view. And then, when the sun has sunk down, and the sable night steals over the glittering waves, then everything is bathed in blue Greek fire, in honor of the royal bride. Now we enter the port. The big chain which usually bars it drops down before the bridal ship. Torches burn on the shore. There stand the emperor's body-guard, the Waragians, with their two-edged battle-axes, and the blue-eyed Normans; there the patriarch with innumerable priests; everywhere one hears music and shouts of joy, and the imperial prince in the bloom of youth, welcomes his betrothed, and the royal train direct their steps towards the palace of Blacharnae. . . ."

"And all this splendor I have thrown away," sneered Dame Hadwig. "Praxedis, thy picture is not complete, for on the following day comes the patriarch, to hold a sharp discourse with the western Christian, and to instruct her in all the heresies, which flourish on the barren, arid soil of your religion, like deadly nightshade

and henbane. Then I am instructed what to believe of their monkish pictures and the decrees of the Councils of Chalcedon and Nicaea. After him comes the mistress of the ceremonies, to teach me the laws of etiquette and court-manners; what expression to wear on my face, and how to manage my train; when to prostrate myself before the emperor and when to embrace my mother-in-law. Further, how to treat this favorite with courtesy, and to use this or that monstrous form of speech, in addressing some wonderful personage: 'If it please your Eminence, your Highness, your adorable Greatness!'—Whatever can be called originality and natural strength is nipped in the bud, and my Lord and Master turns out to be a painted doll like the rest. Then perhaps some fine morning the enemy appears before the gates, or the successor is not to the liking of the blues and greens of the Circus; revolution rages through the streets, and the German duke's daughter is put into a convent bereft of her eyesight. . . . what good does it do her then, that her children were addressed as their Highnesses when still in the cradle? Therefore, Praxedis, I did not go to Constantinople!"

"The emperor is the Master of the universe, and his will is forever just," said the Greek, "so I have been taught to believe."

"Hast thou ever reflected, that it is a very precious boon, for a man to be his own master?"

"No," said Praxedis.

The tone which the conversation had taken pleased the Duchess.

"What account of me did your Byzantine painter, who was sent to take my likeness, carry home, I wonder?"

The Greek maid seemed not to have heard the question. She had risen from her seat and gone to the window.

"Praxedis," said the Duchess with asperity, "I want an answer."

Thus questioned Praxedis turned round, and faintly smiling said: "that was a pretty long time ago, but Master Michael Thallehus did not speak over well of you. He told us that he had prepared his finest colors and gold-leaves, and that you had been a lovely child, and when brought before him to be painted, that he had felt as if he must do his very utmost, and a thrill of awe had come over him, as when he painted God's holy mother, for the monastery of Athos. But Princess Hadwig had been pleased to distort her eyes; and when he had ventured to raise a modest objection, her Grace put out her tongue, held two open-spread hands to her nose, and said in very graceful broken Greek, that this was the right position to be painted in. The imperial court-painter profited by the occasion to express his opinion, about the want of manners and education in German lands, and has vowed never again to try and paint a German Fräulein. And the emperor Basilius on hearing this account growled fiercely through his beard. . . ."

"Let his Majesty growl, as long as he chooses," said the Duchess, "and pray to Heaven that he may bestow the patience which I then lacked on others. I have not yet had an opportunity of seeing a monkey, but according to all that is told about them, by trustworthy men, Master Michael's pedigree must extend to those members of creation."

Meanwhile she had put on the bracelets. It represented two serpents twisted together and kissing each other. On the head of each rested a tiny crown. From the mass of other trinkets, a heavy silver arrow, had got into her hands and it also left its prison-house for a fairer abode. It was drawn through the meshes of the golden threaded net.

As if to try the effect of the ornaments, Dame Hadwig now walked with stately steps through the chamber. Her attitude seemed to challenge admiration, but the hall was empty; even the cat had slunk away. Mirrors there were none on the walls, and as for the furniture, its adaptation to comfort was but small, according to our present views.

Praxedis' thoughts were still busy with the subject just discussed. "My gracious Mistress," said she, "I nevertheless felt very sorry for him."

"Sorry for whom?"

"For the emperor's son. He said that you had appeared to him in a dream, and that all his happiness depended upon you."

"Let the dead rest," said Dame Hadwig testily. "I had rather that you took your guitar and sang me the Greek ditty:

"Constantine thou foolish lad,
Constantine leave off thy weeping!"

"The lute is broken, and all the strings torn,
since my Lady Duchess pleased to—"

"To throw it at the head of Count Boso of Burgundy," said Dame Hadwig. "That was well done indeed, for who told him to come uninvited to Sir Burkhard's funeral, and to preach to me, as if he were a saint?—so we will have the lute mended, and meanwhile, my Greek treasure, canst thou tell me, why I have donned these glittering ornaments to-day?"

"God is all-knowing," said the Greek maid, "I cannot tell."

After this she was silent. So was Dame Hadwig, and there ensued one of those long significant pauses generally preceding self-knowledge. At last the Duchess said: "Well, to say the truth, I don't know myself!"—and looking dismally at the floor, added: "I believe I did it from ennui. But then the top of the Hohentwiel is but a dreary nest,—especially for a widow. Praxedis, dost thou know a remedy against dullness?"

"I once heard from a very wise preacher," said Praxedis, "that there are several remedies. Sleeping, drinking, and traveling—but that the best is fasting and praying."

Then Dame Hadwig rested her head on her lily-white hand, and looking sharply at the quick-witted Greek, she said: "To-morrow we will go on a journey."

CHAPTER II.

THE DISCIPLES OF ST. GALLUS.

THE next day, the Duchess crossed the Bodensee in the early glow of the morning sun, accompanied by Praxedis and a numerous train. The lake was beautifully blue; the flags floated in the air, and much fun was going on, on board the ship. And who could be melancholy, when gliding over the clear, crystal waters; past the green shores with their many towers and castles; snowy peaks rising in the distance; and the reflection of the white sails trembling and breaking in the playful waves?

Nobody knew where the end of the journey was to be. But then they were accustomed to obey without questioning.

When they approached the bay of Rorschach, the Duchess commanded them to land there. So the prow was turned to the shore, and soon after she crossed lightly over the rocking plank and stepped on land. Here the toll-gatherer, who received the duty from all those who traveled to Italy, and the market master, as well as those who held any official position, came to meet their sovereign; and calling out lustily, "Hail Herro!" "Hail Liebo!"* waved big branches of mighty fir-trees over their heads. Graciously returning their salutations, the Duchess walked through the deferential crowd, which fell back on either side, and ordered her chamberlain to distribute some silver coins;—but there was not much time for tarrying. Already the horses which had been secretly sent on before, in the night, stood ready waiting, and when all were in the saddle, Dame Hadwig gave the word of command: "To the holy Gallus." Then her servants looked at each other with wondering eyes, as if asking, "What business can we have there?" But there was not even time for an answer, as the cavalcade was already cantering over the hilly ground towards the monastery itself.

St. Benedict and his disciples knew very well on what places to build their monasteries. Uphill and down-hill, wherever you find a large building, which, like a fortress, commands a whole tract of land, or blocks up the entrance to a valley, or forms the central point of crossing highways, or that lies buried amongst vineyards, famous for their exquisite wines,—there the passing tourist,—until the contrary has been proved to him—may boldly advance the assertion, that the house in question belongs, or rather belonged formerly to the order of St. Benedict, for in our days monasteries become scarcer and inns more plentiful, which phenomenon may be ascribed to the progress of civilization.

The Irish saint Gallus, had also chosen a lovely spot, when pining for forest-air he settled down in this Helvetian solitude: In a high mountain-glen, separated by steep hills from the milder shores of the Bodensee, through which many a wild torrent rushed in mad

flight, whilst on the other side rose the gigantic rocks of the Alpstein, whose snow-capped peaks disappear in the clouds, there, sheltered by the mountain, the monastery lay cradled at its foot. It was a strange thing for those apostles of Albion and Erin, to extend their missions unto the German continent, but if one examines the matter closely, their merit in doing so is not so great as it appears at first sight.

"The taste for visiting foreign lands is so deeply rooted in the minds of Britons, that it cannot be eradicated,"—thus wrote as early as in the times of Charlemagne, a simple trustworthy historian. They were simply the predecessors and ancestors of the present British tourists, and might be recognized even at a distance by the foreign, curious shape of their knap-sacks. Now and then one of them would settle down for good somewhere, although the honest natives of the soil did not always look with favorable eyes on the intruder. Still their greater pertinacity, the inheritance of all Britons, the art of colonizing and the mystic veneration which all that is foreign, always inspires in the lower classes, made their missionary endeavors rather successful. With other times we have other customs! In the present day the descendants of those saints are making railroads for the Swiss, for good Helvetian money.

On the spot near the Steinach where once had stood the simple cell of the Hibernian hermit, and where he had fought with bears, goblins, and water fairies, a spacious monastery had been built. Above the lower shingle-covered roofs of the dwelling and school-houses, the octagon church-tower rose in all its splendor; granaries, cellars, and sheds abounded also, and even the merry sound of a mill-wheel might be heard, for all the necessaries of life had to be prepared within the precincts of the cloister; so that the monks need not go too far beyond the boundaries, thereby endangering their souls. A strong wall, with heavy, well-barred gates, surrounded the whole; less for ornament than for security, since there was many a powerful knight in those times who did not much heed the last commandment, "do not covet thy neighbor's goods."

It was past the dinner-hour, and a deep calm lay over the valley. The rules of St. Benedict prescribed that at that hour everybody should seek his couch; and, though on that side of the Alps, the terrible heat of an Italian sun which forces one into the arms of Morpheus is never felt, the pious monks nevertheless followed this rule to the letter.

Only the guard on the watch tower stood upright and faithful as ever, near the little chamber-window, waging war with the innumerable flies buzzing about him. His name was Romeias, and he was noted for keeping a sharp lookout.

Suddenly he heard the tramp of horses' feet in the neighboring firwood, to which he listened intently. "Eight or ten horsemen," muttered he, and upon this quickly dropped down the portcullis from the gate, drew up the little bridge leading over the moat, and then from a nail in the wall took his horn. Finding that some spiders had been weaving their cobwebs in it, he gave it a good rubbing.

At that moment the out-riders of the cavalcade became visible on the outskirts of the pine wood. When Romeias caught sight of them, he first gave a rub to his forehead, and then eyed the approaching party with a very puzzled look. "Women-folk?" he exclaimed aloud, but in that exclamation there was neither pleasure nor edification.

He seized his horn, and blew three times into it with all his might. They were rough, uncounted notes that he produced, from which one might conclude that neither the muses nor the graces had kindly surrounded the cradle of Romeias, when he first saw the light of this world at Villingen in the Blackforest.

Any one who has often been in a wood must have observed the life in an ant-hill. There everything is well organized; each ant attending to its business and perfect harmony reigning in all the bustle and movement. Now you put your stick into it, frightening the foremost ants, and instantly all is wild confusion, and a disorderly running hither and thither ensues. And all this commotion has been brought about by one single movement of your stick. Now the sounds coming from the horn of Romeias, had just the same disturbing effect in the monastery.

The windows of the great hall in the school-house were filled with young inquisitive faces.

* Old German words.

Many a lovely dream vanished out of the solitary cells, without ever coming to an end, and many a profound meditation of half-awake thinkers as well. The wicked Sindolt who at this hour used to read the forbidden book of Ovid's "Art of Love," rolled up hastily the parchment leaves, and hid them carefully in his straw mattress.

The Abbot Cralo jumped up from his chair; stretched his arms heavy with sleep, and then dipping his forefinger into a magnificent silver washing-basin, standing before him on a stone table, wetted his eyes to drive away the drowsiness that was still lingering there. After this he limped to the open bow window, but when he beheld who it was that had occasioned all this disturbance, he was as unpleasantly surprised as if a walnut had dropped on his head, and exclaimed: "St. Benedict save us! my cousin the Duchess!"

He then quickly adjusted his habit, gave a brush to the scanty tuft of hair which his head still boasted of and that grew upwards like a pine-tree in a sandy desert; put on his golden chain with the cloister seal on it, took his abbot's staff made of the wood of an apple-tree adorned with a richly carved handle of ebony, and then descended into the court yard.

"Can't you hasten?" called out one of the party outside. Then the abbot commanded the door-keeper to ask them what they demanded. Romeias obeyed.

A bugle now sounded and the chamberlain Spazzo in the capacity of herald, rode up close to the gate, and called out loudly:

"The Duchess and reigning sovereign of Suabia sends her greeting to St. Gallus. Let the gates be opened to receive her."

The abbot heaved a deep sigh, then climbed up to Romeias' watch-tower, and leaning on his staff he gave his blessing to those standing outside, and spoke thus:

"In the name of St. Gallus, the most unworthy of his followers returns his thanks for the gracious greeting. But his monastery is no Noah's ark into which every species of living being, pure and impure, male and female, may enter. Therefore, although my heart is filled with regret, to sanction your entrance is an impossibility. On the last day of judgment, the abbot is held responsible for the souls of those intrusted to him. The presence of a woman, although the noblest in the land, and the frivolous speech of the children of this world, would be too great a temptation for those who are bound, to strive first after the kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness. Do not trouble the conscience of the shepherd who anxiously watches over his flock. The canonical laws bar the gate. The gracious Duchess will find at Trojen or Rorschach a house belonging to the monastery, at her entire disposal."

Dame Hadwig who had been sitting on horse-back impatiently enough hitherto, now struck her white palfrey with her riding-whip, and reining it so as to make it rear and step backwards, called out laughingly:

"Spare yourself all your fine words, Cousin Cralo, for I will see the cloister."

In doleful accents, the abbot began: "Woe unto him by whom offense cometh. It were better for him . . ."

But his warning speech did not come to an end; for Dame Hadwig, entirely changing the tone of her voice, sharply said: "Sir Abbot, the Duchess of Suabia must see the monastery."

Then the much afflicted man perceived that further contradiction could scarcely be offered without damaging the future prospects of the monastery. Yet his conscience still urged him to opposition.

Whenever a person is in a doubtful position, and is uncertain how to act, it is a great comfort to the vacillating mind to ask the advice of others; for that expedient lessens the responsibility, and is a solid support to fall back upon.

Therefore Sir Cralo now called down: "As you insist so peremptorily, I must put the case first before the assembled brotherhood. Until then, pray have patience."

He walked back through the court-yard, inwardly wishing that a second great flood might come and destroy the highway, on which such an unwelcome guests had come. His limping gait was hurried and excited, and it is not to be wondered at, if the chronicler reports of him, that he had fluttered up and down the cloister-walk at that critical moment like a swallow before a thunder-storm.

Five times the little bell of St. Othmar's chapel, near the great church, rang out now,

calling the brothers to the reading-room. The solitary cross-passages filled quickly with cow-figures; all going towards the place of assembly, which, opposite the hexagonal chief-building, was a simple gray hall, under the peristyle of which a graceful fountain shed its waters into a metal basin.

On a raised brick-floor stood the abbot's marble chair adorned with two roughly carved lions' heads. With a very pleasurable sensation the eye, from under these dark arches and pillars, looked out on the greenness of the little garden in the inner court. Roses and hollyhocks flourished and bloomed in it; for kind nature even smiles on those who have turned their backs on her.

The white habits and dark-colored mantles, contrasted well with the stone-gray walls, as one after the other noiselessly entered. A hasty bend of the head was the mutual greeting. Thus they stood in silent expectation, while the morning sun came slanting in through the narrow windows, lighting up their different faces.

They were tried men; a holy senate, well pleasing in God's sight.

He with the shrunk figure and sharp-featured pale face, bearing the traces of much fasting and many night-vigils, was Notker the stutler. A melancholy smile played about his lips. The long practice of asceticism had removed his spirit from the present. In former times he had composed very beautiful melodies; but now he had taken a more gloomy tendency and at night was constantly challenging demons to fight with him. In the crypt of the holy Gallus he had lately encountered the devil himself, and beaten him so heartily that the latter hid himself in a corner, dismally howling. Envious tongues said, that Notker's melancholy song of "media vita" had also a dark origin; as the Evil One had revealed it to him in lieu of ransom, when he lay ignominiously conquered, on the ground, under Notker's strong foot. Close to him, there smiled a right-honest, and good natured face, framed in by an iron-gray beard. That was the mighty Tutilo, who loved best to sit before the turning-lathe, and carve exquisitely fine images of ivory. Some proofs of his skill even now exist, such as the diptychon with the virgin Mary's ascension, and the bear of St. Gallus. But when his back began to ache, humming an old song, he would leave his work, to go wolf hunting, or to engage in an honest boxing match, by way of recreation; for he preferred fighting with wicked men, to wrestling with midnight ghosts, and often said to his friend Notker: "he who like myself, has imprinted his mark on many a Christian, as well as heathen back, can well afford to do without demons." Then came Ratpert, the long-tried teacher of the school, who left his historical books most unwillingly, whenever the little bell called him to an assembly. He carried his head somewhat high, yet he and the others, though their characters differed so much, were one heart and one soul; a three-leaved cloistershamrock. Being one of the last who entered the hall, he had to stand near his old antagonist, the evil Sindolt, who pretending not to see him, whispered something to his neighbor, a little man with a face like a shrew-mouse, who, puckering up his lips, tried hard not to smile; for the whispered remark had been: that in the large dictionary by Bishop Salomon, beside the words "*rabulista* signifies some one, who cannot help disputing about everything in the world," some unknown hand had added, "like Ratpert our great thinker."

Now in the background their towered above the rest, the tall figure of Sintram the famous calligraphist; whose letters were then the wonder of the whole cisalpine world, but the greatest of St. Gallus's disciples, with regard to length of body, were the Scotchmen, who had taken their stand close to the entrance.

Fortegian and Failan, Dubsian and Brendan and so on; inseparable compatriots; secretly grumbling over what they considered the neglect shown them. The sandy-haired Dubduin was also amongst them, who in spite of the heavy iron penitential chain which he wore, had not been elected prior. As a punishment for the biting satirical verses, which he had composed on his German brothers, he had been sentenced to water the dead peach-tree in the garden for three years.

Notker, the physician, had also joined the assembly. He had but lately administered the wondrous remedy for the abbot's lame foot; an ointment made of fish brain, and wrapping it

up, in the fresh skin of a wolf, the warmth of which was to stretch out the contracted sinews. His nickname was peppercorn, on account of the strictness with which he maintained the monastic discipline;—and Wolo who could not bear to look at a woman or a ripe apple, and Engelbert the founder of the collection of wild beasts, and Gerhard the preacher, and Folkard the painter. Who could name them all, the excellent masters, whose names, when mentioned called up in the next generation of Monks, feelings of melancholy and regret, as they confessed, that such men were becoming scarcer every day?

When all were assembled, the abbot mounted his chair, and the consultation began forthwith. The case however proved to be a very difficult one.

Ratpert spoke first, and demonstrated from history, in what way the Emperor Charlemagne had once been enabled to enter the monastery. "In that instance," he said, "it was presumed that he was a member of the order, as long as he was in our precincts, and all pretended not to know who he was. Not a word was spoken of imperial dignity, or deeds of war, or humble homage. He walked about amongst us like any other monk, and that he was not offended thereby, the letter of protection, which he threw over the wall, when departing well proved."

But in this way, the great difficulty,—the person asking for admittance being a woman,—could not be got rid of. The stricter ones amongst the brotherhood grumbled, and Notker, the peppercorn, said: "She is the widow of that destroyer of countries, and ravager of monasteries, who once carried off our most precious chalice as a war-contribution, saying the derisive words: 'God neither eats nor drinks, so what can he do with golden vessels?' I warn you not to unbar the gate." The advice however did not quite suit the abbot, as he wished to find a compromise. The debate became very stormy, one saying this, the other that. Brother Wolo on hearing that the discussion was about a woman, softly slunk out, and locked himself up in his cell.

At last one of the brothers rose and requested to be heard.

"Speak, brother Ekkehard!" called out the abbot, and the noisy tumult was hushed, for all liked to hear Ekkehard speak. He was still young in years, of a very handsome figure, and he captivated everybody who looked at him, by his graceful mien and pleasing expression. Besides this he was both wise and eloquent, an excellent counselor and a most learned scholar. At the cloister-school he taught Virgil, and though the rule prescribed, that none but a wise and hoary man, whose age would guard him from the abuse of his office, and who by his experience would be a fit counselor for all,—should be made custodian, yet the brothers had agreed that Ekkehard united in himself all the necessary requirements, and consequently had entrusted him with that office.

A scarcely perceptible smile had played around his lips, whilst the others were disputing. He now raised his voice and spoke thus: "The Duchess of Suabia is the monastery's patron, and in such capacity is equal to a man, and as our monastic rules strictly forbid that a woman's foot shall touch the cloister-threshold, she may easily be carried over."

Upon this the faces of the old men brightened up, as if a great load had been taken off their minds. A murmur of approbation ran through the assembly, and the abbot likewise was not insensible to the wise counsel.

"Verily, the Lord often reveals himself, even unto a younger brother! Brother Ekkehard, you are guileless like the dove, and prudent like the serpent. So you shall carry out your own advice. I give you herewith the necessary dispensation." A deep blush overspread Ekkehard's features, but he quietly bowed his head in sign of obedience.

"And what about the female attendants of the Duchess?" asked the abbot. But here the assembly unanimously decided that even the most liberal interpretation of the monastic laws could not grant them admittance. The evil Sindolt proposed that they should meanwhile pay a visit to the recluses of Erin-hill, because when the monastery of St. Gallus was afflicted by a visitation, it was but fair that the pious Wiborad should bear her share of it. After having held a whispering consultation with Gerold the steward about the supper, the abbot descended from his high chair, and accompanied by the brotherhood, went out to meet his guests.

These had meanwhile ridden three times round the cloister-walls, banishing the ennui of waiting by merry jests and laughter. The air of "justus germinavit," the monotonous hymn in praise of St. Benedict, was struck up by the monks, who were now heard approaching. The heavy gate opened creaking on its hinges, and out came the abbot at the head of the procession of friars, who walking, two and two together, chanted the hymn just mentioned.

Then the abbot gave a sign to stop the singing.

"How do you do, Cousin Cralo?" flippantly cried the Duchess from her saddle. "I have not seen you for an age! Are you still limping?"

Cralo however replied with dignity: "It is better that the shepherd should limp than the flock. Be pleased to hear the monastery's decree." And forthwith he communicated the condition on which she was to enter.

Then Dame Hadwig replied smilingly: "During all the time that I have wielded the scepter in Suabia, such a proposition has never been made to me. But the laws of your order shall be respected. Which of the brothers have you chosen to carry the Sovereign over the threshold?" but on casting her sparkling eyes over the ranks of the spiritual champions and beholding the dark fanatical face of Notker the stammerer, she whispered to Praxedis: "May be we shall turn back at once."

"There he stands," said the abbot.

Dame Hadwig following with her eyes the direction which the forefinger indicated, then beheld Ekkehard, and it was a long gaze, which she cast on his tall handsome figure, and noble countenance, glowing with youth and intellect. "We shall not turn back," was implied by a significant nod to Praxedis, and before the short-necked chamberlain, who in most cases was willing enough, but was generally too slow, had dismounted, and approached her palfrey, she had gracefully alighted and approaching the custodian, she said: "Now then, perform your office."

Ekkehard had been trying meanwhile to compose an address, which in faultless Latin was intended to justify the strange liberty he was about to take,—but when she stood before him, proud and commanding, his voice failed him, and the speech remained where it had been conceived,—in his thoughts. Otherwise, however, he had not lost his courage, and so he lifted up his fair burden with his strong arms, who, putting her right arm round his shoulder, seemed not displeased with her novel position.

Cheerfully he thus stepped over the threshold which no woman's foot was allowed to touch; the abbot walking by his side, and the chamberlain and vassals following. The serving ministers swung their censers gayly into the air, and the monks marching behind in a double file as before, sung the last verses of the unfinished hymn.

It was a wonderful spectacle, such as never occurred, either before or after in the monastery's history, and by those prone to useless moralizing many a wise observation might be made, in connection with the monk's carrying the Duchess; on the relation of church and state in those times, and the changes which have occurred since,—but these reflections we leave each one to make for himself.—Natural philosophers affirm, that at the meeting of animate objects, invisible powers begin to act, streaming forth, and passing from one to the other, thus creating strange affinities. This theory was proved true at least with regard to the Duchess and her bearer, for whilst she was being rocked in his arms, she thought inwardly: "Indeed, never the hood of St. Benedict has covered a more graceful head than this one;" and when Ekkehard put down his burden with shy deference in the cool cross-passage, he was struck by the thought, that the distance from the gate had never appeared so short to him before. "I suppose that you found me very heavy?" said the Duchess.

"My liege lady, you may boldly say of yourself as it has been written, 'my yoke is easy and my burden is light,'" was the reply.

"I should not have thought that you would turn the words of Scripture into a flattering speech. What is your name?"

"They call me Ekkehard."

"Ekkehard I thank you," said the Duchess with a graceful wave of her hand.

He stepped back to an oriel window in the cross-passage, and looked out into the little gar-

den. Was it mere chance that the image of St. Christopher now rose before his inward eye? He also considered his burden a light one, when he began to carry the child-stranger through the water, on his strong shoulder; but heavier and heavier the burden weighed on his back, and pressing him downwards into the roaring flood, deep, and deeper still; so that his courage began to fail him, and was well-nigh turned into despair? . . .

The abbot had ordered a magnificent jug to be brought, and taking it in his hand, he went himself to the well, filled it and presenting it to the Duchess said: "It is the duty of the abbot to bring water to strangers for them to wash their hands, as well as their feet and . . ."

"We thank you, but we do not want it," said the Duchess, interrupting him, in her most decided accents.

Meanwhile two of the brothers had carried down a box, which now stood open in the passage. Out of this the abbot drew a monk's habit, quite new, and said: "Thus I ordain our monastery's mighty patron, a member of our brotherhood, and adorn him with the holy garb of our order."

Dame Hadwig complied, lightly bending her knee, on receiving the cowl from his hands, and then she put on the garment, which became her well, being ample and falling in rich folds; for the rule says: "The abbot is to keep a strict look-out that the garments shall not be too scanty, but well fitted to their wearers."

The beautiful rosy countenance looked lovely in the brown hood.

"And you must likewise follow the example of your mistress," said the abbot to the followers of the Duchess, upon which the evil Sindolt gleefully assisted Master Spazzo to don the garb.

"Do you know," he whispered into his ear, "what this garment obliges you to? In putting it on, you swear to renounce the evil lusts of this world, and to lead a sober, self-denying and chaste life in future."

Master Spazzo, who had already put his right arm into the ample gown, pulled it back hastily and exclaimed with terror: "I protest against this," but when Sindolt struck up a loud guffaw, he perceived that things were not quite so serious and said: "Brother, you are a wag."

In a few minutes the vassals were also adorned with the garb of the holy order, but the beards of some of the newly-created monks descended to the girdle, in opposition to the rules, and also they were not quite canonical as to the modest casting down of their eyes.

The abbot led his guests into the church.

CHAPTER III.

WIBORAD THE RECLUSE.

THE one who was least of all delighted by the arrival of the unexpected guests was Romeias the gatekeeper. He had a presentiment what part of the trouble was likely to fall to his share, but he did not yet know the whole of it. Whilst the abbot received the Duchess, Gerold the steward came up to him and said:

"Romeias, prepare to go on an errand. You are to tell the people on the different farms to send in the fowls that are due before evening, as they will be wanted at the feast, and besides you are to procure as much game as possible."

This order pleased Romeias well. It was not the first time that he had been to ask for fowls, and yeomen and farmers held him in great respect, as he had a commanding manner of speaking. Hunting was at all times the delight of his heart, and so Romeias took his spear, hung the cross-bow over his shoulder, and was just going to call out a pack of hounds, when Gerold pulled his sleeve and said: "Romeias, one thing more! You are to accompany the duchess' waiting-women, who have been forbidden to enter the monastery, to the Schwarzthal, and present them to the pious Wiborad, who is to entertain them as pleasantly as may be until the evening. And you are to be very civil, Romeias, and I tell you there is a Greek maid amongst them with the darkeat eyes imaginable. . . ."

On hearing this, a deep frown of displeasure darkened Romeias's forehead, and vehemently thrusting his spear to the ground he exclaimed: "I am to accompany women folk? That is none of the business of the gatekeeper of St. Gallus's monastery—" but Gerold with a significant nod towards him, continued: "Well, Romeias, you must try to do your best; and have you never heard that watchmen, who have faithfully performed their missions, have

found an ample jug of wine in their room of an evening,—eh, Romeias?"

The discontented face brightened up considerably, and so he went down to let out the hounds. The blood-hound and the beagle jumped up gayly, and the little beaver-puppy also set up a joyous bark, hoping to be taken out likewise; but with a contemptuous kick it was sent back, for the hunter had nothing to do with fish-ponds and their inhabitants. Surrounded by his noisy pack of hounds, Romeias strode out of the gate.

Praxedis and the other waiting-women of the Duchess had dismounted from their horses and seated themselves on a grassy slope, chatting away about monks and cows and beards, as well as about the strange caprices of their mistress, when Romeias suddenly appeared before them and said: "Come on!"

Praxedis looked at the rough sportsman, and not quite knowing what to make of him, pertly said: "Where to, my good friend?"

Romeias, however, merely lifted his spear, and pointing with it to a neighboring hill behind the woods, held his tongue.

Then Praxedis called out: "Is speech such a rare article in St. Gall that you do not answer properly when questioned?"

The other maids giggled, upon which Romeias said solemnly: "May you all be swallowed up by an earthquake, seven fathom deep."

"We are very much obliged to you, good friend," was Praxedis's reply, and the necessary preliminaries for a conversation being thus made, Romeias informed them of the commission he had received, and the women followed him willingly enough.

After some time the gatekeeper found out that it was not the hardest work to accompany such guests, and when the Greek maid desired to know something about his business and sport, his tongue got wonderfully loosened, and he even related his great adventure with the terrible boar, into whose side he had thrown his spear and yet had not been able to kill it, for one of its feet would have loaded a cart, and its hair stood up as high as a pine-tree, and its teeth were twelve feet long at the least. After this he grew still more civil, for when the Greek once stopped to listen to the warbling of a thrush, he waited also patiently enough, though a singing-bird was too miserable a piece of game for him to give much heed to; and when Praxedis bent down for a pretty brass-beetle, crawling about in the moss, Romeias politely tried to push it towards her with his heavy boot, and when in doing so he crushed it instead, this was certainly not his intention.

They climbed up a wild, steep woodpath, beside which the Schwarzthal-brook flowed over jagged rocks. On that slope the holy Gallus had once fallen into some thorny bushes, and had said to his companion, who wanted to lift him up: "Here let me lie, for here shall be my resting-place and my abode forever."

They had walked far before they came to a clearing in the fir-wood, where, leaning against the sheltering rocks, stood a simple chapel in the shape of a cross. Close to it a square little stone-hut was built against the rock, in which but one tiny window, with a wooden shutter, was to be seen. Opposite there stood another hut exactly like it, having also but one little window.

It was customary at that time for those who inclined to the monastic life, and who, as St. Benedict expressed himself, felt strong enough to fight with the Devil, without the assistance of pious companions, to have themselves immured in that way. They were called "Reclusi" that is Walled-in, and their usefulness, and aim in life, may well be compared to that of the pillar-saints in Egypt. The sharp winds of winter, and frequent fall of snow, rendered their exposure in the open air somewhat impossible, but the longing for an anchorite's life, was nevertheless quite as strong.

Within those four walls on Erin hill there lived the Sister Wiborad, a far-famed recluse of her time. She came from Klingnau in Aargau, and had been a proud and prudish virgin, learned in many an art; besides being able to recite all the Psalms in the Latin tongue, which she had learnt from her brother Hitto. She was not however quite opposed to the idea of sweetening the life of some man or other, but the flower of the youth at Aargau did not find grace in her eyes; and one day she set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. There in the holy city her restless mind must have undergone some great shock, but none of her contemporaries

ever knew in what way. For three entire days her brother Hito ran up and down the Forum through the Halls of the Coliseum, and the triumphal arch of Constantine to the four-faced Janus near the Tiber, seeking for his sister and not finding her, and on the morning of the fourth day she walked in by the Salarian gate, carrying her head very high, and whilst her eyes gleamed strangely she said that things would not be right in the world until the due amount of veneration was shown unto St. Martin.

After returning to her home she bequeathed all her wealth to the bishop's church at Constance, on condition that a great festival in honor of St. Martin should be held every year on the 11th of November. Then she went to live in a small house where the holy Zilia had lived before, and there led a hermit's life, until she grew dissatisfied, and betook herself to the valley of St. Gallus. The bishop himself accompanied her, put the black veil on her head with his own hands, and after leading her into the cell, he laid the first stone with which the entrance was closed up. Then he pronounced his blessing, imprinting his seal four times into the lead, which joined the stones together, whilst the monks who had accompanied him chanted sad solemn strains, as if some one was being buried.

The people thereabout held the recluse in great honor. They called her a "hard-forged Saint," and on many a Sunday they flocked to the meadow before her cell, and listened to Wiborad, who stood preaching at her window, and several women went to live in her neighborhood, to be instructed in all the virtues.

"We have arrived at the place of our destination," said Romeias, upon which Praxedis and her companions looked about in every direction; but not a human being was to be seen. Only some belated butterflies and beetles buzzed drowsily in the sunshine and the cricket chirped merrily, hidden in the grass. The shutter at Wiborad's window was almost shut, so that but a scanty ray of sunshine could penetrate; and from within came the monotonous hollow tones of a person chanting psalms, with a somewhat nasal sound, breaking the silence without. Romeias knocked against the shutter with his spear, but this had no effect on the psalm-chanting individual inside. Then the gatekeeper said: "We must try some other way of rousing her attention."

Romeias was rather a rough sort of man, or he would not have behaved as he did.

He began singing a song, such as he often sang to amuse the cloister-pupils, when they managed to steal off into his watch-tower, there to plague him, by pulling his beard or by making all sorts of absurd noises on his big horn. It was one of those ditties, which, from the time that the German tongue was first spoken, have been sung by the thousand, on hills and high-roads, beneath hedges and woody dells, and the wind has carried them on and spread them further. The words of this were as follows:

"I know an oak-tree fair to see,
In yonder shady grove,
There bills and coos the lifelong day
A beautiful wild dove.

I know a rock in yonder vale,
Around which bats are fitting
There, old and hoary in her nest
An ugly owl is sitting.

The wild dove is my heart's delight,
And with a song I greet it;
The arrow keep I for the owl
To kill it when I meet it."

This song had about the same effect, as if Romeias had thrown a heavy stone against the shutter. Instantly there appeared a figure at the little window, from the withered and scraggy neck of which rose a ghastly woman's head, in whose countenance the mouth had assumed a rather hostile position towards the nose. A dark veil hid the rest, and bending out of the little window as far as she could, she cried out with ominously gleaming eyes: "Art thou come back, Satanas?"

Romeias then advanced a few steps and said complacently: "Nay, the Evil One does not know such fine songs as Romeias, the monastery's gatekeeper. Calm yourself, Sister Wiborad, I bring you some dainty damsels, whom the Abbot warmly recommends to your kind reception."

"Take yourselves off, ye deceiving phantoms!" screamed the recluse. "I know the snares of the Tempter. Hence, begone!"

But Praxedis now approached the window, and humbly dropping a low courtesy to the old

hag, explained to her that she did not come from hell, but from the Hohentwiel. Showing that the Greek maiden could be a little deceitful, she added that she had already heard so much of the great piety of the far-famed Sister Wiborad, that she had availed herself of the first opportunity of paying her a visit, though the fact was, that she had before that day never heard about the cell and its inhabitant.

After this the wrinkles on Wiborad's forehead began somewhat to disappear. "Give me thy hand, stranger," said she, stretching her arm out of the window, which, as the sleeve fell back, could be seen in all its skinny leanness.

Praxedis held up her right hand, and as the recluse touched with her dry fingers the soft warm hand with its throbbing pulses, she became slowly convinced that the young girl was a being of flesh and blood.

Romeias on perceiving this change for the better rolled some big stones under the window of the cell. "In two hours I shall be back to fetch you;—God bless you, virgins all," he said aloud, and then added in a whisper to the Greek maid,—"and don't be frightened if she should fall into one of her trances."

Whistling to his dogs he then quickly strode towards the wood. The first thirty steps or so he got on without any impediment; but then he suddenly stopped; and turning first his shaggy head round, and then the whole body, he stood leaning on his spear, intently gazing at the spot before the cell, as if he had lost something there. Yet he had forgotten nothing.

Praxedis smiled and kissed her hand to the rudest of all gatekeepers. Then Romeias quickly turned round again, shouldered his spear,—dropped it, took it up again, then stumbled, and finally managed to complete his retreat, after which he vanished behind the moss-grown stems.

"Oh thou child of the world, groping in darkness," scolded the recluse, "what meant that movement of thy hand?"

"A mere jest," replied Praxedis innocently.

"A downright sin," cried Wiborad in rough accents, so that Praxedis started,—and then continuing with her preaching added: "Oh the Devil's works and delusions! There you cast your eyes slyly about until they enter a man's heart like lightning, and kiss your hands to him as if that were nothing! Is it naught, that he looks back who ought to be looking forwards? No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. 'A jest?' O give me hyssop to take away your sin, and snow to wash you clean!"

"I did not think of that," admitted Praxedis, deeply blushing.

"That is the misery, that you do not think of so many things;"—then looking at Praxedis from head to foot she continued, "neither do you think that wearing a bright green garment, and all such flaring colors, are an abomination unto those who have banished all worldly thoughts; and that thy girdle is tied so loosely and negligently round thy waist, as if thou wert a public dancer. Watch and pray!"

Leaving the window for a few moments, the recluse returned presently, and held out a coarsely twisted cord.

"I have pity on thee, poor turtle-dove," she said, "Tear off thy silken finery and receive herewith the girdle of self-denial, from Wiborad's own hand; and let it be a warning to thee, to have done with all vain talkings and doings. And when thou feelest the temptation again to kiss thy hand to the gatekeeper of a monastery, turn thy head eastwards and chant the psalm, 'Oh Lord, deliver me from evil!'—and if, even then peace will not come to thee, then light a wax-candle and hold thy forefinger over the flame, and thou wilt be saved; for fire alone cures fire."

Praxedis cast down her eye.

"Your words are bitter," she said.

"Bitter!" exclaimed the recluse. "Praised be the Lord that my lips do not taste of sweets! The mouth of saints must be bitter. When Pachomius sat in the desert, the angel of the Lord came unto him, took the leaves from a laurel-tree, and writing some holy words of prayer thereon, gave them to Pachomius and said: 'Swallow these leaves, and though they will be as bitter as gall in thy mouth, they will make thy heart overflow with true wisdom.' And Pachomius took the leaves and ate them, and from that moment his tongue became bitter, but his heart was filled with sweetness, and he praised the Lord."

Praxedis said nothing, and there ensued a silence which was not interrupted for some time. The other maids of the Duchess had all vanished, for when the recluse had handed out her girdle, they nudged each other and then quietly glided away. They were now gathering bunches of heather and other autumnal flowers, giggling at what they had witnessed.

"Shall we also put on such a belt?" said one of them.

"Yes, when the sun rises black," replied the other.

Praxedis had put the cord into the grass.

"I do not like robbing you of your girdle," she now said shyly.

"Oh, the simplicity," exclaimed Wiborad, "the girdle that we wear is no child's play like the one that I gave thee. The girdle of Wiborad is an iron hoop with blunted spikes,—it clicks like a chain and cuts into the flesh,—thou wouldst shudder at the mere sight of it."

Praxedis gazed towards the wood, as if spying whether Romeias was not yet to be seen. The recluse probably noticed that her guest did not feel particularly comfortable, and now held out to her a board, on which lay about half a dozen of reddish-green crab-apples.

"Does time pass slowly by for thee, child of the world?" she said. "There, take these, if words of grace do not satisfy thee. Cakes and sweetmeats have I none, but these apples are fair in the sight of the Lord. They are the nourishment of the poor."

The Greek maid knew what politeness required. But they were crab-apples, and after having with an effort swallowed the half of one, her pretty mouth looked awry, and involuntary tears started into her eyes.

"How dost thou like them?" cried the recluse. Then Praxedis feigned as if the remaining half fell by chance from her hand. "If the Creator had made all apples as acid as these," she said with a sour-sweet smile, "Eve would never have eaten of the apple."

Wiborad was offended. "'Tis well," said she, "that thou dost not forget the story of Eve. She had the same tastes as thou, and therefore sin has come into the world."

The Greek maid looked up at the sky, but not from emotion: A solitary hawk flew in circles over Wiborad's hut. "Oh that I could fly with thee away to the Bodensee," she thought. Archly shaking her pretty head she then inquired: "What must I do to become as perfect as you are?"

"To renounce the world entirely," replied Wiborad, "is a grace from above, which we poor mortals can't acquire by ourselves. Fasting, drinking of pure water, castigating the flesh and reciting of psalms,—all these are mere preparations. The most important thing is to select a good patron-saint. We women are but frail creatures, but fervent prayer brings the champions of God to our side, to assist us. Imagine, before this little window, there he often stands in lonely nights,—he, whom my heart has elected, the valiant Bishop Martin, and he holds out his lance and shield, to protect me from the raging devils. An aureole of blue flames crowns his head, flashing through the darkness like summer lightning, and as soon as he appears the demons fly away shrieking. And when the battle is over, then he enters into friendly communion with me. I tell him all that weighs on my poor heart;—all the grief which my neighbors cause me, and the wrong which I suffer from the cloister-folk; and the Saint nods to me and shakes his curly head, and all that I tell him, he carries to heaven and repeats it to his friend the Archangel Michael, who keeps watch every Monday, before the throne of God Almighty. There it comes before the right ear, and Wiborad the last of the least is not forgotten. . . ."

"Then I shall also choose St. Martin to become my patron-saint," exclaimed Praxedis. But this had not been the drift of Wiborad's praises. She threw a contemptuous, half-jealous look on the rosy cheeks of the young girl. "The Lord pardon thee thy presumption!" cried she with folded hands—"dost thou believe that this can be done with a flippant word and smooth face? Indeed! Many long years have I striven and fasted until my face became wrinkled and furrowed,—and he did not favor me even with one single look! He is a high and mighty Saint and a valiant soldier of the Lord, who only looks on long tried champions."

"He will not rudely shut his ears against my prayers," exclaimed Praxedis.

"But thou shalt not pray to him," cried Wiborad angrily. "What has he to do with thee? For such as thou art, there are other patron-saints. I will name thee one. Choose thou the pious Father Pachomius for thyself."

"Him I don't know," said Praxedis.

"Bad enough, and it is high time for you to make his acquaintance. He was a venerable hermit who lived in the Theban desert, nourishing himself with wild roots and locusts. He was so pious that he heard during his life-time the harmony of the spheres and planets and often said: 'If all human beings would hear what has blessed my ears, they would forsake house and land; and he who had put on the right shoe would leave the left one behind, and hasten hither.' Now in the town of Alexandria there was a maid, whose name was Thais, and nobody could tell which was greater, her beauty or her frivolity. Then Pachomius said unto himself "Such a woman is a plague for the whole Egyptian land," and after cutting his beard and anointing himself he mounted a crocodile, which by prayer he had made subservient to himself, and on its scaly back was carried down the Nile; and then he went to Thais, as if he also were an admirer of hers. His big stick, which was a palm-tree, he had taken with him, and he managed to shake the heart of the sinner so as to make her burn her silken robes, as well as her jewels, and she followed Pachomius, as a lamb does the shepherd. Then he shut her up in a rocky grave, leaving only a tiny window in it; instructed her in prayer, and after five years her purification was completed, and four angels carried her soul up to heaven."

This story did not impress Praxedis very favorably.

"The old hermit with his rough beard and bitter lips is not good enough for her," she thought, "and therefore I am to take him for myself," but she did not dare to give utterance to these thoughts.

At this moment the curfew bell began to ring in the monastery, and at this signal the recluse stepped back into her chamber and closed her shutter. The hollow sound of psalm-chanting was heard again, accompanied by the noise of falling strokes. She was flagellating herself.

Meanwhile Romeias had begun his sport in the distant wood, and throw his spear—but he had mistaken the trunk of a felled oak for a young deer. Angrily he pulled out his weapon from the tenacious wood;—it was the first time in his life that such a thing had happened to him.

Before Wiborad's cell total silence reigned for a considerable length of time, and when her voice was again heard it was quite altered; the tones being fuller and vibrating with passion: "Come down unto me, holy Martin; valiant champion of God; thou consolation of my solitude; thou light in my darkness. Descend unto me, for my soul is ready to receive thee and my eyes are thirsting for thee."

After this there ensued a pause, and then Praxedis started with terror. A hollow shriek had come from within. She pushed open the shutter and looked in. The recluse was prostrated on her knees, her arms extended beseechingly, and her eyes had a fixed, stony expression. Beside her lay the scourge.

"For God's sake," cried Praxedis, "what is the matter with you?"

Wiborad jumped up and pressed the hand which the Greek maid extended to her convulsively. "Child of Earth," said she in broken accents, "that has been deemed worthy to witness the agonies of Wiborad—strike thy bosom; for a token has been given. He, the elected of my soul, has not come; offended that his name has been profaned by unholy lips; but the holy Gallus has appeared to my soul's eye—he who as yet has never deigned to visit my cell, and his countenance was that of a sufferer and his garments were torn, and half burnt. That means that his monastery is threatened by some great disaster. We must pray that his disciples may not stumble in the path of righteousness."

Bending her head out of the window she called out, "Sister Wendelgard!"

Then the shutter was opened on the opposite cell and an aged face appeared. The face belonged to good Dame Wendelgard, who in that fashion was mourning for her spouse, who had never returned from the last wars.

"Sister Wendelgard," said Wiborad, "let us sing three times 'Be merciful to us, oh Lord.'"

But the Sister Wendelgard had just been in-

dulging in loving thoughts of her noble spouse. She still harbored an unalterable conviction that some day he would return to her from the land of the Huns, and she would have liked best there and then to leave her cell, to go and meet him.

"It is not the time for psalm-singing," she replied.

"So much the more acceptable, the voluntary devotion rises up to Heaven," said Wiborad, after which she intoned the said psalm with her rough, unmelodious voice. But the expected response did not come. "Why dost thou not join me in singing David's song?"

"Because I don't wish to do so," was Sister Wendelgard's unceremonious reply. The fact was, that during the many years of her seclusion she had at last grown weary of it. Many thousand psalms had she sung at Wiborad's bidding, in order to induce St. Martin to deliver her husband out of the hands of the infidels; but the sun rose and set daily—and yet he never came. And so she had begun to dislike her gaunt neighbor, with her visions and phantasms.

Wiborad however turned her eyes upwards, like one who thinks he can discover a comet in clear daylight. "Oh, thou vessel full of iniquity and wickedness!" she cried, "I will pray for thee, that the evil spirits may be banished from thee. Thine eye is blind as thy mind is dark."

But the other quietly replied: "Judge not, that thou be not judged. My eyes are as clear as they were a year ago, when in a moon-shiny night they beheld you getting out of your window, and going away Heaven knows where;—and my mind still refuses to believe that prayers coming from such a mouth can work miracles."

Then Wiborad's pale face became distorted, as if she had bitten a pebble. "Woe to thee, whom the Devil has deluded!" screamed she, and a flood of scolding words streamed from her lips; but her neighbor knew well how to answer her with similar missiles.

Quicker and quicker the words came, confusing and mixing themselves together, whilst the rocky walls threw back unharmonious echoes, and frightened a pair of little owlets, which leaving their cranny nest flew awry screeching . . . in truth at the famous quarrel beneath the portal of the cathedral at Worms, when the two queens* were scolding and upbraiding each other, the volubility and anger exhibited were not to be compared to that of the pious recluses.

In mute astonishment Praxedis stood listening to the noise, secretly wishing to interfere and make peace; but then a soft thing fares ill between two sharp ones.

But now the merry notes of a horn, intermingled with the loud barking of dogs was heard from the wood, and a moment later the tall, majestic figure of Romeias could be seen also, approaching slowly.

The second time that he had thrown the spear it had not hit a tree, but a magnificent stag of ten antlers, which now hung over his shoulder; and besides this, he carried fastened to his belt six hares which had been caught in snares.

On beholding the figure before him, the sportsman's heart rejoiced mightily. Without saying a word he loosened two of the living hares, and swinging one in each hand, he threw them so dexterously into the narrow little windows that Wiborad suddenly feeling the soft fur brushing past her head, started back with a loud scream. The brave sister Wendelgard likewise got a great shock, for her black habit had loosened itself in the heat of battle, and the wretched little hare, getting entangled therein, and trying to discover an outlet, caused her no small fright. So both stopped their scolding, closed the shutters, and there was silence again on Erin-hill.

"We'll go home," said Romeias to the Greek maid, "for it is getting late." Praxedis, who was not over pleased, either by the quarreling or Romeias' way of making peace, had no desire to stay any longer. Her companions had gone back some time ago, following their own inclinations.

"Hares must be of small value here, as you throw them away in such an unmannerly way," she said.

"True, they are not worth much," Romeias rejoined laughingly, "yet the present deserved thanks at least."

Whilst still speaking, the dormer-window of

* Chriemhilde and Brunhilde.

Wiborad's roof opened; about half of her gaunt lean figure became visible, and a stone of some weight flew over Romeias' head, without hitting him. That was her way of thanking him for the hare.

From this can be seen, that the forms of social intercourse differed somewhat from the present fashions.

Praxedis expressed her astonishment.

"Oh, such things happen about once a week," explained Romeias. "A moderate overflow of gall gives new strength to such old hags, and it is doing them a kindness if one helps them to effect such a crisis."

"But she is a saint," said Praxedis shyly.

After first murmuring some unintelligible words in his beard, Romeias said: "Well, she ought to be thankful if she is one, and I am not going to tear off her garb of sanctity. But since I was at Constance on a visit to my mother, I have heard many a tale that's not quite as it ought to be. It has not yet been forgotten in those parts, how she had to defend herself before the bishop on account of this and that, which is none of my business; and the Constance merchants will tell you without your asking them, that the recluses near the cathedral have lent them money, given to them by pious pilgrims, on usurious interest. It was not my fault that once, when I was still a boy, I found in a quarry a strange big pebble. When I knocked it to pieces with my hammer, there was a toad in the middle, looking very much astonished. Since then I know what a recluse is like. Snip-snap—trari-trara!"

Romeias accompanied his new friend to the house which lay beyond the cloister-walls and which was destined to receive her. Before it the other maids were standing, and the posy of wild flowers they had gathered lay on a stone table before the door.

"We must say Good-bye," said the gate-keeper.

"Farewell," said Praxedis.

He then went away, and after going thirty steps suddenly turned round,—but the sun does not rise twice in one day; least of all for the keeper of a cloister-gate! No hand was being kissed to him. Praxedis had entered the house. Then Romeias slowly walked back, and without troubling himself to ask leave, hastily took up the flowers from the stone table, and went away. The stag and four hares he brought to the kitchen. After this he toiled up to his room in the watch-tower, fastened the nosegay to the wall with the help of a nail, and taking a piece of charcoal, drew a heart under it, which had two eyes, a long stroke in lieu of a nose, and a cross-line for a mouth.

He had just finished this, when the cloister-pupil Burkhard came up, bent upon amusing himself. Romeias seized him with a powerful grasp, held out the charcoal, and placing him before the wall, said: "There, write the name under it!"

"What name?" asked the boy.

"Hers," commanded Romeias.

"What do I know about her, and her name," testily replied the pupil.

"There one can see again, what is the use of studying," grumbled Romeias. "Every day the boy sits for eight hours behind his asses'-skins and does not know the name of a strange damsel!" . . .

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE MONASTERY.

DAME HADWIG had meanwhile performed her devotions at the grave of the holy Gallus. The Abbot was then about to propose a walk in the cloister-garden, but she asked him, first to show her the treasures of the church. The mind of woman, however intellectual, ever delights in ornaments, jewels, and fine garments. The Abbot tried hard to dissuade her from this wish; saying that theirs was but a poor little monastery, and that his cousin, no doubt, had seen far better things on her travels, or at court, but it was all in vain. So they went to the sacristy. Here the cupboards were first opened, revealing many purple chasubles and magnificent priests' garments, with embroidered pictures, representations of the holy history. Here and there was also some piece strongly reminding one of Roman heathenism, such as the marriage of Mercury with Philology. When the cupboards were done with, large boxes were opened, full of silver lamps, golden crowns, finely wrought frames for the holy books; and ornaments for

the altar. These things had mostly been brought over the Alps by monks, who tying them round their knees, had thus slyly preserved them from covetous eyes and hands. Beautiful vessels, in all sorts of curious forms; candlesticks in the shape of dolphins; golden drinking-cups resting on silver pillars; censers and many other beautiful articles, altogether a rich treasure. A chalice made of a single piece of amber, which glistened wonderfully when held to the light, attracted the Duchess' notice. At the edge a small piece was broken off.

"When my predecessor Hartmuth was dying," said the Abbot, "that little bit was powdered and given to him, mixed with wine and honey, to calm the fever."

In the middle of the amber was a tiny fly, so well preserved, as if it had but just settled down there. Probably the little insect sitting contentedly on its blade of grass, in antediluvian times, when the liquid resin streamed over it, little thought, that it would thus be bequeathed to far-off generations.

But such dumb testimonials of nature's powers, were little heeded then. At least the chamberlain Spazzo, who surveyed and examined everything with a careful eye, was occupied the while with very different ideas. He thought how much pleasanter it would be to be on war-terms with the pious monks, and instead of claiming their hospitality as a friend, to enter arms in hand, and carry all the treasures away. Having witnessed in his time many a reverse of friendship between the high-born, he was inwardly speculating on this possibility, and eying keenly the entrance to the sacristy, he murmured to himself: "Coming from the choir 'tis the first door to the right!"

The Abbot who probably thought likewise that the prolonged examination of the gold and silver, produced a hankering for their possession slyly omitted opening the last box, which contained the most magnificent things of all, and in order to divert their attention from them urgently proposed their going into the open air.

So the party directed their steps towards the garden, which occupied a considerable space, and produced much vegetable and fruit for the kitchen, as well as useful herbs for medicines.

In the orchard a large portion was divided off and reserved for wild animals and numerous birds, such as were to be found in the neighboring Alps; and rarer ones which had been sent as presents, by stranger guests from foreign countries.

Dame Hadwig took great pleasure in looking at the rough uncouth bears, which were funny enough when climbing about on the tree in their prison. Close to these, a pug-nosed monkey, chained together with a baboon, played their merry gambols,—two creatures of which a poet of that time, says that neither one nor the other possessed a single trace of the faculty of making itself useful, by which to establish a claim to its existence.

An old wild goat with bent down head stood immovably within its narrow boundary, for since it had been carried off from the icy atmosphere of its snowy mountain peaks and glaciers, the native of the Alps had become blind;—for it is not every creature that thrives amid low human habitations.

In another division a large family of thick-skinned badgers was living. On passing them the evil Sindolt exclaimed laughingly: "Heaven bless you miserable little beasts, the chosen game of pious monks."

On another side was heard a shrill whistle from a troop of marmots, which were running quickly to hide themselves in the chinks and crevices of the artificial rockery that served as their dwelling. Dame Hadwig had never beheld such amusing little creatures before. The Abbot told her of their way of living.

"These animals," said he, "sleep more than any other creature; but when awake, they show a wonderful sharpness and forethought, for when winter approaches, they gather up grass and hay wherever they find it, and one of them lies down on its back, whilst the others put on it everything they have scraped together, and then they seize it by the tail, and drag it like a loaded cart into their caverns.*

Then Sindolt said to the stout chamberlain, Master Spazzo: "What a pity that you have not become a mountain-rat, that would have

* This fable has its origin in the "*Historia naturalis*" of Plinius.

When the Abbot had proceeded a few paces, the evil Sindolt began to give a new sort of explanation: "That is our Tutilo," said he, pointing to a bear, which had just thrown down one of its companions,—"that the blind Thieto,"—pointing to the wild goat, and he was just about to honor the Abbot with some flattering comparison, when the Duchess interrupted him by saying: "As you are so clever in finding similes, will you find one for me also?"

Sindolt became embarrassed. Luckily his eye now fell on a beautiful silver-pheasant, which was in the midst of a troop of cranes, basking in the sunshine which lighted up its pearly gray feathers.

"There," said Sindolt.

But the Duchess turned round to Ekkehard, who gazed dreamily at the bustle and life before him.

"What do you think of it?" asked she.

He started up. "Oh, mistress!" said he in soft tones, "who is so audacious as to compare you to anything that flies or crawls?"

"But if we desire it?"

"Then I only know of one bird," said Ekkehard. "We have not got it, nor has any one; in star-lit midnights it flies high over our heads, brushing the sky with its wings. The bird's name is Caradrion, and when its wings touch the earth a sick man is healed. Then the bird, inclining towards the man, opens its beak over his mouth, and taking the man's sickness unto itself rises up to the sun, and purifies itself in the eternal light; and the man is saved."

The Abbot's return put a stop to further similes. One of the serving brothers was sitting on an apple-tree, plucking the apples, and putting them into baskets. When the Duchess approached the tree, he was going to descend, but she made him a sign to stop where he was.

Now, the singing of sweet boyish voices was heard. The voices were those of the younger cloister-pupils who came to do homage to the Duchess. Children as they were, the little fellows wore already the monk's habit, and several even the tonsure on their eleven years old heads. When the procession of the little rosy-cheeked future abbots came in sight, with their eyes cast down and singing their sequences so seriously, a slight, mocking smile played round Dame Hadwig's lips, and with her strong foot she upset the nearest of the baskets, so that the apples rolled about enticingly on the ground, in the midst of the boys. But unabashed they continued their walk; only one of the youngest wanted to bend down and take up the tempting fruit, which his companion forcibly prevented, by taking a good hold of his girdle.

Much pleased, the Abbot witnessed the young folks' excellent behavior and said: "Discipline distinguishes human beings from animals, and if you were to throw the apples of Hesperides amongst them, they would remain steadfast."

Dame Hadwig was touched. "Are all your pupils so well trained?" asked she.

"If you like to convince yourself with your own eyes," said the Abbot, "you will see that the elder ones know quite as well the meaning of obedience and submission."

The Duchess nodding an assent, was then led into the outer cloister-school, in which the sons of noblemen, and those who intended to join the secular clergy, were educated.

They entered the upper class. In the lecturer's chair stood Ratpert, the wise and learned teacher who was initiating his pupils into the mysteries of Aristotle's logic. With bent heads the young scholars sat before their parchments, scarcely lifting their eyes to look at the party now entering. The teacher inwardly thought this a good opportunity to gather some laurels, and called out, "Notker Labeco!" This was the pearl amongst his pupils, the hope of science, who on a weakly body carried a powerful head, with an immense protruding under-lip, the cause of his surname, the symbol of great determination and perseverance on the stony roads of investigation.

"He will become a great man," whispered the Abbot. "Already in his twelfth year he said that the world was like a book, and that the monasteries were the classical passages in it."

The young man in question, let his eyes glide over the Greek text, and then translated with pompous solemnity the deep intricate meaning thereof:

"If on a stone or piece of wood, you find a straight line running through, that is the mutual

line of demarkation, of the even surface. If the stone or wood were to split along that line, then we should behold two intersections, near the visible chink, where there was only one line before. Besides this we see two new surfaces, which are as broad as the object was thick, before one could see the new surface. From this it appears that this object existed as one whole, before it was separated."

But when this translation had been well got through, some of the young logicians put their heads together, and began to whisper, and the whispers became louder and louder;—even the cloister-pupil Hepidan, who undisturbed by Notker's capital translation, was employing all his skill to carve a devil with a double pair of wings, and a long curling tail, on the bench before him, stopped with his work. Then the teacher addressed the next boy, with the question: "How does the surface become a mutual line of demarkation?" upon which he began to blunder over the Greek text; but the commotion in the school-benches became louder still, so that there arose a buzzing and booming like distant alarm-bells. The translation ceased altogether and suddenly the whole mass of Ratpert's pupils rushed up noisily, towards the Duchess. In the next moment they had torn her from the Abbot's side, shouting "caught, caught," and making barricades with the benches, they repeated their cries: "We have caught the Duchess of Suabia! What shall be her ransom?"

Dame Hadwig, in the course of her life, had found herself in various positions, but that she could ever become the prisoner of school-boys had certainly never entered her head. This having however the charm of novelty for her, she submitted to her fate with a good grace.

Ratpert the teacher took out of the cupboard a mighty rod, and swinging it over his head, like a second Neptune, he recited, in a thundering voice, the verses of Virgil:

"So far has the conceit, in your pitiful powers, decoyed you,
That, not awaiting my will, and rousing the heavens
and waters
Ye have ventured to stir, ye rebellious winds of the ocean?
Quos ego!"

A renewed shout was the answer. The room was already divided by a wall of benches and stools, and Master Spazzo was inwardly meditating the expediency of an attack, and the effect of vigorous blows on the heads of the ring-leaders. As for the Abbot, he was perfectly speechless, as this unexpected audacity had quite paralyzed his faculties for the moment. The high-born prisoner stood at the other end of the school-room, in a niche, surrounded by her fifteen-years-old captors.

"What is the meaning of all this, ye wicked boys?" asked she smilingly.

Then one of the rebels advanced, bent his knee before her, and humbly said: "He who comes as a stranger is without protection or peace, and peaceless people are to be kept prisoners, until they have payed a ransom for their liberty."

"Do you learn that out of your Greek books?"

"No, mistress, that is German law."

"Very well, then I will ransom myself," said Dame Hadwig, and laughing merrily, she seized the red-cheeked logician, and drawing him towards her, wanted to kiss him. He however tore himself away, and joining the noisy ranks of his companions cried out:

"That coin we do not understand!"

"What ransom then do you exact?" asked the Duchess who was fast getting impatient.

"The bishop of Constance was also our prisoner," replied the pupil, "and he obtained for us three extra holidays in the year, as well as a feast of bread and meat, and has further secured this to us with his name and seal."

"Oh gluttonous youth!" said Dame Hadwig, "Then I must at least do as much for you as the bishop. Have you ever tasted the *Felchen** from the Bodensee?"

* A peculiar kind of fish in the Bodensee.

"No!" cried the boys.

"Then you shall receive six fish as an annual present. This fish is good for young beaks."

"Do you secure this to us with your name and seal?"

"If it must be so, yes."

"Long life to the Duchess of Suabia! All hail!" was now shouted on all sides. "Hail! she is free." The school-benches were quickly removed, the passage cleared, and jumping

and shouting triumphantly they led back their prisoner.

In the background the parchment leaves of Aristotle flew up into the air, as outward signs of joy. Even the corners of Notker Labeo's mouth turned down into a broad grin, and Dame Hadwig said: "The young gentlemen were very gracious. Please to put back the rod into the cupboard, honored professor."

A continuation of the translation of Aristotle was not to be thought of. Who can tell whether the uproarious outbreak of the pupils was not in close connection with their study of logic? Seriousness is often a very dry and leafless trunk, else folly would scarcely find room to wind her wanton green-leaved tendrils around it . . .

When the Duchess accompanied by the Abbot had left the school-room, the latter said: "There is nothing now left to show you but the library of the monastery, the well for thirsty souls, the armory with its weapons of science." But Dame Hadwig was tired and so declined his offer.

"I must keep my word," said she, "and make the donation to your boys documental. Will you be pleased to have the parchment got ready, that I may affix my signature and seal."

Sir Cralo conducted his guest to his apartments. On going along the cross-passage, they passed a small room, the door of which was open. Close to the bare wall stood a pillar, from the middle of which hung a chain. Over the portal, in faded colors, was painted a figure which held a rod in its lean hand. "Him whom the loveth, he chastiseth," was written under it in capital letters.

Dame Hadwig cast an inquiring look at the Abbot.

"The scourging-room!" replied he.

"Is none of the brothers just now liable to punishment?" asked she, "it might be a warning example."

Then the evil Sindolt's feet twitched as if he had trodden on a thorn. He turned round as if he had been attracted by a voice calling to him, and exclaiming, "I am coming," he quickly vanished into the darker parts of the passage. He well knew why he did so.

Notker the stuturer, after the labor of years, had at last completed a psalm-book, adorned with dainty drawings. This book the envious Sindolt had destroyed at night; cutting it to pieces, and upsetting a jug of wine over it. On account of this, he had been sentenced to be flogged three times, and the last installment was still due. He knew the room, and the instruments of penance hanging on the walls well enough, from the nine-tailed "Scorpion" down to the simple "wasp."

The Abbot hurried on. His state-rooms were richly decorated with flowers. Dame Hadwig threw herself into the primitive arm-chair, to rest from the fatigue of all the sight-seeing. She had received many new impressions within the space of a few hours. There was still half an hour left before supper.

Had any one taken the trouble to visit all the cloister-cells, he might have satisfied himself, that not a single inhabitant thereof had remained unaffected by the arrival of the high-born guests. Even those who pass their whole lives in seclusion feel that they owe homage to woman.

The hoary Tutilo had remembered with a pang, on the arrival of the Duchess, that the left sleeve of his habit was adorned with a hole. Under ordinary circumstances the sleeve would probably have remained unpatched, until the next great festival, but now there was no time for delay. So he sat down on his couch, provided with needle and thread, busily mending the rent. Being once busy with such things he also put new soles to his sandals; fastening them with nails, and humming a tune to speed the work. Ratold, the thinker, walked up and down in his cell, with a deep frown on his forehead, hoping that an opportunity would present itself to praise the virtues of the high-born guest in an improvised speech, and to heighten the effect of the spontaneous effusion, he was studying it beforehand. He intended to take the following lines of Tacitus, "on the Germans," for a text: "They believe also, that there is something holy about women, and that they have the gift of seeing into the future. Therefore they never disdain the advice given by them, and often follow their warnings." This was about all that he knew of the other sex, but his squirrel eyes twinkled with the hope, of being able, from the praise of the

Duchess, easily to diverge to some spiteful criticism on his brethren. Unfortunately the opportunity to bring in his speech never came, or he did not know how to seize it.

In another cell six of the brothers sat under the huge ivory comb, which was suspended by an iron chain from the ceiling. This was a very useful institution established by Abbot Hartmuth. Murmuring the prescribed prayers, they assisted one another in the careful arrangement of each other's hair. Many an overgrown tonsure was also restored to a shining smoothness on that day.

While these things were going on in the monastery itself, no less activity was displayed in the kitchen under the superintendence of Gerold the steward. And now resounded the tinkling of that bell, the sounds of which were not heard without a pleasurable sensation, even by the most pious of the brethren, as it was the signal for the evening-mess. Abbot Cralo led the Duchess into the refectory. The large room was divided in the middle by nine pillars, and around fourteen covered tables the members of the monastery, priests and deacons, stood assembled, like champions of the church militant. These however did not pay any great attention to the noble guest.

The duty of reader for that week, before the meals, had to be performed by Ekkehard the custodian. In honor of the Duchess he had chosen the 45th psalm. He arose and said: "Oh Lord, open my lips, that my mouth may speak forth thy praise," and all repeated these words in a low murmur, as a sort of blessing on his reading.

After that he lifted his voice and began reciting the psalm, which Scripture itself calls a love-song.

"My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made, touching the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

"Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever.

"Gird thy sword upon thy thigh O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

"And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness.

"Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.

"Thy throne, before God, is forever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter.

"Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

"All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloe and cassia—"

The Duchess seemed to understand the latent homage, and as if she herself was being addressed in the words of the psalm, she fastened her eyes intently on Ekkehard. But the Abbot likewise had noticed this, and made a sign to interrupt the reading; and thus the psalm remained unfinished, and every one sat down to supper.

Sir Cralo could not however prevent Dame Hadwig's ordering the zealous reader to sit down by her side. According to rank, this seat on her left side had been destined for the old dean Gozbert; but he for the last few minutes had been sitting on thorns; for he had once indulged in a very rough spoken dispute with Dame Hadwig's late husband, at the time when the latter carried off the precious chalice, as a war-contribution. On that account he had also a grudge against the Duchess, and had no sooner remarked her intention than he gladly moved downwards, and pushed the custodian into his seat. Next to Ekkehard came Spazzo the chamberlain, and after him the monk Sindolt.

The meal began. The steward well knowing that the arrival of stranger guests fully sanctioned an enlargement of the accustomed frugal cloister fare, had not restricted himself to the ordinary porridge. The strict bill of fare of the late Abbot Hartmuth was also not adhered to.

To be sure there appeared at first a steaming dish of millet-porridge, that those who preferred strictly to adhere to the prescribed rule might satisfy their hunger: but after that one delicacy followed another in quick succession. Side by side with the roast stag stood the delicious bear's ham, and even the beaver of the upper pond, which had been robbed of its life

in honor of the occasion. Pheasants, partridges, turtle-doves, and a rich collection of smaller birds followed; as well as an immense quantity of fish of all descriptions, so that finally every species of animal,—crawling, flying, or swimming, that was good to eat, was represented on the table.

Many an one of the brothers fought a fierce battle within the depths of his heart on that day. Even Gozbert the old dean,—after having stilled the craving of hunger with millet-porridge, and having pushed aside with a tremendous frown the roasted stag and bear's ham, as if it were a temptation of the Evil One,—when afterwards a beautifully-roasted grouse was put down before him, felt the odor thereof rise temptingly into his nostrils. And with the savory smell the memories of his youth came back; when he himself was a first-rate sportsman, fully two score years ago, and when he went out in the early morning to shoot the woodcock, and meet the gamekeeper's bright-eyed daughter; and twice he resisted the half-involuntary movement of his arm, the third time he felt his strength going, and a moment after one half of the bird lay before him, and was hastily dispatched.

Spazzo the chamberlain had watched with an approving nod the appearance of the many dishes. A large Rhine salmon had quickly disappeared under his hands, and he now cast his eyes about in search of something to drink. Then Sindolt, his neighbor, seized a small stone jug, poured out its contents into a metal cup, and said: "Your health in the choicest wine of the monastery."

Master Spazzo intended to take a copious draught, but scarcely had the liquid touched his palate when he put down the goblet hastily, shaking all over as with the ague, and exclaimed, "then may the Devil be friar!"

The evil Sindolt had given him a sour cider, made of crab-apples, and sweetened with the juice of the blackberry. On Master Spazzo's looking inclined to thank him by a bow, he quickly fetched a jug of the delicious red "Valtelliner" wherewith to soften his ire. The "Valtelliner" is a capital wine; in which formerly the Roman Emperor Augustus drowned his grief over the lost battle of Varus. By degrees Master Spazzo's good humor returned; so that, without knowing him, he willingly drank to the health of the Bishop of Chur, to whom the monastery was indebted for this wine, and Sindolt did not fail to keep him company.

"What may your patron say to such drinking?" asked the chamberlain.

"St. Benedict was a wise man," replied Sindolt, "therefore he ordained, that although it had been written that wine was altogether no drink for monks, yet as not a single person at the present day could be persuaded of the justness of this observation, and in consequence of the weakness of the human mind, every one should be allowed a bottle a day. No one, however, is to drink to satiety, for wine will make even the wisest swerve from the path of wisdom."

"Good," said Spazzo, and drained his tumbler.

"On the other hand," continued Sindolt, "those of the brotherhood in whose district little or no wine grows must resign themselves and praise the Lord without grumbling."

"Good also," said Spazzo, again emptying his goblet.

Meanwhile the Abbot did his best to entertain his princely cousin. He first began to sing the praises of her late husband Sir Burkhard, but Dame Hadwig's responses were but scanty and cold, so that the Abbot found out that everything has its time; especially the love of a widow for her late spouse. So he changed the conversation, asking her how the cloister-schools had pleased her.

"I feel sorry for the poor fellows who are forced to learn so much in their early days," said the Duchess. "Is not that a burden for them, under the weight of which they suffer all their lives?"

"Pardon me, noble cousin," replied the Abbot, "if both in the capacity of friend and relation I beg you not to indulge in such thoughtless speech. The study of science is no disagreeable obligation for the young; rather is it to them like strawberries, the more they eat the more they want."

"But what can they have to do with the heathen art of logic?" asked Dame Hadwig.

"That, in proper hands, becomes a weapon

to protect God's church," said the Abbot. "With such arts heretics were wont to attack believers, but now we frighten them with their own arms: and believe me, good Greek or Latin is a much finer instrument than our native language, which even in the hands of the ablest is but an unwieldy bludgeon."

"Indeed," said the Duchess, "must we still learn from you what is to be admired? I have existed until now, without speaking the Latin tongue, Sir Cousin."

"It would not harm you if you were still to learn it," said the Abbot, "and when the first euphonious sounds of the Latin tongue shall have gladdened your ear, you will admit that, compared to it, our mother-tongue is but a young bear, which can neither stand nor walk well before it has been licked by a classical tongue. Besides, much wisdom flows from the mouths of the old Romans. Ask your neighbor to the left."

"Is it so?" asked Dame Hadwig, turning towards Ekkehard, who had silently listened to the foregoing conversation.

"It would be true, liege lady," said he, enthusiastically, "if you still needed to learn wisdom."

Dame Hadwig archly held up her forefinger: "Have you yourself derived pleasure from those old parchments?"

"Both pleasure and happiness," exclaimed Ekkehard with beaming eyes. "Believe me, mistress, you do well to come to the classics for advice, in all positions of life. Does not Cicero teach us to walk safely in the intricate paths of worldly prudence? Do we not gather confidence and courage from Livy and Sallust? Do not the songs of Virgil awaken us to the conception of imperishable beauty? The Gospel is the guiding-star of our faith; the old classics, however, have left a light behind them, which, like the glow of the evening sun, sends refreshment and joy into the hearts of men."

Ekkehard spoke with emotion. Since the day on which the old Duke Burkhard had asked her hand in marriage, the Duchess had not seen any one who showed enthusiasm for anything. She was endowed with a high intellect, quick and imaginative. She had learned the Greek language very rapidly, in the days of her youth, on account of the Byzantine proposal. Latin inspired her with a sort of awe, because unknown to her. Unknown things easily impress us, whilst knowledge leads us to judge things according to their real worth, which is often much less than we had expected. The name of Virgil, besides, had a certain magic about it.

In that hour the resolution was formed in Hadwig's heart to learn Latin. She had plenty of time for this, and after having cast another look on her neighbor to the left, she knew who was to be her teacher.

The dainty dessert, consisting of peaches, melons, and dried figs, had vanished also, and the lively conversation at the different tables told of the frequent passing round of the wine-jug.

After the meal, in accordance with the rules of the order, a chapter out of the lives of the holy fathers had to be read for the general edification.

The day before Ekkehard had begun a description of the life of St. Benedict, which had been written by Pope Gregory. The brothers drew the tables closer together; the wine-jug came to a dead stop, and all conversation was hushed. Ekkehard continued with the second chapter: "One day when he was alone, the Tempter approached him; for a small black bird, commonly called a crow, came and constantly flew around his head, and approaching so near that the holy man might have captured it with his hand. He, however, made the sign of the cross, and the bird flew away."

"No sooner, however, had the bird flown away, when a fiercer temptation than the holy man had ever yet experienced, assailed him. A considerable time before he had beheld a certain woman. This woman, the Evil One caused to appear before his mental eyes, and to influence the heart of God's servant, to such a degree that a devouring love gnawed at his heart, and he almost resolved to leave his hermit-life, so strong was the longing and desire within him."

"But at that moment, however, a light from heaven shone on him, compelling him to return to his better self. And he beheld on one side a hedge of brambles and nettles, and he undressed and threw himself into the thorns and stinging nettles, until his whole body was lacerated."

"And thus the wounds of the skin had healed the wound of the spirit, and having conquered sin he was saved."

Dame Hadwig was not greatly edified by this lecture. She let her eyes wander about in the hall in search of something to divert her thoughts. Had the chamberlain, perhaps, also disapproved of the chapter, or had the wine got into his head?—for suddenly he dashed at the book, and closing it vehemently, so that the wooden covers clapped audibly, he held up his beaker, saying: "To the health of St. Benedict." Ekkehard turned a reproachful look on him, but the younger members of the brotherhood, regarding the toast as serious, had already echoed it noisily. Here and there a hymn in praise of the holy man was begun; this time to the tune of a merry drinking song, and loud, joyous voices rang through the hall.

Whilst Abbot Cralo looked about with a somewhat dubious expression, and Master Spazzo was still busily drinking to the health of the saint with the younger clergy, Dame Hadwig inclined her head towards Ekkehard, and said, in a half whisper:

"Would you be willing to teach me Latin, young admirer of the classics, if I felt inclined to learn it?"

Then Ekkehard heard an inner voice, whispering like an echo of what he had read: "Throw thyself into the thorns and nettles, and say no!"—but heedless of the warning voice, he replied: "Command, and I obey."

The Duchess gazed once more on the young monk with a furtive, searching look, then turned to the Abbot and talked of indifferent things.

The cloister-inmates did not seem inclined as yet to let this day's unusual liberty end here. In the Abbot's eyes there was a peculiarly soft and lenient expression, and the cellarer also never said "nay," when the brothers descended with their emptied wine-jugs into the vaults below.

At the fourth table the old Tutilo began to get jolly, and was telling his inevitable story of the robbers. Louder and louder his powerful voice rang through the hall: "One of them turned to fly,—I after him with my oaken stick,—he throws away spear and shield to the ground,—I quickly seize him by the throat, force the spear into his hand and cry, 'thou knave of a robber, for what art thou encumbering the world? Thou shalt fight with me!'"

But they had all heard it too often already, how he had then in honest fight split open the skull of his antagonist,—so they eagerly requested him to sing some favorite song, and on his giving an assenting nod, some of them hurried out, presently to return with their instruments. One of them brought a lute, another a violin with one string only, a third a sort of dulcimer with metal pegs, which were played with a tuning key, and a fourth a small ten-stringed harp. This last curious-looking instrument was called a psalter, and its three-cornered shape was held to be a symbol of the Trinity.

When the instruments were tuned, they gave him his baton of ebony. Smilingly the hoary artist received it, and rising from his seat, gave them the signal to play a piece of music, which he himself had composed in his younger days. Gladly the others listened; only Gerold the steward became rather melancholy on hearing the melodious sounds, for he was just counting the emptied dishes and stone jugs, and like a text to the melody the words vibrated through his mind: "How much this one day has swallowed up in goods and money!" Softly he beat time with his sandal-clad foot, until the last note had died away.

At the bottom of the table a silent guest, with a pale olive complexion and black curls, was sitting. He came from Italy, and had accompanied the mules loaded with chestnuts and oil from Lombardy over the Alps. In melancholy silence he let the floods of song pass over him.

"Well, Master Giovanni," said Folkard the painter, "has the fine Italian ear been satisfied? The Emperor Julianus once compared the singing of our forefathers to the screeching of wild birds, but since that time we have made progress. Did it not sound lovelier in your ears than the singing of wild swans?"

"Lovelier—than the singing of swans"—repeated the stranger in dreamy accents. Then he arose and quietly stole away. Nobody in

the monastery ever read what he wrote down in his journal that evening.

"These men on the other side of the Alp," he wrote, "when they let their thundering voices rise up to heaven, never can attain to the sweetness of an artistic modulation. Truly barbarous is the roughness of their wine-guzzling throats, and whenever they attempt by sinking and then raising their voices to attain a melodious softness,—all nature shudders at the sound, and it resembles the creaking of chariot-wheels on frozen ground."

Master Spazzo intending to end well what he had so well begun, slunk away to the building in which Praxedis and her companions were installed, and said: "You are to come to the Duchess, and that at once."

The maidens first laughed at his cowl, and then followed him into the refectory, as there was no one to hinder their entrance; and as soon as they became visible at the open door, a buzzing and murmuring began, as if a dancing and jumping were now to commence, such as these walls had never before experienced.

Sir Cralo, the abbot, however, looked at the Duchess, and exclaimed: "My Lady Cousin!" and he said it with such a touching, woe-begone expression, that she started up from her reverie. And suddenly she looked with different eyes than before on the chamberlain and herself, in their monks' habits, as well as on the rows of carousing men. The faces of the more distant ones were hidden by their projecting hoods, and it looked as if the wine was being poured down into empty cowls; in short, the scene altogether with the boisterous music appeared to her like a mad masquerade, that had lasted too long already.

So she said: "It is time to go to bed," and then went with her suite over to the school-house, where she was to rest that night.

"Do you know what would have been the reward of dancing?" asked Sindolt of one of his fellow monks, who seemed rather sorry at this sudden termination of their festivity. He stared at him inquiringly. Then Sindolt made a movement which meant unmistakably "scourging."

CHAPTER V.

EKKEHARD'S DEPARTURE.

EARLY the next morning, the Duchess and her attendants mounted their steeds, to ride homewards; and when she declined all parting ceremonies, the Abbot did not press her to the contrary. Therefore perfect quiet reigned in the monastery, whilst the horses were neighing impatiently. Only Sir Cralo came over, knowing well what good manners demanded.

Two of the brothers accompanied him. One of them carried a handsome crystal cup with a finely wrought silver foot and cover, in which many a pretty bit of onyx and emerald was set. The other carried a small jug of old wine. The Abbot pouring out some into the cup, then wished good speed to his cousin, begging her to drink the parting-draught with him, and to keep the cup as a small remembrance.

In case that the present should not be thought sufficient, he had still another curious piece in the background, which, though made of silver, had a very insignificant appearance, as it bore close resemblance to an ordinary loaf of bread. This could be opened, and was filled up to the brim with gold-pieces. Without there being an absolute necessity for it, the Abbot did not intend to mention this, keeping it carefully hidden under his habit.

Dame Hadwig took the proffered cup, feigned to drink a little and then handing it back, said: "Pardon me, dear cousin, what shall a woman do with that drinking-vessel? I claim another parting gift. Did you not speak of the wells of wisdom yesterday? Give me a Virgil out of your library!"

"Always jesting," said Sir Cralo, who had expected a more costly demand. "What good can Virgil do you, as you do not know the language?"

"As a matter of course, you must give me the teacher with it," seriously replied Dame Hadwig.

But the Abbot shook his head in sign of displeasure. "Since what time are the disciples of St. Gallus given away as parting-gifts?"

Upon this the Duchess resumed: "I suppose you understand me. The fair-haired custodian shall be my teacher; and three days hence, at the latest, he and the volume of Virgil shall make

their appearance at my castle! Mind, that the settlement of the disputed land in the Rhine-valley, as well as the confirmation of the monastery's rights, are in my hands; and that I am not disinclined to erect a small cloister to the disciples of St. Gallus, on the rocks of the Hohentwiel.—And so farewell, Sir Cousin!"

Then Sir Cralo, with a melancholy look, beckoned to the serving monk, to carry the chalice back to the treasury. Dame Hadwig gracefully extended her right hand to him, the mares pawed the ground; Master Spazzo took off his hat with a flourish,—and the little cavalcade turned their backs on the monastery, setting out on their way homewards.

From the window of the watch-tower an immense nose-gay was thrown into the midst of the parting guests, in which there shone at least half a dozen sun-flowers, not to mention innumerable asters; but nobody caught it, and the horses' hoofs passed over it.

In the dry moat outside the gate, the cloister-pupils had hidden themselves. "Long life to the Duchess of Suabia! Hail! hail!—and she must not forget to send us the Felchen!" was loudly shouted after her, as a parting salutation.

"He who, as reward for his bad behavior, obtains three holidays, and the best fish of the lake, may well shout," said Master Spazzo.

Slowly the Abbot went back to the monastery, and as soon as he got there he sent for Ekkehard the custodian.

"A dispensation has come for you. You are to take a volume of Virgil to the Duchess Hadwig, and become her teacher. 'The old song of Maro may soften the Scythian customs by their lovely tunes'—is written in Sidonius. I know that it is not your wish—" Ekkehard cast down his eyes, with a heightened color, "but we must not offend the mighty ones of this earth. To-morrow, you will set out on your journey. 'Tis with regret that I lose you, for you were one of the best and most dutiful here. The holy Gallus will not forget the service which you are rendering him. Don't omit to cut out the title-page of Virgil, on which is written the curse on him who takes the book away from the monastery."

That which our hearts desire, we gladly suffer to be put on us, as a duty.

"The vow of obedience," said Ekkehard, "obliges me to do the will of my Superior without fear or delay, without regret or murmur."

He bent his knee before the Abbot, and then went to his cell. It seemed to him as if he had been dreaming. Since yesterday almost too much had occurred for him. It is often so in life. In a long period, time pursues its monotonous way, but when once we come to a turning-point, then one change follows another. He prepared himself for the journey.

"What thou hast begun, leave unfinished behind thee; draw back thy hand from the work it was employed on, and go away with thy heart full of obedience,"—he scarcely needed to remind himself of this portion of the rules.

In his cell lay the parchment-leaves of a psalm book, which had been written, and illustrated by Folkard's masterly hand. Ekkehard had been commissioned to finish up the first letter on each page with the precious gold-color which the Abbot had lately bought from a Venetian merchant; and by adding faint golden lines at the crowns, scepters and swords, as well as at the borders of the mantles, to give the last touch to the figures.

He took up parchments and colors, and brought them over to his companion, that he might put the finishing strokes to the work himself. Folkard was just about to compose a new picture: David playing the lute, and dancing before the ark of the Covenant. He did not look up, and Ekkehard silently left the studio again.

After this he bent his steps to the library, there to fetch the Virgil, and when he stood all alone in the high-arched hall, amongst the silent parchments, a feeling of melancholy came over him. Even lifeless things, when one is about to take leave of them, seem to possess something of a soul, and to share some of the feelings which are moving our own hearts.

The books were his best friends. He knew them all, and knew who had written them. Some of the handwritings reminded him of companions whom death had gathered already.

"What will the new life, which begins to-morrow, bring to me?" he thought, whilst a solitary tear started into his eye. At that moment his gaze fell on the small, metal-bound glossary,

in which the holy Gallus, not knowing the German language, had had a translation of the most familiar words and sentences written down by the priest of Arbon. Then Ekkehard thought himself, how the founder of the monastery had once set out, with so little help and preparation, a stranger into heathen lauds; and how his God and his courageous heart had protected him in all dangers and sorrows. His spirits rose; he kissed the little book, took the Virgil from the book-shelf, and then turned to go.

"Whoever carries away this book shall receive a thousand lashes of the scourge; may palsy and leprosy attack him,"—was written on the title page. Ekkehard cut it out.

Once more he looked around, as if to take a final leave of all the books. At that moment a rustling was heard in the wall, and the large sketch which the architect Gerung had once drawn, when Abbot Hartmuth had wanted a new building to be added to the monastery, fell to the ground, raising a cloud of dust.

Ekkehard did not regard this occurrence in the light of a presentiment or warning.

On walking along the passage of the upper story he passed an open chamber. This was the snugery of the old men. The blind Thieto, who had been Abbot before Cralo, until his waning eyesight had forced him to resign, was sitting there. A window was open, so that the old man could breathe freely and enjoy the warm sunny air. With him Ekkehard had spent many an hour in friendly converse. The blind man recognized his step and called him in.

"Where are you going?" asked he.

"Down-stairs,—and to-morrow I am going far away. Give me your hand, I am going to the Hohentwiel."

"Bad,—very bad," muttered the old man.

"Why, father Thieto?"

"The service of women is an evil thing for him who wishes to remain good. Court service is worse still. What then are both together?"

"It is my fate," said Ekkehard.

"St. Gallus keep you and bless you. I will pray for you. Give me my stick."

Ekkehard offered his arm, which was refused, however, and seizing his staff the blind man rose and went to a niche in the wall, from which he took out a small phial and gave it to Ekkehard.

"It's water from the river Jordan, which I took myself. When the dust of this world has covered your face and is dimming your eyes, then bathe them with it. It will not help me any more. Farewell."

In the evening Ekkehard mounted the little hill which rose behind the monastery. This was his favorite walk. In the fish-ponds which had been artificially made there, to supply the necessary fish for the fast-days, the dark fir-trees were reflected. A gentle breeze ruffled the surface of the water, in which the fish swam briskly about. With a smile he gazed at them, thinking, "When shall I taste you again?"

In the fir-wood on the top of the Freudenberg there was solemn silence. There he stopped to enjoy the extensive view before him.

At his feet lay the monastery, with all its buildings and walls. There, in the court-yard, was the well-known fountain; the garden was full of autumnal flowers, and in one long row the windows of the many cells were presented to his view. He knew each one, and saw also his own. "May God protect thee, peaceful abode!"

Contemplating the place where we have spent the days of our eager and striving youth works like a magnet on our hearts, which require so little to feel attracted. He only is poor to whom the great bustling life of this world has not granted time, bodily and mentally, to find a resting-place—real home.

Ekkehard raised his eyes. Far away in the distance, like the fair prospect of a distant future, the Bodensee's placid surface shone out like a mirror. The line of the opposite shore, as well as the outlines of the hills behind it, were covered with a light mist, only here and there a bright light, and the reflection in the water, indicating the dwelling places of human beings.

"But what does the obscurity behind mean?" He turned round and beheld the Sântis rising with its horns and pinnacles behind the fir-clad hills. On the gray and weather-beaten rocky walls the warm sunbeams were contending with the clouds, and lighting up the masses of

old snow, which in its caves and crevices lay awaiting a new winter. Right over the Kamor hung a heavy cloud, which, widely extended, was obscuring the sun and throwing a gray and somber light on the mountain peaks around. It began to lighten in the distance.

"Is that meant as a warning for me?" said Ekkehard. "I don't understand it. My way is not towards the Sântis."

Full of thoughts, he descended to the valley again.

In the night he prayed at the grave of St. Gallus, and early in the morning he bid goodbye to all. The volume of Virgil and the little bottle of Thieto were packed up in his knapsack, which also held the few things besides that he possessed.

He, who has not even his own person, his wishes and his desires at his free disposal, can still less have any worldly possessions and goods.

The Abbott gave him two gold pieces and some silver coins, as a traveling penny.

In a ship laden with corn, he crossed the lake; a favorable wind filling the sail, and courage and the love of travel swelling his bosom.

At dinner-time the castle of Constance, as well as the cathedral with its towers, became more and more distinct.

With a joyous bound Ekkehard sprang on shore. In Constance he might have stopped and claimed the hospitality of the Bishop, but this he did not do. The place was disagreeable to him,—he hated it from the bottom of his heart. Not on account of its position and scenery, for in that respect it may be boldly compared with any town on the lake, but on account of a man whom he detested.

This was the Bishop Salomon, who had been lately buried with great pomp in the cathedral. Ekkehard was a simple-minded, straightforward and pious man. To become proud and over-bearing in the service of the church seemed very wrong to him; to combine this with worldly tricks and knavery highly blamable,—and in spite of wickedness of heart to become famous, most strange. Such however had been the Bishop Salomon's career. Ekkehard well remembered having heard from older companions, how the young nobleman had forced his way into the monastery and acted as spy; how he had managed to represent himself as indispensable to the Emperor, until the miter of an Abbot of St. Gall was exchanged for that of a Bishop of Constance.

And the fate which had befallen the messengers of the exchequer,—that was related by the children in the streets. These, the intriguing prelate had provoked and insulted so long, till they, trying to right themselves with the sword, had made him prisoner; but though Sir Erchanger's wife Berchta tended and nursed him like a Lord during his captivity, and begged him for the kiss of peace, and ate out of the same plate with him, his revenge was not appeased until the Emperor's court of law, at Aidingen, condemned his enemies to be beheaded.

And the daughter, which he had begotten in the early days of his student-life, was even then Lady Abbess at the cathedral in Zürich.

All this was known to Ekkehard; and in the church where that man was buried he did not like to pray.

It may be unjust to transfer the hatred, which is intended for a human being alone, to the actual spot where he has lived and died, but still one can understand this feeling. So he shook the dust from his feet, and walked out of the city-gate, leaving the strippling Rhine, having but just issued from the lake, on his right hand.

He cut for himself a strong walking stick from a hazel-bush. "Like unto the rod of Aaron which budded in the temple of God, distinguishing his race from that of the degenerate Jews, so may this stick, blessed by God's grace, be my protection against the evil ones on my way,"—he said in the words of an old blessing on walking-sticks.

His heart beat with pleasure as he briskly walked along.

How full of hope and joy is he who in the days of his youth goes out on unknown paths to meet an unknown future! With the wide world before him, a blue sky overhead, and the heart fresh and trusting, as if his walking-stick must produce leaves and blossoms wherever he plants it in the ground, and must bear happiness, in the shape of golden apples on its

boughs. Walk merrily on.—The day will come when thou also will drag thyself wearily along, on the dusty high roads, when thy staff will be but a dry withered stick, when thy face will be pale and worn, and the children will be pointing their fingers at thee, laughing and asking: where are the golden apples? . . .

Ekkehard was truly light-hearted and content. To sing merry songs was not becoming for a man of his calling; more fitting was the song of David, which he now began:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters"—and this may have been registered in heaven, in the same book in which the guardian angels of youth put down the merry songs of wandering scholars and apprentice boys.

His path took him through meadows and past high reeds. A long and narrow island, called Reichenau, extended itself in the lake. The towers and cloister-walls were mirrored in the placid waters, and vineyards, meadows and orchards testified to the industry of the inhabitants. About two hundred years ago the island was but a barren tract, where damp ground had been inhabited by hideous crawling things and poisonous snakes. The Austrian Governor Sintlaz, however, begged the wandering Bishop Pirminius to come over, and to pronounce a solemn blessing on the island. Then the snakes went away in great masses, headed by the scolopendras, ear-wigs and scorpions; toads and salamanders bringing up the rear. Nothing could resist the curse which the Bishop had pronounced over them. To the shore, on the spot where afterwards the castle Schopfeln was built, the swarm directed its course, and from thence they fell down into the green floods of the lake; and the fish had a good meal on that day. . . .

From that time the monastery founded by St. Pirmin thrived and flourished; a hot-bed of monastic erudition, of considerable repute in German lands.

"Reichenau, emerald isle, thou favorite child of kind nature,
Rich with the law of science, and all that is pious and goodly,
Rich in thy fruit-bearing trees, and the swelling grapes of thy vineyards;
Proudly, and fair from the waves, the lily lifts its white petals,—
So that thy praise has e'en reached the misty land of the Britons."

Thus sang the learned monk Ermenrich already in the days of Ludwig the German, when in his abbey of Ellwangen he was longing for the glittering waters of the Bodensee.

Ekkehard resolved to pay a visit to this rival of his monastery. On the white sandy shore of Ermatingen a fisherman was standing in his boat, baling out water. Then Ekkehard pointing with his staff towards the island, said, "Ferry me over there, my good friend."

The monk's habit in those days generally gave weight to all demands, but the fisherman crossly shook his head and said: "I will not take any more of you over, since you fined me a shilling at the last session-day."

"Why did they fine you?"
"On account of the Kretzmann!"
"And who is the Kretzmann?"
"The Allmann."

"He likewise is unknown to me," said Ekkehard. "What is he like?"

"He is made of metal," grumbled the fisherman, "two spans high, and holds three water-lilies in his hand. He was standing in the old willow-tree at Allmannsdorf, and it was good that he stood there; but at the last session they took him out of the tree and carried him into their cloister. So now he stands on that Italian bishops' grave at Niedertzell. What good does he do there?—Does he help dead Saints to catch fish?"

Then Ekkehard perceived that the fisherman's Christian faith was as yet not very strong; and also why the bronze idol had cost him a shilling's fine. He had sacrificed a kid to him at night-time, in order that his nets might be well filled with felchen, trout and perch; and the authorities had punished these heathenish memories, according to the imperial laws.

"Be sensible, my good fellow," said Ekkehard, "and try to forget the Allmann. I will restore you a good part of your shilling if you will row me over."

"What I say," replied the old man, "shall not be turned round like a ring on a finger. I will take none of you. My boy may do it if he likes."

He then whistled through his fingers, which brought his boy, a tall boatman, who undertook to row him over.

When Ekkehard landed he directed his steps towards the monastery, which, hidden between fruit-trees and vine-clad hills, stands in the middle of the island.

The autumn was already advanced, and both old and young were occupied with the vintage. Here and there the hood of a serving brother stood out in dark contrast to the red and yellow vine leaves. On the watch-tower the fathers of the monastery stood assembled in groups, looking down and taking pleasure in the busy crowd of grape-gatherers below. In a large marble vase, which was believed to be one of the identical vessels used at the marriage at Cana, the new wine had been carried about in the procession to receive the blessing. Merry shouts and singing were heard from all sides.

Unobserved Ekkehard reached the monastery, and when he was but a few steps from it he perceived the heavy tower with its vestibule, the arches of which are ornamented alternately with red and gray sand-stone.

In the court all was bushed and silent. A large dog wagged its tail at the stranger, without giving a single growl, for it knew better than to bark at a monk's habit. All the brotherhood seemed to have been enticed into the open air by the beautiful weather.

Ekkehard now entered the vaulted room for visitors, near the entrance. Even the door-keeper's chamber next to it was empty. Open tuns were standing about; some filled already with the newly pressed wine. Behind these, near the wall, was a stone bench, and Ekkehard feeling tired from his long walk, the fresh breeze having blown about his head and made him sleepy, he put his staff against the wall, lay down on the bench, and soon fell asleep.

As he lay thus, a slow step approached the cool recess. This was the worthy brother Rudimann, the cellarer. He carried a small stone jug in his right hand, and had come to fulfill his duty by tasting the new wine. The smile of a man, contented with himself and with the world, was on his lips; and his belly had thriven well, like the household of an industrious man. Over this he wore a white apron, and at his side dangled a ponderous bunch of keys.

"As cellarer shall be chosen some wise man of ripe judgment, sober, and no glutton; no quarrelor or fault-finder, no idler and no spend-thrift; but a pious man, who will be to the whole neighborhood like a father,"—and as far as the weakness of the flesh allowed this, Rudimann strove to unite in himself the above-mentioned qualities. At the same time he had to perform the unpleasant duty of carrying out the punishments, and whenever one of the brothers became liable to a flogging, he tied him to the pillar, and nobody could then complain of the weakness of his arm. That he, besides this, sometimes uttered malicious speeches with a malicious tongue, and tried to entertain the Abbot with insinuations against his fellow-monks,—like the squirrel Ratatöskr of the Edda, which ran up and down the ash-tree called Yggdrasil, and repeated the eagle's angry speeches at the top of the tree, to Nidhögre the dragon at the bottom,—this was none of his business; and he did it of his own free will.

To day, however, he wore a very benign and mild expression, the result of the excellent vintage; and he dipped his drinking vessel into an open vat, held it towards the window and then slowly sipped its contents, without once observing the sleeping guest.

"This also is sweet," said he, "though it comes from the northern side of the hill. Praised be the Lord; who taking the position and wants of his servants on this island, into due consideration, has given a fat year after so many meager ones."

Meanwhile Kerhildis, the upper maid-servant, passed the door, carrying a tub full of grapes to the press.

"Kerhildis," whispered the cellarer, "most trustworthy of all maids, take my jug, and fill it with wine from the Wartberg, which you will find over there, that I may compare it with this one."

Kerhildis put down her load, went away, and speedily returning, stood before Rudimann with the jug in her hand. Archly looking up at him, for he was a head taller than she was, she said: "To your health."

Rudimann took a long pious draught, as a

taste, so that the new wine ran down his throat, with a low melodious gurgle.

"It will all be sweet and good," said he, lifting his eyes with emotion, and that they then fell on the maid-servant's beaming countenance,—was scarcely the cellarer's fault, as she had had plenty of time in which to retire.

So he continued with unction: "But when I look at thee, Kerhildis, my heart becomes doubly glad, for you also thrive as the cloister-wine does this autumn, and your cheeks are like the pomegranates, waiting to be plucked. Rejoice with me, over the goodness of this wine, best of all maids."

So saying, the cellarer put his arm round the waist of the dark-eyed maid, who did not resist very long; for what is a kiss at vintage-time?—and besides she knew Rudimann to be a man of sober character, who did everything in moderation, as it befitted a cellarer.

The sleeper started up from his slumbers on the stone bench. A peculiar noise, which could be caused by nothing else but by a well-meant and well-applied kiss, struck his ear; and looking through the opening between the vats, he saw the cellarer's garments covered with flowing tresses, which could not well belong to that habit. Up he sprang, for Ekkehard was young and zealous, and moreover accustomed to the strict discipline of St. Gall. The idea that a man in the holy garb of the order could kiss a woman had never struck him as possible before.

Snatching up his strong hazel-wand, he quickly advanced, and with it struck a powerful blow at the cellarer, which extended from the right shoulder to the left hip, and which fitted like a coat made according to measure,—and before the astonished Rudimann had recovered from the first shock, there followed a second and third blow of the same description. He dropped his pitcher, which was shattered to pieces on the stone floor, whilst Kerhildis fled.

"In the name of the pitcher at the marriage at Cana!" cried Rudimann, "what is the meaning of this!" and turning round on his assailant, the two looked into each other's faces for the first time.

"'Tis a present which the holy Gallus sends to St. Pirmin," replied Ekkehard fiercely, again raising his stick.

"Well, I might have guessed as much," roared the cellarer, "St. Gallish crab-apples! You may be recognized by your fruits. Rough ground, rough faith, and rougher people! Just wait for the present I shall make thee in return!"

Looking about for some weapon, and perceiving a good-sized broom, he took it up, and was just about to attack the disturber of his peace, when a commanding voice called out from the gate:

"Stop! Peace be with you!"—and a second voice with a foreign accent exclaimed: "What Holofernes has sprung out of the ground here?"

It was the Abbot Wazmann, who with his friend Simon Bardo, the former Protospathar of the Greek Emperor, was returning from blessing the new wine. The noise of the quarrel had interrupted a very learned discussion of the Greek, on the siege of the town of Haf by Joshua; and the strategic mistakes of the king of Haf, when he went out at the head of his army, towards the desert. The old Greek commander who had left his home, not to lose his strength of body and mind, in the peaceful state of Byzantium, employed himself very zealously with the study of tactics, in his leisure hours; and he was jestingly called "the Captain of Capernaum," although he had adopted the garb of the Order.

"Make room for the fight," cried Simon Bardo, who had witnessed with regret the interruption of the combat by the Abbot. "In my dreams last night I saw a rain of fiery sparks. That means fighting."

But the Abbot, in whose eyes the self-assumed power of younger brothers was most obnoxious, commanded peace, and desired to hear the case before him, that he might settle it.

Then Rudimann began his tale, and kept back nothing. "A slight misbehavior," murmured the Abbot. "Chapter forty-six, of misbehavior during work-time, whilst gardening or fishing, in the kitchen or cellar. Allemannic law, of that which is done to maids, . . . let the antagonist speak."

Then Ekkehard also told what he had witnessed; and how he had acted on the impulse of a just and righteous indignation.

"This is complicated," murmured the Ab-

bot. "Chapter seventy: no brother shall dare to strike a fellow-brother, without the Abbot's sanction. Chapter seventy-two: of that which is becoming in a monk; and which leads to eternal felicity. . . . How old are you?"

"Twenty-three."

Then the Abbot seriously resumed. "The quarrel is ended. Your brother cellarer may look on the received blows, as the just retribution, for your forgetfulness; and you, stranger, I might well bid to continue your journey, for the laws say: 'Whenever a stranger-monk enters a monastery, he shall be satisfied with everything he meets there, allowing himself only to reprove mildly, and not making himself officious in any way.' In consideration of your youth, however, as well as the blameless motive of your action, you shall be allowed to pass an hour's devotion at the chief-altar of our church, in expiation of your rashness, and after that you will be welcome as the guest of the monastery."

The Abbot and his sentence fared as many an impartial judge has fared before. Neither of the two were satisfied. They obeyed, but they were not reconciled. When Ekkehard was performing his expiatory prayers, many thoughts and reflections on timely zeal, good will and other people's judgment thereon, crossed his mind. It was one of the first lessons he learned from contact with other men. He returned to the monastery by a little side door.

What Kerhildis, the upper-maid, related that evening to her companions, in the sewing-room at Oberzell, where they had to make a dozen new monks' habits, by the flickering light of the pine-wood, was couched in such very insulting terms, regarding the disciples of the holy Gallus, that it had better not be repeated here! . . .

CHAPTER VI.

MOENGAL.

WHILE Ekkehard was performing his compulsory devotions, in the church at Reichenau, Dame Hadwig had stood on the balcony, looking out into the distance;—but not on account of the setting sun, for the sun went to his rest at her back, behind the dark hills of the black-forest, and Dame Hadwig looked with eager, expectant eyes towards the lake, and the path which led from it up to Hohentwiel. The view, however, did not appear to satisfy her, for when the twilight melted into darkness, she went in, rather discontentedly; ordered her chamberlain to come, and conversed a long time with him.

Early the next morning Ekkehard stood at the threshold of the cloister, ready to continue his journey. The Abbot was also up betimes, and was taking a walk in the garden. The serious look of the judge was no longer visible on his face. Ekkehard said good-bye to him. Then the Abbot, with a meaning smile, whispered in his ear: "Happy man, who has to teach grammar to such a fair pupil."—These words stabbed Ekkehard to the heart. An old story rose in his memory; for even within cloister walls there are evil, gossiping tongues, and traditional stories which go round, from mouth to mouth.

"You are probably thinking of the time," replied he, tauntingly, "when you were instructing the nun Clotildis in the act of dialectis, Sir Abbot."

After this he went down to the boat. The Abbot would much rather have taken a quantity of pepper for his breakfast, than have had that fact called up to his mind. "A happy journey!" he called out after his departing guest.

From that time Ekkehard had drawn down on himself the enmity of the monks at Reichenau. This, however, he little heeded; and was rowed down the lake, by the same boatman of Ermatingen.

Dreamily he gazed about from his boat. Over the lake transparent white mists were floating, through which the little belfry of Egina's cloister, Niederzell, peeped out on the left, while on the other side the island stretched out its farthest points. A large stone-built castle could be seen through the willow-bushes, but Ekkehard's eyes were riveted on a more distant point. Proud and grand, in steep, bold outlines, a rocky mountain-peak rose above the hills on the shore, like to a mighty spirit, which, ponderous and pregnant with action, towers over the insignificant objects around. The

morning sun was casting faint gleams of light on the rocky edges and steep walls. A little to the right, several lower hills of the same shape stood modestly there, like sentinels of the mighty one.

"The Hohentwiel," said the boatman to Ekkehard. The latter had never before beheld the place of his destination; but he did not need the boatman's information. Inwardly thinking, "thus must the mountain be which she has chosen for her residence."

A deep, earnest expression overspread his features. Mountain-ranges, extensive plains, water and sky, in fact all that is grand and beautiful in nature always produces seriousness. Only the actions of men sometimes bring a smile to the lips of the looker-on. He was thinking of the apostle John, who had gone to the rocky isle of Patmos, and who had there met with a revelation.

The boatman rowed steadily onwards; and they had already come to the projecting neck of land on which Radolfszell and a few scattered houses were situated, when they suddenly came in view of a strange little canoe. It was simply made of the rough, hollow trunk of a tree; roofed over and quite covered up with green boughs and water-rushes, so that the rower inside was invisible. The wind drifted it towards a thick plantation of water-reeds and bulrushes near the shore.

Ekkehard ordered his ferryman to stop this curious little boat, and in obedience he pushed his oar into the green covering.

"Ill luck befall you!" called out a deep bass voice from the inside, "*oleum et operam perdidit*, all my labor lost!—Wild geese and water-ducks are gone to the Devil!"

A covey of water-fowl, which hoarsely shrieking rose up from the rushes, corroborated the truth of this exclamation.

After this, the leafy boughs were pushed aside, and a brown weather-beaten and deeply furrowed countenance peeped out. The man it belonged to was clothed in an old faded priest's robe, which, cut off at the knees by an unskilled hand, hung down in a ragged fringe. At his girdle the owner of the boat wore, instead of a rosary, a quiver full of arrows; whilst the strung bow lay at the head of the boat.

The individual just described was about to repeat his cursing, when he beheld Ekkehard's tonsure and Benedictine garment, and quickly changing his tone, he cried: "*Ohio! salve confrater!* By the beard of St. Patrick of Armagh! If your curiosity had left me unmolested another quarter of an hour, I might have invited you to a goodly repast of the game of our lake." With a melancholy expression he cast a look at the covey of wild ducks in the distance.

Ekkehard smilingly lifted his fore-finger: "*Ne clericus venationi incumbat!* No consecrated servant of God shall be a sportsman!"

"Your book-wisdom does not do for us at the Untersee," called out the other. "Are you sent hither perhaps, to hold a church examination with the parish-priest of Radolfszell?"

"The parish-priest of Radolfszell?" inquired Ekkehard in his turn. "Do I verily see the brother Marcellus?" He cast a side-look on the sportsman's right arm, from which the sleeve was turned back, and there beheld, etched into the flesh, in rough outlines, a picture of our Saviour, encircled by a serpent, over which stood the words, "*Christus vincit.*"

"Brother Marcellus?" laughed the other, pushing his hair back from his forehead, "*fuimus Troes!* welcome in Moengal's realm!"

He stepped out of the canoe into Ekkehard's boat, and kissing him on cheek and forehead he said: "Health to the holy Gallus! And now we will land together, and you shall be my guest, even without the wild ducks."

"Of yourself I had conceived a very different idea," said Ekkehard, and this was not to be wondered at.

Nothing gives a more erroneous idea of persons, than when we come to the places where they once lived and worked, there to see fragmentary bits of their activity; and from the remarks of those left behind, to form in ourselves an impression of those that are gone. The deepest and most peculiar part of the character of a man is frequently unnoticed by others; even though it be open to the day; and in tradition it disappears entirely.

When Ekkehard had joined the monastery, the brother Marcellus had already left it, to assume the priest's office at Radolfszell. Some neatly written manuscripts, such as Cicero's book on duty, and a Latin Priscianus with

Irish characters between the lines, still kept up the remembrance of him. His name too was held in great veneration in the inner cloister-school, where he had been one of the most distinguished teachers. Besides this, he had led a blameless life, but since that time nothing had been heard of him at St. Gall. For these reasons, instead of the lively sportsman, Ekkehard had expected to find a serious, meager and pale-faced scholar.

The shores of Radolfszell were soon reached. A thin silver coin, stamped on one side only, satisfied the boatman, and then the two stepped on shore. A few houses and a handful of fishermen's huts surrounded the little church, which holds the remains of St. Radolf.

"We have reached Moengal's dwelling," said the old man. "Be pleased to enter. It's to be hoped that you will not carry tales about my house, to the Bishop of Constance, like the deacon of Rheingau, who pretended that he found the jugs and drinking-horns of a size which ought to have been objectionable, in any century."

They entered into a wainscoted hall. Stag-antlers and bison-horns hung over the entrance; while spears and fishing-tackle of every description ornamented the walls in picturesque confusion. Close to a reversed tun in one corner stood a dice-box,—in fact, if it had not been the abode of the parish priest, it might have been that of an imperial game-keeper.

A few moments later a jug of somewhat sour wine, as well as a loaf of bread and some butter, were placed on the oak table; and when the priest returned from an expedition to the kitchen, he held up his habit like a filled apron, and poured down a shower of smoked fish before his guest.

"*Hec quod anseres fugasti, antvogelasque et horotumbum!* Alas that you should have frightened away the wild geese, as well as the ducks and moor-fowls!" said he, "but when a person has to choose between smoked fish and nothing, he always chooses the former."

Members of the same fraternity are quickly at their ease with each other; and a lively conversation was kept up during the meal. But the old man had far more questions to put than Ekkehard could well answer. Of many a one of his former brothers, nothing else was to be told but that his coffin had been laid in the vault, side by side with the others; a cross on the wall, besides an entry in the death-register, being the sole traces left that he had ever lived. The stories, jokes and quarrels, which had been told, thirty years ago, had been replaced by new ones, and all that had happened lately did not interest him much. Only when Ekkehard told him about the end and aim of his journey he exclaimed: "*Oho confrater!* how could you cry out against all sport, when you yourself aim at such noble deer!"

But Ekkehard turned the subject, by asking him: "Have you never felt any longing for the quiet and study within the cloister-walls?"

At that question the parish-priest's eyes lighted up; "Did Catilina ever feel any longing for the wooden benches of the senate, after they had said to him: *excessit, evasit, erupit!*—Young men like you cannot understand that. The flesh-pots of Egypt? *ille terrarum mihi praeter omnes* . . . said the dog to the kennel, in which he had lain seven years."

"No, I certainly do not understand you," replied Ekkehard. "What was it that created such a change in your views?" casting a look at the sportsman's implements which were lying about.

"Time," replied the priest, beating his fish on the table to make them tender, "time and growing experience. But this you need not repeat to your Abbot. I also was once such a man as you are now, for Ireland produces pious people, as is well known here. *Eheu*, what a different being I was when I returned with my Uncle Marcus from our pilgrimage to Rome. You should have seen the young Moengal then! The whole world was not worth a herring to him, whilst psalm-singing, vigils, and spiritual exercises were his heart's delight. Thus we entered the monastery of St. Gallus—for in honor of a countryman, an honest Hibernian does not mind going a few miles out of his way,—and finally I stopped there altogether. Outward property, books, money and knowledge,—the whole man became the monastery's own, and the Irish Moengal was called Marcellus, and threw his uncle's silver and golden coins out of the window; thus to break down the bridge leading back to the world. They

were fine times, I tell you; praying, fasting, and studying, to my heart's content."

"But then, too much sitting is unhealthy, and much knowledge gives one a quantity of superfluous work to do. Many an evening I have meditated like a bookworm and disputed like a magpie, for there was nothing which could not be proved. Where the head of St. John the Baptist was buried, and in what language the serpent had spoken to Adam,—all was investigated and demonstrated, while such ideas, as that human beings had also received flesh and blood from their Creator, never entered my head. Ohone, confrater, then there came evil hours for me, such as I hope may be spared you. The head grew heavy, and the hands restless. Neither at the writing-desk nor in the church could I find rest or peace; hence, hence was the inward cry of my heart. I once said to the old Thieto, that I had made a discovery. What discovery, quoth he? That outside the cloister-walls there was fresh air. . . Then they forbade me to go out; but many a night did I steal up to the belfry, to look out and envy the bats that could fly over into the pine-woods. . . Confrater, that cannot be cured by fasting and prayer, for that which is in human nature must come out."

"The late Abbot at last took pity on me, and sent me here for one year; but the Brother Marcellus never returned. When I cut down a pine-tree in the sweat of my brow, and made myself a boat out of it, and struck down the bird flying in the air, then I began to understand what it meant to be healthy. Hunting and fishing drive away morbid fancies. In this way I have performed the priest's duties at Radolfzell for thirty years, *rusticitate quadam imbutus*,—liable to become a rustic, but what does it matter? 'I am like the pelican in the wilderness, and, like the owl, I have built my nest amidst ruins,' says the psalmist, but I am fresh and strong, and old Moengal does not intend to become a dead man so soon, and he knows that he is at least secure against *one* evil. . ."

"And that is?" inquired Ekkehard.

"That St. Peter will not one day give me a blow on the forehead with the blessed key of heaven, saying, 'Off with you, who have meddled with vain and useless philosophy!'"

Ekkehard did not reply to Moengal's outpourings. "I suppose," said he, "that you have often hard work with your ecclesiastical duties. Hardened hearts, heathendom, and heresy."

"'Tis not so bad as they make it out to be," said the old man. "To be sure in the mouths of Bishops and Chamberlains and in the reports of the session and the synod, it seems terrifying enough, when they describe the heathenish idolatry, and threaten it with punishment. Here we have simply the old faith; tracing the Godhead, in tree and river and on mountain-heights. Everybody in this world must have his book of revelations, his apocalypse. Now the people hereabouts have theirs in the open air; and really, one is capable of high and holy thoughts, when early in the morning one stands in the water-reeds and sees the glorious sun arise. Nevertheless they come to me, on the Lord's day, and chant the mass; and if they were not fined so often, they would open their hearts to the Gospel far more readily still. A bumper, confrater, to the fresh air!"

"Allow me," said Ekkehard, "I will drink to the health of Marcellus the teacher at the cloister-school, and the learned author of the Irish translation of Priscianus."

"Very well," laughed Moengal. "But with regard to the Irish translation, I am afraid that there is a hitch in the matter!"*

Ekkehard was very anxious to reach his destination, for anybody who is close to the end of his journey is loth to tarry long. "The mountain stands fast enough," said Moengal, "that won't run away, you may be sure."

But Moengal's wine, and his ideas of fresh air, had nothing very tempting for him, who was about to go to a Duchess. So he rose from his seat.

"I will accompany you to the borders of my

* This it had, surely enough: for when lately a learned son of the emerald isle paid a visit to the library of St. Gallus, there to inspect the work of his pious countryman, he soon burst into a merry laugh, and then the Rector of Dublin translated some of the Irish comments as follows:

"God be thanked that it is getting dark!" "St. Patrick of Armagh, release me from this book-writing." "Oh, that I had a glass of good old wine beside me," etc.

district," said the priest, "for to-day you may still walk by my side, in spite of my torn and faded garments; but when you are once settled down on yonder mountain you will believe yourself transfigured, and that you have become a grand lord; and on the day that you will pass Radolfzell on horseback, and will behold old Moengal standing on the threshold, then perhaps, you will hardly deign to wave your hand to him—that is the way of the world. When the 'heuerling' has become big, then it is called 'felchen,' and devours the small ones of its own race."

"It is not fair that you should speak thus," said Ekkehard, kissing his Irish brother.

Then they set out together, Moengal taking his lime-twigs with him, therewith to ensnare birds on his return. It was a long distance through the pine-wood, and no sound was stirring.

Where the trees were less crowded together, they could see the dark mass of the Hohentwiel, throwing its shadow over them. Moengal's sharp eyes now looked searchingly along the path, and shaking his head he muttered: there's something coming."

They had proceeded a short way when Moengal seized his companion's arm, and pointing forward, he said: "these are neither wild ducks nor animals of the forest!"

At the same moment was heard a sound like the neighing of a horse in the distance. Moengal sprang aside, glided through the trees, and lying down on the ground listened intently.

"Sportsman's folly," muttered Ekkehard to himself, quietly waiting till Moengal came back and inquired: "brother, do you know whether St. Gallus is at war with any of the mighty ones in the land?"

"No."

"Then may be that you have offended some one?"

"No."

"Strange," said the old man, "for three armed men are coming towards us."

"Most likely they are messengers sent by the Duchess to receive me," said Ekkehard, with a proud smile.

"Oho!" muttered Moengal, "you've not hit the mark there. That is not the livery of the Duchess's vassals. The helmet has no distinguishing mark, and no one on the Hohentwiel wears a gray mantle!"

He stood still now.

"Forwards," said Ekkehard. "He whose conscience is clear is protected by the angels of the Lord."

"Not always, at least in the Hegau," replied the old man. There was no time for continuing the dialogue, for the tramp of horses' feet and the clattering of arms were heard, and the next moment three men on horseback, with closed visors and drawn swords, became visible.

"Follow me!" cried the priest, "*maturate fugam!*" He threw his lime-twigs on the ground, and tried to drag Ekkehard along with him, but when he resisted, Moengal sprang into the bushes alone. The thorns added new rents to the old ones in his well-worn garments, but this he heeded not, and tearing himself free, he escaped into the thicket, with the agility of a squirrel. He knew the tricks!

"It is he!" called out one of the riders; upon which the others jumped out of their saddles. Ekkehard stood proudly waiting for them. "What do you want?"—no answer. Then he seized the crucifix suspended from his girdle, and was just beginning with "in the name of our Saviour. . ." when he was already thrown on the ground. Rough, strong hands held him as in a vise; a cord was twisted round his arms, which were then tied behind his back; a white handkerchief bound over his eyes, so that he could see nothing, and then the command "forwards" was given.

Surprise and consternation at this strange treatment had quite paralyzed him, so that he advanced with tottering steps, upon which they took him up and carried him to the opening of the wood, where four men were waiting with a sedan-chair.

Into this they threw their victim, and then the train sped onwards; Ekkehard noticing by the tramp of the horses' feet that his captors remained at his side.

Whilst Moengal was fleeing through the wood, the blackbirds and linnets flew about so confidently from bough to bough, and the thrushes' clear notes sounded so tempting, that he forgot all danger, and his heart unbroidered him for having dropped the lime-twigs.

When even the quail now sang out its "Quakkera! quakkera!"—it sounded downright provoking, and he turned his steps back towards the spot where he had left his companion. Everything was quiet there, as if nothing had happened. In the distance he could see the sun shining on the helmets of the departing knights.

"Many that are first shall be last," said he, shaking his head, and bending down to pick up the lime twigs. "He expected to go to a princess's castle, and a prison opens to receive him. Holy Gallus, pray for us!"

Further reflections did not trouble Moengal's brains. Such deeds of violence were as plentiful as primroses in spring-time.

Once a fish swam about in the Bodeusee, and could not understand what the cormorant meant by coming down on it, and the black diver had already got it in its beak, and flew away with it, and the fish could still not understand it.

So it was with Ekkehard, lying with tied hands in the sedan-chair; for the more he reflected about this sudden change in his fate, the less could he comprehend it.

Now the idea rose dimly within him, that some friend or relation of those messengers of the exchequer might live in the Hague, and revenge their death, on the innocent disciple of St. Gallus; for Solomon, who had occasioned their shameful execution, had once been Abbot of St. Gall. In that case, Ekkehard had to prepare himself for the worst; as he well knew that neither tonsure nor monk's habit would be any protection against having his eyes burned out, or hands cut off, if it was a question of revenge.

He thought of dying. With his conscience he was at peace, and death itself had no terror for him; but yet in his heart there arose the faint murmur; "why not a year later, after my foot had been set on the Hohentwiel?"

Now his bearers were moving more slowly, as they were walking up-hill. Into which of their robbers' nests were they carrying him? They had ascended for about half an hour, when the tramp of the horses' feet made a hollow sound, as if they were going over a wooden bridge. Still everything was quiet; there was no call even of the watchman on the tower. The decisive moment was close at hand, and Ekkehard now felt new courage and confidence rising within his heart, as he remembered the words of the psalmist:

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

"I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust."

Another bridge was crossed, then a gate opened, and the sedan-chair was put down; after which they took out their prisoner. His foot touched the ground; he felt grass, and heard a faint whispering, as if there were many people around him. At the same time the cords were loosened.

"Take away the bandage from your eyes," said one of his companions. He obeyed, and—oh heart, do not break with too much happiness!—he stood in the courtyard on the Hohentwiel.

The wind was rustling in the boughs of the old linden-tree, to which a tent-like linen cloth was fastened, from which garlands of ivy and vine-leaves were hanging. All the inhabitants of the fortress were assembled, and on a stone bench in the midst sat the Duchess. From her shoulders the princely mantle of dark purple descended in heavy folds; a sweet smile softened her haughty features, and now the stately figure rose and advanced towards Ekkehard.

"Welcome to Hadwig's domains!"

Ekkehard had as yet scarcely realized his position. He was about to kneel down before her, but she prevented him by graciously extending her hand to him. Throwing aside his gray mantle, the chamberlain Spazzo, now likewise came forward, and embraced Ekkehard like an old friend.

"In the name of our gracious mistress, please to receive the kiss of peace."

A faint suspicion that he was being played with crossed Ekkehard's mind; but the Duchess now called out laughingly: "You have been paid in your own coin. As you did not allow the Duchess of Suabia to cross the threshold of St. Gallus otherwise, it was—but fair that she also should have the man of St. Gall carried through the gateway into her castle."

Master Spazzo again shook hands with him, and said: "I hope you're not angry; we were

but acting up to our mistress's commands!"—He had first headed the attack, and was now helping to welcome Ekkehard, doing both with the same pompous air, for a chamberlain must be flexible, and even know how to reconcile contradictions.

Ekkehard smiled. "For a mere jest, you have acted your part very seriously." He remembered how one of the riders had given him a good thrust between the ribs with the butt-end of his lance, when they threw him into the sedan-chair. This had certainly not been the Duchess's order; but the lancer had once been present when Luitfried, the nephew of one of the exchequer's messengers, had thrown down the Bishop Solomon; and from that time had kept the erroneous notion, that a good blow or kick was absolutely necessary to throw down anybody belonging to the church.

Dame Hadwig now took her guest by the hand and showed him her airy castle, with its beautiful view of the Bodensee, and the distant mountain peaks. Then all the people belonging to the castle came and asked for his blessing; amongst them also the lancers; and he blessed them all.—

The Duchess accompanied him to the entrance of his chamber, where new clothes and other comforts awaited him; there she told him to rest himself from the fatigues of the journey; and Ekkehard felt happy and light-hearted after his strange adventure.

The following night it occurred in the monastery of St. Gall that Romeias, the gate-keeper, without any reason started up from his couch, and fiercely blew his horn; so that the dogs barked loudly, and everybody awoke. Yet there was no one asking admittance. The Abbot concluded that it was the doing of evil spirits; but at the same time ordered Romeias's evening drink to be reduced to one-half, for six days;—a measure which was based, however, on very wrong suppositions.

CHAPTER VII.

VIRGILIUS ON THE HOHENTWIEL.

AFTER one has got over the trouble and fatigue of a migration to a new residence, it is very pleasant work to make everything around cozy and comfortable.

No one ought to think it a matter of indifference in what place he lives, and what his surroundings are. He whose windows, for instance, look out on a high-way, where carts and carriages are constantly passing, and on which stones are being ground to pieces, is certainly oftener visited by gray, dusty thoughts, than by gay many-colored fancies.

With regard to situation, Ekkehard might well be contented; for the ducal castle on the Hohentwiel was high, airy and lonely enough;—but still he was not quite satisfied, when on the day after his arrival, Dame Hadwig showed him his domicile.

It was a spacious chamber, with arched windows supported on pillars, and was entered by the same passage which also led to the Duchess's hall and chambers. Now the impressions which a man takes with him, from his lonely cloister-cell, are not to be shaken off in one single night, and Ekkehard reflected how often he might be disturbed in his meditations, if the tread of armor-clad men, or the softer footsteps of serving-maids, were to pass his door; where he might even hear the mistress of the castle, passing up and down, in her chambers. So he simply addressed himself to the Duchess, saying: "I have a favor to ask of you, my liege lady."

"Speak," said she mildly.

"Could you not give me besides this grand room, a more distant and solitary little chamber, no matter whether it be high up under the roof, or in one of the watch-towers? One great requirement for the study of science, as well as the exercise of prayer, is perfect quiet, according to the rules of the cloister!"

On hearing this, a slight frown overshadowed Dame Hadwig's fair brow. It was not a cloud,—only a cloudlet. "If you wish to be often quiet alone," said she with a satirical smile, "why did you not stay at St. Gall?"

Ekkehard bowed his head and remained silent.

"Stay," cried Dame Hadwig, "your wish shall be fulfilled. You can look at the room in which Vincentius, our chaplain, lived till his blessed end. He also had the taste of a bird of prey, and preferred being the highest on the

Hohentwiel, to being the most comfortable. Praxedis, get the large bunch of keys and accompany our guest."

Praxedis obeyed. The chamber of the late chaplain was high in the square tower of the castle. Slowly she ascended the winding staircase, followed by Ekkehard. The key grated in the long unused lock, and creaking on its hinges the heavy door swung back. They entered,—but what a sight was before them!

Where a learned man has lived, it takes some time to destroy all traces of him. The room in question, of moderate size and with white-washed walls, contained but little furniture; dust and cobwebs covering everything. On the oak table in the middle stood a small pot, that had once served as an inkstand, but the ink had long been dried up. In one corner stood a stone jug, which in former times had probably held the sparkling wine. On a rough book-shelf were some books, and close by, some open parchments;—but oh misery!—a storm had broken the little window; so Vincentius's room, after his death, had been open to sunshine and rain, to insects and birds. A flock of pigeons taking undisputed possession, had snugly settled down, among all the book-wisdom. On the epistles of St. Paul and Julius Cæsar's Gallic wars they had built their nests, and now looked with surprise at the intruders.

Opposite the door was written with charcoal on the wall: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things."—Ekkehard read it and then asked his lovely guide, "Was that the late chaplain's last will?"

Praxedis laughed merrily. "He was a pleasant and peace-loving man, the late Master Vincentius. 'Comfort and rest are better than many a pound of silver,' was what he often said. But my lady the Duchess, worried him a good deal with her questions; one day she was wanting to know about the stars; the next about herbs and medicine; the day after, about the Holy Bible and the traditions of the church. 'What have you studied for, if you cannot tell me anything?'—she would say, and Master Vincentius's patience was often sorely tried."

Praxedis pouted archly to her forehead. "In the middle of Asia," he often replied, "there is a black marble stone; and he who can lift it knows everything and need not ask any more questions." He was from Bavaria, Master Vincentius, and I suppose that he wrote down the quotation from Scripture to console himself.

"Does the Duchess ask so many questions?" said Ekkehard absently.

"That you will soon find out for yourself," replied Praxedis.

Ekkehard examined the books on the shelves. "I am sorry for the pigeons, but they will have to go."

"Why?"

"They have spoilt the whole of the first book on the Gallic wars; and the epistle to the Corinthians is hopelessly and irreparably damaged."

"Is that a great loss?" asked Praxedis.

"A very great loss!"

"Oh, you naughty doves," said Praxedis jestingly. "Come to me, before yonder pious man drives you out, amongst the hawks and falcons," and she called the birds which had quietly remained in their niche; and when they did not come, she threw a ball of white worsted on the table; the male dove flew towards it, believing that it were a new dove. With stately steps he approached the white ball, greeting it with a gentle cooing; and when Praxedis snatched it up, the bird flew on her head.

Then she began to sing softly a Greek melody. It was the song of the old, yet ever young singer of Teus.

"Tell me, thou pretty birdie,
Tell me, from whence thou comest,
And whence the balmy fragrance
Which from thy snowy pinions
Drips down upon the meadow;
Who art thou? and what wilt thou?"

Ekkehard started up with surprise from the codex, in which he was reading, and threw an almost frightened look on the young girl. If his eye had been more accustomed to see natural grace and beauty, it would probably have rested somewhat longer on the Greek maid. The dove had hopped upon her hand, and she lifted it up with a bended arm. Anacreon's old countryman, who out of a block of Parian marble created the Venus of Knidos, would

have fixed the picture in his memory, if he had witnessed it.

"What are you singing?" asked Ekkehard; "it sounds like a foreign language."

"Why should it not be foreign?"

"Greek—?"

"And why should I not sing Greek," pertly rejoined Praxedis.

"By the lyre of Homer," exclaimed Ekkehard, full of surprise, "where in the name of wonder did you learn that; the highest aim of our scholars?"

"At home," quietly replied Praxedis.

Ekkehard cast another look, full of shy respect and admiration, at her. While reading Aristotle and Plato he had hardly remembered that any living persons still spoke the Greek tongue. The idea now dawned upon him that something was here embodied before him, that in spite of all his spiritual and worldly wisdom was beyond his reach and understanding.

"I thought I had come as a teacher to the Hohentwiel," said he almost humbly, "and I find my master here. Would you not now and then deign to bestow a grain of your mother-tongue on me?"

"On condition that you will not drive away the doves," replied Praxedis. "You can easily have a grating put up before the niche, so that they do not fly about your head."

"For the sake of pure Greek—" Ekkehard was beginning to say, when the door opened, and the sharp voice of Dame Hadwig was heard.

"What are you talking here about doves and pure Greek? Does it take so much time to look at four walls?—Well, Master Ekkehard, does the den suit your taste?"

—He bowed in the affirmative.

"Then it shall be cleaned and put in order," continued Dame Hadwig. "Be quick, Praxedis, and see about it,—and to begin with, let us drive away these doves!"

Ekkehard ventured to put in a word on their behalf.

"Indeed!" said the Duchess, "you desire to be alone, and yet wish to keep doves! Shall we perhaps hang a lute on the wall, and strew rose-leaves into your wine? Well, they shall not be driven out; but they shall appear roasted on our supper-table this evening."

Praxedis appeared as if she heard nothing of all this.

"And what was that about the pure Greek?" inquired the Duchess. And Ekkehard simply told her the favor he had asked of Praxedis. Upon this the frown returned to Dame Hadwig's forehead. "If you are so very anxious to learn," said she, "you can ask me; for I also speak that language." Ekkehard made no objection, for in her speech there was a certain sharpness which cut off all replies. The Duchess was strict and punctual in everything. A day or two after Ekkehard's arrival she worked out a plan for learning the Latin language, and so it was settled that they should devote one hour each day to the grammar and another to the reading of Virgil. This latter was looked forward to with great pleasure by Ekkehard. He intended to apply the whole of his faculties to the new study and to summon up all his erudition and knowledge, in order to make the task easy to the Duchess.

"It is certainly no useless work which the old poets have left behind," he said. "How difficult it would be to learn a language, if it were bequeathed to us, merely through a dictionary, like corn in a sack, which we should first have to grind into flour, and then to make into bread. Now the poet puts everything in its right place, and the whole is clothed in harmonious forms; so that what otherwise would prove a hard and tough matter for our teeth we can now drink in like honey-dew."

To mitigate the bitterness of the grammar, Ekkehard could find no means. Every day he wrote a task for the Duchess on parchment, and she proved a very eager and industrious pupil; for each morning when the sun rose over the Bodensee, and cast its early rays on the Hohentwiel, she stood already at her window, learning her task; silently or loud as might be. Once her monotonous reciting of *amo, amas, amat, amamus, etc.*, reached even Ekkehard's ear in his chamber.

Poor Praxedis was heavily afflicted, as the Duchess, to heighten her own zeal, ordered her to learn always the same task with her, which she considered a great nuisance. Dame Hadwig, only a beginner herself, delighted in correcting her hand maiden, and was never so

pleased as when Praxedis took a substantive for an adjective, or conjugated an irregular verb as a regular one.

In the evening the Duchess came over to Ekkehard's room, where everything had to be ready for the reading of Virgil. Praxedis accompanied her, and as no dictionary was found amongst the books which Master Vincentius had left behind, Praxedis, who was well-versed in the art of writing, was ordered to begin to make one, as Dame Hadwig did not know so much of that. "What would be the use of priests and monks," said she, "if everybody knew the art belonging to their profession? Let the blacksmiths wield the hammer, the soldiers the sword, and the scribes the pen, and every one stick to his own business." She had, however, well practiced writing her name, in capital letters, artistically entwined; so that she could affix it to all documents to which she put her seal as sovereign of the land.

Praxedis cut up a big roll of parchment into small leaves; drawing two lines on each, to make three divisions. After each lesson she wrote down the Latin words they had learned in one, the German in the next; and the Greek equivalent in the third column. This last was done by the Duchess's desire, in order to prove to Ekkehard that they had acquired some knowledge already before he came. Thus the lessons had fairly begun.

The door of Ekkehard's room, leading into the passage, was left wide open by Praxedis. He rose and was about to shut it, when the Duchess prevented him, by saying: "Do you not yet know the world?"

Ekkehard could not understand the meaning of this. He now began to read and translate the first book of Virgil's great epic poem. Æneas the Trojan rose before their eyes; how he had wandered about for seven years on the Tyrian sea, and what unspokeable pains it had cost him to become the founder of the Roman people. Then came the recital of Juno's anger, when she went to entreat Æolus to do her bidding; promising the fairest of her nymphs to the God of the winds, if he would destroy the Trojan ships.—Thunder-storms, tempests, and dire shipwrecks,—the turbulent waves scattering weapons and armor, beams and rafters, of what had once been the stately fleet of the Trojans. And the roar of the excited waves reach the ears of Neptune himself, who, rising from his watery depths, beholds the dire confusion. The winds of Æolus are ignominiously sent home; the rebellious waves settle down; and the remaining ships anchor on the Lybian shores.

So far Ekkehard had read and translated. His voice was full and sonorous, and vibrating with emotion; for he perfectly understood what he had read. It was getting late; the lamp was flickering in its socket, and Dame Hadwig rose from her seat to go.

"How does my gracious mistress like the tale of the heathen poet?" asked Ekkehard.

"I will tell you to-morrow," was the reply.

To be sure she might have said it there and then; for the impression of what she had heard was already fixed in her mind; but she refrained from doing so, not liking to hurt his feelings.

"May you have pleasant dreams," she called out as he was departing.

Ekkehard went up to Vincentius's room in the tower, which had been restored to perfect order; all traces of the doves having been removed. He wanted to pray and meditate, as he was wont to do in the monastery, but his head began to burn, and before his soul stood the lofty figure of the Duchess; and when he looked straight at her, then Praxedis's black eyes also peeped at him from over her mistress's shoulders. What was to become of all this? He went to the window where the fresh autumn air cooled his forehead, and looked out at the dark vast sky, stretching out over the silent earth. The stars twinkled brightly, some nearer, some farther off; more or less brilliant. He had never before enjoyed such an extensive view of the starry firmament; for on the top of the mountains the appearance and size of things change much. For a long time he stood thus, until he began to shiver; and he felt as if the stars were attracting him upwards, and that he must rise towards them as on wings. . . He closed the window, crossed himself, and went to seek his resting place.

On the next day Dame Hadwig came with Praxedis to take her grammar lesson. She had

learnt many words and declensions, and knew her task well; but she was absent withal.

"Did you dream anything?" she asked her teacher when the lesson was over.

"No."

"Nor yesterday?"

"Neither."

"'Tis a pity, for it is said that what we dream the first night in a new domicile comes true. Now confess, are you not a very awkward young man?" she continued, after a short pause.

"I?" asked Ekkehard, greatly surprised.

"As you hold constant intercourse with the poets, why did you not invent some graceful dream, and tell it to me? Poetry and dreams, 'tis all the same, and it would have given me pleasure."

"If such is your command," said Ekkehard, "I will do so the next time you ask me; even if I have dreamt nothing."

Such conversations were entirely new and mystical for Ekkehard. "You still owe me your opinion of Virgil," said he.

"Well," returned Dame Hadwig, "if I had been a queen in Roman lands, I do not know whether I should not have burnt the poem, and imposed eternal silence on the man . . ."

Ekkehard stared at her, full of amazement.

"I am perfectly serious about it," continued she, "and do you wish to know why?—because he reviles the Gods of his country. I paid great attention when you recited the speeches of Juno yesterday. That she, the wife of the chief of all the Gods, feels a rankling in her mind, because a Trojan shepherd boy does not declare her to be the most beautiful,—and being powerless to call up a tempest at her will, to destroy a few miserable ships, must first bribe Æolus by the offer of a nymph! And then Neptune, who calls himself the king of the seas, and allows strange winds to cause a tempest in his realms; and only notices this transgression when it is well nigh over!—What is the upshot of all that?—I can tell you, that in a country whose Gods are thus abased and defamed, I should not like to wield the scepter!"

Ekkehard could not very readily find an answer. All the manuscripts of the ancients were for him stable and immovable as the mountains; and he was content to read and admire what lay before him—and now such doubts!

"Pardon me, gracious lady," he said, "we have not read very far as yet, and it is to be hoped that the human beings of the Æneid will find greater favor in your eyes. Please to remember, that at the time when the Emperor Augustus had his subjects counted, the light of the world began to dawn at Bethlehem. The legend says that a ray of that light had also fallen on Virgil, which explains why the old Gods could not appear so great in his eyes."

Dame Hadwig had spoken according to her first impression, but she did not intend to argue with her teacher.

"Praxedis," said she, in a jesting tone, "what may thy opinion be?"

"My powers of thought are not so great," said the Greek maid. "Everything appeared to me to be so very natural, and that made me like it. And what has pleased me most, was that Mistress Juno gave Æolus to one of her nymphs for a husband; for though he was somewhat elderly he was, after all, king of the winds, and she must certainly have been well provided for."

"Certainly," said Dame Hadwig, making a sign to her to be silent. "'Tis well that we have learnt in what way waiting-women can appreciate Virgil."

Ekkehard was only provoked into greater zeal by the Duchess's contradiction. With enthusiasm he read, on the following evening, how the pious Æneas goes out to seek the Lybian land; and how he meets his mother Venus, dressed in the habit and armor of a Spartan maid; the light bow hanging over her shoulder, and her fair heaving bosom scarcely hidden by the looped-up garment; and how she directs her son's steps towards the Lybian princess. Further he read, how Æneas recognized his Divine mother but too late,—calling after her in vain; but how she wrapped him up in a mist, so that he could reach the new town unseen, where the Tyrian queen is building a splendid temple in honor of Juno. There he stands transfixed with admiration, gazing at the representation of the battles before Troy, paint-

ed by the hand of the artist; and his soul is refreshed by the recollections of past battles.

And now Dido, the mistress of the land, herself approaches, urging on the workmen, and performing her sovereign's duties.

"And at the gate of the temple, in Juno's honor erected,

There on her throne sat the queen, surrounded by arms-bearing warriors, Dealing out justice to all, and dividing the labors amongst them, With an impartial hand, allotting his share to each one . . ."

"Read that over again," said the Duchess. Ekkehard complied with her wish.

"Is it written thus in the book?" asked she. "I should not have objected if you had put in these lines yourself; for I almost fancied I heard a description of my own government. Yes, with the human beings of your poet, I am well satisfied."

"It was no doubt easier to describe them than the Gods," said Ekkehard. "There are so many men in this world—"

She made him a sign to continue. So he read on, how the companions of Æneas came to implore her protection, and how they sung their leader's praise; who, hidden by a cloud, stood close by. And Dido opens her town to the helpless ones; and the wish arises in her, that Æneas their king might also be thrown by the raging waves on her shores; so that the hero feels a great longing to break through the cloud that is veiling him.

But when Ekkehard began with:

"Scarce had she uttered this wish, when the veiling cloud, floated backwards . . ."

a heavy tread was heard, and the next moment in came Master Spazzo, the chamberlain, wanting to have a look at the Duchess taking her lesson. Most likely he had been sitting with the wine-jug before him, for his eyes were staring vacantly, and the salutation-speech died on his lips. It was not his fault though; for quite early in the morning he had felt his nose burn and itch dreadfully, and that is an unmistakable sign of a tipsy evening to come.

"Stop there," cried the Duchess, "and you, Ekkehard, continue!"

He read on with his clear, expressive voice.

"Showing Æneas himself, in all the bloom of his beauty,

High and lofty withal; godlike, for the heavenly mother,

Having with soft flowing locks, and glorious features endowed him,

Breathing, into his eyes, serenity and radiance forever.

Like, as the ivory may, by dexterous hands be embellished,

Or as the Parian stone, encircled by red, golden fillets,

Then he, addressing the queen, to the wonder of all the surroundings,

Suddenly turned, and said: Behold then, him you were seeking,

Me, the Trojan Æneas, escaped from the Lybian breakers."

Master Spazzo stood there, in utter confusion; whilst an arch smile played around the lips of Praxedis.

"When you honor us next with your presence," called out the Duchess, "please to choose a more suitable moment for your entrance; so that we are not tempted to imagine you to be, Æneas the Trojan escaped from the Lybian breakers!"

Master Spazzo quickly withdrew, muttering: "Æneas the Trojan? has another Rhinelandish adventurer forged some mythical pedigree for himself? Troy?—and clouds floating backwards? . . . Wait Æneas the Trojan; when we too meet, we shall break a lance together! Death and damnation!"

CHAPTER VIII

AUDIFAX.

In those times there also lived on the Hohen-twiel a boy, whose name was Audifax. He was the child of a bondsman, and had lost both his parents early in life. He had grown up like a wild mountain-ash, and the people did not care much about him. He belonged to the castle, as the house-leek did that grew on the roof, or the ivy which had fastened its tendrils to the walls. As he grew older he was intrusted with the care of the goats, and this office he fulfilled faithfully enough, driving them out and home again every day. He was a shy and silent boy, with a pale face, and short-cut fair hair; for only the free-born were allowed to wear long waving locks.

In the spring, when trees and bushes put forth their new shoots, Audifax loved to sit in the open air, making himself pipes out of the young wood, and blowing thereon. It was a doleful, melancholy music, and Dame Hadwig had once stood on her balcony listening to it for hours. Probably the plaintive notes of the pipe had suited her fancy that day; for when Audifax came home with his goats on the evening, she told him to ask a favor for himself; and he begged for a little bell for one of his favorite goats, called Blackfoot. Blackfoot got the little bell, and from that time nothing particular had broken the monotonous routine of Audifax's life. But with increasing years he became shyer, and since the last spring he had even given up blowing on his pipe. It was now late in the autumn, but the sun was shining brightly still, and he was driving his goats as usual down the rocky mountain slope; and sitting on a rock, looked out into the distance. Through the dark fir-trees he could see the glittering surface of the Bodensee. All around, the trees were already wearing their autumnal colors, and the winds were playing merrily with the rustling red and yellow leaves on the ground. Heaving a deep sigh, Audifax after awhile began to cry bitterly.

At that time a little girl, whose name was Hadumoth, was minding the geese and ducks belonging to the castle poultry-yard. She was the daughter of an old maid-servant, and had never seen her father. This Hadumoth was a very good little girl, with bright red cheeks and blue eyes; and she wore her hair in two tresses falling down on her shoulders. The geese were kept in excellent order and training, and though they would stick out their long necks sometimes, and cackle like foolish women,—not one of them dared to disobey its mistress; and when she waved her hazel-wand, they all went quietly and decently along, refraining from useless noise. Often they picked their herbs in company with the goats of Audifax; for Hadumoth rather liked the short-haired goat herd, and often sat beside him; and the two looked up together at the blue sky; and the animals soon found out the friendly feelings between their guardians, and consequently were friendly also.

At that moment Hadumoth was likewise coming down the hill with her geese, and on hearing the tinkling of the goat-bells, she looked about for the driver. Then she beheld him sitting on the stone, in his distress; and going up to him, sat down by his side and said: "Audifax, what makes thee cry?"

But the boy gave no answer. Then Hadumoth put her arm round his shoulders, drew his little smooth head towards her and said sorrowfully: "Audifax, if thou criest, I must cry also."

Then Audifax tried to dry his tears, saying: "Thou needest not cry, but I must. There is something within me that makes me cry."

"What is in thee, tell me?" she urged him. Then he took one of the stones, such as were lying about plentifully, and threw it on the other stones. That stone was thin, and produced a ringing sound.

"Didst thou hear it?"

"Yes," replied Hadumoth, "it sounded just as usual."

"Hast thou also understood the sound?"

"No."

"Ah, but I understand it, and therefore I must cry," said Audifax. "It is now many weeks ago, that I sat in yonder valley on a rock. There it first came to me. I cannot tell thee how, but it must have come from the depths below; and since then I feel as if my eyes and ears were quite changed, and in my hands I sometimes see glittering sparks. Whenever I walk over the fields I hear it murmuring under my feet, as if there was some hidden spring; and when I stand by the rocks I see the veins running through them; and down below, I hear a hammering and digging, and that must come from the dwarfs, of which my grandfather has told me many a time. And sometimes I even see a red glowing light, shining through the earth. . . . Hadumoth, I must find some great treasure, and because I cannot find it, therefore I cry."

Hadumoth made the sign of the cross, and then said: "Thou must have been bewitched somehow, Audifax. Perhaps thou hast slept after sunset on the ground, in the open air; and thus one of the goblins below has got power over thee. Wait, I know something better than crying."

She ran up the hill, speedily returning with a small cup full of water, and a bit of soap,

which Praxedis had once given her; as well as some straws. Then she made a good lather, and giving one of the straws to Audifax she said: "There, let us make soap-bubbles, as we used to do. Dost thou remember, when we made them last time, how they always grew bigger and more beautifully colored; and how they flew down the valley, glittering like the rainbow? And how we almost cried when they burst?"

Audifax had taken the straw without saying a word, and had blown a fine bubble, which fresh like a dew-drop was hanging at the end of the straw; and he held it up into the air to let the sun shine on it.

"Dost thou recollect, Audifax," continued the girl, "what thou saidst to me once, when we had used up all our soap-water, and it became night, with the stars all coming out?—'These are also soap-bubbles,' thou saidst, 'and the good God is sitting on a high mountain, blowing them, and he can do it better than we can.'"

"No, I do not remember that," said Audifax.

He hung down his head again, and began to cry afresh. "What must I do to find the treasure?" sobbed he.

"Be sensible," said Hadumoth, "what wilt thou do with the treasure, if thou couldst find it?"

"I should buy my liberty, and thine also; and all the land from the Duchess; mountain and all; and I should have made for thee a golden crown, and for every goat a golden bell, and for myself a flute made of ebony and pure gold."

"Of pure gold," laughed Hadumoth. "Dost thou know what gold looks like?"

Audifax pointed with his fingers to his lips. "Canst thou keep a secret?" She nodded in the affirmative. "Then promise me with your hand." She gave him her hand.

"Now I will show you, how pure gold looks," said the boy, diving into his breast-pocket, and pulling out a piece like a good-sized coin, but shaped like a cup. On it were engraven mystic, half-effaced characters. It glistened and shone brightly in the sun, and was really gold. Hadumoth balanced it on her forefinger.

"That I found in yonder field; far over there, after the thunderstorm," said Audifax. "Whenever the many-colored rainbow descends to us, there come two angels, who hold out a golden cup, so that its ends should not touch the rough and rain-drenched ground; and when it vanishes again, they leave their cups on the fields, as they cannot use them twice; for fear of offending the rainbow."

Hadumoth began to believe that her companion was really destined to obtain some great treasure. "Audifax," said she, giving him back his rainbow cup, "this will not help thee. He who wants to find a treasure must know the spell. Down in the depth below, they keep a good watch over their treasures, and don't give up anything, unless they are forced to do it."

"Oh, yes, the spell!" said Audifax with tearful eyes. "If I only knew that!"

"Hast thou seen the holy man already?" asked Hadumoth.

"No."

"For some days a holy man has been in the castle, who is sure to know all spells. He has brought a great book with him, out of which he reads to the Duchess; in it is written everything; how one conquers all the spirits in air, earth, water and fire. The tall Friderich told the men-servants; and that the Duchess had made him come, to strengthen her power; and to make her remain forever young and beautiful, and live to eternity."

"I will go the holy man then," said Audifax.

"They will beat you perhaps," warned Hadumoth.

"They will not beat me," replied he. "I know something which I will give him, if he tells me the spell."

Meanwhile the evening had set in. The two children arose from their stony seat; goats and geese were collected; and then, in well-organized troops, like soldiers, were driven up the hill, and into their respective sheds.

That same evening, Ekkehard read out to the Duchess, the end of the first book of the Æneid, which had been interrupted by Master Spazzo's untimely entrance. How Dido greatly surprised by the hero's unexpected appearance, invites him as well his companions into her hospitable halls;—and Dame Hadwig gave

an approving nod, at the following words of Dido:

"I, by a similar fate, with many a sorrow acquainted,
Wearily erring about, till I found a home in this
country,
Grief is no stranger to me, and has taught me to help
the afflicted."

Then Æneas sends back Achates to the ships, that he might bring the good news to Ascanius; for on him was centered all the care and affection of his father. But Dame Venus, whose head is rife with new cunning, wishes to inflame Dido's heart with love for Æneas. So she removed Ascanius to the distant Italian groves and gave his form to the God of love; who divesting himself of his wings, and imitating the carriage and gait of Ascanius, followed the Trojans sent to fetch him, and thus appeared before the Queen in her palace at Carthago.

"Often she thus could be found, with her soul in her eyes, gazing at him,
Then too, many a time, she presses him close to her bosom,
Little knowing, poor queen, to what God she is giving a shelter.
Bent on his mother's designs, in her heart he effaces the image
Of Sicheus her spouse; then tries to rekindle her passions,
Calling up feelings within her, which long had slumber'd forgotten."

"Stop a moment," said Dame Hadwig. "This part, I think, is again very poor, and weakly conceived."

"Poor and weakly conceived?" asked Ekkehard.

"What need is there of Amor," she said. "Could it not happen without using cunning and deceit, and without his interference that the memory of her first husband could be effaced in the heart of a widow?"

"If a god himself made the mischief," said Ekkehard, "then Queen Dido's behavior is excused, or even justified;—that, I believe, is the intention of the poet." Ekkehard probably thought this a very clever remark, but the Duchess now rose, and pointedly said: "Oh, that, of course, alters the matter! So she needed an excuse;—really that idea did not strike me! Good night."

Proudly she stepped through the chamber, her long flowing garments rustling reproachfully.

"'Tis strange," thought Ekkehard, "but to read Virgil with women, has certainly its difficulties." Further his reflections did not go.

The following day he was going over the courtyard, when Audifax, the goat-herd, came to him, kissed the hem of his garment, and then looked up at him with beseeching eyes.

"What dost thou want?" asked Ekkehard.

"I should like to know the spell," replied Audifax, timidly.

"What spell?"

"To lift the treasure out of the deeps."

"That spell I should like to know also," said Ekkehard, laughing.

"Oh, you have got it, holy man," said the boy eagerly. "Have you not got the great book, out of which you read to the Duchess in the evening?"

Ekkehard looked at him sharply. He became suspicious; remembering the way in which he had come to the Hohenwid. "Has anybody prompted thee thus to interrogate me?"

"Yes."

"Who?"

Then Audifax began to cry, and sobbed out, "Hadumoth."

Ekkehard did not understand him. "And who is Hadumoth?"

"The goose-girl," faltered the boy.

"Thou art a foolish boy, who ought to mind his business."

But Audifax did not go.

"You are not to give it me for nothing," said he. "I will show you something very pretty. There must be many treasures in the mountain. I know one, but it is not the right one; and I should so like to find the right one!"

Ekkehard's attention was roused. "Show me what thou knowest," Audifax pointed downward; and Ekkehard, going out of the courtyard, followed him down the hill. On the back of the mountain, where one beholds the fir-clad Hohenstoffeln and Hohenlöwen, Audifax quitted the path and went into the bushes toward a high wall of gray rocks.

Audifax pushed aside the opposing branches, and tearing away the moss, showed him a yellow vein, as broad as a finger, running through the gray stone. The boy then managed to break

off a bit of the yellow substance, which stuck in the chinks of the rock like petrified drops. In the bright gold-colored mass small opal crystals, in reddish white globules, were scattered.

Closely examining it, Ekkehard looked at the detached piece, which was unknown to him. It was no precious stone; the learned men in later years gave it the name of Natrolith.

"Do you see now that I know something?" said Audifax.

"But what shall I do with it?" inquired Ekkehard.

"That you must know better than I. You can have them polished, and adorn your great books with them. Will you now give me the spell?"

Ekkehard could not help laughing at the boy. "Thou oughtest to become a miner," he said, turning to go.

But Audifax held him fast by his garment. "No, you must first teach me something out of your book."

"What shall I teach you?"

"The most powerful charm."

An inclination to allow himself an innocent joke now came into Ekkehard's serious mind. "Come along with me, then, and thou shalt have the most powerful charm."

Joyfully Audifax went with him. Then Ekkehard laughingly told him the following words out of Virgil:

"Auri sacra fames, quid non mortalia cogis pectora?"

With stubborn patience, Audifax repeated the foreign words, over and over again, until he had fixed them in his memory.

"Please to write it down; that I may wear it on me," he now entreated.

Ekkehard wishing to complete the joke, wrote the words on a thin strip of parchment, and gave it to the boy; who, gleefully hiding it in his breast-pocket, again kissed his garment, and then darted off, with innumerable mad gambols, outrivaling the merriest of his goats.

"This child holds Virgil in greater honor than the Duchess," thought Ekkehard to himself.

At noontide Audifax was again sitting on his rock; but this time there were no tears glistening in his timid eyes. For the first time, after a long while, his pipe was taken out, and the wind carried its notes into the valley, where they reached his friend Hadumoth, who came over at once, and gaily asked him: "Shall we make soap-bubbles again?"

"I will make no more soap-bubbles," said Audifax, and resumed his pipe-blowing; but after awhile he looked about carefully, and then drawing Hadumoth quite close to him, he whispered in her ear, his eyes glistening strangely: "I have been to see the holy man. This night we will seek the treasure. Thou must go with me." Hadumoth readily promised.

In the servants' hall, the supper was finished; and now they all rose from their benches at the same time, and arranged themselves in a long file. At the bottom stood Audifax and Hadumoth, and it was the latter who used to say the prayers, before these rough, but well-meaning folks. Her voice was rather trembling this time.

Before the table had been cleared, two shadows glided out, by the yet unlocked gate. They belonged to Hadumoth and Audifax; the latter going on before. "The night will be cold," he said to his companion, throwing a long-haired goat's skin over her.

On the southern side where the mountain wall is steepest, there was an old rampart. Here Audifax stopped, as it afforded them a shelter against the keen night wind of autumn. He stretched out his arm and said: "I think this must be the place. We have yet to wait a long time, till midnight."

Hadumoth said nothing. The two children sat down side by side. The moon had risen, and sent her trembling light, through airy, scattered cloudlets. In the castle some windows were lighted up; they were again reading out of their Virgil. Everything was quiet and motionless around; only at rare intervals, the hoarse shriek of an owl was heard. After a long while, Hadumoth timidly said: "How will it be, Audifax?"

"I don't know," was the answer. "Somebody will come and bring it; or the earth will open, and we must descend; or—"

"Be quiet, I am frightened."

After another long interval, during which Hadumoth had slumbered peacefully, her head resting on Audifax's bosom,—the latter, rub-

bing his eyes hard, to drive away sleepiness, now awakened his companion.

"Hadumoth," said he, "the night is long, wilt thou not tell me something?"

"Something evil has come into my mind," replied she. "There was once a man, who went out in the early morning, at sunrise, to plow his field; and there he found the gold dwarf, standing in a furrow and grinning at him; who spoke thus: 'take me with you.' He who does not seek us, shall have us; but he who seeketh us, we strangle him—" Audifax, I am so frightened."

"Give me thy hand," said Audifax, "and have courage."

The lights on the castle had all died out. The hollow hugh-notes of the watchman on the tower, announced midnight. Then Audifax knelt down, and Hadumoth beside him. The former had taken off his wooden shoe from his right foot, so that the naked sole touched the dark earth. The parchment strip he held in his hand, and with a clear firm voice pronounced the words, the meaning of which he did not understand,

"Aurisacra fames, quid non mortalia cogis pectora?"

He remembered them well. And on their knees the two remained, waiting for that which was to come. But there came neither dwarf nor giant, and the ground did not open either. The stars over their heads glittered coldly, and the chill night-air blew into their faces. Yet a faith so strong and deep, as that of the two children, ought not to be laughed at, even if it cannot remove mountains, or bring up treasures from the deep.

Now a strange light was seen on the firmament. A shooting-star, marking its way by a trailing line of light, fell down; followed by many others. "It is coming from above," whispered Audifax, convulsively pressing the little maiden to his side. "Auri sacra fames—" he called out once more into the night. Then the golden lines crossed each other; and soon one meteor after another became extinguished, and everything in the sky was again quiet as before.

Audifax looked with anxious eyes around; then he rose sorrowfully, and said in faltering tones: "Tis nothing; they have fallen into the lake. They grudge us everything. We shall remain poor."

"Hast thou said the words, which the holy man gave thee, quite right?"

"Exactly so as he taught me."

"Then he has not told thee the right spell. Probably he wants to find the treasure for himself. Perhaps he has put a net in the place where the stars fell down—"

"No, I don't believe that," said Audifax. "His face is mild and good, and his lips are not deceitful."

Hadumoth was thoughtful.

"Perhaps he does not know the right words?"

"Why not?"

"Because he has not got the right God. He prays to the new God. The old Gods were great and strong also."

Audifax pressed his fingers on the lips of his companion. "Be silent."

"I am no longer afraid," said Hadumoth. "I know some one else, who knows all about spells and charms."

"Who is it?"

Hadumoth pointed to a steep dark mountain, opposite. "The woman of the wood," replied she.

"The woman of the wood?" repeated Audifax aghast. "She, who made the great thunder-storms, when the hailstones fell as big as pigeon's eggs, into the fields; and who has eaten up the Count of Hilzingen, who never returned home?"

"Just on account of that. We will ask her. The castle will still be closed for some hours, and the night is cold."

The little goose-girl had become bold and adventurous; for her sympathy with Audifax was great, and she wanted so much to help him to the fulfillment of his wishes. "Come," said she eagerly, "if thou art frightened in the dark wood, thou canst blow on thy pipe; and the birds will answer thee, for it will soon be dawn."

Audifax did not raise any further objection. So they walked on northwards through the dark fir-wood. They both knew the path well. Not a human creature was stirring about; only an old fox, lying in ambush, for some rabbit or partridge, caught sight of them and was as little

satisfied with their appearance, as they had been with the shooting stars.

Foxes also, have to bear their disappointments in life; therefore it drew in its tail, and hid itself in the bushes.

The two children had gone on for about an hour, when they reached the top of the Hohenkrähen. Hidden amongst trees, there stood a small stone hut, before which they stopped. "The dog is sure to bark," said Hadumoth. But no dog was heard. They approached nearer and saw that the door stood wide open.

"The woman of the wood is gone," they said. But on the high rock on the Hohenkrähen, a small fire was still faintly burning; and dark shadows could be seen gliding about it. Then the children crept along the steep path leading up to the rock.

The first gleam of the coming dawn, was already visible over the Bodensee. The path was very narrow, and a projecting piece of rock, over which a mighty oak-tree spread out its branches, hid the fire from their view. There, Audifax and Hadumoth cowered down, and peeped round the corner. Then they saw, that some big animal had been killed. A head, apparently that of a horse, was nailed to the stem of the oak; and spouses as well as a quantity of bones, lay scattered about; while a vase filled with blood, stood beside the fire.

Around a roughly hewn piece of rock, serving as table, a number of men were sitting. On it, stood a big kettle of beer, out of which they filled and re-filled their stone jugs.

At the foot of the oak, sat a woman, who was certainly not so lovely, as the Allemannic virgin Bissula; who inflamed the heart of the Romnn statesman Ausonius, in spite of his age; to such a degree that he went about in his prefecture, spouting poetry in her praise: "her eyes are blue as the color of the heavens, and like gold is her wavy hair. Superior to all the dolls of Latium, is she, a child of the barbarians; and he who wants to paint her, must blend the rose with the lily."* The woman on the Hohenkrähen was old and haggard.

The men were looking at her; whilst the dawn was evidently spreading in the east. The mists hanging over the Bodensee, began to move, and now the sun was casting his first ray on the hills, burnishing their tops with gold. The fiery ball itself had just risen on the horizon, when the woman jumped up; the men following her example. She swung a bunch of mistletoe and fir-tree branches over her head, and then dipping it into the vase, three times sprinkled the bloody drops toward the sun; three times also over the men, and then poured out the contents of the vase at the foot of the tree.

The men all seized their jugs, and rubbing them in a monotonous way, three times on the smooth surface of the rock, to produce a strange humming noise, lifted them together toward the sun, and then drained them at one draught. The putting them down again, sounded like one single blow, so simultaneous was the movement. After this every one put on his mantle, and then they all went silently down hill.

It was the first night of November.

When all had become quiet again, the children stepped out of their hiding-place, and confronted the old woman. Audifax had taken out the slip of parchment,—but the hag snatching up a brand out of the fire, approached them with a threatening look; so that the children hastily turned round, and fled down the hill, as fast as their feet could carry them.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WOMAN OF THE WOOD.

AUDIFAX and Hadumoth had returned to the castle on the Hohentwiel, without anybody having noticed their having made this nightly expedition. They did not speak of their adventures, even to each other; but Audifax brooded over them night and day. He became rather negligent in his duties, so that one of his flock got lost in the hilly ground near where the Rhine flows out of the Bodensee. So Audifax went to look for the goat; and after spending a whole day in the pursuit, he triumphantly returned with the truant, in the evening.

Hadumoth welcomed him joyfully; delighted at his success, which saved him from a whipping. By and by, the winter came, and the animals remained in their respective stalls. One

* Ausonius, Idyll. 7.

day the two children were sitting alone before the fireplace in the servants' hall.

"Dost thou still think of the treasure and the spell?" said Hadumoth.

Then Audifax drew closer to her and whispered mysteriously. "The holy man has after all got the right God."

"Why so?" asked Hadumoth. He ran away to his chamber, where, hidden in the straw of his mattress, were a number of different stones. He took out one of these and brought it to her.

"Look here," he said. It was a piece of gray mica-slate, containing the remains of a fish; the delicate outlines of which, were clearly visible. "That's what I have found at the foot of the Schiener mountain, when I went to look for the goat. That must come from the great flood, which Father Vincentius, once preached about; and this flood, the Lord of Heaven and Earth sent over the world, when he told Noah to build the big ship. Of all this, the woman of the wood knows nothing."

Hadumoth became thoughtful. "Then it must be her fault, that the stars did not fall into our lap. Let us go and complain of her, to the holy man."

So they went to Ekkehard, and told him all that they had beheld that night on the Hohenkrähen. He listened kindly to their tale, which he repeated to the Duchess in the evening. Dame Hadwig smiled.

"They have a peculiar taste, my faithful subjects," said she. "Everywhere handsome churches have been erected, in which the Gospel is preached to them. Fine church-music, great festivals and processions through the waving cornfields, with cross and flag at their head,—all this does not content them. So they must needs sit on their mountain-tops in cold, chilly nights, not understanding what they're about, except that they drink beer. 'Tis really wonderful. What do you think of the matter, pious Master Ekkehard?"

"It is superstition," replied he, "which the Evil One sows in weak and rebellious hearts. I have read in our books about the doings of the heathens, how they perform their idolatrous rites in dark woods; by lonely wells and even at the graves of their dead."

"But they are no longer heathens," said Dame Hadwig. "They are all baptized and belong to some parish church. But nevertheless some of the old traditions still live among them; and though these have lost their meaning, they yet run through their thoughts and actions, as the Rhine does in winter, flowing noiselessly on, under the icy cover of the Boden-see. What would you do with them?"

"Annihilate them," said Ekkehard. "He who forsakes his Christian faith and breaks the vows of his baptism, shall be eternally damned."

"Not so fast, my young zealot!" continued Dame Hadwig. "My good Hegau people are not to lose their heads, because they prefer sitting on the cold top of the Hohenkrähen, on the first night of November, to lying on their straw mattresses. For all that, they do their duties well enough, and fought under Charlemagne against the heathenish Saxons, as if every one of them had been a chosen combatant of the Church itself."

"With the Devil there can be no peace," cried Ekkehard hotly. "Are you going to be lukewarm in your faith, noble mistress?"

"In reigning over a country," returned she with a slight sarcasm in her voice—"one learns a good deal that is not written down in books. Don't you know that a weak man is often more easily defeated by his own weakness, than by the sharpness of the sword? When the holy Gallus one day visited the ruins of Bregenz, he found the altar of St. Aurelia destroyed, and in its place three metal idols erected; and around the great beer-kettle the men sat drinking; for this is a ceremony which is never omitted when our Suabians wish to show their piety in the old fashion. The holy Gallus did not hurt a single man amongst them; but he cut their idols to pieces, threw them into the green waves of the lake, and made a large hole into their beer-kettle. On this very spot he preached the Gospel to them, and when they saw that no fire fell down from the heavens to destroy him, they were convinced that their Gods were powerless, and so became converted. So you see that to be sensible is not to be lukewarm."

"That was in those times," began Ekkehard, but Dame Hadwig continued: "And now the Church has been established from the source of the Rhine to the North Sea, and far stronger

than the ancient castles of the Romans, a chain of monasteries, fortresses of the Christian faith, runs through the land. Even into the recesses of the Black Forest the Gospel has penetrated; so why should we wage war so fiercely against the miserable stragglers of the olden times?"

"Then you had better reward them," said Ekkehard bitterly.

"Reward them?" quoth the Duchess. "Between the one and the other, there is still many an expedient left. Perhaps it were better if we put a stop to these nightly trespasses. No realm can be powerful in which two different creeds exist, for that leads to internal warfare, which is rather dangerous, as long as there are plenty of outward enemies. Besides, the laws of the land have forbidden them these follies, and they must find out, that our ordinances and prohibitions are not to be tampered with in that way."

Ekkehard did not seem to be satisfied yet; a shadow of displeasure being still visible on his countenance.

"Tell me," continued the Duchess, "what is your opinion of witchcraft in general?"

"Witchcraft," said Ekkehard seriously, taking a deep breath, which seemed to denote the intention of indulging in a longer speech than usual—"witchcraft is a damnable art, by which human beings make treaties with the demons inhabiting the elements, whose workings in nature are everywhere traceable; rendering them subservient by these compacts. Even in lifeless things there are latent living powers, which we neither hear nor see, but which often tempt careless and unguarded minds, to wish to know more and to attain greater power, than is granted to a faithful servant of the Lord. That is the old sorcery of the serpent; and he, who holds communion with the powers of darkness, may obtain part of their power, but he reigns over the Devils by Beelzebub himself, and becomes his property, when his time is at an end. Therefore witchcraft is as old as sin itself, and instead of the one true faith, the belief in the Trinity reigning paramount, fortune-tellers and interpreters of dreams, wandering actors and expounders of riddles, still infest the world; and their partisans are to be found above all among the daughters of Eve."

"You are really getting polite!" exclaimed Dame Hadwig.

"For the minds of women," continued Ekkehard, "have in all times been curious and eager to obtain forbidden knowledge. As we shall proceed with our reading of Virgil, you will see the excess of witchcraft embodied in a woman, called Circe, who passed her days, singing, on a rocky headland. Burning chips, of sweet-scented cedar-wood, lighten up her dark chambers, where she is industriously throwing the shuttle, and weaving beautiful tapestry; but outside in the yard, is heard the melancholy roaring of lions and tigers, as well as the grunting of swine, which were formerly men, whom by administering to them her potent magic philters, she has changed into brutes."

"I declare, you are talking like a book," said the Duchess pointedly. "You really ought to extend your study of witchcraft. To-morrow you shall ride over to Hohenkrähen and examine, whether the woman of the wood is a Circe also. We give you full authority to act in our name, and are truly curious to ascertain what your wisdom will decree."

"It is not for me to reign over a people and to settle the affairs of this world," replied he evasively.

"That will be seen," said Duchess Hadwig. "I do not think that the power of commanding has ever embarrassed any one, least of all a son of the Church."

So Ekkehard submitted; the more readily, as the commission was a proof of confidence on her part. Early on the next morning he rode over to the Hohenkrähen on horseback, taking Audifax with him, to show him the way.

"A happy journey, Sir Chancellor!" called out a laughing voice behind him. It was the voice of Praxedis.

They soon reached the old hag's dwelling, which was a stone hut, built on a projecting part of the high rock, about half way up. Mighty oaks and beech-trees spread their boughs over it, hiding the summit of the Hohenkrähen. Three high stone steps led into the inside, which was a dark, but airy chamber. On the floor, there lay heaps of dried herbs, giving out a strong fragrance. Three bleached horses' skulls grinned down fantastically from the walls; whilst beneath them hung the huge antlers of a stag. In the door-post was cut a double, intri-

cate triangle; and on the floor, a tame woodpecker, and a raven with cropped wings, were hopping about.

The inhabitant of this abode was seated beside the flickering fire on the hearth, sewing some garment. By her side stood a high, roughly hewn, weather-beaten stone. From time to time, she bent down to the hearth, and held out her meager hand over the coals; for the cold of November was beginning to be felt, especially on the mountains. The boughs of an old beech-tree came almost into the room through the window. A faint breeze was stirring them; and the leaves being withered and sere, trembled and fell off; a few of them falling right into the chamber.

The woman of the wood was old and lonely; and suffering probably from the cold.

"There you are lying now, despoiled and faded and dead," she said to the leaves—"and I am like you." A peculiar expression now came to her old wrinkled face. She was thinking of former times, when she also had been young and blooming, and had had a sweetheart of her own. But his fate had driven him far away from his native fir-woods. Plundering Normans, coming up the Rhine, robbing and burning wherever they came, had carried him off as a prisoner, like so many others; and he had stayed with them more than a year, and had become a seaman, and in the rough sea-air he had got to be rough and hard also. When at last they gave him his liberty, and he returned to his Suabian woods, he still carried with him the longing for the North Sea, and pined for his wild sailor life. The home faces were no longer pleasant to his eyes; those of the monks and priests least of all; and as misfortune would have it, in the heat of passion he slew a monk who had upbraided him, so that he could no longer remain in his home.

The thoughts of the old woman were constantly recurring that day, to the hour when he had parted from her forever. Then, the servants of the judge led him to his cottage in the wood of Weiterdingen, and exacted six hundred shillings from him, as a fine for the man he had slain. Then he had to swear a great oath, that beside his cottage and acre, he had nothing left, either above or under ground.

After that he went into his house, took a handful of earth, and threw it with his left hand over his shoulder, at his father's brother, in sign that his debt was to pass on to this his only remaining relation by blood. This done, he seized his staff, and dressed in his linen shirt, without shoes or girdle, he jumped over the fence of his acre, for such was the custom of the "*Chrene Chruuda*,"* and thus he became a homeless wanderer, free to go out into the wilderness. So he went back to Denmark to his own Northmen and never returned any more. All that had ever reached her, was a dark rumor that he had gone over with them to Seeland, where the brave sea-kings, refusing to adopt the Christian faith with its new laws, had founded a new home for themselves.

All this had happened long, long ago; but the old woman remembered it all, as if it were but yesterday, that she had seen her Friduhelm going away from her forever. Then she had hung up a garland of vervain at the little chapel of Weiterdingen, shedding many tears over it; and never had another lover been able to efface his image from her heart. The cold dreary November weather, reminded her of an old Norman song, which he had once taught her, and which she now hummed to herself:

"The evening comes, and winter is near,
The hoar-frost on fir-trees is lying;
Oh hoak, and cross and prayers of monk—
How soon shall we all be a dying.

"Our homes are getting so dusky and old
And the holy wells desecrated,
Thou god-inhabited, beautiful wood,
Wilt thou, even thou be prostrated?

"And silent we go, a defeated tribe,
Whose stars are all dying and sinking,
Oh Iceland, thou icy rock in the sea,
With thee, our fates we'll be linking.

"Arise and receive our wandering race,
Which is coming to thee, and bringing
The ancient Gods, and the ancient rights,
To which our hearts are still clinging.

"Where the fiery hill is shedding its light,
And the breakers are shorewards sweeping,
On thee thou defiant end of the world!
Our last long watch, we'll be keeping."

* The curious custom, that by this act, called the "*Chrene Chruuda*," the debt passed on to the next relation by blood, who was able to pay it, is described in Merkel's "*1000 Saitica*." The origin of "*Chrene Chruuda*" has not yet been sufficiently explained.

Ekkehard meanwhile had got down from the saddle, and tied his horse to a neighboring fir-tree. He now stepped over the threshold, shyly followed by Audifax.

The woman of the wood threw the garment she had been working at, over the stone, folded her hands on her lap, and looked fixedly at the intruder in his monk's habit, but did not get up.

"Praised be Jesus Christ," said Ekkehard, by way of greeting, and also to avert any possible spell. Instinctively he drew in the thumb of his right hand, doubling his fingers over it, being afraid of the evil eye and its powers. Audifax had told him how peoplessaid, that with one look she could wither up a whole meadow. She did not return his greeting.

"What are you doing there," began Ekkehard.

"I am mending an old garment that is getting worn," was the answer.

"You have been also gathering herbs?"
 "So I have. Are you an herb-gatherer? Here are many of them, if you wish for any. Hawk-weed and snail-clover, goat's-ear and mouse-ear, as well as dried woodruff."

"I am no herb-gatherer," said Ekkehard. "What use do you make of those herbs?"

"Need you be asking what is the use of herbs?" said the old woman. "Such as you, know that well enough. It would fare ill with sick people and sick hearts, and with our protection against nightly sprites, as well as the stilling of lover's longings, if there were no herbs to be had!"

"And have you been baptized?" continued Ekkehard.

"Aye, they will have baptized me, likely enough."

"And if you have been baptized," he said raising his voice, "and have renounced the devil with all his works and allurements, what is the meaning of all this?" He pointed with his stick toward the horses' skulls on the wall, and giving a violent push to one, caused it to fall down on the floor, where it broke to pieces, so that the white teeth rolled about on the ground.

"The skull of a horse," quietly replied the old woman, "which you have shivered to pieces: It was a young animal, as you may see by the teeth."

"And you like to eat horseflesh?"
 "It is no impure animal, nor is it forbidden to eat it."

"Woman!" cried Ekkehard, approaching her closer, "thou exercisest witchcraft and sorcery!"

Then she arose, and with a frowning brow and strangely glittering eyes, she said: "You wear a priest's garment, so you may say this to me; for an old woman has no protection against such as you. Otherwise it were a grave insult which you have cast on me, and the laws of the land punish those that use such words."

During this conversation, Audifax had remained timidly standing at the door, but when the raven now made its way toward him, he was afraid and ran up to Ekkehard; from thence he saw the stone by the hearth, and walked up to it; for the fear even of twenty ravens would not have prevented him from examining a curious stone. Lifting the garment which was spread over it, he beheld some strange, weather-beaten figures carved on it.

At that moment Ekkehard's eye fell also on the stone. It was a Roman altar, and had doubtless been erected on those heights by cohorts, who at the command of their Emperor had left their camp in luxurious Asia, for the inhospitable shores of the Bodensee. A youth, in a flowing mantle and with Phrygian cap, was kneeling on a prostrate bull,—the Persian God of light, Mithras; who gave new hope and strength to the fast sinking faith of the Romans.

An inscription was nowhere visible. For a considerable time Ekkehard stood examining it; for with the exception of a golden coin bearing the head of Vespasian, which had been found in the moor at Rapperswyl, by some dependents of the monastery, and some carved stones among the church treasures, his eye had never before beheld any carving of the olden times; but from the shape and look of the thing, he guessed at its being some silent witness of a by-gone world.

"Whence comes the stone?" asked he.

"I have been questioned more than enough now," defiantly said the old woman. "Find an answer for yourself."

The stone might have said a good deal for itself, if stones were gifted with speech, for a

goodly piece of history often clings to such old and weather-beaten ruins. What do they teach us? That the races of men, come and go like the leaves; that spring produces and autumn destroys, and that all their thinkings and doings last but a short span of time. After them, there come others, talking in other tongues and creating other forms. That which was holy before, is then pulled down and despised, and that which was condemned, becomes holy in its place. New Gods mount the throne,—and it is well if their altars are not erected on the bodies of too many victims.

Ekkehard saw another meaning in the stone's being in the hut of the woman of the wood.

"You worship that man on the bull!" he cried vehemently. The old woman took up a stick standing by the fireplace, and with a knife made two notches in it. "'Tis the second insult you have offered me," she said hoarsely. "What have we to do with yonder stone image?"

"Then speak out. How is it that the stone comes to be here?"

"Because we took pity on it," replied she. "You, who wear the tonsure and monk's habit, probably will not understand that. The stone stood outside, on yonder projecting rock, which must have been a consecrated spot, on which many have knelt probably, in the olden times. But in the present days nobody heeded it. The people here about, dried their crab-apples, or split their wood on it; just as it suited them; and the cruel rain has been washing away the figures. 'The sight of the stone grieves me,' said my mother one day. It was once something holy, but the bones of those, who have known and worshiped the man on it, have long been bleached white,—and the man in the flowing mantle looks as if he were freezing with the cold. So we took it up, and placed it beside the hearth, and it has never harmed us as yet. We know how the old Gods feel, when their altars are shattered; for ours also have been dethroned. You need not begrudge its rest to the old stone."

"Your Gods?" said Ekkehard, "who are your Gods?"

"That you ought to know best, for you have driven them away, and banished them into the depths of the lake. In the floods below, everything has been buried. The ancient rights and the ancient Gods! We can see them no more, and know but the places where our fathers have worshiped them, before the Franks and the cowl-bearing men had come. But when the winds are shaking the tops of yonder oak-tree, you may hear their wailing voices in the air; and on consecrated nights, there is a moaning and roaring in the forest, and a shivering of lights; whilst serpents are winding themselves round the stems of the trees; and over the mountains you hear a rustling of wings, of despairing spirits, that have come to look at their ancient home."

Ekkehard crossed himself.

"I tell it thus as I know it," continued the old woman. "I do not wish to offend the Saviour, but he has come as a stranger into the land. You serve him in a foreign tongue, which we cannot understand. If he had sprung up from our own ground, then we might talk to him, and should be his most faithful worshippers, and may be things would then fare better in Allemannia."

"Woman!" cried Ekkehard wrathfully, "we will have thee burned—"

"It is written in your books that trees grow up; to burn old woman with very well. I have lived long enough. The lightning has lately paid a visit to the woman of the wood,"—pointing to a dark stripe on the wall,— "the lightning has spared the old woman."

After this she covered down before the hearth, and remained there motionless like a statue. The flickering coals threw a fitful, varying light on her wrinkled face.

"'Tis well," said Ekkehard, as he left the chamber. Audifax was very glad when he could see the blue sky again over his head. "There they sat together," said he pointing upward.

"I will go and look at it, whilst thou goest back to the Hohentwiel, and sendest over two men with hatchets. And tell Otfried the deacon of Singen to come and bring his stole and mass-book with him."

Audifax bounded away, whilst Ekkehard went up to the top of the Höhenkrähen.

In the castle on the Hohentwiel, the Duchess had been sitting meanwhile taking her midday meal. She had often looked about, as if some-

thing were missing. The meal was soon over, and when Dame Hadwig found herself alone with Praxedis she began:

"How dost thou like our new teacher, Praxedis?"

The Greek maid smiled.
 "Speak," said the Duchess in a commanding voice.

"Well, I have seen many a schoolmaster before this, at Constantiuopolis," said Praxedis flippantly.

Dame Hadwig threatened her with her finger, "I shall have to banish thee from my sight, if thou indulgest in such irreverent speeches. What hast thou to say against schoolmasters?"

"Pardon me," said Praxedis. "I did not mean any offense. But whenever I see such a bookman, wearing such a very serious expression, and assuming such an important air; drawing out of his manuscript some meaning which we have already nearly guessed; and when I see how he is bound up in his parchments, his eyes seeing nothing but dead letters, having scarcely a look to spare for the human beings around him,—then I always feel strongly tempted to laugh. When I am in doubt whether pity would be the proper feeling I take to laughing. And he certainly does not require my pity, as he knows so much more than I do."

"A teacher must be serious," said the Duchess. "Seriousness belongs to him, as the snow does to our Alps."

"Serious,—ah well in this land where the snow covers the mountain-peaks, everything must be serious," resumed the Greek maid. "If I were only as learned as Master Ekkehard to be able to express all that I want to say! I mean that one can learn many things jestingly, without the sweat-drops of hard labor on one's brow. All that is beautiful ought to please, and be true, at the same time. I mean that knowledge is like honey, which can be got at in different ways. The butterfly hovers over the flowers and finds it; but such a learned German appears to me like a bear, who clumsily puts his paws into a bee-hive and then licks them. I for my part don't admire bears."

"Thou art a frivolous-minded maiden and not fond of learning. But how does Ekkehard please thee otherwise,—I think him very handsome."

Praxedis looked up at her mistress. "I have never yet looked at a monk, to see whether he were handsome."

"Why not?"

"Because I thought it quite unnecessary."

"Thou givest queer answers to-day," said Dame Hadwig, getting up from her seat. She stepped to the window and looked out northward; where from the dark fir-trees rose the heavy mass of the steep, rocky Höhenkrähen.

"The goat-boy has just been here, and has told some of the men to go over," said Praxedis.

"The afternoon is mild and sunny," observed the Duchess. "Tell them to saddle the horses and we will ride over, and see what they are doing. Ah—I forgot that thou complainedst of the fatigue of riding, when we returned from St. Gallus. So I will go there alone—"

Ekkehard meanwhile had inspected the scene of the nightly revel, of which but few traces remained. The earth around the oak-tree was still wet and reddish looking, and a few coals and ashes indicated where the fire had been.

With astonishment he beheld here and there, hanging in the branches of the oak, small wax effigies of human limbs. There were feet and hands, as well as images of cows and horses,—offerings for the recovery of sick men and beasts, which the superstitious peasantry, preferred hanging up on old consecrated trees; to placing them on the altars of churches.

Two men, with hatchets, now came up.
 "We have been ordered to come here," they said.

"From the Hohentwiel?" asked Ekkehard.

"We belong to the Duchess, but we live yonder on the Höhenböwen; where you can see the smoke rise from the charcoal-pile."

"Good," said Ekkehard. "You are to cut down this oak for me."

The men looked at him. Embarrassment was visible in their faces.

"Begin at once, and make haste, for before nightfall, the tree must be felled to the ground."

Then the two men walked up to the oak. With gaping mouths they stood before the magnificent tree. One of them let his axe fall.

"Don't you know the spot, Chomuli?" quoth he to his companion.

"How should I know it, Woveli?"

The former pointed toward the east, and lift-

ing one of his hands to his mouth, imitated the act of drinking. "On account of that, Chomuli."

Then the other looked down hill where Ekkehard was standing, and winking cunningly with one eye, said: "We know nothing, Woveli."

"But he will know, Chomuli."

"That remains to be seen," was the reply.

"It is really a sin and a shame," continued the other. "That oak is at least two hundred years old, and has lived to witness many a bright May and Autumn fire. I really can't do it."

"Don't be a fool," said his companion making the first stroke. "The more readily we hew away at the tree, the less your monk will believe, that we have sat under its branches in nightly worship. Remember the shilling fine! A man must be cautious, Woveli!"

This last remark did not fail to have its effect. "Yes, a man must be cautious," he repeated aiming a blow at the tree of his devotion. But ten days ago, he had hung up a wax effigy himself, in order to cure his brown cow of fever.

The chips flew about, and keeping regular time, their blows quickly followed each other.

The deacon of Singen had also arrived with stole and mass book. Ekkehard beckoned to him to go with him into the hut of the woman of the wood. She was still sitting motionless as before, beside her hearth. A sharp gust of wind, entering as the door opened, extinguished her fire.

"Woman of the wood," called out Ekkehard imperiously, "put your house in order and pack up your things, for you must go!"

The old woman seized her staff and cut a third notch. "Who is it, that is insulting me for the third time," growled she, "and who wishes to cast me out of my mother's house, like a stray dog?"

"In the name of the Duchess of Suabia," continued Ekkehard solemnly, "and on account of your practicing heathenish superstitions and nightly idolatries, I banish you herewith from house and home; and bid you leave the land. Your chair shall be placed before the door of your hut, and you shall wander restlessly about, as far as the sky is blue, and Christians visit the church; as far as the falcon flies on a day of Spring when the wind is carrying him along, faster than his wings. No hospitable door shall be opened to you; no fire be lighted to give you warmth; and may the wells deny you water, until you have renounced the powers of darkness, and made your peace with the almighty God; the judge of the living and dead."

The woman of the wood had listened to him, without showing great emotion.

"An anointed man will insult thee three times under thy own roof," muttered she, "and thou shalt make a sign on thy staff, in witness of this; and with that same staff, thou shalt go out toward the setting sun, for they will not give thee sufficient ground, to rest thy head upon. Oh mother! My mother!"

She then scraped her scanty belongings together, making a bundle of them; and taking her staff, prepared herself to go. The heart of the deacon of Singen was touched. "Pray God through his servants to have mercy on you, and perform some Christian penance," he said, "so that you may find forgiveness."

"For that, the woman of the wood is too old," she replied. Then she called her woodpecker, which flew about her head; the raven followed, with a scared frightened look, and she had already opened the door and cast back one last look on the walls and fireplace, the herbs and horses' skulls, when she struck her stick violently on the threshold, so as to make the stone flags resound. "Be cursed ye dogs!" cried she; then followed by her birds, took the path leading into the woods, and disappeared.

And silent we go, a defeated tribe,
Whose stars are all dying and sinking.
Oh Iceland, thou icy rock in the sea,
With thee, our fates we'll be linking!"

was her low chant; slowly dying out, among the leafless trees.

Ekkehard now put on the stole; and the deacon of Singen carrying the mass book before him, they proceeded through chamber and closet. The walls were sanctified by the sign of the cross, so as to banish the evil spirits forever; and finally, with prayers, he pronounced the mighty exorcism over the place.

The pious work had lasted long; and when the deacon took off Ekkehard's stole, the cold sweat drops stood on his brow; as he had never before heard such impressive words. Just when

all was over, the tramping of horses' feet was heard.

It was the Duchess, accompanied by one servant only. Ekkehard went out to meet her; and the deacon directed his steps homeward.

"You were so long away, that I had to come hither myself, to see how you had settled everything," graciously called out the Duchess.

The two wood-cutters had in the meanwhile finished their job, and made their retreat by the back of the hill: They stood in awe of the Duchess. Ekkehard then told her about the life and doings of the woman of the wood, and how he had driven her away.

"You are very severe," said Dame Hadwig.

"I thought I was very mild," replied Ekkehard.

"Well, we approve of that which you have done. What do you intend to do with the deserted hut?" casting a hasty look at the stone walls.

"The power of the evil spirits has been banished and exorcised," said Ekkehard. "I mean to consecrate it as a chapel to St. Hadwig."

The Duchess looked at him with a well pleased expression.

"How did you hit upon that idea?"

"The thought struck me just now,—the oak I have had cut down."

"We will examine that spot; and I think that we shall approve also of the felling of the oak."

She climbed the steep path, leading up to the top of the Hohenkrähen, accompanied by Ekkehard.

There lay the oak on the ground; its mighty branches almost preventing their further ascent. A flat stone, but a few paces in circumference, crowned the top of the strangely shaped hill. They were standing on the rocks, which formed a declivitous wall beneath their feet. It was a giddy height, on which was neither stone nor tree for support, and the two figures stood out picturesquely, against the blue sky; the monk in his dark garment and the Duchess, wrapped up in her bright colored mantle. Silently they stood thus; looking at the splendid view before them. In the depth below, the plain lay stretched out before them, through the green meadows of which, the river Aach ran in serpentine lines. The roofs and gables of the houses in the valley, looked like tiny dots on a map. Opposite rose darkly, the proud, well-known peak of the Hohentwiel; blue, flat mountain-ridges rising like walls, behind the mighty one; hiding the Rhine after its escape from the Bodensee.

The Unterse with the island of Reichensau lay bathed in light; and in the far off distance, the faint outlines of gigantic mountains were visible, through transparent clouds. They became clearer and clearer as the sun sunk down, a golden glow surrounding them like a halo of glory—the landscape becoming softer, shadows and glittering lights melting into each other.

Dame Hadwig was touched, for her noble heart could feel and appreciate nature's beauty and grandeur. But the feelings lie very close to each other, and at that moment, a certain tenderness pervaded her whole being. Her looks from the snowy Alpine peaks fell on Ekkehard. "He is going to consecrate a chapel to St. Hadwig," something whispered within her, over and over again.

She advanced a step, as if she were afraid of becoming giddy, and putting her right arm on Ekkehard's shoulder, leaned heavily on him; her sparkling eyes looking intently into his. "What is my friend thinking about?" said she, in soft accents.

Ekkehard who had been lost in thought started.

"I have never before stood on such a height," said he, "and I was reminded of the passage in Scripture: 'Afterward the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him: All this will I give thee, and the glory of them, if thou wilt worship me. But Jesus answered and said unto him: Get thee behind me Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.'"

With a strange look the Duchess stepped backward; the light in her eyes changing, as if she would have liked to push the monk down into the abyss.

"Ekkehard!" cried she, "you are either a child—or a fool!"

Then she turned round, and hastily and displeased descended the path. Mounting her horse, she rode back to the Hohentwiel, at a

gallop, so furious, that her servant could scarcely follow her.

Ekkehard full of consternation, remained where he was. He passed his hand over his eyes, as if to remove a mist from before them.

When late at night he sat in his tower on the Hohentwiel, thinking of all that had happened that day, he beheld a distant gleam of fire. He looked out and saw that the fiery blaze arose from the fir-trees on the Hohenkrähen. The woman of the wood, had been paying her last visit to the future chapel of St. Hadwig.

CHAPTER X.

CHRISTMAS.

THE evening on the Hohenkrähen, cast a gloom also over the following days. Misunderstandings are not easily forgiven; least of all by him who has caused them.

For this reason Dame Hadwig spent some days in a very bad humor, in her own private apartments. Grammar and Virgil had both a holiday. With Praxedis, she took up the old jest about the schoolmasters at Constantinople; seeming now to enjoy it much better. Ekkehard came to ask whether he were to continue his lessons. "I have got a toothache," said the Duchess. Expressing his regret, he attributed it to the rough autumnal weather.

Every day he asked several times how she was, which somewhat conciliated the Duchess.

"How is it," said she to Praxedis, "that a person can be of so much more real worth than he appears outwardly to possess?"

"That comes from a want of gracefulness," replied the Greek maid. "In other countries I often found the reverse; but here, people are too lazy, to manifest their individuality by every movement or word. They prefer thinking to acting: believing that the whole world must be able to read on their foreheads what is passing within."

"But we are generally so industrious," said Dame Hadwig, complacently.

"The buffaloes likewise work the livelong day," Praxedis had almost said,—but she finally contented herself, with merely thinking it.

Ekkehard all this time, felt quite at his ease; for the idea that he had given an unsuitable answer to the Duchess never struck him. He had really been thinking of that parable in Scripture, and failed to see that in reply to the timid expression of a friendly liking, it might not always be quite the right thing to quote Scripture. He revered the Duchess; but far more as the embodied idea of sublimity than as a woman. That sublime being's demand adoration, had never struck him; and still less that even the sublimest personage is often perfectly satisfied with simple affection. That Dame Hadwig was out of spirits, he noticed however, but he contented himself by making the general observation, that the intercourse with a Duchess was rather more difficult than that with the brotherhood at St. Gall.

Amongst the books which Vincentius had left behind were the Epistles of St. Paul, which he now studied. Master Spazzo during those days, put on a still haughtier mien than usual, when he passed him. Dame Hadwig soon found out that it were better to return to the old order of things.

"It was really a grand sight which he had that evening from the Hohenkrähen," said she one day to Ekkehard. "But do you know our weather-signs on the Hohentwiel? Whenever the Alps appear very distinct and near, the weather is sure to change. So we have had some bad weather since. And now we will resume our reading of Virgil."

Upon this, Ekkehard, highly pleased, went to fetch his heavy metal-bound book; and so their studies were resumed. He read and translated to them, the second book of the Æneid, about the downfall of Troy, the wooden horse and the fearful end of Laocoon. Further, of the nightly battle; Cassandra's fate, and Priamus' death; and finally Æneas' flight with the aged Anchises.

With evident sympathy, Dame Hadwig listened to the interesting tale. Only, with the disappearance of Æneas' spouse Krethaa, she was not quite satisfied.

"That he need not have told so lengthily to Queen Dido," she said, "for I doubt much, whether the living woman was overpleased, that he had run after the lost one so long. Lost is lost."

And now the winter was drawing near. The sky became dreary and leaden, and the distance

shrouded with mists. First the mountain-peaks round about, put on their snow-caps; and then valley and field followed their example. Small icicles fastened on the rafters under the roofs, with the intention of quietly remaining there for some months; and the old linden-tree in the courtyard had for some time, like a careful and economical man who disposes of his worn-out garments to the Hebrews,—shaken down its faded leaves to the winds. They made up a good heap; which was soon scattered in all directions, by the merry, gamboling breezes. The bare branches of the tree were often crowded with cawing rooks, coming from the neighboring woods, and eagerly watching for a bone or crumb from the kitchen of the castle. Once there was one amongst the sable brotherhood, whose flight was heavy, as its wings were damaged; and on beholding Ekkehard, who chanced to go over the courtyard, the raven flew screeching away. It had seen the monk's habit before, and had no reason to like it.

The nights of winter are long and dark. Now and then appear the northern lights; but far brighter than these, in the hearts of men, is the remembrance of that night when angels descended to the shepherds in the fields, greeting them with:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

On the Hohentwiel they were preparing for Christmas by getting ready all sorts of presents. The year is long, and numbers many a day in which people can show each other kindnesses; but the Germans like having one especial day, set aside for that, in particular. Therefore, before all other nations, they keep up the custom of making Christmas presents. The good heart has its own peculiar rights.

During that time, Dame Hadwig had almost put aside the grammar entirely; taking to sewing and embroidery. Balls of gold-thread and black silk lay about the woman's apartments; and when Ekkehard once came in unawares, Praxedis rushed up and pushed him out of the door, whilst Dame Hadwig hid some needlework in a basket.

This aroused Ekkehard's curiosity, and he arrived at the not unreasonable conclusion, that some present was being made for him. Therefore he thought about returning the kindness; intending to exert his utmost powers and abilities for that purpose. So he sent word to his friend and teacher, Folkard, at St. Gall, to send him parchment, colors and brushes, as well as some precious ink; which request was speedily fulfilled. Then Ekkehard sat up many an hour at night in his tower, pondering over a Latin composition which he wanted to dedicate to the Duchess, and which was to contain some delicate homage.

But all this was not so easy, as he had thought. Once he began, at the creation of the world, intending to proceed in daring flight, to the beginning of Dame Hadwig's reign in Suabia; but he had already written some hundred hexameters and had only got as far as King David; and the work would probably have taken him three years to complete. Another time he tried to number up all the women who, either by their strength or their beauty, had influenced the fate of nations; such as Queen Semiramis and the virgin Amazons; the heroic Judith and the tuneful Sappho;—but to his great regret he found out, that by the time his pen had worked its way to the Duchess, it would have been quite impossible to find anything new to say in her praise. So he went about much downcast and distressed.

"Have you swallowed a spider, pearl of all professors?" inquired Praxedis one day, on meeting him in the aforesaid mental condition. "You may well be jesting," said Ekkehard sadly;—and under the seal of secrecy he confided his griefs to her.

"By the thirty-six thousand volumes in the library at Constantinopolis!" exclaimed she, "why, you are going to cut down a whole forest of trees, when a few flowers are all that's wanted. Why don't you make it simple and graceful,—such as your beloved Virgil would have made it?" After this she ran away, and Ekkehard crept back to his chamber. "Like Virgil?" he mused. But in the whole of the *Æneid* there was no example of a similar case. He read some cantos, and dreamily set thinking over them, when a good idea suddenly struck him. "I've got it!" cried he. "The beloved poet himself is to do homage to her!" He then wrote a poem, as if Virgil had appeared to him, in his solitude; expressing his delight, that his poetry was living again in German

lands; and thanking the high-born lady for thus befriending him. In a few minutes it was ready.

This poem Ekkehard now wished to write down on parchment, adorned by some handsome illustrations. So he composed the following picture. The Duchess, with crown and scepter, sitting on her throne, accosted by Virgil in white garments; who inclining his bay-crowned head, advances toward her. He is leading Ekkehard,—who modestly walking by his side, as the pupil with the master, is likewise humbly bowing before her.

In the strict manner of the excellent Folkard, he first drew the sketch. He remembered a picture in a psalm-book, representing the young David, before King Abimelech. Thus, he arranged the figures. The Duchess he drew two fingers' breadth higher than Virgil; and the Ekkehard of the sketch was considerably shorter than the heathen poet. Budding Art, lacking other means, expressed rank and greatness outwardly.

With the figure of Virgil he succeeded tolerably well; for they had always used ancient pictures as models for their drawings at St. Gall, and assumed a stereotype way of executing both drapery and outline. Likewise he succeeded with his own portrait, in so far as he managed to draw a figure in a monk's habit, wearing a tonsure; but a terrible problem for him was the representation of a queenly woman's form, for as yet no woman's picture, not even God's holy Mother, had received admittance, amongst the monastery's paintings. David and Abimelech, which he was so well accustomed to, were of no help to him here, for the regal mantle scarcely came down to their knees; and he knew not how to draw it any longer. So, care once more resumed its seat on his forehead.

"Well, what now?" quoth Praxedis, one day.

"The poem is finished," replied Ekkehard. "Now something else is wanting."

"And what may that be?"

"I ought to know in what way women's garments cling to their tender limbs," said he, in doleful accents.

"You are really saying quite wicked things, ye chosen vessel of virtue," scolded Praxedis. But Ekkehard then made his difficulties known to her in a clearer way, upon which the Greek maid made a movement with her hand, as if to open his eyes.

"Open your eyes," she said, "and look at the living things around you."

The advice was simple enough, and yet entirely novel to one who had acquired all his skill in art in his solitary cell. Ekkehard cast a long and scrutinizing look at his counselor. "It avails me nothing," said he, "for you do not wear a regal mantle."

Then the Greek took pity on the doubt-beset artist. "Wait," said she, "the Duchess is down stairs in the garden, so I can put on her ducal mantle, and you will be helped." She glided out, and after a few minutes reappeared, with the purple mantle, hanging negligently from her shoulders. With slow measured steps, she walked through the chamber. On a table stood a metal candlestick, which she seized and held up like a scepter; and thus, with head thrown back, she stood before the monk.

He had taken out his pencil and parchment. "Turn round, a little more toward the light," said he, beginning at once to draw eagerly.

Every time, however, when he looked at his graceful model, she darted a sparkling look at him. His movements became slower, and Praxedis looked toward the window. "But, as our rival in the realm," began she, with an artificially raised voice, "is already leaving the courtyard, threatening to take us by surprise, we command you, on pain of losing your head, to finish your drawing within the next minute."

"I thank you," said Ekkehard, putting down his pencil.

Praxedis stepped up to him, and bending forward, looked at what he had done. "What shameful treason!" exclaimed she, "why, the picture has no head!"

"I merely wanted the drapery," said Ekkehard.

"Well, you have forfeited a great piece of good fortune," continued Praxedis in her former tone. "If you had faithfully portrayed the features, who knows whether we should not

have made you Patriarch of Constantinople in sign of our princely favor."

Steps were now heard outside. Praxedis quickly tore off the mantle from her shoulders, so that it dropped on her arm, just as the Duchess was standing before them.

"Are you again learning Greek?" said she, reproachfully, to Ekkehard.

"I have shown him the precious sardonix in the clasp of my mistress's mantle;—it is such a beautifully cut head," said Praxedis. "Master Ekkehard has much taste for antiquities, and he was greatly pleased with the stone."

Even Audifax made his preparations for Christmas. His hope of finding treasures being greatly diminished,—he now stuck more to the actual things around him. Often he descended at night-time to the shores of the river Aach, which slowly flowed on toward the lake. Close to the rotten little bridge stood a hollow willow-tree, before which, Audifax lay in ambush many an hour; his raised stick directed toward the opening in the tree. He was on the lookout for an otter. But no philosopher trying to fathom the last cause of Being, ever found his task such a difficult one, as Audifax did his otter-hunting; for, from the hollow tree, there was still many a subterranean outlet to the river, which the otter knew, and Audifax did not. And often when Audifax, trembling with cold, said: "Now it must come,"—he would hear a noise far up in the river, caused by his friend the otter putting its snout out of the water to take a good breath of air; and when Audifax softly crept up to the place from whence the sound had come, the otter was lying on its back and floating comfortably down the river.

In the kitchen on the Hohentwiel there was great bustle and activity—such as there is in the tent of a commander-in-chief on the eve of a battle. Dame Hadwig herself stood amongst the serving maidens. She did not wear her ducal mantle, but a white apron; and stood distributing flour and honey for the gingerbread. Praxedis was mixing ginger, pepper and cinnamon to flavor the paste with.

"What shape shall we take?" asked she. "The square with the serpents?"

"No, the big heart is prettier," said Dame Hadwig. So the gingerbread was made in the shape of hearts, and the finest was stuck with almonds and cardamom by the Duchess's own hand.

One morning Audifax entered the kitchen, half frozen with cold, and crept up to the fireplace. His lips trembled as in a fever; but he seemed to be merry and in high spirits. "Get ready, my boy," said Praxedis, "for this afternoon thou must go to the forest and hew down a fir-tree."

"That is none of my business," proudly said Audifax, "but I will do it, if you will also do me a favor."

"And what does Master Goat-herd desire?" asked Praxedis.

Audifax ran out, and on returning, triumphantly held up a dark-brown otter's skin, glossy and soft to the touch.

"Where did you get that from?" asked Praxedis.

"I caught it myself," replied Audifax, looking with sparkling eyes at his booty. "You are to make a fur-cap out of it for Hadumoth."

The Greek maid, who liked the boy well, promised to fulfill his request.

The Christmas-tree was brought home, and adorned with apples and wax-lights. The Duchess arranged everything in the great hall. A man from Stein on the Rhine had arrived and brought a basket, tightly sewn up in linen. He said that it was from St. Gall, and destined for Master Ekkehard. Dame Hadwig had the basket put unopened on the table with the other gifts.

Christmas-eve had arrived. All the inhabitants of the castle were assembled, dressed in their best; for on that day, there was to be no separation between masters and servants. Ekkehard read to them the story of Christ's nativity; and then they all went, two and two, into the great hall. There the Christmas-tree, with its many candles, lighted up the room splendidly. The last to enter were Audifax and Hadumoth. A little bit of tinsel, with which the nuts had been gilt, lay on the threshold. Audifax took it up. "That has fallen off from the wings of the Christ-child," whispered Hadumoth.

On large tables, the presents for the serving people were laid out; a piece of linen, or cloth, and some cakes. They rejoiced at the gener-

osity of their mistress, which was not always so manifest. Beside the share allotted to Hadumoth, verily lay the fur-cap. She cried when Praxedis kindly betrayed the giver to her. "I have got nothing for thee, Audifax," said she. "It is instead of the golden crown," whispered he.

Men- and maid-servants then offered their thanks to the Duchess, and went down again to the servants' hall. Dame Hadwig taking Ekkehard by the hand, led him to a little table apart. "This is meant for you," said she.

Between the almond-covered gingerbread heart and the basket, there lay a handsome velvet priest's cap, and a magnificent stole. Fringe and grounding were of gold thread, and embroideries of black silk interwoven with pearls ran through the latter, which was worthy indeed of a bishop.

"Let me see how it becomes you," said Praxedis, and in spite of their ecclesiastical character, she put the cap on his head, and threw the stole over his shoulders. Ekkehard cast down his eyes. "Splendid," exclaimed she, "you may offer your thanks!"

Shyly Ekkehard put down the consecrated gifts; and then drawing the parchment-roll from out his ample garment, he timidly presented it to the Duchess. Dame Hadwig held it unopened in her hand. "First we must open the basket," she said. "The best"—smilingly pointing to the parchment—"must come last."

So they cut open the basket. Buried in hay, and well preserved by winter's cold, there lay a huge mountain-cock. Ekkehard lifted it up. With outspread wings it measured above six feet. A letter accompanied this magnificent piece of feathered game.

"Read it aloud!" said the Duchess, whose curiosity was aroused. Ekkehard breaking the clumsy seal then read as follows:

"To the venerable Brother Ekkehard on the Hohentwiel, through Burkard the cloister-pupil, from Romeias the gate-keeper.

"If there were two of them, one would be for you; but as I have not been lucky enough to get two, this one is not for you, and yours will come later. It is sent to you, on account of not knowing her name; but she was with the Duchess in the monastery on that day, and wore a dress of the color of the green woodpecker; and her tresses were fastened round her head.

"For her,—the bird; on account of continual thinking, on the part of him who shot it, of the walk to the recluses. It must be well macerated and roasted, because otherwise tough. In case of other guests, she is herself to eat the white flesh on the back-bone, because that is the best; the brown often having a resinous taste.

"With it, I wish her all blessings and happiness. To you, venerable brother, likewise. If on your castle were wanting a watchman, porter or gamekeeper, you might recommend Romeias to the Duchess; who, on account of being mocked at by the steward, and of the complaints of that dragon, Wiborad, would gladly change his service. Practice in the office of gate-keeper, both giving admittance, and pitching out of strange visitors, can be testified to. The same with regard to hunting. He is already now looking toward the Hohentwiel, as if a cord were drawing him thither. Long life to you and to the Lady Duchess. Farewell."

A merry peal of laughter followed the reading of this curious epistle. Praxedis had blushed all over. "That is a bad reward," angrily exclaimed she, "that you write letters in other people's name to insult me!"

"Stop," said Ekkehard, "why should the letter not be genuine?"

"It would not be the first that was forged by a monk," was Praxedis' bitter reply. "Why need you laugh at that rough sportsman? He was by no means so bad!"

"Praxedis, be reasonable!" urged the Duchess. "Look at that mountain cock,—that has not been shot in the Hegau; and Ekkehard writes a somewhat different hand. Shall we give the petitioner a place on the Hohentwiel?"

"Pray don't!" cried Praxedis eagerly. "Nobody is to believe that—"

"Very well," said Dame Hadwig, in a tone bespeaking silence. She then opened Ekkehard's parchment-roll. The painting at the beginning had succeeded pretty well; and any doubt of its meaning, was done away with, by the superscription of the names: Hadwigis,

Virgilius and Ekkehard. A bold initial, with intricate golden arabesques headed the poem.

The Duchess was highly pleased. Ekkehard had never before given her any proof of his skill in art. Praxedis looked with an arch smile at the purple mantle, which the Duchess wore on the picture, as if she could tell something more about it.

Dame Hadwig made a sign to Ekkehard, to read and explain the poem. So he read out the following verses; which rendered into English are as follows:

"In nightly silence sat I once alone,
Deciphering some parchments old and deep;
When suddenly, a bright unearthly light,
Lit up my room. 'Twas not the moon's pale ray,—
And then, a radiant figure did I see.
Immortal smiles were playing round his mouth,
And in his rich and sable-colored locks,
He wore a crown of everlasting bay.

"And with his finger pointing to the book,
He then spoke thus: 'Be of good cheer, my friend,
I am no spirit, come to rob thy peace,
I merely came to wish thee all that's good.
All that which the dead letters here relate,
I once have written with my own heart's blood:
The siege of Troy, and then Æneas' flight
The wrath of Gods, and splendid Rona's birth.

"Almost a thousand years have since gone by.
The singer died,—his nation died with him.
My grave is still; but seldom do I hear
The distant shout, at merry vintage time
Or roar of breakers from the Cape Misene.
Yet lately was I call'd up from my rest,
By some rough gale, which coming from the North,
Brought me the tidings, that in distant lands,
Æneas' fate was being read again;
And that a noble princess, proud and fair
Had kindly deigned, to dress my epic song
In the hoild accents of her native tongue.

"We once believed, the land beyond the Alps
Was peopled by a rough, uncultured race;—
But now at home we long have beer forgot,
And in the stranger land we live again.
Therefore I come, to offer you my thanks;
The greatest boon, a minstrel can obtain
It is the praise from noble woman's lip.

"Hail to thy mistress, who in union rare,
Has strength and wisdom, in herself enshrined,
And like Minerva in the ranks of Gods,
In steel-clad armor sitteth on the throne,
Fair patron yet of all the peaceful arts.
Yet many years may she the scepter wield,
Surrounded by a strong and loving race,
And when you listen to the foreign strains,
Like armor rattling, and the clash of steel,—
Then think of me, it is Italia's voice,
'Tis Virgil greets the rock of Hohentwiel."

"Thus spoke he, waved his hand and disappear'd.
But I wrote down, still on that very night
What he had said; and to my mistress now
I shyly venture to present these leaves,
A humble gift, from faithful Ekkehard."

A short pause ensued, after he had finished the reading of his poem. Then the Duchess approached him with outstretched hand, "Ekkehard I thank you." They were the same words, which she had once said to him in the cloister courtyard at St. Gall; but the tones were still milder than at that time; her eyes sparkled and her lips wore a wondrous smile, like that of sweet-eyed fairies, which is said to be followed by a shower of delicious roses.

Then turning to Praxedis, she continued, "And thee I ought to condemn to ask his pardon on thy very knees for having but lately spoken with so little veneration of learned and ecclesiastical men." But the Greek maiden's eyes sparkled archly, well knowing that without her help and advice the shy monk would scarcely have been able to attain this success.

"In future I will give him all the reverence that's due," said she. "I will even weave him a garland if you desire it."

After Ekkehard had gone up to his little chamber, the two women still sat up together, and the Greek maid fetched a basin filled with water, some pieces of lead, and a metal spoon. "The lead-melting of last year has prophesied well," said she. "We could then not quite understand what the strange shape was which the lead assumed in the water; but now I am almost sure that it resembled a monk's cowl, and that our castle can now boast of."

The Duchess had become thoughtful. She listened to hear whether Ekkehard might not be returning.

"It is nothing but an idle amusement," said she.

"If it does not please my mistress," said the Greek, "then she might order our teacher to entertain us with something better. His Virgil is, no doubt, a far better oracle than our lead, when opened on a consecrated night with prayers and a blessing. I wonder now what part of his epic would foretell to us the events of the coming year?"

"Be silent," said the Duchess. "He spoke

but lately so severely on witchcraft; he would laugh at us."

"Then we shall have to content ourselves with the old way," returned Praxedis, holding the spoon with the lead in it over the flame of the lamp. The lead melted and trembled, and, muttering a few unintelligible words, she poured it into the water, the liquid metal making a hissing sound.

Dame Hadwig, with seeming indifference, cast a look at it when Praxedis held the basin up to the light. Instead of dividing into fantastic shapes, the lead had formed a long pointed drop. It glimmered faintly in Dame Hadwig's hand.

"That is another riddle for time to solve," laughed Praxedis. "The future this time closely resembles a pine-cone."

"Or a tear," said the Duchess, seriously, leaning her head on her right hand.

A loud noise from the ground floor interrupted the further investigation of the omen. Giggling and screams of the maid-servants, rough sounds of male voices interspersed with the shrill tones of a lute were heard in dire confusion coming up the passage. Respectfully, but beseechingly, the flying troop of the maids stopped at the threshold. The tall Erideron could scarcely refrain from scolding, and little Hadumoth was crying audibly. A groping, fumbling step was heard behind them, and presently there appeared an uncouth figure, wrapped in a bearskin, with a painted mask, in the form of a bear's snout, snarling and growling like a hungry bruin seeking for its prey. Now and then this apparition drew some inharmonious sounds from a lute which was hanging over his shaggy shoulders, suspended on a red ribbon; but as soon as the door of the hall was thrown open, and the rustling dress of the Duchess was heard approaching, the nightly phantom turned round, and slowly tumbled back into the echoing passage.

The old housekeeper then began; telling their mistress how they had sat merrily together rejoicing over their presents, when the monster had come in upon them, and had first executed a dance to his own lute's playing, but how he had afterward blown out the candles, threatening the frightened maidens with kisses and embraces; finally becoming so wild and obstreperous that they had all been obliged to take flight.

Judging from the hoarse laughter of the bear, there was strong reason for suspecting Master Spazzo's being hidden under the shaggy fur; who, after imbibing a considerable quantity of wine, had concluded his Christmas frolics in that way.

Dame Hadwig appeased her exasperated servants, and bade them go to bed. From the yard, however, was soon heard another cry of surprise. There they all stood in a group, steadfastly looking up at the tower; for the terrible bear had climbed up, and was now promenading on the top of it, lifting his shaggy head up to the stars, as if he wanted to send a greeting to his namesake in the firmament—the great bear.

The dark figure stood out in clear outlines against the pale, starry sky, and his growls sounded weirdly through the silent night; but no mortal was ever told what the luminous stars revealed to the wine-clouded brains of Master Spazzo, the chamberlain.

At the same midnight hour, Ekkehard knelt before the altar of the castle chapel, softly chanting the Christmas-matins, as the church rules prescribed.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OLD MAN OF THE HEIDENHOHE.

The remainder of the winter passed by monotonously; and in consequence swiftly enough. They prayed and worked; read Virgil and studied the grammar every day. Dame Hadwig had quite given up asking dangerous questions. During the Carnival, the neighboring nobility came to pay their respects to the Duchess. Those of Nellenburg and of Veringen; the old Count of Argengau with his daughters, the Guelphs from over the lake, and many others; and in those days there was much feasting, accompanied by more drinking. After that, it became lonely again on the top of the Hohentwiel.

March had come, and heavy gales blew over the land. On the first starlight night, a comet was seen in the sky; and the atork which lived comfortably on the castle-gable, had flown away

again, a week after its return. At all these things, people shook their heads. Further, a shepherd, driving his flock past the hill, told how he had met the army-worm,* which was a sure sign of coming war.

A strange, uncomfortable feeling took possession of all minds. The approach of an earthquake is often felt at a considerable distance; here, by the stopping of a spring; there, by the anxious flying about of birds; and in the same way the danger of war makes itself felt beforehand.

Master Spazzo, who had bravely sat behind the wine-jug in February, walked about with a downcast expression. "You are to do me a favor," said he one day to Ekkehard. "I have seen a dead fish in my dream, floating on its back. I wish to make my last will. The world has become old and is left standing on its last leg; and that also will soon give way. Good-by then Firnewine! Besides we are not very far off from the Millenium; and have lived merrily enough. Perhaps the last years count double. At any rate, mankind cannot go on much longer in that way. Erudition has gone so far, that in this one castle of Hohentwiel, more than half a dozen books lie heaped up; and when a fellow gets a good thrashing, he goes up to court and makes his complaint, instead of burning down his enemy's house over his head. With such a state of affairs, the world must naturally soon come to an end."

"Who is to be your heir, if all the world is to perish," was Ekkehard's reply.

A man of Augsburg, coming to the Reichenau, also brought evil tidings. Bishop Ulrich had promised a precious relic to the monastery—the right arm of the holy Theopontus, richly set in silver and precious stones. He now sent word that as the country was unsafe at present, he could not risk sending it.

The Abbot ordered the man to go to the Hohentwiel, there to inform the Duchess of the state of things.

"What is the good news?" asked she, on his presenting himself.

"There's not much good in them. I would rather take away better ones from here. The Suabian *arriere-ban* is up in arms; horses and riders, as many as have a sword and shield hanging on their walls, are ready. They are again on the road, between the Danube and the Rhine."

"Who?"

"The old enemies from yonder. The small fellows with the deep-set eyes and blunt noses. A good deal of our meat will again be ridden tender under the saddle this year."

He drew out of his pocket a strangely shaped small horseshoe, with a high heel to it. "Do you know that?—a little shoe, and a little shield, a crooked saber, and arrows fleet;—as quick as lightning, and never at rest; oh Lord, deliver us from this pest!"

"The Huns?" exclaimed the Duchess, in startled tones.

"If you prefer to call them Hungarians, or Hungry-ones,—'tis the same to me," said the messenger. "Bishop Pilgrim sent the tidings from Passau to Freising; whence it reached us. They have already swum over the Danube, and will be falling like locusts into the German lands; and as quick as winged Devils. 'You may sooner catch the wind on the plain, or the bird in the air,' is an old saying with us. May the plague take their horses! I for myself, only fear for my sister's child at Passau, the fair little Bertha."

"It is impossible!" said Dame Hadwig. "Can they have forgotten already what answer the messengers of the Exchequer returned them: 'We have iron and swords, and five fingers to our hands?' In the battle on the Inn, their heads were made acquainted with the truth of these words."

"Just for that very reason," said the man. "He who has been beaten once, likes to come back and beat the enemy in his turn. The messengers of the Exchequer, in reward for their bravery, have had their heads cut off;—so who will like taking their places in the foremost ranks?"

"We likewise know the path, which has been trodden by our ancestors, going to meet the enemy," proudly returned the Duchess.

She dismissed the man from Augsburg with a present. Then she sent for Ekkehard.

"Virgil will have to rest awhile," said she, telling him of the danger that was threatening from the Huns. This state of things was by

no means pleasant. The nobles had forgotten, in their many personal feuds, how to act and stand up together, whilst the Emperor, of Saxon origin and not over fond of the Suabians, was fighting in Italy, far away from the German frontier. So the passage to the Bodensee was open to the invaders; whose mere name caused a terror wherever it was pronounced. For years their tribes swarmed like will-o'-the-wisps, through the unsettled realm, which Charlemagne had left in the hands of unqualified successors. From the shores of the North Sea, where the ruins of Bremen spoke of their invasion, down to the southern point of Calabria, where the natives had to pay a ransom for each head,—fire and plunder marked their way.

"If they are not ghosts which the pious Bishop Ulrich has seen," said the Duchess, "they are certain to come to us also; so what is to be done? To meet them in open battle? Even bravery is folly, when the enemy is too numerous. To obtain peace, by paying tribute and ransom, thus driving them over to our neighbors' territory? Others have done that before, but we have other ideas of honor and dishonor. Are we to barricade ourselves on the Hohentwiel, and leave the land at their mercy, when we have promised our protection to our subjects?—never! What do you advise?"

"My knowledge does not extend to such matters," sorrowfully replied Ekkehard.

The Duchess was excited. "Oh, schoolmaster," cried she reproachfully, "why has Heaven not made you a warrior? Many things would be better then!"

Ekkehard, deeply hurt, turned to go. The words had entered his heart like an arrow, and remained there. The reproach had some truth in it, so it hurt him all the more.

"Ekkehard," called out Dame Hadwig, "you must not go. You are to serve the country with your knowledge, and what you do not know as yet, you may learn. I will send you to some one who is well versed in these matters. Will you undertake this mission for me?"

Ekkehard had turned round again. "I never have been unwilling to serve my mistress," said he.

"But then you must not be frightened, if he gives you but a rough and unfriendly reception. He has suffered many a wrong from past generations; and he does not know the present. Neither must you be shocked, if he should appear very old and fat to you."

He had listened attentively: "I do not quite understand you—"

"Never mind," said the Duchess. "You are to go over to Sipplingen to-morrow; close to Ueberlingen, where the rocky shore shelves down into the lake. These caverns were made, in the olden times, to serve as hiding-places. When you see the smoke of a fire rising out of the hill, go to that spot. There you will find the person I want you to see; and you must then speak with him about the Huns."

"To whom is my mistress sending me?" inquired Ekkehard, eagerly.

"To the old man of the Heidenhöhle," replied Dame Hadwig. "One does not know any other name for him hereabouts. But stop," continued she, "I must give you the watchword, in case of his refusing you admittance."

She opened a cupboard, and searching about amongst her trinkets and other small things, took out a tiny slate, on which were scrawled a few letters. "That you are to say to him, besides giving him my kindest greetings."

Ekkehard looked at the slate. It contained only the two insignificant Latin words, "*neque enim*!"—nothing else.

"That has no meaning," said he.

"Never mind, the old man knows well what it means for him."

Before cockcrow the next morning, Ekkehard passed out of the gate on the Hohentwiel, on horseback. The fresh morning air blew about his head, over which he now drew his hood. "Why has Heaven not made you a warrior; many things would be better then." These words of the Duchess accompanied him, like his own shadow. They were for him a spur to courageous resolutions. "When danger comes, she shall not find the schoolmaster sitting behind his books," thought he.

His horse went on at a good pace. In a few hours he rode over the woody hills that separate the Untersee from the lake of Ueberlingen. At the ducal tenement of Sernatingen, the blue mirror of the lake lay stretched out before his

eyes. There he left his horse in the care of the steward, and continued the path leading along the shore on foot.

At a projecting point he stopped awhile to gaze at leisure at the fine view before him. The eye, here meeting with no obstacle, could glance over the waters to the distant Rhetian Alps, which, like a crystal wall, rise heavenward, forming the background of the landscape.

Where the rocks of red sandstone steeply arise out of the lake, the path mounted upward. Steps hewn in the rocks made the ascent easier. Here and there apertures serving as windows broke the uniformity of the walls, indicating by their deep shadows the places where, in the times of the Roman supremacy, unknown men had dug these caverns as an asylum, in the same way as the catacombs.

The ascent was fatiguing enough. Now he had reached a level, only a few steps in circumference, on which young grass was growing. In front, there was an entrance into the rock, about the height of a man. Out of this there now rushed, violently barking, a huge black dog, which, stopping short about two paces from Ekkehard, held itself ready with teeth and fangs to fly at him, keeping its eyes steadily fixed on the monk, who could not move without risk of the dog's attacking him. His position was certainly not an enviable one, retreat being impossible, and Ekkehard not carrying arms about him. So he remained immovable, facing his enemy, when at an opening there appeared the head of a man with gray hair, piercing eyes, and a reddish beard.

"Call back the dog!" cried Ekkehard.

A few moments afterward the gray-haired man appeared at the entrance, armed with a spear.

"Back, Mummolin!" cried he.

The huge animal reluctantly obeyed; and not until the old man had threatened it with his spear did it retreat, growling.

"Your dog ought to be killed, and hung up nine feet over your door until it fell to pieces," said Ekkehard, angrily. "It nearly made me fall over into the lake," turning round, and beholding the lake lying at his feet from the perpendicular height.

"In the Heidenhöhlen the common laws have no force," defiantly replied the old man. "With us, 'tis—keep off two steps, or we split your skull."

Ekkehard wanted to go on.

"Stop there," continued the stranger, barring the passage with his spear. "Not so fast if you please. Where are you going to?"

"To the old man of the Heidenhöhle."

"To the old man of the Heidenhöhle?" angrily repeated the other. "Have you no more respectful term for that personage, you yellow beaked cowl-bearer?"

"I know no other name," replied Ekkehard somewhat abashed. "My greeting is, *neque enim*."

"That sounds better," said the old man in a softer tone. "From whence do you come?"

"From the Hohentwiel. I am to tell you—"

"Stop, I am not he whom you seek. I am merely his servant Rauching. I will announce you."

Considering the appearance of those barren, rocky walls and the black dog, this formality seemed somewhat out of place. Ekkehard was kept waiting some time. It was as if preparations for his reception were being made. At last Rauching made his reappearance. "Be pleased to enter." So they walked along a dark passage that widened at the end, admitting them into a chamber, which had been hewn in the rocks by human hands, high and spacious, with an arched ceiling. A rough paneling partly covered the walls. The openings for the windows were wide and airy; showing a piece of the lake and hills, like a picture in a frame. Some bright, warm sunbeams streamed in, lighting up the otherwise dark chamber. Here and there, traces of stooce benches were visible; while a high-backed chair, likewise of stone, and resembling a bishop's seat in old churches, stood beside the window. In it a figure was seated. It was a strange human form, of mighty dimensions. The huge head rested heavily between the broad shoulders; forehead and cheeks were deeply furrowed. Round his temples were a few scanty white curls; whilst his mouth was almost entirely toothless,—signs which spoke of the wondrous age of the man. Round his shoulders hung a cloak of undecided color, the back of which, hidden

* A kind of caterpillars, migrating in large numbers.

by the chair, was no doubt threadbare enough; the seams showing here and there many a patch. He wore a pair of coarse boots, and by his side lay an old hat, with a dusty old trimming of fox's fur. In a niche in the wall, stood a chess-board with carved ivory pieces. A game seemed just to have been finished; the king mated by a knight, and two bishops.

"Who comes to the forgotten one?" asked the old man, in a trembling voice. Then Ekkehard bowing his head before him, told his name, and who had sent him there.

"You have brought an evil watchword with you. Do people still speak of Luitward of Vercelli?"

"Whose soul be damned," added Rauching. "I have never heard anything about him," said Ekkehard.

"Tell him, Rauching, who Luitward of Vercelli was. It would be a pity if he were to die in the memory of men."

"He was the greatest rascal that ever the sun shone upon," was Rauching's reply.

"Tell him also, what is the meaning of *neque enim*."

"There is no gratitude in this world; and of an emperor's friends, even the best is a traitor."

"Even the best is a traitor," murmured the old man, lost in thought. His eye now fell on the chess-board. "Ah, yes," muttered he faintly, "checkmated, mated by bishops and knights"—he clenched his fist, and made a movement as if to rise; then falling back with a deep sigh, he raised his shriveled hand to his forehead, resting his heavy head on it.

"The headache"—said he, "the cursed headache!"

"Mummolin!" cried Rauching.

With bounding steps the black dog came in; and on seeing the old man with bent-down head, he whinnying crept up to him, and licked his forehead. "'Tis well," said the old man; after awhile, lifting himself up again.

"Are you ill?" kindly asked Ekkehard.

"Ill?" rejoined he,— "may be that it is a sort of illness! I have been visited by it such a long time, that it seems quite like an old acquaintance. Have you ever had the headache? I advise you, never to go out to battle, when you are attacked by a headache; and by no means to conclude a peace. It may cost you a realm, that headache—"

"Could not some physician—" began Ekkehard.

"The wisdom of physicians, has in this case, long come to an end. They have done their best for me," pointing to his forehead, where two old scars crossed each other.

"Look here! if they want you to try that remedy, you must not do so. In my younger days they hung me up by the feet;—then they made some cuts in my head; thus taking away some blood, and part of my intellects, without helping me. At Cremona (Zedekias was the name of the Hebrew sage), they consulted the stars, and placed me on a mulberry-tree at midnight. It was a long exorcism with which they drove the headache into the tree, but it did not help me. In the German lands, they ordered me to take powdered crabs' eyes, mixed with the dust of St. Mark's grave; and a draught of wine from the lake after it: all in vain! Now I've got used to it. The worst is licked away by Mummolin's rough tongue. Come here my brave Mummolin, who has never betrayed me yet."

He stopped, almost breathless, and caressed the dog.

"My message—" Ekkehard was beginning, —but the old man waved his hand to him and said: "Have patience yet awhile; 'tis not well to speak with an empty stomach. You must be hungry. Nothing is more awful and more holy than hunger—said that dean of yore, when his friend and guest ate up five of the six trouts before him, leaving only the smallest on the plate. He who has had something to do with the world does not easily forget that saying. Rauching, prepare our meal."

So Rauching went into a neighboring closet, which had been fitted up as a kitchen. The provisions were kept in different niches, and a few moments later, a white wreath of smoke curled up from the rocky chimney. Shortly after, the cooking was done. A stone slab served as table. The crowning piece of the frugal repast was a pike; but the pike was old; moss growing on its head, and its flesh was tough as leather. A jug of reddish looking wine was also brought by Rauching; but that had grown on the Sippling hills, a vintage

which still enjoys the reputation of being the most sour of all the sour wines produced on the lake. Rauching waited upon them during the meal.

"Well, what may your business be?" asked the old man, when the meager repast was ended.

"Evil tidings; the Huns are invading the country. Their hoofs will soon be treading the Suabian ground."

"Good!" cried the old man. That serves you right. Are the Normans also approaching?"

"You speak strangely," said Ekkehard.

The eyes of the old man lighted up. "And if enemies were to spring up around you, like mushrooms, you have deserved it well; you and your masters. Rauching, fill the glass; the Huns are coming,—*neque enim*! Now you will have to swallow the soup, which your masters have salted for you. A great and proud empire had been founded, extending from the shores of the Ebro to the Raab in the Danish land, into which not a rat could have entered, without faithful watchmen catching it. And this, the great Emperor Charlemagne—"

"God bless him," exclaimed Rauching.

"—left behind him; strong and powerful. The tribes which had once put a stop to the Roman supremacy were all united as they ought to be; and in those days the Huns slyly kept behind their hedges on the Danube, the weather not being favorable for them; and as soon as they tried to move, their wooden camp-town in Pannonia was destroyed to the last chip by the brave Franks. Later, the great ones in Germany began to feel sorely, that not every one of them could be the master of the world; so each one must needs establish a government in his own territory. Sedition, rebellion, and high-treason, well suited their tastes; and so they dethroned the last of Charlemagne's descendants, who held the reins of the world. The representative of the unity of the realm has become a beggar, who must eat un-buttered water-gruel;—and now, your lords who preferred Arnulf the bastard and their own arrogance, have got the Huns on their heels, and the old times are coming back, as King Attila had them painted. Do you know the picture in the palace at Milan?"

"There the Roman Emperor was painted sitting on the throne, with Scythian princes lying at his feet; till one day King Attila, chancing to ride by, gave a long and steadfast look at the picture, and laughingly said: 'quite right; only I'll make a small alteration.' And he had his own features given to the man on the throne; those kneeling before him, pouring out bags of tributary gold, being now the Roman Cæsars. The picture is still to be seen."

"You are thinking of bygone tales," said Ekkehard.

"Of bygone tales?" exclaimed the old man. "For me there has been nothing new, these last forty years, but want and misery. Bygone tales! 'Tis well for him who still remembers them, in order that he may see how the sins of the fathers are visited on the children and children's children. Do you know why Charlemagne shed tears once in his life?—when they announced to him the arrival of the Norman sea-robbers: 'as long as I live,' said he, 'tis mere child's play, but I grieve for my grandsons.'"

"As yet we have still an Emperor and a realm," said Ekkehard.

"Have you still one?" said the old man, draining his glass of sour Sippling wine, and shivering after it, "well, I wish him joy. The corner-stones are dashed to pieces; and the building is crumbling away. With a clique of presumptuous nobles, no realm can exist. Those who ought to obey are lording it over the others; and he who ought to reign must wheedle and flatter, instead of commanding. Methinks, I have heard of one to whom his faithful subjects sent the tribute in pebbles, instead of silver, and the head of the Count who was sent to collect it lay beside the stones, in the bag. Who has avenged it?"

"The Emperor is fighting and gathering laurels in Italy," rejoined Ekkehard.

"Oh, Italy! Italy!" continued the old man.

"That will still become a thorn in the German flesh. That was the only time the great Charles—"

"Whom God bless," exclaimed Rauching.

"—allowed himself to be entrapped. It was a sad day, on which they crowned him at Rome; and no one has chuckled so gleefully as he on St. Peter's chair. He was in want of us,—but what have we ever had to do in Italy? Look there! Has that mountain-wall been

erected heavenward, for nothing? All that, which lies on the other side, belongs to those in Byzantium; and it is all right so; for Greek cunning is better there than German strength; but later generations have found nothing better to do than to perpetuate the error of Charlemagne. The good example he left them, they have trampled upon; and whilst there was plenty to do in the East and North, they must needs run off to Italy, as if the great magnet lay behind the Roman hills. I have often thought about it, what could have driven us in that direction; and if it was not the Devil himself, it can only have been the good wine."

Ekkehard had become saddened by the old man's speeches, who, seeming to feel this, said: "Do not regard what a buried man tells you. We here in the Heidenhöhlen cannot make it any better; but the truth has many a time taken up her abode in caverns, whilst ignorance was striding at a great pace through the land."

"A buried man?" said Ekkehard inquiringly.

"You may for all that, drink a bumper with him," jestingly replied the mysterious stranger.

"It was necessary that I should die before the world; for the headache and the rascals had brought me into discredit. You need not therefore, stare at me so, little monk. Sit down here on the stone bench, and I will tell you about it and you can make a song of it, to play on the lute. There once lived an Emperor, who had few happy days; for his realm was large, and he himself was big and stout, and the headache tormented him; ever since the day that he mounted the throne. Therefore he took unto himself a chancellor, who had got a fine head, and could think better than his master; for he was thin and meager like a pole, and had no headache. The Emperor had raised him from obscure birth, for he was only the son of a blacksmith; and he bestowed favors on him, doing all that his chancellor advised him to do. Aye, he even concluded a miserable peace with the Normans; for his counselor told him, that this matter was too insignificant; and that he had more important things to do than to worry himself about a handful of pirates. At the same time, the chancellor went to the Emperor's spouse, and beguiled her weak heart; playing on the lute before her. Besides this he carried off by force the daughters of some noble Allemannians; and finally joined in a league, with the Emperor's enemies. And when the Emperor at last called together a great diet to remedy the state of affairs, his gaunt chancellor was among the foremost who spoke against him. With the words '*neque enim*,' he began his speech, and then he proved to them, that they must dethrone their Emperor; and he spoke so venomously and treacherously against the peace with the Normans, which he had himself concluded,—that they all fell off from their master, like withered leaves when the autumn winds are shaking the tree. And they cried that the time for the stout ones was at an end; and then and there they dethroned him; so that he who had entered Tribur, with a threefold crown on his head, had nothing when he went away that he could call his own, but what he wore on his back; and at Mainz he sat before the Bishop's castle, glad when they presented him with a dish of soup. The brave chancellor's name was Luitward of Vercelli. May God reward him according to his deserts, and the Empress Richardis and the rest of them likewise."

"But when later the people in Suabia took pity on the poor outlaw, and gave him a little bit of land, whereby to earn a scanty livelihood; and when they thought of sending an army to fight for his rights, Luitward dispatched murderers against him. It was a wild night for the tenement of Neidingen; the storm was breaking the branches of the trees, and the shutters were rattling violently. The dethroned Emperor not being able to sleep on account of the headache, had mounted on the roof, to let the storm cool his burning forehead, when they broke in to murder him. It is not a very pleasant feeling I can tell you, to sit in the cold night air on the roof, with a heavy aching head, and hear how people are regretting down stairs, that they cannot strangle you, or hang you over the draw-well."

"He who has lived to hear that had better die at once. The stout Meginhard at Neidingen, had fallen down from a tree and was killed just at the right time; so that they could lay him on the bier, and spread the news in the country that the dethroned Emperor had paid his tribute to grim King Death. They say that it was a fine procession, when they carried him

to the Reichenau. The heavens are said to have opened, casting a ray of light on the bier; and the funeral must have been touching indeed, when they buried him on the right side of the altar. "That he had been stripped of his honor, and bereft of his kingdom, was a trial imposed from above, to cleanse and purify his soul, and as he bore it patiently, it is to be hoped that the Lord rewarded him with the crown of eternal life, to comfort him for the crown which he had lost"—thus they preached in the cloister-church, not knowing that he, whom they imagined they had buried, was at that same hour entering the solitude of the Heidenhöhlen, laden with all his trifling belongings, and leaving behind him a curse on the world."

The old man laughed. "Here it is safe and quiet enough to think of old times. Let's drink a bumper to the dead! And Luitward has been cheated after all; for though his Emperor wears an old hat instead of a golden crown, and drinks the sour juice of the Sippling grape instead of the sparkling Rhine wine, he is still alive: whilst the meager ones, and all their race are dead, long ago. And the stars will prove right after all, in prophesying at his birth that he would leave this false world in the roar of battle. The Huns are coming! Oh, come thou also soon, thou joyful end!"

Ekkehard had listened with the utmost attention. "Oh, Lord, how wonderful are Thy ways," he exclaimed, attempting to kneel down and kiss the old man's hands; but he prevented him, saying: "All these things have been done away with, long ago. Take an example—"

"Germany has greatly wronged you, and your race," Ekkehard was beginning to say, but the old man interrupted him, saying: "Germany! I do not bear her a grudge. May she prosper and flourish, undisturbed by enemies; and find some ruler who will make her powerful again, and who is not plagued with the headache when the Normans come back; and not have a chancellor whose name is Luitward of Vercelli. But those who have divided his garments amongst them, and cast lots for his vesture—"

"May Heaven punish them with fire and brimstone," said Rauching, in the background. "And what answer shall I give to my mistress?" asked Ekkehard, after having finished his beaker.

"With regard to the Huns?" said the old man. "I believe that is simple enough. Tell the Duchess to go into the woods, and to see what the hedgehog does when an enemy is coming too near. It curls itself up into a ball, and presents its prickles; and he who lays hands on it is wounded. Suabia has got plenty of lances. Let them do the same. You monks will also not be the worse for carrying the spear. And if your mistress wishes to know still more, then you may tell her the adage which rules in the Heidenhöhlen. Rauching, what is it?"

"Keep two steps off, or we'll break your head," he replied.

"And if there be a question of peace, then tell her, the old man of the Heidenhöhle once concluded a bad one, and that he would never do so again; although his headache were as bad as ever; and that he would much rather saddle his own horse, at the sound of the war-trumpet, —if you outlive his last ride, you may say a mass for him."

The old man had spoken with a strange excitement. Suddenly his voice broke off; his breath became short, almost groaning, and bending his head, he said: "It is coming on again."

Rauching hastily presented him with a draught of water; but the oppression did not subside.

"We must try the remedy," said Rauching. From a corner of the chamber, he rolled forward a heavy block of stone, about a man's height, bearing some traces of sculpture, which they had found in the cavern; a mystic monument, belonging to former inhabitants. He placed it upright against the wall. It appeared as if a human head bearing a bishop's miter had once been represented on it. Rauching now seized a thick, knotty stick, and placing another in the hands of the old man, began thrashing away at the stone image, and pronouncing slowly and solemnly the following words: "Luitward of Vercelli! Traitor and adulterer, *neque enim!* Ravisher of nuns, and foul rebel, *neque enim!* Heavily fell the blows, and a faint smile lighted up the withered features of the old man. He arose and began striking away at it also, with feeble arms.

"It has been written, that a bishop must lead a blameless life," said he in the same tone as Rauching,—"take this for the peace with the Normans! This for the seduction of the Empress Richarda, *neque enim!*" This for the diet at Tribur, and that for the election of Arnulf! *neque enim!*"

The cavern rang with the resounding blows; the stone image standing immovable, under the fierce attacks. The old man became more and more relieved; warming himself by giving vent to the old hatred, which for years had nourished his miserable life.

Ekkehard did not quite understand the meaning of what he saw. He began to feel uncomfortable and so took his leave.

"I trust you have been enjoying yourself, at the expense of the old fool up there," said the steward of Sernatlegen to him, when he brought out his saddled horse. "Does he still believe that he has lost a crown and a kingdom? Ha, ha!"

Ekkehard rode away. In the beech-wood, the new green leaves were sprouting forth, telling of the coming Spring. A young monk from the Reichenau was going the same road. Bold and gay, like the clashing of arms, his song floated through the solitary wood:

"Arise ye men of Germany, ye warriors gay;
With warlike song, and watchman's call, drive sleep away!
At every hour make the round, from gate to wall,
Lest unawares the enemy upon you fall,
From walls and towers then be heard, *eia vigila!*
The echoes all repeating, *eia vigila!*"

It was the song which the night-guards sang at Mutina in Italy, while the Huns were attacking the town in which the Bishop resided. The monk had stood himself on guard at the gate of St. Geminianus, three years ago, and well knew the hissing of the Hunnic arrows; and when a presentiment of new battles is, so to say in the air, the old songs rise again in the minds of men.

CHAPTER XII.

THE APPROACH OF THE HUNS.

The old man is right," said Dame Hadwig, when Ekkehard reported to her the result of his mission. "When the enemy threatens,—prepare, and when he attacks us,—beat him; that is so simple that one really need not ask any one's advice. I believe that the habit of long thinking and wavering in critical moments, has been sown by the enemy, like weeds in the German lands. He who doubts is near falling; and he who misses the right moment for action often digs his own grave. We will get ready."

The exciting and dangerous position put the Duchess into high spirits; just as trout delight in the turbulent waters, rushing over rocks and stones, while they sicken in a still lake. An example of courage and energy given by one in power is never lost on inferiors. So they were all busy, making preparations for the reception of the enemy. From the tower on the Hohentwiel, visible at a great distance, the war-flag floated forth upon the air; and through the woods and fields, unto the remotest farmsteads, hidden in lonely mountain glens, the war-trumpet was heard; calling together all those who were capable of bearing arms; poverty alone freeing any one from the military service. Every man possessing more than two acres of land was obliged to place himself under arms, and to present himself at the first call. The Hohentwiel was to be headquarters; Nature herself having made it a fortress, Swift messengers were riding on horseback through the Hegau; and people began stirring everywhere in the land. Behind the dark fir-woods, the charcoal-burners had formed a corps. "This will do," said one of them, swinging a heavy poker over his head, as if about to strike down an enemy. "I will also fight with the rest of them."

At the doors of the priests, and at those of the old and sick, the messengers also knocked. Those who could not fight were to pray for the others. This decree resounded through the land, reaching also the monastery in St. Gall.

Ekkehard likewise went to the peaceful little island of Reichenau, as the Duchess had desired. This mission would have been highly distasteful to him if the reason for it had been a different one. He was to bring an invitation to the brotherhood to come to the Hohentwiel in case of danger.

There he found everything already in a state of excitement. The brothers were promenading beside the fountain, in the mild spring

air; but not one of them was seriously thinking of enjoying the fine weather and blue sky. They were talking of the evil times, and bolder counsel what was to be done. The idea of leaving their quiet cells did not appear to please them at all.

"St. Mark," one of them had said, "will protect his disciples, and by striking the enemy with blindness cause them to ride past; or he will raise the waves of the Bodensee to devour them, as the Red Sea swallowed up the Egyptians."

But old Simon Bardo replied: "This calculation is not quite safe; and when a place is not fortified by towers and walls, a retreat might after all be the better plan. Wherever a shilling's worth is still to be got, no Hun will ride by, and if you put a gold piece on the grave of a dead man, his hand will grow out of the earth to seize it."

"Holy Pirminius!" said the gardener, in doleful accents, "who then is to mind the fruits and vegetables in the garden, if we must go?"

"And the chickens," said another, whose chief delight was in the poultry-yard,— "have we then bought the three dozen turkeys merely for the enemy?"

"If one were to write an impressive letter to them," proposed a third,— "they surely cannot be such barbarians as to harm God and His saints."

Simon Bardo, with a pitying smile, then said: "Thou hadst better become a shepherd, and drink a decoction of camomile,—(thou who wouldst write impressive letters to the Huns! Oh, that I had brought my old firework-maker Kedrenus with me over the Alps! Then we should cast a light on the enemy far brighter than the mild moonshine in the flower-garden, which called up such tender recollections in the soul of Abbot Walsfrid. We should then sink ships, and command the whole shore with our long fire-tubes. Hurrab! How they would be scattered to the winds when our missiles would be flying through the air like fiery dragons, pouring down a rain of burning naphtha. But what does any of you know about such fire? Oh, Kedrenus, thou paragon of firework-makers!"

Ekkehard had entered the monastery, and asked for the Abbot. A serving brother showed him up to his apartments; but he was neither there, nor was he to be seen anywhere else.

"He will most likely be in the armory," said a monk passing by. So the serving brother led Ekkehard to the armory, which was situated high up in the tower. There, quantities of arms and harness were heaped up; with which the monastery provided its warriors for the arriaban. Abbot Wazmann stood there, hidden by a cloud of dust. He had had the armor taken down from the walls, to examine it. Dust and cob-webs bore witness to its having rested for a long while. During the examination, the Abbot had not forgotten to provide for himself. His upper garment lay on the ground before him; and in its place, he had donned a coat of mail, with the help of a fair-haired cloister pupil. He was now stretching out his arms to see whether it fitted him tightly and comfortably.

"Come nearer!" cried he, on seeing Ekkehard. "The reception is fitted to the times!"

Ekkehard then communicated the Duchess's invitation to him.

"I should have asked for this myself," replied he, "if you had not come." He had seized a long sword, and made a cut in the air with it; so that Ekkehard started back a pace or two. From the swift, whizzing sound which it produced, one could guess that the hand which held it was not unaccustomed to its use.

"Yes, 'tis getting serious," said he. "Down in Altdorf in the Shussenthal, the Huns have already effected their entrance; and we shall soon see the flames of Lindau, reflected in the water. Do you wish to choose a suitable armor for yourself also? This one, with the shoulder-strap, will defeat every blow or thrust as well as the finest linen shirt ever spun by a virgin in holy nights."

Ekkehard courteously declined the offer, and then went down, accompanied by the Abbot; who seemed to enjoy his coat of mail thoroughly. Throwing his brown habit over it, like a true champion of the Lord, he made his appearance amongst the anxious brotherhood still assembled in the garden.

"St. Mark appeared to me this night, pointing to the Hohentwiel," cried the Abbot. "Thither, thou shalt bring my remains, to save

them from desecration by the hands of the heathen," he said. "Be up and get ready! With prayers and fasting your souls have fought to the present moment with the Evil One; but now your fists are to prove that you are warriors indeed; for those who come are the sons of the Devil. Witches and demons begot them in the Asiatic deserts. All their doings are vile wickedness, and when their time comes they will all go back to hell!"

During this appeal, even the most careless of the brothers became convinced that danger was near. A murmur of approbation ran through the ranks; for the cultivation of science had not yet made them so effeminate, but that they looked on a warlike expedition as a very desirable pastime.

With his back leaning against an apple-tree, stood Rudimann the cellarer; an ominous frown on his forehead. Ekkehard went up to him, wishing to embrace him, as a sign that a general calamity was wiping out the old quarrel; but Rudimann, waving him off, said: "I know what you mean." Then drawing a coarse thread out of the seam of his garment, he threw it to the ground, and placed his foot on it.

"As long as a Hunnic horse is treading German ground, all enmity shall be torn out of my heart, as this thread is out of my garment; but if we both outlive the coming battles, we will take it up again, as it were meet." After these words he turned round, and descended into the cellar, there to attend to important business. In due order, the large tuns lay there in the arched vaults; and not one of them gave back a hollow sound when struck. Rudimann had ordered some masons, and now had a small antechamber, which generally served for the keeping of fruit and vegetable, arranged, as if it were the cloister-cellar. Two small casks, and one larger one, were put there. "If the enemy finds nothing, he becomes suspicious," said the cellarer to himself, "and if the Sippinger choice wine, which I sacrifice, only does its duty, many a Hun will find some difficulty in continuing his journey."

The masons had already got ready the square stones, to wall up the inner cellar door,—when Rudimann once more stepped in. Walking up to an old rotten looking tun, he tapped it; and filling a small jug, emptied this with a most melancholy expression; and then, folding his hands as in prayer, he said: "May God protect thee, noble red wine of Meersburg!" A solitary tear stood glistening in his eye.

In all parts of the monastery, busy hands were preparing for the coming danger. In the armory the harness and arms were being divided. Unfortunately there were many heads, and but few helmets. Then, the leather-work was in a somewhat dilapidated condition, and stood in great need of repair.

In the treasury the Abbot was superintending the packing up of precious articles and holy relics. Many heavy boxes were thus filled. The golden cross with the holy blood; the white marble vase, which had once held the wine at the marriage of Cana; coffin with the remains of martyrs; the Abbot's staff, and the golden pixes,—all were carefully packed up, and brought over to the ships. Some were also carrying off the heavy green emerald, weighing fully twenty-eight pounds.

"The emerald, you may leave behind," said the Abbot.

"The parting gift of the great Emperor Charles? The rarest jewel of the cathedral? Another such the bowels of the earth do not contain?" asked the serving brother.

"I know a glassmaker in Venetia, who can easily make another, if the Huns should carry this one away," carelessly replied the Abbot. So they put the jewel back into the cupboard.

Before evening had set in, everything was ready for the departure. Then the Abbot commanded the brothers to assemble in the courtyard. All appeared, with the exception of one.

"Where is Heribald?" asked he.

Heribald was a pious monk, whose ways had many a time cheered up a desponding brother. In his infancy, his nurse had let him fall on the stone floor, and from that time, he had had a weakness of the brain; a certain softness,—but he possessed an excellent heart, and took as much delight in God's beautiful world as any stronger-minded being.

So they went to look for Heribald, and found him up in his cell. The yellow and gray cloister-cat seemed to have offended him in some way; for he had fastened the cord which generally served him as a girdle round its body;

and hung it up on a nail in the ceiling. The poor old animal hung thus suspended in the air, screeching and mewling pitifully, whilst Heribald rocked it gently to and fro, talking Latin to it.

"Come on, Heribald!" called out his companions. "We must leave the island."

"Let him fly who will," replied the idiot. "Heribald won't go away."

"Be good, Heribald, and follow us; the Abbot commands you."

Then Heribald pulled off his shoe, and held it out to the brothers. "The shoe was already torn last year," said he. "Then Heribald went to the camerarius and said: 'give me my yearly portion of leather, that I may make myself a new pair of shoes.' But the camerarius replied: 'if thou didst not tread thy shoes all awry, then they would not tear,—and so he refused the leather. Upon this, Heribald complained of the camerarius to the Abbot, but he said: 'a fool, as thou art, can well go bare-foot.' Now Heribald has no decent shoes to put on, and he will not go amongst strangers with his torn ones."

Such sound reasons could not well be argued away, so the brothers seized him, intending to carry him off by force; but no sooner had they reached the passage than Heribald broke away from them, and rushed as quick as lightning to the church, and from thence up the stairs that led to the belfry. When he had reached the very top, he drew up the small wooden ladder after him, so that there was no possibility of getting at him.

They reported to the Abbot how matters stood. "Well, then we must leave him behind," said he. "Children and fools, are protected by a guardian-angel of their own."

Two large barges lay waiting at the shore, to receive the fugitives. They were strong, well-built ships, furnished with oars and masts. In some smaller boats, the serving people, and all others who lived on the Reichenau, sailed with all their chattels and belongings. The whole looked a strange medley.

One bark, filled by the maid-servants, and commanded by Kerhildis the upper maid, had already steered off; without its crew knowing what place they were bound for; but fear, this time, was stronger than their curiosity to see the mustaches of strange warriors.

And now the brotherhood was approaching the shore; presenting a strange sight. The greater part were armed; some chanting the litany, others carrying the coffin of St. Mark; the Abbot with Ekkehard walking at the head of the cloister pupils. They all cast back a sorrowful look toward the home where they had spent so many years; and then they went on board.

No sooner had they fairly started, than all the bells began to ring merrily. The weak-minded Heribald was ringing a farewell greeting to them. Afterward, he appeared on the top of the cathedral tower, and called down with a powerful voice, "*dominus vobiscum*," and here and there one of the monks responded in the accustomed way: "*et cum spiritu tuo*."

A keen breeze was curling the waves of the lake, which had only lately thawed. Numerous large ice-blocks were still floating about, so that the ships often had great difficulty in proceeding.

The monks who were taking care of St. Mark's coffin, anxiously cowered down when the waves sometimes entered their boat; but bold and erect Abbot Wazmann's tall figure towered above the rest; his habit fluttering in the wind.

"The Lord is at our head," said he, "as He was in the fiery pillar before the people of Israel. He is with us on our flight, and He will be with us in the hour of our happy return."

In a clear, moonshiny night the monks of the Reichenau ascended the Hohentwiel, where they found everything prepared for their reception. In the small castle church, they deposited the coffin of their saint; six of the brothers being ordered to stay beside it; watching and praying.

The courtyard, on the next morning, was transformed into a bustling bivouac. Some hundred armed vassals were already assembled, and from the Reichenau, ninety more combatants were added to their numbers. They were all eagerly preparing for the coming contest. Already before sunrise the hammering of the blacksmiths awakened the sleepers. Arrows and lances were being made. Near the fountain in the yard stood the big grinding-stone, on which the rusty blades were sharpened. The

old basketmaker of Weiterdingen had also been fetched up; and was sitting with his boys under the great linden tree; covering the long boards destined for shields, with a strong plaiting of willow branches. Over this a tanned skin was fastened, and the shield was complete. Round a merry fire others were seated, melting lead, to make sharp-pointed missiles for the slings. Bludgeons and heavy clubs of ash were also hardened in the flames. "If one of these knocks at the skull of a heathen," said Rudimann swinging a heavy club over his head, "it is sure to be admitted."

All who had served before in the arrier ban, were put under the command of Simon Bardo, the Greek field-marshal. "A man who wants to pass his old days peaceably, must come to Germany," he had jestingly said to the Duchess; but in reality the clatter of arms strengthened his mind like old Rhine wine. With an untrusting zeal he drilled the unexperienced men in the use of arms; and every day for many an hour the stone flags of the courtyard resounded with the heavy, regular tramp of the monks, who in closed ranks, were being taught the art of a spear attack. "With you, one could verily knock down walls when once your blood is up," said the old soldier with an approving nod.

Those of the younger men, who possessed a good eye and flexible sinews, were enlisted among the archers. These also, practiced industriously, shooting at a target. Once, a loud cry of delight was heard in the courtyard, where the jolly fellows had manufactured a straw figure, wearing a crown of owl's feathers, and holding a six-corded whip in its hand. A small piece of red cloth in the shape of a heart, fastened in front, was the mark.

"Attila the King of the Huns!" cried the archers, "who can hit him right in the heart?"

"Boasting is easy enough," said Dame Hadwig, who was looking down from her balcony; "but though on an evil bridal night, Death felled him, his spirit is still living in the world; and I fear that even those coming after us will yet have trouble enough to banish his dread memory."

"If they could only shoot away at him, as well as they do now down there," said Praxedis, when a triumphant shout was heard. The straw figure tottered and fell; an arrow having hit the heart.

Ekkehard came up to the hall. He had exercised with the others, and his face glowed with the unwonted exertion; whilst the helmet had left a red stripe on his forehead. In the excitement of the moment, he had forgotten to leave his lance outside the door.

With evident pleasure Dame Hadwig stood looking at him. He was no longer the timid teacher of Latin. Bowing his head before the Duchess, he said: "Our brothers in the Lord, from the Reichenau, bid me tell you that a great thirst is besetting their ranks."

Dame Hadwig laughed merrily. "Let them put a tun of cool beer in the courtyard. Until the Huns are all driven out of the country, our cellarer is not to complain about the emptying of his tuns." Then pointing at the bustling life in the courtyard, she added: "Life, after all, brings us richer and more manifold pictures than all poets can paint. You were hardly prepared for such a change of things, eh?"

But Ekkehard would allow nothing approaching a slight to come near his beloved Virgilius.

"Allow me," said he, leaning on his spear, "all that we now see, you will find word for word in the *Æneid*; as if there was to be nothing new under the sun. Would you not fancy that Virgil stood here on this balcony, looking down on yonder busy crowd;—when he sang, at the beginning of the war in Latium:

"Yonder the shields for the head, are with willow branches surrounded;
Others the armor of ore, are to shining polish restoring.
There, the protecting greaves, of glittering silver are forged.
Sickle and plough for the time, are dishonored and wholly forgotten,
All are busily mending the rusty swords of their fathers;
Bugles are heard in the land, and the watchword to all is now given."

"Yes, that really fits the situation wonderfully well," said Dame Hadwig; "but can you also predict the issue of the coming battles, from your epic,"—she was going to ask; but in times of such busy confusion, 'tis somewhat difficult to speak about poetry. At that moment the steward came in, to report that all the meat was eaten up; and to ask whether he might kill two more oxen.

After a few days, Simon Bardo's men were so well drilled, that he could let them pass muster before the Duchess;—and it was time, for they had already been disturbed in their rest last night. A bright red light was illuminating the sky, far over the lake. Like a fiery cloud, the dread sign hung there for several hours; the conflagration being probably far off in Helvetia. The monks began to dispute about it. Some said it was a heavenly apparition; a fiery star, sent as a warning unto all Christendom. Others said that there must be a great conflagration in the Rhine valley; and one brother, gifted with a particularly fine nose, even pretended to perceive the smell of burning. It was long past midnight when the red light died out.

On the southern declivity of the mountain, there was a moderate sized grove, where the first spring flowers were blooming already, while the snow was still lying in the nooks and crevices of the valleys. This was to be the place for the mustering. Dame Hadwig was seated on her noble palfrey, surrounded by a small troop of well-armed knights, who had also joined the party on the Hohentwiel; the Barons of Randegg, of Hoewen and the gaunt Friedinger. The Abbot from Reichenau was likewise proudly sitting on his ambling nag; a well-mounted champion of the Lord. Master Spazzo, the chamberlain, was taking great pains to equal him, with regard to carriage and movements, which were both highly aristocratic and knightly. Ekkehard, who was likewise to have accompanied the Duchess on horseback, had declined the honor; that he might not raise envy in the hearts of the other monks.

And now the outer castle-gate slowly opened on its heavy hinges, and out strode the archers, who, with the cross-bow-men, headed the march. Amidst the merry sounds of music, they walked on in closed ranks; Audifax, with a very serious expression, being amongst the horn-blowers, in the capacity of bagpiper. Suddenly, Simon Bardo ordered a signal to be given, at the sound of which the ranks swiftly deployed, skirmishing about, like a swarm of wild bees. They had soon occupied every bush and hedge in the neighborhood.

Then there came the troop of monks, firmly treading the ground, with helmets and armor under their habits; the shields hanging on their backs. With couched lances, they were a redoubtable force. Their flag floated merrily high in the air; a red cross in a white field. They marched on as regularly as if they had been soldiers these many years; for with strong-minded men, mental discipline is an excellent preparation for the warrior's life. Only one in the left wing was not able to keep pace with the others, his lance protruding beyond the straight line preserved by his companions. "It is not his fault," said Abbot Wazmann to the Duchess. "He copied a whole mass-book in the space of six weeks, so that he has got the writing-cramp in his hand."

Ekkehard was marching in the right wing, and when his troop passed the Duchess, he caught a look from the radiant eyes, which could scarcely have been intended for the whole corps.

Divided into three bodies, then came the vassals and bondmen. Their musical instruments were huge bulls' horns; emitting strange, uncouth sounds, and many a singular looking weapon was seen that day, which had already been used under the great Emperor Charles. Some of them were merely armed with a heavy bludgeon.

Master Spazzo with his sharp eyes meanwhile looked down into the valley. "Tis well that we are all together, and well prepared; for I verily believe that we shall soon get some work to do," said he, pointing downward in the direction where the roofs of Hiltzingen were peeping out from the wooded dells. A dark line was seen approaching. Then Simon Bardo ordered his troops to atop, and after casting a searching look in that direction, said: "these are not Huns, for they are not on horseback." Still, taking all needful precaution, he commanded his archers to occupy the foot of the hill.

As the ranks of the strangers approached, the garb of St. Benedict became visible. A golden cross, in lieu of a standard, was towering above the lances, and the "Kyrie eleison" was now heard quite plainly. "My brothers!" exclaimed Ekkehard. Then the ranks of the Reichenau monks broke up, and running down the hill with shouts of delight, they soon met, and were joyfully embracing each other. To meet

again in the hour of danger, makes the heart doubly glad. Arm in arm with those of the Reichenau, the stranger guests now ascended the hill, headed by their Abbot, Cralo. On a heavy cart in the rear guard, they were transporting the blind Thieto.

"May God bless you, most noble cousin," said the Abbot, bowing his head before the Duchess. "Who would have thought half a year ago, that we should return your call, with the whole of the brotherhood? But the God of Israel says, 'let my people leave their home, so that they may remain faithful unto me.'"

Dame Hadwig held out her hand to him, with visible emotion. "Yes, these are times of trial," said she. "Be welcome!"

Thus fortified by the new-comers, the troop betook themselves back again, behind the protecting walls of the Hohentwiel. Praxedis had descended into the courtyard. There she stood under the linden-tree, gazing at the men as they came in. Those of St. Gall had all arrived, yet her eyes were still riveted on the door, as if there were still some one missing. He, however, whom her eyes sought, was not amongst the last entering guests either.

In the castle, they were busying themselves to make room for the new comers. For the number of men, now assembled, the space was but scanty. In the round, principal tower, there was an airy hall, in which they heaped up straw, for a temporary night's quarter. "If things go on in this way," grumbled the steward, whose head was nearly turned with all the demands that were being made on him,—“we shall soon have the whole priesthood of Europe up here."

Kitchen and cellar gave all they could. In the hall down stairs, monks and warriors were sitting, noisily taking their meal. Dame Hadwig had invited the two Abbots as well as those of noble birth amongst her guests, into her own reception room. There was a great deal to be discussed, and the questions and answers, quickly given and often crossing each other, made a strange confusion of voices.

As soon as an opportunity offered, Abbot Cralo told them about the fate of his monastery.

"This time," he began, "the danger came upon us almost unawares. Scarcely had one spoken of the Huns, when the ground was already resounding, with the tramp of their horses, hoofs. 'Sharp' was the word now. The pupils of the cloister-school I hastily sent over to the fortress of Wasserburg. Aristotle and Cicero will probably get somewhat dusty; the boys catching fish in the Bodensee, instead of studying the classics,—if they do not get more serious work to do. The old teachers fled with them over the water, in good time. We others had made ourselves a sort of stronghold, as a refuge. Where the Sitter-brook rushes through the narrow, fir-grown valley, we found an excellent hiding-place, which we thought no heathenish bloodhound would ever sniff out. There, we built ourselves a strong house, with towers and walls; and we consecrated it to the holy Trinity,—who I trust will protect it.

"We had scarcely finished it, when the messengers from the lake came, crying: 'fly, the Huns are coming!' Then there came others from the Rhine valley, and 'fly!' was again the word. The sky was already dyed red, from conflagrations and camp-fires; the air was filled with the shrieks of people flying and the creaking of retreating cart-wheels. So we also set out. Gold and jewels; St. Gallus' and St. Othmar's coffins; in fact all our treasures were first safely hidden; the books being carried off before to the Wasserburg by the boys. So we left the monastery; not thinking much about eating and drinking; some scanty provisions only having been brought to our retreat in the wood beforehand. Thither we now went in great haste. Only on the road the brothers perceived that we had left the blind Thieto behind in his cell; but nobody ventured to return for him, as the ground was, so to say, already burning under our feet. Thus we remained for several days quietly hidden in our fir-wood; often jumping up at night to seize our arms, fancying the enemy were outside; but it was but the rushing of the Sitter, or the rustling of the wind in the tree-tops. One evening, however, a clear voice demanded admittance; and on opening the door in came Burkhard, the cloister pupil, haggard and tired to death. Out of friendship for Romeias, the cloister watchman, he had remained behind without our noticing it. He was the bearer of evil tidings. The terror of that which he had seen had turned some of the

hairs on his young head quite gray." Abbot Cralo's voice here began to tremble. He stopped a moment to take a draught of wine. "The Lord be merciful to all Christian departed ones," said he with emotion. "His blessing be with them, and may He let them rest in peace."

"Amen," said the others. "Of whom are you thinking?" asked the Duchess. Praxedis had left her place and gone behind her mistress's chair, where she stood breathlessly watching Abbot Cralo's lips.

"It is only when a man is dead and gone," continued the Abbot, taking up again the thread of his tale, "that the remaining ones appreciate his value. Romeias, the best of all watchmen, did not leave the monastery with us. 'I will keep my post to the last,' said he. He then barred and locked all the gates; hid all that was valuable, and went his round on the walls; accompanied by Burkhard the cloister pupil. The remaining time he kept watch on the tower; his arms by his side. Soon after we had left, a large body of Huns on horseback, carefully prying about, approached the wall. Romeias gave the ordinary bugle sounds, and then quickly running to the other end of the courtyard, blew the horn again there; as if the monastery were still occupied, and well prepared. 'Now the time has come for us to depart also,' said he to the pupil. He had fastened an old withered nosegay to his helmet, Burkhard told us; and thus the two went over to the blind Thieto, who, being loath to leave his accustomed corner, was placed on two spears, and thus carried away. Letting themselves out by a secret little gate, they fled up the Schwarzathal.

"Already the Huns had sprung from their horses, and had begun to climb the walls, and when they saw that nothing stirred, they swarmed in like flies on a drop of honey. Romeias meanwhile quietly walked on with his hoary burden. 'Nobody shall say of the cloister watchman,' said he, 'that he quickened his step to please a pack of heathenish blood-hounds.' Thus he tried to encourage his young friend; but only too soon, the Huns were on their track. Wild cries came up the valley, and soon after, the first arrows whizzed through the air. So they reached the rock of the recluses; but here, even Romeias was surprised;—for as if nothing uncommon had happened, Wiborad's hollow psalm-singing was heard as usual. In a heavenly vision, her speedy suffering and death had been revealed to her, and even the pious Waldramm, could not persuade her to fly. 'My cell is the battle-field on which I have fought against the old enemy of mankind, and like a true champion of the Lord, I will defend it to the last breath,' said she; and so she remained quite alone in that desolate spot, when all others left it. As the cloister's refuge in the fir-wood was too far to be reached, Romeias picked out a remote little hut, and in it carefully deposited the blind Thieto; letting him in by the roof. Before leaving him, he kissed the old man, and then told the cloister pupil to fly, and save himself.

"You see something may happen to me," he said, "and so you must tell those in the refuge to look after the blind one." Burkhard in vain besought him to fly likewise; quoting Nisus and Euryalus, who had also fled into the woods, before the greater numbers of the Volkian horsemen. "I should have to run too fast," replied Romeias, "and that would make me too warm, and give me pains in the chest. Besides I should like to speak a word or two with the children of the Devil."

"He then went up to Wiborad's cell, and knocking at the shutter, called out: 'Give me thy hand, old dragon; we will make peace now,' upon which Wiborad stretched out her withered right hand. Finally, Romeias blocked up the narrow passage of the Schwarzathal with some huge stones, and then taking his shield from his back, and holding his spears ready, he seized his big bugle-horn, to blow once more on it. With flying hair he thus stood behind his wall, expecting the enemy. At first the sounds were fierce and warlike, but by degrees they became softer and sweeter, until an arrow, flying right into the opening, produced a sharp dissonance. The next moment, a whole shower of arrows covered him and stuck fast in his shield; but he shook them off like raindrops. Here and there, one of the Huns climbed up the rocks to get at him, but Romeias's spears fetched them down quickly. The attack became fiercer and louder, but, undaunted, Wiborad was still chanting her psalm: "Destroy them in Thy anger, oh Lord,

Destroy them that they do no more exist, so that the world knows that God is reigning in Israel, and over the whole earth, Sela."

"So far Burkhard had witnessed the fighting; then he had turned and fled. On hearing his account in the refuge, we were all very much grieved, and sent out a troop that very night to look after the blind Thieto. Perfect quiet reigned on the hill of the recluses when they reached it. The moon was shining on the bodies of the slain Huns, and amongst them the brothers found also——"

Here the recital was interrupted by loud sobs. Praxedis was with difficulty supporting herself on the back of the Duchess's chair, and was weeping bitterly.

"There they found the dismembered body of Romeias," continued the Abbot. "His head was hewn off and carried away by the enemy. He lay on his shield; the faded flowers which had adorned his helmet tightly clutched in his hand. May God reward him: for he, whose life was lost in doing his duty, is surely worthy to enter heaven. Wiborad's shutter was knocked at in vain, and the tiles of her roof were mostly broken. So one of the brothers climbed up, and on looking down beheld the recluse lying in her blood before the little altar of her cell. Three wounds were visible on her head, which proved that the Lord had deemed her worthy to die a martyr's death, by the hands of the heathen."

Every one was too much moved to speak. Dame Hadwig also was deeply touched.

"I have brought you the veil of the martyr," said Sir Cralo, "consecrated by the blood of her wounds. You might hang it up in the castle church. Only Thieto, the blind one, had remained unharmed. Undiscovered by the enemy, he was found soundly sleeping in the little hut by the rock. 'I have been dreaming that an eternal peace had come over the world,' said he to the brothers, when they awoke him. But even in our remote little valley, we were not to have peace much longer; as the Huns found their way to us also. That was a swarming, piping and snorting, such as had never been heard before in the quiet fir-wood. Our walls were strong, and our courage likewise; but hungry people soon get tired of being besieged. The day before yesterday our provisions were eaten up; and when the evening came, we saw a pillar of smoke rise from our monastery. So we broke through the enemy, in the middle of the night; the Lord being with us and our swords helping likewise. And so we have come to you,"—with a bow toward the Duchess, "homeless and orphaned, like birds whose nest has been struck by lightning; and bringing nothing with us, but the tidings that the Huns, whom the Lord destroy, are following on our heels."

"The sooner they come, the better," defiantly said the Abbot of the Reichenau, raising his goblet.

"Here's to the arms of God's own champions," said the Duchess, ringing her glass, against his.

"And revenge for the death of the brave Romeias," added Praxedis in a low voice and with tears in her eyes, when her glass vibrated against that of the gaunt Fridinger.

It was getting late. Wild songs and warlike cries, were still resounding in the hall on the first floor. The young monk who had come to the Reichenau from Mutua in Italy, had again struck up his sentinel's song.

The opportunity for valiant deeds was no longer far off.

CHAPTER XIII.

HERIBALD AND HIS GUESTS.

ON the little island of Reichenau, it was silent and lonely after the departure of the inhabitants of the cloister. The weak-minded Heribald was lord and master of the whole place, and was much pleased with his solitude. For hours he now sat on the shore, throwing smooth pebbles over the waves, so that they danced merrily along. When they sank at once, he scolded them loudly.

With the poultry in the yard, which he fed very regularly, he also talked a good deal. "If you are very good, and the brothers do not return," he once said, "Heribald will preach you a sermon." In the monastery itself, he also found plenty of amusement, for in a single day of solitude, a man can hatch a good many useful ideas. The camerarius had angered him, by refusing to give him the necessary shoe-

leather; so Heribald went up to the cell of the camerarius, smashed to pieces his large, stone water-jug, as well as his three flower-pots, and then opening the straw mattress, he took out some of the straw, and put in the broken crockery instead. Having achieved this feat, he lay down on it, and on feeling the hard and sharp-edged contents tolerably unpleasant, he smiled contentedly and betook himself to the Abbot's apartments.

Toward the Abbot he also bore a grudge, as he was indebted to him for many a sound whipping; but in his rooms, everything was locked up, and in excellent order. So nothing was left to him, but to cut off one of the legs of the cushioned easy-chair. Having done this, he cunningly placed it back in its old place, as if nothing whatever had happened.

"That will break down nicely with him, when he comes home, and sits comfortably on it. 'Thou shalt castigate the flesh,' says St. Benedict. But Heribald has not cut off the chair's foot,—the Huns have done it."

The duty of prayer and psalm-singing he performed regularly, as the rules of the order prescribed. The seven times for prayer each day, the solitary man strictly adhered to, as if he could be punished for missing them; and he descended also every night into the cloister church, there to hold the midnight vigil.

At the same hour, when his brothers were carousing in the hall of the ducal castle with the monks of St. Gall, Heribald was standing in the choir. The dark, dreary shadows of night enveloped the aisle, in which the everlasting lamp was dimly burning; but fearlessly and with a clear voice, Heribald intoned the first verse: "Oh Lord, deliver me from evil"—and then sang the third psalm, which David had once sung, when he fled before his son Absalom. When he came to the place where the antiphon was to fall in, according to custom, he stopped, waiting for the response. Everything remained silent and still, however. Heribald passed his hand over his forehead, and said: "Ah, I forgot! They are all gone, and Heribald is alone." Then he wanted to sing the forty-ninth psalm, as the nightly service required,—when the everlasting lamp went out, a bat having extinguished it with its wings. Outside storm and rain were raging. Heavy drops fell on the roof of the church, and beat against the windows. Heribald began to shudder.

"Holy Benedict," exclaimed he, "be pleased to see that it is not Heribald's fault, that the antiphon was not sung. He then rose and walked with careful steps through the dark aisle. A shrill wind whistled through a little window of the crypt under the high-altar, producing a bowling sound; and as Heribald advanced, a draught caught his garment. "Art thou come back, thou hellish tempter?" said he, "must I fight thee once more?"

Undauntedly he stepped back to the altar and seized a wooden crucifix, which the Abbot had not had taken away. "In the name of the Holy Trinity, I defy thee, Satanas. Come on, Heribald awaits thee!" With unabated courage he thus stood on the altar steps; but though the wind continued to howl dismally, the Devil did not appear.

"He still remembers the last time," smilingly said the idiot. About a year ago the Evil One had appeared to him in the shape of a big dog, barking furiously at him; but Heribald had attacked him with a pole; and had aimed his blows so well, that the pole broke.

Then Heribald screamed out a number of choice invectives, in the direction where the wind was moaning; and when even after this, nothing came to tempt him, he replaced the crucifix on the altar, bent his knees before it, and then went back to his cell, murmuring the "Kyrie eleison." There he slept the sleep of the just until late in the morning. The sun was already high in the heavens, when Heribald was complacently walking up and down, before the monastery. Since the time when he had enjoyed an occasional holiday at school, he had seldom had an opportunity of resting himself. "Idleness is the soul's worst enemy," St. Benedict had said, and in consequence strictly ordered his disciples to fill up the time which was not claimed by devotional tasks, by the work of their hands. Heribald, not knowing any art or handicraft, had been employed in cutting wood and in rendering similar useful, but tiring services;—but now, he paced up and down with crossed arms before the heaped up log-wood; looking up smilingly at one of the cloister windows.

"Why don't you come down, Father Rudimann, and make Heribald cut the wood? You, who used to keep such excellent watch over the brothers; and who so often called Heribald a useless servant of the Lord, when he looked at the clouds, instead of handling the axe. Why don't you attend to your duty?"

Not even an echo gave answer to the half-witted creature's query; so he drew out some of the under logs, thus making the whole pile fall noisily down. "Tumble down if you like," continued he in his soliloquy, "Heribald has got a holiday, and is not going to put you up again. The Abbott has run away, and the brothers have run away also; so it serves them right, if everything tumbles down."

After these laudable achievements, Heribald directed his steps to the cloister garden. Another project now occupied his mind. He intended to cut a few delicate lettuces for his dinner, and to dress them a good deal better than they would ever have been done, during the time of the father head cook's superintendance. Temptingly the vision rose before him, how he would not spare the oil-jug, and would pitilessly cut to pieces some of the biggest onions; when a cloud of dust rose on the opposite shore and the forms of horses and riders became visible.

"Are you there already?" said the monk, making the sign of the cross and then mumbling a hasty prayer; but a few moments later, his face had resumed its customary smile of contentment.

"Strange wanderers and pilgrims are to meet with a Christian reception at the gate of any house of the Lord," murmured he. "I will receive them."

A new idea now crossed his brain, and again passing his hand over his forehead, he exclaimed: "Have I not studied the history of the ancients, in the cloister school, and learned how the Roman Senators received the invading Gauls? Dressed in their mantles, the ivory scepter in their hands, the venerable men sat in their chairs, immovable like bronze idols. Ah, well, the Latin teacher shall not have told us in vain, that this was a most worthy reception. Heribald can do the same!"

A mild imbecility may be an enviable dower, now and then in life. That which appears black to others, seems to the half-witted blue or green, and if his path be zigzag, he does not notice the serpents hidden in the grass; and the precipice into which the wise man inevitably falls, he stumbles over, without even perceiving the threatening danger.

A curule chair not being just then in the monastery, Heribald pushed a huge oak stem toward the gate which led into the courtyard. "For what end have we studied secular history, if we cannot even take counsel by it?" said he, seating himself quietly on his block, in expectation of that which was to come.

Opposite on the near shore, a troop of horsemen had stopped. With their reins slung round their arms, and their arrows ready fastened on their bows, they had gone on ahead, to reconnoiter the land. When no ambuscade came out from behind the willows bordering the lake, they stopped awhile to rest their horses. Then the arrows were put back into their quivers; the crooked sabers taken between the teeth, and pressing the spurs into the horses' sides, they went into the lake. Quickly the horses crossed the blue waves. Now the foremost men had touched the land, and jumping from their saddles, shook themselves three times, like a poodle coming out of its bath, and then with piercing, triumphant shouts they approached the monastery.

Like an image of stone, Heribald sat at his post, gazing undauntedly at the strange figures before him. As yet he had never passed a sleepless night, musing over the perfection of human beauty, but the faces which now met his view, struck him as being so very ugly, that he could not suppress a startled, "Have mercy upon us, oh Lord!"

Partly bent, the strange guests were sitting in their saddles; their shrunk, meager little bodies dressed in beasts' skins. From their square-shaped skulls, black, shaggy hair hung down in wild disorder; and their unshapely yellow faces glistened as if they had been anointed with tallow. One of the foremost had enlarged his coarse-lipped mouth considerably, by a voluntary cut at the corners, and from their small, deep-set eyes they looked out suspiciously at the world.

"To make a Hun, one need only give a square shape to a lump of clay, put on a smaller lump for a nose, and drive in the chin"—Heri-

bald was just thinking, when they stood before him. He did not understand their hissing language, and smiled complacently, as if the whole gang did not regard him in the least. For a while they kept staring with unbounded astonishment at this puzzling specimen of humanity,—as critics are apt to do at a new poet, of whom they do not as yet know, in what pigeon-hole of ready made judgments they are to put him. At last one of them beheld the bald place on Heribald's pate, and pointing at it with his saber,—upon which the others raised a hoarse laugh,—he seized his bow and arrow to aim at the monk. But now Heribald's patience had come to an end, and a feeling of Allemannic pride coming over him as he confronted this rabble, he jumped up calling out: "By the tonsure of St. Benedict, the crown of my head shall not be mocked at by any heathenish dog!" He had seized the reins of one of the foremost riders, and snatching away his saber, was just going to assume an aggressive attitude, when quicker than lightning one of the Huns threw a noose over his head and pulled him down. Then they tied his hands to his back, and were already raising their death-bringing arms, when a distant tramping was heard, like the approach of a mighty army. This occurrence for the moment completely drew off their attention from the idiot. They threw him like a sack against his oak trunk, and quickly galloped back to the shore. The whole body of the Hunnic legion had now arrived on the opposite shore. The vanguard, by a shrill whistle, gave the signal that all was safe. At one of the extremities of the island, overgrown with reeds, they had spied a ford which could be crossed on horseback with dry feet. This they showed to their friends, who now swarmed over like wild bees; many hundred horsemen. Their united forces had availed nothing against the walls of Augsburg and the Bishop's prayers; so, divided into several troops, they now ravaged the land. Their faces, figures, and manner of sitting on horseback were all alike, for with uncultivated races, the features are mostly cast in one mold; indicating that the vocation of the individual lies in conforming itself to the mass, instead of contrasting with it.

In the orchards and gardens, where the monks used to recite their breviaries, Hunnic arms now glistened for the first time. In serpentine lines their armed ranks now came up toward the monastery; a wild din of music, a mixture of cymbals and violins, preceded them; but the sounds were shrill and sharp, as the ears of the Huns were large, but not sensitive, and only those, who from some reason or other were unfit for the duties of a warrior, became musicians.

High over their heads floated their standard, showing a green cat in a red field, around which some of the chieftains were gathered; Ellak's and Hornebog's tall figures towering above the rest.

Ellak, with clear features and a straight nose, very unlike that of a Hun, had had a Circassian mother, to whom he was indebted for his pale intelligent face with penetrating eyes. He represented the ruling intellect of the mass. That the old world must be plowed afresh with fire and sword, and that it was better to be the plowman than to serve as manure, was his deep-rooted conviction. Hornebog, lean and lank of figure, wore his long black hair in two solitary curls, one at each side. Above these rose the glittering helmet, adorned with two widely spread out eagles' wings, the emblem of Hunnic horsemanship. To him the saddle served as home, tent and palace. He shot the bird flying, and with his saber could sever the head of an enemy from its trunk, while galloping past. At his side hung the six-corded whip, an ingenious symbol of executive power.

On the backs of the horses belonging to the chieftains, beautifully woven carpets, as well as chasubles were hanging; a clear proof that they had already paid visits to other monasteries. The booty was transported in several wagons, and a considerable and motley crowd of followers closed the train.

In a cart drawn by mules, amongst copper camp-kettles and other kitchen utensils, an old wrinkled woman was sitting. She was shading her eyes with her right hand, looking toward the sun, in the direction where the mountain peaks of the Hegau rose into the air. She knew them well, for the old hag was the woman of the wood. Banished by Ekkehard, she had wandered away into stranger lands; vengeance being her first thought when she awoke in the morning, and her last before she fell asleep in the evening. Thus she came as far as Aug-

burg. At the foot of the hill on which the wooden temple of the Suabian Goddess Zisa had once stood, the Huns' camp-fires were burning, and with them she remained.

On a prancing black steed, by the side of the old woman, a young maiden was gayly riding along. Her skirts were looped up, and she also seemed to feel herself perfectly at home in the saddle. Under her short little nose there was a lovely pair of red lips; her dark eyes were bright and sparkling, and her long raven hair hung down in wavy tresses, interwoven with red ribbons, which merrily floated in the air like the streamers of a ship. Over her loose bodice, bow and arrow were hanging, and thus she managed her horse, a true Hunnic Artemis. This was Erica, the flower-of-the-heath. She was not of Hunnic origin, having been picked up as an abandoned child by some Hunnic riders on the Pannonian heaths. Thus she had accompanied the Huns, and had grown up, hardly knowing how. Those whom she liked she caressed, and those who displeased her she bit in the arm. Botund the old Hunnic chieftain had loved her, and was killed for this reason by Irkund the young one. But when Irkund wanted to enjoy the fruit of this deed, Zobolus' sharp lance did him the same service which Irkund had rendered Botund, without the latter asking for it. Thus Erica's fate had been varied, new ways! new countries! and new loves!—and she had become part and parcel of her troop. She was its good spirit, and was held in high veneration.

"As long as the flower-of-the-heath blooms in our ranks, we shall conquer the world," said the Huns. "Forward."

Meanwhile, poor Heribald was still lying in his fetters at the monastery gate. His meditations were very sad. A big gad-fly, which he could not drive away with his bound hands, was buzzing round his head. "Heribald has behaved with dignity," thought he. "Like one of the old Romans he has sat at the gate to receive the enemy, and now he is lying bound on the stones, and the gad-fly may sit on his nose quite unmolested. That is the reward of dignified behavior. Heribald will never again be dignified! Amongst hedgedogs, dignity is a most superfluous thing."

Like a mountain-torrent when the flood-gate has been removed, the Hunnic tide now streamed into the cloister yard. At this spectacle, the good Heribald began to feel really uncomfortable. "Oh, Camerarius," continued he, in his meditation, "and if thou wouldst refuse me the next time even the shirt and habit, besides the shoe-leather, then should I fly nevertheless! a naked man!"

Some of the vanguard then reported to Ellak in what state they had found the solitary monk. He made a sign for them to bring the prisoner up before him, upon which they loosened his cords, set him on his feet, and indicated the direction in which he was to go, by heavy blows. Slowly the poor wretch advanced, emitting a complaining grunt.

An unspeakably satirical smile played round the Hunnic chieftain's lips, when the idiot at last stood before him. Negligently dropping his horse's reins on its neck, he turned round. "See, what a representative of German art and science looks like," called he out to Erica.

On his numerous piratical expeditions, Ellak had required a scanty knowledge of the German language. "Where are the inhabitants of this island?" asked he in a commanding voice.

Heribald pointed over to the distant Hegau.

"Are they armed?"

"The servants of God are always armed, for the Lord is their shield and sword."

"Well said," laughed the Hun. "Why hast thou remained behind?"

Heribald became embarrassed. He had too much pride to betray the true reason, viz., his torn shoes, so he replied: "Heribald is curious, and wanted to see what the sons of the Devil were like."

Ellak translated the monk's polite speech to his companions, who struck up a loud guffaw.

"You need not laugh," cried Heribald angrily. "We know very well what you are! Abbot Wazmann has told us."

"I shall have thee killed," said Ellak carelessly.

"That will only serve me right," returned Heribald. "Why did I not fly with the others?"

Ellak, casting a searching look at the queer fellow, was struck with another idea. He made a sign to the standard-bearer, who ap-

proached, swinging in the air his flag with the green cat, which had once appeared to King Attila in his youth. In a dreamy mood he was sitting in his uncle Rugilas' tent, reflecting whether he had not better become a Christian and serve God and science, when the cat came in. Amongst the treasures of Rugilas, it had found the golden imperial globe, which had made part of the booty at Byzantium; this it held in its paws and played with it, rolling it about on the floor. And an inward voice said to Attila: "Thou shalt not become a monk, but thou shalt play with the globe of the universe, as the cat does with that golden bauble." Then he became aware that Kutka, the God of the Huns, had appeared to him, and so he swung his sword in the direction of the four quarters of the world,—let his finger-nails grow, and became what he was destined to become, Attila, King of the Huns, the scourge of God!

"Kneel down, miserable monk," cried Ellak, "and worship him whom thou seest in this flag!"

But Heribald stood immovable.

"I don't know him," said he with a hollow laugh.

"'Tis the God of the Huns!" angrily cried the chieftain. "Down on thy knees, cowl-bearer, or"—he pointed to his sword.

Heribald laughed once more, and putting his forefinger to his forehead, said: "If you think that Heribald is so easily imposed upon, you are vastly mistaken. It has been written, when God created Heaven and Earth, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, He said: let there be light! Now if God were a cat he would not have said: let there be light! Heribald will not kneel down—"

A Hunnic rider, who had stealthily approached the monk, now pulled his garment, and whispered in an excellent Suabian dialect in his ear: "Countryman, I would kneel down if I were in your place. They are dangerous people." The warrior's real name was Snewelin, and his birthplace was Ellwangen in Riesgau; but in the course of time he had dropt his Suabian nationality, and had become a Hun; which transformation had rather improved his outward fortunes. When he spoke, his voice had something windy about it, which was caused by his having lost four front teeth, besides several back ones; and this had been the principle reason why he had become a Hun. In his younger days, namely, when he was still earning a peaceful livelihood in the capacity of cart-driver of the Salvator convent, he had been sent northward, with a cart load of choice Neckar-wine; to the great market at Magdeburg; a well armed escort, accompanying him. To that town, the priests of the heathenish Pomeranians and Wends, always resorted to buy their libation wine, and Snewelin made an excellent bargain, when he sold his wine to the white-bearded upper priest of the three-headed God Triglauff, for the great temple at Stettin. But afterward, he remained sitting over the wine with the white-bearded heathen, who, being a great friend of the Suabian nectar, soon became enthusiastic, singing the praises of his native land, and saying that the world was infinitely more advanced in their parts, between the Oder and the Spree. He tried moreover to convert Snewelin to the worship of Triglauff the three headed one, and to that of the black and white Sun-god Radegast, as well as to Radomysl, the Goddess of lovely thoughts,—but this was rather too much for the man of Ellwangen. "You infamous heathenish swindler," exclaimed he, first upsetting the wine-table, and then flying at him—as the young knight Siegfried did at the wild, long-bearded dwarf Alberich,—he wrestled with him, and at one strong tug pulled out the half of his grey beard. But his antagonist, calling on Triglauff to help him, dealt him a blow on the mouth with his iron-plated staff, which for ever destroyed the beauty of his teeth; and before the toothless Suabian cart-driver had recovered from the blow, his white-bearded antagonist had vanished, so that he could not take revenge on him. But when Snewelin walked out of the gates of Magdeburg, he shook his fists northward, and said: "We two shall meet again, some day!"

In his native town he was much laughed at on account of his lost teeth, and so, to escape the continual ridicule, he went amongst the Huns, hoping that perhaps some day, when these should direct their steps northward, he would be able to settle a heavy account with the three-headed Triglauff and all his worshipers.

Heribald, however, did not heed the curious horseman's warning. The woman of the wood had meanwhile got down from her cart, and approached Ellak. With a sinister grin she looked at the monk. "I have read in the stars, that by the hands of such bald-headed men, evil will befall us," cried she. "To prevent the coming danger, you ought to hang up this miserable creature before the cloister-gate, with his face turned toward yonder mountains!"

"Hang him up," echoed many voices in the crowd, the pantomime of the old woman having been understood. Ellak once more turned his head toward Erica. "This monster has also got principles," said he tauntingly. "It would save his life, and yet he refuses to bend his knees. Shall we have him hanged, flower-of-the-heat?"

Heribald's life was hanging on a very slender thread. Round about, he saw nothing but stern pitiless faces; his courage began to fail him, and the tears came into his eyes; but in the hour of danger, even the most foolish are often guided by a happy instinct. Like a star, the red-cheeked face of Erica shone before him, and with frightened steps he quickly approached her. To kneel before her, was not such a difficult task to him; her sweet looks inspiring him with confidence. With out-stretched arms he implored her assistance.

"There!" cried the flower-of-the-heat, "the man of the island is by no means so foolish as he looks. He prefers kneeling to Erica, instead of the green and red flag." She smiled graciously on the pitiful suppliant, and jumping from the saddle, she patted him as if he were some half wild animal. "Don't be afraid," said she, "thou shalt live, poor old black-coat!" and Heribald could read in her eyes that she meant what she said. He pointed to the woman of the wood, who had frightened him most. Erica shook her head; "She shall not harm thee." Then Heribald briskly ran to the wall, near which lilacs and spring-roses were already blooming, and hastily tearing off some of their branches, he presented them to the Hunnic maiden.

A loud shout of delight rang through the cloister-yard. "Hail to the flower-of-the-heat," cried they all, clashing their arms together.

"Why don't you shout likewise," whispered the man from Ellwangen into Heribald's ear. So he also raised his voice to a hoarse "hurrah!" with tears glistening in his eyes.

The Huns had unseated their horses, and very much resembled a pack of hounds, which, in the evening at the end of the sport, are waiting for the entrails of the deer which has been killed. Here and there, one is pulling at the cord that restrains him,—there another is barking fiercely with impatience. With similar feelings the Huns stood before the monastery. At last Ellak gave the signal, that the pillage might begin. In wild disorder they then ran forward, up the staircase, and along the passage into the church. Confused cries, of expected booty and disappointed hopes, resounded everywhere. Then they examined the cells of the brotherhood, but here, also, nothing was found, except the scanty furniture.

"Show us the treasury," said they to Heribald, who complied with this wish willingly enough, as he well knew that all that was precious had been taken away. Only a few plated candlesticks, and the big emerald of colored glass, were still there.

"Miserable convent! The set of beggars!" called out one, giving a kick with his iron-clad foot to the false jewel, so that it became cracked. Heribald was rewarded by sundry heavy blows, so he stole sorrowfully away, as soon as an opportunity offered.

In the cross-passage he met Snewelin, who accosted him, with: "Countryman, I am an old wine-merchant; tell me where your cellar may be?" Heribald led him down and chuckled contentedly when he saw that the chief entrance had been walled up. With a knowing look he winked at the fresh lime, as if to say that he well knew its secret. The man of Ellwangen, without much ado, now cut off the seals on one of the tuns, tapped it and filled his helmet. This he raised to his lips, and took a long, long draught. "Oh Hahnenkamm and Heidenheim!" exclaimed he, shivering as with the ague, "for this beverage, I verily need not have become a Hun!" He then ordered his companions to carry up the vats, but Heribald stepping forward, pulled his gown, and anxiously said:

"Allow me, good man, but what am I to drink when you are gone away?"

Snewelin laughingly reported the monk's scruples to the others. "The fool must keep something," they said, putting back the smallest tun unopened. This kindness touched Heribald so much, that he fervently shook hands with them.

Up stairs in the courtyard, a wild shouting was now heard. Some, who had searched the church, had also lifted a grave-stone, from under which a bleached skull grinned at them, out of its dark cowl. This spectacle frightened even the Huns. Two of the gang went up to the belfry, the steeple of which was adorned with a gilt weathercock, according to custom. Whether they took it to be the protecting god of the monastery, or imagined it to be real gold, they climbed up the roof, and audaciously sitting there, tried to bring the cock down with their lances. But now a sudden giddiness came over them. One let his raised arm sink;—a stagger, a cry, and he fell down, quickly followed by the other. With broken necks they lay in the cloister-yard.

"A bad omen," said Ellak to himself. The Huns uttered a dismal howl, but a few moments later the accident was entirely forgotten. The sword had ravished so many of their companions from their side, so what mattered two more or less? The bodies were carried into the cloister-garden. With the logs which Heribald had upset in the early morning, a funeral pile was erected; the books which had been left in the libraries were thrown down from the windows, and were made use of in filling up the gaps between the logs,—an excellent burning material!

Ellak and Hornebog were walking together through the ranks. Squeezed in between the logs, a neatly written manuscript with shining golden initials peeped out. Hornebog, drawing his sword, pierced the parchment with it, and presented it to his companion stuck on the point of the blade.

"What do these hooks and chickens' feet mean, Sir Brother?" asked he.

Ellak took the manuscript, and glanced over some of its pages. He also knew Latin.

"Western wisdom," replied he. "A man named Boethius wrote it, and it contains many fine things about the comfort of Philosophy."

"Phi—losophy," slowly repeated Hornebog, "what does that mean, Sir Brother?"

"It does not mean a fair woman, nor yet fire-water either," was Ellak's reply. "It will be difficult to describe it in the Hunnic language—but if a man does not know wherefore he is in the world, and stands on his head to find out the reason, that is near about what they call Philosophy in these western lands. He, who comforted himself with it in his tower at Pavia, was after all killed for it."

"And that served him right!" exclaimed Hornebog. "He who holds a sword in his hand, and feels a horse between his thighs, knows why he is in the world; and if we did not know the reason better than those who smear such hooks on asses' skins, then they would be on our heels at the Danube, and our horses would not drink their fill out of the Suabian sea."

"Don't you think that it is very lucky that such trash is made?" continued Ellak, throwing back the manuscript on to the funeral pile.

"Why so?" asked Hornebog.

"Because the hand which guides the pen is never fit to handle the sword, so as to make a good gash in the flesh; and when once the nonsense which is concocted by one single head is written down, then at least a hundred others will muddle their brains with it. A hundred blockheads more make a hundred soldiers less, which is clearly enough our advantage, whenever we choose to make an invasion. 'As long as they write books and hold synods in the West, my children may safely carry their tents forward!' that's what the great Attila himself said."

"Praised be the great Attila!" said Hornebog, reverently, when a voice called out, "Let the dead rest!" and with dancing steps Erica came toward the two chieftains. She had mustered the cloister-booty, and an altar-cloth of red silk finding grace in her eyes, she put it on like a mantle, the corners lightly thrown back over her shoulders.

"How do I look?" said she, turning her little head complacently about.

"The flower-of-the-heat does not require any tinsel belonging to Suabian idolators to please us," sternly replied Ellak. Upon this

she jumped up at him, to pat and stroke his lank black hair, and then called out, "Come along, the meal is ready prepared."

Then they went all three to the courtyard. All the hay which could be found the Huns had strewn about, lying down on it and waiting for the repast. With crossed arms Heribald stood in the background looking down at them. "The heathenish dogs cannot even sit down like Christians, when they are about to eat their daily bread," he thought, taking good care, however, not to utter his thoughts aloud. The experience of former blows had taught him silence.

"Lie down, blackcoat, thou mayest eat also," cried Erica, making a sign to him to follow the example of the others.

The meat was cut off with their short sabers, the fingers serving as knife and fork. In the middle of the courtyard, the big wine-tun stood upright, every one taking as much as he liked. Here and there a finely wrought chalice was used as a drinking cup. Heribald also had as much wine as he wished for, but when with inward contentment he was just beginning to sip at it, a half-gnawed bone flew at his head. With a sorrowful look of surprise he gazed up, and beheld that many another met with the same fate. To throw bones at each other was a Hunnic custom, which served as dessert.

When the wine was beginning to tell on them, they began a rough and unmelodious singing. Two of the younger horsemen sang an old song in honor of King Attila, in which it was said that he had not only been a conqueror with the sword, but also a conqueror of hearts. Then followed a taunting verse on a Roman Emperor's sister, who, charmed with him by hearsay, fell in love with him at a distance, and offered her heart and hand to him, which, however, he refused.

The chorus which followed it strongly resembled the screeching of owls and the croaking of toads. When this was finished some of the men approached Heribald, and made him understand that he also was expected to give them a song. He began to refuse, but this availed him nothing. So he sang in an almost sobbing voice, the antiphon in honor of the holy cross, beginning with the "sanctifica nos."

With mute astonishment the drunken men listened to the long-drawn notes of the old church music, which sounded like the voice of the preacher in the wilderness. With rising anger the woman of the wood, sitting beside the copper kettle, heard it. Grasping her knife, she stealthily approached Heribald from behind, and seizing his hair, wanted to cut off his curls,—the greatest insult that could be offered to a consecrated head. But Heribald vigorously pushed her back, and chanted on, nothing daunted, which mightily pleased the assembly, so that they gave a shout of delight. Cymbals and violins also resounded again, and now Erica, who had become tired of the monotonous chant, approached Heribald. With a look that combined both archness and pity, she seized him by the arm, and drawing him into the midst of the wild dance, which was now beginning, she called out, "Singing must always be followed by dancing!" Heribald did not know what to do, while the flower-of-the-heat was all eagerness to begin. "It matters little whether Heribald dances or not, it will be only another small link in the chain of abominations," he finally thought; so he bravely stamped the ground with his sandal-clad feet, his habit flying about him. Tighter and tighter he pressed the Hunnic maiden's waist, and who knows what might still have happened if she had not, with heightened color and panting bosom, finally stopped herself. Giving her partner a little parting slap in the face, she ran off to the chieftains, who with serious faces were looking on at the frolics.

The shouts were dying out now, the fumes of the wine being danced off. So Ellak gave the order to burn the dead. In a moment's time the whole troop were seated on horseback, and riding in closed ranks to the funeral pile. The horses of the two deceased men were then stabbed by the eldest amongst the Huns, and laid beside their late masters' bodies. Calling out some monstrous conjurations, he lifted the firebrand and lighted the pile. Boethius' "Comfort of Philosophy," pine-logs, manuscripts and corpses vied with each other which could burn the brightest, and a mighty pillar of flames and smoke rose up to the sky.

With wrestling, warlike exercises and races, the memory of the dead was celebrated! The sun had sunk far down in the west, and so the

* Places notorious for their sour bad wines.

whole body of Huns entered the monastery, there to pass the night.

It was on the Thursday before Easter, when all this happened on the island of Reichenau. The tidings of this invasion soon reached the fishermen's huts around Radolfzell. When Moengal, the parish priest, held the early morning service, he still counted six of his flock, but in the afternoon there were only three, including himself.

Gloomily he sat in the little room in which he had once hospitably entertained Ekkehard, when the pillar of smoke from the Hunnic funeral pile rose into the air. It was dense and black enough for him to suppose the whole monastery to be in flames, and the scent of burning came over the lake.

"Hihahoi!" cried Moengal, "*jam proximus ardet Ucalegon*, already it is burning at neighbor Ucalegon's! Then it is time for me also to get ready. Out with ye now, my old Cambutta!"

Cambutta, however, was no serving maid, but a huge bludgeon, a real Irish shillelagh, and Moengal's favorite weapon. The chalice and ciborium he packed up and put into his leathern game bag. This was all he possessed of gold or silver. Then he called his hounds, his hawk and two falcons together, and giving them all the meat and fish his pantry boasted, he said: "Children, eat as much as ever you can, so that nothing is left for those cursed plagues, when they come!"

The vat in the cellar he knocked to pieces, so that the sparkling wine streamed forth. "Not a drop of wine shall the devils drink in Moengal's house. Only the jug which contained the vinegar was left in its place. On the fresh, delicious butter in the wooden tun he emptied a basket full of ashes. His fishing-tackle and other sporting utensils he buried in the ground; then he smashed the windows, and strewed the fragments about the room. Some he even put into the chinks of the floor, with the points turned upward—all in honor of the Huns! Hawk and falcons then received their liberty. "Farewell!" cried he, "and keep near, for soon you will get dead heathens to pick!"

So his house was put in order. Hanging the game-bag, as well as a Hibernian canteen, over his shoulders, with two spears in his hands, and Cambutta fastened on his back,—thus old Moengal walked out of his parsonage, which had been his home for so many years; a valiant champion of the Lord!

He had already gone on a few paces through the smoke-darkened atmosphere, when he suddenly stopped short, saying: "Wait a bit, I have forgotten something."

So he quickly retraced his steps, murmuring: "The yellow-faced rascals shall at least find some written words of welcome."

Arrived at his door, he drew a piece of red chalk from his pocket, and therewith wrote in large Irish characters a few words on the gray sandstone slab over the portal. Later rains have washed them away, and nobody has ever read them, but no doubt it was a significant greeting, which old Moengal left behind him in Irish runes. Quickening his pace, he then took the direction of the Hohentwiel.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BATTLE WITH THE HUNS.

GOOD FRIDAY had come; but the anniversary of our Saviour's death was not kept on the Hohentwiel this time, in the silent way which the prescriptions of the church require. By the arrival of old Moengal all doubts about the enemy's approach were dispersed. Late in the night a war council was held, at which it was determined that they should go out to meet the Huns in open battle.

The sun rose drearily on that day; soon being hidden again in mist. A fierce gale was blowing over the land, chasing the clouds along, so that they sank down on the distant Bodensee, as if water and air were to mingle together. Now and then a solitary sunbeam struggled through. It was as the yet undecided battle which Spring was waging against the powers of Winter. The men had already risen, and were preparing for a serious day's work.

In his closet, up in the watch-tower, Ekkehard was silently pacing up and down, his hands folded in prayer. A highly honorable commission had devolved on him. He was to preach a sermon to the united forces before they went out to battle, and so he was now praying for strength and inspiration, that his words might

be like sparks, kindling the warlike flame in each breast. Suddenly the door opened, and in came the Duchess, unaccompanied by Praxedis. Over her morning dress she had thrown an ample cloak, to protect herself against the cool air; perhaps also that she might not be recognized by the stranger guests, while going over to the watch-tower. A faint blush mantled on her cheeks, when she thus stood alone, opposite her youthful teacher.

"You are also going out to battle, to-day?" asked she.

"Yes, I go with the others," replied Ekkehard.

"I should despise you if you had given me any other reply," said she, "and you have justly presumed, that for such an expedition, it would not be necessary to ask my leave. But have you not thought of saying good-by?" added she, in low reproachful accents.

Ekkehard was embarrassed. "There are many nobler and better men leaving your castle to-day. The abbots and knights will surround you;—how then could I think of taking a special leave of you, even if—" his voice broke off.

The Duchess looked into his eyes. Neither said a word.

"I have brought you something which is to serve you in battle," said she after awhile, drawing out a precious sword with a rich shoulder-belt from under her mantle. A white agate adorned the hilt. "It is the sword of Sir Burkhard, my late husband. Of all the arms he possessed, he valued this the most. 'With that blade one could split rocks, without breaking it,' he said many a time. You will wear it to-day with honor."

She held out the sword to him; Ekkehard received it in silence. His coat of mail he had already put on under his habit. Now he buckled on the shoulder-belt, and then seized the hilt with his right hand, as if the enemy were already facing him.

"I have got something else for you," continued Dame Hadwig. On a silk ribbon, she wore a golden locket round her neck. This she now drew forth. It was a crystal, covering an insignificant looking splinter of wood.

"If my prayers should not suffice, then this relic will protect you. It is a splinter of the holy cross, which the Empress Helena discovered. Wherever this relic is, wrote the Greek patriarch who attested its genuineness, there will be peace, happiness and pure air. May it now bring a blessing to you in the coming battle."

She leaned toward him, to hang the jewel round his neck. Quickly he bent his knees to receive it; but it had long been hanging round his neck, and still he knelt before her. She passed her hand lightly over his curly hair, and there was a peculiar soft and half-sad expression on the usually haughty countenance.

Ekkehard had bent his knee at the name of the holy cross, but now he felt as if he must kneel down a second time before her who was thus graciously thinking of him. A budding affection requires some time to understand itself clearly, and in matters of love he had not learned to reckon and count, as in the verses of Virgil, or he might have guessed that she who had taken him away from his quiet cloister cell,—that she who on that evening on the Hohenkrähen, had looked on him so tenderly, and now again on the morning of battle, was standing before him, as Dame Hadwig was at that moment, might well have expected some words out of the depth of his heart,—perhaps even more than words only.

His thoughts quickly followed each other, and all his pulses were throbbing. When on former occasions anything like love had stirred his heart, then the reverence for his mistress had driven it back, nipping it in the bud, as the cold winds of March wither and blight the early spring-flowers. At this moment however, he was not thinking of that reverence, but rather how he had once carried the Duchess boldly over the cloister-yard. Neither did he think of his monastic vow, but he felt as if he must rush into her arms, and press her to his heart with a cry of delight. Sir Burkhard's sword seemed to burn at his side. "Throw aside all reserve, for only the bold will conquer the world." Were not these words to be read in Dame Hadwig's eyes?

He stood up; strong, great and free,—she had never seen him look so before,—but it lasted only a second. As yet not one sound betraying his inward struggle had escaped his

lips, when his eye fell on the dark, ebony cross, which Vincentius had once hung up on the wall. "It is the day of the Lord, and thou shalt open thy lips to-day before his people,"—the remembrance of his duty drove away all other thoughts.

There once came a frost, on a bright summer-morning, and grass and leaves and blossoms became black and seared, before the sun rose over them.

Shyly as in former times, he took Dame Hadwig's hand. "How shall I thank my mistress?" said he in broken accents.

She cast a searching look at him. The soft expression had vanished, and the old sternness had returned to her brow, as if she meant to say: "If you don't know how, I am not going to tell you,"—but she said nothing. Still Ekkehard held her hand in his. She drew it back.

"Be pious and brave," said she, turning to leave the chamber. It sounded like mockery.

Scarcely longer than a person needs to say the Lord's prayer, had the Duchess been with him, but far more had happened in that time than he knew of.

He resumed his walk up and down his small abode. "Thou shalt deny thyself and follow the Lord," thus St. Benedict's rules began, and Ekkehard felt almost proud of the victory he had won; but Dame Hadwig had gone away with wounded feelings; and if a haughty mind believes itself to be disdained, evil days must follow.

It was the seventh hour of the morning, and in the courtyard on the Hohentwiel they were all attending divine service, before setting out. The altar had been erected under the old lindentree, and on it were placed the sacred relics, to comfort the hearts of all believers. The courtyard was entirely filled with armed men, standing in close, orderly groups, just as Simon Bardo had arranged them. Like the roll of distant thunder arose the introductory chaunts of the monks. The Abbot of Reichenau, wearing the black pall with the white cross, celebrated high mass.

After him, Ekkehard mounted the altar-steps. With deep emotion his eye glided over the crowded assembly; once more the remembrance of how he had but a short time ago stood face to face with the Duchess in the solitary chamber, passed through his mind,—and then he read the gospel of the suffering and death of our Saviour. As he read on, his voice became always clearer and more distinct, and when he had finished, he first kissed the book and then handed it to the deacon, for him to put it back on its silk cushion. For a moment he looked up heavenward, and then began his sermon.

The assembly listened to his words with breathless attention.

"Almost a thousand years have come and gone," cried he, "since the Son of God bent his head on the cross, saying: 'It is finished!' but we have not yet prepared our souls to receive the redemption, for we have lived in sin, and the offenses which we have committed through the hardness of our hearts cry out against us toward Heaven. Therefore a time of affliction has come upon us; glittering swords are raised against us; heathenish monsters have invaded the Christian territories.

"But instead of angrily inquiring, 'how long will the Lord forbear, before He interferes and delivers our beloved homes from the hands of such heathenish idolaters,' let everybody strike his own bosom and say: On account of our sins this chastisement has been sent upon us. And if you would be delivered from them, think of our Saviour's painful death, and as he took up his cross, bearing it himself to the place of skulls, seize the sword, and choose your own Golgotha!"

Pointing over to the shores of the lake, he poured out words of comfort and prophesy, strong and powerful, as the lion's call in the desert.

"The times are coming of which it has been written: 'And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sands of the sea. And they went up, on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God, out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and

the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever.*

"And all this, which the seer beheld and revealed at Patmos, is for us a promise of the victory that is to come, if we go out with purified hearts, to meet the enemy. Let them come, on their swift horses; what does it matter? The Lord has marked them as the children of the devil, therefore their face is but a mockery of the human countenance. They can destroy the harvest on our fields, and desecrate our altars, but they cannot resist the powerful arms of those whom God himself has inspired. Therefore keep in mind that we Suabians must always be in the foremost ranks, when the fatherland has to be defended; and if in other times it would be a dire sin in the eyes of the Lord to buckle on the sword on His holy day,—to-day He will bless our weapons, and send down his saints to assist us, and fight Himself in our ranks; He the Lord of hosts, who sends down his destroying lightnings, and opens the bowels of earth itself, when the right time has come."

With choice examples of glorious warlike deeds Ekkehard then tried to inspire his auditors; and many a hand fiercely grasped the spear, and many a foot was lifted impatiently from the ground, when he spoke of Joshua, who with the Lord's help had conquered thirty-one kings, on the other side of the Jordan;—and of Gideon, who with loud sounding trumpets, entered the camp of the Midianites, and drove them before him unto Bethesda and Tebath;—and of the sally of the men of Bethulia, who after Judith's glorious deed, smote the Assyrians with the edge of the sword.

But at the end, he quoted the words, which Judas Maccabeus had spoken to his people, when they erected their camp at Emaus, before going out to fight the army of King Antiochus. "Arm yourselves and be valiant men, and see that ye be in readiness against the morning, that ye may fight with these nations that are assembled together against us to destroy us and our sanctuary."

For a moment after he had ended there was perfect silence, but soon arose a great stir among the men, and a rattling and clashing of arms was heard. Swords and shields were knocked together, spears lifted, and badges waved in the air; all as signs of hearty approval, according to old custom. "Amen," was repeated from all sides, whilst the whole assembly fell on their knees as the high-mass was reaching its close. The wooden rattles, instead of the usual church-bells, thrilled them with awe. Every one who had not yet taken the holy sacrament went up to the altar to receive it. But now from the watch-tower was suddenly heard the cry, "To arms! to arms! the enemy is coming! A dark mass of riders and horses are moving toward us from the lake!" and now there was no longer any possibility of keeping back the eager men who were all pressing toward the gate; Abbot Wazmann having scarcely time to pronounce a blessing over them.

So, in our days does the fisherman of the north run out of the church on a Sunday at the time when the shoals of herring are approaching. "The fish are coming," cries the watchman on the shore, and the moment afterwards every man is hurrying away toward the boats. Forsaken and alone stands the clergyman,—so his devotions are also at an end and he seizes the nets likewise to wage war upon the scaly tribe.

Thirsting for the coming battle, the troops left the courtyard; each heart swelling with the soul-stirring conviction, that a great and important moment was at hand. The monks of St. Gall mustered sixty-four, those of the Reichenau ninety, and of the arriere-ban men, there were above five hundred. Close by the standard of the cross of the brotherhood of St. Gall, walked Ekkehard. It was a crucifix, veiled in black crape, with long black streamers; as the monastery's banner had been left behind.

On the balcony stood the Duchess, waving her white handkerchief. Ekkehard, turning round, looked up at her, but her eyes evaded his, and the parting salutation was not meant for him.

St. Mark's coffin had been carried down to the lower castle-gate, by some of the serving brothers. Every one touched it with the points of his lance and sword, and then silently passed on.

In the wide plain, stretching out toward the lake, Simon Bardo drew up his troops, and one

could see how pleased the old field-marshal was, that his scar-covered breast again wore the accustomed mail, instead of the monk's habit. His head was covered by a strangely shaped, pointed steel morion; his broad, jewel-set girdle, as well as the gilt handle of his sword, indicated the ancient general.

"You read the classics, on account of the *grammar*," said he to the Abbots, "but I have learnt my *handicraft* from them. With the military advice of Frontinus and Vegetius, one may still achieve something even nowadays. First we will try the battle-array of the Roman legions; for in that position one can best await the enemy, and see what he means to do. Afterward, we are still at liberty to change our tactics, for affairs will not be settled between us in half an hour."

The light corps of the archers and sling-bearers were ordered to occupy the border of the wood, where they would be sheltered by the fir-trees, against any attack on horseback. "Take low aim," said he, "for even if you should merely hit the horse instead of the rider, it is always something." At the sound of the bugle, the troop advanced to execute his commands. As yet, nothing was to be seen of the enemy.

The men of the arriere-ban, he arrayed in two close ranks. With leveled lances they slowly advanced; a space of a few steps remaining between the two files. The knight of Randegg, and the gaunt Friedinger, commanded them.

The monks, Simon Bardo collected into one compact body, placing them in the rear.

"Why this?" asked Abbot Wazmann, inwardly hurt at losing the honor of heading the attack. But Bardo, experienced in war, smilingly replied: "Those are my Triarians; not because they are veteran soldiers, but because they are fighting for their own warm nests. To be driven out of house and home and bed, makes swords cut deepest, and spears thrust fiercest. Don't be afraid, the tug of war will yet draw the disciples of St. Benedict into the strife."

The Huns had left the monastery of Reichenau at early dawn. The provisions were all consumed, the wine drunk, and the cloister pillaged; so, their day's work was done. Heribald's forehead lost many a wrinkle, when the last of the Hunnic riders had passed out of the cloister-gate. He threw after them a golden coin which the man from Ellwangen, had secretly thrust into his hand. "Countryman, if thou shouldst hear that a mishap has befallen me," said Snewelii, "I trust that thou wilt let a dozen masses be read for my poor soul. I have always befriended you and your fellow monks, and how I have fallen amongst the heathens, I scarcely can understand myself. The soil of Ellwangen is unfortunately too rough and stony for producing saints."

Heribald, however, would have nothing to do with him. In the garden, he shoveled up the bones and ashes of the burnt Huns and their horses, throwing them into the lake, whilst the Huns were still visible on the other side. "No heathen dust shall remain on the island," said he. Then he went to the cloister-yard, and thoughtfully stared at the place, where he had been forced to dance on the day before.

Meanwhile, the Huns were riding through the dark fir-wood toward the Hohentwiel. But as they were thus cantering along, heedless of all danger, here and there a horse began to stagger, and arrows and other sharp missiles flew into their ranks, sent by invisible hands. The vanguard began to slacken rein and to halt; but Ellak, giving the apurs to his horse, cried out: "Why do you care for the stinging of gnats? forward, the plain is a better field of battle!"

A dozen of his men were ordered to stay behind, in order to protect the baggage and camp followers against their hidden enemies. The ground echoed with the tramp of the advancing horde, and as soon as they reached the plain, they spread their ranks, and uttering a wild howl, advanced to meet the approaching column of the arriere-ban.

Far ahead rode Ellak, accompanied by the Hunnic standard-bearer, who was waving the green and red flag over his head. Uttering a piercing cry, the chieftain now lifted himself high in the saddle, and then shot off the first arrow, thus opening the battle according to old custom; and now the bloody fight began in good earnest. Little availed it to the Suabian warriors, that they stood firm and immovable like a wall of lances; for although the horses recoiled before it, a shower of arrows were sent

at them from the distance. Half raised in the stirrups, the Huns took aim, and generally their arrow hit the mark.

Others came on from the aides, and woe to the wounded, if his companions did not take him into the center.

Then the light troops intended to come out of the fir-wood, and attack the Huns from behind. The sound of the bugle again collected them together; they advanced,—but quick as thought their enemies' horses were turned round, and a shower of arrows greeted them. They staggered, only a few advanced, but these also were thrown back, so that finally Audifax was left alone, bravely marching along. Many an arrow whizzed round his head, but without minding them or once looking back, he blew his bagpipe, as was his duty. Thus he came right into the midst of the Hunnic riders. But now his piping stopped suddenly, for in passing, one of the Huns had thrown a noose over his head. Trying hard to resist, Audifax looked around, but not a single man of his troop was to be seen. "Oh, Hadumoth!" cried he, mournfully. The rider took pity on the brave fair haired boy; so instead of splitting his head, he lifted him up into the saddle, and galloped away to the place where the Hunnic train had stopped, under the shelter of a hill. With erect figure, the woman of the wood stood on her cart, intently gazing at the raging battle. She had dressed the wounds of the first Hun who fell, pronouncing some powerful charms over them, to stop the bleeding.

"Here I bring you some one to clean the camp-kettles!" cried the Hunnic rider, throwing the boy over, so that he fell right into the cart, and at the feet of the old woman.

"Welcome, thou venomous little toad," cried she fiercely, "thou shalt get thy reward sure enough, for having shown the way up to my house, to that cowl-bearer!" She had recognized him at once, and dragging him toward her, tied him fast to the cart.

Audifax remained silent, but scalding tears fell from his eyes. He did not cry though on account of being taken prisoner, but he cried from another heavy disappointment. "Oh, Hadumoth!" sighed he again. Yesterday at midnight he had sat together with the young goose-driver, hidden in a corner of the fireplace. "Thou shalt become invulnerable," Hadumoth had said, "for I will give thee a charm against all weapons!" She had boiled a brown snake, and anointed his forehead, shoulders and breast with its fat. "To-morrow evening I shall wait for thee in this same corner, for thou wilt surely come back to me, safe and sound. No metal can do anything against the fat of a snake." Audifax had squeezed her hands, and had gone out so joyously into battle,—and now!

The fighting was still going on in the plain, and the Suabian combatants not being used to battle, began to get tired already. With an anxious expression Simon Bardo was watching the state of affairs; and with an angry shake of the head, he grumbled to himself: "The best strategy is lost on these Centaurs, who come and go, and shoot at a distance, as if my three-fold flank stood there only to amuse them. It would really be well, if one were to add a chapter to Emperor Leo's book on tactics, treating of the attack of the Huns."

He now approached the monks, and dividing them again into two bodies, ordered the men of St. Gall to advance on the right, and those of Reichenau, on the left; then wheeling about, so that the enemy, having the wood at his back, was shut in by a semicircle. "If we do not surround them, they will not let us get at them," cried he, flourishing his broadsword in the air. "So now to the attack!"

A wild fire was gleaming in all eyes, and on the point of starting they all dropped down on their knees; each took up a clod of earth, and threw it over his head that he might be consecrated and blessed by his native earth; and then they rushed on to battle. Those of St. Gall struck up the pious war-song of "*media vita*." Notker, the stutterer, once passed through the ravines of the Martistobel, in his native land, when a bridge was just being built over the yawning precipice. The workmen were hanging suspended over the giddy height, and at that sight the idea rose in his soul how in our life we are always walking on the edge of the abyss of Death, and so he composed those verses. Now they served as a sort of magic song, which was to protect them, and bring death to their enemies. Solemn sounded its strains from the lips of the men going into battle:

* Revelation XX, 7.

"Though yet we live, by Death we are surrounded,
And ever near his messengers are staying,
Whom could we choose, to help us in great danger,
But Thee, oh Lord! The judge of all the living!
Almighty God!"

And from the other wing the monks of the Reichenau were singing:

"Long our fathers for thy coming panted,
And Thou redeemedst them from sin and sorrow,
Up to Thy throne arose their wailing voices,
And Thou didst not reject their tears and prayers,
Thou Lord of hosts!"

And from both sides was then heard together:

"Forsake us not, when our strength is failing,
Be our staff, when courage is departing,
Oh, not to bitter Death give up Thy children,
Almighty God, in whom we all are trusting,
Merciful God, great God of all the Heavens,
Oh Lord forsake us not! Have mercy on us!"

Thus they stood in close combat. With unmitigated surprise the Huns had beheld the approaching columns. Howls, and the hissing, devilish cry of "hui! hui!" was their response to the "media vita." Ellak, likewise, now divided his horsemen for a regular attack, and the fighting continued fiercer than ever. The Hunnic horsemen soon broke through the ranks of the small body of the monks of St. Gall, and a close fight then began. It was strength wrestling with swiftness, German awkwardness against Hunnic cunning.

The earth of the Hegau was then dyed red with the blood of many a pious man. Tutilo, the strong, was slain. He had pulled down a Hun from his horse by the feet, and swinging the wry-faced wretch through the air, split his skull against a stone; but a moment afterward an arrow pierced the temple of the hoary warrior. Like the victorious hymns of the heavenly host, it sounded through his wounded brain,—then he fell down on his slain foe. Sindolt, the wicked, atoned for many a bad trick which he had played his brothers in former times by the death-wound in his breast; and nothing did it avail Dubslan the Scot that he had made a vow to Saint Minwalouia to go barefoot to Rome if he would protect him in this battle,—for he also was carried dead out of the tumult.

When the blows rained down on the helmets like hailstones on slate roofs, old Moengal drew his hood over his head, so that he could look neither to the right nor to the left; then throwing away his spear, he cried, "Out with thee now, my old Cambutta." Unbuckling his beloved shillalah, which had accompanied him, fastened to his back, he now stood like a thrasher on the barn-floor. For some time a horseman had capered around him. "Kyrie eleysion," sang out the old man, breaking the horse's skull at one blow. With both feet the rider jumped to the ground, grazing Moengal's arm with his crooked saber. "Heigho," exclaimed he; "in spring 'tis a good thing to be bled; but take care, little surgeon!" aiming a blow at him, as if he wanted to strike him ten fathom deep into the ground. But the Hun evaded the blow, and whilst doing so, the helmet fell off and disclosed a soft and rosy face, framed in by long wavy tresses, interwoven with red ribbons. Before Moengal could think of aiming another blow, his antagonist jumped up at him like a tiger-cat; the young, fresh face approached his, affording him as it were in his old days an opportunity of culling a kiss from coral lips; but the moment after, he received a sharp bite on his cheek. Clapping his assailant, he felt a soft and slender waist. "Take thyself away, goblin," cried he. "Has hell sent out her she-devils also?" Here, another bite, for the sake of symmetry, saluted him on the left cheek. He started back, but before he had raised his bludgeon again, Erica had jumped on a horse which had lost its rider, and gayly laughing, she rode away, swift as a dream that vanishes at cock-crow.

In the middle of the arriere-ban fought Master Spazzo, the chamberlain, heading a troop. The slow advance had rather pleased him, but when the fight seemed to come to no conclusion, and men were clinging to each other, like the hounds to the deer in a chase,—then it became rather too much for him. A dreamy, pensive mood came over him in the midst of the raging battle, and only when a passing rider pulled off his helmet, as an acceptable booty, was he roused from his meditations, and when the same, renewing the experiment, tried to drag off his mantle, he cried out angrily: "Is it not yet enough, thou marksman of the Devil?" dealing him at the same time a thrust with his long sword, which pinned the Hun's thigh to his own horse. Master Spazzo then thought of

giving him the death-blow, but on looking into his face, he found it so very ugly, that he resolved to bring him home to his mistress, as a living memento of the battle. So he made the wounded man his prisoner. His name was Cappan; and putting his head under Master Spazzo's arm, in sign of submission, he grinned with delight, showing two rows of shining white teeth, when he perceived that his life had been spared.

Hornbog had led his troops against the brothers of the Reichenau. Here also, grim Death was reaping a rich harvest. The cloister-walls glistened in the distance over the lake, like an appeal to the combatants to exert their utmost strength; and many a Hun who came within reach of their swords, found out that he was treading on Suabian ground, where heavy blows are as plentiful as wild strawberries in summer. But the ranks of the brothers also were considerably thinned. Quirinius the scrivener was resting for ever from the writing-crank, which had caused the spear in his right hand to tremble. Beside him, there fell Wiprecht the astronomer, and Kerimold the master of salmon-fishing, and Witigowo the architect;—who knows them all? the nameless heroes, who met a glorious end, on that day!

Only one of the monks had reason to be grateful to a Hunnic arrow, and that was brother Pilgeram. He was born at Cologne on the Rhine, and had carried his thirst of knowledge, as well as a mighty goitre to St. Pirmin's isle; where he was one of the most learned and most pious monks; but his goitre increased and he became hypochondriac over the ethics of Aristotle, so that Heribald had often said to him: "Pilgeram, I pity thee." But now a Hunnic arrow pierced the excrescence on his throat. "Farewell, friend of my youth!" cried he on sinking down; but the wound was not dangerous, and when his consciousness returned, he felt his throat as well as his head considerably lightened, and from that moment he never opened Aristotle again.

Round the standard of St. Gall, a select body of men had rallied. The black streamers still floated in the air from the image on the cross; but the contest was doubtful. With word and action, Ekkehard encouraged his companions not to give way, but it was Ellak himself who fought against them. The bodies of slain men and horses cumbered the ground in wild disorder. He who survived had done his duty, and when all are brave, no single heroic deed can claim its special share of glory. Sir Burkhard's sword had received a new baptism of blood in Ekkehard's hands, but in vain had he fiercely attacked Ellak the chieftain; for after having exchanged a few blows and thrusts, they were separated again by other combatants. Already the cross, towering on high, began to stagger, aimed at by unceasing arrows, when a loud cry of surprise rang through the ranks: for from the hill on which stood the tower of Hohenfriedingen, two unknown horsemen in strange-looking armor, came galloping at full speed toward the scene of battle. Heavily one of them, who was of mighty bulk, sat on his steed. Both shield and harness were of antiquated shape, but the faded golden ornaments indicated the high birth of the wearer. A golden band encircled his helmet, from which a tuft of red feathers waved. His mantle fluttering in the wind, and his lance leveled, he looked like a picture of the olden times; like King Saul in Folkard's psalm-book riding to meet David. Close by his side rode his companion, a faithful vassal, ready to succor and protect him.

"'Tis the archangel Michael!" cried some in the Christian ranks, and with this their strength rallied. The sun was shining brightly on the strange rider's arms,—like an omen of victory,—and a few moments later the two were in the midst of the battle. He, with the gilt armor was looking about for a worthy antagonist, which he soon found, for when the Hunnic chieftain's keen eyes had spied him out, his horse's head was turned toward him. The spear of the stranger knight passed harmlessly by him, missing its aim; and Ellak's sword was already raised to deal him the death blow, when the vassal threw himself between the two. His broadsword merely struck the enemy's horse, so, bending his head forward, to catch the blow meant for his master, the faithful shield-bearer found his death.

With a loud, clattering sound Ellak's horse fell to the ground, but before the sound had quite died out, the Hun had already recovered his feet. The unknown knight raised his mace, to

break his enemy's head, but Ellak, with his left foot placed tightly on the body of his dead courser, pressed back the raised arm with his sinewy hands, trying at the same time to pull him down. Then, face to face, the two mighty ones began wrestling, so that those around them ceased fighting, to look on.

With a cunning movement, Ellak now seized his short sword, but just when he lifted his arm, his antagonist's mace came down slowly but heavily on his head. Yet his hand still dealt the thrust, and then lifting it up to his forehead, over which the blood was running in streams, Ellak reeled back on his war-horse, on which a moment later the Hunnic chieftain angrily gave up the ghost.

"Here, sword of God and St. Michael!" triumphantly rose again the joint cry of monks and arriere-ban men! Rallying their strength, they rushed on to one last despairing attack. The knight in the gilt armor was still the foremost in the fight. The death of their leader caused such a panic to the Huns, that they turned round, and sped away in wild, disorderly flight.

The woman of the wood had already perceived the unfavorable turn which the battle was taking. Her horses were ready harnessed, and casting one last angry glance at the victorious monks and the rocky mountains which had once been her home, she drove on the horses at a quick pace, in the direction of the Rhine, followed by the rest of the train. "To the Rhine!" was the watchword of the flying Huns. Hornbog was the last, who unwillingly turned his back on the battle-field, and the Hohentwiel.

"Farewell, till next year!" cried he tauntingly.

The victory was gained; but he, whom they believed to be the archangel Michael, sent to their rescue, now let his heavy head sink down on his horse's neck. Reins and arms had both fallen from his hands, and whether the cause was the last thrust of the Hunnic chieftain, or suffocation in the heat of the battle, he was lifted down from his horse, a dead man. On opening his visor, a happy smile was still visible on his wrinkled old face, and from that hour the headache of the old man of the Heidenhöhlen had ceased forever.

A black dog ran about searching on the battle-field, till he found the old man's body. Dismissed by bowling, he then licked his forehead, Ekkehard standing near, with a tear in his eye, saying a prayer for the welfare of his soul.

The conquerors returned to the Hohentwiel, their helmets adorned with green fir-twigs, and leaving twelve of the brothers behind to watch the dead on the battle-field. Of the Huns, one hundred and eighty had fallen in battle, whilst the Suabian arriere-ban had lost ninety-six; those of the Reichenau eighteen, and those of St. Gall twenty, besides the old man and Rauching his bondsman.

With a handkerchief tied round his face, Moengal stalked over the field, using his shillalah like a staff. One by one he examined the dead. "Hast thou not seen a Hun amongst them, who in reality is a Hunnic woman?" asked he of one of the watch-keeping brothers.

"No," was the reply.

"Then I may as well go home," said Moengal.

CHAPTER XV.

HADUMOTH.

THE night, which had appeared long and dreary to those who had been intrusted with the watch on the battle-field, was passing away. The horror of Death lay over the whole valley. "The Lord be merciful unto their souls," sounded the low-voiced call of the watchman. "And deliver them from the sufferings of purgatory, Amen!" was the response of his companions, who were cowering round a camp-fire, on the border of the pine-wood. The deep black shadows of night lay over the bodies of the slain, as if the heavens compassionate, wished to hide what human hands had done there. At dawn of day, even the clouds disappeared, as if they also were driven away by the horror of the sight beneath them; others came, and likewise fled, ever changing their shapes and forms; losing one to assume another,—everything is restless, except in Death, where eternal rest is found. Friend and enemy, side by side as they had fallen, still lay there, quiet and calm.

One slight figure like that of a child, the watchman saw gliding over the battle-field. It

ent down, walked on, and bent down again, and ever continued its search; but he dared not call it. He stood like one that is spell-bound. "Probably it is the angel who is marking their foreheads with a letter so that they can be recognized when the spirit will return to their bodies, on the day of resurrection," thought he, remembering the words of the prophet. Silently he crossed himself, and when he looked again, the figure had vanished.

The morning dawned, and there came a number of men from the arriere-ban, to relieve the monks. The Duchess had sent them, although Simon Bardo was not quite satisfied with this arrangement. "A victory is but half a victory if it is not followed up by pursuit of the enemy. We ought to go after them until the last of them are annihilated," he said. But the monks insisted on their return on account of the Easter holidays, and the others said: "Before we could catch those, on their swift horses, we should have far to go. They have come to us, and we have beaten them, and if they should come again, we have more blows to store for them;—the work of yesterday deserves rest."

Then it was determined upon that the dead should be buried before the break of Easter Sunday.

So the men fetched their spades and hoes, and dug two wide graves. On one side of the field there was an abandoned gravel-pit, which they widened into a spacious resting-place. This last was destined for the dead Huns. Arms and harnesses were taken off and collected; forming a considerable heap in all. When the corpses were thrown down; one after the other, as they were brought. It was a mass of torn members, repulsive to the eye; men and horses in wild confusion; a throng, as when the rebellious host of angels fell down into hell.

The pit was filled. One of the grave-diggers came and brought a solitary head with cleft forehead and fierce expression. "Most likely that belongs also to the heathens, and may look for its trunk below," quoth he, throwing it down into the pit.

When the whole field had been searched, without their discovering any more Hunnic bodies, they covered up the huge grave. It was a burial without solemnity;—sundry curses instead of blessings were called down, and ravens and other birds of prey, hoarsely screeching, fluttered about in great numbers. Those who inhabited the rocks on the Hohenkrähen, and the dark pine-wood beneath, had all come, Moengal's hawk among them; and they were evidently protesting by their cries against thus losing their rightful prey. With a hollow sound the clods of earth and pebbles fell into the wide grave. Then the deacon of Singen came, with the vase of consecrated water, with which he sprinkled the mound, in order to banish the demons, and keep down the dead who rested in the stranger earth. A weather-beaten piece of rock, which had sometime since fallen down from the Hohentwiel, was finally rolled on to the Hunnic grave, and then they went away shivering, to get ready the second tomb, which was to receive their own dead. All those who had belonged to the ecclesiastical state were to be buried in the cloister church at Reichenau.

At the same hour in which the battle had begun the day before, a solemn procession descended from the Hohentwiel. These were the men who had won the battle. They advanced in the same order as on the day before, but their gait was slow, and their standard was muffled in black crape. On the watchtower of the castle, the black flag had likewise been hoisted. The Duchess herself rode also with the train, dressed in dark sober-colored garments, which gave an unusually serious and severe stamp to her face. The dead monks were carried on biers to the brink of the great tomb, in such that they should participate in the last homage rendered to their fellow-champions. When

One last notes of the litany had died away, Abherot Wazzmann approached the open grave, pronouncing the farewell greeting and offering up another thanks of the survivors to the ninety-six who lay there so pale and still, side by side.

"Blessed be their memory, and may their remains rest in peace until the day of resurrection! May their names descend unto posterity, and may the glory of the holy champions bring down a blessing on their children!" Thus he spoke in the words of the preacher, throwing down when he had ended the first handful of earth, the Duchess as well as the others following his example one by one. After this

there ensued a solemn silence, as all those who had fought together on the day before were to separate again after the funeral; and many a hard-featured face waxed soft, and many a kiss and hearty shake of the hand were exchanged at parting.

Those of the Reichensu were the first who set out for their monastery. The biers with the dead were carried along; the brothers walking by their sides, bearing lighted tapers, and chanting psalms. The corpse of the old man from the Heidenhöhlen, long weary of life, they had also taken along with them. With bent down head the war-horse of the unknown warrior, covered with a black cloth, walked by its side. It was a gloomy and sad spectacle withal, to see the long funeral train slowly enter the pine-wood, and then disappear amid the gloom.

The next to take leave of the Duchess were the remaining arriere-ban men. The gaunt Friedinger, with his arm in a sling, rode down the valley at the head of a troop. Only the Knight of Randegg, with a few select soldiers, was to be garrisoned on the Hohentwiel.

With unfeigned emotion Dame Hadwig followed the departing ones with her eyes, and then slowly rode over the battle-field. The day before she had stood on the tower anxiously watching the turn the battle was taking.

Master Spazzo was now called upon to explain a good many things, and although he evidently did not shrink from exaggerating a little here and there, the Duchess seemed well satisfied. She did not speak to Ekkehard.

When she too had returned home the plain became silent and forsaken again, as if nothing at all had happened there. Only the trampled grass, the wet, reddish earth, and the two huge tombs, bore witness to the harvest which Death had held there but the day before. It was not long before the blood was dried up and the grass had grown afresh. The mounds under which the dead rested were covered with moss and creepers. Wind and birds had carried seeds there, and bushes and trees had sprung up in rich luxuriance—for plants thrive well where the dead are buried. But the tale of the battle with the Huns is still living in the memory of the present generation. The piece of rock which had been rolled upon the grave, is called the "Heidenbock" (Heathenbuck) by the inhabitants of the Hegau, and in the night of Good Friday there is nobody who would like to pass the valley. In that night earth and air belong to the dead, who are then supposed to arise from their graves. Then the small, swift-footed horses dart about again; the dark columns of the Christian champions on foot eagerly press forward: the armor glittering from under the decayed habits of the monks. The clatter of arms and wild war cries, rise louder than the tempest, and fiercely rages the battle of the spirits in the air, when suddenly from yonder island in the lake a knight in shining gilt armor, on a black steed, comes hurrying along, and drives them all back into their cool resting-places. Vainly the Hunnic chieftain tries to resist him, angrily lifting his crooked sword; but at that moment the heavy battle axe descends on his head,—and he must go down like the rest—and everything is silent as before; only the young leaves of the tender birch-tree are trembling in the wind.

Easter Sunday passed drearily and sadly. In the evening Dame Hadwig sat in the hall, with Ekkehard, Master Spazzo the chamberlain, and the Knight of Randegg. It can be easily imagined what their talk was about. The great events of the past days found an echo in all their thoughts and speeches; like to the echo of the Lurlei-rock in the Rhine: scarcely has the first tone died away in one place when a hollow rolling sound takes it up again in the next, and so it goes on, reverberating from all sides, as if it were never going to end.

The Abbot of Reichenau had sent a messenger to report that they had found the monastery but slightly damaged, unharmed by fire. Further, that they had destroyed all traces of the Huns by carrying the holy relics about and by the sprinkling of consecrated water everywhere, and finally that the dead had been buried.

"And what became of the brother who stayed behind?" asked the Duchess.

"On him the Lord our God has shown that in His mercy He does not forget poor childish minds in the midst of danger and peril. On our return he stood on the threshold, as if nothing whatever had happened to him. 'Well, how didst thou like the Huns?' one of us called out to him, upon which he said, with his customary smile: 'Well, thank they have pleased a shower of arro

me very much indeed. Never have I seen such jolly fellows before; and as for eating and drinking, they are wonderfully considerate! The father cellarer has never taken the slightest notice of my being thirsty, but they gave me wine, as much as I wanted,—and if they dealt me sundry blows and boxes on the ear, they made it up again with the wine; and that is more than any of you would ever have done. Only discipline was wanting—and besides they have not yet learned how to behave in church.' Further, he could say still many a thing in praise of the stranger guests, but this, Heribald added, he would only reveal under the seal of confession."

Dame Hadwig was as yet not inclined for amusement. She graciously dismissed the messenger, giving him the finely wrought coat of mail of the slain Hunnic chieftain, in order that it might be hung up in the cloister-church, as a lasting token of the past battle. The duty of distributing the booty was hers, according to the general desire.

Master Spazzo, whose tongue had not been lazy all this time in recounting his warlike deeds,—and the number of the Huns he had slain increased with every recital, like a falling avalanche,—now said with emphasis: "I have still got a war-trophy to present, which I have destined for my gracious mistress herself."

He then went down to the under apartments, in one of which Cappan, his prisoner, lay on a bundle of straw. His wound had been dressed, and had proved not to be dangerous. "Get up, thou son of the Devil!" cried Master Spazzo, adding a rude kick to this invitation. The Hun rose; his face wearing a somewhat dubious expression, as if he did not believe that his life was to last much longer. Thus he limped through the room, leaning on a stick. "Forward!" said Master Spazzo, indicating the direction in which he was to go. So they went up stairs and entered the hall. Here an imperious, "stop," from Master Spazzo, made the unfortunate wretch stand still, casting his eyes around with evident surprise.

With kindly interest Dame Hadwig looked at the strange specimen of humanity before her. Praxedis also had come near, and turning to Master Spazzo said: "One cannot say much for the beauty of your war-trophy, but it is curious enough."

The Duchess folded her hands; "And this is the nation before whom the German Empire has trembled!" exclaimed she.

"The terror was caused by the multitude, and their always keeping together," said the Knight of Randegg. "They won't come back again so easily, that's sure."

"Are you so very certain of this?" asked she pointedly.

The Hun did not understand much of the conversation. His wounded foot hurt him, but he did not dare to sit down. Praxedis addressed him in Greek, but he shyly shook his head. Then she tried to get up an understanding, by dint of signs and nods,—but this too was in vain. "Allow me," said she to the Duchess, "I still know of a way to make him give us a sign of life, which I have heard of at Constantinople." Gliding out of the hall, she presently returned, carrying a cup, which she presented with mock deference to the dumb prisoner. It was a strong liquor, distilled from cherries and stone-fruit, such as the late castle chaplain had loved to concoct now and then. At the sight of this, the Hun's face became radiant; his blunt nose sniffed up the rising aroma; and emptying the cup, which he evidently regarded as a sign of peace, he threw himself down with crossed arms before Praxedis, and kissed her shoe.

She made him a sign that the homage was due to the Duchess, upon which he wanted to repeat his thanks to her, but Dame Hadwig stepped back, and beckoned to Master Spazzo to take his prisoner away again.

"You have queer fancies," said she to him, when he had returned, "however, it was gallant of you to think of me, even in battle."

Meanwhile, Ekkehard had been silently sitting at the window, looking out over the country. Master Spazzo's ways annoyed him, and even Praxedis's jokes had hurt his feelings. "In order to humiliate us," thought he, "the Lord has sent over the children of the desert to be a warning to us and to teach us, even on the ruins of that which is perishable, to think of that which is eternal;—the earth which covers the bodies of the slain is still fresh, and those left behind are already jesting, as if all had been but an empty dream."

Praxedis had approached him, and now playfully said: "Why did you not likewise bring home some keepsake from the battle, Professor! A wonderful Hunnic Amson is said to have skirmished about there; and if you had caught her, we should now have a nice pair of them."

"Ekkehard had to think of higher things than Hunnic women," said the Duchess bitterly, "and he knows how to be silent, as one who has taken a vow for that purpose. Why should we need to know how he fared in battle!"

This cutting speech deeply wounded the serious-minded man. A jest at the wrong moment falls like vinegar on honey dew. Silently he walked out to fetch Sir Burkhard's sword, and drawing it out of the scabbard, he laid it on the table before the Duchess. Fresh, red spots were still glistening on the noble blade, and the edge showed many a new notch, here and there. "Whether the schoolmaster was idle all the time, this sword may bear witness! I have not made my tongue the herald of my deeds!"

The Duchess was startled. She still bore him a grudge in her heart, and she was sorely tempted to give it vent, in an angry outburst. But the sword of Sir Burkhard called up manifold thoughts. So, restraining her passion, she held out her hand to Ekkehard. "I did not wish to offend you," said she.

The mildness of her voice was like a reproach to him, and he hesitated to take the proffered hand. He almost wanted to ask her pardon for his roughness, but the words clove to his tongue,—and at that moment, the door opened, and he was spared the rest.

Hadumoth, the little geese-driver came in. Shyly she stopped at the door, not venturing to speak. Her face, which was pale from want of sleep, bore the traces of recent tears.

"What is the matter with thee, my poor child?" called out Dame Hadwig, "come hither!"

Then the little maiden came forward, and kissed the Duchess's hand. She tried to speak, but violent sobs prevented her.

"Don't be afraid," said the Duchess soothingly; upon which she found words and said: "I cannot take care of the geese any more; I must go away, and thou must give me a gold piece, as big as thou hast got. I cannot help it, but I must go!"

"And why must thou go, my child?" asked the Duchess. "Has any one wronged thee?"

"He has not come home again!"

"There are many who have not come home again; but thou must not go away on that account. Those who have fallen are now with our dear Lord in heaven. They are in a large beautiful garden, and are much happier than we are."

But Hadumoth, shaking her young little head, said: "Audifax is not with God; he is with the Huns. I have searched for him down in the valley, and he was not amongst the dead men. Besides, the charcoal-burners' boy from Hohenstoffeln, who also went out with the archers, saw himself, how he was taken prisoner. I must go to fetch him. I can find no peace if I don't!"

"But how wilt thou find him?"

"That I don't know. I shall go where the others went. They say that the world is very wide, but in the end I shall find him. I feel sure of it. The gold piece which thou art to give me, I will give to the Huns, and say: Let me have Audifax for this, and when I have got him, we shall both come home again."

Dame Hadwig delighted in all that was extraordinary. "From that child we might all learn something!" she said, lifting up the shy little Hadumoth to imprint a kiss on her forehead. "God is with thee, without thy knowing it. Therefore, thy thoughts are great and bold. Who amongst you has a gold coin?"

The Knight of Randegg fetched one out of the depth of his pocket. It was a large golden thaler; on one side of which could be seen the Emperor Charles with a stern face, and wide open eyes, and on the other a crowned female head. "It's my last one," said he laughingly, handing it to Praxedis. The Duchess then gave it to the child. "Go out then, with the Lord; it is a decree of Providence."

All were deeply touched, and Ekkehard put his hands on the little maiden's head, as if to bless her. "I thank you!" said she, turning to go; then once more looking round she added: "but if they will not let me have Audifax, for one gold piece only?"

"Then I will give thee another," said the Duchess.

Upon this, the child confidently walked away.

And Hadumoth really went out into the unknown world. The gold piece, sewn up in her bodice, her pocket filled with bread, and the staff which Audifax had once cut for her, from the dark green holly-bush, in her hand. That she did not know the way, and that her finding food and a shelter for the night, were doubtful things, she had not time to trouble herself about. The Huns have gone away, toward the setting sun, and have taken him with them, was her sole thought. The flowing Rhine, and the setting sun were her only waymarks, and Audifax her goal.

By and by, the scenery became strange to her; the Bodensee looking smaller and narrower in the distance, and foreign hills rising before her, to hide the proud and familiar shape of the hill, which was her home. More than once did she look back, until she had caught the last glimpse of the Hohentwiel, with its walls and towers steeped in dark blue shadows. Then she entered an unknown valley, grown with dark pine-woods, under the shade of which, low, straw-thatched cottages lay hidden. Nodding a last good-by to her Hegau mountains, Hadumoth walked on undauntedly.

When the sun had gone down to his rest behind the pine-woods, she stopped awhile. "Now they are ringing the bell for evening-prayer at home," said she, "I will pray also." She knelt down in the woody solitude and prayed; first for Audifax, then for the Duchess, and finally for herself. Everything was silent around her. She only heard her own fast-beating heart.

"What will become of my poor geese?" thought she next, rising from her knees, "'tis now the hour to drive them home." Then Audifax, with whom she had so often returned home of an evening, rose again before her mind and she hurried on.

In the different farmyards which she passed in the valley, not a soul was stirring about; only before one little straw-thatched cottage, an old woman was sitting. "Thou must take me in for the night, grandmother," said Hadumoth coaxingly; but except a sigh that she could remain, she received no answer whatever, for the old woman was deaf. When the people had fled up into the mountains on account of the Huns, she alone had remained behind.

Before the day had well dawned, Hadumoth had already set out again on her journey. Her road now took her through extensive woods, in which the fir-trees seemed never to come to an end. Here, the first soft touches of spring were already visible. The first flowers were peeping out from the moss; and the first beetles hovered above them, softly humming; and the delicious smell of the pine-trees scented the air everywhere, as if it were an incense, which the trees sent up to the sun, to show their gratitude for all which his rays had called up into life, around them.

The little maiden, however, was not satisfied. "Here it is far too beautiful for the Huns to be," said she to herself. So, at the first opportunity which offered itself, she turned her back on the mountains, and soon came to an opening in the wood, which afforded a considerable view. Far down, in the distance, the Rhine was winding along, like a serpent. Jammed in between its dividing arms was an island, bearing many a stately tower and wall, as if belonging to a monastery; but Hadumoth's sharp eyes discerned that the walls were blackened and spotted, and the roofs all destroyed. A dark-blue cloud of smoke hung heavily over it.

"How do they call the land here?" asked she of a man, who was just then emerging from the wood.

"Black Forest," was the answer.

"And over there?"

"Rheingau."

"The Huns must have been there?"

"The day before yesterday."

"And where are they now?"

The man, leaning on his staff, gave a sharp look at the child, and pointing down the Rhine, said, "and why dost thou ask?"

"Because, I wish to go to them." Upon this he lifted his staff and walked on, murmuring, "holy Fintan, pray for us!"

Hadumoth also steadily walked on again. She had noticed from the height, that the Rhine was flowing onward in large circuits; so she cut across the mountains, thus to get the start on the Huns. Two days she thus wandered on, sleeping one night in the open air, on the mossy ground, and scarcely meeting a human being all the time. She had to cross,

however, many a wild ravine and swift-flowing mountain torrent, as well as mighty old pine-trees which the storm had uprooted. On the same place where they had once stretched their tops toward the sky, they now lay to rot and decay; emitting a weird, grayish light at night; but in spite of all terrors and difficulties, she never once lost her courage.

At last the mountains became less steep, flattening down into an elevated plain, over which the rough winds could sweep at their leisure; and in the crevices of which the snow was still lying;—yet she walked on.

—The last piece of bread had been eaten, when from another hill she again caught sight of the Rhine. So she now turned to walk toward it, until she came to a narrow chasm, in the depth of which a foaming mountain torrent dashed along. A dense mass of brambles and other thorny bushes grew on the sides of this steep descent, but Hadumoth bravely made for herself a passage through them, though this cost her no small amount of pain and weariness. The sun was high in the heavens, and the thorns ever and anon caught hold of her dress, but whenever her feet grew weary and unwilling to proceed, she said, "Audifax!" and lifted them up again.

At last she had come to the bottom, and was standing at the foot of dark rocky walls, through which the waters had made a passage, falling down in a bright, sparkling cascade. The old-looking stones, on which a reddish moss was growing, glistened and shone like burnished gold, through the glittering waves, which rose up against them, alternately covering them up, until they arrested their mad course a few steps lower down, in a dark green, transparent little pond, like to a life-wearied man going to rest, and looking back in quiet contemplation of the frolics and extravagances of his past life. Luxurious, broad-leaved plants grew around it, on which the spray lay like sparkling dewdrops, whilst blue-winged dragon-flies hovered above them, as if they were the spirits of dead flowers.

Dreamily the melodious rustling of the water crept into the heart of the hungry child. With that brook she must go on to the Rhine. Everything was wild and entangled, as if never a human being had broken in upon that solitude—and now a dry, green little nook looked invitingly over at Hadumoth; and she followed the invitation and laid herself down. The air was so cool and fresh, and the brook rustled and murmured on until it had lulled her to sleep. With her head resting on her outstretched right arm, she lay there, a smile playing on her tired countenance. She was dreaming. Of whom? The blue dragon-flies betrayed nothing.

A slight sprinkling of water awoke her from her dreams, and when she slowly opened her eyes a man with a long beard, dressed in a coarse linen suit, and with legs bared to the knees, stood before her. Some fishing-tackle, a net and a wooden tub, in which blue-spotted trout were swimming, lay in the grass beside him. He had thus stood for a considerable time, watching the little sleeper, and doubting whether she were a human being, said, "Where am I?" asked Hadumoth a healthlessly.

"At the waterfall of Wielad. But replied the fisherman, "and this water, which contains plenty of fine salmon, is called the Murg and goes into the Rhine. But whence dost thou come, little maiden? Hast thou dropped from the sky?"

"I come from far away, and where I live the hills are quite different from here. With us, they grow quite straight out of the plain; each one standing alone,—and the salmon swim about in the lake, and are much bigger. Hegau our land is called."

The fisherman shook his head. "That must be a good way off. And where art thou going to?"

"To the Huns," replied Hadumoth; and then she told him why she had gone out into the world, and for whom she was searching.

Upon this the fisherman shook his head again with redoubled energy. "By the life of my mother!" exclaimed he, "that is an adventurous expedition!" but Hadumoth, folding her hands pleadingly said: "Fisherman, thou must show me the way to find them."

Then the long-bearded man, the Hun's "If it must be so, come along," doubts were "They are not very far off." Grieved she had fishing tackle he followed the little girl, she plucked off the trees and bushes beneath, murmuring, "he loves me."

wangled, or when bits of rocks blocked up the way, he took her up in his arms and carried her through the foaming waters. After leaving the ravine to their right, they soon came to the spur of the hill, at the foot of which the Rhine flows.

"Look there, child," said he, pointing across the river to a low level mountain tract. "Over there you get into the Frick valley at the foot of the Bötzbeg. There they have pitched their camp, after burning the Castle of Laufenburg yesterday—but farther than this, the murderous incendiaries shall not proceed," added he fiercely.

"After walking on for awhile Hadumoth's side stopped before a projecting rock. "Wait a bit," said he. He then took up some logs of dry fir-wood that lay about, and heaped them up into a pile, putting some smaller branches of resinous pine-wood between. He did not light it though. The same thing he did again in sundry other places. Hadumoth looked on, but could not guess why he was doing this. At last they descended to the banks of the Rhine.

"Art thou really in earnest about the Huns?" asked he once more.

"Yea," said Hadumoth. Upon this he loosened a small canoe, which had been hidden in the bushes, and rowed her across. On the other side they came right into a wood, which the man entered, always looking carefully about everywhere. Here also were piles of wood mixed with resin and covered with green branches. Nodding contentedly he returned to Hadumoth. "Further than this I cannot accompany thee, for yonder is the Frick-valley and the Hunnic camp. Take care that they see thee that boy at once; better to-day than to-morrow. It might otherwise be too late. And may God protect thee! Thou art a brave child."

"I thank thee," said Hadumoth, pressing his sorry hand. "But why dost thou not come with me?"

"I shall come later," replied the fisherman with a significant look, stepping back into his canoe.

At the entrance of the valley was the Hunnic camp, consisting of some tents, and a few larger huts made of branches and straw. The horses were lodged in block-houses of pine-logs. At the back was a mountain, whilst in front they had made a trench, fortified by a kind of palisade, made with paling and pieces of rock, in the genuine Hunnic fashion. Their sentinels rode up and down, within a considerable circumference. The reason of their having settled down there for awhile, was partly their needing some rest after their late exploits, and partly an intended attack on the convent of St. Fridolin, situated in that neighborhood. Some of their men were building ships and rafts on the banks of the Rhine.

In his tent lay Hornebog, who was now sole leader since Ellak's death; but in spite of all the cushions and carpets heaped up there, he could find no rest. Erica, the flower-of-the-heath, was sitting by his side, playing with a golden double die. The Rhine were round her neck on a Hunnic garb.

"Why," said Hornebog to her, "but thou receive have become very uncomfortable. Those bald-headed monks have dealt us rather too heavy blows. We must not be quite so rash in future. Here, also, I do not feel quite at my ease, for it is too still, and a calm generally precedes a storm. With thee, too, everything is changed since Ellak was killed. Thou shouldst love me now, as thou didst him, when he was the first leader; but thou art like a burnt-out fire."

Erica pulled away the jewel with a jerk, so that it rebounded on her bosom with a metallic ringing, and softly hummed some Hunnic melody. Then there entered one of the Hunnic sentinels, accompanied by Hadumoth and Snewelin of Giliwangen as interpreter. The child had entered the camp, bravely passing the posts and not heeding their calls, until they stopped her. Snewelin then explained Hadumoth's wish with regard to the prisoner boy. He was in as soft and compassionate a mood as if he were at home—and about to celebrate Ash-wednesday, for he had summed up on that day the misdeeds which he had committed in the course of his Hunnic life; and the bribes and presents began to weigh heavily on his mind.

"Also, that I can pay them a ransom," said Hadumoth, undoing the seam of her tunic, and taking out the gold piece. She handed it to him, and he gave it to the boy, who was sitting by her side.

to the chieftain, who laughed immoderately, joined by Erica.

"What a crazy land!" exclaimed Hornebog, when his laughter had subsided. "The men cut off their hair, and the children do what would honor a warrior. If instead of this little maiden, the armed men from the lake had followed us, it would have put us into an awkward position."

A sudden suspicion now crossing his mind, he cast a searching look at the child. "If she were a spy!" exclaimed he. But Erica now rose and patted Hadumoth's head. "Thou shalt stay with me," said she, "for I want something to play with since my black horse is dead, and my Ellak is dead."

"Take the brat away!" Hornebog now called out angrily. "Have we come here to play with children?" Then Erica saw that a storm was brewing in the chieftain's bosom, and taking the little maiden by the hand, led her out.

There where the camp receded toward the mountain, between some sheltering pieces of rock, a temporary cooking-place had been erected, which was the undisputed realm of the woman of the wood. Audifax was kneeling before the biggest of the kettles, blowing into the fire, in which the soup that was destined for the evening meal was boiling. But now he jumped up and gave a loud shriek, for he had beheld his little friend. Instantly the old hag stretched out her head from behind the other kettle, and this was more than a warning. Without moving he stirred the soup with a peeled branch, as was his prescribed task. Thus he stood, the image of dumb grief. He had become pale and haggard, and his eyes dimmed by the tears which had touched nobody. "Mind that thou dost not hurt the children, old baboon!" cried Erica.

Then Hadumoth went over to where the boy was, who now dropped his primitive spoon, and silently held out his hand to her; but out of his dark blue eyes there came a look, which told its own story of woe and suffering, and the longing wish to regain his liberty. Hadumoth likewise stood quietly before him. She had often imagined a joyous and touching meeting, but all these pictures had faded away now. The greatest joy sends its gratitude up to heaven in a voiceless prayer.

"Give me a dish of soup, Audifax," said she, "I am very hungry."

The woman of the wood suffered him to pour out some soup for her, into a wooden plate, which the hungry child eagerly took. When she had stilled the craving for food, her spirits rose again, and she fearlessly gazed on the wild faces of the Hunnic riders, who came to fetch their soup. Afterward she sat down close beside Audifax. He was still silent and reserved, and only when it became dark and his tyrant went away his tongue got loosened. "Oh, I have so much to tell thee, Hadumoth!" whispered he. "I know where the treasure of the Huns is! The woman of the wood has got it in her keeping. Two big boxes stand under her couch in yonder hut. I have looked into them myself, and they were quite full of jewels and diadems and golden trinkets. A silver hen, with a brood of chickens and eggs, is also amongst them, which they stole in Lombardy, —and many more beautiful things. I have paid dearly for seeing them though."

He lifted up his leathern hat. One half of his right ear had been cut off.

"The woman of the wood came home before I could close the lid again. 'Take that, for thy reward,' said she, lifting her scissors up to my ear. It has hurt me a good deal, Hadumoth, but I shall pay her back some day!"

"I will help thee," said his companion.

For a long time the two whispered on together; for no sleep came to the eyes of the happy one. The noise in the camp was hushed now, and the shadows of night brooded over the valley. Then Hadumoth said: "I must ever and again think of that night when the stars fell down." Audifax, heaving a sigh, murmured: "Ah, I shall still get my treasure. I know I shall." And again they sat quietly together for awhile; until Audifax gave a violent start. Hadumoth could feel the trembling of his hand. On the other side of the Rhine, on the summit of the black-looking mountains, a sudden light shone out. It was like a torch swung around, and then thrown away.

"There, it's gone again!" Audifax said softly.

"Ah, but look there!" affrightedly exclaimed Hadumoth, pointing behind her.

From the height of the Bötzbeg another flame darted up; likewise describing a fiery circuit in the air. It was the same signal. And yonder, over in the Black Forest, on the same place where the burning torch had first been visible, there now arose a mighty flame, lighting up the dark, starless night. The guard in the valley uttered a piercing whistle, and the inhabitants of the camp began to stir everywhere. The woman of the wood came back also, and threateningly called out: "What art thou dreaming about, boy? Quick, put the nags to the cart, and saddle my sumpter-horse!"

Audifax silently obeyed her orders.

The cart stood ready, and the sumpter-horse was tied to a stake. Carefully the old woman approached it with two panniers, which she hung over its back, and then taking out the two boxes from her hut, she put one in each, covering them up afterward with some hay. When she had done this she peered out anxiously into the darkness. Everything was quiet again. The wine of the Frick valley had insured a sound sleep to the Hunnic warriors.

"Tis nothing," muttered the woman of the wood, "we can take the horses back again;" but the next moment she started up, almost blinded. The mountains rising behind the camp had suddenly become alive with hundreds of torches and fire-brands; and from all sides there resounded the loud and terrific cry of battle. From the Rhine dark masses of armed men were swiftly approaching; on all the mountain summits tremendous bonfires were burning. Up now, ye sleepers!—it was too late, for already the fire-brands came flying into the Hunnic camp. Pitifully sounded the frightened neighing of the horses, whose large shed was already burning. Dark figures stormed the camp on all sides. This time King Death was coming with blazing torchlight, and he who brought him was the old Knight Irmingier, the owner of the Frickgau. He, the strong father of six strong sons; who, like Matthias with his Maccabees, could no longer bear to behold the misery of his people. And with them there came the men of Hornussen and Herznach; those from the Aarthal and Brugg, as well as from Baden's hells; and far away from the Gieselaufluh. Safely hidden in the dark pine-wood, they had waited until the torch was lifted up on the Eggberg, assuring them of the neighborly help of the people in the Black Forest; and then they rushed to the attack. With bleeding head Snewelin galloped past. A well-aimed fire-brand had stuck to his garments, setting them all ablaze, so that he looked like a fiery phantom. "The world is coming to an end," cried he. "The millenium is at hand! May God have mercy on my poor soul!"

"Lost, everything lost," muttered the woman of the wood, lifting her hand up to her forehead. Then she untied the sumpter-horse, to harness it likewise before her cart. Meanwhile Audifax was standing in the dark, biting his lips that he might not scream out with delight, at this unexpected turn of affairs. A trembling reflection of the flames, played on his excited countenance. Everything was boiling within him. For some time he stood there, gazing fixedly at the tumult, and the fighting of the dark figures before him. "Now I know, what I must do," whispered he into Hadumoth's ear. He had taken up a big stone, and springing up at the woman of the wood with the agility of a wild cat, he struck her down. After this he quickly pulled away the sumpter-horse, upon the saddle of which he placed the trembling Hadumoth with the sudden strength of a man. "Take hold of the pommel!" cried he. Then jumping up himself, he seized the reins, and the horse no sooner felt the unwonted burden, than it galloped off into the night, frightened by the glare and noise around. Audifax never staggered, though his heart was beating wildly. The blinding smoke made him shut his eyes, and thus they sped onward; over the corpses of the dead, and through the crowds of fighting men. After awhile the noise became fainter in the distance, and the horse began to slacken its pace. It was taking the children toward the Rhine—they were saved!

Thus they rode on through the long, dark night, scarcely once daring to look about them. Audifax silently held the reins, feeling as if he were in a dream. First he put his hand on Hadumoth's head, and then struck against one of the boxes, which, emitting a metallic ring, convinced him that he was not dreaming, after all. The horse was good-tempered, and carried its burden willingly enough, across fields, over

heaths and through dark woods, always in the direction of the Rhine. When they had thus ridden on for a considerable time, a cool breeze, the messenger of the coming dawn, made them shiver. Hadumoth opened her eyes, "Where are we?" asked she.

"I don't know," replied Audifax. And now a roaring and rushing, like distant thunder, struck their ears; but it could not be from a coming storm, as the sky brightened, whilst the little stars waxed dimmer and slowly vanished. The noise became louder and nearer. They passed a stately castle, looking down proudly into the waters below. Then their path took them round a little hill, and then they suddenly beheld the broad flood of the Rhine, dashing along with a thundering noise, over dark, weatherbeaten rocks. Clouds of pearly-white spray glistened in the air, whilst soft mists hung around everywhere. The horse stopped, as if it wanted to take in the grand spectacle at its leisure. Then Audifax jumped to the ground, and taking down the tired little Hadumoth, as well as the two baskets, he allowed the brave animal to graze.

So the two children stood before the falls of the Rhine; Hadumoth tightly grasping her companion's right hand with her left; gazing long and silently at the spectacle before them. Presently, the sun cast his first rays on the dashing waters, which caught them and built them up into a glittering, many-colored rainbow.

Then Audifax went up to the baskets, to take out one of the boxes; which on being opened, disclosed its glistening contents of pure gold and silver. The long-coveted treasure was found at last; had become his own; not by spells and nightly conjurations, but by the use of his hands and by seizing the favorable opportunity. Thus he gazed on the shining baubles without any surprise, for had he not known it for many months that such a treasure was destined for him?

Of every kind of article it contained he picked out one; a casket, a ring, a coin and a bracelet, and with them approached the brink of the waters.

"Hadumoth," said he, "here I think that God must be; for His rainbow is hovering over the waters. I will make Him a thank-offering."

Stepping on a projecting rock, he flung in with a strong hand, first the casket, then the ring, coin and bracelet, and then kneeling down, Hadumoth kneeling by his side, they prayed for a long time, and thanked God.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAPPAN GETS MARRIED.

WHEN a thunderstorm has blown over, the water-brooks are still turbid and muddy; and so, a great stirring event is generally followed by a time of small and annoying work, until everything has returned to its old routine.

This experience Dame Hadwig was forced to make also. There was a great deal to arrange and put in order, after the driving away of the Huns; but this she did willingly enough, as her lively spirit and the pleasure she took in active interference quite made up to her for the trouble this gave her.

The widows and orphans of the slain arriereban men, as well as all those whose houses had been burnt, and whose harvests had been destroyed, came to sue for assistance. Help was given to every one, as far as this was possible. Messengers were sent off to the Emperor, to report that which had happened, as well as to make proposals for taking the necessary precautions against any possible future invasion. Wherever the fortress was found deficient, improvements were made; the booty was distributed, and finally the erection of a chapel on the grave of the Christian warriors was decided upon. With Reichenau and St. Gall there was also a good deal of business to transact, for ecclesiastics seldom forget to present their bills for any services that they have rendered. They well knew how to bemoan and bewail the damages done to their monasteries, as well as the great loss of goods and chatels which they had experienced; and every day some delicate hint was dropped to the Duchess, that a donation of land would be most desirable for the afflicted servants of God. Far away in the Rhine valley, where the Breisach Mountain with its dark, scorched rocks, narrows the bed of the river, the Duchess owned some property, called Saspach. On a volcanic soil the vine thrives particularly well, —so this would have suited the pious brothers

of the Reichenau admirably; if it were only to find out the difference between the Rhine wine and those that grew near the lake; besides it being some slight compensation for their military services, and for the reciting of the necessary masses for the souls of the dead.

One day, on which Dame Hadwig had not appeared quite disinclined to make the donation, was followed by the arrival of the sub-prior in the early morning, bringing a parchment with him, on which the whole formula of the donation was written down. It sounded really very well when read aloud, how everything was to be given to St. Pirminius; house and yard, with all that was in it; cultivated and uncultivated land; woods and vineyards; meadows and brooks, with the right of building mills and of fishing; as well as the vassals, both male and female, who were living there—even the customary curse was not wanting, and ran as follows: "If any one should dare to doubt the donation; or, worse still, to try and rob the monastery of it, the *Anathema Marantha* shall be pronounced on him. The anger of God Almighty, and all the holy angels shall fall on him. May he be stricken with leprosy, like Naaman the Syrian, and with sudden death like Ananias and Sapphira, besides paying a fine of a pound of gold to the exchequer in expiation of his crime."

"The Lord Abbot wanted to save our gracious sovereign the trouble of writing the donation herself," said the sub-prior. "There has been left an empty space for adding the name and boundaries of the property; as well as for the signatures of both parties, and the necessary witnesses."

"Have you learned to be so quick in all your doings?" replied Dame Hadwig. "I will look at that parchment of yours, some day or other."

"But it would be a very dear and desirable thing for the Abbot, if I could bring him back the deed, signed and sealed by your Highness, to day. It is only on account of the order and precision in the monastery's archives, the Abbot said."

Dame Hadwig, casting a haughty look at the man, then said: "Tell your Abbot that I am just now summing up the account of how much the quartering of the brothers on the Hohentwiel has cost me in kitchen and cellar. Tell him likewise that we have our own scribes, if we should feel so inclined, to give away landed property on the Rhine, and that—" she wanted to add a few more bitter words, but the sub-prior here fell in coaxingly, telling her a number of cases where Christian kings and princes had done the same. How the King of France for instance, had generously indemnified St. Martin of Tours for the losses which he had suffered through the Norman invasion; and how beneficial the donation had been for the giver's soul; for as fire was extinguished by water, thus the soul was purified by alms-giving. But the Duchess, turning her back on him, left him standing there in the hall, with his many yet untold examples, on the tip of his tongue.

"Too much zeal is an evil thing," muttered the monk, "'the greater hurry, the less speed,' as the proverb has it." Dame Hadwig having reached the entrance, turned round once more, and with an indecipherable movement of the hand, now said: "If you wish to go, you had better go at once!"

So he made his retreat.

To annoy the Abbot, the Duchess, on the very same day, sent a golden chain to the venerable Simon Bardo, in acknowledgment of his prosperous leadership.

The fate of Cappan, the Hunnic prisoner, was a matter of special interest to the Duchess. At first he had spent some anxious days. He did not then understand why his life had been spared, and he walked shyly about, like one who has no just claim to himself; and when he slumbered on his couch of straw, evil dreams came to him. Then he saw large flowery plains, on which numberless gallows were growing like thistles, and on every one of them hung one of his countrymen, and he himself was suspended from the highest of all; and he could not find fault with this, as it was the usual fate allotted to war prisoners in those days. No gallows however, were erected for him. For some time he still cast sundry suspicious glances at the linden tree in the courtyard, which had a nice leafless branch; and he fancied sometimes that this branch was beckoning to him, and saying: "Heigho! how well thou wouldst adorn me!"

By degrees, however, he found out that the lime was merely a fine shady tree, and so he

became less timid. His wounded foot was now healed, and he wandered about in yard and kitchen, looking on with mute astonishment at the doings of a German household. It is true he still thought that a man's home ought to be the back of his horse, and that a skin-covered cart sufficed for women and children; but when it rained, or the evenings were cool, the hearth-fire and the sheltering walls did not appear altogether despicable to him. Besides this, he began to find out that wine was better than mare's milk, and a woolen jacket softer than a wolf's skin. So his wish to fly dwindled away, and home-sickness could not attack him, as a home was an unknown luxury to him.

In those days a maiden worked in the house and garden whose name was Friderun, and her figure resembled a many-storied building with a pointed roof, her head having the shape of a pear. The first freshness of youth had for some time passed away from her, and when she opened her broad mouth for speech or laughter, a single long tooth became visible, indicative of her mature state. Evil tongues were wont to whisper that she had once been Master Spazzo's sweetheart; but that was long ago, as her affections had been bestowed these many years on a herdsman, who had met his death in the ranks of the arriere-ban by some Hunnic arrow,—and so her heart was lonely now. Very tall people are generally good-natured, and do not suffer under the evil consequences of too much thinking. So she cast her eyes on the Hun, who was slinking about all alone in the courtyard, and her compassionate heart fastened on him like a glistening dewdrop on a toad-stool. She tried to instruct him in all the arts which she practiced herself, and often when she had weeded the garden and dug the ground, she would give the hoe to Cappan, who willingly did what he had seen his instructress do before him. In the same way he followed her example when he saw her gathering beans or herbs, and after a few days, whenever water was to be fetched, the slender Friderun had only to point at the wooden pail to make Cappan take it up on his head and walk down with it to the splashing fountain.

Only in the kitchen they had no reason to be over-satisfied with the docile pupil's achievements, for one day when a piece of game was intrusted to him to beat tender with a wooden drumstick, old memories arose in his mind; and so he devoured part it quite raw, along with the onions and leek which had been prepared for seasoning the meat.

"I really believe that my prisoner pleases thee," Master Spazzo called out one day to her, when the Hun was busily splitting wood in the courtyard. A deep blush covered the cheeks of the tall one, who cast down her eyes. "If he could only speak German, and were not a damned heathen," continued Master Spazzo, but the slender maiden was too bashful to speak.

"I know how well thou deservest to be made happy, Friderun," Master Spazzo began again. Then Friderun's tongue was loosened. "With regard to the speaking of German," said she, still looking down, "I really should not mind that so much; and as for his being a heathen, I do not see why he need remain one. But—"

"But what?"

"He cannot sit down like a decent human being when he eats. If he is to enjoy his meals, he must always be stretched out on the ground."

"That a spouse like thee would soon cure him of. How is it, hast thou already some sort of understanding on this subject with him?"

Friderun again held her tongue, and suddenly ran away like a frightened deer, her wooden shoes clattering over the stone flags. Master Spazzo then walked up to the wood splitting Cappan, and clapping him first on the back to make him look up, he pointed with his forefinger at the flying Friderun, nodded his head interrogatively, and looked at him sharply. Cappan first pressed his right arm to his breast, bowed his head, and then jumped high up in the air, so that he spun round like the terrestrial globe on its axis, and finally stretched his mouth into a broad, joyous grin.

Master Spazzo could now see well enough how matters stood with both of them. Friderun however, had not witnessed the Hun's demonstrations of joy. Heavy doubts were still weighing on her soul; therefore she had gone out of the castle-gate. There she plucked a wild flower, and was now eagerly pulling off the white leaflets, one after the other, murmuring, "He loves me, loves me not, he loves me."

When all had become a prey to the winds, her murmur ceased, and looking with beaming eyes at the stalk with its last remaining white leaf, she smilingly nodded her head at it.

Meanwhile Spazzo the Chamberlain, expounded the case to the Duchess, whose active mind at once took up the idea of settling Cappan's fate. The Hun had given proofs of understanding many a useful art in the garden.

He well knew, for instance, how to stop the cunning subterranean digging of the moles. With bent willow-boughs, at the end of which a noose was fastened, he had contrived an untimely end for many a one of the black little animals. In one and the same moment they were jerked up to sunlight, gallows, and death. He also manufactured excellent traps for mice; in short he showed himself an able huntsman in all that regarded the lowest kind of sport.

"We will give him some acres of land at the foot of the Stoffer Mountain," said Dame Hadwig, "in return for which he can wage war against all obnoxious and injurious animals, as far as our land goes; and if the tall Friderun really likes him, she can have him: for I very much doubt whether any other of the maidens of this land has cast loving eyes on him."

So she told Ekkehard to prepare the prisoner for baptism, in order that he might be received as a member into the Christian community; and when he shook his head rather doubtfully, Dame Hadwig added: "The good will must here make up for that which is wanting in the understanding. The instruction you can make short, for he, no doubt, will understand as much as the Saxons did, whom the great Emperor Charles had driven into the Weser."

Ekkehard did as he was told, and his instruction fell on good soil. Cappan had picked up many a German word in the course of his warlike expedition, and had, in common with all his countrymen, a great talent for guessing what was required of him, even when the words had not been quite understood. Signs and tokens also helped a good deal; for when Ekkehard sat before him, with the open bible with golden initials on his knee, and pointed heavenward, the Hun knew of what he was speaking. The likeness of the devil he also understood, and indicated by gestures that he was to be abhorred, and before the sign of the cross he fell on his knees, as he had seen done by others. In this way the instruction was carried on.

When Cappan had also made progress in expressing himself, it came out that his past life had really been a very bad one. He nodded in the affirmative when asked whether he had taken pleasure in the destruction of churches and monasteries, and from the number of his outstretched fingers it became evident that he had assisted more than once at such sacrilege. With evident signs of sincere repentance, he confessed to having once eaten part of a slain priest's heart, in order to cure himself of fever. In expiation, he now diligently learned to express his guilt in words, and whenever a word was missing Friderun helped him. So, in a short time, Ekkehard could declare himself satisfied; though his mind certainly had not yet taken in all that St. Augustine requires, in his book on the teaching of infidels. The same day was then fixed upon for both baptism and wedding. According to the Duchess's desire, he was to have three godfathers; one from Reichenau, one from St. Gall, and a third from the arriere-ban, in remembrance of the battle in which he had been taken prisoner. Those of the Reichenau, sent Rudiman the cellarer, whilst the arriere-ban was represented by Master Spazzo; and because the godfathers could not make up their minds whether the converted should be called Pirminius, in honor of the Reichenau, or Gallus, they brought the case before the Duchess, to abide by her decision. She said: "Call him Paul, for he also has gone out breathing fury and vengeance against the disciples of the Lord, until the scales were taken from his eyes."

It was on a Saturday when the godfathers led Cappan, who had fasted during the whole day, to the castle chapel, and they alternately spent the night with him in prayer. The Hun was resigned and devout, and on the whole in a becoming frame of mind. He believed that the spirit of his mother, dressed in lamb's skins, had appeared to him, saying: "Poor son, thy bow is broken, and thou no more canst flee; and those who have disarmed thee, thy masters now shall be."

Early on Sunday morning, when the pearly dew-drops were still hanging on the grass, and the first lark was soaring up to the bright blue sky, a small troop, bearing a cross and flag, marched down the hill,—this time no funeral train!

Ekkehard walked in front, dressed in a purple priest's garment, and behind him came the Hun between his two godfathers. Thus they walked through the luxurious meadow-lands, down to the shores of the little river Aach. Arrived there, they stuck the cross into the white sand, and then formed a semi-circle round him who, for the last time, was to be called Cappan. In the quiet of that Sabbath morning, the clear notes of the litany rose up to God, imploring Him to look down mercifully on the man who was now bending his head before Him, longing for deliverance from the yoke of heathendom and sin.

Then they told him to undress down to the belt. He was kneeling on the sand, whilst Ekkehard pronounced the exorcism over him, in the name of Him whom angels and archangels adore; before whom the heavens and earth tremble and abysses open. He then breathed three times on his forehead, and putting some consecrated salt into his mouth, as a symbol of new wisdom and new thoughts, he anointed his forehead and breast with holy oil. The Hun was perfectly awed, scarcely daring to breathe; so much the solemnity of the action impressed him, and when Ekkehard asked him, in the words of the prescribed formula: "Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his works and doings?" he replied, with a clear voice: "I renounce him!" and then repeated the words of the creed as well as he could. Upon this, Ekkehard immersed him in the river; the baptism was pronounced, and the new Paul arose from the waters. One melancholy look he cast at the fresh mound on the newly-dug grave, at the border of the wood,—then his godfathers drew him out, and wrapped his trembling form in a dazzling white linen garment. Proudly he stood amongst his new brothers. Ekkehard then preached a short sermon on the text, "He is blessed who taketh good care of his garments, so that he shall not be found naked," and exhorted him to wear this spotless linen, in sign of his regeneration from sin to godliness, wrought in him by baptism; and finally he laid both hands on his head. With loud-sounding jubilant hymns, they led back the new Christian to the castle.

In the arched window embrasure, in one of the basement chambers, the tall Friderun had been sitting meanwhile; Praxedis gliding about her like an unstable will-o'-the-wisp. She had sued the Duchess's permission to array the awkward bride, on this her day of honor. Her hair was already entwined with red ribbons, and the apron, with its wonderful amount of folds, falling down to the high-heeled shoes, was put on. Over this was fastened the dark belt with its gilt border,—only he who wins the bride may unclasp it,—and now Praxedis took up the glittering crown, bedecked with innumerable colored glass beads and tinsel gold.

"Holy mother of God!" exclaimed she, "must this also be put on? If thou walkest along in that head-gear they will believe in the distance that some tower had sprung into life, and was going to be wedded."

"It must be," said Friderun.

"And why must it be?" said the Greek. "I have seen many a smart bride at home wearing the myrtle wreath, or the silver-green olive branch in her locks, and it was well so. To be sure, neither myrtle nor olive grows in these dark, gloomy fir-woods of yours, but ivy would be pretty also, Friderun?"

But she turned round angrily on her chair. "Rather not marry at all than go to church with leaves and grass in my hair," replied she. "That may do well enough for foreigners, but when a Hegau maiden goes to her wedding, the Schoppel-crown must adorn her head. Thus it has always been, ever since the Rhine flowed through the Bodensee, and the mountains have stood here. We Suabians are a princely race, as my father said many a time."

"Your will shall be done," said Praxedis, fastening the spangled crown on her head.

The tall bride rose, but a frown had gathered on her forehead, like a fleeting cloud that throws its shadow on a sunny plain.

"Wilt thou cry now already, so that the tears may be spared thee in wedlock?" asked the Greek.

Friderun made a serious face, and the ungracious mouth assumed a very sorrowful expres-

sion, so that Praxedis had some difficulty in restraining a laugh.

"I feel so depressed," said the bride of the Hun.

"And what is depressing thee, future rival of the pine-trees on the Stoffer Mountain?"

"I am afraid that the young men will play me some trick because I marry a foreigner. When the convent-farmer of the Schlangenhof brought home the old widow from Bregenz wood, they went to his house on the wedding-night, and with bull's horns, brass kettles, and sea-shells, made such a terrible noise as if a hail-storm was to be frightened away; and when the miller of Rielasingen came out of the house, on the first morning after his marriage, they had put a dry and withered May-pole before his door, and instead of flowers and ribbons, a wisp of straw and a ragged apron hung from it."

"Be sensible," said Praxedis, soothingly.

But Friderun would not take comfort, and dolefully went on, "and what if they should treat me like the gamekeeper's widow, when she married the apprentice boy? Her roof was cut in twain during the night, so that one half fell down to the right and one to the left; and the starry sky shone into their marriage bed; and the rooks flew about their heads without their knowing why and wherefore."

Praxedis laughed. "I hope that thou hast got a good conscience, Friderun?" said she, significantly; but Friderun was now very nearly crying.

"And who knows," said she, evasively, "what my Cappan—"

"Paul," Praxedis corrected her.

"—may have done in his younger days. Last night I dreamt that he held me close in his arms, when suddenly a Hunnic woman, with yellow face and black hair, came and tore him away. 'He is mine,' cried she, and when I did not let him go, she became a serpent, and tightly coiled herself around him."

"Leave alone serpents and Hunnic women now," interrupted Praxedis, "and get thyself ready, for they are already coming up the hill. Don't forget the sprig of rosemary, and the white handkerchief."

Cappan's white garment shone out brightly in the courtyard, and so Friderun gave the slip to all foreboding thoughts, and walked out. The bridesmaids welcomed her outside; he who had just been baptized, laughed at her with his whole face; the chapel-bell rang out merrily, and so they went to be married.

The religious ceremony was over, and the new couple walked out of the castle-yard with beaming faces. Friderun's kith and kin had come; strong, healthy looking people; who, as regarded bodily height, did not fall short of Friderun. They were farmers and yeomen on the neighboring lands, and had come to help in lighting the first fire on the new hearth, at the foot of the Hohenstöffeln, and to celebrate the wedding in all due form. On a cart decorated with garlands, which headed the train, the bride's outfit was to be seen. There, the huge bedstead of pine-wood was not missing, on which roses and magic signs were painted; meant to drive away nightmares, goblins, and other nightly apprites. Besides this, there were still sundry boxes and trunks, containing the necessary household articles.

The bridesmaids carried the distaff, with the bundle of flax, and the prettily adorned bridal broom, made of white birch twigs; simple emblems of industry and order for the future household.

Loud shouts of joy and merriment were not wanting either, and Cappan felt as if the baptismal floods had swept away all recollection of his having ever governed, and lived on the back of a swift-footed horse. Decently and soberly, he walked along with his new relations, as if he had been a bailiff or magistrate of Hegau since his youth. Before the noise of the merry-makers going down the hill had died away, two nice-looking lads, the sons of the steward at the imperial castle at Bodmann, and cousins of Friderun, appeared before the Duchess and her guests. They came to invite them to the wedding; each with a cowslip stuck behind his ear, and a nosegay in his buttonhole.

Somewhat embarrassed, they remained standing at the entrance, until the Duchess made them a sign to approach, upon which they walked on a few steps, stopped again, and scraping a deep bow, they spoke the old customary words of the invitation to the wedding-feast of their cousin, begging her to follow

them over dale and vale, roads and moats, bridges and water, to the house of the wedding. There she would find some vegetables, such as the good God had given. A tun would be tapped, and violins ringing, a dancing and stinging, jumping and springing. "We beseech you, to accept two bad messengers for one good one. Blessed be Jesus Christ!" so they concluded their speech, and without waiting for the answer, they scraped another bow, and quickly hurried away.

"Shall we give the honor of our presence to the youngest of our Christian subjects," gayly asked Dame Hadwig. The guests well knew that questions which were so graciously put must not be answered in the negative. So they all rode over in the afternoon. Rudimann, the deputy of St. Pirmin's monastery, accompanied them; but he was silent and watchful. His account with Ekkehard had not yet been settled.

The Stoffer Mountain, with its three basalt pinnacles, feathered with stately pine-trees looks proudly down over the land. The castle, whose ruins now crown its summit, was not built then; only on the highest of the three points stood a deserted tower. Somewhat lower down, on a projecting part of the hill, there was a modest little house, hidden amongst the trees, which was to be the domicile of the newly married pair. As a tribute, and sign that the owner of the house was the Duchess's vassal, it was decreed that he should furnish every year fifty moles' skins, and on the day of St. Gallus a live wren.

On a green meadow in the woods, the wedding-party had erected their camp. In large kettles and pans a tremendous cooking and frying was going on; and he who could not get some dish or plate, feasted off a wooden board; and where a fork was wanting, a double pointed hazel-wand was installed in its place.

Cappan had made an effort to sit decently and upright by the side of his spouse; but in the depth of his mind he was revolving the thought whether, after some time, he could not resume his old custom of lying down during meal-times.

During the long intervals between the different dishes,—for though the repast had begun at midday, it was to last until sunset,—the Hun rested his limbs, which had been tortured by the continual sitting.

Welcomed by the sounds of the rustic musical band, the Duchess, with her train, now approached on horseback. Stopping her palfrey, she looked down into the crowd of merry-makers, amongst which the new Paul was showing off his wild antics. The music, not being sufficient for him, he shouted and whistled his own time, wheeling his tall spouse about in a labyrinthine dance. It looked like a walking tower dancing with a wild cat; the slow one dancing with the swift; now together, then apart; now breast to breast, then back to back. Sometimes he would suddenly thrust his partner away, and beating his wooden shoes together in the air, he made seven capers, one always higher than the other; and finally dropping on his knees before Dame Hadwig, he bowed his head as if he would kiss the dust which her horse's hoofs had touched. This was the expression of his gratitude.

His Hegau cousins, looking on at this wonderful dancing, conceived the laudable desire of emulation, and perhaps later they had themselves instructed in the art; for one still hears a legendary account of the "seven capers," or the Hunnic "hop," in those parts, which, as a variation from the customary monotonous Suabian round dances, had, since those days, become the crowning feat of all festivals.

"Where is Ekkehard?" asked the Duchess, who, after getting down from her palfrey, had walked through the ranks of her subjects. Praxedis pointed over to some shady spot, where a gigantic pine-tree lifted its dark-green top toward the sky. On its knotty, rugged roots, the monk was sitting. The loud merriment of the crowd of people oppressed his heart, though he could not tell why. So he had gone aside, and was dreamily gazing at the faint distant outlines of the Alps, rising over the woody hills.

It was one of those soft, balmy evenings, such as Sir Burkhart of Hohevels enjoyed in later times from his huge tower on the lake; "when the air is tempered and mixed up with sun-fire." The distance was shrouded in a soft glowing haze. He who has ever looked down from those quiet mountain-tops when on a bright, radiant day the sun is slowly sinking

down, arrayed in all the splendor of his royal robes, when heaven and earth are palpitating with warmth and light, whilst dark purple shadows fill up the valleys, and a margin-glory, like liquid gold, illumines the snowy Alpine peaks, he will not easily forget that aspect; and, perchance, when sitting later within his dusky walls, the memory of it will rise in his heart as soft and bewitchingly sweet as a song uttered in the melting tones of the South.

Ekkehard was sitting there, with a serious expression on his countenance, his head supported by his right hand.

"He is no longer as he used to be," said Dame Hadwig to the Greek maid.

"He is no longer as he used to be," thoughtlessly repeated Praxedis, for she was intently gazing on the women of the Hegau, in their holiday garments; and whilst scrutinizing those high, stiff bodices, and tun-like, starched skirts, she wondered whether the genius of good taste had left that land forever in despair, or whether his foot had never entered it.

Dame Hadwig now approached Ekkehard. He started up from his mossy seat as if he saw a ghost.

"All alone, and away from the merry-makers?" asked she. "What are you doing here?"

"I am thinking where real happiness may be found," replied Ekkehard.

"Happiness?" repeated the Duchess. "Fortune is a fickle dame, who seldom stays long anywhere," says the proverb. Has she never paid you a visit?"

"Probably not," said the monk, riveting his eyes on the ground. With renewed vigor the music and noise of the dancers struck the ear.

"Those who lightly tread the green meadow-lands, and know how to express with their feet what oppresses their hearts, are happy," continued he. "Perhaps one requires very little to be happy; but above all,"—pointing over to the distant, glittering Alpine peaks,—"there must be no distant heights which our feet may never hope to reach."

"I do not understand you," coldly said the Duchess; but her heart thought otherwise than her tongue. "And how fares your Virgil?" said she, changing the conversation. "During those days of anxiety and warfare, I am afraid that dust and cobwebs will have settled on it."

"He will always find a refuge in my heart, even if the parchment should decay," replied he. "Only a few moments ago, his verses in praise of agriculture passed through my mind. Yonder the little house, nestling in the shade-giving trees; down below, the dark fertile fields; and a newly wedded pair, going to earn their bread with hoe and plow from kind mother Earth. With a feeling almost of envy, Virgil's picture rose before me:

"Simple and artless, his life is with many a blessing surrounded,
Rich with many a joy, and peaceful rest after labor,
Grottoes and shady retreats, affording a shelter for slumber."

"You well know how to adapt his verses to life," said Dame Hadwig, "but I fear that your envy has made you forget Cappan's duties of destroying the moles and the obnoxious field-mice. And then the joys of winter! when the snow rises like a wall up to the straw-thatched roof, so that daylight is sorely perplexed through what chink or crevice it may creep into the house."

"Even such a dilemma I could bear with composure; and Virgil, too, knows how this may be done."

"Many a one, in the winter, will sit by the glare of the fire,
Late in the evening then; the light-giving torches preparing,—
During the time that his wife his favorite ditties is singing,
Throwing the shuttle along, with a dexterous hand through the texture."

"His wife?" maliciously asked the Duchess. "But if he has got no wife?"

From the other side there now arose a loud shout of delighted laughter. They had put their Hunnic cousin on a board, and were carrying him high above their heads, as they used to carry the newly chosen king on his shield in the olden days of election. Even in this elevated position he made some gleeful capers.

"And may not have a wife?" observed Ekkehard, absently. His forehead was burning. He covered it with his right hand. Wherever he looked, the sight pained him. Yonder, the loud joy of the wedding guests; here the

Duchess, and in the distance the glittering mountains. An inexpressible pain was gnawing at his heart; but his lips remained closed. "Be strong and silent," he said to himself.

He was in reality no longer as he used to be. The undisturbed peace of his lonely cell had forsaken him. The late battle, as well as all the excitement brought on by the Hunnic invasion, had widened his thoughts; and the signs of favor which the Duchess had shown him had called up a fierce conflict in his heart. By day and by night he was haunted by the recollection how she had stood before him, hanging the relic round his neck, and giving him the sword that had been her husband's; and in evil moments self-reproaches—misty and unexpressed as yet—that he had received these gifts so silently, passed through his troubled soul. Dame Hadwig had no idea of all that was stirring in his heart. She had accustomed herself to think more indifferently of him since she had been humiliated by his apparently not understanding her; but as often as she saw him again, with his noble forehead clouded by grief, and with that mute appealing look in his eyes,—then the old game began afresh.

"If you take such delight in agricultural pursuits," said she lightly, "I can easily help you to that. The Abbot of Reichenau has provoked me. To think of asking for the pearl of my estates, as if it were a mere crumb of bread, which one shakes down from the table-cloth, without so much as looking at it!"

Here something rustled in the bushes behind them, but they did not notice it. A dark brown color might have been seen between the foliage. Was it a fox or a monk's garment?

"I will appoint you steward of it," continued Dame Hadwig. "Then you will have all that, the lack of which has made you melancholy today; and far more still. My Saspath is situated on the merry old Rhine, and the Kaiserstuhl boasts the honor, that it was the first to bear the vine in our lands. The people are honest and good thereabouts, though they speak rather a rough language.

Ekkehard's eyes were still resting on the ground.

"I can also give you a description of your life there; though I have not Virgil's talent for painting. Fancy that Autumn has come. You have led a healthy life; getting up with the sun, and going to bed with the chickens,—and so vintage-time has arrived. From all sides men and maids are descending, with baskets full of ripe, luscious grapes. You stand at the door looking on—"

Again the rustling was heard. "—and wondering how the wine will be, and whose health you are going to drink in it. The Voges Mountains seem to wink over at you, as bright and blue as the Alps do from here; and as you are gazing at them, you see a cloud of dust rising on the high-road from Breisach. Soon after, horses and carriages become visible, and—well, Master Ekkehard, who is coming?"

Ekkehard who had scarcely followed her recital, shyly said, "who?"

"Who else but your mistress, who will not give up her sovereign right of examining her subjects' doings!"

"And then?"

"Then? then I shall gather information about how Master Ekkehard has been fulfilling his duties; and they will all say: 'he is good and earnest, and if he would not think and brood quite so much, and not read so often in his parchments, we should like him still better.'"

"And then?" asked he once more. His voice sounded strange.

"Then I shall say in the words of Scripture: 'well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.'"

Ekkehard stood there like one but half-conscious. He lifted one arm, and let it fall again. A tear trembled in his eye. He was very unhappy.

At the same time a man softly crept out from the bushes. As soon as he felt the grass again under his feet, he let his habit, which had been gathered up, drop down. Looking stealthily back once more at the two standing there, he shook his head, like one who has made a discovery. He had certainly not gone into the bushes to gather violets.

The wedding-feast, by slow stages, had got to that point where a general chaos threatens. The mead was having its effect on the different minds. One hung his garment on a tree, feeling an almost irresistible inclination to smash

everything, whilst another strove to embrace everybody. A third, who remembered having culled many a kiss from Friderun's cheek, ten years ago, sat gloomily at the table, where he had emptied many a goblet, and looking down at the aots that crept about on the floor, said to himself: "Heigho! None of them is worth a straw." The two youths who had looked so very shy in the morning when they came to invite the Duchess, were now playing an Allemanic trick on their Hunnic kinsman. They had dragged a large linen sheet out of one of the wedding trunks. On this they placed the unfortunate Capan, and then taking hold of the four corners, they jerked him up into the air. The victim of this trick, taking this treatment as a mark of friendship and respect, customary in those parts, submitted with perfect good grace, swinging himself gaily up and down.

Suddenly the tall Friderun gave a loud shriek, upon which all heads were turned round to see what might have caused it. The two cousins almost let fall the sheet, when a shout of delight broke forth, so loud and uproarious that even the old fir-grown basalt rocks were probably surprised by it, used though they were to the noise of tempests and storms.

Audifax and Hadumoth were there, on their way back from the Huns, and had been discovered first by the tall bride. Audifax led the horse that carried the treasure-boxes, by the reins, and with beaming faces the two children walked side by side. That day they had once more beheld the top of the Hohentwiel, and had greeted it with a shout of delight. "Don't tell them everything," whispered Audifax, putting long willow-branches over the panniers.

Friderun was the first who ran to meet them, and snatching Hadumoth up from the ground, she carried her off in triumph.

"Welcome, ye lost ones! Drink, bagpiper, drink, my boy!" so they cried on all sides, for they all knew of his capacity, and held out the huge stone jugs in sign of welcome.

The children had agreed together on the road in what way they should accost the Duchess when they came home.

"We must thank her very prettily," Hadumoth had said. "And I must give her back the gold thaler. I got Audifax for nothing, I shall tell her."

"No, we will add to it still two of the biggest gold coins," Audifax had replied. "This we will present, begging her to remain our gracious mistress as before. That shall be our thanks, as well as the fine for my having slain the woman of the wood."

So they had got the gold all ready prepared.

They now caught sight of the Duchess standing with Ekkehard under the pine tree. The wild burst of joy had interrupted their agricultural conversation. Praxedis came bounding along, to impart the wondrous news, and following on her heels, the two youthful runaways walked hand in hand. They both knelt down before Dame Hadwig; Hadumoth holding up her thaler, and Audifax his two big gold coins. He tried to speak, but his voice failed him. Then Dame Hadwig, with lofty grace, addressed the surrounders.

"The illness of my two young subjects affords me an opportunity to give them a proof of my favor. Be witnesses thereof."

Breaking off a hazel-wand from a neighboring bush, she approached the children, and after first shaking the golden coins out of their hands, so that they flew into the grass, she touched their heads with the branch, saying: "Arise, and in future scissors shall never cut off your hair any more. As vassals belonging to the castle of Hohentwiel ye have knelt down, as freedmen stand up again; and may ye be as fond of each other in your free state as before!"

This was the form of granting freedom, according to the Salic law. The Emperor Lotharius had already shaken the golden denar out of his old servant Doda's hand; thus freeing her from the yoke of slavery; and as Audifax was of Franconian birth, Dame Hadwig had not acted according to the Allemanic laws.

The two children arose. They had well understood what had happened. A strange dizzy feeling had seized the little goat-herd's brain. The dream of his youth,—liberty, golden treasure,—all had become true! A lasting reality, for all days to come!

When the mist before his eyes had cleared away again, he beheld Ekkehard's serious countenance, and throwing himself at his feet with Hadumoth, he cried: "Father Ekkehard,

we thank you also for having been good to us!"

"What a pity that it is already so late," said Praxedis, "or you might have joined another pair in wedlock; or at least have sanctified a solemn betrothal; for these two belong as much to each other as yonder pair."

Ekkehard let his blue eyes rest for awhile on the two children. Laying his hands on their heads and making the sign of the cross over them, he softly said to himself, "where is happiness?"

Late at night, Rudimann the cellarer rode back to his monastery. The ford being dry he could cross it on horseback. From the Abbot's cell a gleam of light still fell on the lake. So Rudimann knocked at his door, and but half opening it said: "My ears have taken in more to-day than they liked to hear. 'Tis all over with the Saapach estate on the Rhine. She is going to make that milk-sop of St. Gall steward of it."

"*Variùm et mutabile semper femina!* Woman is ever fickle and changeable!" murmured the Abbot, without looking round. "Good night!"

CHAPTER XVII.

GUNZO VERSO EKKEHARD.

DURING the time in which all that has been told until now, was happening on the shores of the Bodensee, far away in the Belgian lands, in the monastery of the holy Amandus *sic l'Elnon*, a monk had been sitting in his cell. Day after day, whenever the convent rules permitted it, he sat there transfixed as by a spell. The rough and cheerless winter time had come; all the rivers were frozen up, and snow covered the plain as far as eye could see—he scarcely noticed it. Spring followed and drove away winter—he heeded it not. The brothers talked of war, and evil tidings, which had reached them from the neighboring Rhine-lands—but he had no time to listen to these tales.

In his cell, every article of furniture, nay even the floor, was covered with parchments, for almost all the monastery's books had emigrated to his chamber. There he sat reading and thinking, and reading again, as if he wanted to find out the first cause of all being. On his right, lay the psalms and holy Scriptures; on his left, the remains of heathenish wisdom. Everything he peered over assiduously; now and then a malicious smile interrupting the seriousness of his studies, upon which he would hastily scribble down some lines on a narrow strip of parchment. Were these grains of gold and precious stones, which he dug out of the mines of ancient wisdom? No.

"What on earth can be the matter with brother Gunzo?" said his fellow monks amongst themselves. "In former times his tongue rattled on like a mill wheel, and the books were seldom disturbed in their rest by him; for did he not often say with boasting mien: 'They can only tell me what I know already?'—and now? Why, now his pen hurries on, sputtering and scratching, so that you may hear the noise it makes, even in the cross-passage. Does he hope to become notary or Prime Minister of the Emperor? Is he trying to find the philosopher's stone, or is he perhaps writing down his journey in Italy?"

But Brother Gunzo continued his labors undisturbed, whatever they were. Untiringly he emptied his jug of water and read his classics. The first thunder-storms came, telling of summer's heat; but he let thunder and lightning do as they pleased, without minding them. His slumbers at night were sometimes broken by his rushing up to his inkstand, as if he had caught some good ideas in his dreams; but often they had vanished before he had succeeded in writing them down. Still his perseverance in trying to attain his aim never wavered, and consoling himself with the prophetic words of Homer: "Yet though it tarry long, the day is certainly coming," he crept back to his couch.

Gunzo was in the prime of life, of moderate height, and portly dimensions. When he stood before his well-polished metal mirror in the early morning, and gazed somewhat longer than was necessary on his own image, he would often stroke his reddish beard with a threatening gesture, as if he were going out there and then to fight in single combat.

In his veins flowed Franconian as well as Gallic blood, and this latter gave him something of the liveliness and sprightliness which is wanting in all those of pure Teutonic race. For

this reason he had bitten and torn a good many more goose quills, whilst writing, than any monk in a German monastery would have done, besides holding many a soliloquy in the same space of time. In spite of this he mastered the natural restlessness of his body, and forced his feet to keep quiet under the heavily-laden writing desk.

On a soft, balmy summer evening, when his pen had again flitted over the patient parchment, like a will o'-the-wisp, emitting a soft creaking sound, it suddenly began to slacken its pace,—then made a pause; a few strokes more, and then he executed a tremendous flourish on the remaining space below, so that the ink made an involuntary shower of spots like black constellations. He had written the word *finis*, and with a deep sigh of relief he rose from his chair, like a man from whose mind some great weight had been taken. Casting a long look on that which lay before him, black on white, he solemnly exclaimed, "Praised be the holy Amandus! we are avenged!"

At this great and elevating moment, he had finished a libel, dedicated to the venerable brotherhood on the Reichenau, and aimed at,—Ekkehard the custodian at St. Gall. When the fair-haired interpreter of Virgil took leave of his monastery, and went to the Hohentwiel, he never, though he searched the remotest corners of his memory, had an inkling of the fact that there was a man living whose greatest wish and desire was to take vengeance on him; for he was inoffensive and kind-hearted, never willingly hurting a fly. And yet so it was, for between Heaven and Earth, and especially in the minds of learned men, many things will happen which the reason of the reasonable never dreams of.

History has its caprices, both in preserving and destroying. The German songs and epics, which the great Emperor Charles had so carefully collected, were to perish in the dust and rubbish of the following ages; whilst the work of Brother Gunzo, which never benefitted any one of the few who read it, has come down to posterity. Let the monstrous deed, which so excited the Gallic scholar's ire, therefore be told in his own words.

"For a long space of time," thus he wrote to his friends on the Reichenau, "the revered and beloved King Otto had carried on negotiations with the different Italian princes, to let me come over to his lands. But as I was neither of such low birth, or so dependent upon any that I could have been forced to this step, he himself sent a petition to me, of which the consequence was, my pledging myself to obey his call. Thus it happened that when he left Italy, I soon followed him, and when I did so, I did it with the hope that my coming, whilst harming no one, might benefit many; for what sacrifices does the love of one's fellow creatures and the desire to please not entice us into? Thus I traveled onwards not like a Briton, armed with the sharp weapons of censure, but in the service of love and science.

"Over high mountain passes and steep ravines and valleys I arrived at last at the Monastery of St. Gall, in a state of such bodily exhaustion that my hands, stiffened by the icy mountain air, refused me their service, so that I had to be taken down from my mule by stranger hands. The hope of the traveler was to find a peaceful resting-place within the monastic walls; which hope was strengthened, on beholding the frequent bending of heads, the sober-colored garments, soft-treading steps, and sparing use of speech prevalent there. So I was wholly unprepared for what was to follow; although, by a strange chance, I happened to think of Juvenal's saying with regard to the false philosophers—

'Sparing and soft is their speech,—but malice is lurking behind it!'

And who would have believed that the said heathen was gifted with a prophetic vision of future cow-bearing wickedness?

"Yet I was still harmlessly enjoying my life, waiting to see whether amongst the scanty murmurs of the brothers some sparks of philosophical wisdom would shine forth. All remained dark, however, for they were preparing the arms of cunning.

"Amongst their numbers there was also a young convent pupil and his uncle, who—well, who was no better than he should be! They called him a worthy teacher of the school, although to me he appeared rather to look at the world with the eyes of a turtle-dove. Of this

languishing-looking wiseacre I shall have to say more, presently. Listen, and judge of his deed!

"Walking up and down, he instigated the convent pupil to become a partaker of his base design.

'Night had come, and with it the time for grief-stilling slumber:
After the sumptuous meal, Bacchus exacted his rights—

when an evil star prompted my making a mistake in the use of a *casus*, in the Latin table speeches we held together; using an *accusativus*, where I ought to have put an *ablativus*.

"Now it became evident in what kind of arts that far-famed teacher had instructed his pupil all day long. 'Such an offense against the laws of grammar deserved the rod,' mockingly said that little imp to me, the well-tried scholar; and he further produced a rhymed libel, which his fine teacher must have prompted him to, and which caused a rough cisalpine burst of laughter in the refectory at the expense of the stranger guest.

"But who does not know what the verses of a set of overbearing monks must be like? What do such as they know of the inner structure of a poem, where all must be artistically built up to produce a fine and pleasing effect? What of the high dignity of poetry? They pucker up their lips and spout forth a poem like to that Lucilius, who has been branded by Horace; and who, whilst standing on one foot only, dictated two hundred verses and more before an hour had elapsed.

"Judge now, ye venerable brothers, what insults have been heaped on me; and what must be the character of the man who can upbraid his fellow creature for mistaking an *ablativus*!"

The man, who, intending only a harmless jest, had committed this fearful crime, was Ekkehard. But a few weeks before the sudden turn in his fate brought him to the Hohentwiel the terrible deed had been done. With the coming morn on the next day, he had forgotten the conversation that had taken place at supper with the overbearing Italian, but in the bosom of him who had been convicted of the wrong *ablativus* was matured a rancor as fierce and gnawing as that, which, caused by the war-deeds of Achilles, drove the Telamonian Atias to destroy himself, and which followed him even into the Hades.

He rode toward the north out of the valley along through which the Sitter rushes; he saw the Bodensee and the Rhine, and thought of the *ablativus*! He entered the gray and ancient gates of Cologne, and crossed the frontiers of Belgium,—but the false *ablativus* sat behind him on the saddle like an incubus. The cloister-walls of the holy Amandus could not exclude it; and in the early psalms at morning, and during the litany and vespers, the *accusativus* rose before his mind exacting its expiatory sacrifice.

Of all the unpleasant days of one's life, those imprint themselves deepest in our minds in which, by our own fault, a humiliation has befallen us. Instead of being angry with one's self, one easily bears an ill will toward all those who were the involuntary witnesses of our defeat. The human heart is so very unwilling to confess its own failings; and many a one who unmoved can think of past battles and dangers, feels his blood rush into his cheeks at the recollection of some foolish word which escaped him just then, when we would have liked so much to have made a brilliant remark.

Therefore Gunzo was bent on taking his revenge on Ekkehard, and he had an able and sharp pen, and had spent many a month over his work, so that it became a master piece of its kind. It was a black soup made up of hundreds of learned quotations, richly seasoned with pepper and worm-wood, and all those spicy, bitter things which, before all others, give such a delicious flavor to the controversies of ecclesiastical men.

Besides this, a delightful undercurrent of rudeness pervaded the whole, so that the reader feels as though a man were being thrashed with regular flails, in a neighboring barn. This makes a very pleasant contrast to our present times, in which the poison is presented in the shape of gilt pills; and when the combatants first exchange a polite bow, before they break each other's heads.

The treatise was divided into two parts; the first serving to prove that only an ignorant and uncultivated mind could be shocked by so slight an error as the mistaking of a *casus*; whilst the second was written in order to convince the world that the author himself was

the wisest, most learned, and at the same time most pious of all his contemporaries.

For this end he had read the classics and the Holy Scriptures, in the sweat of his brow, so that he could make a list of all the places in which the caprice or negligence of the author had also misplaced an *ablativus*. So he managed to name two in Virgil, one in Homer, Terence and Priscianus. Further, an example out of Persius, where the ablative stands in the place of the genitive, besides a number of instances out of the books of Moses and the Psalms.

And if a number of such instances can be found even in the Holy Scriptures, who is so wicked that he would dare to blame or change such a mode of expression? Wrongly, therefore, believes the little monk of St. Gall, that I was not well versed in the grammar; although my tongue may sometimes be impeded, by the habits of my own language, which, though derived from the Latin, is yet very different from it. Now, blunders are made through carelessness, and human imperfection in general; for, says Priscianus, very truly: "I do not believe, that of all human inventions a single one can be perfect in all respects, and on all sides. In like manner, Horace has often taken it on himself to excuse negligences of style and language in eminent men: 'sometimes even the good Homer is stumbling,' and Aristotle says in his book on the *Hermeneta*: 'All that which our tongue utters is merely an outward expression of that which is stamped on our mind. The idea of a thing, therefore is always pre-existent before the expression, and therefore, the thing itself is of far greater importance than the mere word. But whenever the meaning is abstruse, thou shalt patiently, and with thy reasoning powers, try to find out the real import.'"

Then there followed innumerable classical examples of awkward and negligent expressions of thought, which ended the words of the Apostle, who calls himself "unskilled with regard to speech, but not unskilled in knowledge."

"If one therefore examines the behavior of my antagonist of St. Gall, one feels tempted to believe that he had once invaded the garden of some wise man, from one of whose hot-beds he had stolen a radish, which had discomposed his stomach and increased his gall. Let everybody therefore keep a sharp lookout on his garden. Evil communications corrupt good manners.

"Yet it is possible, also, that he could not have done otherwise; for having perchance rummaged the whole day long, in the remotest folds of his cowl, to find something wherewith to regale the stranger guest, and not finding anything else but cunning and malice, he let his guest taste a bit of that. Bad men have evil possessions.

"With his behavior, his outward appearance,—which we did not fail carefully to investigate—was in strict harmony. His countenance bore a pale luster, like bad metal used for the adulteration of the genuine; his hair was crimped; his hood finer and daintier than necessary, and his shoes of light make,—so that all the signs of vanity were found on him which were a vexation in the eyes of St. Hieronymus, when he wrote: 'To my great regret, there are some of the clergy in my parish who are very anxious for their garments to be well scented and their nails well polished; who anoint their curled hair with precious ointments, and who wear dainty, embroidered shoes. Such garments, however, are scarcely fitted for a dandy and bridegroom, let alone for one of the Lord's elected.'

"Further I have reflected, whether the sound of his own name was not in harmony with his actions likewise. And what now? Ekkehard, or Akhar, was his name,—as if already at his baptism, by dint of a prophetic providence, he had been stigmatized with the name of a malefactor; for who does not know of that Akhar who appropriated to himself a purple mantle, as well as two hundred bags of silver and a golden wedge, out of the booty at Jericho, so that Joshua had him led out into a remote valley, where he was stoned to death by all Israel; and all he possessed was given up to the flames? Of such a man his namesake of St. Gall has shown himself to be a worthy successor; for he who disregards the law of politeness and good breeding, acts as badly as a thief. He purloins the gold of true wisdom.

"If it were permitted to believe in the transmigration of souls, such as Pythagoras has taught, it would be beyond all doubt that the soul of the Hebrew Akhar had entered the frame of

this Ekkehard, and in this case one ought to pity it, as it were better to dwell in the body of a fox even, than in that of a crafty and cunning monk. All this which I have said until now, has been said without any personal hatred. My hatred is directed only against the man's inherent wickedness. Consequently I only detest an attribute of his, and not the substance itself, which we are bound to honor as God's likeness, according to Scripture.

"Please to observe now," continued Gunzo, in the second part of his book, "how insanely my enemy has acted against the benefits of science and knowledge. More than a hundred written volumes had I brought with me over the Alps; weapons of peace, such as Marcianus' flowery instructions in the seven liberal arts; Plato's unfathomable depth in his *Timæus*; the obscure wisdom of Aristotle, hardly lighted up in our present days, in his book on the *Hermeneta*, and Cicero's eloquence in the *Topica*.

"How serious and faithful might our conversation not have been if they had questioned me about these treasures! How could I imagine that such as I, whom God has so richly gifted, would be ridiculed on account of mistaking a *casus*! I who know Donat and Priscianus almost by heart!

"It is probable that that empty coxcomb believes that he carries the whole of the *Grammatica* in his hood,—but beloved brethren, believe me—he has scarcely had a glimpse of her back in the distance, and if he were to try to catch sight of her radiant countenance, he would stumble and fall to the ground over his own awkward feet. The *Grammatica* is a noble woman, who wears for a wood-cutter an aspect very different from that she has for an Aristotle.

"But how shall I speak to you of grammar's sister, of dialectics, whom that Greek sage has called the nurse of intellect? Ooh, noble art! that entangles the fool in her nets, whilst showing the wise man how to evade them, and discloses to our wondering eyes the hidden threads, by which being and not-being are linked together! But of that, you cowl-bearing monk knows nothing! Nothing of that subtle fineness which, with nineteen kinds of syllogisms, knows how to explain all that which has ever been thought before, as well as all that which can be thought hereafter. God is wise, and deprives him of such knowledge; knowing beforehand that he would only use it for deceitful and wicked ends."

In this way the learned Italian proved his superiority in all the liberal arts. To rhetoric and all its treasures, a whole chapter was dedicated, in which certain persons, to whom the Goddess Minerva had once appeared in their dreams, and fools who believed that brevity of expression is a proof of wisdom, were pointedly alluded to. Then arithmetic, geometry and astronomy were discussed; interspersed with deep investigations on the questions whether the stars were gifted with intellectual souls, and a claim on immortality; and further whether at the time when Joshua had said: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon," he had also imposed immobility on the other five planets; or whether these had been allowed to continue their circular motion.

A profound sounding of this problem offered an opportunity of speaking first of the harmony of the spheres, and then of music in general, as the last of the liberal arts; and thus the vengeance-fraught little ship, carried along by the billowy floods of learning, could at last reach the goal it had so long been aiming at.

"Wherefore now do you think that I have expounded all this?" asked he, finally.

"Not to expound the elements of the liberal arts, but to expose the folly of an ignorant man, who preferred pecking away at grammatical blunders to deriving true wisdom from his guest; for though his inward nature may forever be shut out from the realms of art, he might at least have caught an outward reflection of my light. But he was swelling with insolent pride, so that he preferred to pass for a sage amongst his fellow-monks; like to that frog which, sitting in the mire, thought to rival the bull in greatness. Ah, never has the pitiful creature stood on the heights of science, hearing God's own voice speak to him. Born in the wilderness, and grown up amidst silly, prattling people, his soul has remained on the level of the beasts of the field. Unwilling to dwell in the active life of this world, and incapable of a life of inward contemplation, he has been marked by the enemy of mankind as his own.

Willingly I would exhort you to try what could be done for him, with the aid of healing medicine, but I sadly fear that his disease is too deeply rooted.

*For on a hardened skin, even sneeze-wort will prove unavailing.

says Persius.

"And now, after having read all this, please to judge, ye venerable brothers, whether I am the man to have merited such treatment and ridicule from the hands of a fool. I deliver both him and myself into your hands, for before the judgment of the just, the fool falls back into his own nothingness. *Finis!*"

"Praised be the holy Amandus!" said Gunzo once more, when the last word of his work had been written down. The old serpent would certainly have swelled with joy, if it could have watched him, in the full glory of his likeness to Deity, when he added the last dot. "And God looked on all that he had made, and beheld, it was good." And Gunzo?—he did the same.

Then he walked up to his metal looking-glass, and gazing for a long time at his own reflection, as if it were of the greatest importance for him to study the countenance of the man who had annihilated the Ekkehard of St. Gall, he finally made a deep bow to himself.

The bell in the refectory had for some time been announcing the supper hour. Psalm and grace were finished, and the brotherhood was already seated before the steaming millet-porridge, when Gunzo at last came in with a radiant countenance. The dean silently pointed to a remote corner away from his customary seat; for he, who missed the regular hour too often, was, as a punishment, separated from the others, and his wine was given to the poor. But without the least murmur, Gunzo sat down and drank his Belgian pump-water,—for his book was lying finished in his cell, and that made up to him for everything.

When the meal was over, he invited some of his friends to come up to his cell, in as mysterious a way as if they were about to dig for some hidden treasure, and when they were all assembled, he read his work out to them. The monastery of St. Gallus, with its libraries, schools, and learned teachers, was far too famous in all Christendom for the disciples of St. Amandus not to listen to the whizzing of Gunzo's arrows with a secret joy. Cleverness and a blameless life are often far more offensive to the world than sin and wickedness. Therefore they nodded their honny heads approvingly as Gunzo read out the choice bits.

"It would have been well, before this, to have taught these Helvetian bears a lesson!" said one. "Insolence joined to roughness does not deserve any gentler treatment."

Gunzo continued. "*Bene, optime, aristotelicissime!*" murmured the assembled monks, when he had ended.

"May the dish please you, Brother Akhar!" exclaimed another. "Belgian spice, to flavor the Helvetian cheese!"

The brother head cook, embracing Gunzo, actually wept with joy. Nothing so learned, profound, and beautiful had ever gone out into the world before from the cloister of St. Amandus. Only one of the brothers was standing immovable near the wall.

"Well?" said Gunzo interrogatively.

"And where is charity?" softly asked the brother, and after these few words he relapsed again into silence. The reproach struck home.

"Thou art right, Hucbald," said he. "This want shall be supplied. Charity requires us to pray for our enemies. Therefore I will add a prayer for the poor fool at the end. That will have a good appearance, and impress all tender minds favorably. Ay?"

But the brother did not reply. It had become very late, and they all left the cell now on tip-toe. Gunzo tried to retain him who had spoken of charity, as he cared a good deal for his opinion; but Hucbald turned away and followed the others.

"Matthew twenty-three, verse twenty-five," he murmured, when his foot had crossed the threshold. Nobody heard it.

Slumber that night, however, obstinately refused to close the eyes of Gunzo the learned. So he read the production of his industry over and over again. He soon knew in what place every word stood, and yet he could not withdraw his eyes from the well-known lines. At last he seized his pen, saying: "A more pious ending,—so be it!" He reflected awhile, pacing up and down his cell with slow, measured steps.

"It shall be done in hexameters, for who has ever before retaliated an insult received in so worthy a manner?"

So he sat down and wrote. He wished to write a prayer for his enemy,—but then nobody can act contrary to his nature. Once more he glanced over the written pages. They were really too good! Then he penned the supplement. When the cock was announcing the dawn of day, this also was finished. Two dozen and a half of rattling monks' verses. That his thoughts, from the prayer of his antagonist, by degrees, diverged on himself and his glorious work, was but a natural transition for a man gifted with so much self-esteem.

With complacent unctio, he wrote down the five last stanzas.

"Go then into the world, my book; and wherever thou findest
Shameful, slanderous tongues, which my glorious
life are defiling,
Crush them without remorse, and humble them with
thy just censure.
Until thy author one day will enter the kingdom of
Heaven,
Such as is promised to him, who has not buried his
talents."

The parchment was rough and resistant, so that he had to press the goose-quill, in order to make it receive the letters.

On the next day, Gunzo packed up his epistle in a tin box, and this again in a linen bag. A bondman of the monastery, who had slain his brother, had taken a vow of a pilgrimage to the grave of the twelve Saints, with his right arm chained to his right hip; and to pray there until some heavenly sign of grace was shown to him. His way led up the Rhine. So, Gunzo put the tin case around his neck, and a few weeks later, it was delivered safe and sound into the hands of the gate-keeper at Reichenau. Gunzo well knew his friends there. Therefore he had dedicated the libel to them.

Moengsl, the old parish-priest, had also some business to transact in the monastery, on that day. In the stranger's room sat the Belgian pilgrim. They had given him some fish-soup, which he managed to eat with much difficulty; his chains clinking whenever he lifted his arm.

"Thou hadst better go home again, and marry the widow of the man thou hast slain," said Moengsl. "That would be a far better expiation, that to make a fool's journey into the wide world, with your rattling chains."

The pilgrim shook his head silently, as if he thought that such chains might prove heavier still than any which the blacksmith could forge.

Moengsl asked to be announced to the Abbot. "He is very busy with some book he is reading," was the answer. Nevertheless he was ushered into his presence.

"Sit down, parish-priest," graciously said the Abbot. "I know that you are rather fond of salty and peppery things. Here's something for you."

He read out to him Gunzo's libel which had just arrived. The old man listened attentively, but his eyebrows contracted and his nostrils expanded during the lecture.

When he had come to the description of Ekkehard's curly hair and five shoes, the Abbot was nearly convulsed with laughter, but Moengsl sat there, rigid and serious, and on his forehead a frown had gathered, like clouds before a thunder-storm.

"Well, I reckon that his pride will be well whipped out of him!" said the Abbot. "Sublime! really sublime! And an abundance of knowledge. That will strike home, and cannot be answered."

"But it can though," grimly said the parish-priest.

"And in what way?" eagerly asked the Abbot.

Moengsl made a gesture of evil import. "A good stick from a holly-bush, or a brave hazel-wood, is all that's wanted, and then to go down the Rhine, until there is but an arm's length left between the Suabian wood and the Italian writer's back. And then——" He concluded his speech figuratively.

"You are somewhat rude, parish-priest, and have no appreciation of learning," said the Abbot. "To be sure—such a treatise as that can only be written by a refined intellect. Respect, say!"

"Fine learning that, indeed!" exclaimed Moengsl, who had worked himself into a downright rage. "Puffed up lips, and a bad and wicked heart, are like an earthen pot, covered with tinsel," says Solomon. Learned? Why, the wood in my parish is as learned as that, for it also repeats what you call out to it, and that

is at least a melodious echo. We know these Belgian peacocks, which are to be found though, also in other parts. Their feathers are stolen, and their singing, in spite of tail and rainbow-colors behind, is hoarse, and will always be hoarse; no matter what airs the creatures may give themselves. Before my great recovery, I also believed that it was singing, instead of croaking, when a fellow puffed up his cheeks with grammar and dialectica, but now 'Farewell, *Marcianus Capella*,' say we now at Radolfszell!"

"I believe that it is time for you to think of going home, as the clouds are fast gathering over Constance," said the Abbot.

Then the parish priest found out that he had not chosen a suitable individual for expounding his views on healthy opinions and science too. So he took leave.

"For the matter of that, thou mightst have remained as well in thy monastery at Benchor on the emerald isle, thou Irish wooden head," thought Abbot Wazmann, whilst taking leave with evident coolness.

"Rudimann!" he called out through the passage, when Moengsl was gone. Rudimann, instantly made his appearance.

"I suppose you remember the last vintage-time," began the Abbot, "as well as a blow given to you by a certain milk-sop, to whom a fanciful Duchess is now about to give certain lands?"

"I remember the blow," replied Rudimann with a bashful smile, like a maiden who is questioned about her lover.

"That blow has been returned by some one, with a strong and unrelenting hand. You may be satisfied. Read this," handing Gunzo's parchment to him.

"By your leave," said Rudimann, stepping up to the window. He had tasted many a noble wine in his life, during the time that he had occupied his present post of cellarer, but even on the day when the Bishop of Cremona had sent him some jugs of sparkling brown Asti, his countenance had not shone so radiantly as it did now.

"What a precious gift from above is extending knowledge, and a fine style," exclaimed he. "The brother Ekkehard is done for. He cannot dare to show his face again."

"'Tis not quite so far yet," said the Abbot.

"But then, that which is not, may yet be in the future. The learned brother Gunzo is helping us. His epistle must not be allowed to rot unread. So you can have some copies taken; better six than three. That fine young gentleman must be driven away from the Hohentwiel. I am not overfond of yellow-beaked birds, who pretend to sing better than their elders. Some cold water, poured on his tonsure, will benefit him. We will send a note to our brother in St. Gall, urging him to command his return. How is it with the list of his sins?"

Rudimann slowly raised his left hand, and began to count on his fingers. "Shall I recount them?—First, he has disturbed the peace of our monastery, during the vintage, by——"

"Stop," said the Abbot, "that is past and done away with. All that which happened before the battle with the Huns is buried and forgotten. That is a law which the Burgundians made, and which we will adhere to also."

"Then without the help of my fingers," said the cellarer. "The custodian of St. Gallus has become subject to haughtiness and insolence since the day on which he left his monastery. Without moving his lips to frame a greeting, he passes by brothers whose age and intellect ought to claim his reverence. Then he presumed to preach the sermon on the holy day when we beat the Huns, although such an important and solemn office ought to have been performed by one of the Abbots. Further, he presumed to baptize a heathenish prisoner, although such a baptism should have been superintended by the regular priest of the parish and not by one who ought to attend at the gate of the monastery of St. Gallus."

"What may still arise out of the constant intercourse of the forward youth with his noble mistress, He Who searcheth all hearts alone can tell! Already at the wedding feast of that baptized heathen, it was observed that he did not shun meetings with that beauteous dame, in solitary places; and that he heaved frequent sighs, like a shot buck. Likewise it has been remarked with heartfelt sorrow, that a Greek maiden, as fickle and unstable as a will-o'-the-wisp, is flicking about him; so that, which is left undone by the mistress, may be finished by her hand-maiden, of whose ortho-

doxy even, one is not fully assured. Now, a frivolous woman is bitter than death, according to Scripture. She is a bait of the evil one, and her heart is a net, and only he who pleases God can escape her wiles."

It was a most becoming and just thing, for Rudimann, the protector of the upper maid Kerhildis, to be so well versed in the words of the Preacher.

"Enough," said the Abbot. "Chapter twenty-nine, treating of the calling back of absent brothers. It will do, and I have a sort of presentiment, that the fickle lady will soon flutter about on her rock, like an old swallow, whose nestling has been taken away. Good-by sweetheart!—and Saspach will yet become ours!"

"Amen!" murmured Rudimann.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MASTER SPAZZO THE CHAMBERLAIN'S MISSION.

EARLY on a cool pleasant summer day, Ekkehard walked out of the castle gate, into the breezy morning air. He had passed a sleepless night, during which he had paced up and down in his chamber. The Duchess had called up a host of wild thoughts in his heart, and in his head there was a buzzing and humming, as if a covey of wild ducks were flying about there. He shunned Dame Hadwig's presence, and yet longed every moment that he was away, to be near her. The old happy ingenuousness had taken wing. His ways had become absent and variable; in short, the time which has never been spared yet to mortal man, and which Godfrey of Strasburg describes "as an ever-present pain, in a continual state of bliss," had come for him.

Before the night had quite set in, a thunder-storm was raging outside. He had opened his little window, and enjoyed the fierce sheets of lightning, flashing through the gathering darkness, and every now and then lighting up the shores of the lake; and he had laughed when night had triumphed again, and the thunders were reverberating between the hills.

Now it was a fine sunny morning. Glistening dewdrops hung on the grass, and here and there an unmelted hailstone was lying in the shade. Quiet and peace were now reigning over hill and vale, but the ears of the blasted corn-fields hung down their broken heads, for the hailstorm had blighted the fair promising harvest. From the rocky hill-sides mud colored little brooklets were running down into the valley.

As yet, nothing was stirring in the fields, for it was only just daybreak. In the distance, on the hilly ground which extends in undulating lines at the back of the Hohentwiel, a man was striding along. It was the Hunnic convert. He carried willow branches and all sorts of slings, and was just setting out on his work to wage war on the field-mice. As he walked along he whistled merrily on a lime-tree leaf, and looked the image of a happy bridegroom; for in the arms of the tall Frideric he had found new happiness.

"How are you?" mildly said Ekkehard when he passed by with a humble salutation. The Hun pointed up to the blue sky: "As if I were in heaven!" said he, gayly spinning round on one of his wooden shoes. Ekkehard turned his steps back again; but for a long while the whistling of the mouse-catcher could still be heard interrupting the silence around. At the foot of the hill there lay a piece of weather-beaten rock, over which an elder tree spread its bows, richly laden with luxuriant white blossoms. Ekkehard sat down on it, and after dreamily gazing into the distance for some time, he drew out from under his habit a neatly bound little book, and began to read. It was neither a breviary nor the Psalter. It was called "The Song of Solomon," and it was not good for him to read it. To be sure, they had once taught him that the lily-scented song expressed the longing for the church, the true bride of the soul, and in his younger days he had studied it, undisturbed by the gazelle eyes and the dove-like cheeks and slender as the palm-tree waist of the Sulamite woman; but now!—now he read it with other eyes. A soft dreaminess came over him.

"Who is it that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" He looked up to the towers of the Hohentwiel, which were glittering in the first rays of the morning sun, and there found the answer.

And again he read: "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of night." A stirring breeze shook down some of the white blossoms on the little book. Ekkehard did not shake them off. He had bent down his head, and was sitting there immovable.

Meanwhile Cappan had cheerfully begun his daily labors. There was a field down in the plain, on the border of the lands belonging to the Hohentwiel, on which the field-mice had erected their headquarters. The hamsters were carrying off plenty of provisions for the winter, and the moles were digging their passages in the gravelly soil. To that spot Cappan had received orders to betake himself. Like a statesman in a rebellious province, he was to restore order, and cleanse the land of all obnoxious subjects. The floods of the late thunder-storm had laid open the hidden refuges. He dug them up gently, and slew many a field-mouse before it was aware of it. Then he carefully prepared his various slings and traps, putting also here and there some poisonous baits, which he had concocted out of the thorn-apple and belladonna; and all the while that he was thus intent on these his murderous designs, he continued to whistle merrily, little knowing what terrible clouds were gathering over his head.

The land on which he was exercising his art, bordered on some grounds that belonged to the Monastery of Reichenau. There, where a forest of stately old oaks stretched their tops into the air, some straw-thatched roofs might be seen. These were the roofs of the Schlangenhof, which, together with many acres of wood and fields, belonged to the monastery. A pious widow had left it to St. Pirmin, in order to secure eternal bliss for her soul. They had let it to a farmer, who was rather a rough man with a thick knotty skull, full of hard, stubborn thoughts. He had many men and maid-servants, as well as horses and cattle, and was altogether a thriving man, for he took good care that the copper-brown snakes, which infested both court and stable, were left unmolested. Their dish of milk in the stable corner, was never allowed to remain empty, and in consequence they had got quite tame, and never harmed anybody. "These snakes are the blessing of the whole farm," the old man would often repeat.

For the last two days, however, the convent-farmer had not enjoyed one single quiet hour; for the frequent thunder-storms made him very anxious about his crops. When three of them had passed by, without doing any damage, he had a horse put to a cart, on which was placed a sack of last year's rye, and with that he drove over to the deacon of Singen. He, on seeing the cart approaching, grinned so as to show his big grinders, for he knew his customer well enough. His living was scanty, but out of the folly of mankind, he yet made enough to butter his bread with.

The convent-farmer had taken the sack of corn down from the cart, and said: "Master Otfried, you have taken good care of me, and have prayed away the thunder storms from my fields. Don't forget me, if the thunder should come again."

And the deacon replied: "I think you must have seen me standing under the church door, with my face turned toward the Schlangenhof, sprinkling the holy water three times toward the tempest, in the shape of the holy cross; besides saying the verse of the three holy nails. That, drove away clouds and hailstones fast enough, I can tell you! Your rye, convent-farmer, would make excellent bread, if a trifle of barley were added to it."

Then, the convent-farmer returned home, and was just thinking of filling a smaller sack with barley, as an additional, well-deserved present, for his advocate with Heaven, when again some black and threatening clouds became visible. When they were looming dark and terrible, over the oak wood, a whitish gray smaller cloud hurried up after them. It had five points like to the fingers of a hand, and swelled and shot forth sheets of lightning, and soon a hailstorm, far worse than any previous ones, came down. The convent-farmer had at first stood confidently under his porch, thinking that the deacon of Singen would again drive it away, but when the hailstones began pelting his corn-fields, causing the ears to fall like soldiers in a battle, he struck his clenched fist on the oaken table, calling out: "May that cursed liar at Singen be damned."

In the height of despair at the deacon's prayers having failed, he now tried an old traditional remedy of the Hegau. Tearing down some branches from the nearest oak tree, he plucked off the leaves, and putting these into his venerable old wedding coat, he hung that up on the mighty oak-tree which overspread his house. But the merciless hailstones continued to beat down the corn, in spite of wedding coat and oak-leaves. Like a statue, the convent farmer stood there, with his eyes riveted on the bundle in the air, hoping that the wind which would drive the thunderstorm away would come out of it,—but it came not! Then, biting his lips and with contracted eyebrows, he walked back into the house. Almost heart-broken with grief, he threw himself into a chair before the table, and for some time he sat there without uttering a word. When at last he spoke, it was to pronounce an awful curse. This, with the convent farmer was already a change for the better.

The head servant timidly ventured to approach him now. He was of gigantic stature, but before his master he stood as timid as a child.

"If I only knew the witch!" exclaimed the farmer. "The weather-witch! the cursed old hag! She should not have shaken out her skirts over Schlangenhof in vain. May her tongue be withered in her mouth."

"Need it have been a witch?" said the head servant. "Since the woman of the wood has been driven away from the Hohenkrähen, no other has dared to show her face here."

"Hold thy tongue until thou art asked!" fiercely growled the convent farmer.

The man remained standing there, well knowing that his turn would come. After some time the old man gruffly said: "What dost thou know?"

"I know what I know," replied the other, with a sly expression.

Again there ensued a pause. The convent farmer looked out of the window. The harvest was destroyed. He turned round.

"Speak," cried he.

"Did you notice that strange gray cloud, sailing past the dark ones?" said the man. "What else can it have been but the cloud-ship? Somebody has sold our corn to the owners of that ship."

The convent-farmer crossed himself, as if he wanted to prevent his saying more.

"I have heard it said by my grandmother," continued the head servant. "She has often heard people speak about it in Alsace, when the thunderstorms came from over the Odilienberg. The ship comes from a land that is called Magonia, and is always white, and sails on black clouds. Fasolt and Mermuth sit in it, and throw down the hailstones on the fields, if the great weather-wizard has given them the power to do so. Then, they lift up our corn into their ship, and sail back to Magonia, where they are all well paid for it. To be on good terms with the cloud-sailors is more profitable than the reading of masses. We shall have nothing but the husks this year."

The convent farmer became thoughtful. Then he suddenly seized the head servant by the collar, and shaking him violently, cried: "Who?" But the man in reply put one of his fingers up to his lips. It had become late.

At the same early hour when Cappan had met Ekkehard, the convent farmer, accompanied by the head servant, was walking through the fields to look at the damage. Neither of them said a word. The loss in crops was considerable, but they did not fail to observe that the land on the other side had suffered far less. It was as if the oak wood had been the boundary line for the hailstorm.

On the neighboring lands Cappan was performing his duties. He had finished setting his traps, and thought he would allow himself some rest. So he drew from his pocket a piece of bread and some bacon, which was as soft and white as the newly fallen snow, and looked so tempting that he could not help thinking of his spouse with deep gratitude for having provided him with such food. Further, he thought about many another thing which had occurred since their wedding, and he cast a longing look up to the larks, as if he wanted them to fly over to the Hohenstoffeln to carry some tender messages there, and again he felt so lightsome and happy that he cut a mighty caper into the air.

His slender spouse not being present just then, he thought of giving himself a treat, by lying down full length on the ground, whilst

he ate his food; for at home he had until then always been obliged to sit down, little as he liked it.

Just at that moment he remembered that Friderun, to call down a blessing on his work, had taught him to pronounce some words, which were to exorcise the vermin; exhorting him very earnestly not to forget saying them. His breakfast would never have tasted well if he had not obeyed this injunction.

On the border of the field there was a stone, on which a half moon was engraved, the sign of Dame Hadwig's ownership. He stepped up to it, and pulling off his wooden shoe from his right foot, he stood barefoot and stretched out his arms toward the wood. The convent farmer and his head servant, who were walking between the trees, stopped at this sight, but Cappan did not observe them and pronounced the words which Friderun had taught him.

"*Atus sanctus cardia cardiani!* Mouse and she mouse, hamster and mole, I bid ye all to go away from the fields and meads below; and may fever, plague and death follow you wher'er ye go! *Afrias, aestrias, palamiasii!*"

Hidden behind some bulky oak-trees, the convent farmer and his companion had watched the exorcism. They now approached stealthily. "*Afrias, aestrias, palamiasii!*" said Cappan for the second time, when a blow from behind hit him right on the neck, so that he fell down. Strange, unintelligible words entered his ears, and before he had recovered from his surprise, four fists were lustily belaboring his back, like flails on a barn floor.

"Our work it, thou corn-murderer!" shrieked the convent farmer. "What has the Schlangenhof ever done thee, thou weather-maker, mice-catcher, rake-hell?"

Cappan gave no answer. The poor fellow was perfectly bewildered, but this only angered the old man the more.

"Look into his eyes, whether they are bleared, and if things are reflected wrongly in them," called he out to the head servant. The latter obeyed, but he was honest.

"'Tis not in the eyes," said he.

"Then lift up his arm!"

He tore off the upper garment from the prostrate man, and examined his arms very carefully; for he who held communion with evil spirits, bore some mark on his body. But they found nothing whatever on the poor wretch, except some scars of old wounds. This fact had almost restored him to favor in their eyes, for folks were then quick and changeable in their passions, as an historian of those days informs us. Just at that moment however, the servant-man's eyes fell on the ground, where a large stag-beetle was crawling along. His wings shone with violet-blackish hue, and the reddish horns were proudly raised, like a stag's antlers. He had witnessed the ill-treatment which Cappan had received, and was going to continue his way, not having liked it.

The head servant started back, affrightedly.

"The *donner gugg!*" exclaimed he.

"The thunder-beetle!" cried the convent farmer likewise, and now Cappan was lost. That he, together with the beetle, had made the storm, was now beyond all doubt, for the stag-beetle was then believed to attract thunder and lightning.

"Confess and repent, thou heathenish dog!" said the farmer, searching for his knife, but here an idea struck him and he continued, "he shall meet with his punishment on the grave of his brothers. To revenge them, he has brought down the hailstorm."

The servant had meanwhile smashed the stag-beetle between two large pebbles, which he afterward buried in the ground. Together they now laid hands on Cappan, dragging him over the field to the Hunnic mound, and there bound fast his hands and feet. This being done, the man ran over to the Schlangenhof, to call his fellow-servants. Wild and blood-thirsty they came. Some of them had danced at Cappan's wedding, but this did not in the least prevent their going out now to stone him.

Cappan began to collect his scattered senses. What he was accused of he could not guess, but he understood well enough that his life was in great danger. Therefore he now uttered a shriek which rent the air, wild and complaining, like the death-cry of a wounded horse, and awakened Ekkehard from his reverie under the elder-tree. He recognized the voice of his god-child and looked down. A second time Cappan's cry rose up to him, and then Ekkehard forgot Solomon's song, and hurried down the valley. He came in the nick of time. They

had placed Cappan with his back toward the piece of rock covering the mound and were forming a semicircle around him. The convent farmer explained how he had caught him in the very act of weather-making, and then they unanimously agreed that he should be stoned to death.

Into this grim assembly rushed Ekkehard. The ecclesiastical men of those days were less deluded than they were a few hundred years later, when thousands lost their lives by fire, on account of similar accusations; and the state signed the death warrant; and the church gave its blessing thereto. Ekkehard, though convinced of the existence of witchcraft, had himself once copied the treatise of the pious Bishop Agobard, written to disprove the nonsensical popular superstition of weather-making. Indignant wrath gave eloquence to his speech.

"What are ye about, ye deluded men, that ye intend to judge, when ye ought to pray that ye may not be judged yourselves! If the man has sinned, then wait till the new moon, when the parish priest at Radolszell will be holding court against all malefactors. There let seven sworn men accuse him of the forbidden art, according to the laws of the Emperor and of the church."

But the men of the Schlangenhof would not heed his words. A threatening murmur ran through their ranks.

Then Ekkehard thought of striking another chord in their rough minds.

"And do ye really believe, ye sons of the land of saints, of the Suabian ground, which the Lord has been pleased to look upon with gracious eyes, that such a poor, miserable Hun could have the power to command the clouds? Do ye think that the clouds would obey him? That a brave Hegau flash of lightning would not rather have split his head to punish him for having dared to meddle with it?"

This last reason had almost convinced the native pride of the men, but the convent farmer cried out: "The thunder-beetle! the thunder-beetle, we have seen it with our eyes, crawling around his feet!"

Then the cry of "stone him to death!" was again raised. A first stone was hurled at the unfortunate Hun, making his blood flow. Upon this Ekkehard bravely threw himself on his god-son, shielding him with his own body.

This had its effect.

The men of the Schlangenhof looked at each other dumfounded, until one of them turned round to go away, and the others following his example, the convent farmer was soon left standing there all alone.

"You are taking the part of the land-destroyer!" he cried, angrily; but on Ekkehard not giving an answer, he likewise dropped the stone from his hand and went away grumbling.

Poor Cappan found himself in a most pitiable condition; for, on a back which has been under the treatment of Allemannian peasants' fists, "no grass will grow again so easily," as the expression is in those parts.

The stone had caused a wound on the head which was bleeding profusely. Ekkehard first washed his head with some rain-water, made the sign of the cross over it to stop the bleeding, and then dressed the wound as well as he could. He thought of the parable of the Good Samaritan. The wounded man looked gratefully up at him. Slowly Ekkehard led him up to the castle, and he had to persuade him before he would take his arm. The foot that had been wounded in the late battle also began hurting him again, so that he limped on with suppressed groans.

On the Hohentwiel their arrival was the cause of great and general excitement, for everybody liked the Hun. The Duchess descended into the courtyard, bestowing a friendly nod on Ekkehard on account of his kindness and compassion. The trespass of the monastery's vassal against her subject raised her just resentment.

"That shall not be forgotten," said she. "Be comforted, my poor mouse-catcher, for they shall pay thee damages for thy wounded pate that will equal a dowry. And for the broken peace of the realm we shall decree the highest possible fine. A few pounds of silver shall not be sufficient. These convent people grow to be as insolent as their masters!"

But the most indignant of all was Master Spazzo, the chamberlain.

"Did I for this reason withhold my sword from his head when he lay wounded before me, that those clodhoppers of the Schlangenhof should pave it with their field-stones? And what if he was our enemy before? Now he is

baptized and I am his god-father, and bound to take care of the welfare of his soul as well as of his body. Be content, god-child!" cried he, rattling his sword on the stone flags, "for as soon as thy scratch has been mended I shall accompany thee on thy first walk, and then we will settle accounts with the convent farmer. Hail and thunder, that we will! So as to make the chips fly off his head! With those farmers things cannot go on any longer in that way. These fellows carry shields and arms like noblemen, and instead of hunting like peasants, they keep dogs broken in to fly at boars and bears; and blow on their bugles as if they were the lords of the creation. Whenever a man carries his head higher than the rest, one may be sure that he is a farmer!"

"Where was the trespass committed?" asked the Duchess.

"They dragged him from the boundary stone with the raised half-moon to the Hunnic mound," said Ekkehard.

"Consequently the deed has been done, even on our own ground and territory," indignantly exclaimed the Duchess. "That is too much! Master Spazzo, you must to horse!"

"We must to horse!" echoed the chamberlain fiercely.

"And demand even to-day that the Abbot of Reichenau shall pay us both damages and fine, for the peace which has been broken, as well as give us all possible satisfaction. Our sovereign rights shall not be trampled upon by monastic insolence!"

"Shall not be trampled upon by monastic insolence!" repeated Master Spazzo, still fiercer than before.

Seldom had he entered on a mission which was more to his taste. "We will mount, Sir Abbot!" cried he, going up to his room to make the necessary preparations.

His green velvet waistcoat and gold-bordered chamberlain's mantle he quietly left in his wardrobe, choosing instead an old and shabby gray suit. After having donned this, he put on the large greaves, which he had worn on the day of the battle. Fastening on them the biggest spurs he possessed, he tramped up and down a few times to try their effect. Finally he stuck three waving feathers in his steel-cap, and hung his sword over his shoulder. Thus arrayed, he came down into the courtyard.

"Do look at me, most lovely maiden Praxedis," said he to the Greek, "and tell me what sort of expression my face wears now?" He had pushed the steel cap toward his left ear, and haughtily turned his head over his right shoulder.

"A most insolent one indeed, Sir Chamberlain!" was the reply.

"Then 'tis all right," said Master Spazzo, mounting his steed. A moment later he cantered out by the castle gate, so that he made the sparks fly about; having the pleasant conviction that this time insolence was his bounden duty.

On the way, he practiced the part he was going to act. The storm had thrown down a fir-tree, to the roots of which the torn-up earth was still clinging. Its mighty branches blocked up the way.

"Out of the way, ecclesiastical blockhead!" called out Master Spazzo to the fir-tree, and when it did not move he drew his sword.

"Forward, Falada," spurring his steed, so that it jumped over the tree in one flying leap. Whilst the animal was performing this feat, Master Spazzo gave a good cut at the branches, so as to make the twigs fly about.

In less than an hour and a half he had reached the cloister-gate. The small strip of land which, at low tide, linked the shore with the island, was now above water, thus affording a passage. A serving brother opened the door for him. It was about dinner-time. The imbecile Heribald quickly came out of the convent garden, to satisfy his curiosity with regard to the strange horseman. He pressed up close to the horse when Master Spazzo dismounted. The watch-dog, furiously barking, dragged at his chain to get at the steed, so that the animal reared back, and Master Spazzo almost came to grief. When he had safely alighted, he seized his scabbard and dealt Heribald a blow over the back.

"It is not meant for you," cried he, stroking his beard, "it is for the watch dog. Pass it on!"

Heribald stood there, perfectly agitated, and rubbed his shoulder.

"Holy Pirmin!" wailed he.

"To-day there is no holy Pirmin whatever," said Master Spazzo in a most decisive tone.

Then Heribald laughed, as if he knew his customer now.

"Heigho, gracious lord, the Huns had also been here, and there was nobody but Heribald to receive them; but they did not speak to him so wickedly as that."

"The Huns are no ducal chamberlains, fool!" Master Spazzo replied haughtily.

In Heribald's weak mind, the idea began to dawn that the Huns might not be the worst guests, on German ground. He held his tongue, however, and returned to the garden, where he plucked some sage leaves and rubbed his back with them.

Master Spazzo strode over the cloister-yard to the gate, which, through the cross-passage, led into the interior. He had assumed his heaviest tread. The bell that announced dinner was just ringing. One of the brothers now came quickly across the yard. Him Master Spazzo now seized by his garment.

"Call down the Abbot!" said he. The monk looked at him in mute astonishment; then, casting a side look at the chamberlain's worn hunting-suit, he replied: "It is the hour for our midday meal. If you are invited, which however seems rather doubtful to me,"—with another ironical look, at Master Spazzo's outward man,—but he was spared the end of his sentence, for the chamberlain dealt the hungry brother such a genuine cuff, that he was sent reeling into the yard again, like a well thrown shuttle-cock. The midday sun shone on the smooth tonsure of the prostrate man.

The Abbot had already been informed of the violent assault which the convent farmer had made on one of the Duchess's subjects. He now heard the noise in the courtyard and on stepping up to the window, he was just in time to see the pious brother Ivo sent flying out into the yard. "Happy is he who knows the secret causes of such things," says Virgil, and Abbot Wazmann was in that happy condition. He had seen Master Spazzo's feathers nodding over at him with a threatening aspect from out the somber cross-passage.

"Call down the Abbot!" was again shouted up from the courtyard, so that the panes of the little cell-windows vibrated.

Meanwhile, the soup was getting cold in the refectory, so that the assembled brotherhood at last fell to, without waiting any longer for the Abbot.

Abbot Wazmann had sent for Rudimann the cellarer. "All this annoyance we sorely owe to that green-beak of St. Gall! Oh, Gunzo, Gunzo! No one ought to wish ill to his neighbor, but still I cannot help revolving in my mind, whether our strong-handed yeoman had not done better to hurl their stones at that hypocrite Ekkehard, rather than at the Hunnic wizard!"

A monk now shyly entered the Abbot's room. "You are desired to come down," said he in low accents. "There is somebody down stairs who shouts and commands like a mighty man."

Then the Abbot said to Rudimann the cellarer: "It must be very bad weather with the Duchess. I know the chamberlain, and that he is a perfect weathercock. Whenever his mistress wears a smile round her haughty lips, then he laughs with his whole face, and when clouds have gathered on her forehead, then a downright thunder-storm will explode with him—"

"—and the lightning precedes the thunder," added Rudimann. Heavy steps were now heard approaching.

"There's no time to be lost," said the Abbot. "Set out as quickly as you can, cellarer, and express our deep regret to the Duchess. Take some silver coins out of the convent box, as smart-money for the wounded man, and say that we will have prayers offered for his recovery. Get along! you are his god-father and a clever man."

"It will be rather a difficult task," said Rudimann. She is sure to be downright exasperated."

"Take her some present," said the Abbot. "Children and women are easily bribed."

"What sort of a present?" Rudimann was about to ask, when the door was thrown open, and Master Spazzo came in. His face wore the right expression.

"By the life of my Duchess!" exclaimed he, "has the Abbot of this rats' nest poured lead into his ears, or has the gout got hold of his feet,

that he does not come down to receive his visitors?"

"We are taken by surprise," said the Abbot. "Let me welcome you now." He lifted his right forefinger to give him a blessing.

"I need no such welcome!" returned Master Spazzo. "The devil is the patron saint of this day. We have been insulted, grossly insulted! We exact a fine; two hundred pounds of silver at the least. Out with it! Murder and rebellion! The sovereign rights shall not be trampled upon by monastic insolence! We are an ambassador!"

He rattled his spurs on the floor. "Excuse me," said the Abbot, "we could not recognize the ambassador's garb in your gray jacket."

"By the camel's-hair coat of St. John the Baptist!" flared up Master Spazzo, "and if I were to come to you in my shirt the garment would be good enough, to appear as a herald, before your black cows!"

He put on his helmet again, from which the feathers seemed to nod triumphantly. "Pay me at once so that I can go on again. The air is bad here, very bad indeed."

"Allow me," said the Abbot, "but we never permit a guest to depart in anger from our island. You are sharp and urgent because you have not yet dined. Don't disdain a meal, such as the monastery can offer, and let us talk of business afterward."

That a fellow in return for his rudeness is kindly pressed to stay to dinner, made some impression on the chamberlain's mind. He took off his helmet again. "The sovereign rights shall not be trampled upon by monastic insolence," muttered he once more; but the Abbot pointed over to the open cloister-kitchen. The fair-haired kitchen-boy was turning the spit before the fire and smacking his lips, for a lovely smell of the roast meat had entered his nostrils just then. Some covered dishes, calling up pleasant anticipations, were standing in the background, whilst a monk, bearing a huge wine-jug, was just coming up from the cellar. The aspect was too tempting to resist any longer, so Master Spazzo laid aside his frown, and accepted the invitation.

When he had arrived at the third dish his insulting speeches became more scarce, and when the red wine of Meersburg was sparkling in the beaker, they ceased entirely. The red wine of Meersburg was good.

Meanwhile Rudimann rode out of the convent-gate. The fisherman of Ermatingen had caught a gigantic salmon, which lay, fresh and glittering, in the vaults below. This fish had been selected by Rudimann as a suitable present for appeasing the Duchess. Before he set out, however, he had still something to do in the copying-room of the monastery. A lay brother was to accompany him, with the huge fish, packed up in straw, lying before him on the saddle. Master Spazzo had ridden over in the haughtiest fashion, whereas Rudimann now assumed his most humble expression. He spoke shyly, and in low accents, when he asked for the Duchess. "She is in the garden," was the reply. "And my pious confrater Ekkehard?" asked the cellarer.

"He has accompanied the wounded Capan to his cottage on the Hohenstoffeln, where he is nursing him, so that he is not expected home before night."

"This I am truly sorry to hear," said Rudimann, with an evil expression of spite hovering about his lips. He then had the salmon unpacked, and put on the granite table in the middle of the courtyard. The tall lime-tree threw its cool shade over the glistening scales of the royal fish, and it was as if its large eye had still retained the power of sight, and were longingly looking away from the green branches, to the blue waves of its native element.

The fish measured above six feet in length, and Praxedis screamed outright when its straw covers were taken off. "He does not come home before nightfall," muttered Rudimann, breaking off a strong branch from the tree, a piece of which he put between the jaws of the fish, so that it remained with wide open mouth. With some of the leaves he carefully lined the inside, and then diving down into his breast-pocket he drew out thence the parchment leaves of Gunzo's libel. Rolling them first neatly up, he then stuck them between the jaws of the salmon.

With unfeigned astonishment Praxedis had been watching the strange proceeding.

The Duchess was now seen approaching them. Humbly Rudimann walked forward

to meet her, and imploring her indulgence for the convent's bondsman he told her how sorry the Abbot was; spoke with appreciation of the wounded man; expressed his doubts about the possibility of weather-making; and in fact spoke on the whole with tolerable success.

"And may an unworthy present show you at least the good will of your ever faithful Reichenau," concluded he, stepping aside, so that the salmon could shine out in full glory. The Duchess smiled, half reconciled already; and now her eye caught the parchment roll. "And that?" said she inquiringly.

"The latest production of literature!" said Rudimann. With a deep bow he then took leave, and remounting his mule, hastily set out again on his way home.

The red wine of Meersburg was good, and Master Spazzo was not accustomed to treat drinking as a thing that could be done quickly. He persevered before the wine-jug, like a general besieging a city; and sitting immovably on his bench, drank like a man, silently, but much, leaving all loud demonstrations to younger persons.

"The red wine is the most sensible institution of the monastery. Have you got more of it in the cellar?" he said to the Abbot when the first jug was emptied. His wanting to drink more was meant as a politeness and a sign of reconciliation. So the second jug was brought up.

"Without injuring our sovereign rights!" said he grimly, when he knocked his beaker against that of the Abbot. "Certainly, certainly," replied the latter with a queer side-look.

The fifth hour of the evening had thus come, and the sounds of the bell were floating through the monastery.

"Excuse me," said the Abbot, "we must now go to vespers; will you come with us?"

"I prefer waiting for you here," replied Master Spazzo, casting a look into the long neck of the wine-jug. It contained ample provision for at least another hour. So he let the monks sing their vespers, and drank on, all alone.

Again an hour had elapsed, when he tried to remember for what reason he had ridden over to the monastery, but the fact was that he could not recollect it any more very clearly. The Abbot came back now.

"How did you entertain yourself?" asked he.

"Very well," said Master Spazzo. The jug was empty.

"I do not know—" began the Abbot.

"Certainly!" said Master Spazzo, nodding his head. Then the third jug was brought.

Meanwhile Rudimann had returned home from his expedition. The sun was far inclining to the west; the sky was all aglow, and faint purple gleams of light were falling through the narrow windows on the carousing party.

When Master Spazzo again drank bumpers with the Abbot the red wine glistened like fiery gold in the cup, and he saw an aureole of light flickering round the Abbot's head. He tried to collect his scattered senses. "By the life of Hadwig," said he solemnly, "who are you?"

The Abbot did not understand him.

"What did you say?" asked he. Then Master Spazzo recognized the voice. "Ah, so," cried he, striking the oak table with his fist. "The sovereign rights shall not be trampled upon by monastic insolence!"

"Certainly not," rejoined the Abbot.

Then the chamberlain felt a spasmodic pain in the forehead, which he knew very well, and which he used to call "*the waker*." The waker came only when he was sitting behind the wine-jug, and whenever it announced itself it was a sure signal that in half an hour later the tongue would be paralyzed and the speech refuse to come. If "*the waker*" came for the second time, then the feet also were threatened with temporary paralysis. So he arose.

"These cowl-bearing monks shall not have the satisfaction of witnessing how their wine shuts up the mouth of a ducal chamberlain," thought he. He stood quite erect on his feet.

"Stop," said the Abbot, "we must not forget the parting draught!"

Then the fourth jug was brought. It is true that Master Spazzo had arisen, but then between rising and going a good many things may yet happen. He drank again, but when he wanted to put down his beaker, he placed it in the empty air, so that it fell down and broke to pieces. At this Master Spazzo got furious;

whilst many a thought was crossing in, and confusing his muddled brain.

"Where have you got him?" cried he to the Abbot.

"Whom?"

"The convent farmer! Out with him, the coarse peasant, who tried to murder my god-child!" He threateningly advanced a few paces toward the Abbot, making only *one* false step.

"He is at the Schlangenhof," smilingly said the Abbot, "and I willingly deliver him up to you; only you must be pleased to fetch him from there yourself."

"Murder and rebellion! We will fetch him!" roared Master Spazzo, rattling his sword as he strode toward the door. "We will drag him out of his bed even, the rascal! And when we have got him, by the knapsack of St. Gallus, if he—then—I can tell you—"

This speech was never ended, as his tongue stood still now, like the sun at Joshua's bidding during the battle with the Amorites.

He stretched out his hand for the Abbot's cup and drank that out. But his speech did not return. A sweet placid smile now settled on the chamberlain's lips. He stepped up to the Abbot to embrace him.

"Friend and brother! much beloved old wine-jug! what if I were to dig out one of thine eyes?" he tried to say with stammering tongue, but he could only utter some unintelligible sounds. He pressed the Abbot vehemently to his bosom, treading on his feet at the same time with his heavy boots.

Abbot Wazmann had already been deliberating within himself whether he should not offer a bed for the night to his exhausted guest, but the embrace and the pain in his toes changed his hospitable designs, and he took care that the chamberlain set out on his return.

His horse stood ready saddled in the cloister-yard, where the weak-minded Heribald was sneaking about. He had fetched himself a large piece of tinder from the kitchen, which he intended to light and then stick in the nostrils of the chamberlain's horse, thus to revenge himself for the blow which he had received. Master Spazzo, having scraped together the last remains of his dignity, now made his appearance. A servant with a burning torch lighted him on his way. The Abbot had taken leave of him at the upper gate.

Master Spazzo then bestrade his faithful steed Falada, but he was no sooner mounted than he glided down again on the other side. Heribald, who was near, hurried up to catch him in his arms, and as he did so, his bristly beard grazed the chamberlain's forehead.

"Art thou here also, my wise King Solomon," stammered Master Spazzo. "Be my friend!" kissing him. Then Heribald threw away his cinder and placed his foot upon it.

"Heigho, gracious Lord!" cried he. "Mey you come home safe and sound! You have come to us in a different manner from the Huns, and therefore your departure is different also. And yet, they, too, understand how to drink wine."

Master Spazzo, who had recovered his seat, pressed the steel-cap down on his head, and tightly grasped the reins. Something was still weighing on his mind, and made him struggle with his heavy tongue. At last he recovered some of his lost strength. He lifted himself in the stirrups, and his voice obeyed now.

"And the sovereign rights shall not be trampled upon by monastic insolence!" cried he, so that his voice rang loudly through the dark and silent cloister-yard.

At the same time, Rudimann informed the Abbot of the success which his mission had had with the Duchess.

Master Spazzo rode away. To the servant who had accompanied him with the torch he threw a gold ring, which induced the torch-bearer to go on with him over the narrow causeway through the lake.

He had safely reached the mainland, and the cool night air was fanning his heated face. He burst out laughing. The reins he still held tightly in his right hand. The moon was shining brightly, whilst dark clouds were gathering round the peaks of the Helvetian mountains. Master Spazzo now entered the dark fir-wood. Loudly and clearly, at measured intervals, the cuckoo's voice was heard through the silence around.

Master Spazzo laughed again. Was it some pleasant recollection, or longing hope for the future, which made him smile so sweetly?

He stopped his horse.

"When will the wedding be?" called he out in the direction where the cuckoo was sitting

on its tree. He counted the calls, but the cuckoo this time was indefatigable. Master Spazzo had already come to number twelve, when his patience began to wane.

"Hold thy tongue, confounded bird!" cried he. But the cuckoo called out for the thirteenth time.

"Five-and-fourty years we have got already," angrily exclaimed Master Spazzo, "and thirteen more would make it fifty-eight. That would be a nice time, indeed!"

The cuckoo sang out for the fourteenth time.

Here another woke up, and also raised its voice; a third one followed, and now there began a chorus of emulating cuckoo-voices around the tipsy chamberlain, so that all counting became impossible.

Now his patience left him entirely.

"Miserable liars and breakers of marriages, that's what you are," cried he furiously. "Would that the devil would take you altogether."

He spurred his horse on to a quicker pace. The wood became thicker, and heavy clouds were sailing toward the moon. It was intensely dark; the pine trees had assumed a strange weird look, and everything was silent around. Willingly would Master Spazzo now have listened to the voice of the cuckoo, but the nightly disturber of peace had flown away, and the solitary rider began to shiver.

"An unshapely cloud now stealthily approached the moon, and had soon covered her up entirely. Then Master Spazzo recollected that his nurse had told him in his early infancy, how the bad wolf Hati and Monagarm the moon-dog, persecuted the radiant astre. Looking up, he clearly recognized both wolf and moon-dog in the sky. They had just taken hold with their teeth, of the gentle comforter of belated travelers;—Master Spazzo was convulsed with pity. He drew his sword.

"*Vince luna! conquer, oh moon!*" cried he, at the top of his voice, and rattling his sword against his greaves. *Vince luna, Vince luna!*"

His cries were loud, and his jingling metal sounded fierce enough, but the cloud monsters did not loosen their hold on the moon; only the chamberlain's horse became frightened, and galloped at full speed through the dark wood with him.

When Master Spazzo awoke on the next morning, he found himself lying at the foot of the Hunnic mound. On the meadow, he saw his mantle, whilst his black steed Falada, was indulging in a morning walk, at some distance. The saddle was hanging down on one side, and the reins were torn. Falada, however, was eating the young grass and flowers with evident enjoyment. Slowly the exhausted man lifted his head, and looked about yawning. The convent tower of Reichenau was mirrored in the distant lake, as peacefully as if nothing whatever had happened. He tore up a bunch of grass, and held the dewy blades to his forehead. "*Vince luna!*" said he with a bitter smile. He had got a racking headache.

CHAPTER XIX.

BURKHARD THE CLOISTER-PUPIL.

RUDIMANN the cellarer was no bad logician. A roll of parchment leaves in the jaws of a salmon, must beget curiosity. Whilst Master Spazzo had been drinking the cloister wine, his mistress and Praxedis sat in their private room, spelling out Gunzo's libel. Ekkehard's pupils had learned enough Latin to understand the chief part, and what remained grammatically obscure they guessed at, and what they could not guess, they interpreted as well as they could. Praxedis was indignant.

"Is the race of scholars then everywhere like that at Byzantium?" exclaimed she. "First, a grail is metamorphosed into an elephant, and then a great war is made against the self-created monster! The present from the Reichenau is as sour as vinegar," puckering up her lovely mouth, just as when she had tasted Wiberad's crab-apples.

Dame Hadwig was beset by strange feelings. A certain something told her that the spirit which pervaded Gunzo's libel was not a good one, and yet she felt some satisfaction at Ekkehard's humiliation.

"I think that he has deserved this reprimand," said she.

Then Praxedis stood up: "Our good teacher needs many a reprimand, but then that should be our business. If we manage to cure him of

his shy awkwardness, then we shall have done him a good service; but if some one who carries a beam in his own eye, reproaches his neighbor with the mote in his,—that is too bad! The wicked monks have merely sent this to alander him. May I throw it out of the window, gracious mistress?"

"We have neither requested you to complete Ekkehard's education, nor to throw a present we have received out of the window," sharply said the Duchessa. So Praxedis held her peace.

The Duchess could not tear away her thoughts so easily from the elegant libel. Her ideas with respect to the fair-haired monk had undergone a great change since the day on which he carried her over the cloister courtyard. Not to be understood in a moment of excited feeling, is like being disdained. The sting remains for ever in the heart. Whenever her eyes now chanced to light on him, it did not make her heart beat any the quicker. Sometimes it was pity which made her gaze kindly on him again; but not that sweet pity out of which love springs, like the lily out of the cool soil. It contained a bitter grain of contempt.

Through Gunzo's libel, even Ekkehard's learning, which the women until then had been wont to treat with great respect, was laid prostrate in the dust,—so what was there now left to admire? The silent working and dreaming of his soul was not understood by the Duchess, and a delicate timidity is but too often considered folly by others. His going out into the fields in the fresh morning, to read Solomon's song, came too late. He should have done that last autumn.

Evening had come.

"Has Ekkehard returned home yet?" asked the Duchess.

"No," said Praxedis. "Neither has Master Spazzo returned."

"Then take yonder candlestick," said Dame Hadwig, "and carry up the parchment-leaves to Ekkehard's tower. He must not remain ignorant of the works of his fellow-brothers."

The Greek maid obeyed, but unwillingly. In the closet up in the tower, the air was close and hot. In picturesque disorder, books and other things were strewn about. On the oak-table, the gospel of St. Matthew lay opened at the following verses:

"But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

"Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

"And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, 'Give me here John Baptist's head on a charger.'"

The priestly stole, the Duchess's Christmas-gift to Ekkehard, lay beside it. Its golden fringe were hanging over the little bottle with the water from the Jordan, which the blind Thieto had given him.

Praxedis pushed back the other things, placing Gunzo's libel on the table. When she had arranged everything, she felt sorry. Just about to go, she turned back once more, opened the window, and gathering a branch of the luxuriant ivy which was winding its garlands round the tower, she threw it over the parchment-leaves.

Ekkehard came home very late. He had been nursing the wounded Capan. He had found it far harder work to comfort his tall spouse. After the first wailing was over and her tears had been dried, her speech until sunset had been nothing but one great curse against the convent farmer; and when she raised her strong arms and spoke of scratching his eyes out, of pouring henbane into his ears, and breaking his teeth, whilst her long brown tresses threateningly fluttered in the air, it needed a great effort to quiet her.

Yet he had succeeded at last.

In the silence of night, Ekkehard read the leaves which the Greek maid had put on his table. His hand played with a wild rose, which he had culled in the fir-wood when riding home, whilst his eyes took in the spiteful attacks of the Italian scholar.

"How is it," thought he, inhaling the soft fragrance of the flower, "that so much that is written with ink, cannot deny its origin? All ink is made of the gallnut, and all gallnuts spring from the poisonous sting of the wasp."

With a serene countenance he finally laid aside the yellow parchment leaves. "A good work! an industrious good work!—well, the peewit is also an important personage amongst the feathered tribe, but the nightingale does not

heed its singing." He slept very well after he had read it.

On coming back from the castle chapel, the next morning, he met Praxedis in the courtyard.

"How are you, venerable baptizer of Hunnic idolators," said she lightly. "I am really very anxious about you. I dreamt that a big brown sea-crab had swum up the Rhine, and from the Rhine into the Bodensee, and from thence, he came up to our castle; and he had got a pair of sharp pincers, and with them he pinched you very badly. The sea-crab's name was Gunzo. Say, have you any more such good friends?"

Ekkehard smiled.

"Most likely, I do not please many a one, who does not please me either," said he. "He, who comes into contact with sooty kettles, easily gets blackened himself."

"You, however, seem to be wholly indifferent about it," said Praxedis. "You ought to be thinking already about the reply. Boil the crab till it gets dark red. Then he will not bite you again."

"The answer to this," replied Ekkehard, "has been given already by another: 'whosoever shall say to his brother, Rica, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.'"

"You are extremely mild and pious," said Praxedis, "but take care how you get on in the world with that. Whoever does not defend his skin, will be flayed, and even a miserable enemy should not be considered quite harmless. Seven wasps together will kill a horse, you know."

The Greek maid was right. Silent contempt of an unworthy antagonist, is easily interpreted into weakness. But Ekkehard acted according to his nature.

Praxedis, approaching him still closer, so that he started back, now added: "Shall I give you another piece of advice, most reverend master?" He silently nodded in the affirmative.

"Then let me tell you, that you have again become far too serious of late. To look at you, one would think that you were going to play at nine-pins with the moon and stars. We are now in the middle of summer, and your habit must be exceedingly warm. Get yourself some linen garment; and perhaps it would not harm you either to cool your head a little in yonder spring—but, above all, be merry and cheerful. The Duchess might otherwise become indifferent toward you."

Ekkehard wanted to take her hand. Sometimes he felt as if Praxedis were his good angel; but at that moment Master Spazzo, on horseback, entered the courtyard at a slow and lingering pace. His head was bent toward the pommel, and a leaden smile rested on his tired features. He was half asleep.

"Your face has undergone a great change since yesterday," called out Praxedis to him. "Why do the sparks not fly out any more from under Falada's hoofs?"

With a vacant stare he looked down at her. Everything was dancing before his eyes.

"Have you brought home a considerable smart-money, Sir Chamberlain?" asked Praxedis.

"Smart money? for whom?" stolidly said Master Spazzo.

"For poor Cappan! Why, I verily believe that you have eaten a handful of poppy-seed, not to know any more for what purpose you rode out."

"Poppy seed?" said Master Spazzo, in the same drowsy tone—"Poppy-seed? No. But wine of Meersburg—red wine of Meersburg—unmeasured quantities of red Meersburg—yes!"

Heavily he dismounted, and then retired into the privacy of his apartments. The report about the result of his mission was not given. Praxedis cast an astonished look at the departing chamberlain, as she did not wholly understand the reason of Master Spazzo's peculiar frame of mind.

"Have you never heard that, to a grown-up man, neither springs, woods, nor singing of birds are half so refreshing as old wine?" said Ekkehard, smilingly. "But even as the Jew ish prophet boy said to King Darius when his generals and officers were quarreling around his throne about which of them was the strongest: 'The wine is the strongest of all! for it conquers the men who drink it, and leads their minds astray.'"

Praxedis had approached the wall, and was looking downward.

"Do look, you radiant star of science," she now said to Ekkehard, "who may that dainty

ecclesiastical little man be who is coming up here?"

Ekkehard bent over the wall and looked down the steep rocky hill-side. Between the hazel-bushes, bordering the footpath that led up to the castle, walked a boy with wavy brown locks, wearing a monk's habit coming down to his ankles; sandals on his naked feet, a leathern knapsack on his back, and carrying a staff with an iron point in his hand. Ekkehard did not recognize him as yet.

After a few minutes he reached the castle gate. There he turned round, and shading his eyes with his hand, he gazed over the wide beautiful landscape stretching out before him. Then he entered the courtyard and approached Ekkehard with measured steps. It was Burkhard, the cloister pupil; the son of Ekkehard's sister, who had come over from Constance to pay a holiday visit to his youthful uncle.

He made a solemn face, and pronounced his greeting as if he had learned it by heart.

Ekkehard embraced the well-behaved boy, who in all the fifteen years of his life had never done a downright foolish thing. Burkhard was the bearer of sundry kind messages from St. Gall, as well as of an epistle of Master Ratpert, who, being busy just then with some translation, asked Ekkehard's advice in what style and measure he was wont to translate certain difficult passages in Virgil. "Hail, prosperity and progress in knowledge," was the letter's parting salutation.

Ekkehard at once began to question his nephew about all the brothers, but Praxedis soon interrupted him.

"Please to let the pious youngster rest himself first. A parched tongue is not adapted for speech. Come with me, my little man, thou shalt be a more welcome visitor than the wicked Rudimann from the Reichenau!"

"Father Rudimann?" exclaimed the boy. "Him I know also."

"How did you get to know him?" asked Ekkehard.

"He paid us a visit but a few days since, and brought a big letter to the Abbot, as well as a treatise, which they say contains a great deal about yourself, beloved uncle, and is not much in your praise."

"Hear, hear!" said Praxedis.

"And when he had taken leave, he only went as far as the church, where he prayed till night-fall. Now he must have known every nook and corner in the monastery, for when the sleeping-bell sounded, he slunk on tiptoe to the great dormitory, there to listen to what the brothers might say about you and the contents of the treatise. The night-lamp burnt but dimly, so that he could crouch down unseen in a dark corner. But at midnight, Father Notker Peppercorn came to make the round and to inspect whether every one had fastened his girdle tidily round his garment, and whether no knife or other dangerous weapon was perchance in the bedroom. He drew out the stranger from his hiding place; and the brothers woke up, and the big lantern was lighted, and then they all rushed on him, armed with sticks and scourges from the scourging-room, and there was a tremendous noise and uproar, although the Abbot and Dean tried to quiet them. Notker Peppercorn was also highly indignant: 'The devil goes about in disguise, trying whom he may devour,' cried he, 'but we have caught the devil, and will scourge him!'

"But Father Rudimann, in spite of all, was yet inclined to be saucy: 'I declare ye excellent youths,' said he, 'if I knew where the carpenter had left some outlet, I should creep away on my hands and feet; but now, when chance has delivered me into your hands, mind that you do not heap insults on the head of your guest!' Then they all got quite furious, and dragged him out into the scourging-room, where he had to go down on his knees to escape scot-free; and when finally the Abbot said: 'We will let the fox go home to his den,' he expressed his thanks in very polite terms."

"On my way, yesterday, I met a cart laden with two big wine-tuns, which the driver told me were a present from the cellarer of the Reichenau for the friendly reception he had met with at St. Gall."

"Of all this, Master Rudimann did not breathe a word when he called on us yesterday," said Praxedis. "For that recital thou verily deservest a piece of cake, my darling boy. Thou canst tell a story as well as any older person."

"Oh," said the cloister pupil half offended, "that's nothing! But I am going to write a

poem about it, entitled, 'The wolf's invasion of the sheep-fold, and subsequent punishment.' I have already got it half ready in my head. That will be fine!"

"Dost thou also make poems, my young nephew?" gayly said Ekkehard.

"That would be a nice cloister pupil indeed, who with fourteen years could make so poem!" was the boy's reply. "My hymn in praise of the Archangel Michael, with double-rhymed hexameters, I was permitted to read out to the Abbot, who was pleased to call my verses 'a glittering string of pearls.' And then my Sapphic ode, in honor of the pious Wiborad, is likewise very pretty. Shall I recite it to you?"

"For God's sake!" cried Praxedis. "Dost thou think that one merely drops down into our courtyard to begin at once reciting odes? Thou hadst better eat thy cake first."

She ran off to the kitchen, leaving Ekkehard's learned nephew under the linden-tree to talk with his uncle. He profited by the opportunity to speak a good deal about the *trivium* and *quadrivium*, and as the Hohentwiel just then threw a delicately drawn shadow on the plain below, the cloister pupil indulged in a prolix discussion about the cause of all shadow, which he pronounced with great assurance to spring from a compact body standing in the way of light; proving afterward the vanity of all other definitions.

Like the waters from a fountain did the scientific flood stream forth from the youthful lips. In astronomy also he was quite at home, and his uncle had to listen patiently to the praise of Zoroaster and King Ptolemæus of Egypt. Further, he had to undergo a strict examination himself, about the shape and application of the astrolabe, and finally the curly-headed nephew began to demonstrate how absurd was the opinion of those who believed that on the other side of the globe lived the honorable race of the antipodes!

All these fine things he had learned only five days ago,—but at last his uncle did what the brave Emperor Otto did when the famous Bishop of Rheims, and Otrich the cathedral-schoolmaster of Magdeburg and hundreds of learned abbots and scholars, held their great contest about the basis and classification of the-oretical philosophy, before him,—namely he yawned. At that critical moment Praxedis reappeared with a delicious cherry-tart and a basket filled with various fruits, and these good things speedily gave a more natural turn to the thoughts of the fifteen-years-old philosopher. Like a well-educated boy he first said grace before eating, as was customary in the monastery, and then he turned his attentions to the annihilation of the cherry-tart, leaving the question of the antipodes to some future time.

Praxedis now turned to Ekkehard. "The Duchess bids me tell you," she said with mock earnestness, "that she feels inclined to return to the study of Virgil. She is anxious to learn the final fate of Queen Dido,—and so we are to begin again this very evening. Remember that you are to wear a more cheerful expression than the present one," added she in a lower key, "as it is a delicate attention, in order to show you that in spite of a certain treatise, her confidence in your learning has not been destroyed."

This was a fact; but Ekkehard received the news with a start of terror. To be again together with the two women as he used to be,—the mere thought was painful. He had not yet learnt to forget a certain Good Friday morning.

He now slapped his nephew on the shoulder, so as to make him start, and said: "Thou hast not come here to spend thy holidays merely with fishing and bird catching, Burkhard. This afternoon we will read Virgil with the gracious Duchess, and thou shalt be present also."

He thought to place the boy like a shield between the Duchess and his thoughts.

"Very well," replied Burkhard, with cherry-dyed lips. "I prefer Virgil a great deal to hunting and riding, and I shall request the Lady Duchess to teach me some Greek. After that visit when they took you away with them, the cloister pupils often said that she knew more Greek than all the venerable fathers of the monastery put together. They say that she learnt it by sorcery. And although I am the first in Greek—"

"Then you will certainly be Abbot in five years, and in twenty, Holy Father at Rome," said Praxedis mockingly. "Meanwhile you

would do well to wash your blue lips in yonder spring."

At the fourth hour of the evening, Ekkehard was waiting in the pillared hall below, ready to resume his reading of the *Æneid*. More than six months had gone by, during which Virgil had been laid aside. Ekkehard felt oppressed. He opened one of the windows through which the pleasant cool air of evening came streaming in.

The cloister pupil was turning over the leaves of the Latin manuscript.

"When the Duchesa speaks to thee, mind to be very polite," said Ekkehard. But he replied with a complacent air: "With such a grand lady, I shall only speak in verse. She shall see that a pupil from the inner school stands before her."

Here the Duchess entered, followed by Praxedis. She greeted Ekkehard with a slight bend of the head. Without appearing to notice the boy, she sat down in her richly carved arm-chair. Burkhard had made her a graceful bow from the lower end of the table, where he stood.

Ekkehard opened the book, when the Duchess said indifferently: "Why is that boy here?"

"He is but a humble auditor," said Ekkehard, "who, inspired by the wish to learn the Greek language, ventures to approach such a noble teacher. He would be very happy if from your lips he could learn—"

But before Ekkehard had ended his speech, Burkhard had approached the Duchess. With eyes cast down, and a mixture of shyness and confidence, he said with a clear intonation of the rhythm:

"Esse velim Græcus, cum vix sim, dom'na*, Latinus."

It was a faultless hexameter.

Dame Hadwig listened with astonishment; for a curly-headed boy who could make an hexameter was an unheard-of thing in the Allemannic lands then. And moreover he had improvised it in her honor. Therefore she was really pleased with the youthful verse-maker.

"Let me look at thee a little nearer," said she drawing him toward her. She was charmed with him, for he had a lovely boyish face, with a red and white complexion, so soft and transparent that the blue veins could be seen through it.

In luxuriant masses the brown curls fell down over his temples, whilst a bold, aquiline nose rose over the learned youthful lips, as if it were mocking their utterance. Then, Dame Hadwig put her arms round the boy, and kissing him on both lips and cheeks, fondled him like a child almost, and finally pushing a cushioned footstool close to her side, bade him sit down on it.

"To begin with, thou shalt gather something else than Greek wisdom from my lips," said she jestingly, giving him another kiss. "But now be a good boy, and quickly say some more well set verses."

She pushed back his curls from his blushing face; but the cloister pupil's metrical powers were not discomposed even by the kiss of a Duchesa. Ekkehard had stepped up to the window, where he looked out toward the Alps, whilst Burkhard without hesitation, recited the following lines:

"Non possum prorsus dignos componere versus,
Nam nimis expavi duce me litante suavi."

He had again produced two faultless hexameters.

The Duchess laughed out gayly. "Well, I verily believe that thou didst greet the light of this world with a Latin verse, at thy birth? That flows from thy lips as if Virgil had arisen from his grave. But why art thou frightened when I kiss thee?"

"Because you are so grand, and proud, and beautiful," said the boy.

"Never mind," replied the Duchess. "He who, with the fresh kiss yet burning on his lips, can improvise such perfect verses, cannot be very much terrified."

Making him stand up before her, she asked him: "And why art thou so very eager to learn Greek?"

"Because they say that if a man knows Greek, he can become so clever as to hear the grass grow," was the ready answer. "Ever since my fellow-pupil Nokter with the large lip, has vaunted himself that he were going to learn all Aristotle by heart, and then translate

it into German, I have been uneasy in my mind."

Dame Hadwig again laughed merrily. "Let us begin, then? Dost thou know the antiphon, 'Ye seas and rivers praise the Lord?'"

"Yes," said Burkhard.

"Then repeat after me, 'θάλασσι καὶ ποταμί, εὐλογοῦτε τὸν κύριον.'"

The boy repeated it.

"Now sing it!" He did so.

Ekkehard looked over reproachfully at them. The Duchess interpreted the look aright.

"So, now thou hast learnt six words already," she said to Burkhard, "and as soon as thou wilt ask for it in hexameters, thou shalt be taught some more. For the present, sit down there at my feet, and listen attentively. We will read Virgil now."

Then Ekkehard began the fourth canto of the *Æneid*, and read of the sorrows of Dido, who is ever beset by thoughts of the noble Trojan guest, whose words and looks are all deeply engraven on her inmost heart. And she speaks out her grief thus to her sister:

"If it were not decreed, in the depth of my soul, that I never
Wedlock again would contract, with any man that is living,
If I, the torches of Hymee, and bridal room not detested,
Might be so weak perhaps, to give way to this present temptation,
Anna, to thee confess, that since my beloved Sicheæus,
Fell with the wound in his heart, at the feet of the blood-dripping Lares,
He alone, has succeeded in touching my heart, and disturbing
All the peace of my soul, that is changed into strife and contention."

But Dame Hadwig had not much sympathy with the sorrows of the Carthaginian widowed queen. She leaned back in her arm-chair and looked up at the ceiling. She found no longer any similarity between herself and the desolate woman in the book.

"Stop a moment," cried she. "How very clear it is that this is written by a man. He wants to humiliate women! It is all false! Who on earth would fall so madly in love with an utter stranger?"

"That Virgil has to answer for," said Ekkehard. History no doubt bequeathed the facts to him."

"Then the present generation of women is somewhat stronger-minded," said the Duchesa, making a sign to him to continue. She was almost offended with Virgil's description. Perhaps because she was reminded of certain Didonian feelings which she had experienced herself one day. Things had not always been as they now were.

And he read on, how Anna advisea her sister not to struggle any longer against her growing passion; and how,—though peace and rest might be implored for by sacrifices on the altars of the mighty Gods,—the relentless, devouring flame was yet burning on inwardly, and the wound did not heal.

And again the poor deluded Queen desires to hear of the battles round Ilium, and:

"When she was left then alone, and the rays of the queen of the heavens,
Fell on her desolate couch, and the stars were silently shining,
Seeming to mock at her grief, which, excluding the pain-stilling slumber,
Kept her awake at night, when she thought of him, her beloved,
Many a time, to delude her heart, and stifle its longings
She would fondle the boy, the image of him, of *Æneæ*."

A low giggle here interrupted the reading. The cloister-pupil, sitting at the Duchess's feet, so as almost to touch her wavy robes, had listened attentively until now, when he struggled in vain to stifle a rising laugh, which at last broke out, though he had covered up his face with his hands to keep it back.

"What is the matter now, young verse-maker?" asked the Duchess.

"I could not help thinking," said the boy with some embarrassment, "that if my gracious mistress were the Queen Dido, I should have been acting the part of Ascanius, when you deigned to kiss and caress me."

The Duchess looked down sharply at the boy. "Art thou inclined to be naughty? Well 'tis no wonder," added she, pointing at his curls, "for the precocious youth has already got gray hairs on his head."

"That is from the night when they slew Romeias," the cloister-pupil wanted to say, but could not, as the Duchess sharply continued: "That comes from thy forwardness,

which makes thee say foolish things, when thou hadst better be silent. Get up, little man!"

Burkhard rose from the stool and stood blushing before her.

"So," said she, "now go to Praxedis and tell her that as a punishment, all thy gray hairs are to be cut off, and beg her to do it for you. That will be a good cure for untimely laughter."

The boy's eyes filled with big tears, but he dared not disobey. So he went up to Praxedis, who had some sympathy for him, since she had heard that he had been Romeias' companion during his last hours.

"I shall not hurt thee, my little saint," she whispered drawing him toward her. He knelt down before her, bending his young head over her lap, whilst she took a big pair of scissors out of her straw-braided work-basket, and executed the punishment.

At first the cloister-pupil's sobs sounded dolefully—for he who allowed a strange hand to touch his locks was considered to be deeply dishonored—but Praxedis's soft little hand caressingly patted his cheeks, after having ruffled his curls, so that, in spite of all punishment, he felt almost happy, and his mouth smilingly caught up the last falling tear.

Ekkehard looked down silently for awhile. Frivolous, though graceful jesting, makes a sad heart but sadder. He was hurt that the Duchesa had thus interrupted his reading. Looking up into her eyes, he found no comfort there. "She trifles with thee, as well as she trifles with the boy," thought he, closing the book and rising from his seat.

"You are right," said he to Dame Hadwig, "'tis all wrong. Dido ought to laugh, and *Æneæ* to go and kill himself with his sword. Then, it would be quite natural."

She gazed at him with an unsteady look.

"What is the matter with you?" asked she.

"I cannot read any more," replied he.

The Duchess had risen also.

"If you do not care to read any longer," she said with an apparently indifferent expression, "there are still other ways and means to pass one's time. What say you, if I were to ask you to tell us some graceful tale,—you might choose whatever you liked. There are still many grand and beautiful things, besides your Virgil. Or you might invent something yourself. I see that you are oppressed by some care. You neither like to read, nor to go out into the country. Everything hurts your eyes, as you say. I think that your mind lacks some great task which we will now give you."

"What could I invent?" replied Ekkehard.

"Is it not enough happiness to be the echo of a master, like Virgil?" He looked with a veiled eye at the Duchesa. "I should only be able to chant elegies,—very sad ones too."

"Nothing else?" said Dame Hadwig reproachfully. "Have our ancestors not gone out to war, and let their bugles sound the alarm through the world, and have they not fought battles as grand as those of *Æneæ*? Do you believe that the great Emperor Charles would have had all the old national songs collected and sung, if they had been nothing but chaff? Must you then, take everything out of your Latin books?"

"I know nothing," repeated Ekkehard.

"But you *must* know something," persisted the Duchess. "If we, who live here in this castle, were to sit together of an evening and talk of old tales and legends, I shouldn't wonder, if we should produce something more than the whole of the *Æneid* contains? 'Tis true that the pious son of the Emperor Charles did not care any more for the old heroic songs, and preferred listening to whining psalms, until he died, diseased in body and mind; but we still cling to those old tales. Do tell us such a story, Master Ekkehard, and we will gladly spare you your Virgil with his love-sick Queen."

But Ekkehard's thoughts were quite differently occupied. He shook his head like one who is dreaming.

"I see that you want some stimulant," said the Duchess. "Above all, a good example will inspire you. Praxedis, prepare thyself, and likewise tell our chamberlain, that we are going to entertain ourselves to-morrow with the telling of old legends. Let everybody be well prepared."

She took up Virgil and threw it under the table, as a sign that a new era was to begin forthwith.

Her idea was certainly good, and well conceived. Only the cloister-pupil who had rested his head on Praxedis's lap, whilst the Duchesa spoke, had not quite taken in her meaning.

* Abbreviation of *domina*.

"When may I learn some more Greek, gracious mistress?" asked he. "Θάλασσι καὶ πόρασι."
 "When the gray hairs are grown again," said she, gayly, giving him another kiss.
 Ekkehard left the hall with hasty steps.

CHAPTER XX.

THE OLD GERMAN LEGENDS.

On the top of the Hohentwiel and within the castle walls, a very pretty though small garden had been laid out on a steep projecting rock, encircled by a wall. It was a lovely place; well fitted for observation. The hill was so steep there, that by leaning over the parapet one could throw a stone down into the valley below, and he who delighted in an extensive view could there enjoy it to his heart's content; his eye taking in mountain and plain, lake and distant Alps; no obstacle barring the view.

In a corner of this little garden an old maple-tree spread out its branches undisturbed. Its winged seeds were already ripe and brown, fluttering down on the black garden earth below. A ladder had been placed against its grayish green trunk, at the foot of which Praxedis was standing, holding the corner of a long and heavy piece of tent-cloth; whilst Burkhard, the cloister-pupil, was sitting high up in the branches, trying to fasten the other ends with the help of a hammer and some nails.

"Attention," called out Praxedis. "I verily believe that thou art watching yonder stork, flying over to Radolfszell. Take care, thou paragon of all Latin scholars, and do not drive the nail into the air!"

Praxedis had lifted the cloth with her left hand, and when the cloister-pupil now let go the other end it fell down heavily, tearing out the badly fixed nails, and entirely burying the Greek maid under its massy folds.

"There, now,—thou awkward boy!" scolded Praxedis, as soon as she had disentangled herself from her coarse wrapper. "I suppose I must look out whether there are not any more gray hairs to be cut off!"

Scarcely had she pronounced the last word, when the cloister-pupil became visible on the ladder, and, jumping down from the middle, he now stood on the cloth before Praxedis.

"Sit down," said he, "I do not mind in the least being punished again. I have dreamt this very night that you cut off all my curls, and that I had returned to school with an entirely bald head,—and yet I was not sorry for it."

Praxedis lightly clapped his head. "Don't grow too impudent during the holidays, my little man, or thy back will prove a nice floor for the rod to dance upon when thou gettest back to thy cloister school."

But the cloister-pupil was not thinking of the cool auditories of his monastery. He remained standing motionless before Praxedis.

"Well," said she, "what is the matter? what dost thou want?"

"A kiss," replied the pupil of the liberal arts.
 "Heigho! nothing else?" laughed Praxedis.
 "What reasons has thy wisdom for such a demand?"

"The Lady Duchess has kissed me also," said Burkhard, "and you have often asked me to tell you all about that day when I fled with my brave old friend Romeias before the Huna, and how he fought like a hero, as he was. All this I shall not tell you, unless you will give me a kiss."

"Listen," said the Greek maid, with a mock, serious face, "I have something very wonderful to tell you."

"What?" asked the boy eagerly.

"That thou art the naughtiest little rogue that has ever set his foot on the threshold of a cloister-school," continued she, and suddenly throwing her white arms around him, she gave him a hearty kiss on the nose.

"Well done, I declare!" called out a deep bass voice from the garden door at the very moment when she playfully pushed the boy away from her. It was Master Spazzo.

"Ah, is it you?" said Praxedis, perfectly unabashed. "You are just in time, Sir Chamberlain, to assist us in fixing this canvas. I shall never get it done with that silly boy!"

"So it appears," said Master Spazzo, with a cutting look at the cloister-pupil, who, standing rather in awe of the chamberlain's fierce-looking mustache, slipped away between some rose-bushes. Astronomy and the metrics, Aristotle in the original language, and red girl's lips, formed a strange medley in the youthful mind.

"Are there no fitter objects for kisses in this castle, gentle maiden?" asked Master Spazzo.
 "If one should ever feel so inclined," was Praxedis' answer, "the fitter objects ride away and stray about in night and darkness; and when they return at daytime, they look as if they had been chasing the will-o'-the-wispa all night."

Herewith, Master Spazzo was answered. He had made a vow not to betray a single word of his nightly adventures; cuckoo, and *vince luna* included.

"In what way can I help you?" said he humbly.

"In making a bower," said Praxedis. "In the cool hours of the evening, the Duchess will hold court here, and then stories are to be told; old stories, Sir Chamberlain, the more wonderful the better! Our mistress has grown tired of Latin, and wishes for something else. Something original, that has not yet been written down—you are also expected to contribute your mite!"

"The Lord protect my soul!" exclaimed Master Spazzo. "If under the reign of a woman everything was not wondrously strange, I really should begin to wonder at this. Are there no wandering minstrels and lute-players left, who, for a helmet full of wine, and a leg of deer, will sing themselves hoarse with such tales? We are rising in estimation! Vagabonds, jugglers, bards and the like strutting idlers, are to be flogged, and if they complain, they are to receive a man's shadow on a wall as an indemnification.* I thank you for that honor!"

"You will do what you are commanded, like a faithful vassal, who, moreover, has still to render a report about a certain business, transacted over the monastic wine jug," said Praxedis. "It will be merrier, at any rate, than to spell out Latin! Have you no desire to rival the learned Master Ekkehard?"

This hint made some impression on the chamberlain's mind. "Give me the corners of the cloth," said he, "so that I may fix them." He then mounted the ladder, and fastened the ends to the branches. Opposite, were some tall poles entwined with the blue-blossomed bean-plant. To these, Praxedis tied the other two corners, and very soon the grayish-white canvas formed a nice roof, contrasting pleasantly with the green foliage.

"It would be a very cozy place for drinking the vesper wine," said Master Spazzo half sadly at the idea of that which was to come.

Praxedis, meanwhile, arranged the table and seats. The Duchess's stuffed arm chair with the finely carved back, touched the stem of the maple-tree, whilst some low stools were placed round for the others. Fetching down her lute, Praxedis put it on the table beside a huge nosegay which she had ordered Burkhard to make. Finally, she tied a strong thread of red silk first to the trunk, then round the bean-plantation, and from there to the wall, so as to leave free only a narrow entrance.

"There," said she gayly, "now our fairy-hall is hedged in, like King Laurins' rose-garden. The walls were not very difficult to make."

The Duchess, taking much pleasure in her idea, adorned herself with particular care on that day. It was still somewhat early to be called evening, when she went down to the bower. She was really a dazzling apparition, as she proudly sailed along, in her flowing robes. The sleeves and seams were richly embroidered with gold, and a steel-gray tunic, held by jeweled clasps, fell down to the ground like a mantle. On her head she wore a soft transparent tissue, a sort of veil; fastened to a golden head-band. Pulling out a rose from Burkhard's nosegay, she stuck it in, between the head-band and the veil.

The cloister-pupil, who was fast forgetting his classics and liberal arts, had begged leave to carry the Duchess's train, and it was in her honor that he had donned a pair of very queer-looking pointed shoes, adorned on both sides with ears. He certainly felt a good deal elated at the happiness of being allowed to act as page to such a mistress.

Praxedis and Master Spazzo came in after her. The Duchess, casting her eyes hastily about, now said: "Haa Master Ekkehard, for whose especial benefit we have appointed this evening, become invisible!"

"My uncle must be ill," said Burkhard. "He paced up and down in his room with

hasty steps yesterday evening, and when I wanted to show him the different constellations, such as the bear, and Orion and the faintly glittering Pleiads, he gave me no answer whatever. At last, he threw himself on his couch with all his clothes on, and talked a good deal in his sleep.

"What did he say?" asked the Duchess.

"He said, 'Oh my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stones; let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice. For sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is lovely.' And another time he said: 'Why do you kiss the boy before my eyes? what do I hope still, and why do I tarry yet in the Lybian lands?'"

"That is a nice state of things, I declare," whispered Master Spazzo into the Greek maid's ear. "Does that rest on your conscience?"

"The Duchess, however, said to Burkhard: "I suppose that thou hast been dreaming thyself. Run up to thy uncle and make him come down, as we are waiting for him."

She sat down gracefully on her throne-like seat. The cloister-pupil soon came back with Ekkehard, who was looking very pale, whilst his eyes had something wild and sad about them. He silently bowed his head, and then sat down at the opposite end of the table; Burkhard wanted to place his stool again at the Duchess's feet, as he had done the day before when they had read Virgil;—but Ekkehard rose and pulled him over by the hand. "Come hither!" said he. The Duchess let him do as he wished.

Caasting first a look around her, she began thus: "We pretended yesterday, that in our German legends and tales, there was as much and as good matter for entertainment, as in the Roman epic of *Aeneas*; and I doubt not that each person amongst us knows something of heroic battles and besieged fortresses; of the separation of faithful lovers, and the dissensions of mighty kings. The human heart is differently disposed, so that that which does not interest the one, may please the other. Therefore we have made the arrangement, that each of our faithful subjects, as the lot will decide, shall relate some graceful tale; and it will be our task then to allot a prize for the best story. If one of you men should be the conqueror, he shall have the ancient drinking-horn which, from the time of King Dagobert, has been hanging in the great hall, and if my faithful Praxedis should be the victorious one, some pretty triquet is to be her reward. The pulling of straws shall decide who is to begin."

Praxedis had prepared four bits of straw of different lengths, which she handed to the Duchess.

"Shall I add another for the young versemaker?" asked she.

But Burkhard said in a doleful voice: "I beseech you to spare me; for, if my teacher at St. Gall were to hear that I had again diverted myself with idle tales, I should certainly be punished as I was when we acted the story of the old Hildebrand and his son Hadubrand, in Romeias' room. The gate-keeper always delighted in it, and it was he who made our wooden horses and shields, with his own hands. I was the son Hadubrand, and my fellow-pupil Notker acted old Hildebrand; his underlip being as big as that of an old man. Ho, didn't we fly at each other, so that a cloud of dust flew out of Romeias's windows! Notker had already unfastened his arm-ring, holding it out to me, as the old song describes it, and I was just saying: 'Hoho thou old blade! Thou art really too cunning by half. Dost thou think to beguile me with thy words, and then to throw thy spear at me? Has thy head become hoary with treachery and lies? Seafaring men in the west, on the Wendel lake told me: he was killed in the wars, was Hildebrand the son of Heribrand!' when Master Ratolt, our teacher of rhetoric, came up stairs on tip-toe, and belabored us so fiercely with his large rod, that sword and shield fell from our hands."

"Romeias, who was called a stupid old block-head, for decoying us from useful studies, and my friend Notker and myself were locked up for three days, fed on bread and water, and had to make a hundred and fifty Latin hexameters in honor of St. Othmar, as a punishment."

The Duchess smiled. "God forbid that we should tempt thee again to sin," said she.

She put the four straws into her right hand, and smilingly held them out, for them to draw. Ekkehard's eyes were fixed immovably on the rose under her head-band, as he stepped up to

* An old Suabian law.

her. She had to speak to him twice, before he pulled out a straw.

"Death and damnation!" Master Spazzo almost ejaculated, for he had got hold of the shortest straw. But he well knew that no excuse would be available, and dolefully looked down into the valley, as if he expected help to come from thence. Praxedis had turned her lute and was playing a prelude, that blended sweetly with the rustling of the branches in the old maple-tree.

"Our chamberlain has to fear no punishment if he will relate us some pretty story," said the Duchess. "Please to begin."

Then Master Spazzo bent his head forward, put his sword with its broad hilt before him, so that he could lean on it, gave a preliminary stroke to his beard, and thus began:

"Although I never took much delight in old stories, preferring to hear the clashing of two good swords, or the tapping of a tun of good wine, I yet once chanced to come across a fine legend. In my younger days I had to make a journey to Italy, and my road then took me through the Tyrol and over the Brenner Mountain; and it was a rough and stony path, leading me over many a rock, and through many a wild glen, so that my horse lost one of its shoes. When the evening set in I had reached a little village called Gothenass, or Gloggensachsen, which from the times of Sir Deitrich of Bern, has lain there hidden amongst the larch-woods. At the outskirts of this village, and built against the mountain, there was a house much resembling a stronghold, before which there lay heaps of iron dross, whilst inside there was a big fire, and some one who was lustily pounding the anvil.

"So I called to the blacksmith to come forth and shoe my horse, and when nobody came, I gave a knock at the door with the butt-end of my lance, so that it flew open as wide as it could, whilst I gave vent to some tremendous curse, of death and murder, and all possible evils. Suddenly a man stood before me, with shaggy hair and a leathern apron, and scarcely had I set eyes on him, when my lance was already beaten down, so that it broke to pieces as if it had been mere glass, whilst an iron bar was swung threateningly over my head. On the man's naked arms there were to be seen sinews, which looked as if he could strike an anvil ten fathoms deep into the ground. Then I bethought myself, that under such circumstances a polite speech might not come amiss, and therefore I said: I merely wanted to beseech you to shoe my horse. Then the blacksmith drove the iron bar into the ground and said: 'That sounds somewhat different, and will help you. Rudeness, however, will attain nothing at Weland's forge. That's what you may tell the people where you come from.'

"After this speech he shod my horse, and I saw that he was a skillful and honorable blacksmith, and so we became very good friends, and I let my horse be put into his stables, and remained his guest for the night. And we caroused together till late, and the wine was called Terlaner, and he poured it out of a leathern bottle.

"Whilst we were thus drinking I questioned my sooty host about the name of his forge, and how it had got that name; upon which he struck up a loud laugh, and then told me the story of 'Smith Weland.' And if it was not exactly what you might call very refined, it was for all that a very pretty tale."

Master Spazzo stopped awhile, throwing a look at the table, like one who looks about for a draught of wine to moisten his dry lips with. But wine there was none, and the look was not understood. So he continued.

"Whence Smith Weland had come, said the man of Gothenass to me, had never been quite ascertained. It was said that in the northern seas, in the land of Schonen, the giant Vade was his father, and that his grandmother was a mermaid, who, when he was born, came up from the depth of the sea, and sat a whole night on a rock and harped: 'Young Weland must become a blacksmith.' So, in the course of time, Vade brought the boy to Mimer, the famous armorer, who lived in a dark fir-wood, twenty miles behind Toledo, and who instructed him in all the branches of his art.

"As soon, however, as he had made his first sword, Mimer advised him to go away and to acquire the last finishing touch of his craft amongst the dwarfs. So Weland went to the dwarfs and became much renowned.

"One day, however, the giants invaded dwarf-land, so that Weland had to fly, and he could

take nothing away with him, except his broadsword Mimung. This he buckled across his back; and chance then brought him to the Tyrol. Between the Eisach, Etsch and Inn, there reigned in those days King Elberich, who kindly received Weland and gave him the forge in the wood on the Brenner Mountain, and all the iron and ore which was hidden in the mountain's veins was put at his disposal. And Weland's heart became light and happy, in the Tyrolese Alps. The mountain-torrents rushed past him, setting his wheels a going; the winds fanned his fire into brighter flames, and the stars said to each other: 'We must do our best, or the sparks which Weland produces will outshine us.' Thus Weland's work prospered. Shield and swords, knives and drinking-cups, as well as all the ornaments which adorn a king's palace, were made by his dexterous hands, and there was no smith, as far as the sun shone on Alpine snow, who could compare with him. King Elberich, however, had many bitter enemies, who one day formed an alliance, with the one-eyed Aemilius for their leader, and invaded the land. And Elberich's heart was filled with dismay, and he said: 'He who will bring me Aemilius's head, shall marry my only daughter.' Then Weland extinguished the fire in his forge, buckled on his broadsword Mimung, and went out to fight King Elberich's enemies. And his good sword cut off Aemilius's head, so that the whole body of enemies turned round and fled homeward, as fast as ever they could. Weland, however, presented the head to the King. But he said angrily: 'What I have said about my daughter the winds have scattered; a smith can never become my son-in-law, for he would blacken my hands when I extended them in friendly greeting. But thou shalt have three golden coins as a reward. With these a man can tilt, and joust, dance and be merry, and buy himself a wench in the market.' Weland, however, threw the three golden coins at his feet, so that they rolled under the throne, and said: 'May God bless you; you will never see me more!' and with this he turned round, to leave the land. But the king, not wanting to lose the smith, had him thrown to the ground, and his tendons cut, so that he became lame, and had to give up all thoughts of flight.

"Then Weland dragged himself in sadness home to his forge, and relighted his fire; but he whistled and sang no more when he wielded the heavy hammer, and his mind was embittered. One day the King's son, a red-cheeked boy, who had run out alone into the wood, came in and said: 'Weland, I want to look at thy work.' Then the smith artfully replied: 'Place thyself close to the anvil; there thou wilt see everything best,'—and he took the red-hot iron bar out of the flames, and stabbed the king's son right into the heart with it. The bones he afterward bleached, and covered with ore and silver, so that they became pillars for candlesticks, and the skull he encircled with gold, making it into a drinking-cup.' All this Weland sent to Elberich, and when the messengers came to inquire for the boy, he said: 'I have not seen him; he must have run out into the woods.'

"Some time afterward the King's daughter was walking in her garden. She was so beautiful that the lilies bowed their heads before her. On her forefinger she wore a ring of gold, shaped like a serpent, in the head of which there glistered a carbuncle, which Elberich had set there himself; and he held this ring far dearer than a kingdom, and had given it to his daughter only because he loved her above everything. As she was culling a rose, the ring fell from the maiden's finger, and rolling over the stones it got broken, and the carbuncle fell out of its golden setting, so that the maid lamented bitterly, wringing her hands, and would not go home for fear of her father's anger.

"Then, one of her waiting-women said to her: 'You must go secretly to Smith Weland, and he will mend it for you.' So the King's daughter entered Weland's forge, and told him her grief. He took the ring out of her hand, and set about repairing it, so that the carbuncle soon shone out again from the serpent's head. But all this while Weland's forehead had been wearing a dark frown, and when the maiden kindly smiled at him, and turned to go, he said: 'Oho, you shall not go away yet!' And he locked the strong door, and seizing the King's daughter with strong arms, he carried her into his chamber, where moss and fern leaves lay heaped up. And when she went away she wept aloud, and tore her soft silken hair—"

Here, Master Spazzo was interrupted by a slight noise. Praxedis, with a deep blush overspreading her features, had cast an inquiring look at the Duchess, to see whether she should not jump up, to close Master Spazzo's mouth, but as nothing of the kind was to be read in her calm, set features, she impatiently drummed with her fingers on the back of her lute.

"—and a deed of violence had been done,"

Master Spazzo continued, quite unabashed.

"Then, Weland began singing and shouting, in such a manner as had never been heard in the forge before, ever since his tendons had been cut. Leaving his shields and swords unfinished, he now worked day and night, and forged for himself a pair of large metal wings, and he had hardly finished them, when King Elberich came down the Brenner Mountain, with a strong body of armed men. Then Weland quickly fastened the wings to his shoulders, and hung his sword Mimung, over his back, and thus equipped he mounted the roof of his house, so that the men exclaimed: 'Behold, Smith Weland has become a bird!' With a powerful voice he then called out: 'May God bless you, King Elberich! You will not forget the smith so easily, I trow! Your son I have slain, and your daughter is with child by me. Farewell, and give her my greetings!' After this, he spread out his huge wings, making a noise like a hurricane, and flew through the air. The King seized his bow, and all the knights hastily followed his example. Like an army of flying dragons, the arrows whizzed round his head; but not one of them hit him, and he flew home to his father's castle in Schonen, and never was seen again. And Elberich never gave Weland's message to his daughter, who in that same year gave birth to a son, who was called Wittich, and became a strong hero like his father.

"That is the story of Smith Weland!"

Master Spazzo leaned back, leaving a deep sigh of relief. "They will not trouble me a second time for a story, I warrant," thought he.

The impression which the story had made on the hearers was very different. The Duchess expressed herself well satisfied with it. She had some sympathy with the smith's revenge, whilst Praxedis angrily said that it was truly a sooty smith's story, and that the chamberlain ought to be ashamed to show himself before women! Ekkehard said: "I don't know, but it seems to me as if I had once heard something like it, but then, the king's name was Nidung, and the forge was at the foot of the Caucasus."

Then the chamberlain called out angrily; "If you prefer the Caucasus to Gloggensachsen, very well, then you may lay the scene there, but I well recollect how my Tyrolese friend showed me the very spot itself. Over the chamber door, there was a broken rose of metal, and an iron eagle's wing, and below it the words, 'Here the smith flew away,' were engraved. Now and then, people come there to pray, as they believe Weland to have been a great saint."

"Let us see who will be the first to try and out rival Master Spazzo," said the Duchess, once more mixing the straws. They drew accordingly, and the shortest, this time, remained with Praxedis. She neither appeared embarrassed, nor did she appeal to the indulgence of her listeners. Passing her white little hand over her dark tresses she began thus:

"It is true, that my nurses never sang me any lullabies of valiant knights, and thank God, I have never been in a lonely forge in a wood; but even in Constantinople you may hear such tales recited. At the time when I was instructed at the Emperor's court in all the arts well becoming a serving maiden, there was also an old woman who kept the keys, by name Glycerium, who often said to us: 'Listen ye maidens all, if you should ever serve a princess whose heart is consumed by a secret passion, and who cannot see him whom she loves, then you must be sly and thoughtful like the waiting-woman Herlindis, when King Rother wooed the daughter of the Emperor Constantine.' And when we were sitting together on an evening in the women's apartment then they whispered and chattered, until old Glycerium related the story of *King Rother*.

"In the olden times there was an emperor, also called Constantine, living in his castle on the Bosphorus, who had a wondrously beautiful daughter; and people said of her that she was radiant like the evening star, and outshone all other maids like a golden thread amongst silken ones. One fine day there arrived a great ship, out of which lauded twelve counts and twelve

knights, and they all rode into Constantine's courtyard; one of them, whose name was Lupolt, riding at their head. And all the people of the city marveled at them, for their garments and mantles were heavy with gold and precious stones, and the horses' saddles rang with little golden bells. These were the messengers of King Rother of Vikingland, and Lupolt jumped down from his saddle, and spoke thus to the Emperor:

"We are sent out by our King, called Rother, who is the handsomest man ever born of woman. He is served by the best of heroes, and his court is the constant scene of balls and tournaments and all that heart can desire. But as yet he is unmarried, and his heart feels lonely.

"You should give him your daughter!"

"Now, Constantine was a hot-tempered man, and throwing the imperial globe fiercely to the ground, he cried: 'Nobody has as yet wooed my daughter, who has not lost his head in the endeavor. How do you dare to insult me in that way? You are all my prisoners.'

"And he had them thrown into a dungeon, into which neither sun nor moon could shine; and they had nothing but bread and water to live on; and there they shed many bitter tears of sorrow.

"When the tidings reached King Rother, his heart was filled with sadness, and he sat on a rock all alone, and would speak to nobody. Then he formed the resolution of crossing the seas, like a true knight, to succor his faithful messengers; and as he had been warned against the Greeks, and had been told that if a man wanted to attain anything there he must needs paint and gild truth, he made his knights take an oath that they would all pretend that his name was not Rother but Dietrich, and that he had been banished by King Rother, and had come to crave the Greek Emperor's assistance. Thus, they set out in a ship, and Rother took his harp on board with him, for before his twelve ambassadors had weighed anchor he came to the shore with his harp and played three airs, which they were to remember, saying: 'If ever you should be in distress, and hear these airs, you will know that Rother is near and will help you.'

"It was on Easter-day, and the Emperor Constantine had gone on horseback to Hippodrom, when Rother made his entrance. And all the citizens of Constantinople ran out of their houses, for such a sight they had never seen before. Rother had brought his giants along with him. The first was called Asprian, and carried an iron bar which measured six yards in length; the second was called Widolt, and was so fierce that they had loaded him with chains, and the third was called Eveningred.

"Besides these, a large number of valiant knights followed him, and twelve carriages loaded with jewels came in the rear, and the whole was such a splendid spectacle that the Empress said: 'Alas, how stupid we have been in refusing our daughter to King Rother! What a man he must be to send such an army of heroes over the seas!'

"King Rother himself wore a gold breast-plate, and a purple coat, and two rows of beautiful rings on his wrists. And he bent his knee before the Greek Emperor and said: 'I, the Prince Dietrich, have been outlawed by a king whose name is Rother, so that all I have ever done in his service now tells against me. I have come to offer my services to you.'

"Then Constantine invited all the heroes to his Court at Hippodrom, and treating them with all honor, he made them sit down at his own table. Now, in the hall, there was a tame lion, which used to take away the serving-men's food. It also came to Asprian's plate, to lick it up, upon which the giant seized it by the mane and threw it against the wall, and it was killed on the spot. Then the chamberlains said to each other: 'He who has no desire to be thrown against the wall, had best leave that man's plate alone.'

"King Rother then began to distribute a great many handsome presents among the Greeks. Every one who visited him in his temporary abode received either a mantle or some piece of arms. Amongst others there also came an outlawed count, to whom he gave a thousand silver crowns, and took him into his service, so that his train was increased by many hundred knights.

"Thus the so-called Dietrich's praise was in the mouth of everybody, and amongst the women there began a whispering and talking,

so that there was not a chamber whose walls did not ring with Sir Dietrich's name.

"Then the golden-haired daughter of the Emperor said to Herlindus, her waiting-woman: 'Alas, what shall I do, that I also may obtain a look at the man whom they all renown so?' And Herlindis replied: 'The best thing would be, if you begged your father to give a great banquet, and to invite the stranger guests; then you could easily see him.'

"The Emperor's daughter followed this advice, and Constantine did not say, her nay, and he invited [all his dukes and counts as well as the foreign heroes. All who were invited came; and around him whom they called Dietrich there was a great crowd, and just when the Princess with her court-ladies came in, with the golden crown on her head, and her gold-embroidered purple mantle, there was a great noise, which was occasioned by a chamberlain's having ordered Asprian the giant to move on his bench, to make room for other people. For all reply, Asprian gave the chamberlain a box on the ear which split his head, and there ensued a general jostling, so that Dietrich had to restore order himself.

"For this reason the Emperor's daughter could not obtain the desired glimpse of the hero, though she wanted it ever so much.

"When she had returned home, she said to Herlindis: 'Woe is me! I shall neither have rest now by night nor by day, until my eyes have beheld that valiant man. He who would bring me the hero to my chamber might win a handsome reward.' And Herlindis replied laughingly: 'That message I will faithfully undertake. I will go to the house where he lives.'

"Then the sly maiden put on her most becoming garments, and went out to Sir Dietrich, who received her with due courtesy. And she sat down beside him, and whispered into his ear: 'My mistress, the Emperor's daughter, sends you many gracious greetings. She has taken a great fancy to you, and wishes you to pay her a visit.'

"But Dietrich replied: 'Woman, thou art not doing right. I have entered many a bower in days gone by; why dost thou mock the homeless wanderer? At the Emperor's Court there are noble dukes and princes enough, and thy mistress never dreamt of what thou art now saying!'

"And when Herlindis insisted on the truth of her words, Sir Dietrich said: 'There are so many spies about here, that he who wishes to keep his reputation unstained must be very careful. Constantine would banish me if he found out that I had been to see his daughter. Please to tell her this; though I should much like to serve her.'

"Herlindis was rising to go, when the King ordered his goldsmiths to make a pair of golden shoes, and another pair of silver, and he gave her one of each pair, as well as a mantle and twelve bracelets; for he was a gallant man, and knew that a princess's waiting-woman, intrusted with such delicate matters, ought to be much honored."

Praxedis here stopped a moment, for Master Spazzo, who had begun drawing a number of big-nosed faces on the sand with the scabbard of his sword, now hummed audibly, but as he did not say anything she continued:

"And Herlindis returned home full of glee and spoke thus to her mistress: 'The valiant knight holds his honor dear. He values the Emperor's good-will too much to comply with your wishes. But look here what he gave me! The shoes, the bracelets, and the mantle! How glad I am that I went there, for surely I shall never behold a handsomer knight in this wide world! God pardon me, but I stared at him as if he were an angel!'

"Alas!" said the Princess, 'am I never to be made happy? Then at least thou must give me the shoes which the noble hero gave to thee. I will give thee their weight in gold.'

"Thus the bargain was concluded. First she put on the golden shoe, but when she took up the silver one she perceived that it was made for the same foot. 'Woe is me!' cried the beautiful maiden. 'Thou hast made a mistake, and I shall never get it on. Thou must go once more to Sir Dietrich and beg him to give thee the other shoe, and also that he should come himself.'

"That will delight all scandal-loving tongues," laughed Herlindis, 'but what does it matter? I will go!'—and she drew up her skirts almost to her knees, and walked over the wet courtyard to Sir Dietrich, and the noble

hero saw her coming, and he well knew what she wanted. Still, he feigned not to see her.

"But Herlindis accosted him thus: 'You see that I had to come again. A mistake has been made; so my mistress bids me ask you to give me the other shoe, and to accompany me yourself.'

"Verily I should much like to go," said he, 'but the Emperor's chamberlains would betray me.'

"Never fear that," said Herlindis, 'for they are all out, practicing the throwing of the spear. Take two servant men with you, and follow me softly, and nobody will miss you during the tournament.'

"After this, the faithful maiden wanted to go, but the hero detained her, saying: 'I will first inquire after the shoes.' Then Asprian, who was outside called out: 'What matters an old shoe? We have made many thousands of them, and the servants are now wearing them. I will look for the right one.' So he brought it, and Dietrich again gave a mantle and twelve bracelets to the waiting-woman.

"So she went on before, and imparted the desired news to her mistress.

"Sir Dietrich, meanwhile, caused a great uproar to be made in the courtyard at Hippodrom. Widolt came out first with his iron bar, and raved like a madman. Asprian cut a somersault in the air, and Eveningred threw an immense stone of several hundred weight a long distance, and then sprang after it, so that none of the spies thought of watching. Sir Dietrich as he steadily walked across the yard.

"At the window stood the Princess, looking out, and her heart beat fast when she saw him approach. Her chamber-door was then opened to him and she addressed him thus: 'Welcome, my noble lord! Great pleasure does it give me, to see you. Now you can put the beautiful shoes on my feet yourself.'

"Gladly I will do so," said the hero, sitting down at her feet; and his manners were graceful and elegant. So she put her foot on his knee, and the foot was dainty and the shoes fitted well. So Sir Dietrich put them on for her.

"Please to tell me, noble and gracious lady," the artful man now began, 'thou hast probably been wooed by many a man; now confess, which of them has pleased thee most?'

"Then the Emperor's daughter replied with a serious mien. 'Sir, by the purity of my soul, and by my holy baptism! If all the heroes of the world were brought together, not one of them would be found worthy to be called thy equal. Thou art a virtuous and noble man,—yet if I could choose freely, I would take a hero, of whom I cannot help thinking day and night. The messengers whom he has sent to woo me, have been thrown into a deep, dreary dungeon. His name is Rother; he lives across the seas, and if he will not become my own, I shall remain a maid all the days of my life!'

"Heigho!" said Dietrich, 'if thou wilt wed with Rother, I will bring him hither quickly. We have lived pleasantly together as friends, and he has ever been kind and good to me, although he drove me away from his lands.'

"Then the Princess replied: 'How canst thou love a man who has banished thee?—Ah, now I see it all! Thou art a messenger, sent by King Rother. And now speak out forthwith, and hide nothing from me, for what thou wilt now tell me, I will keep secret until the day of judgment.'

"When she had thus spoken, the hero looked steadily at her and said: 'Then I will put my trust in God and leave my fate in thy hands. Know then, that thy feet are resting on King Rother's knees!'

"Great was the terror of the gentle maiden. Hastily drawing away her feet, she cried: 'Woe is me! how could I be so ill-bred and thoughtless as to place my foot on thy lap! If God had really sent thee hither, I should be deeply thankful. But how can I trust thee? If thou couldst prove to me the truth of what thou hast told me, I would gladly quit my father's realms with thee, even to-day. There is not a man living whom I would take but thee, if thou wert really King Rother,—but for the present this must remain undone.'

"How could I prove it better than through my imprisoned friends?" said the King. 'If they could see me, thou wouldst soon be convinced that I have spoken truth.'

"Then I will beg my father to let them out," said the Princess. 'But who will prevent their escape?'

"I will look to that," replied he.

"Then the Emperor's daughter kissed the hero, and he left her chamber in all honor, and returned to his house, his heart full of deep joy.

"At the first dawn of the next day the Princess took a staff and put on a black mourning dress, with the pilgrim's badge on her shoulders, as if she wanted to leave the land, and her face was very pale and sad. Thus, she knocked at the Emperor's door and artfully said: 'My dear father! Though still alive, I am yet suffering great torments. I feel very miserable, and who will comfort me? In my dreams the imprisoned messengers of King Rother have appeared to me, and they look pale and worn, and leave me no peace. So I must go to escape from them, if you will not at least let me comfort the miserable men, with good food, wine and a bath. Let them come out of their prison, if it were only for three days.'

"Then the Emperor made answer. 'This will I grant thee, if thou wilt find me security that they return to their prison on the third day.'

"At the usual hour for supper, the so-called Sir Dietrich with his knights also came to the Emperor's hall, and when the repast was over, and every one was washing his hands, the Princess walked round the tables, as if she wanted to choose some one among the number of rich dukes and noble lords who would stand bail. When she came to Dietrich she said: 'Now it is time that thou shouldst help me. Stand bail for thy messengers with thy life.'

"Then he replied: 'I will be surety, most beautiful maiden.' And he pledged his head to the Emperor, who sent out some men to open the prison gate. The wretched messengers were by this time reduced to a state of great weakness. When the doors were opened, the clear daylight shone in, and dazzled the unfortunate men, who had grown unused to it. Then they took the twelve counts, and made them go out. Each one was followed by a knight. They could scarcely walk. Lupolt their leader, again walked at their head. He wore a torn apron round his loins; his beard was long and shaggy, and his body was covered with sores. Sir Dietrich was overwhelmed with sadness, and he turned his head away, that they might not recognize him; and he could scarcely repress the rising tears, which the pitiful sight called forth. He then had them all brought to his house, where everything was got ready for their reception, and the counts said to each other, 'Who was he, who stood aside? He is surely befriending us.' And they, with their hearts full of old grief, laughed with a new joy; but they did not recognize him.

"On the following day, the Emperor's daughter invited the sorely tried men to court, presented them with good, new garments, ordered a warm bath to be prepared for them, and had a table spread for a sumptuous repast. As soon as the noblemen were seated around it, forgetting their woe for a moment, Sir Dietrich took his harp, and hiding himself behind a curtain, touched the strings and played one of the melodies which he had before played on the seashore.

"Lupolt, who had raised the cup to his lips, let it fall, so that the wine was all spilt over the table; and another who was cutting bread dropped his knife, and all listened wondering. Louder and clearer their King's song was heard, and then Lupolt jumped across the table, and all the counts and knights followed him, as if something of their old strength had suddenly returned, and they tore down the curtain, and kissed the harper, and knelt before him, and the joy was indescribable.

"Then, the Princess knew that he was really and truly King Rother, of Vikingland, and she uttered a loud cry of delight which attracted her father Constantine thitherward; and whether he liked it or not, he could do nothing but join the lovers' hands. The messengers never went back to their dungeons; Rother was no longer called Dietrich, and he kissed his bride and took her home over the seas, and became a very happy man, holding his wife in great honor. And whenever they sat lovingly together they would say: 'Thanks be to God, to knightly valor, and prudent waiting-woman's cunning.'

"That is the story of King Rother!"

Praxedis had spoken a long while.

"We are well satisfied," said the Duchess, "and whether Smith Weland will carry off the prize, after King Rother's history has been told, seems to me rather doubtful."

Master Spazzo was not annoyed at this.

"The waiting-women at Constantinople seem to have eaten wisdom with spoons," said he. "But although I may be conquered, the last tale has not yet been told." He glanced over at Ekkehard who was sitting lost in thought. He had not heard much of King Rother. All the time that Praxedia had been speaking, his eyes had been fixed on the Duchess's head-band with the rose in it.

"To say the truth," continued Master Spazzo, "I hardly believe the story. Some years ago, when I was sitting in the bishop's courtyard at Constance, drinking a jug of wine, a Greek peddler, trafficking with relics, came that way. His name was Daniel, and he had many holy bones and church ornaments, and the like articles, amongst which there was also an ancient sword, with jewel-set hilt, which he tried to foist on me, saying that it was the sword of King Rother, and if the gold crowns had not then been as scanty with me as the hairs on the peddler's pate, I should have bought it. The man told me that Sir Rother had fought for the Emperor's daughter with that very same sword, with King Ymelot of Babylon, but of golden shoes, waiting-women or harp-playing, he knew nothing whatever."

"I dare say that many things might still be found in this world, which you know nothing about," lightly said Praxedis.

The evening had set in. The moon had risen, shedding her pale light over hills and plain. Strong fragrant perfumes filled the air, and the fireflies were getting ready for flight, in the bushes and crevices of the rocks round about.

A servant came down with some lights, which, being surrounded by linen, saturated with oil, burned brightly and steadily. The air was mild and pleasant.

Buckhard, the cloister pupil, was still sitting contentedly on his stool; his hands folded as in devotion.

"What does our young guest think?" asked the Duchess.

"I would gladly give my best Latin book, if I could have seen the giant Asprian dashing the lion against the wall," replied he.

"Thou shouldst become a knight, and go out to conquer giants and dragons thyself," jestingly said the Duchess.

This, however, did not convince him. "But we have to fight the Devil himself," said he, "that is better still."

Dame Hadwig was not yet inclined to go indoors. Breaking a twig from the maple-tree into two unequal pieces, she stepped up to Ekkehard. He started up confusedly.

"Well," said the Duchess, "you must draw. Either you or I!"

"Either you or I," vacantly repeated Ekkehard. He drew out the shorter piece. It slipped out of his hand, whilst he silently resumed his seat.

"Ekkehard!" sharply exclaimed the Duchess. He looked up.

"You are to relate something!"

"I am to relate something," murmured he, passing his right hand over his forehead. It was burning, and inside it was a storm.

"Ah, yes—relate something. Who is going to play the lute for me?"

He stood up and gazed out into the moonlit night, whilst the others looked at him in mute wonder, and then he began in a strange, hollow voice:

"'Tis a short story. There once was a light, which shone brightly, and it shone down from a hill, and it was more radiant and glorious than the rainbow. And it wore a rose under the head-band—"

"A rose under the head-band?" muttered Master Spazzo, shaking his head.

"—And there was once a dusky moth," continued Ekkehard, still in the same tone, "which flew up to the hill, and which knew that it must perish if it flew into the light. And it did fly in all the same, and the light burned the dark moth, so that it became mere ashes,—and never flew any more. Amen!"

Dame Hadwig sprang up, indignantly.

"Is that the whole of your story?" asked she.

"'Tis the whole of it," replied he with unchanged voice.

"It is time for us to go in," proudly said the Duchess. "The cool night-air produces fever."

She walked past Ekkehard with a disdainful look. Burkhard again carried her train, whilst Ekkehard stood there immovably.

The chamberlain patted him on the shoulder. "The dark moth was a poor fool, Master Chamberlain!" said he compassionately.

A sudden gust of wind here put out the lights. "It was a monk," said Ekkehard indifferently, "sleep well!"

CHAPTER XXI.

REJECTION AND FLIGHT.

EKKEHARD had remained sitting in the bower for a long time after the others had gone away, and when at last he also rose, he rushed out into the darkness. He did not know whether his feet were carrying him. In the morning he found himself on the top of the Hohenkrähen, which was silent and deserted since the woman of the wood had left it. The remains of the burnt but formed now but a confused mass. On the place where the sitting-room had once been, was still the Roman stone with the Mithras. Grass and ferns were growing on it, and a slow-worm was stealthily creeping up on the old weather-beaten idol.

Ekkehard burst into a wild laugh. "The chapel of St. Hadwig!" he cried, striking his breast with his clenched hand. "Thus, it must be!" He upset the old Roman stone, and then mounted the rock on the top of the hill. There he threw himself down, pressing his forehead against the cool ground, which had once been touched by Dame Hadwig's foot. Thus he remained for a long time. When the scorching rays of the midday sun were falling vertically down, he still lay there, and—slept.

Toward the evening he came back to the Hohentwiel, looking hot and excited, and having an unsteady gait. Blades of grass clung to the woolen texture of his habit.

The inhabitants of the castle shyly stepped out of his way, as if ill-luck had set her seal on his forehead. In other times they used to come toward him, to entreat his blessing.

The Duchess had noticed his absence, without making any inquiries about him. He went up to his tower, and seized a parchment, as if he would read; it happened to be Gunzo's libel. "Willingly I would ask you to try the effect of healing medicine, but I fear that his illness is too deeply rooted," was what he read. He laughed. The arched ceiling threw back an echo, which made him jump up, as if he wanted to find out who had laughed at him: Then he stepped up to the window, and looked down into the depth below. It was deep, far deeper than he had imagined, and, overcome by a sudden giddiness, he started back.

His eye, now fell on the small vial which the old Thieto had given him. With a painful recollection he thought of the blind old man! "Serving women is an evil thing for him who wishes to remain in the paths of virtue," he had said when Ekkehard took leave.

He tore the seal off and poured the water from the Jordan over his head and eyes. It was too late. Whole floods of holy water will not extinguish the inward fire, unless one dives down, never to rise again to the surface. Yet a momentary feeling of quiet came over him.

"I will pray to be delivered from temptation," said he. He threw himself on his knees, but after a while he fancied that he heard the pigeons swarming round his head, as they did on the day when he first entered his chamber. Only they had mocking faces now, and had a contemptuous look about their beaks.

He got up, and slowly descended the winding staircase to the castle-chapel. The altar, which had often witnessed his former earnest devotions, was a safer place for him, he thought. The chapel was as it had always been, dark and silent. Six ponderous pillars with square capitals adorned with leaf-work, supported the vault. A faint streak of daylight fell in through the narrow window. The depth of the niche in which the altar was placed was but faintly illuminated; the golden background of the mosaic picture of the Redeemer alone shone with a soft glitter. Greek artists had transplanted the forms of their church ornaments to the German rock. In white flowing garments, with a golden red aureole around his head, the Saviour's lean figure stood there, with the fingers of the right hand extended in the act of blessing.

Ekkehard knelt before the altar-steps; his forehead resting on the cold stone flags. Thus he remained wrapt in prayer. "Oh thou, that hast taken the sins and sufferings of the whole world on thyself, send out one ray of thy grace on me, unworthy object." He looked up with

a fixed stare as if he expected the earnest figure to step down, and hold out his hand to him.

"I am here at thy feet, like Peter, surrounded by tempest, and the waves will not bear me up! Save me, oh Lord! save me as thou didst him, when thou walkedst over the raging billows, extending thy hand to him and saying 'oh, thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?'"

But no such sign was given him.

Ekkehard's brain was giving way.

A rustling, like that of a woman's garments, now become audible, but Ekkehard did not hear it.

Dame Hadwig had come down, impelled by a strange impulse. Since her feelings for the monk had undergone a change, the image of her late husband recurred oftener to her inward mind. This was but natural. As the one receded into the background, the other must come forward again. The latter reading of Virgil had also its share in this, as there had been said so much about the memory of Sicheus.

The following day was the anniversary of Sir Burkhard's death. With his lance and shield by his side, the old duke lay buried in the chapel below. His tomb was covered by a rough stone-slab. A sarcophagus of gray sandstone stood near it, resting on small clumsy pillars, with Ionic head-pieces, which again rested on quaint ugly stone-animals. This stone coffin Dame Hadwig had had made for herself. Every year, on the anniversary of the Duke's death, she had it carried up, filled with corn and fruits, which were distributed amongst the poor,—the means for living coming from the resting-place of the dead. It was an old pious custom.

To-day she intended to pray on her husband's grave. The reigning twilight concealed Ekkehard's kneeling figure. She did not see him.

Suddenly she started up from her kneeling posture. A laugh, soft yet piercing struck her ear. She knew the voice well. Ekkehard had risen and recited the following words of the psalmist:

"Hide me under the shadow of thy wings. From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about. Arise, O Lord, disappoint them, cast them down."

He said it in an ominous tone. It was no more the voice of prayer.

Dame Hadwig bent down once more beside the sarcophagus, on which she would gladly have placed another, to hide her from Ekkehard's view. She had no longer any wish to be alone with him. Her heart beat calmly now.

He went to the door, about to go, when suddenly he looked back once more. The everlasting lamp was softly rocking to and fro over Dame Hadwig's head. Ekkehard's eyes pierced the twilight this time, and with one bound,—quicker than that which in later days St. Bernard had made, when the Madonna had beckoned to him in the cathedral at Speier—he stood before the Duchess. He cast a long and penetrating look at her. Rising from the ground, and seizing the edge of the stone sarcophagus with her right hand, she confronted him, whilst the everlasting lamp over her head was still gently swinging to and fro on its silken cord.

"Thrice blessed are the dead, for one prays for them," said Ekkehard, interrupting the silence.

Dame Hadwig made no reply.

"Will you pray for me also, when I am dead?" continued he. "Oh, no, you must not pray for me!"—but you must let a goblet be made out of my skull, and when you take another monk away from the monastery of St. Gallus, you must offer him the welcome draught in it,—and give him my greeting! You can put your own lips to it also; it will not crack. But you must then wear the head-band with the rose in it."

"Ekkehard!" said the Duchess, "you are trespassing!"

He put his right hand up to his forehead.

"Ah yes!" said he in a soft, mournful voice, "ah, yes!—the Rhine is trespassing also. They have stopped its course with gigantic rocks, but it has gnawed them all through, and is now rushing and roaring onward, carrying everything before it, in its glorious newly won liberty! And God must be trespassing also methinks, for he has allowed the Rhine to be, and the Hohentwiel and the Duchess of Suabia, and the tuncure on my head."

The Duchess began to shiver. Such an outbreak of long repressed feeling she had not ex-

pected. But it was too late,—her heart remained untouched.

"You are ill," she said.

"Ill?" asked he; "it is merely a requital. More than a year ago, at Whitsuntide, when there was as yet no Hohentwiel for me, I carried the coffin of St. Gallus in solemn procession out of the cloister, and a woman threw herself on the ground before me. 'Get up,' cried I, but she remained prostrate in the dust. 'Walk over me with thy relic, oh priest, so that I may recover,' cried she, and my foot stepped over her. 'That woman suffered from the heartache. Now 'tis reversed.'"

Tears interrupted his voice. He could not go on. Then he threw himself at Dame Hadwig's feet, clasping the hem of her garment. His whole frame was convulsed with trembling.

Dame Hadwig was touched; touched against her will; as if from the hem of her garment, a feeling of unutterable woe thrilled her up to her very heart.

"Get up," said she, "and try to think of other things. You still owe us a story. You will soon have conquered this weakness."

Then Ekkehard laughed through his tears.

"A story!" cried he, "yes, a story! But it must not be told. Come, let us act the story! From the height of yonder tower one can see so far into the distance, and so deep into the valley below,—so sweet and deep and tempting. What right has the ducal castle to hold us back? Nobody who wishes to get down into the depth below need count more than three,—and we should flutter and glide softly into the arms of Death, awaiting us down there. Then I should be no longer a monk, and I might wind my arms about you,—and he who sleeps here in the ground below," striking Sir Burkhard's tombstone with his clenched hand, "shall not prevent me! If he, the old man, should come I would not let you go, and we will float up to the tower again, and sit where we sat before, and we will read the *Æneid* to the end, and you must wear the rose under your head-band, as if nothing whatever had happened. The gate we will keep well locked against the Duke, and we will laugh at all evil backbiting tongues, and folks will say, when sitting at their fireplaces of a winter's evening: 'that is a pretty tale of the faithful Ekkehard, who slew the Emperor Ermenrich for hanging the Harlungen brothers, and who afterward sat for many hundred years before Dame Venus's mountain, with his white staff in his hands, and he meant to sit there until the day of judgment, to warn off all pilgrims coming to the mountain. But at last he grew tired of this, and ran away and became a monk at St. Gall, and he fell down an abyss and was killed, and he is sitting now beside a proud, pale woman, reading Virgil to her. And at midnight may be heard the words: 'If thou comest, oh, Queen, to renew the unspeakable sorrow.' And then she must kiss him, whether she will or not, for death makes up for the pleasures denied us in life.'"

He had uttered all this with a wild, wandering look in his face; and now his voice failed, with low weeping. Dame Hadwig had stood immovably all this time. It was as if a gleam of pity were lighting up her cold eye, as she now bent down her head toward him.

"Ekkehard," said she, "you must not speak of death. This is madness. We both live, you and I!"

He did not stir. Then she lightly laid her hand on his burning forehead. This touch sent a wild thrill through his brains. He sprang up.

"You are right," cried he, "We both live, you and I!"

A dizzy darkness clouded his eyes as he stepped forward, and winding his arms round her proud form, he fiercely pressed her to his bosom, his kiss burning on her lip. Her resisting words died away unheard.

Raising her high up toward the altar, as if she were an offering he was about to make, he cried out to the dark and solemn looking picture, "Why dost thou hold out thy gold glittering fingers so quietly, instead of blessing us?"

The Duchess had started like a wounded deer. One moment, and all the passion of her hurt pride lent her strength to push the frenzied man back, and to free herself at least partly from his embrace. He had still got one arm round her waist, when the church-door was suddenly opened, and a flaring streak of daylight broke through the darkness,—they were no longer alone.

Rudimann, the cellarer from the monastery,

stepped over the threshold, whilst other figures became visible in the background of the courtyard.

The Duchess had waxed pale with shame and anger. A tress of her long dark hair had become loosened and was streaming down her back.

"I beg your pardon," said the man from the Reichenau, with grinning politeness. "My eyes have beheld nothing."

Then Dame Hadwig, ridding herself entirely from Ekkehard's hold, cried out: "Yes, I say!—yes, you have seen a madman, who has forgotten himself and God. I should be sorry for your eyes if they had beheld nothing, for I would have had them torn out!"

It was with an indescribably cold hauteur that she pronounced these words.

Then Rudimann began to understand the strange scene.

"I had forgotten," said he in a cutting tone, "that the man who stands there is one of those to whom wise men have applied the words of St. Hieronymus, when he says that their manners were more befitting dandies and bridegrooms than the elect of the Lord."

Ekkehard stood there leaning against a pillar, with arms stretched out in the air, like Odysseus when he wanted to embrace the shadow of his mother. Rudimann's words roused him from his dreams.

"Who dares to come between her and me?" cried he threateningly. But Rudimann, patting him on the shoulder with an insolent familiarity, said: "Calm yourself, my good friend; we have only come to deliver a note into your hands. St. Gallus can no longer allow the wisest of all his disciples to remain out in this shilly-shallying world. You are called home! And don't forget the stick with which you are wont to ill-treat your confraters, who like to snatch a kiss at vintage-time, you chaste censor," he added in a low whisper.

Ekkehard stepped back. Wild longings, the pain of separation, burning passionate love, and cutting, taunting words,—all these overwhelmed him at once. He made a few steps toward the Duchess; but the chapel was already filling. The Abbot of Reichenau had come himself to witness Ekkehard's departure.

"It will be a difficult task to get him away," he had said to the cellarer. It was easy enough now. Monks and lay-brothers came in after him.

"Sacrilège," Rudimann called out to them. "He has laid his wanton hand on his mistress, even before the altar!"

Then Ekkehard could not restrain himself any longer. To have the most sacred secret of his heart profaned by insolent coarseness,—a pearl thrown before swine,—he tore down the everlasting lamp, and swung the heavy vessel over his head. The light went out, and the moment after, a hollow groan was heard, and the cellarer lay with bleeding head on the stone flags. The lamp lay beside him. Then there followed a fierce struggle, fighting, confusion—all was coming to an end with Ekkehard. They had got the better of him, and tearing off the cord which served him as a belt, they tied his hands together.

There he stood, the handsome youthful figure; now the very picture of woe, resembling the broken-winged eagle. His eyes sent out a painful, troubled and appealing look at the doorway,—who turned her head away.

"Do that which you think right," said she to the Abbot, sweeping proudly through the ranks of the lookers-on.

A cloud of smoke met her outside, whilst the voices of loud, noisy merriment were heard from the castle gate, outside of which a great bonfire, made up of resinous pine branches, was burning. The servants of the castle danced around it, throwing flowers into the flames, and at that moment, Audifax putting his arm round the companion of his adventures, had jumped with her through the flames, uttering a loud cry of delight.

Where does all this smoke come from?" asked Dame Hadwig of Praxedis, who was coming toward her.

"Solstice! Midsummer-day!" said the Greek maid.

It was a dreary, uncomfortable evening. The Duchess had locked herself up in her bedroom, refusing admittance to any one.

Ekkehard, meanwhile, had been dragged into the dungeon by the order of the Abbot. In the same tower, the airy upper story of which

was his chamber, there was a damp, dark vault, the floor of which had fragments of old tombstones lying about; they had been brought there when the castle-chapel had been renovated. A bundle of straw had been thrown in for him, and a monk was sitting outside to guard the entrance.

Burkhard, the cloister-pupil, ran up and down wailing and wringing his hands. He could not understand the fate which had befallen his uncle. The servants were all putting their heads together, eagerly whispering, and gossiping, as if the hundred-tongued Rumor had been sitting on the roof, spreading her falsehoods about. "He tried to murder the Duchess," said one. "He has practiced the Devil's own arts with that big book of his," said another. "To-day is St. John's day, when the Devil has no power, and so he could not help him."

At the well in the courtyard, Rudimann, the cellarer, was standing, letting the clear water flow over his head. Ekkehard had given him a sharp cut, out of which the dark blood was slowly trickling down into the water.

Whilst he was thus occupied, Praxedis came down, looking pale and depressed. She was the only being who had sincere, heartfelt pity, for the prisoner. On seeing the cellarer, she ran into the garden, tore up a blue cornflower with the roots, and then bringing it to him, said: "Take that into your right hand until it gets warm, and then the bleeding will cease. Or shall I fetch you some linen to dress the wound?"

The cellarer shook his head. "It will stop in its own time," said he. "Tis not the first time that I have been bled. Keep your cornflowers for yourself."

But Praxedis was anxious to conciliate Ekkehard's enemy. So she fetched some linen, upon which he allowed his wound to be dressed, without, however, offering any thanks for it.

"Are you not going to let Ekkehard out to-day?" asked she.

"To-day?" Rudimann repeated sneeringly. "Do you feel inclined to weave a garland for the standard-bearer of Antichrist? the leading horse of Satan's car, whom you have petted and spoiled up here, as if he were the darling son Benjamin himself? To-day indeed! When a month is passed you may put the question again, over there," pointing toward the Helvetian Mountains.

Praxedis was frightened. "What, then, do you intend to do with him?"

"That which is right," replied Rudimann, with an evil laugh. "Wantonness, deeds of violence, disobedience, haughtiness, sacrilege, blasphemy,—there are scarcely names enough for all his nefarious acts; but thank God, there are yet means for their expiation!" He made a motion with his hand, like that of flogging. "Ah, yes, plenty of means of expiation, gentle mistress! We are going to write the catalogue of his sins on his back."

"Have pity," said Praxedis, "for he is a sick man."

"For that very reason we are going to cure him. When he has been tied to the pillar for an hour or so, and half a dozen rods have been flogged to pieces on his bleeding back, then all his sins and his deviltries will vanish!"

"For his sake!" exclaimed the terrified girl.

"Save yourself, for that is not all. A stray lamb must be delivered up to the fold it belongs to. There he will find good shepherds who will look after the rest. Sheep-shearing, sweet mistress, sheep-shearing! Then they will cut off the hair of his head, which will make it a deal cooler, and if you feel inclined to undertake a pilgrimage to St. Gall, in a year hence, you will see on Sundays and holidays, somebody standing barefooted before the church-door, and his head will be as bare as a cornfield after harvest-time, and the penitential garb will become him very nicely. What do you think? The heathenish goings on with Virgil are at an end now."

"He is innocent!" said Praxedis.

"Oh," said the cellarer sneeringly, "we shall never harm innocence! He need only prove himself so by God's ordeal. If he takes the ring out of the kettle of boiling water with unburnt arm, our Abbot himself will give him the blessing; and I will say that it was all a delusion of the Devil's own making, when my eyes beheld the lady Duchess clasped in the arms of his holiness, Ekkehard."

Praxedis wept. "Dear venerable Master Rudimann!" said she in a low voice. "Throwing an ugly leer at the Greek man,

he said with pinched lips: "So it will be. I might however perhaps be induced to interfere on his behalf, if—"

"If?" asked Praxedis eagerly. "If you would be pleased to leave your chamber-door open to-night, so that I could communicate the result of my endeavors to you."

Playfully drawing the ample folds of his habit together, so that the outlines of his tightly laced waist became visible, he assumed a complacent and expectant attitude. Praxedis stepped back, and stamped her foot on the blue cornflower.

"You are a bad, wicked man!" she cried turning her back on him.

Rudimann, who knew how to interpret physiognomy, clearly saw from the twitching of Praxedis's eyelids, and the angry frown on her forehead, that her chamber-door would be locked, now and ever, against all the cellarers in Christendom.

She went away. "Have you still any commands?" asked she, once more looking back.

"Yes, thou Greek wasp! A jug of vinegar if you please. I want to lay my rods in it; the writing is easier then, and will not fade away so soon. I have as yet never had the good fortune to flog an interpreter of Virgil. Such a scholar verily deserves particular attention."

Burkhard, the cloister-pupil, was still sitting under the linden-tree, sobbing. Praxedis, in passing gave him a kiss, chiefly to spite the cellarer. She went up to the Duchess, intending to implore her compassion for Ekkehard on her knees; but the door remained locked against her. Dame Hadwig was deeply hurt. If the monks of the Reichenau had not come in on them, she might have pardoned Ekkehard's frenzy; all the more as she herself had sowed the seed of all this,—but now it had become a public scandal, which demanded punishment. The fear of gossiping tongues does influence many an action.

The Abbot had sent her the letter from St. Gall. "St. Benedict's rules," so the letter said, "exacted not only the outward forms of a monastic life, but the self-denial of heart and soul, which forms the spirit of it!" Ekkehard was to return. From Gunzo's libel some parts were quoted against him.

It was all perfectly indifferent to the Duchess. What his fate would be, if delivered into the hands of his antagonists, she knew quite well. Yet she was determined to do nothing for him. Praxedis knocked at her door a second time, but again it was not opened.

"Oh thou poor moth," said she sadly.

Ekkehard meanwhile lay in his dungeon like one who had dreamt some wild dream. Four bare walls surrounded him; some faint gleams of light falling in from above. Now and then he shivered as with cold. By degrees a melancholy smile of resignation settled on his lips, but this did not always remain there; bursts of anger, which made him clench his fists, interrupted it.

It is the same with the human mind as with the sea. Though the tempest may have blown over, the surge is yet stronger and more impetuous than before, and now and then some mighty straggling wave dashes wildly up, frightening the sea-gulls away from the rocks.

But Ekkehard's heart was not to be broken. It was still too young for that. He began to reflect on his position. The view in the future was not very cheering. He well knew the rules of his order, and that the men from Reichenau were his enemies.

With big strides he paced up and down the narrow space. "Great God, whom we may invoke in the hour of affliction, how will this all end?"

He shut his eyes, and threw himself on the bundle of straw. Confused visions passed before his soul. Thus he saw with his inward eye how they would drag him out in the early morning. The Abbot would be sitting on his high stone chair, with the hooked staff in his hand, in sign of his sitting in judgment, and then they would read out a long bill of complaints against him,—all this in the same courtyard in which he had once sprung out of the sedan chair, with such a jubilant heart, and in which he had preached his sermon against the Huns, on that solemn Good-Friday,—and now they were all against him!

"What shall I do?" thought he. "With my hand on my heart and my eyes raised toward Heaven, I shall say: 'Ekkehard is not guilty!' Then the judges will say, 'Prove it!' The big fire lighted beneath, so

that the water hisses and bubbles. Then the Abbot draws off the golden ring from his finger. They push up the right sleeve of his habit, whilst solemn penitential psalms are chanted around them. "I conjure thee, spirit of the water, that the Devil quit thee, and that thou serve the Lord, to make known the truth, like to the fiery furnace of the King of Babylon, when he had the three men thrown into it!" Thus the Abbot would address the boiling water; and "dip in thy arm, and fetch the ring," says he to the accused.

"Just God, how will thy ordeal speak?" Wild doubts were besetting Ekkehard's soul. He believed in himself and his good cause, but his faith was less strong in the dreadful means, by which priestcraft and church-laws sought to arrive at God's decision.

In the library of his monastery there was a little book bearing the title: "Against the inveterate error of the belief, that through fire, water, or single combat, the truth of God's judgment could be revealed."

This book he had once read, and he remembered it well. It was to prove, that with these ordeals, which were an inheritance from the ancient heathen time, it was as the excellent Godfrey of Strasburg has expressed it in later days, namely, "that the best Christian is as combustible as an old rag."

"And what, if no miracle is performed?" His thoughts were inclined to dark and despondent doubts. "With burnt arm, to be proclaimed guilty and to be flogged,—whilst she perhaps would stand on the balcony looking on, as if it were being done to an entire stranger. Oh Lord of Heaven and Earth, send down Thy lightning!"

Yet hope does not entirely forsake even the most miserable. Then he fancied again how through all this shame and misery a piercing "stop!" was heard, and how she flew down with disheveled locks, and in her rustling ducal mantle drove his tormentors away, as the Saviour drove out the usurers from the temple. And then, when all were gone, she presents him both her hand and lips to receive the kiss of reconciliation. Long and ardently his phantasy dwelt on that beautiful possibility, which filled his heart with a soft consolation, and he spoke with the words of the Preacher: "As gold is purified from dross in the fire, so the heart of man is purified by sorrow."

He now heard a slight noise in the antechamber of his dungeon. A stone jug was put down. "You are to drink like a man," said a voice to the lay brother on guard, "for on St. John's night all sorts of unearthly visitors people the air and pass over our castle. So you must take care to strengthen your courage. There's another jug set ready when that is finished."

It was Praxedis who had brought the wine. Ekkehard did not understand what she wanted. "Then she also is false," thought he. "God protect me!"

He closed his eyes and soon fell asleep. Some hours later he awoke. The wine had evidently been to the lay brother's taste, for he was lustily singing a song in praise of the four goldsmiths, who had refused the making of heathenish idols at Rome; for which they had suffered martyrdom. With his heavy sandal-clad foot, he kept beating time on the stoneflags. Ekkehard heard that another jug of wine was brought in. The singing became always louder and more uproarious. Then he held a soliloquy; in which he spoke much about Italy and good fare, and *Santa Agnese fuori i mura*, until he suddenly ceased talking, whilst his snoring could be heard very plainly through the stone walls.

Everything was silent around. It was about midnight. Ekkehard lay in a half-slumbering state, when he heard the bolts of the door softly withdrawn. He remained lying where he was. A muffled figure came in, and a soft little hand was laid on the slumberer's forehead. He jumped up.

"Hush!" whispered Praxedis, for it was she.

When everybody had gone to rest, Praxedis had kept awake. "The bad cellarer shall not have the satisfaction of punishing our poor melancholy teacher," she had said to herself; and woman's cunning always finds some way and means to accomplish its schemes. Wrapping herself up in a gray cloak, she had stolen down on tiptoe. No special artifices were necessary, for the lay-brother was sleeping the sleep of the just. If it had been otherwise, the Greek would have frightened him by some ghost-trickery. That would have been her plan.

"You must fly!" said she to Ekkehard. "They mean to do their worst to you."

"I know it," replied he sadly.

"Come then."

He shook his head. "I prefer to submit and to suffer," said he.

"Don't be a fool," whispered Praxedis. "First you built your castle on the glittering rainbow, and now that it has all tumbled down, you will allow them to ill treat you, into the bargain? As if they had a right to drag you away and to flog you! And you will let them have the pleasure of witnessing your humiliation? It would be a nice spectacle for them, to be sure! 'One does not see an honest man hung every day,' said a man to me once in Constantinople, when I asked him why he was running."

"Where should I go to?" asked Ekkehard.

"Neither to the Reichenau, nor to your monastery," said Praxedis. "There is still many a hiding-place left in this world." She was getting impatient, and seizing Ekkehard by the hand, she dragged him on. "Forward!" whispered she. He allowed himself to be led.

They slunk past the sleeping watchman; and now they stood in the courtyard, where the fountain was splashing merrily. Ekkehard bent over the spout, and took a long draught of the cool water.

"All is over now," said he. "And now away!"

It was a stormy night. "As the bridge is drawn up, you cannot go out by the doorway," said Praxedis, "but you can get down between the rocks, on the eastern side. Our shepherd-boy has tried that path before."

They entered the little garden. A gust of wind was rocking the branches of the maple-tree to and fro. Ekkehard felt as if he were in a dream.

He mounted the battlement. Steep and rugged the gray rocks sloped into the valley, that now looked like a dark yawning abyss. Black clouds were chasing each other along the dusky sky; weird, uncouth shapes, resembling two bears pursuing a winged dragon. After awhile, the fantastic forms united into one shapeless mass, which the wind drifted onward toward the Bodensee, that glittered faintly in the distance. The whole landscape could only be seen in indistinct outlines.

"Blessings on your way," said Praxedis.

Ekkehard sat perfectly motionless on the battlement, still holding the Greek maiden's hand clasped in his. His lips could not express the feelings of gratitude which pervaded his whole being. Suddenly he felt her cheek pressed against his, and a trembling kiss imprinted on his forehead, followed by a pearly tear. Softly, Praxedis then drew away her hand.

"Don't forget," said she, "that you still owe us a story. May God lead your steps back again to this place some day, so that we may hear it from your own lips."

Ekkehard now let himself down. Waving one last farewell with his hand, he soon disappeared from her sight. The stillness of night was interrupted by a loud clatter and booming amongst the cliffs. A piece of rock had become loosened, and fell noisily down into the valley. Another followed somewhat slower, and on this Ekkehard was sitting, guiding it as a rider does his horse. So he went down the sloping precipice, through the black night,—farewell!

She crossed herself, and went back, smiling through her tears. The lay-brother was still fast asleep. Whilst crossing the courtyard, Praxedis spied a basket filled with ashes, which she seized, and softly stealing back into Ekkehard's dungeon, she poured out its contents in the middle of the room, as if this were all that were left of the prisoner's earthly remains.

"Why dost thou snore so heavily, most reverend brother?" said she, hurrying away.

CHAPTER XXII.

ON THE WILDKIRCHLEIN.

AND now, much beloved reader, we must bid thee to gird thy lions, take thy staff in hand, and follow us up into the mountains. From the lowlands of the Bodensee, our tale now takes us over to the Helvetian Alps. There, the Sântis stretches out grandly into the blue air,—when he does not prefer to don his cloud-cap,—smilingly looking down into the depths below, where the towns of men shrivel up to the size of ant-hills. All around him there is

a company of fine stalwart fellows made of the same metal, and there they put their bold heads together, and jestingly blow misty veils into each other's faces. Over their glaciers and ravines a mighty roaring and rustling is heard at times; and that which they whispered to each other respecting the ways and doings of mankind, had already a somewhat contemptuous tinge, a thousand years ago,—and since then it has not become much better I fear.

About ten days after the monks of the Reichenau had found nothing but a heap of ashes instead of their prisoner in the castle dungeon, and had debated a good deal whether the Devil had burnt him up at midnight, or whether he had escaped,—a man was walking up the hills, along the white foaming Sitter, over luxuriant meadow-lands, interspersed with rocks.

He wore a mantle made of wolves' skins over his monkish garb; a leathern pouch at his side, and he carried a spear in his right hand. Often he pushed the iron point into the ground and leaned on the butt end, using the weapon thus as a mountain stick.

Round about there was perfect silence and solitude. Long stretches of mist were hovering over the wild valley, where the Sitter comes out of the Seelapsee; whilst at the side, a towering wall of rocks, fringed by scanty green plants, rose up toward heaven.

The mountain glens, which in the present days are inhabited by a merry and numerous race of herdsmen, were then but scantily peopled. Only the cell of the Abbot of St. Gall stood there in the valley, surrounded by a few small, humble cottages.

After the bloody battle of Zülpich, a handful of liberty-loving Allemannic men, who could not learn to bend their necks to the Franconian yoke had settled down in that wilderness. Their descendants were still living there in scattered, shingle-covered houses, and in summer they drove their herds up into the Alps. They were a race of strong and healthy mountaineers, who, untouched by the goings on in the world at large, enjoyed a simple free life, which they bequeathed to the following generations.

The path which was followed by our traveler became steeper and rougher. He now stood before a steep overhanging wall of rocks. A heavy drop of water had fallen on his head from above, upon which he cast up a searching look to see whether the grim canopy of stones would yet delay falling down till he had passed by. Rocky walls, however, luckily can remain longer in an oblique position than any structure made by human hands; so nothing fell down but a second drop.

Leaning with his left hand on the stone wall, the man continued his way, which, however, became narrower with every step he took. The dark precipice at his side came nearer and nearer, a giddy depth yawning up at him, and now all trace of a pathway ceased altogether. Two mighty pine-trunks were laid over the abyss, serving as a bridge.

"It must be done," said the man, boldly stepping over it. Heaving a deep sigh of relief when his feet touched ground again on the other side, he turned round to inspect the dangerous passage somewhat more at his leisure.

It was a narrow promontory, above and below which there was a steep, yellowish-gray wall of rocks. In the depth below, scarcely visible, was the mountain brook Sitter, like a silver band in the green valley, whilst the sea-green mirror of the Seelapsee seemed to hide itself shyly between the dark fir-trees. Opposite, in their armor of ice and snow, there rose the host of mountain giants, and the pen feels a shudder of delight pass through it when called upon to write down their names. The long-stretched bewildering Kamor, the tremendous walls of the Boghartenfist, the Sigelsalp and Maarwiese, on whose battlements grows a luxuriant vegetation like moss on the roofs of old houses. Then the mysterious keeper of the secret of the lake, the "old man," with his deeply furrowed stone forehead and hoary head—the chancellor and bosom friend of the mighty Sântis.

"Ye mountains and vales praise the Lord!" exclaimed the wanderer, overwhelmed by the grandeur of the spectacle before him. Many hundreds of mountain-swallows fluttered out of the crevices between the rocks. Their appearance was like a good omen for the lonely traveler.

He made some steps onward. There the wall of rocks had many a fissure, and he saw a two-fold cavern. A simple cross made of rudely carved wood stood beside it. Stems of fir-

trees heaped up on one side and interlaced with branches of the same, in the manner of a block-house, bore witness to its being a human habitation. Not a sound interrupted the stillness around.

The stranger knelt down before the cross and prayed there a long while.

It was Ekkehard, and the place where he knelt was the "Wildkirchlein."

He had reached the valley in safety on his stone horse after Praxedis had freed him. The next morning found him weary and exhausted at the door of old Moengal at Radolfszell.

"Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them!" said he in the words of the prophet after he had told the parish priest all that happened to him.

Then the old man pointed over toward the Sântis. "Thou art right," said Moengal. "The holy Gallus did the same. 'Into the wilderness will I go, and there shall I wait for Him who shall restore my soul's health.' Perhaps he would never have become a saint, if he had thought and acted differently. Try to conquer thy grief. When the eagle feels sick and his eyes grow dim, then he rises heavenward as far as his wings will carry him. The nearness of the sun gives a new youth. Do thou the same. I know a bonny nook for thee to recover thy health in."

He then described the road to Ekkehard.

"Thou wilt find a man up there," continued he, "who has not seen much of the world for the last twenty years. His name is Gottshalk. Give him my greeting and let us hope that God has forgiven him his trespasses."

The parish priest did not say for what sin his old friend was doing penance up there. He had once been sent to Italy when times were bad to buy corn. When he came to Verona he was well received by the quarrelsome Bishop Rathenius, and he held his devotions in the venerable cathedral where the remains of St. Anastasia lay unlocked in a golden shrine; and the church was deserted, and the Devil tempted Gottshalk to take a keepeeke to Germany. So he took as much of the saint's body as he could carry away under his habit; an arm, a foot, and some spine-bones, and secretly departed with his spoil. But from that hour he had lost his inward peace. By day and night the saint appeared to him in her torn and mutilated condition; walking with crutches and demanding back her arm and her foot. Over mountains and Alpine glens she followed him, and threateningly approached him even on the threshold of his own cloister. Then he threw away the stolen limbs and fled half maddened to the heights of the Sântis; there to expiate his heavy sin in the hermit's cell which he erected for himself.

For two days old Moengal secreted his young friend in his cell, and then he rowed him across the lake during the nighttime. "Don't go back to thy convent," said he when they were about to part company, "lest their tittle-tattle should be the ruin of thee. Jeers and derision are worse than punishment. 'Tis true that thou deservest some lecturing; but that must be done for thee by the fresh mountain breezes, which are better entitled to set thee right again than thy fellow-monks."

A spear and a wolf's skin were his parting gifts to Ekkehard.

Shyly and steadily he continued his journey at nighttime, and it was with bitterness of heart that like a stranger he passed the monastery, which still bore visible traces of the ravages of the Huns. Some windows were lighted up, and seemed to beckon to him; but he only hurried onward the quicker. The Abbot's cell in the mountains he also passed by without entering. He did not wish to be recognized by any one belonging to the monastery.

His prayers were ended now. Wistfully he gazed at the entrance of the cavern, waiting for Gottshalk the hermit's coming out to welcome the visitor. But nobody appeared; the cavern was empty.

Sancta Anastasia ignosce reprobis! Holy Anastasia, pardon thy ravisher! was written with juice from Alpine herbs on the bright-colored rock. A stone trough caught up the water which came trickling through the crevices. It was so full that the water ran over.

Ekkehard entered the cell. Some earthen dishes stood beside an old stone flag, which probably had served as a hearth. In a corner there lay a coarse flannel net, as well as a hammer and spade, a small ratchet, and a quantity of pine-logs. In some wooden boards was a sort of couch,

consisting of straw and dry leaves, which looked rotten and decayed. Two rats, frightened by Ekkehard's entrance, ran to hide in a crevice.

"Gottshalk!" cried Ekkehard, using his hand like a speaking trumpet. Then he uttered a sort of shout, such as is customary amongst the mountaineers in those parts, but nobody answered. In a jug, the milk it had once contained had become a crusty substance. Mournfully Ekkehard stepped out again on the narrow strip of ground which separated the cavern from the precipice.

Gazing over to the left, he could see a small bit of the blue Bodensee coming out behind the mountains. All the magnificence of the Alpine world, however, could not banish a feeling of unutterable woe from his heart. Alone and God-forsaken he stood there on the solitary height. He strained his faculty of hearing to the utmost, in the hope of catching the sound of a human voice, but the low and monotonous moaning of the wind in the pine-wood below was all that he heard.

His eyes became moist.

It was getting late. What now? The cravings of hunger drew off his attention for the moment. He still had provisions for three days with him. So he sat down before the cavern and took his evening meal, moistening his bread with the tears he could not restrain.

His mountain threw long purple shadows on the opposite rocks, whose peaks only were still glowing in the sunshine.

"As long as the cross stands on yonder rock I shall not be entirely forsaken," said he. He then collected some grass that grew outside and prepared himself a new couch in the place of the old one. The cool evening air began to be felt. So he wrapped himself up in Moengal's mantle and lay down. Sleep is the best cure for the sufferings of youth, and in spite of heartache and loneliness, it soon closed Ekkehard's eyelids.

The first dawn of morning rose over the head of the Kamor, and only the morning-star was still shining brightly, when Ekkehard started up from his slumbers. It was as if he had heard the merry tones of a herdsman's shout, and on looking up he saw a light shining out from the darkest recess of the cavern. He believed himself to be under the delusion of a dream; that he was still in his dungeon and that Praxedis was coming to free him. But the light came nearer, and proved to be a torch of pine-wood. A young girl, with highlooped-up petticoats, was carrying this primitive candle. He jumped up. Without showing either fear or surprise, she stood before him and said, "God's welcome to you."

It was a bold, half wild looking maiden, with olive complexion and fiery sparkling eyes. Her dark abundant tresses were fastened behind by a massive silver pin, in the shape of a spoon. The braided basket on her back, and the Alpine atick in her right hand, marked her as being an inhabitant of the mountains.

"Holy Gallus, protect me from new temptation," thought Ekkehard; but she called out cheerfully. "Again I say, be welcome! My father will be very glad to hear that we have got a new mountain-brother. One can well see, by the little milk which the cows give, that the old Gottshalk is dead,—he has said many a time."

It did not sound like the voice of a female demon.

Ekkehard was still sleepy and yawned.

"May God reward you!" ejaculated the maid.

"Why did you say, may God reward you?" asked he.

"Because you have not swallowed me up," laughed she, and before he could put any more queries she ran away with her torchlight, and disappeared in the back of the cavern.

Presently she returned, however, followed by a gray-bearded herdsman wrapped in a mantle of lamb's skins.

"Father will not believe it!" cried she.

The herdsman now took a deliberate survey of Ekkehard. He was a hale and hardy man, who in the days of his youth could throw a stone of a hundred weight above twenty paces without losing an inch of his ground. His tanned face and his bare sinewy arms were signs of his not yet having lost much of his strength.

"So you are going to be our new mountain-brother?" said he, good naturedly extending his hand. "Well, that's right."

Ekkehard was a little embarrassed at the strangeness of the apparition.

"I intended to pay a visit to Brother Gottshalk," said he.

"Zounds! there you are too late," said the herdsman. "He lost his life last autumn. 'Twas a grievous affair. Look there!"—pointing to a wall of rocks in the depth below—"on yonder slope he went to gather dry leaves; I was there myself to help him. Suddenly he started up, as if he had been bitten by a snake, and pointing over at the Hohenkasten, he cried: 'Holy Anastasia, thou art made whole again, and standest on both feet, and beckonest to me with both thy arms!' and down he jumped, as if there had been no abyss between the rock he stood on and the Hohenkasten. With a '*kyrie eleison!*' he went down into the frightful depth. May God be merciful to his soul! It was only this spring that we found the body wedged in between the rocks, and the vultures had carried off one arm and one leg, nobody knows whereto."

"Don't frighten him!" said the maiden, giving her father a nudge.

"You can remain here notwithstanding that, all the same," continued he. "You shall get all that we gave to Gottshalk; milk and cheese, and three goats which may graze wherever they like. And if that won't satisfy you, you can ask for more, for we are no niggards and misers up here. In return, you will preach us a sermon each Sunday, and pronounce a blessing over meadows and pasture-grounds, so that storms and avalanches will cause no harm. Further, you have to ring the bell to announce the hours."

Ekkehard cast a doubtful look into the spacious cavern. It was a delicious feeling for him, to know that there were human beings close at hand; but he could not make out whence they came.

"Are your pasture-lands in the depths of the mountains?" asked he with a smile.

"He does not know where the Ebenalp is!" exclaimed the young girl compassionately. "I will show it you."

Her chip of pine-wood was still burning. She turned round to the back part of the cavern, the men following on her heels. So they went through a dark and narrow passage, into the interior of the mountain; fragments of stones were lying across the path. Often they had to bend down their heads to be able to proceed. Faint, reddish gleams of light played on the projecting edges of the walls, and soon the flaring daylight appeared. The young girl struck her chip against the strangely formed stalactites which hung down from the roof, so that it went out. A few steps more, and they stood on a wide and delicious Alpine tract.

Innumerable flowers were exhaling their sweet fragrance. Veronicas, orchises, and lovely blue gentians grew there in great profusion; and the Apollo, the magnificent butterfly of the Alps, with its shining red eyes on its wings, was hovering over the luxuriant petals.

After the oppressive darkness and narrowness of the cavern, a magnificent and extensive panorama was doubly grateful to the eye.

The early morning mists were as yet lying in heavy and compact masses over the valley, looking like some mighty sea, which in the very moment, when its foam-crested billows were rising up, had been changed into stone. With clear, sharp outlines the mountain-peaks stood out against the blue sky,—like giant isles rising out of the sea of mists. The Bodensee, too, was covered up with vapory clouds, and the rows of the far off Rhetian mountains with their craggy pinnacles were just visible through the soft haze surrounding them. The melodious tinkling of the cow-bells was the only sound that broke the silence of that early morning hour. In Ekkehard's soul there rose a proud and yet humble prayer.

"You are going to stay with us," said the old herdsman. "I can tell so by the expression of your eyes."

"I am a homeless wanderer, whom the Abbot has not sent out hither," said Ekkehard sadly.

"That's all the same to us," replied the other. "If but we, and the old Sántis over there, are satisfied, then nobody else need be asked. The Abbot's sovereignty does not extend here. We pay him our tithes, when his stewards come here to look at our cottages, on the day when the milk is examined, because it is an old custom; but except that, we have an old proverb which says 'his fields and grounds I do not till, nor do I bow before his will.'

"Look there!" pointing out a gray mountain-peak, which in solitary grandeur rose from far-stretching ice-fields,—"that is the high Sántis, who is the Lord and master of the mountains. We take off our hats to him, but to nobody else. There, to the right is the 'blue snow,' where in times long ago, there were meadows and pasture-grounds enough; but a proud and overbearing man lived there, who was a giant, and whose pride increased with his flocks, so that he said: 'I will be king over all that my eyes survey.' But in the depths of the Sántis, there arose a roaring and trembling; and the ground opened and emitted floods of ice, which covered up the giant, his cottage, herds and meadows; and from the eternal snow which lies there, cold chilling winds blow down, to remind one, that besides the lord of the mountains, nobody is meant to reign here!"

The herdsman inspired Ekkehard with confidence. Independent strength, as well as a kindly heart, could be perceived in his words. His daughter, meanwhile, had gathered a nosegay of Alpine roses, which she held out to Ekkehard.

"What is thy name?" asked he.

"Benedicta."

"That is a good name," said Ekkehard, fastening the Alpine roses to his girdle. "Yes, I will remain with you."

Upon this the old man shook his right hand, so as to make him wince, and then seizing the Alpine horn which hung suspended on a strap at his side, he blew a peculiar signal.

From all sides answering notes were heard, and soon the neighboring herdsman all came over;—strong, wild-looking men, and assembled round the old man, whom on account of his good qualities they had elected master of the Alps and inspector of the meadows on the Ebenalp.

"We have got a new mountain-brother," said he. "I suppose that none of you will object?"

After this address they all lifted their hands in sign of approval, and then stepping up to Ekkehard, they bade him welcome; and his heart was touched and he made the sign of the cross over them.

Thus Ekkehard became hermit of the Wild-irchlein, scarcely knowing how it had all come about. The master of the Ebenalp kept his word, and did his best to make him comfortable. The three goats were lodged in the side-cavern. Then he also showed him an intricate hidden path between the rocks, which led down to the Seealpee, which contained plenty of fine trout. Further, he put some new shingles into the gaps of the roof, that wind and weather had caused in Gottshalk's block-house.

By degrees, Ekkehard accustomed himself to the narrow confinement of his new domicile, and on the following Sunday he carried the wooden cross into the foreground of the cavern; adorned it with a wreath of newly gathered flowers, and rang the bell which had hung at the entrance ever since Gottshalk's time, and which bore the mark of Sancho, the wicked bell-founder at St. Gall. When his herdsman, with their families of boys and girls were all assembled, he preached them a sermon on the transfiguration, and told them how every one who ascended the mountain heights with the right spirit, in a certain sense of the word, became transfigured also.

"And though Moses and Elijah may not come down to us," he cried, "have we not the Sántis and the Kamor standing beside us?—and they also are men of an old covenant, and it is good for us to be with them!"

His words were great and bold; and he himself wondered at them, for they were almost heretical, and he had never read such a simile in any of the church fathers before. But the herdsman were satisfied, and the mountains also; and there was nobody to contradict him.

At noon, Benedicta, the herdsman's daughter, came up. A silver chain adorned her Sunday bodice, which encircled her bosom like a coat of mail. She brought a neat milking-pail, made of ashwood, on which, in simple outlines, a cow was carved.

"This my father sends you," said she, "because you have preached so finely, and have spoken well of our mountains,—and if anybody should try to harm you, you are to remember that the Ebenalp is near."

She threw some handful of hazel-nuts into the pail. "These, I have gathered for you," added she, "and if you like them, I know where to find more."

Before Ekkehard could offer his thanks, she had disappeared in the subterranean passage.

"Dark-brown are the hazel-nuts,
And brown like they am I
And he who would my lover be
Must be the same as I!"

she sang archly, whilst going away.

A melancholy smile rose to Ekkehard's lips. The tempest in his heart had not yet been quite appeased. Faint murmurs were yet reverberating within; like the thunderclaps of an Alpine storm, which are repeated by innumerable echoes from the mountains.

A huge, flat piece of rock had fallen down beside his cavern. Melting snow had undermined it in the spring. It resembled a grave-stone, and he christened it inwardly the grave of his love. There he often sat. Sometimes, he fancied the Duchess and himself lying under it; sleeping the calm sleep of the dead; and he sat down on it, and looked over the pine-clad mountains far away toward the Bodensee,—dreaming. It was not well that he could see the lake from his cell, as the sight called up continual painful recollections. Often his heart was brimful with bitter, angry pain; often again he would strain his eyes in the direction of the Untersee of an evening, and whisper soft messages to the passing winds. For whom were they meant?

His dreams at night were generally wild and confused. He would find himself in the castle chapel, and the everlasting lamp was rocking over the Duchess's head as it did then; but when he rushed toward her, she had the face of the woman of the wood, and grinned at him scoffingly. When he awoke from his uneasy slumbers in the early morning his heart would often beat wildly, and the words of Dame Hadwig, "Oh, schoolmaster, why didst thou not become a warrior?" persecuted him, till the sun had risen high in the sky, or the appearance of *Benedicta* would banish them.

Often again he would throw himself down on the short, soft grass on the slope, and ponder over the last months of his life. In the pure, keen Alpine air, figures and events assumed clearer and more objective outlines before his inward eye, and he was tormented by the thought that he had behaved shyly and foolishly, and had not even succeeded in fulfilling his task by telling a story like *Praxedis* and *Master Spazzo*.

"Ekkehard thou hast made thyself ridiculous," muttered he to himself; and then he felt as if he must break his head against the rocks.

A melancholy mind broods long over a wrong it has undergone; quite forgetting that a blame-worthy action is only blotted out in the memory of others by better ones following.

Therefore Ekkehard was as yet not ripe for the healing delights of solitude. The ever-present recollection of past suffering had a strange effect on him. Whenever he sat alone in his silent cavern, he fancied he heard voices that mockingly talked to him of the foolish hopes, and the deceits of this world. The flight and calls of the birds in the air, seemed to him the shrieks of demons, and all his praying would avail nothing against these fantastic delusions.

When the terrors of the wilderness have once taken hold of a mind, eye and ear are easily deceived and apt to believe all the old legends and tales which assert that the air, as well as water and earth, is inhabited by legions of immortal spirits.

It was a soft, fragrant midsummer night. Ekkehard was just about to lay himself down on his simple couch, when the moon-beams fell right into the cavern. Two white clouds were sailing along the sky, one behind the other, and he overheard how they were talking together. One of them was *Dame Hadwig*, and the other *Praxedis*.

"I should really like to see what the asylum of a wandering fool looks like," said the first white cloud, and swiftly hurrying down the steep rocky walls, she stood still on the *Kamor*, right opposite the cavern, and then floating down to the fir-trees which grew in great numbers in the valley below, she cried out: "It is he! Go and seize the blasphemer."

Then the fir-trees sprang into life and became monks; thousands and thousands, and chanting psalms and swinging rods in their hands, they began to climb up the rock toward the *Wildkirchlein*.

Trembling with terror Ekkehard jumped up and seized his spear,—but now it was as if a host of will-o'-the-wisps started out from the recesses of the cavern. "Away with you, out from the Alps!" cried they threateningly. All his pulses throbbled in the heat of fever, and so he ran away over the narrow path, along the

frightful precipice, into the dark night, like a madman.

The second cloud was still standing beside the moon. "I cannot help thee," said she with *Praxedis's* voice, "I do not know the way."

Downhill he ran, as fast as his feet would carry him. Life had become a mere torture to him, and yet he caught hold of projecting parts of the rocks, and used his spear as a staff, not to fall down and thus get into the hands of the approaching specters.

The nightly descent from the *Hohentwiel* was mere child's play compared to this. Unconscious of all danger, he darted past precipices, and at last came down to level ground, beside the lake. The goats often fell down there, when they turned their eyes away from the grass, and gazed into the neck-breaking depth below.

At last he stood still beside the mysteriously beckoning, green *Seelapsee*, over which the silvery moonbeams danced and trembled. The rotten trunks, lying about on the shores, gave forth a spectral light. Ekkehard's eyes grew dim and filmy.

"Take me into thy arms," cried he, "for my heart is panting for rest."

He ran into the cool, silent flood, but his feet still touched ground, and the cooling waters of the mountain lake sent a delicious freshness through his feverish limbs. The water already reached to his breast, when he stopped and looked up confusedly. The white clouds had disappeared, the moonbeams having dissolved them into transparent vapors. Magnificently, and yet sadly withal, the stars were glittering high over his head.

In bold, fantastic lines the *Möglisalp* stretched out its grass-covered horns toward the moon. On its left stood, calm and serious, the furrowed head of the "old man," and to the right, towering above its double belt of glaciers, the stern, gray pyramid of the *Säntis*, surrounded by innumerable crags and pinnacles, looking like dark specters of night.

Then, Ekkehard knelt down on the pebbly ground of the lake, so that the waters closed over his head, and rising again after awhile, he stood there immovably with lifted arms, as if he were praying.

The moon now sank down behind the *Säntis*; a bluish light trembled over the old snow of the glaciers. A racking pain darted through Ekkehard's brain. The mountains around him began to rock and dance; a wailing sound streamed through the pine-woods, and the lake rose and stirred, and its waves were alive with thousands and thousands of black tadpoles.

But in soft, dewy beauty, the figure of a woman rose from the waters, and floated up to the top of the *Möglisalp*. There she sat on the soft, velvety grass, and shook the water from her long streaming tresses, and made herself a wreath of Alpine flowers.

In the depths of the mountains there arose a growling and trembling. The *Säntis* stretched himself out to his full height, and so did the old man to his right. Like gigantic Titans of old, they stormed at each other. The *Säntis* seized his rocks, and threw them over, and the old man tore off his head and flung it at the pyramid of the *Säntis*. Now the *Säntis* stood on the right side, and the old man was flying before him to the left;—but the lady of the lake looked on in smiling composure, and from her mountain-peak she mocked the stone combatants. And she shook her yellow curls, out of which there fell down a pearly waterfall; and it flowed down wilder and wilder, till it whirled the maiden with the liquid eyes back into the lake.

Upon this, the uproar and strife ceased suddenly. The old man took up his head, put it on again, and singing a sad, mournful strain, he returned to his old place. And the *Säntis* likewise had resumed his post, and his glaciers were glittering calmly as before.

— When Ekkehard awoke the next morning, he lay in his cavern, shaken with feverish cold. His knees felt as if they were broken.

The sun stood at his zenith, when *Benedicta* flitted past the cavern, and saw him lying there trembling, and wrapped in his wolf's skin mantle. His habit hung heavy and dripping over a piece of rock.

"When you again are going to fish for trout in the *Seelapsee*," said she, "you had better let me know, so that I can lead you. The goat-boy who met you before sunrise, told us that you had staggered up the hill like a man walking in his sleep."

She went and rang the midday bell for him.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ON THE EBENALP.

FOR six days Ekkehard was ill. The herds-men nursed him, and a decoction of the blue-gentian took away the fever. The Alpine air too, helped his recovery. A great shock had been necessary to restore his bodily as well as mental equilibrium. Now he was all right again, and heard neither voices, nor saw phantoms. A delicious feeling of repose and recovering health ran through his veins. It was that state of indolent, pleasant weakness, so beneficial to persons recovering from melancholy. His thoughts were serious, but had no longer any bitterness about them.

"I have learnt something from the mountains," said he to himself. "Storming and raging will avail nothing, though the most enchanting of maidens were sitting before us; but we must become hard and stony outside like the *Säntis*, and put a cooling armor of ice round the heart; and sable night herself must scarcely know how it burns and glows within."

By degrees, all the sufferings of the past months were shrouded and seen through a soft haze. He could think of the Duchess and all that had happened on the *Hohentwiel*, without giving himself a headache. And such is the influence of all grand and beautiful nature, that it not only delights and softens the heart of the looker-on, but that it widens the mind in general, and conjures back the days which have long since become part and parcel of the inexorable Past.

Ekkehard, had never before cast a retrospective glance on the days of his youth, but he now loved to fly there in his thoughts, as if it had been a paradise, out of which the storm of life had driven him. He had spent several years in the cloister-school at *Lorsch* on the Rhine. In those days he had no idea what heart- and soul-consuming fire could be hidden in a woman's dark eyes. Then, the old parchments were his world.

One figure out of that time had, however, been faithfully kept in his heart's memory; and that was brother *Conrad* of *Alzey*. On him, who was his senior by but a few years, Ekkehard had lavished the affection of a first friendship. Their rouds in life afterward became different; and the days of *Lorsch* had been forced into the background, by later events. But now, they rose warm and glowing in his thoughts, like some dark hill on a plain, when the morning sun has cast his first rays on it.

It is with the human mind as with the crust of this old earth of ours. On the alluvion of childhood, new strata heap themselves up, in stormy haste; rocks, ridges and high mountains; which strive to reach up to heaven itself, and the ground on which they stand, is forgotten and covered with ruins. But like as the stern peaks of the Alps, longingly look down into the valleys, and often overwhelmed by homesickness, plunge down into the depths from which they rose,—in the same way, memory loves to go back to youth, and digs for the treasures which were left thoughtlessly behind, beside the worthless stones.

So Ekkehard's thoughts now recurred often to his faithful companion. Once more he stood beside him, in the arched pillar-supported hall, and prayed with him beside the mausoleums of the old kings, and the stone coffin of the blind Duke *Thassilo*. With him, he walked through the shady lanes of the cloister-garden, listening to his words;—and all that *Conrad* had spoken then, was good and noble, for he looked at the world with a poet's eye, and it was as if flowers must spring up on his way, and birds carol gayly, when his lips opened to utter words sweeter than honey.

"Look over yonder!" *Conrad* had once said to his young friend, when they were looking down, over the land, from the parapet of the garden. "There, where the mounds of white sand rise from the green fields, there was once the bed of the river *Neckar*. Thus the traces of past generations run through the fields of their descendants, and 'tis well if these pay them some attention. Here, on the shores of the Rhine, we stand on hallowed ground, and it were time that we set to collecting that which has grown on it, before the tedious trivium and quadrivium, has killed our appreciation of it."

In the merry holiday-time, *Conrad* and he had wandered through the *Odenwald*, where, in a valley hidden by green drooping birch-trees, they had come to a well. Out of this they drank, and *Conrad* had said: "Bow down thy head, for this is the grove of the dead, and Ha-

gen's beech-tree and Siegfried's well. Here the best of heroes received his death-wound from the spear of the grim Hagen, which entered his back, so that the flowers around were bedewed with the red blood. Yonder, on the Sedelhof, Chriemhildis mourned for her slain husband, until the messengers of the Hunnic King came to demand the hand of the young widow." And he told him all about the princely castle at Worms, and the treasure of the Nibelungen, and the revenge of Chriemhildis, and Ekkehard listened with sparkling, eager eyes.

"Give me thy hand!" he cried, when all was over to his young friend. "When we have become men, well versed in poetry, then we will erect a monument to the legends of the Rhine. My heart is even now brimful with the material for a mighty song of the prowess of heroes, perils, death and vengeance, and I likewise know the art of the horny Siegfried, how he made himself invulnerable; for though there are no more any dragons to be slain in whose blood one could bathe, every one, who with a pure heart breathes the mountain air, and bathes his brow in the morning dew, is gifted with the same knowledge. He can hear what the birds are singing in the trees, and what the winds tell of old legends, and he becomes strong and powerful; and if his heart is in the right place, he will write it down for the benefit of others."

Ekkehard had listened with an amazed, half fearful surprise at the other's dashing boldness, and had said at last: "My head is getting quite dizzy when I listen to thee and how thou intendest to become another Homerus."

And Conrad had smilingly replied: "Nobody will dare to chant another Iliad after Homer, but the song of the Nibelungen has not yet been sung, and my arm is young and my courage undaunted, and who knows what the course of time may bring."

Another time they were walking together on the shores of the Rhine, and the sun, coming over the Wasgau Mountains, was mirrored in the waves, when Conrad said: "For thee I also know a song which is simple and not too wild, so that it will suit thy disposition, which prefers the notes of a bugle to the roar of thunder. Look up! Just as to-day the towers of Worms shone and glistened in the sun when the hero Waltari of Aquitania, flying from the Hunnic bondage came to Franconia. Here the ferryman rowed him over with his sweetheart and his golden treasure. Through yonder dark, bluish looking wood he then rode, and there was a fighting and tilting, a rattling and clashing of swords and spears, when the knights of Worms, who had gone out in his pursuit, attacked him. But his love and a good conscience made Waltari strong, so that he held out against them all, even against King Gunther and the grim Hagen."

Conrad then told him the whole legend with its details. "Around all large trees," he concluded, "wild, young sprouts shoot up in abundance; and so round the trunk of the Nibelungen a whole thicket has sprung up, out of which he who has got the talent can build up something. Couldst thou not sing the Waltari?"

But Ekkehard preferred at that time to throw pebbles, making them skim the water, and he only took in half the meaning of that which his friend had said. He was a devoted cloister-pupil, and his thoughts were as yet contented with the tasks which fell to his daily share. Time separated the two friends, and Conrad had to fly from the cloister school because he had once said that the logic of Aristotle was mere straw. So he had gone out into the wide world, nobody knew whither, and Ekkehard came to St. Gall pursuing his studies assiduously. There he had grown into a learned and sensible young man, deemed fit to become a professor, and he sometimes thought of Conrad of Alzey with something akin to pity.

But a good seed-corn may for a long time lie hidden in a human heart, and yet at last germinate and bud, like the wheat from Egypt's mummy-graves.

That Ekkehard now delighted in dwelling on these recollections was a proof that he had undergone a considerable change. And this was well. The caprices of the Duchess, and the unconscious grace of Praxedis, had refined his shy and awkward manners. The time of stirring excitement he had gone through during the invasion of the Huns had given a boldet flight to his aspirations; and had taught him to despise the paltry intrigues of petty ambition. Then his heart received a mortal wound, which

had to be struggled with and overcome; and so the cloister scholar, in spite of cowl and tonsure, had arrived at a happy state of transition, in which the monk was about to become a poet, and walked about like a serpent which has assumed a new covering, and only watches for an opportunity to strip off its shabby old coat against some hedge or tree.

Daily and hourly, when contemplating the ever-beautiful peaks of his mountains, and breathing the pure, fragrant Alpine air, it appeared a constant riddle to him, how he could ever have thought to find happiness in reading and poring over yellow parchment leaves, and how he then almost lost his reason on account of a proud woman. "Let all perish which has not strength to live," said he to himself, "and build up a new world for thyself; but build it inwardly; large, proud and wide,—and let the dead Past bury its dead!"

He was already walking about again quite cheerfully in his hermitage, when one evening after he had rung the vesper-bell, the master of the Ebenalp came to him, carrying something carefully in a handkerchief. "God's blessing be with you, mountain-brother," said he. "Well, you have had a good shaking-fit, and I came to bring you something as an after-cure. But I see that your cheeks are red and your eyes bright, so that it has become unnecessary."

He opened his handkerchief, and displayed a lively ant-hill,—old and young ants with a quantity of dry fir-leaves. He shook the industrious little creatures down the hill-side.

"If you had not been well, you would have had to sleep on that to-night," said he with a laugh. "That takes away the last trace of fever!"

"The illness is past," said Ekkehard, "Many thanks for the medicine!"

"You had better provide yourself against the cold, however," said the herdsman, "for a black cloud is hanging over the Brülltobel, and the toads are coming out of their holes; a sure sign that the weather is about to change."

On the next morning all the peaks shone out in a dazzling white cover. A great deal of snow had fallen. Yet it was still much too early for the beginning of winter. The sun rose brightly, and tormented the snow with his rays, so as to make it almost repent having fallen.

When Ekkehard that evening was sitting before his pine-wood torch, he heard a thundering noise, as if the mountains were toppling over. He started, and put his hand up to his forehead, fearing that the fever was coming back.

This time, however, it was no fancy of a sick brain. A hollow echo boomed forth from the other side, rolling through the glens of the Sigelsalp, and Maarwiese. Then there followed a sound like the breaking of mighty trees,—a clattering fall, and all was silent again. Only a low, plaintive hum could be heard all the night, coming up from the valley.

Ekkehard did not sleep; yet, since his experiences on the Seealpsee, he did not quite trust the evidence of his senses. In the early morning he went up to the Ebenalp. Benedicta stood before their cottage door and greeted him with a snow-ball. The herdsman laughed when questioned about the nightly disturbance.

"That music you will hear often enough," said he. "An avalanche has fallen down into the valley."

"And the humming?"

"That I suppose to have been your own snoring."

"But I did not sleep," said Ekkehard.

So they went down with him and listened. It was like a distant moaning coming up from the snow.

"If Pater Lucius of Quaradaves were still living," said Benedicta, "I should believe it to be him, as he had such a soft bear-like voice."

"Hush, thou wild bumble-bee!" cried her father. Then they went to fetch shovels and Alpine sticks, the old man likewise taking his hatchet, and accompanied by Ekkehard they followed the traces of the avalanche. It had fallen down from the Aesher, over earth and rock, breaking the low fir-trees like straw. Three mighty tors, looking down into the valley like sentinels, stopped the fall. There the snow had angrily heaped itself up, only a small part had fallen over. The chief bulk, broken to pieces by the violence of the encounter, lay about in fantastic masses. The herdsman stooped down, to place his ear on the snow; then he advanced a few paces, and thrusting his

mountain-stick in, he cried: "Here we must dig!"

And they shovelled up the snow for a considerable while, and dug a regular shaft, so that the snow walls on both sides rose high over their heads. They had often to breathe on and rub their hands during their cold work. Suddenly the herdsman uttered a shout of delight, echoed by Ekkehard, for now a black spot had become visible. The old man ran to fetch the hatchet; a few shovelful more and a shaggy object arose heavily, and, snorting and grunting, stretched out its forepaws, as if trying to shake off sleep; and finally it slowly mounted one of the tors, and sat down.

It was a huge she-bear, who, on a nightly fishing expedition to the Seealpsee, had been buried alive with her spouse. The latter, however, gave no sign of life. He had been stifled by her side, and lay there in the quiet sleep of death. Around his snout there was yet a half angry, half defiant expression, as if he had left this life with a curse on the early snow.

The herdsman wanted to attack the she-bear with his hatchet, but Ekkehard restrained him, saying: "Let her live! One will be enough for us!"

Then they drew the bear out, and together could hardly carry him. The she-bear sat on her rock gazing down mournfully, and uttering a plaintive growl; she cast a fearful look on Ekkehard, as if she had understood his interference in her behalf. Then she came down slowly, but not as if with hostile intentions. The men meanwhile had made a sling with some twisted fir-branches, in which to drag their booty along. They both stepped back, hatchet and spear in hand, but the bear waddled down over her dead spouse, bit off his right ear and ate it up, as a memorial of the happy Past. After this she approached Ekkehard walking on her hind-legs, who, being frightened at the prospect of a possible embrace, made the sign of the cross, and pronounced St. Gallus's conjuration against bears: "Go out and take thyself away from this our valley, thou monster of the wood. Mountains and Alpine glens be thy realm; but leave us in peace, as well as the herds of this Alm."

The she-bear had stopped, with a bitter melancholy look in her eyes, as if she felt hurt at this disdain of her friendly feelings. She dropped down on her fore legs, and, turning her back on the man who had thus banished her, walked away on all fours. Twice she looked back, before entirely disappearing from their sight.

"Such a beast has the intelligence of a dozen men, and can read a person's will in his eyes," said the herdsman. "Else, I should think you a saint, whom the inhabitants of the wilderness obey."

Weighing the paws of the dead bear in his hand, he continued: "Hurrah! that will be a repast. These we will eat together next Sunday with a dainty salad made of Alpine herbs. The meat will be ample provision for us through the winter, and for the skin we will cast lots."

Whilst they were dragging the victim of the avalanche up to the Wildkirchlein, Benedicta sang:

"And he who digs for snowdrops,
And whom fortune will befrend,
Will by chance dig a bear out,
And perhaps two, in the end."

The snow had been a mere soft sleet, which soon melted again. Summer came back once more to the mountains with heart-stirring warmth, and a peaceful Sabbath-quiet lay over the highlands. Ekkehard had regaled himself with the bear's paws at dinner, in company with the herdsman and his daughter. It was a savory dish, coarse, but strengthening, and well suited for inhabitants of the mountains. Then he mounted the top of the Ebenalp, and threw himself into the fragrant grass, from whence he looked up at the blue sky, enjoying his recovered health.

Benedicta's goats were grazing around him, and he could hear how the juicy Alpine grass was greedily munched between their sharp teeth. Restless clouds drifted along the hill-sides, and on a piece of white lime-stone, with her face toward the Sântis, sat Benedicta. She was playing on a queer sort of a flute. It was a simple and melodious air, like a voice from the days of youth. With two wooden milkspoons in her left hand she beat time. She was a proficient in this art, and her father would often say with regret: "Tis really a pity! She deserved to be called Benedictus, as she would have made a capital herdsman."

When the rythmical air came to an end, she gave a loud shout in the direction of the neighboring alp, upon which the soft tones of an Alpine horn were heard. Her sweetheart, the herdsman on the Klus, stood under the dwarf fir-tree, blowing the *ranz des vaches*,—that strange, primitive music, which, unlike any other melody, seems at first a mere humming sound, which an imprisoned bumble-bee, searching for an outlet, might produce, and that by and by rises and swells into that wondrous song of longing, love, and home-sickness, creeping into the very heart's core, filling it either with rapturous joy, or making it almost break with sorrow.

"I trow that you are quite well again, mountain-brother," cried Benedicte to Ekkehard, "as you are lying so contentedly on your back. Did you like the music?"

"Yes," said Ekkehard, "go on!"

He could scarcely gaze his fill on all the beauty around him. To the left, in silent grandeur, stood the Sântis, with his kindred. Ekkehard already knew them by their different names, and greeted them as his dear neighbors. Before him, a confused mass of smaller hills and mountains, green luxuriant meadows, and dark pine-woods lay extended. A part of the Rhine valley, bordered by the heights of the Aar Mountains and the distant Rhaetian Alps, looked up at him. A vapory stripe of mist indicated the mirror of the Bodensee, which it covered; and all that he saw was wide and grand and beautiful.

He, who has felt the mysterious influence which reigns on airy mountain-peaks, widening and ennobling the human heart, raising it heavenward, in loftier thoughts, he is filled with a sort of smiling pity when he thinks of those, who, in the depth below, are dragging tiles and sand together, for the building of new towers of Babel; and he will unite in that joyous mountain-cry, which according to the old herdsman, is equal to a *paternoster* before the Lord.

The sun was standing over the Kronberg, inclining toward the west, and deluging the heavens with a flood of golden light. He likewise sent his rays into the mists over the Bodensee, so that the white veil slowly dissolved, and in soft, delicate blue tints, the Untersee became visible. Ekkehard strained his eyes, and beheld a filmy dark spot, which was the island of Richensau, and a mountain which scarcely rose above the horizon, but he knew it well,—it was the Hohentwiel.

The *ranz des vaches* accompanied the tinkling of the cow-bells, and over the prospect was a continually increasing warmth of color. The meadows were steeped in a golden-brown green, and even the gray lime-stone walls of the Kamor were dyed with a faint roseate hue. Then, Ekkehard's soul also glowed and brightened. His thoughts flew away over into the Hegau, and he fancied himself once more sitting with Dame Hadwig on the Hohenstöffeln, when they celebrated Capps's wedding, and saw Audifax and Hadumoth, who appeared to him the very embodiment of earthly happiness, coming home from the Huns. There arose also from the dust and rubbish of the past, what the eloquent Conrad of Alzey had once told him of Waltari and Hiltgunde. The joyous spirit of poetry entered his mind. He rose and jumped up into the air in a way which must have pleased the Sântis. In the imagery of poetry the poor heart could rejoice over that which life could never give it—the glory of knighthood, and the felicity of wedded love.

"I will sing the song of Waltari of Aquitania!" cried he to the setting sun, and it was as if he saw his friend Conrad of Alzey, standing between the Sigelsalp and Maarwiese, in robes of light, and nodding a smiling approval to this plan.

So Ekkehard cheerfully set to work. "What is done here, must either be well done, or not at all, else the mountains will laugh at us," the herdsman had once said, to which remark he had then nodded a hearty assent. The goat-boy was sent into the valley to fetch some eggs and honey; so Ekkehard begged his master to give him a holiday, and intrusted him with a letter to his nephew. He wrote it in a cipher, well known at the monastery, so that no other persons could read it. The contents of the letter were as follows:

"All hail and blessings to the cloister-pupil Burkhard!

"Thou, who hast been an eye-witness of thy uncle's sorrow, wilt know how to be silent. Do not try to find out where he is now,

but remember that God is everywhere. Thou hast read in Procopius how Gelimer, the King of the Vandals, when he was a prisoner in the Numidian Hills, and when his misery was great, entreated his enemies to give him a harp, so that he might give voice to his grief. Thy mother's brother now begs thee to give to the bearer of this one of your small harps, as well as some sheets of parchment, colors and pens, for my heart in its loneliness also feels inclined to sing a song. Burn this letter. God's blessing be with thee! Farewell!"

"Thou must be wary and cautious, as if thou wert going to take the young ones out of an eagle's nest," Ekkehard said to the goat-boy. "Ask for the cloister-pupil, who was with Romeiss the watchman when the Huns came. To him thou art to give the letter. Nobody else need know about it."

The goat-boy, putting his forehead to his lips, replied, with a knowing look: "With us no tales are repeated. The mountain air teaches one to keep a secret."

Two days afterward he returned from his expedition, and unpacked the contents of his wicker-basket before Ekkehard's cavern. A small harp, with ten strings, three-cornered so as to imitate a Greek Delta; colors and writing material, and a quantity of clean, soft parchment-leaves with ruled lines, lay all carefully hidden under a mass of green oak-leaves.

The goat-boy, however, looked sullen and gloomy.

"Thou hast done thy business well," said Ekkehard.

"Another time I won't go down there," grumbled the boy, clenching his fist.

"Why not?"

"Because there is no room for such as I. In the hall I inquired for the pupil, and gave him the letter. After that, I felt rather curious to see what nice young saints those might be, who went to school there, with their monks' habits. So I went to the garden where the young gentlemen were playing with dice, and drinking, as it was a recreation day. I looked on at their throwing stones at a mark, and playing a game with sticks, and I could not help laughing, because it was all so weak and miserable. And when they asked me what I was laughing at, I took up a stone and threw it twenty paces further than the best of them, and cried out: what a set of green-beaks you are! Upon this, they tried to get at me with their sticks; but I seized the one next to me, and sent him flying through the air, so that he dropped into the grass like a landed mountain-rook; and then they all cried out that I was a coarse mountain-lout, and that their strength lay in science and intellect. Then I wanted to know what intellect was, and they said: drink some wine, and afterward we will write it on thy back! And the cloister-wine being good, I drank a few jugs full, and they wrote something on my back. I do not remember how it was all done for the next morning I had a very bad headache, and did not know any more about their intellect than I had done before."

Throwing back his coarse linen shirt, he showed his back to Ekkehard, on which with black cart-grease, in large capital letters the following inscription was written.

* Abbaticellani, homines pagani,
Vani et insani, turgidi villani."

It was a monastic joke. Ekkehard could not restrain a laugh. "Don't mind it," said he, "and remember that it is thy own fault as thou hast sat too long over thy wine."

The goat-boy, however, was not to be appeased so easily.

"My black goats are far dearer to me, than all those youekers together," said he, buttoning his shirt again: "But if ever I catch such a milksop on the Ebenalp, I will write something on his back with unburnt ashes, that he will not forget as long as he lives; and if he is not satisfied with that, he may fly down the precipice, like an avalanche in spring."

Still grumbling, the boy went away.

Ekkehard then took up the harp, and sitting down at the foot of the crucifix before his cavern, he played a joyous air. It was a long time since he had last touched the chords, and it was an unspeakable delight for him, in that vast solitude, to give vent in low tuneful melodies, to the thoughts and feelings that were oppressing his heart. And the fair lady *Musica* was *Poetry's* powerful ally; and the epic song of Waltari, which at first had approached him only in misty outlines, condensed itself into clearly

defined figures; which again grouped themselves into warm, life-glowing pictures. Ekkehard closed his eyes to see them still better, and then he beheld the Huns approaching; a race of nimble, merry horsemen, with less repulsive faces than those against whom he had himself fought but a few months ago; and they carried off the royal offspring from Franconia and Aquitania, as hostages; Waltari and the fair Hiltgunde, the joy of Burgundy. And as he struck the chords with greater force, he also beheld King Attila himself, who was of tolerable mien, and well inclined to gaiety and the joys of the cup. And the royal children grew up at the Hunnic court, and when they were grown up, a feeling of home-sickness came over them, and they remembered how they had been betrothed to each other, from the days of their childhood.

Then there arose a sounding and tuning of instruments, for the Huns were holding a great banquet; King Attila quaffed the mighty drinking-cup, and the others followed his example, until they all slept the heavy sleep of drunkenness. Now he saw how the youthful hero of Aquitania saddled his war-horse in a moon-lit night, and Hiltgunde came and brought the Hunnic treasure. Then he lifted her up into the saddle, and away they rode out of Hunnic thralldom.

In the background, in fainter outlines, there still floated pictures of danger, and flight, and dreadful battles with the grasping King Gunther.

In large bold outlines, the whole story which he intended to glorify in a simple, heroic poem, stood out before his inward eye.

That very same night, Ekkehard remained sitting up with his chip-candle, and began his work; and a sensation of intense pleasure came over him, when the figures sprang into life under his hand. It was a great and honest joy; for in the exercise of the poetic art, mortal man elevates himself to the deed of the Creator, who caused a world to spring forth out of nothing. The next day found him eagerly busying himself with the first adventures. He could scarcely account for the laws by which he regulated and interwove the threads of his poem, and in truth it is not always necessary to know the why and the wherefore of everything. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is horn of the Spirit," says St. John.

And if now and then a feeling of doubt and distrust of his own faculties came over him,—for he was timidly organized, and sometimes thought that it was scarcely possible to attain anything without the help of books and learned models,—then he would walk up and down the narrow path before his cavern, and riveting his looks on the gigantic walls of his mountains, he derived comfort and serenity from them; and finally said to himself, "In all that I write and conceive, I will merely ask the Sântis and the Kamor whether they are satisfied." And with these thoughts, he was on a good track; for the poetry of him who receives his inspiration from old mother nature will be genuine and truthful, although the linen-weavers, stone-cutters, or the whole of that most respectable brotherhood of straw-splitters, in the depth below, may ten thousand times declare it to be a mere fantastical chimera.

Some days were thus spent in industrious work. In the Latin verse of Virgil the figures of his legend were clothed, as the paths of the German mother-tongue struck him as being still too rough and uneven for the fair measured puce of his epic. Thus his solitude became daily more peopled. At first, he thought he would continue his work night and day, without any interruption; but the physical part of our nature will claim its rights. Therefore he said: "He who works must attune his daily labor to the course of the sun;" and when the shadows of evening fell on the neighboring heights, he made a pause, seized his harp, and with it ascended the Ebenalp. The spot where the first idea of writing the epic had entered his mind had become very dear to him.

Benedicte welcomed him joyfully, when he came for the first time with his harp.

"I understand you, mountain-brother," said she. "Because you are not allowed to have a sweetheart, you have taken to a harp to which you tell everything that's going on in your heart. But it shall not be in vain that you have become a musician."

Raising her hand to her mouth, she uttered a

clear, melodious whistle, toward the low-thatched cottages on the Klusalp, which soon brought over the herdsman her sweetheart with his Alpine horn. He was a strong and fine looking lad. In his right ear he wore a heavy silver ring, representing a serpent, suspended from which, on a tiny silver chain, hung the slender milkspoon, the herdsman's badge of honor. His waist was encircled by the broad belt, in front of which some monatrous animal, faintly resembling a cow, was to be seen. With shy curiosity depicted in his healthy face he stood before Ekkehard; but Benedicta said:

"Please to strike up a dance now, for often enough we have regretted that we could not do it ourselves; but, when he blows his horn he cannot whirl me round at the same time, and when I play on the flute, I cannot spare an arm."

Ekkehard willingly struck up the desired tune, being much pleased at the innocent merriment of these children of the mountains; and so they danced on the soft Alpine grass, until the moon rose in golden beauty over the Maarwiese. Greeting her with many a shout of delight, they still continued their dance; singing at the same time, alternately some simple little couplets.

"And the glaciers grew upward
Until nigh to the top,
What a pity for the maiden
If they'd frozen her up!"

sang Benedicta's lover, gayly whirling her round;

"And the storm blew so fiercely,
And it blew night and day,
What a pity for the cow-herd
If it had blown him away!"

she replied in the same measure.

When at last, tired with dancing, they rested themselves beside the young poet, Benedicta said: "Some day you will also get your reward, you dear, kind musiemaker! There is an old legend belonging to these mountains, that once in every hundred years a wondrous blue flower blooms on the rocky slopes, and to him who has got the flower the mountains open, and he can go in and take as much of the treasures of the deep as his heart desires, and fill his hat to the brim with glittering jewels. If ever I find the flower I will bring it to you, and you'll become a very, very rich man;"—for, added she, clasping the neck of her lover with both arms,—"I should not know what to do with it, as I have found my treasure already."

But Ekkehard replied, "Neither should I know what to do with it!"

He was right. He, who has been initiated in art, has found the genuine blue flower. Where others see nothing but a mass of rocks and stones, the vast realm of the beautiful opens to him; and there he finds treasures which are not eaten up by rust, and he is richer than all the money-changers and dealers, and purse-proud men of the world, although in his pocket, the penny may sometimes hold a sad wedding-feast with the farthing.

"But what then are we to do with the blue flower?" asked Benedicta.

"Give it to the goats or to the big bull-calf," said her lover laughingly. "They also deserve a treat now and then."

And again they whirled each other around in their national dances, until Benedicta's father came up to them. The latter had nailed the bear's skull, which had since been bleached by the sun, over the door of his cottage, after the day's labors were done. He had stuck a piece of stalactite between the jaws, so that the goats and cows timidly ran away, scared by the new ornament.

"You make noise and uproar enough to make the Sántia tremble and quake," cried the old master of the Alps. "What on earth are you doing up there?" Thus, good-naturedly scolding, he made them go into the cottage.

The Waltari song meanwhile proceeded steadily; for when the heart is brimful of ideas and sounds, the hand must hurry to keep pace with the flight of thought.

One midday, Ekkehard had just begun taking his usual walk on the narrow path before his cavern, when a strange visitor met his view. It was the she-bear, which he had dug out of the snow. Slowly she climbed up the steep ascent, carrying something in her mouth. He ran back to his cave to fetch his spear, but the bear did not come as an enemy. Pausing respectfully at the entrance of his domicile, she dropped a fat marmot which she had caught basking in the sunny grass on a projecting

stone. Was it meant as a present to thank him for having saved her life, or was it instigated by other feelings, who knows? To be sure, Ekkehard had helped to consume the mortal remains of her spouse;—could some of the widow's affection thus be transferred to him?—we know too little about the law of affinities to decide this question.

The bear now sat down timidly before the cavern, steadfastly gazing in. Then Ekkehard was touched, and pushed a wooden plate with some honey toward her, though still keeping his spear in his hand. But she only shook her head mournfully. The look out of her small, lidless eyes was melancholy and beseeching. Ekkehard then took down his harp from the wall, and began to play the strain which Benedicta had asked for. This evidently had a soothing effect on the deserted bear-widow's mind; for raising herself on her hind legs, she walked up and down, with rhythmical grace; but when Ekkehard played faster and wilder she bashfully cast down her eyes, as her thirty-years old bear's conscience did not sanction her dancing. Then, she stretched herself out again before the cavern, as if she wanted to deserve the praise which the author of the hymn in praise of St. Gallus bestowed on the bears, when he called them "animals possessing an admirable degree of modesty."

"We two suit each other well," said Ekkehard. "Thou hast lost what thou hast loved best in the snow, and I in the tempest,—I will play something more for thee."

He now chose a melancholy air which seemed to please her well, as she gave an approving growl now and then. But Ekkehard, ever inwardly busy with his epic, at last said: "I have thought for a long while what name I should give to the Hunnic queen, under whose care the young Hildgund was placed; and now I have found one. Her name shall be *Ospirin*, the godlike bearess. Dost thou understand me?"

The bear looked at him, as if it were all the same to her; so Ekkehard drew forth his manuscript and added the name. The wish to make known the creation of his mind to some living being had for a long while been strong within him. Here, in the vast solitude of the mountains, he thought that the bear might take the place which under other circumstances would have required some learned scholar. So he stepped into his block-house, and leaning on his spear, he read out the beginning of his poem; he read with a loud, enthusiastic voice, and the bear listened with laudable perseverance.

So he read further and further; how the knights of Worms, who persecuted Waltari, entered the Wasgau Forest, and fought with him,—and still she listened patiently; but when at last the single combat went on without end,—when Ekkefried of Saxony fell down into the grass a slain man, beside the bodies of his predecessors, and Hadwart and Patavrid, the nephews of Hagen, likewise shared the lot of their companions,—then the bear raised herself slowly as if even she had grown tired of so much bloodshed; and with stately steps strode down the valley.

In a solitary rocky crag on the Sigelsalp opposite was her domicile. Thitherward she directed her steps to prepare for the coming long sleep of winter.

The epic, however, which of all living beings, was first heard by the she-bear of the Sigelsalp, the writer of this book has rendered into German verse during the long winter evenings; and though many a worthy translator had undertaken this task before him, he yet did not like to withhold it from the reader, in order that he may see, that in the tenth century, as well as in later ages, the spirit of poetry had set up her abode in the minds of chosen men.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SONG OF WALTARI.

WHEN Attila was king amongst the Huns,—
Whose fame had sounded over lands and seas,
Whose valiant hordes had conquered many
kings,

Destroying all who ventured to resist,
And granting peace to those who bent their
necks

Low in the dust, before his mighty sword,
And paying heavy ransom thus were spar'd,—
One day the bugle sounded far and wide
Announcing that another war was near,
Calling the men to arms, and then to horse
To go where'er their leader should decree.
And Attila, when all had been prepar'd,

Spoke thus unto his men, who breathless stood
To hear what their great king would have to
say.

"Wearied of this long peace, I have resolved,
That though unask'd, and like enough to be
Unwelcome too, we yet will tarry not,
But pay a visit to the town of Worms,
Franconia's proud and noble capital."

Scarce had he ended, when a roaring about
Broke on the silence like a cataract,
Loud rose and wild their joyous, swelling cry,

"Long live the King! long live King Attila!"
Gay were the festivals then held at Worms
Where Gibich sat in his ancestral halls,

To celebrate the birth of his first son,
The heir which Heaven had denied him long.
But suddenly a pallor, icy cold,
Spread o'er his features, turning them to stone,

As if Medusa's head he had beheld;
For in that evil moment he had heard,
That from the Danube came a dreadful host
Of enemies, who soon would flood his land,

In numbers countless as the stars of heaven,
And swifter than the scorching desert winds.
In frighten'd haste a council then was held,
In which the wisest men the land possess'd

Were to decide what it were best to do.
And in this danger, one and all agreed,
That, as resistance were mere idle boast,
"Twere better not to irritate their foes

But offer tribute, and give hostages;
And rather give the something, which they
ask'd,

Than lose their all,—land, fortunes, with their
lives.

But as King Gibich's son, Gunther by name,
Was but a suckling yet, as hostage he
Could not be sent,—Sir Hagen in his place,
Gibich's own cousin, was selected then,

A young and stalwart knight, whose pedigree
Provd' his descent from noble, Trojan blood.
So, he was sent, with ample barga of gold
To make the peace with Attila the Hun.

In those same days, there reign'd in Burgundy,
King Herrieh with a strong and mighty hand;
Whose only child, the gentle Hildgund,
Was fairer far, and lovelier to behold,

Than any other maid in all the land
Whose future queen she one day was to be.
But when Franconia had obtain'd the peace,
The Huns, with all their concentrated force,

Approach'd the frontiers now of Burgundy;
And at their head tow'ring above the rest,
There rode the King, the dreaded Attila.
Behind him, pressing forward eagerly,

A body-guard of noble Hunnic chiefs.
The earth re-echoed with their horses' tramp,
The clashing of their swords frighten'd the air,
And in the fields, an iron wood of spears

Shone out with reddish light, like dewy meads,
On which the sun is casting his first rays.
And thus they scal'd the mountains, cross'd the
streams,

For nothing could impede their reckless speed.
Already they had pass'd the river Rhone,
And now came pouring in, a surging sea
Of men and riders, fearful to behold.

At Chalons sat King Herrieh, fearing naught,
When from the belfry rose the watchman's cry:
"I see a cloud of dust, foreboding ill,
Our enemies have come, and so beware,

And shut your houses ere it be too late."
The tale of how Franconia had escap'd
By paying tribute had reach'd Herrieh's ear,
Who now address'd his vassals in this way:

"Well do we know that brave and valiant men
Franconia holds;—and yet they did not dare
Resist the Huns, but made a treaty with
King Attila, and so I do not see

Why we, like fools, should risk to lose our lives.
One cherish'd daughter do I but possess—
Yet for my country's weal I'll offer her
As hostage to the Huns, to guard the peace."

Bare-headed and unarmed, his messengers
Then went to meet the Huns, and sans delay,
Into the presence of King Attila
They soon were brought, who did receive them

well

As was his wont,—to dissipate their fears,
And then with gracious mien address'd them
thus:

"Indeed, believe me, I myself prefer
A friendly treaty far, to bloody war;
I am a man of peace, and only fight
Against the wanton fools who dare to doubt

The power which I hold from Heaven's self:
Therefore, your Master's offer I accept."
This message then was brought unto the King,
Who now went out himself, accompanied

By a long train of heavy laden men,
Bearing the gold and jewels manifold
Which as a tribute to the Huns he paid.

And by the hand, fair as the morning star,
He led his only daughter, Hildgund.
The peace was sign'd,—farewell sweet Hildgund

The pearl of Burgundy, its hope and joy.
Full of content at this new treaty made,
King Attila now led his warriors brave
On to the west, to Aquitania
Where Alpher sway'd the scepter, strong and brave.

An only son, Waltari, was his pride
Who yet a boy, promis'd one day to be
All that a father's heart could wish to see.
Herrich and Alpher, old and faithful friends,
With many a solemn oath on either side
Had long decreed, that when the time should come
Their children's hands in wedlock should be join'd.

Sadly King Alpher brooded in his halls,
On that which it behov'd him now to do.
"Alack!" he cried, "that in my hoary days
I cannot find my death, by lance or sword;
But now that Burgundy has deign'd to crave
A shameful peace, such as Franconia's King
First did conclude,—what now is left to me,
But do the same?—dispatch my messengers
And offer bribes of gold,—and worse than all,
My only son as hostage to the foe!"

Thus spoke King Alpher, and so was it done.
Laden with gold the Huns returned home,
With Hagen, Hildgund and Alpher's son,
They gladly greeted their Pannonian home,
And here our captives led no evil life,
For Attila was not a cruel man

By nature;—so he had them treated well,
Almost as if they'd been his flesh and blood.
The maiden Hildgund, to his wife the Queen,
Ospirin was her name, intrusted was,
Whilst the two princes, he himself took care
To see well taught in all the warlike arts,
Neglecting nothing fitted for their rank.

And so they grew in years, and wisdom too,
Outstripping all in strength and witty speech,
For which the King did love them both alike
And placed them high above the noble Huns.
The German maiden, too, soon won the heart
Of Ospirin, the proud and haughty Queen.

The soft and winning ways of fair Hildgund
Did gain her confidence, until at last
She made her keeper of the treasure-room.
Next to the Queen she was in honor held;
Her slightest wish, scarce uttered, was obey'd.

Meanwhile King Gibich fell a prey to death,
So that his throne was now by Gunther held,
Who broke the treaty made with Attila,
And offer'd scoff and taunts instead of gold
Unto the messengers that he had sent.

As soon as Hagen heard this welcome news,
He fled by night, and safely reached the court
Of Gunther, who receiv'd him full of joy.
Great was the sorrow in the morning, when
King Attila first heard of Hagen's flight,
And with a cunning mien the Queen spoke thus:

"Oh Lord and spouse, I warn thee to beware,
Lest Walter, too, thy pillar of support
Try to escape, like to his faithless friend.
Therefore, I pray thee, follow my advice,
And to Waltari say with friendly speech:

In many battles thou hast prov'd thy arm
Strong and untiring in thy master's cause.
Therefore I fain would give thee now some sign
Of my approving love and gratitude.
Of all the noble Hunnic maidens here
I bid thee choose the best to be thy wife,
And what of goods and lands thou wilt demand
It shall be granted ere you say the word."

These words well pleased the King, and show'd
him how
A woman's cunning often hits the mark
Which has escap'd the prudent eye of man.
And so he bade Waltari come to him,
And told him all the Queen had said before.

But though his words be temptingly set forth,
Waltari guessing all that lay beneath,
And having long before form'd other plans,
With subtle speech his fears tried to dispel.
"Oh Prince, all I have done is quickly told,
And scarce deserves the kindly praise you deign
To lavish on my poor, though faithful deeds.
But if I were to follow your command,
And take a wife, my time would be engross'd
By other cares and duties manifold;
Which all would serve to make me turn away,
And leave the path of honor by your side.
For when you love a wife you dislike war,
Which is to tear you from her loving arms.
And so, my gracious lord, I do beseech
Not thus to banish me from his dear side.
And never, when you order me to fight
By night or day, my sword you'll idle find;
And in the midst of battle ne'er my eyes

Shall be found looking backward, toward the spot

Where wife and children I did leave behind,—
A thought to lame my arm and dim my eye.
Therefore, by your own valor and my own,
I beg you not to force this yoke on me."
Then Attila was touch'd, and in his soul
He thought, "Waltari never thinks of flight!"
Meanwhile rebellion dared to raise her head
In distant lands, amongst another tribe,
Against whose province war was now pro-claim'd,

And young Waltari then was nam'd chief
Of all the army; and it was not long
Before a battle waged long and fierce.
Full valiantly they fought the Hunnic hordes,
Filling the air with their redundant cries,
To which the trumpets join'd their piercing voice.

Like glaring sheets of lightning flew the spears,
Splitting the shields and helmets of the foe,
And as the pelting hailstones in a storm
So fell the arrows, swift and merciless.
And wilder still, and fiercer grew the fight,
Until they drew the sword, and man to man
they fought.

Then many a rider lay with fractur'd skull
Beside his horse, fell'd by the self-same sword.
And in the foremost ranks Waltari fought,
As if King Death himself with nimble scythe
Were mowing down his harvest,—thus he stood,
Filling with awe the hearts of all around,
And causing a wild flight where'er he turn'd,
So that the bloody victory was won.

And great the booty which they made that day.
Giving the signal then to rest themselves
Now from their arm'd dance, Waltari plac'd
A wreath of verdant oak-leaves on his head,
And all his men who saw it did the same.
And thus triumphantly they did return,
Each to his separate home, with gladsome heart.

And to Attila's palace Walter went,
Riding but slowly, like a weary man.
But when the servants saw him thus approach,
With eazer, curious looks, they hurried forth,
And seizing his good palfrey by the reins
They bade him welcome, offering their help
To rest him after all his past fatigues,
And putting questions to him 'bout the war,
And if their arms were crown'd with victory.

But scanty answers to these quests he made;
Then entering the hall he found Hildgund,
Who blushing receiv'd his proffer'd kiss,
Then hurried off to fetch a cup of wine
To still his thirst after so much fatigue.

Long was the draught he took, for as the earth
Gladly absorbs the rain after a long drought
So did the wine refresh his parch'd tongue.
Then clasping the fair maiden's hand in his,
For both knew well that they were long be-
troth'd,

He thus spoke out before the blushing maid:
"Many a year has softly glided by,
Whilst in captivity we long'd for home,
For though the cage that holds us, be of gold,
'Tis still a cage, and ne'er can I forget
The ancient promise which made thee my bride
In times of freedom, ere the Huns had come."
These words, like fiery arrows found their way
Into the ears of Hildgund, who to try,
The faith and truthfulness of him who spoke,
With tearful voice and flashing eye, replied:
"How darest thou dissemble thy true thoughts,
For ne'er thy heart did feel what says thy
mouth,

For thy proud heart is set on nobler game
Than the poor maiden whom thou mockest
now."

With steady eyes, that gaz'd a half reproach,
The valiant hero thus his speech resum'd:
"Far be deceit and falsehood from my lips,
Which never yet have utter'd one false word,
And verily thou know'st I love thee well,—
And if I in thy woman's soul could read,
I fain would tell thee something, secretly,
Whilst not a spying ear is list'ning near.
Fully convinc'd of having wrong'd her knight,
Hildgunde, weeping, fell upon her knees,
"Go where thou wilt, and I will follow thee,
Through grief and dangers, until Death us
part."

With gentle words and loving arms he rais'd
The weeping maiden; saying all he knew
To comfort her, and then reveal'd his plans:
"My soul has long been weary of this yoke,
And fill'd with yearning for my fatherland,
Yet never would I go without Hildgund,
My own beloved future wife and queen."
And smiling through her tears, Hildgund re-
plied:

"My lord, the words thou speakest I have
borne

For many years, a secret in my heart.
So let us fly then when and how thou wilt,
And our love will help us to surmount
All dangers that may rise in our path."
Then further Walter whisper'd in her ear:
"And as they have intrusted thee with all
The keys unto their treasures, I would have
Thee lay aside the armor of the King.
His helmet and his sword, a master-piece
Of foreign workmanship. Then go and fill
Two chests with gold and jewels to the brim,
So that thou scarce canst lift them off the
ground.

Besides, four pair of well-made leathern shoes,
—The way is long,—as many take for thee.
And from the blacksmith fetch some fishing-
hooks,

So that the lakes and rivers which we pass
May yield us fish, for our support and cheer.
All this, a week from this, let be prepar'd,
For then the King will hold a sumptuous feast,
And when the wine has sent them all to sleep
We two will fly away to the far west!"

The hour for the feast had come at last,
And in the hall, bedeck'd with colors gay,
Attila on his throne, in purple clad,
Presided o'er the feast; whilst round about,
On couches numberless, the others lay.
The tables scarce could bear the heavy load
Of all the dishes, pleasant to behold;

Whilst from the golden beakers issued forth
Enticing fragrant scents of costly wines.
The meal had now begun. With zealous grace
Waltari on himself the duty took
To act as host, encouraging the guests
To do full honor to the goodly cheer.

And when at last their appetites were sooth'd,
And all the tables from the hall remov'd,
Waltari to the King these words address'd:
"And now, my noble lord and king, I beg
To give your gracious leave without delay
That the carousing to the meal succeed."

Then dropping on his knees, a mighty cup,
Richly adorn'd with many a picture rare,
He thus presented to the King, who said:
"Indeed, my good cup bearer, you mean well
By thus affording me the ample means
To drown my thirst in this great flood of wine!"
Then laughingly he rais'd it to his lips,
And drank and drank, until the giant cup
Was emptied to the dregs, and fairly stood
The nail-test, as no single drop would flow
When upside down the beaker then was turn'd.

"Now, follow my example, all of you!"
The old carouser cried, with cheerful voice.
And swifter almost than the chased deer
The cup-bearers now hurried through the hall,
Filling the cups as soon as they were quaff'd,
Each trying in this tournament of wine
To get the better of his neighbors there.

Thus in short space of time, many a tongue
That often utter'd wise and prudent speech,
Began to stammer,—until by degrees,
The wine did conquer e'en the strongest men;
So that when midnight came, it found them all
A prey to drunken and besotted sleep.

With soft and careful voice, Waltari now
Call'd to Hildgund, and bidding her prepare,
Went to the stable then to fetch his horse,
Lion by name, his good and trusty steed
That stood awaiting him, pawing the ground,
And with dilating nostrils, bit the reins
As if impatient to display his strength.

Then on each side the treasure-laden chests
Were fasten'd carefully; some victuals too
Packed in a basket, had not been forgot.
First lifting up the maiden in whose hands
The reins he plac'd, Waltari followed her,
His red-plum'd helmet towering above
His massive armor, whose protective strength
Had stood the test of many fierce attacks.

On either side he wore a trusty sword,
Beside a Hunnic saber, short but sharp;
And in his hands both shield and lance he held.
Thus, well prepar'd 'gainst any chance attack
Waltari and his bride rode from the halls
Of Attila forever—full of joy.

All through the long and darksome night they
rode,
The maiden taking care to guide the steed,
And watch the treasure, holding in her hand
The fishing-rod, as her companion had
Enough to do to carry all his arms.

But when the morning sun cast his first rays
Upon the slumb'ring earth, they left the track
Of the broad highway, turning to the shade
Of lonely woods, and if the wish for flight
Had not been stronger in the maiden's heart
Than fear,—she fain would have shrunk back
Before the dangers which seem'd lurking there
Behind each tree; and when a branch but mov'd
Or when some hidden bird its voice did raise,

Her bosom heav'd, with half suppressèd sighs,
But on they rode, having to find their way,
Through pathless woods, and lonely mountain
glens.

Yet still they slept, in that vast banquet hall,
Until the sun stood high up in the sky,
When Attila, the King first did awake,
And rais'd his heavy head, clouded with wice,
Then slowly rose, and stepping to the door,
Call'd out with drowsy voice: "Ye men out
there,

Go find Waltari, quick, and bring him here,
That he may cheer his King with sprightly talk,
Presenting him the welcome morning cup."
The servants, to obey his order, went
In all directions, looking here and there,
Yet nowhere was Waltari to be found.
With trembling gait Dame Ospirin now came,
And from afar was heard her scolding voice,
"What in the name of wonder sills Hildgund,
That she forgets to bring my morning gown?"
Then there arose a whisper 'mongst the men,
And soon the Queen had guess'd the fatal truth,
That both their captives now had taken flight.
Loud was her grief with which she now ex-
claim'd,

"Oh cursèd be the banquet, curs'd the wine
Which so much mischief in one night has
wrought!

And yet I, who foressaw the coming doom,
Unheeded rais'd my warning voice in vain.
So now the strongest pillar of support
That propp'd the throne, Waltari too is gone."
Fierce was the anger which best the heart
Of Attila, who, tearing his gray locks
In his impotent rage, could find no words
In which to utter all that rag'd within.
During that day he neither ate nor drank,
In gloomy silence brooding o'er his loss,
Even at night his mind could find no rest,
For stubborn sleep refus'd to close his eyes.
So, tossing restlessly about, he lay
As if his blood were chang'd to liquid fire;
Then madly starting up, he left his couch
And pacing his dark chamber up and down,
His frantic grief in all his acts display'd.
But while in fruitless sorrow, thus the night
Crept by with stealthy, slowly measured tread,
Waltari with his lady-love rode on
In breathless silence, through the Hunnic lands.
But when the rising dawn announc'd the day,
King Attila did call the eldest Huns,
Whose hoary heads were signs of ripen'd wit,
Around his throne, and then address'd them
thus:

"He that shall bring Waltari back to me —
That cunning fox who has deserted us—
Him I will clothe in costly golden robes,
And cover him with gifts from head to foot,
So that his very feet shall tread on gold."
'Twas said in vain, for neither count nor knight
Nor page nor slave was found in all the land
Who had the courage to pursue a man
Renown'd for his valor and his strength,
Who never yet had found his match and peer,
Whose sword was ever crown'd with victory.
Thus all the King could say was said in vain,
And unavailing were both gold and speech.
Thus unpursued the lovers onward sped,
Trav'ling by night and resting in the day
In shady nooks and shelter'd mountain-glens,
Spending their time in catching birds and fish
To still their hunger, and to drive away
All idle fancies from their hearts and heads,
So that in all this time the noble knight
Not once the maiden wanted to embrace.
Full fourteen times the Sun had pass'd his
round

Since they had left the halls of Attila,
When in the ev'ning light, between the trees
They saw a sheet of water, flashing bright
And golden in the sunshine,—and at last
They gave a joyous welcome to the Rhine,
The noble river from whose vine-clad banks
The stately battlements and lofty towers
Of ancient Worms, Franconia's capital,
Rose proudly in the air. A ferry-man
Who then was loitering beside his boat,
Row'd them across, and as a fee receiv'd
Some fish which in the Danube had been caught
On that same morning by Waltari's hook.
As soon as they had reach'd the other side
Waltari spur'd his charger to a quicker pace.
The boatman, the next morning brought the fish
Unto the royal cook, who gladly took
The foreign ware, which, daintily prepar'd,
He serv'd that very day at the King's board.
Full of surprise King Gunther look'd at them,
Then turning to his guests he said aloud:
"In all the time that in Franconia I

Have sat upon the throne, I ne'er did see
A fish like these amongst the goodly fare
Upon my table; therefore tell me quick,
My worthy cook, whence these fair fish may
come?"

The cook denounc'd the boatman, who was
fetch'd,

And to the questions put, thus did reply:

"As I was sitting by the riverside
Just as the sun was slowly gliding down
Behind the hills,—the eve of yesterday,—
A foreign rider in full armor came
Out from the woods, looking so proud and bold,
As if he then and there came from the wars;
And though his armor was not light I trow
He yet did spur his horse to hurry on,
As if by useen enemies pursued.
Behind him, on the self-same steed, a maid
Fair as the sun, was seated, whose small hands
Did guide the animal, whose wondrous strength
I had full leisure to observe the while.
Besides this double freight of man and maid,
It bore two caskets, fasten'd to its sides,
Which, as it shook its arch'd neck, gave forth
A ringing, clinking sound of precious gold.
This man I row'd across, and got the fish,
Instead of copper payment, from his hands."
As soon as he had ended, Hagen cried:
"My friends, I bid ye all rejoice with me!
For surely 'tis my friend Waltari, who
Now from the Huns has like myself escap'd."
Loud were the shouts of joy which from all
sides

Did greet this welcome news; but full of greed
King Gunther, when the tumult had decreas'd,
With cunning speech the company address'd.

"I also, my good friends, bid you rejoice
With me, that I have liv'd to see the day
When the fair treasure, which my father gave
Unto the Huns,—a kindly providence
Has now sent back, and never be it said
That I had fail'd to profit by my luck."
Thus Gunther spoke, nor did he tarry long,
But choosing from his knights twelve of the best,
He bade them mount, and follow in this quest,
On which his heart and soul was madly fix'd.
In vain did Hagen, faithful to his friend,
Bid him beware, and try to turn his thoughts
To better aims,—his words did not avail;
For avarice and lust of gold had made
Their fatal entrance into Gunther's heart.
So from the gates of Worms the well-arm'd
troop

Rode onwards, following Waltari's track.
Meanwhile Waltari and his gentle bride
Had enter'd a dark wood, where mighty trees
Were giving shade and shelter from the heat.
Two rugged hills extended their steep peaks
In stern and gloomy grandeur heavenward;
A cool and shelter'd ravine lay between,
Blocked up by narrow walls of sandy rocks,
And cradled in a nest of trees and grass,
A very den for robbers, hard to take,
Which they no sooner spied than Walter said,
"Here let us rest, my love! For many nights
My eyes have tasted neither rest nor sleep."
Then taking off his armor, he lay down,
Resting his head upon the maiden's lap.
And further he continued: "While I sleep,
My own belovèd, keep a careful look
Into the valley, and if but a cloud
Of dust were rising in the distance, mind
To wake me with a soft and gentle touch
Of thy dear fingers. Do not startle me
All of a sudden, even though a host
Of enemies were coming at a time.
I fully trust thy loving eyes,"—and thus
He clos'd his own and soon was fast asleep.
Meanwhile King Gunther's greedy eye had
spied

The footprints of a solitary horse,
And with exulting joy he cried aloud:
"Come on, my faithful vassals! Ere the sun
Has sunk behind those hills, we shall have ta'en
Waltari with his stolen gold, I trow."
His face o'ershadow'd by a darkling cloud
Prince Hagen said: "Believe me, noble King,
That not so lightly you will vanquish him.
Oft did I see how valiant heroes fell,
Stretch'd to the ground by Walter's goodly
sword,

Which never miss'd its mark, nor found the
man
Who was his match in all the warlike arts."
Unheeded fell these words on Gunther's ear,
And in the heat of noon, they reach'd the glen,
Which as a stronghold nature had array'd.
With wakeful eyes Hildgundè kept her watch,
When suddenly she saw a cloud of dust
Rise in the distance, and could hear the tramp
Of swift approaching horses. So she laid
Her lily fingers on Waltari's hair,

And whispered in his ear: "Awake my love,
For I can see a troop of armèd men;
Their shields and lances glisten in the sun."
And from his drowsy eyes he rubb'd the sleep,
Then hastily he seiz'd his sword and shield,
Put on the armor, and thus stood prepar'd
For bloody fight, which was to follow soon.
But when Hildgunde saw the knights approach,
She threw herself despairing on the ground,
And with a wailing voice she cried aloud:
"Ah, woe is me! the Huns are coming here!
But rather than return a prisoner
A second time,—I prythee, my dear lord,
To kill me with thy sword;—so that if I
Shall never live to be thy wife, no man
Shall dare to make me his reluctant bride."
With soothing words, Waltari then replied:
"Be calm, my own, and banish needless fear.
For He, who was my help in former plight,
Will not desert me in my sorest need.
These are no Huns, my darling! Silly boys,
Not knowing what the danger they provoke
In youthful wantonness of stubborn pride."
Then with a merry laugh he cried aloud:
"Forsooth, look yonder, if I don't mistake
That man is Hagen, my alien friend!"
Then stepping to the entrance of the gorge,
The hero boldly uttered this proud speech:
"I tell ye that not one Franconian man
Shall bring the tidings home unto his wife
That, living, he had touch'd Waltari's gold,
And,"—but he did not end the haughty
speech,

But falling on his knees he humbly ask'd
God's pardon for his own presumptuousness.
Anon he rose, and letting his keen eye
Glance o'er the ranks of the approaching foes,
He said unto himself, "Of all these men
There is but one of whom I am afraid,
And that is Hagen, for I know his strength;
And that in cunning tricks there is no man
Can claim to be his equal, I believe—"
But whilst Waltari held himself prepar'd
Sir Hagen once again did warn the King:
"If you would hear my counsel, I advise
To send some messenger, and try to get
A peaceful issue; for may be that he
Himself is ready to give up the gold,
If not, there still is time to draw the sword."
So Gamelo of Metz, a stalwart knight,
Was sent as herald to Waltari then,
And soon accosted him, with this demand:
"Tell me, oh, stranger knight, whence thou dost
come.

What is thy name, and where thy home may
be?"

"First let me hear," Waltari then replied,
"Who is the man, whose orders to obey
Thou camest hither?" And with haughty mien,
Sir Gamelo now said: "Franconia's King,
Gnother by name, has sent me on this quest."
Waltari then resum'd: "What does it mean,
To stop and question peaceful travellers thus?
Waltari is my name, of Aquitain,
Whence, as a hostage to King Attila,
I once was sent whilst I was yet a boy;
And now, full tirèd of captivity,
I'm turning back to liberty and home."
"If that is so," Sir Gamelo replied,
"I've come to bid thee to deliver up
Thy golden treasure, with yon damsel fair,
And thy good steed, unto my lord and King;
Who, under these conditions, will be pleas'd
To grant thee life and freedom unimpair'd."
With anger flashing from his dark-blue eyes,
Waltari, when he heard this offer made,
Loudly exclaim'd: "Think ye that I'm a fool?
How can thy King claim what is not his own,
Commanding me as if he were a god,
And I his wretched slave? As yet my hands
Are free and without fetters,—yet, to prove
My courtesy unto thy royal lord,
I willingly now offer him herewith
A hundred bracelets of the purest gold."
With this fair offer Gamelo return'd,
And Hagen, when he heard it, eagerly
Said to the King: "Oh, take what he will give,
Lest evil consequences should ensue.
A fearful dream, which came to me last night,
Does fill my soul with an unusual dread
Of coming ill. I dreamt, oh, gracious lord,
That we together hunted in the wood,
When suddenly a monstrous bear appear'd,
Attacking you with such wild vehemence,
That ere I yet could come to rescue you
The bear had torn the flesh up to the hip
Of your right leg; and when with headlong
haste
I rais'd the lance, it struck me with one paw,
And scratch'd my eye out." But with proud
disdain

The King replied: "I now see verily,

That like thy father, much thou dost prefer
To fight with thy smooth tongue, than with
thy sword."

With burning pain and anger Hagen heard
These bitter words of ill deserved blame.
Yet, keeping a calm outside he replied:
"If that be your opinion, I'll refrain
From joining in this fight against my friend."
So leading out his horse to a near hill,
He there sat down to watch the bloody game.
Then Gunther turn'd to Gamelo once more.
"Go, then, and tell him that we claim the whole.
And should he still refuse to give it up,
I trow that thou art brave and strong enough
To force and throw him with thy valiant
sword."

And eager to obey his King's demand,
Sir Gamelo rode out with joyous speed;
And from the distance yet he rais'd his voice,
And cried: "Hallo, good friend, I bid thee
haste,
And give the whole of thy fair treasure now
Into my hands, for my good lord and King."
Waltari heard, but did not deign to speak,—
So louder yet the knight, approaching him,
Repeated the same quest: "Out with thy gold!"
But now Waltari, losing patience too,
Cried out with angry voice: "Leave off thy
noise!

One verily might think I were a thief,
Who from thy King had robb'd the treasure
here.

Say, did I come to you with hostile mind,
That thus you treat me like an outlaw'd man?
Did I burn houses? or destroy the lands?
Do other damage?—that you hunt me down
Like some obnoxious, hurtful beast of prey?
If then to pass your land, one needs must pay,
I'll offer you the double now, to still
The avarice and greed of your proud King."
But Gamelo, with mocking tone replied:
"Yet more than this I trust you'll offer us.
I'm weary now of talk,—so guard your life!"
And covering his arm with threefold shield,
He threw his lance, which would have struck
the mark,

If, with a subtle movement, Walter had
Not turn'd as side, so that it glided past,
Full harmless by, to fasten in the ground.
"Look out, here comes the answer,"—with
these words

Waltari hurl'd his spear, which pierc'd the shield
Of Gamelo,—and to his hip did nail
The luckless hand which just had miss'd its aim.
The wounded knight then letting go his
shield,—

With his remaining hand tried hard to wrench
The spear out of his side; but ere he could
Succeed in his endeavor, Walter's sword
Had stabb'd him to the heart;—so down he
sank,

Without a groan, into the bloody grass.
No sooner did his nephew, Scaramund,
Behold his uncle's fall, when loud he cried:
"Leave him to me!—for either I will die,
Or have revenge for my dear kinsman's blood!"
So on he gallop'd, up the narrow path
That to Waltari's rocky fortress led.
Gnashing his teeth with inward fury, that
Could find no other vent, he cried aloud:
"I have not come to fight for thy mean gold,
But I will have revenge for him who fell
Before my very eyes,—slain by thy hand."
But with unruffled calm Waltari spoke,
"If mine the fault of that which caus'd the
death

Of him thou call'st thy uncle,—may I fall
Pierc'd to the heart by thy own lance or sword."
Scarce had he ended, when in hasty speed,
That work'd its own destruction, Scaramund
Had thrown his lances both; and one was
caught

By Walter's shield, whilst far beyond the mark
The second in some mighty oak stuck fast.
With naked sword, in blind and furious wrath
He then bore down upon his enemy,
To split his head with one resounding blow,
Which made the sparks flash forth indignantly,
But could not pierce Waltari's cap of steel;
A very masterpiece of workmanship.
Before the echo of this mighty blow
Had died away Waltari's spear had thrown
The rider to the ground; and though he ask'd
For mercy, 'twas too late; for with one cut
His head was sever'd from his trunk; and thus
He shar'd the doom that he could not revenge;
And with his uncle shar'd an early grave.
"Forward!" was Gunther's cry, "and don't desist

Before the worn-out man shall render up
Both life and gold!" Then Werinhard rode
forth

To try his chance against yon fearful man.
He was no friend of lances; all his skill
Lay in his bow; and from the distance he
Sent many an arrow 'gainst his stalwart foe;
But he, well cover'd by his massive shield,
Took ample care not to expose himself;
So that, before Sir Werinhard came near,
His quiver had been emptied all in vain;
And full of anger at this first defeat,
He now rush'd forward with his naked sword.
"And if my arrows are too light for thee,
Then let me see what this my sword will do!"
"Long have I waited here impatiently
For thy approach," Waltari made reply,
And like a flash of lightning his good spear
Flew through the air, the harbinger of death.
Missing Sir Werinhard, it hit the horse,
Which, rearing backward in its agony,
Threw off its rider and then fell on him;
And ere Sir Werinhard could raise himself
Waltari's hand had seized his yellow locka.
Stern and relentlessly he did the same
For him as for the others, and his head
Fell to the ground, where his companions lay.
But Gunther still was loth to quit the fight,
So, as fourth combatant, came Ekkefried,
He who had slain the Duke of Saxony,
And liv'd an outlaw since, at Gunther's court.
Proudly he sat upon his red roan steed;
And ere for serious fight he did prepare,
With taunting word and mocking speech he
tried

To rouse Waltari from his outward calm.
"Say, art thou human, or some imp of hell,
Who, with his magic tricks, by demons taught,
Has thrown and vanquish'd better men than he?
But now, believe me, they will be aveng'd!"
But he, with a contemptuous laugh, replied:
"Forsooth I know the meaning of such stuff,
And am not frightened by thy idle boasts.
Come on, and I will teach thee my dark tricks,
And prove my being master of my art!"
"I will not keep thee waiting,—so beware!"
And with these words, the Saxon Ekkefried,
With dextrous hand, his iron spear did throw,
Which striking 'gainst Waltari's shield was
broke

To pieces, like some wand of brittle glass.
And with another laugh, Waltari cried:
"Take back thy present, and I warrant thee
Thou'lt find the goblin knows to hit the mark!"
A moment later, and his fearful spear,
Cleaving the shield, had pierc'd unto the heart
Of Ekkefried, granting a speedy death.
And as his lawful prize Waltari led
His goodly horse away unto the spot
Where Hildgund still was watching anxiously.
The fifth who came to undertake the fight,
Hadwart by name, had only brought his sword,
With which he hoped to kill this dreadful foe.
And to the King, he said before he went:
"If this my sword should be victorious,
I prithee, let we have Waltari's shield!"
Spurring his horse, he rode unto the spot
Where the dead corpses lay blocking the path;
So, jumping to the ground, he cried aloud:
"Come out then from thy corner, thou sly
rogue,

Who like a false envenom'd snake dost lie
In ambush, hoping thus to save thy life,
Which I am come to take with my good sword.
And as thy dainty, many-colored shield
Will be my booty, I command thee now
To lay it down, lest it might damag'd be.
And if it were decreed that I should fall,
Thou never wilt escape with thy base life;
As my companions will avenge my death."
With calm composure Walter thus replied:
"Indeed, I would not want my trusty shield,
Which more than once to-day has sav'd my life.
Without that shield, I should not now stand
here."

"Then wait, and see me take it!" Hadwart
cried,
"Thy steed, and aye, thy rose-cheek'd damsel,
too,
Wilt soon be mine! Come out then, my brave
sword!"

Then there began a fighting, as the like
Had ne'er been seen before in yonder wood;
So that with wonder and amazement those
Franconians stood, and looked on the while.
At last, to end the combat with one stroke,
Hadwart dealt such a blow as must have fell'd
Waltari to the ground, if with his spear
The blow he had not parried, and anon
He wrench'd the weapon out of Hadwart's hand
And threw it far away over his head.
In ignominious flight Sir Hadwart then
Tried hard to save his life, but Alpers' son,
With swifter feet did follow on his heels;
"Stop yet awhile, thou hast forgot thy shield!"

And with these words he rais'd the iron lance
And struck it through Sir Hadwart's corselet, so
That as he fell, he pinn'd him to the ground.
The sixth, who volunteer'd his chance to take
Was Hagen's nephew, young Sir Patavid.
On seeing him prepar'd to meet his doom,
His uncle feeling pity with the lad,
With persuasive speech tried hard to turn
His daring fancy from this bold endeavor:
"Oh, nephew, see how death is lurking there,
And do not waste your fresh and youthful life
Against yon man, whom you will conquer not."
But Patavid not heeding this advice,
Fearlessly went, spur'd by ambitious pride.
With mournful heart Sir Hagen sat apart,
And heaving a deep sigh he spoke these words:
"Oh, ever greedy youth! oh, baneful thirst of
gold,
I wish that hell would gather all her golden
dross,

And set the dragons to watch over it,
Instead of tempting wretched human souls
Into perdition. There's none has got enough,
And to gain more they risk their very lives
And souls into the bargain. Wretched fools!
That dig and toil and scrape, and do not see
That they are often digging their own grave,
Beside which death stands grinning. Say, what
news

Shall I take back to greet thy mother's ears,
And thy poor wife, who waits for thy return?"
And as he thought of her despairing grief,
A solitary tear would trickle down:
"Farewell, farewell forever, nephew mine!"
He cried in broken accents, which the winds
Did carry off unto Waltari's ear.

Whose heart was touch'd by his old friend's
complaint,
And thus address'd the bold, tho' youthful
knight:

"I warn thee, my brave lad, to spare thy
strength
For other deeds and not to risk the fate
Of those who came before thee,—stalwart
knights,

For I should grieve to lay thee by their side."
"My death does not regard thee; come and fight
Forsooth, I did not come for idle talk,"
Was Patavid's reply, and as he spoke
His whizzing spear came flying through the air,
But by Waltari's own 'twas beaten off
With such a mighty stroke, that e'en before the
feet

Of fair Hildgund it fell, close by the cave.
A cry of fear escap'd from her lips.
Then from her rock she anxiously look'd forth
To see whether her knight still kept the ground,
Another time he rais'd his warning voice,
Bidding his enemy desist from further fight,
Who, heedless of these words, still forward
press'd,

With naked sword in hand, hoping to fell
Waltari with one strong and dextrous blow.
But he bent down his head so that the sword,
Not meeting with resistance, cut the air,
And dragg'd him who held it to the ground;
And ere that he could rise, Waltari's sword
Had dealt the death-blow with unsparring hand.
Quick to avenge his friend, Sir Gerwig now
Did spur his noble steed, which with one bound
Jump'd o'er the bodies that block'd up the way.
And ere Waltari yet could free his sword
From his last foe, Sir Gerwig's battle-axe
(The favorite weapon of Franconians then)
Flew through the air, a fearful sight to see.
Quicker than thought Waltari seiz'd his shield
To guard himself,—and with one backward
bound

Took up his trusty lance; and thus prepar'd,
Unflinching stood, awaiting the attack.
No single word was said on either side;
Each thirsted for the fight with hungry soul;
One to avenge the death of his dear friend,
The other to defend his life and gold,
And her he valued more, far more than both.
Full long they fought with unrelenting zeal,
A well-matched pair, until Waltari's lance
Lifting the shield of his antagonist,
Did find its way into his corselet;
And with a hollow groan he reel'd back,
Expiring on the spot where he fell down.
With fear and wonder the Franconians saw
Waltari's prowess and their friend's defeat;
So that at last they all besought the King
To cease from further fight; but he replied:
"Ah, well, indeed, I never would have thought
To find such weak and craven-hearted men
Amongst my knights that I deem'd brave before.
What! does misfortune make your spirits fail,
Instead of raising them to boiling heat?
And do you mean to say we should return
Conquered and beaten by one single man?"

Nay, if before I only wished to have
The stranger's gold, I now will have his life!
The blood which he has shed does cry for
blood!"

He ceas'd, and at his words new courage fill'd
The hearts of his brave knights, so that now each
Would be the first to try the bloody game,
And in a file they now rode up the path.
Meanwhile, Waltari there to cool his brow
Had ta'en his helmet off, and hung it up
On the strong branch of a tall stately oak;
And as the fragrant breezes cool'd his brow
He felt new strength and vigor in his limbs.
But while he thus stood breathing the fresh air,
Sir Randolf on his fiery steed advanc'd
And came upon him with such sudden speed,
That with his iron bar quite unawares
He would have pierc'd Waltari where he stood,
If that the armor which did shield his breast
Had not been forg'd by Weland's dextrous
hands,

And thus resisted Randolf's fierce assault,
Not having time to don his cap of steel,
He seiz'd his shield as Randolf rais'd his sword,
And dealt a cut, which, grazing Walter's head,
Cut off some locks of his abundant hair.
The second blow now struck against the edge
Of Walter's shield, with such fierce vehemence
That it stuck fast, and ere that he could wrench
It from this prison-hold, Waltari's hand
Had dragg'd him from the saddle to the ground.
"Ha!" cried he, "thou shalt pay for my shorn
locks

With thine own pate!" and as he said the words,
Sir Randolf's head lay bleeding on the ground.
The ninth who now rode up in furious haste
Was Helmnod, bearing neither sword nor lance,
But on a long and twisted cord instead
A heavy trident set with many spikes.
And in the rear, his friends held the one end
Of the strong rope, hoping that when the spikes
Had taken hold of Walter's shield, to drag
Him to the ground with their united force.
"Take care of thy bald head!" Sir Helmnod
cried,

"For death is coming toward thee from above!"
And as he spoke, he threw the curious arms
With practic'd hands,—nor did he miss the aim.
Right in the middle of Waltari's shield
It fix'd its iron claws, and a loud cry
Of joyous exultation fill'd the air,
As this success was noted by the rest,
Who now, e'en aided by the King himself,
Pull'd hard with all their might,—yet 'twas in
vain,

For like some giant oak he kept the ground
Until, wearied at last with such vain sport,
He suddenly let go his faithful shield.
So, trusting merely on his coat of mail
And his own sword, he madly rush'd along
And with one fearful blow he split the head
And neck of Helmnod, through his cap of steel.
Before Sir Trogus yet could free himself
From the entangling rope that held him fast,
To fetch his arms, which all had laid aside
Not to be cumber'd, as they pull'd the rope,—
Waltari with one slash of his fierce sword
Had lam'd him on both legs, and ta'en his shield,
Before Sir Trogus could stretch out his hand
With which he now took up a mighty stone
And hurl'd it with such vigor through the air
That it did break his own strong shield in twain.
Then, crawling onward through the sheltring
grass,

Sir Trogus stealthily regain'd his sword,
Which joyfully he rais'd above his head.
His hero's heart still long'd to die in fight,
And so he cried aloud: "Oh, that a friend
Were near to help me, or my trusty shield
Had not been robb'd! I tell thee, haughty
knight,

Not thine own bravery, but want of chance
Has conquer'd me. Come on and take my
sword!"

"Thy wish shall be fulfill'd!" Waltari cried,
And quick as lightning he flew down the path,
Cut off the hand that vainly raised the sword,
So that it fell, a useless member now
Unto the ground. But ere the final blow
Which was to end his soul's captivity,
He yet had dealt, Sir Tannast gallop'd down
To help his friend in this dread hour of need.
Full angrily Waltari turn'd round,
And with a ghastly wound beneath his arm
Sir Tannast fell, bleeding beside his friend,
And murmuring, "farewell, beloved maid!"
He breath'd his last, and with a smile he died.
Full of despair, Sir Trogus rais'd his voice
To heap such bitter words and sharp insults
Upon Waltari's head, that he, inflam'd
With angry rage, to stop his slanderous tongue—
Now throttled him with his own chain of gold.

When all his knights had thus been slain, the
King

In bitter sorrow fled unto the spot
Where Hagen sat in gloomy solitude;
And shedding scalding tears of rage and grief,
He tried to touch his heart with subtle speech,
And thus to rouse him from his apathy.
But cold as ice, Sir Hagen made reply:
"Full well thou know'st, oh King, that the
pale blood

Which from my fathers I inherited,
Whose craven hearts would shrink with coward
fear

When they but heard of war, does hinder me
To fight with yonder man. 'Tis thy own
speech

Which now does lame my arm. I cannot
fight."

Again the King tried to appease his wrath,
Humbling himself by asking pardon now,
And promising that if he would but fight,
He would reward him amply, ending thus:
"Indeed, I never shall survive the day,
On which the burning shame will be reveal'd,
When in the streets and high-roads 'twill be said,
'One single man did kill a host of knights,
And there was none who would avenge the
deed!"

Still Hagen hesitated, thinking how
Waltari once had been his bosom friend,
His brother almost,—but when now at last
His King and master fell upon his knees,
And with uplifted hands besought his help,
Then the ice melted which had bound his heart
In chains of pride and hatred, and he felt
That if he still refus'd, his honor would
Forever be defil'd, and so he spoke:

"Whate'er thou biddest me to do, my King,
It shall be done, and what no bribe on earth
Could have obtain'd, the faith I owe to thee
Has now accomplish'd,—but before I try
My sword and strength against my quondam
friend,

I fain would find some way to drive him from
His present stronghold, which does make his
strength.

For whilst he keeps that place, 'tis certain
death

To come but near him. Ah, believe me King,
That never even to avenge the death
Of my fair nephew would I raise my hand
Against my well-tried friend. Only for thee,
To save thee from the shame of this defeat,
I sacrifice my friendship. Let us hence,
So that, imagining that we were gone,
He too will ride away, suspecting naught;
And in open field, quite unprepar'd,
We will attack him; and I warn thee that
The fight will not be easy, even so."
This cunning plan did please the King so well,
That he embrac'd Sir Hagen on the spot,
And then they went away to hide themselves,
Leaving their horses grazing in the woods.

The sun had disappear'd behind the hills,
And now our hero, wearied from the fight,
Stood there, revolving in his inmost heart
Whether 'twere best to rest and pass the night—
In his good stronghold, or to hurry on
And find his way out of this wilderness.

His soul misgave him when he saw the King
Kissing Sir Hagen, with exulting mien.
Yet, after he had thought of this and that,
He made resolve 'twere better to remain,
So that it were not said that he had fled
Like some base criminal at fall of night.
So, cutting down from the surrounding trees
And thorny brambles many a branch and bough,
He made himself a strong and solid hedge,
To guard him 'gainst an unforeseen attack—
With deep-drawn sighs he then walk'd to the
spot

Where all the corpses lay his hand had fell'd,
And, putting back each head unto its trunk,
He threw himself down on his knees and prayed:

"Oh, Lord of hosts, whom all the world obeys,
Without whose holy will nothing is done,
I thank Thee that to day Thou wert with me
Helping me to defeat mine enemies,
Who thirsted all to drink my guiltless blood.
Oh, Lord, whose mighty word destroyeth sin,
Yet taketh pity on us sinners all,
I pray Thee now to show Thy mercy rare
On these my hand has slain, so that their souls
May enter all into Thy paradise,
And I may meet them there when my day
comes,"

Thus Walter pray'd; then, rising from the
ground,

He went to fetch the horses of the dead,
And tied them all together with a cord
Made of some willow-branches growing near.
Then, taking off his armor, he lay down

Upon his shield to rest his weary limbs;
And speaking tender words unto Hildgund,
He bade her watch his slumbers as before,
For much he needed some refreshing sleep.
Thus, all the night, the fair and faithful maid
Sat by his side, driving the sleep away,
That tried to steal upon her unawares,
By softly singing little bits of song.
Before the dawn of day Waltari rose,
And telling her to sleep now in her turn,
He paced the ground with calm and even steps,
His lance in hand, ready for an attack.

And thus the night wore on, and morning came;
A soft, refreshing mist fell down as dew
Hanging in pearly drops on grass and trees.
Then from the corpses, with all reverent care,
Waltari took the armors, sword and all,
Leaving their costly dresses, though, untouch'd.
Four of the chargers then were laden with
His rightful booty, whilst the other two
Were destin'd for himself and his fair bride.

Yet ere they started, mounting on a tree,
Waltari, with his falcon-eyes survey'd
The scenery around, but seeing naught
Which might have rous'd suspicion, he resolv'd
To wait no more, and thus they now rode forth,
Hildgund, with the booty-laden steeds
Riding ahead, whilst Walter clos'd the train.
Scarce were they gone when Hildgund, looking
back,

Beheld two stalwart knights approaching fast,
And, paling with dismay, she cried aloud:
"Oh, dear, my Lord! The end is coming now;
I pray thee fly, and save thy precious life!"
Turning his head, Waltari saw the foe,
And said, with tranquil mien: "no man shall
say,

Waltari fled, whilst he could wield the sword!
Here, take the reins of King Attila's horse
And save the golden treasure. Yonder wood
Will give thee shelter, whilst I will accost
The strangers thus, as it becomes a knight."
The maiden tremblingly obey'd his words,
Whilst he prepar'd his trusty lance and shield.
Yet from a distance Gunther call'd out:
"Now thou no more canst hide between the
rocks,

Stand still and let us see whether the end
Will not reveal another countenance!
And whether fortune is thy hired maid!"
But with contemptuous mien Waltari turn'd
His head away, as if he had not heard,
And looking full in Hagen's face, he said:

"Oh, Hagen, my old friend, what has occur'd,
That as an enemy you come to me?
Hast thou forgot the tears which thou hast shed
When lying in my arms for the last time,—
That thus thou treatest me, thy faithful friend?
Indeed, I thought the day that we should meet
Would be a joyous one for thee and me,
And that with open arms and loving words
Thou wouldst accost me. Oh, how oft my
heart

Would beat with restless longing when I
thought

Of thee, so far away, yet still my friend.
Hast thou forgotten, then, our boyish days,
When both did work and strive for one great
aim?

Then when I look'd into thine eyes I felt
As if my parents and my home were near,
As if I were not quite forsaken yet.
And so I kept my love and faith for thee,
And therefore pray thee to depart in peace,
And as a friendly gift I'll fill thy shield
With gold and jewels even to the brim."
But with a somber look and angry voice
Sir Hagen to this speech now made reply:
"Indeed, I think that thou didst break the
faith

When by thy cruel sword my nephew fell,
His life, and not thy gold, I claim from thee,
And will hear naught of friendship past and
gone."

Thus speaking, he alighted from his horse,
As likewise did Waltari and the King;
And so they stood prepar'd, two against one.
Sir Hagen was the first to break the peace,
And with an able hand he threw the spear,
Which proudly pierc'd the air with hissing
sound;

But without deigning e'en to turn aside,
Waltari stood extending his good shield,
From which the lance rebounded with such
force

As if its point had struck against a wall of
stone.

Then Gunther threw his spear with good in-
tent,

But with such feeble arm that it fell down,
Scarce having touch'd the rim of Walter's
shield.

Their lances being gone, both drew the sword,
And with it level'd many a well-aim'd blow,
Which all were parried by Waltari's lance.
At last an evil thought struck Gunther's mind,
And whilst Sir Hagen fiercely onward press'd,
He stealthily bent down to seize his lance.
But just when he had seized the oaken shaft,
Waltari, throwing bold Sir Hagen back,
Did place his foot on the coveted spear.
Full of diamay, the King stood there aghast,
Not moving hand or foot, so that his life
Was sore endanger'd; when Sir Hagen sprang
With deerlike swiftness forward, ahielding him,
So that, recovering by slow degrees,
He once again could join in the attack,
That waged fiercer now than e'er before;
Yet still Waltari stood like some strong rock,
Unmov'd and calm amidst the breaker's roar.
But from his eyes shot forth such scathing looks,
And on his brow, in triple sisterhood,
Sat fury, hatred and the fierce desire
To die or gain the bloody victory.

At last, to Hagen he address'd these words:
"Oh, hawthorn tree,* I do not fear thy prick!
And let thy vaunted strength be what it may,
I mean to wreathe with thee." At these words,
He hurl'd his lance with such unerring aim
That part of Hagen's armor was torn off.
Then turning suddenly to Gunther, he,
With one astounding cut of his good sword,
Did sever the right leg from Gunther's frame.
Half dead, King Gunther fell upon his shield;
But when Waltari just had rais'd his arm,
To deal the mortal blow, Sir Hagen saw
The peril of his King, and with one bound
He threw himself between, so that the sword
Fell on his helmet with a clashing sound,
And then was shiver'd into several bits.
With angry frown, Waltari threw the hilt
Contemptuously aside, for though of gold,
What could it now avail him? Then he rais'd
His iron pointed lance with careless hand,
But ere he yet had pois'd it, Hagen's sword
Cut off the hand, which to its enemies
Had been so fearful, and so far renown'd,—
And now lay helpless on the bloody ground.
Yet even then, Waltari's noble heart
Thought not of flight, but pressing back his

pain,
His left hand grasp'd the Hunnic acimeter
Which still was left him in this hour of need,
And which aveng'd him, slashing Hagen's face
In such a fearful way, that his right eye
Besides six teeth he lost by this one blow.
Then both did drop their arms, and thus at last
The bloody fight was ended. Both had shown
Their strength and valor in an equal way,
And now did part with knightly courtesy.
Then, sitting side by side, they stanch'd their
wounds

With flowers; until Walter's ringing voice
Had brought the fair Hildgund unto their side,
Who with her gentle hands then dress'd the
wounds.

As soon as this was done, Waltari said:
"Now sweet my love, I prythee go and bring
For each a cup of wine, for verily
I think we have deserv'd it all to-day.
First give the cup to Hagen, my old friend,
Who, like a faithful vassal to his King,
Has fought full valiantly in his behalf;
Next give it me and then the King may drink,
Who least has done, and therefore shall be last."
The maiden doing as her lord had said,
Stepp'd up to Hagen, who, though plagued
with thirst

Refus'd to drink before Waltari's lips
Had been refresh'd by the cooling draught.
And when the pangs of thirst had thus been
still'd

The two, who just before had been dread foes,
Now sat together, holding friendly talk,
And jesting gayly as in days gone by.

"In future thou, my friend," Sir Hagen said,
"Must wear a leathern glove, well stuff'd with
wool,

On thy right arm, to make the world believe
Thou still hadst got both hands at thy com-
mands,

And at thy right side thou must wear the sword;
But worse than all, when thou wilt clasp thy
bride

With thy left arm thou must embrace her then,
In fact all thou wilt do in future life
Must awkward be,—*left-handed* as they say."

Briskly Waltari to this jest replied:
"Oh, stop thy railing; poor and one-eyed man,
For with my left hand here, I yet may kill
The boar and stag, which thou no more wilt
eat;

And in my fancy I can see thee look
On friends and foes and all the world awry!
But for the sake of our youthful days
And ancient friendship, I will counsel thee,
To bid thy nurse make porridge and milk-soups
When thou com'st at home, such as heft thy atate
Of toothless incapacity for other food."
Thus they renew'd the friendship of their youth,
And after having reated, laid the King
Who suffer'd greatly, on his horse's back.
And then the two Franconians slowly rode
To Worma, from where the day before they
came

In all the pride of their exulting hearts.
Meanwhile, Waltari and his gentle bride
Went on to Aquitania, Walter's home
Where they were both receiv'd with tears of joy
By his old father, who had long despair'd
Of holding in his arms his son again,
Who soon was wedded to fair Hildgund;
And when his father died, for thirty years
Waltari sway'd the scepter, loved by all.

Oh, much beloved reader, if my song
Has been but roughly chanted, I implore
Thy kind forgiveness,—I did my best.
Praised be Jesus Christ! So ends Waltari's
song.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE LAST ECHO, AND END.

AND he has sung bravely, our hermit Ekkehard; and his Waltari song is a venerable monument of German spirit; the first great epic out of the circle of national heroic legends, which, in spite of the destroying rust of ages, was bequeathed undamaged to later generations. To be sure, other notes have been struck in it than those which the Epigonic poets have hatched in their gilt-edged little books. The spirit of a great, heroic time breathes through it; wild and awful like the roaring of the tempests in mighty oak-trees. There is a sounding and clinking of swords dashing and splitting of helmets; whilst but little is heard of gallant speeches and tender wooing, or would-be eloquent dissertations on God and the universe, and Heaven knows what! All that is shown to us there, is a Titanic fight and Titanic jests; old knighthood in all its simple sternness; true, honest, silent love, and genuine open faced hatred;—these were the materials for Ekkehard's epic; and therefore his work has become grand and mighty, and stands at the portal of German poetry, tall and strong, like one of those iron-clad giants which the plastic art of later days loved to place as gate-keepers before the entrance of its palaces.

He, who by the roughness of ancient, often almost heathenish views, may be affected as by the rude blast on a sea-coast, which is apt to produce a cold in the dress-coat-wearing individual,—will be pleased to consider that the epic has been sung by one who had himself fought with the Huns; and that he composed it many hundred feet over the valley regions, whilst his curls were being ruffled by the wind which had swept over the glaciers on the Sântis; that his mantle was a wolf's skin, and that a she-bear was his first auditor.

'Tis a pity that the sportive spirits and goblins have ceased this many a day to practice their merry art; otherwise it might not be amiss for many a writer of the present day, if, by invisible hands, he were suddenly carried away from his mahogany table to the green meadow of the Ebenalp; up to those heights where the "old man" in all his mountain grandeur, looks into the poet's manuscript; where the thunder, with its manifold echoes, rolls through the ravines and glens; and where the golden vulture, in proud, lonely circles, rises up to the rainbow. There, a man must either compose something grand, pithy and of large dimensions, or he must penitently fall on his knees, like the prodigal son, and confess before those magnificent acenes of nature that he has sinned.

Our tale is drawing to its close.
Perhaps some of our readers would be pleased to hear that Ekkehard, after having completed his song, died a peaceful death. It would verily have been a most touching conclusion, "how he had reclined before his cavern, with eyes strained toward the Bodensee; his harp leaning against the rock; the parchment-roll in his hands,—and how his heart had broken!" Further, one might have added some fine simile:—how the poet was consumed by the burning

flames of his genius; like the torch which is burnt to ashes while it gives its light;—but this touching spectacle, I am sorry to say, Ekkehard did not afford to posterity.

Genuine poetry makes a man fresh and healthy. So Ekkehard's cheeks had assumed a brighter color during his work, and he often experienced a feeling of well-being which made him stretch out his arm, as if he were about to strike down a wolf or bear, with one blow of his fist.

But when his Waltari had bravely conquered all dangers and deathly wounds,—then he gave a shout of delight which made the stalactite walls of his cavern re-echo. The goats in their stable received a double quantity of herbs that day, and to the goat-boy he gave some silver coins to induce him to descend to Sennwald in the Rhine valley, there to procure a jug of red wine.

It was in those days just as it is now, "*libro completo, saltat scriptor pede laeto*," when the book is finished, the writer jumps with joy.

Therefore on that evening he sat on the Ebenalp in the cottage of the old herdsman and they did not spare the jug; and lastly Ekkehard seized the huge Alpine-horn, and mounting a rock, blew a mighty strain in the direction of the hazy distant Hegau Mountains; and the notes swelled out loud and triumphantly, as if they wanted to reach the Duchess's ears, so as to make her step out on her balcony, followed by Praxedis, whom he then would have liked to greet with a laugh.

"If I were to come once more into the world," he said to his friend the master of the Ebenalp, "and were to drop down from the sky just where I pleased, I verily believe that I would choose no other spot than the Wildkirchlein."

"You are not the first man who has been pleased with our residence," laughed the old man. "When brother Gottshalk was still living five Italian monks once came up to pay him a visit, and they brought some better wine than this with them; and they jumped and danced, so as to make their habits fly. 'Twas only when they went down hill again that they composed their faces into the necessary serious expression, and one of them before leaving made a long speech to our goats. 'Don't blab, ye dear goats,' he said, 'for the Abbot of Novalesse need not know anything of our spirits' raptures.'"

"But now, mountain-brother, I wish you to tell me one thing, and that is what you have been doing all these last days, cowering in your cavern? I have well observed that you have drawn many hooks and runes on your asses skin, and I trust that you are not concocting some evil charm against our flocks or mountains? Else—" a threatening look finished the sentence.

"I have merely been writing a song," said Ekkehard.

The herdsman shook his head. "Writing! that confounded writing," he growled. "Well 'tis none of my business; and I trow that the high Sântis will still be looking down on our grandchildren and great-grandchildren, without their knowing how to guide pen or lead pencil; for I shall never believe that writing will do a man any good. Man, if he wants to be God's likeness, must walk upright on both his feet, whilst he who wants to write must sit down with a bent and crooked back. So now I ask you whether that is not just the contrary of how God would have it? Consequently it must be an invention of the Devil. Therefore, mountain brother,—mind what you are about. And whenever you try that trick again, and I find you cowering down like a marmot in your cavern, and writing,—thunder and lightning! then I will exercise my power as Master of the Alps, and I will tear up your parchment leaves into little bits, so that the wind will scatter them amongst the fir-trees below! Up here everything has to be orderly and simple, and I tell you once for all that we will have nothing to do with new-fangled things!"

"I promise not to do it again," said Ekkehard, laughing and holding out his hand.

The brave Master of the Alps had grown warm over the red wine from Sennwald.

"Thunder and lightning!" he continued. "What after all is the meaning of writing down a song? 'Tis mere foolery! There! Try and write that down if you can." And with these words he began to sing some Alpine "*Jodler*," in such rough, unmodulated sounds that even the sharpest ear would have found some diffi-

* The meaning of Hagen in German.

culty in discovering a note which could have been rendered by word or writing.

At the same hour, in a vine-clad summer-house of the Bishop's garden at Passau on the Danube, a man, in the first bloom of manhood, was sitting before a stone table. An indescribable subtle expression played round his lips, half hidden by an ample brown beard, whilst luxurious curls fell down from under his velvet cap. His dark eyes followed the characters which his right hand was tracing on a parchment roll. Two fair-haired boys were standing beside his arm-chair, curiously peeping over his shoulder. Many a parchment leaf was already covered with the recital of tempests and battles, and the bloody deaths of valiant heroes,—and he was now approaching the end. And before long he laid aside his pen and took a long and solemn draught of Hungarian wine, out of a pointed goblet.

"Is it done?" asked one of the boys.

"Yes, 'tis all finished," said the writer, "how it began, and how it came, and how it ended with sorrow and shame!"

He held out the manuscript to him, and the boys ran away jubilant to their uncle, Bishop Pilgerim, and showed it to him. "And thou art in it also, dear uncle," they cried. "'The Bishop with his niece to Passau then did go.' Twice thou art in it,—and here again a third time!"

Pilgerim, the Bishop, then stroked his white beard and said: "Ye may well rejoice, my dear nephews, that Conrad has written down this tale for you; and let me tell you that if the Danube streamed with gold for three entire days and nights, ye might not fish up anything more precious than that song, which contains the greatest history the world ever saw."

The scrivener, meanwhile, stood with radiant countenance under the vine-leaves and blooming honeysuckle in the garden, looking at the withered red leaves, which autumn had shaken from the trees, and then he gazed downward into the soft-flowing Danube, and in his right ear he heard a loud ringing sound,—for at that very moment Ekkehard had filled a wooden cup with wine, and spoken thus to the old herdsman: "I once had a good comrade, for a better one cannot be found anywhere, and his name is Conrad. The love of women and worldly ambition are all naught, but I shall ever remain the debtor of old and faithful friendship unto my last dying day. So you must now drink his health with me, and I tell you he is a man who would please the Sântis well if he were here."

And the herdsman had emptied the cup and had said: "Mountain-brother, I believe you. Long life to him!"

Therefore the man at Passau had felt his ear tingling; but he did not know the reason thereof. The sound had not yet died out, when the Bishop came toward him, and was followed by a groom who led a white little mare, which was old and shabby; and when one looked at it closer, one could see that it was blind in one eye. And the Bishop nodded his head with the pointed miter and graciously said: "Master Conrad, that what you have written to please my nephews, shall not be without its reward. My tried battle-horse is yours!"

A faint, half melancholy smile played round Master Conrad's finely-cut lips, whilst he thought: "Well, it serves me but right. Why did I become a poet!" But aloud, he said, "May God reward you, Sir Bishop! I hope that you will grant me a few days' leave, to rest myself from my work."

Then he caressed the poor old horse, and mounted it without waiting for the answer. And he sat both proudly and gracefully in the saddle, and even persuaded his humble charger to fall into a tolerable canter, so that he soon disappeared.

"I would wager my best falcon against a pair of turtle-doves," said the elder of the two boys, "if he is not again riding to Bechelaren to the Margravian castle. He has said many a time, 'Quite as well as I can bring my gracious master the Bishop into the song, I can also in it erect a memorial to the Margravine Gotelinde and her fair daughter. They, after all, will appreciate it most.'"

Meanwhile Master Conrad had already passed out of the gate of the Bishop's town. Casting a longing look into the distance, he began to sing with a clear voice:

"Then boldly spoke the minstrel, his voice rang through the air:
Oh Margrave, noble Margrave, God gave thee blessing rare
In giving thee so fair a spouse, and true as she is fair.
And if I only were a king, and reigned o'er land and sea,
To make thy daughter my dear queen, my only wish would be,
For ne'er a maid more beautiful."

—but when he had got so far a cloud of dust was blown right into his face, so that involuntary tears started into his eyes, and his singing was stopped.

The lines were out of the work for which the Bishop had just now rewarded him. It was an epic in the German tongue, and was called "The Song of the Nibelungen!"

By and by autumn began, and although the evening red is more glowing and brilliant than in any other part of the year, it is also accompanied by fresh breezes, so that the inhabitants of the Alps get ready to decamp into their lowly dwellings in the valleys, and no wolf's skin then can prevent a man's teeth from chattering.

Fresh snow was glistening on all the peaks around, and was evidently not intending to melt again that year. Ekkehard had preached his last sermon to the herdsman. After it, Benedicta sauntered past him.

"Now 'tis all over with our merry-making up here," said she, "for to-morrow man and beast will betake themselves to their winter quarters. Where are you going, mountain brother?"

The question fell heavily on his heart.

"I should like best to remain here," said he.

Benedicta struck up a merry peal of laughter.

"One can well see that you have not spent a winter up here, else you would not wish for another. I should like to see you snowed up in your hermitage, with the cold creeping in at every clink and crevice, so as to make you tremble like an aspen leaf, whilst avalanches come thundering down round about you, and the icicles are growing right into your very mouth. And when you attempt to go down into the valley to fetch some provisions, then the snow blocks up the path as high as a house; one step and you sink down to the knees,—a second—tralalibidibidibi! and the cowl is all that is left, and one does not see more of you than of a fly that has fallen into a pot of milk. Besides, we have had so many great tillicies this year,—that means a severe winter. Ugh—how pleasant the long winter evenings will be! Then, we sit around the warm stove, and spin by the light of the pine chips. How the wheels fly about, and the fire crackles, and we relate the most beautiful stories, and all good boys may come and listen. 'Tis a pity that you have not become a herdman, mountain-brother, for then I could take you also with me to our spinning-room."

"'Tis a pity," said Ekkehard.

The next morning they went down the valley in gay procession. The old herdsman had put on his finest lined shirt, and looked like some jolly old patriarch. With a round leathern cap on his head, and the handsomest milk-pail on his left shoulder, he walked ahead, singing the "ranz-des-vaches" in a clear fresh voice. Then came Benedicta's goats; the skirmishers of the great army; their keeper amongst them, wearing in her dark locks the last Alpine roses, which already showed some yellow leaves. Then came the big large-spotted Susanna, the queen of the herd, wearing the heavy bell round her neck, in sign of her high rank. Dignified and proud was her gait, and whenever one of the others ventured to outstrip her, she gave her such a contemptuous and threatening look, that the presumptuous cow instantly fell back. Slowly and heavily the rest of the herd marched down hill. "Farewell, thou dainty Alpine grass," was probably thought by many a plump cow, as it cropped a stray flower here and there on the wayside.

The bull carried the milking-stool between his horns, and on his huge back sat the goat-boy, with his face to the tail, holding up the outstretched fingers of both his hands to his not-over-delicately formed nose, and calling out the following doggerel verses:

"The summer's gone away, and autumn's come aright,
So now we will bid you farewell and good night,
Ye silent, snowy masters, good-by then all together,
And may your sleep be sound, until there's better weather!"

A sledge with the simple furniture and kitchen utensils closed the train.

By degrees, herdsmen, cows and goats disappeared in the fir-wood below; their joyous songs and the merry tinkle of the cow-bell's dying away in the distance; and then it became silent and lonely, as on that evening when Ekkehard had first knelt before the cross of the Wildkirchlein.

He entered his hermitage. During his solitary life in the mountains, he had learnt to understand that solitude is only a school for life, and not life itself; and that he, who in this busy, active world will only be a passive spectator, wrapped up in himself, must in the end become a useless being.

"There's no help for it," said he, "I too must return to the valley! The snow is too cold, and I am too young to remain a hermit."

"Farewell then, mighty Sântis, thou good and trusty friend,

Farewell, ye bonny meadows, that healthy breezes send!

I thank thee for thy blessings, oh holy solitude,

That took away my sorrow, heal'd my rebellious mood,

My heart now beateth calmly; my banner is unfur'd,

And longing for new battles, I go into the world.

My youth was idly dreaming,—then came the darksome night,

But here, among the mountains, I woks to life and light."

He seized his knapsack, and in it put his scanty belongings. His most precious thing, the Waltari song, carefully wrapped up, was placed on the top. A smile played round his lips as he looked about on the few things which he left behind. On a stone stood the half empty ink-bottle, which he took and threw down the abyss, where it broke into many glittering fragments. The three-cornered harp, leaning against the wall outside, had something melancholy about it.

"Thou shalt remain here, and sweeten the lonely hours of him who comes after me," said he. "But mind not to give forth weak, sweetish sounds; else it were better that the water should drop down on thy strings from the crevices, so that they get rusty, and that the winds from the glaciers break them. I have sung my song!"

Therewith he hung the harp on a nail.

During his hermit's life, he had carved for himself a strong bow,—quiver and arrows being still there from Gottshalk's time. Thus he was well armed, and after hanging his wolf's skin mantle round his shoulders, he stood before his hermitage, casting a long, long look at the beautiful scenery around; at his beloved mountain peaks,—and then let his gaze glide down into the depth, where the sea-green Scéalpsee peeped forth from between the dark fir-trees. It was all as beautiful as ever.

The black martin, which lived in a crevice of the same rock that sheltered him, confidently flew down on his shoulder and pecked his cheek,—then spreading its black and red plumage it flew up into the blue air, as if it wanted to tell the Sântis that the hermit was going away.

Firmly setting the point of his spear into the ground, he walked down the well-accustomed giddy path. When he had reached the Aesher, he stopped once more, and waving his hand to his hermitage, he uttered a long "Jodler" that reverberated from the Kamor and Hoben-Kasten to the Marawiese, until it was lost in the distant clefts of the mountains.

"He can do it well," said a returning herdman in the valley to one of his comrades.

"Almost like a goat-boy!" said the other, as Ekkehard was just disappearing behind a rocky wall.

The rising sun had already cast his rays for some time on the Wildkirchlein, which, like a deserted nest, seemed to look mournfully into the valley below.

At the Bodensee, people prepared for the coming vintage. One fine evening Dame Hadwig sat in her garden, with the faithful Praxedis by her side. The Greek had unpleasant times now. Her mistress was out of tune, discontented and reserved. To-day, likewise, she could not entice her into a conversation. It was a day of evil remembrances.

"To-day, it is just a year," Praxedis began, with seeming indifference, "that we sailed over the Bodensee, and paid a visit to St. Gallus."

The Duchess made no reply. "A great deal has happened since then," Praxedis was going to add, but the words died on her lips.

"And have you heard, gracious mistress, what people are saying of Ekkehard?" resumed she, after a considerable pause.

Dame Hadwig looked up. Her mouth was working.

"And what do people say?" she asked carelessly.

"Master Spazzo has lately encountered the Abbot from the Reichenau," said Praxedis, "who accosted him thus: 'The Alps have been highly favored, for the walls of the Sántis reverberate with the sound of the lyre and poetical twitterings, for a new Homer has built his nest up there, and if he only knew in which cave the Muses are living, he might lead their dance like the Cynthian Apollo.' And when Master Spazzo, shaking his head, replied, 'How does that regard me?' then the Abbot said: 'The poet's no other than your Ekkehard. This news has reached us from the cloister school at St. Gall.' Master Spazzo then rejoined, laughingly: 'How can a man sing who is not able to tell a story even?'"

The Duchess had risen. "Bé silent," said she, "I won't hear anything more about it." Praxedis understood the wave of her hand, and sorrowfully went away.

Dame Hadwig's heart, however, felt differently from what her tongue uttered. She stepped up to the garden wall, and looked over toward the Helvetian Mountains. Dusk had set in, and long, heavy, steel-gray clouds stood immovably over the evening red that glowed and trembled beneath them.

In looking at the beauty and softness of the waning day, her heart was softened also. Her eyes were riveted on the Sántis, and it was as if she saw a vision, in which the heavens opened and sent down two angels, who, descending to those heights, lifted up a man in a well known monk's habit,—and the man was pale and dead, and an aureole of light, clear and beautiful, surrounded the airy procession.

But Ekkehard was not dead.

A low hissing sound made the Duchess start up from her reverie. Her eyes glided over the dark rocky wall, down which the prisoner had once made his escape, and beheld a dark figure disappearing in the shade, whilst an arrow sped toward her and dropped heavily at her feet.

She bent down to take up the curious missile. No hostile hand had sent it from the bow. Thin parchment-leaves were rolled round the shaft, whilst the point was covered with some wild flowers. She untied the leaves, and did not fail to recognize the handwriting. It was "Waltari's song." On the first page was written in pale red ink: "A parting salutation for the Duchess of Suabia!" and beside it in the words of the Apostle James: "Blessed is the man who has conquered temptation."

Then the proud woman inclined her head, and wept bitterly.

Here our story is ended. Ekkehard went out into the wide world, and never set eyes again on the Hohentwiel. Neither did he ever return to the monastery of St. Gall. It is true that when he descended from the Alps and approached the well-known walls, he reflected whether he should not enter it again as a penitent; but at the right moment an adage of the old Master of the Alps occurred to him: "When a man has once been a master, he does not like to become a servant again,"—and so he passed by.

Later a good deal was talked about a certain Ekkehard at the court of the Saxon Emperor, who was said to be a proud, strong-willed and reserved man; who to great piety united great contempt for the world,—but contented, active, and well-versed in all the arts. He became the Emperor's chancellor and tutor of his young son; and his counsel was of great influence in all the affairs of the realm. One historian reports of him, that by degrees he had risen to so much honor, that there was a rumor that the highest dignity of the Church was awaiting him.

The Empress Adelheid also held him in great esteem; and his influence was one of the chief causes that an army was sent out against the overbearing King of Denmark.

It has not been ascertained whether this was the same Ekkehard of our story.

Others have pretended that there had been several monks of the name of Ekkehard in the monastery of St. Gall; and that he who had instructed the Duchess in Latin was not the same who had composed Waltari's song.

Those, however, who have attentively read the story which we have now happily brought to a conclusion, know better.

About the fate of the others whom our tale, in many-colored forms, has brought before the reader's eye, there is not much left to be told.

The Duchess Hadwig never married again;

and in her pious widowhood reached a considerable age. Later she founded a humble little convent on the Hohentwiel, to which she bequeathed her territories in the Allemannian lands.

Ekkehard's name was no more allowed to be mentioned before her; but Waltari's song was read very often, and she evidently derived much pleasure and comfort from it. According to an—however unwarranted—assertion of the monks from the Reichenau, she is said to have known it almost by heart.

Praxedis faithfully served her mistress for some years more; but by degrees an irresistible longing for her bright, sunny home, took possession of her, so that she declared that she could not bear the Suabian air any longer.

Richly dowered, the Duchess let her go from her. Master Spazzo, the chamberlain, gave her a gallant and honorable escort as far as Venetia; from whence a Greek galley bore the still pretty maiden from the city of St. Mark to Byzantium. The accounts which she gave there of the Bodensee, and the rough but faithful barbarian hearts near its shores, were received by all the waiting-women at the Greek Court with a dubious shake of the head, as if she were speaking of a bewitched sea and some fabulous country.

Old Moengal for some time longer took care of the spiritual welfare of his parishioners. When the Huns threatened the land with another invasion, he spent much time in making plans for their reception. He proposed to dig some hundred deep pit-falls in the plain, to cover them with boughs and ferns, and behind them in full battle array to wait for the enemy; so that horses and riders should thus be frustrated in their wicked designs.

The evil guests, however, did not make their reappearance in the Heggu, and thus robbed the parish priest of the pleasure of splitting their skulls with the mighty blows of his shillalah. A peaceful death overtook the old sportsman, just when he was about to rest himself after a prosperous falcon-hunt. On his grave, in the shadow of his gray parish church, there grew a holly-bush, which became higher and more knotty than any which had ever been seen in those parts; and people said that it must be an offspring of their priest's good bludgeon, Cambutta.

Audifax, the goatherd, learned the goldsmith's art, and settled down in the bishopric of Constance, where he produced much fine workmanship. The companion of his adventures there became his wedded spouse, and the Duchess was god-mother to their first little son.

Burkhard, the cloister pupil, became a celebrated Abbot of the monastery of St. Gallus, and on all great occasions he still manufactured many dozens of learned Latin verses, from which, however,—thanks to the destroying powers of time,—posterity has been spared.

And all have long since become dust and ashes. Centuries have passed in swift procession over the places where their fates were fulfilled, and new stories have taken the place of the old ones.

The Hohentwiel has still witnessed a good deal, during war and peace. Many a brave knight rode out of its gates, and many an imprisoned man pined in its vaults,—until the last hour of the proud fortress struck; for on a fine day in May, it was blown to pieces by the enemy, so that towers and walls were scattered into the air.

In the present day, 'tis quiet enough on that summit. The goats are peacefully grazing between the huge fragments; but from over the glittering Bodensee, the Sántis still stands out in the blue distance, as grand and beautiful as it did many hundred years ago; and it is still a pleasurable thing, seated in the luxuriant grass, to look over the land.

He, who has written this book, has sat up there, on many a spring evening, a strange and lonely guest; and the crows and jacksaws flew tauntingly around him, because he was so lonely; and they did not notice that a numerous and honorable party was assembled around him. They were all those, in fact, whose acquaintance the reader has made in the course of this story; and they told everything, clearly and distinctly, and they kindly encouraged him to write it down, thus to help them to live again in the memory of a later railway-hurrying present.

And if he has succeeded in calling up also before you, much beloved reader, who have patiently followed him till now, a distinct picture of that faded, bygone time, then he con-

siders himself well paid for his trouble and some headache. Fare thee well and be his friend also in the future!

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LIST OF AUTHORS.

EDMOND ABOUT'S WORKS.

- 796 Romance of a Brave Man..... 20
- 801 The Man with the Broken Ear..... 10
- 807 Captain Bitterlin..... 20

Wm. Harrison Ainsworth's Works.

- 44 The Tower of London..... 20
- 313 Old St. Paul's..... 20
- 348 The Mysteries of the Court of the Scarlets 10
- 360 Windsor Castle..... 10

MRS. ALEXANDER'S WORKS.

- 30 Her Dearest foe..... 20
- 36 The Working Girl..... 20
- 46 The Heritage of Langdale..... 20
- 370 Ralph Wilton's Weir..... 10
- 400 Which Shall It Be?..... 20
- 532 Maid, Wife, or Widow?..... 10

THOMAS ALEXANDER'S WORKS.

- 567 Fish and Fishing..... 10
- 571 Game Birds..... 20

BERTHOLD AUERBACH'S WORKS.

- 422 On the Heights..... 20
- 454 Little Barefoot..... 20
- 841 Brigitta..... 10

MISS JANE AUSTEN'S WORKS.

- 819 Pride and Prejudice..... 20
- 836 Sense and Sensibility..... 20
- 956 Emma..... 20
- 987 Mansfield Park..... 20

MACALEN BARRETT'S WORKS.

- 366 Lester Ashland's Wife..... 10
- 547 The Banker's Daughter..... 20
- 555 Mother and Son..... 10

ADOLPHE BELOT'S WORKS.

- 845 The Strangers..... 20
- 876 La Grande Florine..... 20
- 882 The Paricide..... 20
- 934 Dacour's Sequel to "The Paricide"..... 20
- 1021 The Parisian Sultan..... 20
- 1036 The Thirst for the Unknown, Sequel to "The Parisian Sultan"..... 20
- Drama in the Rue de la Paix..... 20

Walter Besant and Jas. Rice's Works.

- 236 Shepherds All and Maidens Fair..... 10
- 300 By Celin's Arbor..... 20
- 350 The Golden Butterfly..... 20
- 441 "Twain in the Fisherman's Bay"..... 10
- 446 When the Ship Comes Home..... 20
- 700 The Seamy Side..... 20
- 702 Sweet Nelly, My Heart's Delight..... 10
- 726 Ready Money Mortiboy..... 20
- 908 "Over the Sea with the Sailor"..... 10
- The Champions of the Fleet..... 20

WILLIAM BLACK'S WORKS.

- 13 A Princess of Thule..... 20
- 28 A Daughter of Heth..... 10
- 47 In Silk Attire..... 10
- 48 The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton..... 10
- 51 Kilmory..... 10
- 53 The Monarch of Mining Lane..... 10
- 73 Madcap Violet..... 10
- 242 The Three Featherers..... 10
- 390 The Marriages of Morna Fergus, and The Maid of Killeann..... 10
- 417 Macleod of Duro..... 20
- 451 Lady Silverdale's Sweetheart..... 10
- 565 Green Pastures and Piccadilly..... 10
- 604 Madcap Violet (large type)..... 20
- 816 White Wings: A Yachting Romance..... 10
- 826 Oliver Goldsmith..... 10
- 950 Sunrise: A Story of These Times..... 20
- 1025 The Pupil of Ansellus..... 10
- 1032 That Beautiful Wretch..... 10

R. D. BLACKMORE'S WORKS.

- 126 Erema; or, My Father's Sin..... 20
- 535 Lorna Doone..... 20
- 660 Clippis, the Carrier..... 20
- 754 Mary Anerley..... 20
- 769 Clara Vaughan..... 20
- 932 Craddock Nowell. First half..... 20
- 932 Craddock Nowell. Second half..... 20
- 984 The Maid of Sker..... 20
- Christowell..... 20

MISS M. E. BRADDON'S WORKS.

- 26 Aurora Floyd..... 20
- 69 To the Blister End..... 20
- 89 The Levels of Arden..... 20
- 95 Dead Men's Shoes..... 20
- 109 Eleanor's Victory..... 20
- 114 Darrell Markham..... 10
- 140 The Lady Lisle..... 10
- 171 Hostages to Fortune..... 20
- 219 Henry Dunbar..... 20
- 219 Birds of Prey..... 20
- 235 An Open Veil..... 20
- 251 Lady Audley's Secret..... 20
- 254 The O. roroon..... 10
- 260 Charlotte's Inheritance..... 20
- 287 Leighton Grange..... 10
- 295 Lost for Love..... 20
- 322 Dead-Sea Fruit..... 20
- 459 The Doctor's Wife..... 20
- 469 Rupert Godwin..... 20
- 481 Vixen..... 20
- 482 The Cloven Foot..... 20
- 500 Joshua Haggard's Daughter..... 20
- 519 Wenvers and West..... 10
- 529 Sir Jasper's Tenant..... 20
- 539 A Strange World..... 20
- 550 Fenton's Quest..... 20
- 562 John Marchmont's Legacy..... 20
- 572 The Lady's Mile..... 20
- 579 Strangers and Pilgrims..... 20
- 581 Only a Woman (Edited by Miss Bradton)..... 20
- 619 Taken at the Flood..... 20
- 641 Only a Clod..... 20
- 649 Publicans and Sinners..... 20
- 656 George Canfield's Journey..... 10
- 665 The Shadow in the Corner..... 10
- 668 Bound to John Company; or, Robert Ainsleigh..... 20

- 701 Barbara; or, Splendid Misery..... 20
- 705 Put to the Test, Edited by Miss M. E. Braddon..... 20
- 734 Diavola; or, Nobody's Daughter. Part I..... 20
- 734 Diavola; or, Nobody's Daughter. Part II..... 20
- 811 Dudley Carleon..... 20
- 828 The Fatal Marriage..... 10
- 837 Just as I Am; or, A Living Lie..... 20
- 942 Asphodel..... 20

Charlotte and Emily Bronte's Works.

- 3 Jane Eyre (in smaller type)..... 10
- 162 Shirley..... 20
- 311 The Professor..... 10
- 329 Wuthering Heights..... 10
- 396 Jane Eyre (in bold, handsome type)..... 20
- 435 Ellicote..... 20
- 987 The Tenant of Wildfell Hall..... 20

RHODA BROUGHTON'S WORKS.

- 186 "Good-Bye, Sweetheart"..... 10
- 269 Red as a Rose is She..... 10
- 285 Cometh Up to Me..... 10
- 402 "Not Wisely, But Too Well"..... 20
- 458 Nancy..... 20
- 520 Joana..... 20
- 702 Second Thoughts..... 20

CAPT. FRED BURNABY'S WORKS.

- 448 On Horseback through Asia Minor..... 20
- 767 A Ride to Khiva..... 10

BEATRICE M. BUTT'S WORKS.

- 574 Dalich..... 20
- 605 Ilvster..... 10
- 856 Miss Molly..... 20
- 913 Passion Flowers..... 10

B. H. BUXTON'S WORKS.

- 831 Jennie of "The Priace's"..... 20
- 873 From the Wings..... 20
- Scepter and Ring..... 20

THOMAS CARLYLE'S WORKS.

- 952 Carlyle's Essays on Characteristics, Rich-ter, Burns, Luther's Psalm, Schiller, and Mentors of Mirabeau, with a Biographical Sketch of Thomas Carlyle by G. N. Williamson..... 20
- 957 Reminiscences by Thomas Carlyle. Edited by James Anthony Froude..... 20
- 973 Essays on Goethe..... 20

Mrs. H. Lovett Cameron's Works.

- 182 Juliet's Guardian..... 10
- 356 Deceivers Ever..... 10

Rosa Nouchette Carey's Works.

- 385 Wooded and Married..... 20
- 708 Nellie's Memories..... 20
- 949 Queenie's Whim..... 20

CERVANTES' WORKS.

- 691 Don Quixote, Illustrated. Part I..... 10
- 691 Don Quixote, Illustrated. Part II..... 10
- 691 Don Quixote, Illustrated. Part III..... 10
- 691 Don Quixote, Illustrated. Part IV..... 10
- 691 Don Quixote, Illustrated. Part V..... 10

VICTOR CHERBULIEZ'S WORKS.

- 419 Mademoiselle Saint-Maur's Lover..... 10
- 432 Jean Tetro's Idea..... 10
- 435 Samuel Brohl and Company..... 10

HENRY COCKTON'S WORKS.

- 259 Valentine Vox (Part I)..... 20
- 259 Valentine Vox (Part II)..... 20

WILKIE COLLINS' WORKS.

- 10 The Woman in White..... 10
- 14 The Dead Secret..... 20
- 22 Man and Wife..... 20
- 32 The Queen of Hearts..... 20
- 38 Antonina..... 20
- 42 Hide and Seek..... 20
- 76 The New Magdalen..... 20
- 94 The Law and the Lady..... 20
- 180 Armadale..... 20
- 191 My Lady's Money..... 10
- 225 The Two Destinies..... 10
- 250 No Name..... 20
- 286 After Dark..... 20
- 409 The Haunted Hotel..... 10
- 433 A Shocking Story..... 10
- 487 A Rogue's Life..... 10
- 551 The Yellow Mask..... 20
- The Woman in White (in large type)..... 20
- 583 Fallen Leaves..... 20
- 654 Poor Miss Finch..... 20
- 675 The Moonstone..... 20
- 696 Jezebel's Daughter..... 20
- 713 The Captain's Last Love..... 20
- 731 Basil..... 20
- 745 The Magic Spontaneous..... 10
- 905 Duell in Fern Wood..... 10
- 928 Who Killed Zebedee?..... 10
- 971 The Frozen Deep..... 20
- 990 The Black Robe..... 20

J. FENIMORE COOPER'S WORKS.

- 222 Last of the Mohicans..... 20
- 224 The Pathfinder..... 20
- 226 The Two Admirals..... 20
- 229 The Pioneers..... 20
- 239 The Pilot..... 20
- 239 The Water-Witch..... 20
- 250 The Two Admirals..... 20
- 615 The Red Rover..... 20
- 761 Wing-and-Wing..... 20
- 940 The Spy..... 20
- The Wyandotté..... 20

Lucy Randall Comfort's Works.

- 495 Claire's Love-Life..... 10
- 532 Love at Saratoga..... 20
- 672 Eve, the Factory Girl..... 20
- 716 Black Bell..... 20
- 854 Corisande..... 20
- 907 Three Sewing Girls..... 20
- 1019 His First Love..... 20

Rev. W. J. Conybeare and Rev. J. S. Howson's Works.

- 730 The Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul. First Half..... 20
- 730 The Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul. Second Half..... 20

GEORGIANA M. CRAIK'S WORKS.

- 252 Hard to Bear..... 10
- 506 Sylvia's Choice..... 20
- 543 Anne Warwick..... 10
- 798 Leslie Tyrrell..... 10
- 916 Faith Uwin's Ordeal..... 20

A. DAUDET'S WORKS.

- 557 Sidonie..... 20
- 675 The Nabob..... 20
- 719 Kings in Exile..... 20

CHARLES DICKENS' WORKS.

- 20 The Old Curiosity Shop..... 20
- 100 A Tale of Two Cities..... 20
- 102 Hard Times..... 10
- 118 Great Expectations..... 20
- 187 David Copperfield..... 20
- 200 Nicholas Nickleby..... 20
- 213 Barnaby Rudge..... 20
- 218 Dombey and Son..... 20
- 239 Northamptonshire (Charles Dickens and Wm. Thackeray)..... 10
- 272 Martin Chuzzlewit..... 20
- 272 The Cricket on the Hearth..... 16
- 284 Oliver Twist..... 20
- 289 A Christmas Carol..... 10
- 297 The Haunted Man..... 10
- 304 Little Dorrit..... 20
- 308 The Chimes..... 10
- 317 The Battle of Life..... 10
- 325 Our Mutual Friend..... 20
- 327 Bleak House..... 20
- 352 Pickwick Papers..... 20
- 357 Somebody's Luggage..... 10
- 367 Mrs. Lurvy's Lodgings..... 10
- 392 The Last Year of Two Idle Apprentices..... 10
- 375 Mugby Junction..... 10
- 403 Tom Tiddler's Ground..... 10
- 498 The Uncommercial Traveller..... 20
- 521 Master Humphrey's Clock..... 10
- 625 Sketches by Boz..... 20
- 639 Sketches of Young Couples..... 10
- 827 The Mudfog Papers, &c..... 10
- 860 The Mystery of Edwin Drood..... 20
- 900 Pictures from Italy..... 10

Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield's, Works.

- 255 Lothair..... 20
- 392 Vivian Grey..... 20
- 405 Henrietta Temple..... 20
- 884 Eudymon..... 20
- 918 Tancred; or, The New Crusade..... 20
- 933 The Young Duke..... 20
- 969 Coningsby; or, The New Generation..... 20
- 983 Contraband Fleming..... 20
- 984 Vivian Grey..... 20
- 989 Venetia..... 20
- 1002 Ixion..... 10
- 1009 Sybil..... 20

Works by the Author of "Dora Thorne."

- 618 Madeline's Lover..... 20
- 656 A Golden Dawn..... 10
- 678 A Dead Heart..... 10
- 718 Lord Lyne's Choice; or, True Love Never Runs Smooth..... 10
- 746 Which Loved Him Best..... 20
- 846 Dora Thorne..... 20
- 921 At War with Herself..... 10
- 931 The Sin of a Lifetime..... 20
- 1013 Lady Gwendoline's Dream..... 10
- 1018 Wife in Name Only..... 20

RICHARD DOWLING'S WORKS.

- 896 High-Water Mark..... 10
- 929 Under St. Paul's..... 20
- Strauberry Leaves..... 20

F. DU BOISCOBEY'S WORKS.

- 709 The Old Age of Monsieur Lecoq. Part I..... 20
- 709 The Old Age of Monsieur Lecoq. Part II..... 20

ANNA H. DRURY'S WORKS.

- 683 Called to the Rescue..... 20
- 823 The Story of a Shower..... 10

THE DUCHESS' WORKS.

- 258 Phyllis..... 10
- 393 Molly Bawn..... 20
- 445 The Baby..... 10
- 499 Phyllis Lillian..... 20
- 538 Phyllis (large type)..... 20
- 74 Beauty's Daughters..... 20
- 74 Beauty's Daughters Got Out of It..... 10
- 1010 Mrs. Geoffrey..... 20

Sir Charles Cavan Duffy's Works.

- 902 Young Ireland. Part I..... 20
- 902 Young Ireland. Part II..... 20

ALEXANDER DUMAS' WORKS.

- 144 The Twin Lieutenants..... 10
- 151 The Marquis of Gipsy..... 10
- 155 The Count of Monte-Cristo (Quadruple Number)..... 40
- 160 The Black Tulip..... 10
- 167 The Queen's Necklace..... 20
- 172 The Chevalier de Malson Ronge..... 20
- 184 The Countess de Charney..... 20
- 188 Nanon..... 10
- 193 Joseph Balsamo; or, Memoirs of a Physician..... 20
- 194 The Conspirators..... 10
- 208 Isabella of Bavaria..... 10
- 208 Catherine Blum..... 10
- 223 The Marriage Verdict..... 10
- 228 The Regent's Daughter..... 20
- 244 The Three Guardsmen..... 20
- 248 The Forty-five Guardsmen..... 20
- 276 The Page of the Duke of Savoy..... 10
- 278 Six Years Later; or, Taking of the Bastille..... 20
- 243 Twenty Years After..... 20
- 298 Captain Paul..... 10
- 306 Three Strong..... 10
- 318 Ingenue..... 10
- 331 Adventures of a Marquis (first half)..... 20
- 331 Adventures of a Marquis (second half)..... 20
- 341 The Marchions of Paris..... 10
- 344 Ascanio..... 10
- 605 The Watchmaker..... 20
- 616 The Two Binans..... 20
- 622 Andre de Taverny..... 20
- 604 Vicomte de Bragelonne (1st Series)..... 20
- 604 Vicomte de Bragelonne (2d Series)..... 20
- 604 Vicomte de Bragelonne (3d Series)..... 20
- 604 Vicomte de Bragelonne (4th Series)..... 20
- 688 Chicot, the Jester..... 20
- 849 Doctor Basillis..... 20
- 897 Beau Tancrède; or, The Marriage Verdict (large type)..... 20

GEORGE EBERS' WORKS.
 712 *Uarda: A Romance of Ancient Egypt*..... 20
 736 *Memo Sum*..... 10
 812 *An Egyptian Princess*..... 20
 880 *The Sisters*..... 20

AMELIA B. EDWARDS' WORKS.
 18 *Barbara's History*..... 20
 184 *My Brother's Wife*..... 10
 145 *Half a Million of Money*..... 20
 157 *Hand and Glove*..... 10
 472 *Debenham's Yew*..... 20
 743 *In the Days of My Youth*..... 20
 829 *Lord Brackenbury*..... 20
 867 *Miss Carew*..... 20

MRS. ANNIE EDWARDS' WORKS.
 148 *A Blue Stocking*..... 10
 154 *A Point of Honor*..... 10
 361 *A Vagabond Heroine*..... 10
 387 *Let Her Face or Her Fortune?*..... 10
 474 *Leads A Woman of Fashion*..... 10
 594 *What a Swell!*..... 20
 655 *Ought We to Visit Her?*..... 20
 878 *Virgilia the Beauty*..... 10
 825 *Philip Marcellino, or, The Morals of May Fair*..... 20

MRS. C. J. EILOART'S WORKS.
 418 *The Love that Lived*..... 20
 938 *The Deen's Wife*..... 20

GEORGE ELIOT'S WORKS.
 7 *Adam Bede*..... 20
 11 *The Mill on the Floss*..... 20
 15 *Romola*..... 10
 35 *Felix Holt, the Radical*..... 20
 58 *Silas Marner*..... 20
 70 *Middlemarch*..... 20
 80 *Daniel Deronda*..... 20
 802 *Mr. Gilfil's Love Story*..... 10
 217 *The Sad Fortunes of Rev. Amos Barton*..... 10
 277 *Brother Jacob*..... 10
 309 *Janet's Repentance*..... 10
 527 *Impressions of Euphrates and Sach*..... 10
 941 *The Mill on the Floss (large type)*..... 20

B. L. FARJEON'S WORKS.
 96 *Love's Victory*..... 10
 105 *At the Sign of the Silver Flag*..... 10
 107 *Blade-o'-Grass*..... 10
 113 *Golden Grain*..... 10
 132 *The Patches of Rosemary Lane*..... 10
 139 *London's Heart*..... 10
 149 *Joshua Marvel*..... 10
 245 *"Bread-and-Cheese and Kisses"*..... 10
 324 *Shadows on the Snow*..... 10
 670 *The Bells of Yarmou*..... 10
 992 *119 Great Porter Square*..... 20

F. W. FARRAR'S WORKS.
 711 *The Life of Christ*..... 20
 722 *The Life and Work of St. Paul (first half)*..... 20
 722 *The Life and Work of St. Paul (second half)*..... 20

George Manville Fenn's Works.
 468 *A Gilded Pill*..... 10
 693 *Goblin Rock*..... 10

OCTAVE FEUILLET'S WORKS.
 120 *Romance of a Poor Young Man*..... 10
 428 *A Woman's Journal*..... 10
 885 *Onests, A Story of Venice*..... 10
 1040 *Jeanner, or, The History of a Parisienne*..... 10

MRS. FORRESTER'S WORKS.
 395 *Under Women*..... 20
 431 *Diana Carew*..... 20
 474 *Vivian*..... 20
 504 *Rhona*..... 20
 538 *A Young Man's Fancy*..... 20
 556 *Mignon*..... 20
 573 *The Turn of Fortune's Wheel*..... 10
 600 *Dolores*..... 10
 620 *In a Country House*..... 10
 633 *Queen Elizabeth's Garden*..... 10
 828 *Ray and Viola*..... 20
 884 *My Hero*..... 20

JESSIE FOTHERGILL'S WORKS.
 661 *Prohibition*..... 20
 840 *The Wellfields, Kith and Kin*..... 20

R. E. FRANCILLON'S WORKS.
 178 *Into Good Luck*..... 10
 644 *Pearl and Emerald*..... 10
 713 *Kather's Glove*..... 10
 904 *Queen Cophetou*..... 10
 924 *Under Slipper-Ban*..... 20

JAMES A. FROUDE'S WORKS.
 780 *John Bunyan*..... 10
 974 *Cesar*..... 20

Lady Georgiana Fullerton's Works.
 442 *The Notary's Daughter, From the French of Madame Leonie D'Aulney*..... 10
 705 *Rose Leblanc*..... 10
 864 *Rosemary*..... 10

EMILE GABORIAU'S WORKS.
 408 *File No. 113*..... 20
 465 *Monsieur Lecoq (first half)*..... 20
 465 *Monsieur Lecoq (second half)*..... 20
 476 *The Slaves of Paris (first half)*..... 20
 476 *The Slaves of Paris (second half)*..... 20
 490 *Marriage at a Venture*..... 10
 494 *The Mystery of Orival*..... 20
 501 *Other People's Money*..... 20
 509 *Within an Inch of His Life*..... 20
 515 *The Widow Lerouge*..... 20
 523 *The Ounce of Gold*..... 20
 671 *The Count's Secret (Part I)*..... 20
 671 *The Count's Secret (Part II)*..... 20
 704 *Captain Contanceau, or, The Volunteers of 1792*..... 20
 741 *The Downward Path, or, A House Built on Sand (In Descriptive Type) Part I*..... 20
 741 *The Downward Path, or, A House Built on Sand (In Descriptive Type) Part II*..... 20
 758 *The Little Old Man of the Baillongues*..... 10
 778 *The Lion of the Forest*..... 10
 789 *Promises of Marriage*..... 10
 813 *The 13th Hussars*..... 10
 834 *A Thousand Francs Reward*..... 10
 899 *Max's Marriage, or, The Viscount's Choice*..... 10

MRS. GASKELL'S WORKS.
 128 *Mary Barton*..... 10
 158 *My Lady Ludlow*..... 10
 182 *Cousin Phillis*..... 10
 208 *North and South*..... 10
 232 *A Dark Night's Work*..... 10

CUNNINGHAM GEIKIE'S WORKS.
 717 *The Life and Words of Christ (first half)*..... 20
 717 *The Life and Words of Christ (second half)*..... 20

CHARLES GIBSON'S WORKS.
 682 *Queen of the Meadow*..... 20
 690 *Robin Gray*..... 20
 751 *In Honor Bound*..... 20
 776 *For Luck of Gold*..... 20

THEODORE GIFT'S WORKS.
 425 *Maid Ellice*..... 20
 1027 *A Matter-of-Fact Girl*..... 20

JAMES GRANT'S WORKS.
 216 *Legends of the Black Watch*..... 10
 245 *Jack Manly*..... 10
 280 *Dick Rodney*..... 10
 321 *Captain of the Guard*..... 10
 335 *The Queen's Cadet*..... 10
 339 *Letty Hyde's Covers*..... 10
 347 *The Hundred Cuirassiers, Torthorwald*..... 10

MARIA M. GRANT'S WORKS.
 312 *Artiste*..... 10
 378 *Bright Morning, or, Once and Forever*..... 10
 383 *The Sun Maid*..... 20
 398 *Victor Lee*..... 20
 729 *My Hero in the Highlands, Prince Hugo*..... 20

J. R. GREEN'S WORKS.
 861 *History of the English People, Vol. I*..... 20
 861 *History of the English People, Vol. II*..... 20
 861 *History of the English People, Vol. III*..... 20
 861 *History of the English People, Vol. IV*..... 20

HENRY GREVILLE'S WORKS.
 404 *Ariadne*..... 10
 420 *Niania*..... 10
 424 *Soolia*..... 10
 536 *Anton Malleoff*..... 10
 544 *The Princess Ogherof*..... 10

T. C. HALIBURTON'S WORKS.
 413 *Sam Slick, the Clockmaker*..... 10
 473 *Sam Slick in England*..... 10
 895 *The Old Judge, Sam Slick in Search of a Wife, or, Wise Saw*..... 20

MISS IZA DUFFUS HARDY'S WORKS.
 659 *A Broken Faith*..... 20
 753 *Only a Love Story*..... 20

THOMAS HARDY'S WORKS.
 58 *Under the Greenwood Tree*..... 10
 569 *Far From the Madding Crowd*..... 10
 738 *Fellow-Townsmen*..... 10
 890 *The Trumpet-Major*..... 20
 946 *The Hand of Ethelberta*..... 20
 956 *A Pair of Blue Eyes, A Ludlinton*..... 20

WILLIAM HAUFF'S WORKS.
 889 *The Beggar Girl of the Bridge of Arts*..... 10
 938 *The Emperor's Picture*..... 10

MARY CECIL HAY'S WORKS.
 8 *The Arandel Motto*..... 10
 407 *The Arandel Motto (in larger type)*..... 20
 417 *Old Myddelton's Money*..... 10
 427 *Old Myddelton's Money (in larger type)*..... 20
 17 *Hidden Perils*..... 10
 434 *Hidden Perils (in larger type)*..... 20
 23 *The Squire's Legacy*..... 10
 616 *The Squire's Legacy (in larger type)*..... 20
 27 *Victor and Vanquished*..... 10
 29 *Nora's Love Test*..... 10
 421 *Nora's Love Test (in larger type)*..... 20
 275 *A Shadow on the Threshold*..... 10
 365 *Keopling the Whirlwind*..... 10
 354 *Back to the Old Home*..... 10
 418 *Dark Inheritance*..... 10
 440 *The Secret of a Secret and Lady Carmichael's Will*..... 10
 686 *Brenda Yarko*..... 10
 724 *For Her Dear Sake*..... 20
 852 *Missing*..... 10
 853 *Dolf's Big Brother*..... 10
 930 *In the Holidays*..... 10
 935 *Under Life's Key and Other Stories*..... 20
 972 *Into the Shade and Other Stories*..... 20
 1011 *My First Offer*..... 20
 1014 *Told in New England and Other Tales*..... 10
 1016 *At the Seaside*..... 10

MRS. CASHEL HOEY'S WORKS.
 493 *A Golden Sorrow*..... 20
 901 *The Blossoming of an Aloe, The Question of Cain*..... 20

THOMAS HUGHES' WORKS.
 492 *Tom Brown's Schooldays at Rugby*..... 20
 640 *Tom Brown at Oxford*..... 20
 598 *The Muddiness of Christ*..... 10
 1041 *Rugby, Tennessee*..... 10

VICTOR HUGO'S WORKS.
 179 *The History of a Crime*..... 10
 261 *Les Misérables—Fantine*..... 10
 262 *Les Misérables—Cosette*..... 10
 263 *Les Misérables—Marius*..... 10
 264 *Les Misérables—St. Denis*..... 10
 265 *Les Misérables—Jean Valjean*..... 10
 307 *The Tollers of the Sea*..... 20
 507 *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*..... 20

MRS. ALFRED W. HUNT'S WORKS.
 917 *The Pony Ring*..... 10
 925 *The Lenden Casket*..... 20

JEAN INCELOW'S WORKS.
 611 *Sarah de Berenger*..... 20
 694 *Off the Skellens*..... 20
 839 *Fated to be Free*..... 20
 982 *Don John*..... 20

C. P. R. JAMES' WORKS.
 303 *Margaret Graham*..... 10
 599 *The Castle of Eborac*..... 20
 607 *The Last of the Fairies*..... 10
 614 *The Man at Arms, or, Henry de Carona*..... 20
 692 *The King's Highway*..... 20
 755 *The Smuggler*..... 20
 814 *The Old Oak Chest*..... 20
 947 *Phillip Augustus*..... 20
 988 *The Huguenot, Richelleu, Agnes Sorel, Bessell, Durley, The Robber*..... 20

MISS HARRIET JAY'S WORKS.
 637 *Madge Danvers*..... 20
 650 *The Queen of Connaught*..... 10

JULIA KAVANAGH'S WORKS.
 238 *Bonrice*..... 20
 879 *Rachel Gray*..... 10

ANNIE KEARY'S WORKS.
 681 *A Doubting Heart*..... 20
 715 *Oldbury*..... 20
 798 *Castle Dairy*..... 20

W. H. G. KINGSTON'S WORKS.
 204 *The Young Linacre*..... 20
 315 *Twice Lost*..... 20

MAY LAFFAN'S WORKS.
 739 *Christy Carew*..... 20
 763 *No Itelations, From the French of Hector Malot*..... 20

GEORGE LAWRENCE'S WORKS.
 806 *Guy Livingstone*..... 10
 808 *Sword and Gown*..... 10

MARGARET LEE'S WORKS.
 354 *A Celebrated Case*..... 10
 938 *Nellie*..... 20
 1024 *Lizzie Adriance*..... 20

CHARLES LEVER'S WORKS.
 98 *Harry Lorrequer*..... 20
 182 *Jack Hinton, the Guardsman*..... 20
 187 *A Rent in a Cloud*..... 10
 146 *Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon (Single Number)*..... 20
 152 *A Hildy O'Leary*..... 20
 168 *Sam Cregeen*..... 20
 169 *St. Patrick's Eve*..... 10
 174 *Kate O'Donoghue*..... 10
 257 *That Boy of Norcott's*..... 20
 296 *Tom Burke, of Ours (first half)*..... 20
 296 *Tom Burke, of Ours (second half)*..... 20
 319 *Davenport Dam (first half)*..... 20
 319 *Davenport Dam (second half)*..... 20
 464 *Gerald Fitzgerald*..... 20
 470 *The Encampment of Glencore*..... 20
 529 *Lord Kilgobbin*..... 20
 546 *Marianne Tierney*..... 20
 566 *A Day's Ride*..... 20
 609 *Barrington*..... 20
 633 *James Carew, Knight*..... 20
 633 *The Martins of Cro' Martin (Part I)*..... 20
 657 *The Martins of Cro' Martin (Part II)*..... 20
 822 *Tony Butler*..... 20
 822 *Luttrell of Arnan, Part I*..... 20
 872 *Luttrell of Arnan, Part II*..... 20
 951 *Pant Gossett's Confessions*..... 10
 965 *One of Them, First half*..... 20
 965 *One of Them, Second half*..... 20
 989 *Sir Brook Fossbrooke, Part I*..... 20
 989 *Sir Brook Fossbrooke, Part II*..... 20

MRS. LEITH-ADAMS' WORKS.
 214 *Winstowe*..... 20
 353 *George's Wooer*..... 10
 353 *My Land of Beulah*..... 10
 592 *Maitland Lemling*..... 20
 906 *Ann Hepey's Foundling*..... 20

L. W. M. LOCKHART'S WORKS.
 376 *Mine is Thine, Fair to See*..... 20

SAMUEL LOVER'S WORKS.
 33 *Handy Andy*..... 20
 66 *Rory O'More*..... 20
 123 *Irish Legends*..... 10
 158 *He Would be a Gentleman*..... 20
 293 *Tom Crobie*..... 10

MRS. E. LYNN LINTON'S WORKS.
 161 *The World Well Lost*..... 20
 563 *Our Professor*..... 10
 991 *My Love*..... 20

SIR BULWER LYTTON'S WORKS.
 6 *The Last Days of Pompeii*..... 20
 58 *Zanoni*..... 20
 680 *Pictures of the Rhine*..... 10
 714 *Lelia, or, The Siege of Grenada*..... 10
 781 *Rienzi, The Last of the Tribunes*..... 20
 935 *Eugene Aram*..... 20
 979 *Ernest Maltravers*..... 20
 1001 *Alice, Kenelm Chillingly, My Novel, Part I, My Novel, Part II, The Caxtons*..... 20

T. B. MACAULAY'S WORKS.
 926 *The Lays of Ancient Rome and Other Poems*..... 10
 976 *History of England, Part I*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part II*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part III*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part IV*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part V*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part VI*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part VII*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part VIII*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part IX*..... 20
 976 *History of England, Part X*..... 20

GEORGE MACDONALD'S WORKS.
 455 *Pan Fober Surgeon*..... 20
 491 *Sir Gibbie*..... 20
 515 *The Annals of a Quiet Neighborhood*..... 20
 627 *The Sea-bird of Perth*..... 20
 627 *Thomas Wingfold, Curate*..... 20
 633 *The Vicar's Daughter*..... 20
 668 *David Elphinstone*..... 20
 677 *St. George and St. Michael*..... 20
 790 *Alec Forbes of Howglen*..... 20
 887 *Maudslai*..... 20

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