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THREE TALES BY W. HAUFF.

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THREE TALES

BY

W. HAUFF.

THE BEGGAR GIRL OF THE PONT
DES ARTS. — THE EMPEROR'S PICTURE. —
THE COLD HEART.

FROM THE GERMAN

BY

M. A. FABER.

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THE BEGGAR GIRL
OF THE
PONT DES ARTS.

THE BEGGAR GIRL

OF THE

PONT DES ARTS.

I.

ANY one who, in the year 1824, frequented the "King of England" hotel in Stuttgart, or who promenaded the broad walk in the pleasure-grounds between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, must, if his memory be not of the shortest, still recollect some figures who drew all eyes upon them at that time. These were two men who did not at all resemble the usual customers and pedestrians in Stuttgart, but seemed rather to belong to the Prado of Madrid or to a café in Lisbon or Seville. Imagine a tall, thin, old man with iron-grey hair, deepset, fiery eyes of a dark-brown colour, a hooked nose, and thin compressed mouth. He moves slowly; erect and proud. To his black-silk breeches and stockings, to the large rosettes upon his shoes, and the broad buckles of his garters, to the long thin rapier at his side, to the high and somewhat peaked hat pressed sideways over his forehead, you long (even if only possessed of a small portion of imagination) to add a short slashed doublet and a Spanish cloak in place of the black frock-coat in which the old man has dressed himself.

And the servant who follows him closely with so proud a step, does not he by his impudent, rogue-like countenance, by his gaudy and heterogeneous dress, by the free and easy manner with which he looks around him, stares at all, and admires nothing, recall to mind the servants in Spanish comedy who, true to their master as his shadow, are in figure far below him, in pride nearly equal with him, in cunning and artifice far above him? He carries under his arm his master's cloak and umbrella; and in his hand a silver box of cigars and matches.

Who, when these two walked slowly down the promenade, did not stand still to look after them? But they were, as is known, no other than Don Pedro de San Montanjo Ligez, comptroller of the household to the Prince of P. who was living at that time in Stuttgart, and Diego his servant. But as it often happens, that only some petty and trivial event is required to make a man noted and remarkable; so it was that this fell to the share of young Fröben who had already for half a year (so long, indeed, as he had been living in Stuttgart) stepped through the castle-gate into the pleasure-grounds every day at the stroke of two, walked three times round the lake, and five times up and down the broad walk, and had been passed by all the glittering equipages and lovely girls, by a host of directors, senators, and lieutenants, and observed by no one; for his appearance was that of any ordinary man of from eight-and-twenty to thirty years of age. But since he had one afternoon met with Don Pedro in the broad walk who had greeted him quite in a friendly manner, had drawn his arm confidentially within his own, and walked up and down

with him several times, talking eagerly; since that time people had watched him with curiosity, even with a certain respect; for the proud Spaniard, who spoke to no one else, had treated him with marked esteem. .

The most beautiful young ladies now discovered that he had by no means an unpleasing face; that, indeed, there was in it something interesting and peculiarly attractive, such as one did not often meet with in the gardens: the directors and various senators enquired "who the young man might be?" whilst only some few lieutenants could give the information that he now and then eat beefsteaks at the Union, had lived for half a year in Castle-street, and rode a handsome Mecklenburg horse which was his own property. They added much as to the excellence of this horse, its build, its colour, how old it might be, what it must have cost; and thence proceeded to talk of horses in general in a way that must without doubt have been very instructive.

But from this time young Fröben was frequently seen in company with Don Pedro, and he was often present in the evening at the "King of England" hotel, where, at a distance from the other guests, he sat next the Señor, and conversed with him. Diego stood behind his master's chair, and was attentive in serving both with sherry and cigars. No one could exactly understand in what way the two gentlemen had met, nor what interest they could find in each other. They guessed right and left, made bold surmises; and after all, the young man himself could have given the best explanation, if any one among them had but asked him.

II.

AND was it not then in the beautiful gallery of the brothers Boisserée and Bertram that they had first met and became acquainted? These hospitable people had given the young man permission to come and see their pictures as often as he liked: and he did so, provided always that he was able to come during the mid-day hours when the gallery was open. It might rain or snow, the weather might be most enticing for a trip into the country, yet he came; he often seemed to be quite ill, yet he came. But we should unduly overrate Herr von Fröben's appreciation of art if we at all supposed that he either studied, or copied, the splendid pictures of the old Flemish painters. No, he came softly in at the door, made his salutation in silence, and went to a distant room; stood before one picture, which he gazed at for a long time, and then, as silently, quitted the gallery. The owners were possessed of too much refinement of feeling to question him about his extraordinary predilection for this picture: yet it must naturally have struck them; for often, when he went away, he could but ill conceal the tears which started to his eyes.

The little picture had no grand historical value, nor any special merit as a work of art. It represented a lady in a costume half Spanish, half old-German. A kindly, expressive face with clear brown eyes, a pretty, delicately-formed mouth, and a soft round chin, stood out from the back-ground like life. Clusters of hair encircled her fair forehead, and a little hat, ornamented with a rich, white feather was put on roguishly, some-

what on one side. The drapery, which left only the exquisite and lovely throat free, was adorned with massive gold chains, and testified as much to the modesty, as to the exalted rank of the lady.

“He has at last fallen quite in love with the picture,” people said, “like Kalaf with that of the Princess Turandot: though incomparably more hopelessly; for this picture is fully three hundred years old, and its original no longer among the living.”

But after a little time, Fröben appeared no longer to be the only worshipper of the picture. One day the Prince of P. visited the gallery with his suite. Don Pedro, the comptroller of the household, left the gazing troop whilst they were walking round; and wandering from room to room, inspected the pictures alone: then, as if struck by lightning, and with an exclamation of astonishment, he remained motionless before the portrait of this lady. When the prince quitted the gallery, the comptroller of the household was long sought for in vain. At last they found him with drooping arms, his fiery eyes half closed, his mouth compressed, in a deep reverie before the picture.

They reminded him that the prince was already descending the staircase; but the old man seemed at this moment to be possessed by but one feeling. He asked, “how this picture had come hither?” He was told that it had been painted several hundred years ago by a celebrated master, and had come by chance into the hands of its present owners.

“Oh, my God, no!” he answered, “the picture is new, not one hundred years old. Where from, say, where from? O, I conjure you, where can I find her?”

The man was so old, and looked so venerable, that there might have appeared something laughable in this out-burst of feeling: but when he again heard the same assertion that the portrait was ancient, and had probably been painted by Lucas Cranach, he shook his head thoughtfully.

"Gentlemen," said he, and he laid his hand solemnly on his heart; "gentlemen, Don Pedro de San Montanjo Ligez holds you to be honorable men. You are not picture-dealers, and do not wish to sell this picture to me as an old one; it is through your kindness I am able to see this portrait, and you enjoy the respect of this province. But all things combine to deceive me, or,——I know the lady whom this picture represents."

With these words, and with a courteous farewell, he strode from the room.

"In good truth," said one of the owners of the gallery, "if we did not know so certainly by whom this picture was painted, when and how it came into our possession, and during what a long circle of years previously it hung in R. one would be disposed to feel puzzled about this lady. Does not even young Fröben seem to bring some reminiscences almost daily before this portrait; and this old Don, did not a youthful fire kindle in his eyes when he asserted that he knew the lady who is painted here? It is wonderful how often imagination plays tricks on very clever men: and I am much mistaken if the Spaniard has been here for the last time."

III.

AND he was right. Scarcely had the gallery opened on the following morning when Don Pedro de San Montanjo Ligez entered with firm, proud tread, and passed through the whole line of pictures to the room in which the lady with the plumed hat was hung. He was vexed that the space in front of the picture should be already occupied, that he could not examine it feature by feature in solitude and alone, as he so much wished to do. A young man was standing before it, who looked at it for a long time, went to a window, gazed up at the passage of the clouds, and then came back again to the portrait. This annoyed the old gentleman considerably; yet, — he was obliged to have patience.

He occupied himself with other pictures; but, filled with thoughts of the lady, he turned his head every moment to see whether the young man had not yet moved; but he stood there like a wall, and appeared sunk in thought. The Spaniard coughed in order to rouse him from this long dream; still the other dreamed on; he scraped some small thing on the floor with his foot; the young man looked round; but his fine eyes only wandered momentarily towards the old man, and then were again riveted on the picture.

“San Pedro! San Jago di Compostella!” muttered the old man, “what a stupid tiresome dilettante!” In an ill-temper, he quitted the room and the gallery: for he felt that, for this day, vexation and annoyance had deprived him of all enjoyment. Yet he would have preferred to wait.

On the following day the gallery was shut, and, therefore, he was obliged to have patience for forty-eight long hours before he could again repair to the picture which interested him to so great a degree. Even before the cathedral clock had fully chimed twelve, he was mounting the staircase with dignified haste, then entered the gallery, the well-known room; and, joy! he was first, was alone, could meditate by himself.

For a long time he gazed steadfastly at the lady; by degrees, tears filled his eyes, and he drew his hand across his grey eyelashes. "O Laura!" he gently whispered.

An audible sigh sounded in his ear; he turned round in alarm; the young man of the day before yesterday was standing here again, and looking at the picture. Annoyed at finding himself disturbed, he bowed a slight greeting which the young man acknowledged in a rather more friendly manner, though not less proudly, than the Spaniard. On this occasion also this latter was desirous of outstaying his undesired neighbour; but in vain: he saw to his horror that the other had even taken a chair, and had seated himself a few paces in front of the portrait that he might examine it with full leisure and at ease.

"The coxcomb!" muttered Don Pedro, "I verily believe he intends to mock my gray hairs!" and he left the room in an even worse temper than on the former day.

In the ante-room he met with one of the owners of the gallery; and thanked him heartily for the pleasure that the collection had afforded him; but he could not

forbear to complain a little of the young disturber of his quiet.

"Herr B.," said he; "you have perhaps observed that one of your portraits has attracted me particularly; it interests me beyond description, it possesses a significance for me that — that I can not express. I came as often as you permitted me, in order to see this portrait; and was delighted to look at it undisturbed, for the crowd did not generally linger long before it; but imagine — an ill-conditioned young fellow overheard me, and he comes whenever I come; and stays, in defiance of me he stays, hours long before this portrait which can in no way concern him."

Herr B. laughed: for right well could he imagine who it was that had disturbed the old gentleman. "This last assertion I should not like to confirm," he replied, "the portrait also appears to affect the young man nearly; for this is not the first time that he has gazed at it so long."

"How so? Who is he?"

"He is Herr von Fröben," continued the other, "who has been residing here for five or six months; and ever since he first saw that picture, that very lady with the plumed hat that you come to visit, he has been here regularly every day at this hour to gaze at this portrait. You perceive then that he must at least have some interest in this picture, since he has already made such long visits to it."

"What, sir! Six months!" exclaimed the old man. "Nay, then I have done grievous injustice in my heart. May God forgive me! I believe too that, in my ill-temper, I behaved discourteously to him. And he is a gentleman, you say? No; no one shall ever be able

to say of Pedro de Ligez that he treated a stranger with discourtesy. I pray you, tell him —— but never mind, I shall meet him again, and I will speak to him."

IV.

WHEN on the next day he again repaired thither, and found Fröben already in front of the picture, he advanced towards him with a very friendly air: and when the young man moved respectfully on one side in order to make way for the old gentleman in the better place, the latter bowed a courteous greeting and said, "If I am not mistaken, Señor, I have already seen you lingering several times before this picture. It is with you as with me: for this portrait is full of interest to me also, and I cannot gaze at it enough."

Fröben was surprised at this speech; the visits of the old man had struck him; he had heard who this person was; and after the cold, stiff salutation of the previous day, he was not prepared for this friendly address.

"I confess, sir," he answered, after some little hesitation, "that this portrait attracts me above all others; for — because — there lies in this picture a something significant to me."

The old man looked enquiringly at him as though this speech did not fully satisfy him, and Fröben continued more composedly; "the effect of works of art is wonderful, especially that of pictures. Thousands will often pass a portrait, find the drawing correct, give their approbation to the colouring, but it does not speak to them with any deeper meaning; whilst to some one

individual, there springs from such a picture some grave presentiment: he stands enchained, can scarce tear himself free of the image; returns again and again to meditate on it anew."

"You may be right," said the old man thoughtfully, as he looked at the portrait, "but, — I think this can only be said of the grander compositions, and of a picture in which the painter has embodied some lofty idea. Many pass it by, till at last its significance strikes some one person who then admires the deep feeling of the artist. But could one advance such theories of this picture?"

The young man reddened. "And why not?" he asked smiling. "The lovely form of this face, the noble brow, these expressive eyes, this exquisite mouth, has not the painter created them all with deep feeling? Is there not something so attractive in these features that ——"

"O pardon, pardon," interrupted the old man stopping him goodhumouredly; "it was undoubtedly a very pretty woman who sat to the painter; her family claims pretty women."

"What! What family!" cried the young man in astonishment; he doubted whether the old man were of sane mind: and yet his words seemed to him of the highest import. "This picture is, indeed, a mere imagination, sir, and it is at the least several hundred years old."

"Then you also believe that fable?" whispered the old man; "between ourselves, the keen eye of the owner is deceived this time; I know the lady."

"In Heaven's name! you know her? Where is

she now? What is her name?" said Fröben greatly moved, as he seized the hand of the Spaniard.

"I should rather say I did know her," replied the latter in a trembling voice, as he raised his dim eyes to the lady. "Yes, I did know her in Valencia, twenty years ago; a long time! She is none other than Donna Laura Tortosi."

"Twenty years!" repeated the young man, sorrowfully and with a downcast air. "Twenty years! No, it is not her."

"It is not?" replied Don Pedro hotly. "Do you say, not? Then do you believe that a painter could have invented and painted these features from his own brain? But I will not be unjust; he was, indeed, a skilful artist who painted her, for the colours are true and clear, faithful and fresh, as those of glowing life. But, do you suppose, that such an artist would not have created quite a different being in his imagination? Do you not perceive, even without knowing the Tortosi family, that this lady possesses a family resemblance, family features, marked and plain as nature defines them; features, such as one never finds in imaginary pictures, but only in family portraits? It is a portrait, I assure you, Señor; and, by heaven! none other than that of Donna Laura just as I saw her twenty years ago in fair Valencia."

"Honoured sir," replied Fröben, "likenesses, and deceptive likenesses, exist; one often fancies one may see a speaking likeness of a friend, only in a strange and old-fashioned costume; and when one enquires, it proves to be his great-grandfather from the thirty years' war, or, perhaps, some quite strange person. I grant you, this portrait bears the marks of so-called

family features, that it may resemble the lovely Donna Laura; but this picture, this, is old; and this much is, at least, known from registers and church-books, that it certainly hung in the church of the Magdalen at R— for a hundred and fifty years; that it came to the church through an accidental legacy, was not painted to order; but according to all information was painted by the German artist, Lucas Cranach."

"Then the devil take my eyes!" cried Don Pedro angrily, as he sprang up and seized his hat. "It is a delusion from below; even in my old age she seeks, by means of this picture, to plunge me in grief and sadness." Tears stood in the old man's eyes, as with hurried and heavy steps he quitted the gallery.

V.

BUT, nevertheless, he had not been there for the last time. Fröben and he still met frequently before the picture; and the old man conceived an ever-increasing liking for the young man on account of his modest, but firm, opinions, his winning candour, and for his whole character which evidenced good education, superior acquirements, and a tact unusual at his age. The old man was a stranger in the city; he felt lonely, for he was not so dead to the world but that he would have liked to speak to some one, now and again. Thus it happened that imperceptibly he attached himself more closely to young Fröben; the latter, indeed, attracted him indescribably, because he shared with him one tender feeling; namely, love for this portrait.

Thus it was that he gladly accompanied the young man in his walks, and often invited him to give him

his company in the evening. One evening, when the dining-saloon at the "King of England" was unusually full, and strange guests encircled the pair so that they found themselves debarred from any confidential conversation, Don Pedro said to his young friend: "Señor, if you have not promised some lady that you will appear before her lattice this evening with your lute, and if no other promise should prevent, may I invite you to broach a flask of right good Ximenes with me in my own apartment?"

"You do me great honor," replied Fröben, "I am bound by no promises, for I am not acquainted with any ladies here, and it is not the custom in this place to play on one's lute in the streets in the evening, or to converse with one's lady-love at the window. I shall accompany you with pleasure."

"Good! Then wait here for a minute whilst I make arrangements with Diego; I will send to call you."

The old man had given his invitation with a sort of solemnity that struck Fröben strangely. It now first occurred to him that he had never yet been in Don Pedro's private room, for they had always met in the public dining-room of the hotel. Putting all things together, he thought he must needs believe that it was a special act of courtesy that the Spaniard wished to show to him by this invitation to his own apartment. In a quarter of an hour Diego appeared with two silver candlesticks, bowed respectfully to the young man, and requested he would follow him. Fröben did so, and remarked that all the guests stared after him with curiosity, and whispered together. Diego opened a folding-door on the first floor, and signed to the

visitor to enter. The latter remained standing at the threshold in surprise. His old friend had taken off his frock-coat, had put on a black, slashed doublet with red trimmings, and had buckled on a long rapier with a golden hilt: a dark red cloak hung over his shoulders. He gravely advanced to meet his guest, extending his thin hand from the rich ruffle to greet him: "You are heartily welcome, Don Fröbenio," said he, "do not be shocked at this poor room; when one is travelling, as you know, things are not as they are at home. All is much more luxurious in my saloon in Lisbon, and my divans are of real Moorish workmanship; but sit down beside me on this little thing they call a sofa; the wine of Herr Schwaderer is pure and good; sit down."

With these words he led the young man to the sofa; the table in front of it was spread with wine and confectionery; Diego filled the glasses, and brought matches and cigars.

"Already for a long time," began Don Pedro, "already for a long time I have been wishing to speak once in perfect confidence to you, Don Fröbenio, if you will not esteem such confidence lightly. Look you, when we met so often in the middle of the day before Laura's picture; then, whilst you were completely absorbed in the contemplation of it, I watched you attentively; and (forgive me if my old eyes committed a theft on yours) I perceived that the subject of this portrait must certainly possess a greater interest for you, and a deeper significance, than you have confessed to me up to this time."

Fröben coloured; the old man looked at him so

keenly and penetratingly, as if he would read the inmost thoughts of his soul.

"It is true," he replied, "that this portrait has a deep significance for me, and you have seen rightly if you imagine that it is not the artist's work that interests me, but the subject of the picture. Ah! It reminds me of the strangest, but happiest moment of my life! You will smile when I tell you that I once saw a young girl who bore the most striking resemblance to this picture; I saw her but once, and never again; and, therefore, it is necessary to my happiness to seek at least in this portrait for her lovely features."

"O Heavens! That is my case also!" exclaimed Don Pedro.

"Then you will laugh," continued Fröben, "when I confess that I can only speak of a portion of the face of this lady. I do not know whether she is fair or dark; whether her forehead is high or low, her eyes blue or brown, I do not know. But the delicate nose, the lovely mouth, the downy cheek, the soft chin, I find in the loved portrait as I beheld them in life."

"Strange!—and these features which are wont to make a less deep impression on the memory than eyes, forehead, and hair; these, when you have only once seen them, can remain so vividly in your mind?"

"Oh, Don Pedro!" said the young man with emotion, "a mouth that one has once kissed, such a mouth, one does not so easily forget. But I will tell you, how it befel me."

"Stop! Not a word!" interrupted the Spaniard. "You would assuredly think me very ill-bred if I were to draw his secret from a cavalier without having first pledged him mine. I will first tell you about the lady

whom I recognized in that wonderful picture; and if then you should deem me worthy of your confidence, you can reward me with your story. But you are not drinking at all: this is pure Spanish wine; and you must drink it, if you wish to visit Valencia with me."

They partook of the exhilarating Ximenes, and the old man proceeded.

VI.

"SEÑOR, I was born in Granada. My father commanded a regiment, and both he and my mother were sprung from the oldest families in the kingdom. I was educated in the Christian faith, and in all branches of learning befitting a nobleman; and my father destined me for a soldier, so soon as I should be twenty years of age and fully grown. But he was a severe man and without consideration where the service was concerned; and as he knew my mother's tenderness for me, and feared she might often prevent him from making me perform my duty properly, he resolved to send me to another regiment, and his choice fell on Pampeluna where my uncle was in command. There I learned the duties of the service diligently and accurately, and in the course of the following ten years attained the rank of captain. When I was thirty years of age, my uncle was moved to Valencia. He had interest, and knew how to use it; so that in half a year I was able to follow him as adjutant. But when I arrived in Valencia great changes had taken place in my uncle's household. He had long before, whilst still in Pampeluna, become a widower. He had become acquainted in

THE BEGGAR GIRL

“Valencia with a rich widow, and had married her
“some weeks before I came to his house. You may
“imagine how surprised I was when he presented an
“elderly lady to me, and called her his wife; but my
“astonishment grew, and turned into delight, when he
“also led forward a young lady, beautiful as the day,
“and named her his daughter Laura and my cousin.
“Up to that day I had never loved; and, for this
“reason, my comrades had often nicknamed me Pedro
“el pedro (Peter the stone), but the stone melted like
“wax before the sunny glances of Laura.

“You have seen her, Don Fröbenio; that picture
“reflects her heavenly features, in so far as it is pos-
“sible for a human artist to equal the wonderful works
“of nature. Ah! just so she wore her hair, just as
“archly as in that picture would she put on her little
“hat with its waving plume, and when she raised her
“dark eyes from beneath their long lashes it was as
“though the gates of heaven opened, and a bright
“angel descended with a friendly greeting.

“My love, Señor, was a happy love; I could, in-
“deed, be near her every day: those barriers which in
“my native country generally separate lovers and make
“love painful, replete with anxiety, full of apprehen-
“sion, deceitful, those barriers did not divide us. And
“when I looked forward to the future, how smilingly
“it lay before me! My uncle loved me as his son; if
“I understood his looks aright, it would seem not to
“be unplesing to him that I should woo his daughter;
“and from my father I could anticipate no objections,
“for Laura was of noble blood, and the wealth of her
“mother was well-known. How strong my love was,
“you may already judge from this, that I loved when

“all trouble and sorrow were so completely absent. For, usually, love springs from the pleasing perception that one is, perhaps, not disagreeable to the object loved; just as fire stealing along under the roof and kept in by a wall suddenly bursts forth, consuming all in the house below, and blazing up towards heaven; so with love. The little preference increases. The apparently insurmountable obstacles urge it on: a yearning is felt which one imagines can only be satisfied by the beloved one. One talks to the lady at the window, sends her letters by her waiting-maid, pictures in sleeping and waking alike dreams her image, her enchanting figure, which until now one has never beheld except veiled and shrouded in the disguising mantilla. At last, whether by stratagem or force the barriers fall. The breach is mounted, the prize borne off to church, and — afterwards the treasure is scrutinized more closely. As with the beautiful mossy ground which is spread just like a carpet over the swampy moor, if you tread on it as on firm ground, your feet sink and springs bubble from below; so here. Every moment displays some new mood in the lady, every day she more freely lifts the veil and mantilla from her heart, and, at last, you would rather be again standing at the window to sing a love-lament, and — never to return.”

VII.

“By Heaven! You are a severe critic!” replied Fröben, reddening; “there lies some truth in what you say; but is it all true? No; otherwise, indeed, every godlike flame that is enkindled in the heart, every

moment of happiness in which half a minute is sufficient to obtain intelligence, all must deceive; and yet I believe in their celestial origin. Oh! things have fallen out better than this with me!"

"I understand what you would say," replied Don Pedro, "such a moment is celestially bright, but it too often merges into a bitter illusion. Listen again. "There were no difficulties to allure or to discourage me, and yet I loved as ardently as any young cavalier in Spain. The only obstacle might be Laura's heart; and her eyes had already often confessed that they were pleased to meet mine. All the little tokens of tenderness that are bestowed under such circumstances, Donna Laura accepted graciously; and, at the end of three months, she permitted me to confess my love to her. The parents had long noticed the affair: my uncle gave me his consent; and said, that on account of the good service I had rendered, he had applied to the king for a commission of major for me. Together with the intelligence of my promotion, I was to make a confession of my attachment to my father, and ask him for his consent. I promised: alas! why did I do so? Ought we not always to imagine that there is a demon behind us who gives us happiness only as a play-thing, that he may suddenly snatch it from us again?"

"Shortly after I had received the assurance of my happiness, I made acquaintance with a captain in a Swiss regiment whom I took a liking for, and I daily brought him home. He was a handsome, fair man, with clear, blue eyes, white skin and rosy cheeks. He would have appeared to be too effeminate for a soldier, only that the famous deeds of arms

“which he had achieved were the talk of every one.
“So much the more dangerous was he to the ladies.
“His whole appearance was new in this country where
“the sun sheds a dark tint over all complexions, where
“black eyes sparkle from beneath black hair: and
“when he told of the icebergs, of the eternal snows of
“his native land, all listened eagerly to his discourse;
“whilst many ladies had already made the attempt to
“melt the ice in his heart.

“One morning a friend, who knew of my attachment to Laura, came to me; and, by various mysterious speeches, gave me to understand that I had better either be upon my guard, or marry my cousin without the commission of major, as otherwise much might happen which would be disagreeable to me. I was perplexed, enquired more minutely, and learned that Donna Laura came to and from the house of a married friend together with a man who slipped into the house, concealed by a cloak. I parted from my friend and thanked him. I did not believe one word of it, but a pang of jealousy and distrust remained with me. I reflected upon Laura’s behaviour towards me, it was unchanged; she was affectionate, amiable, as ever; permitted me to kiss her hand, and, indeed, her lovely mouth also. But here came a pause; for now it first occurred to me how coldly she received my embraces; she did not press my hand in return when I pressed hers, she gave me no return kiss.

“Doubts troubled me; my friend came again, and stirred up the fire more fiercely by more definite intelligence; and I mentally resolved to watch the steps of my mistress more attentively. We generally dined together, my uncle, my aunt, my pretty cousin,

"and myself. On the evening of the day on which my friend had warned me for the second time, my aunt asked her daughter at the table whether she would give her her company in the balcony.

"Laura replied that she had promised to pay a visit to her friend. I might involuntarily have looked at her more keenly upon this; for she cast down her eyes, and blushed. She went to this lady an hour before night set in. When it became dark, I slipped out stealthily to the house, and kept watch: a burning jealousy came over me when I saw a shrouded figure glide up the street, close under the shadow of the houses. I placed myself in front of the house-door, the figure approached, and would have moved me gently on one side. But I seized him by the cloak, and said: 'Señor, whoever you may be, I imagine that it is a man of honour who stands before me at this moment; and on your honour, I demand of you to answer me.' I saw him shrink in alarm at the first sound of my voice; but after a short pause he collected himself, and then replied, 'What is it?'

"'Swear to me upon your honour,' I proceeded, 'that you are not going to that house for the sake of Donna Laura de Tortosi.'

"'Who dares to require from me an account of my goings?' he exclaimed in a deep, feigned voice. By his pronunciation, I perceived that he must be a foreigner; a gloomy foreboding arose in my mind. "'Captain de San Montanjo dares it!' I answered; and, before he was aware of it, I tore down his cloak from his face; — it was my friend Tannensee, the Swiss.

"There he stood like a criminal, unable to say a

“word. But I had drawn my sword; and, speechless
“with rage, I signed to him to do the same. ‘I have
“no weapon with me but a dagger,’ he answered. I
“was almost inclined to pass my sword through his
“body without further delay; but when he remained
“standing before me so composedly, and so unmoved
“by all, I could not perpetrate the fearful deed. I
“retained sufficient composure to desire him to give
“me satisfaction on the following morning, outside the
“city-gate. I retained possession of the door; he as-
“sented, and went away.

“I continued my watch for a long time; until, at
“last, the sedan was brought for Laura; then, until I
“had seen her get into it; and then, I slowly followed
“her home. The pangs of jealousy allowed no sleep
“to visit me on my couch; and thus I heard that steps
“were approaching my door about midnight. Some
“one knocked; astonished, I threw my cloak around
“me and unlocked the door; it was an old servant of
“Laura’s who gave me a letter, and then hurried away
“again.

“Señor! may God of His mercy preserve you from
“receiving such a letter! She confessed to me that
“she had long loved the Swiss, before she knew me
“at all; that, from fear of the anger of her mother,
“she had always restrained him from making an offer
“for her hand; that, compelled by the threats of my aunt,
“she had consented to my proposals. She took all the
“blame upon herself, she swore with the most solemn
“oaths that Tannensee had often wished to confess all
“to me; and had only been persuaded to desist by her
“entreaties, by her fears of being even more strictly
“guarded afterwards. She disclosed to me a terrible

"secret, that the honour of her family would be sullied if I did not assist her and the captain to fly. She conjured me to give up the duel; for if he should fall, nothing would be left for her, his wife, but to take away her own life." To appeal to my generosity, she closed by saying, she should for ever esteem me, but never could love me.

"You will allow that such a letter would, like cold water, quench all the fire of love: it extinguished even my anger. But my feelings of honour could not forgive the deception practised upon me; and, therefore, at the appointed hour, I presented myself on the combat-ground. The captain must have felt deeply how much he had insulted me; although he was a better swordsman than I, he merely defended himself; and it was not his fault that I ran my hand, here between the thumb and forefinger, on his sword so that I was not in a condition to fight any longer.

"Whilst my wound was being dressed, I gave him Laura's letter. He read it; he implored of me to forgive him: I did so with a heavy heart.

"The story of my love is ended, Don Fröbenio; for five days afterwards Donna Laura disappeared with the Swiss."

"And by your aid?" asked Fröben.

"I helped as far as I could. The grief of my aunt was, indeed, great; but under these circumstances, it was better that she should never see her daughter again than that dishonour should fall upon her house."

"Noble man! How much, indeed, it must have cost you! Truly it was a bitter trial."

"It was, assuredly;" replied the old man with a

gloomy smile. "I thought, at first, the wound would never heal: time does much, my friend. I have never seen her since, have never heard from her: once only the newspapers mentioned Colonel Tannensee as a brave man who, among Napoleon's troops, had offered a lengthened resistance to the enemy at the battle of Brienne. Whether it were the same, whether Laura still lives, I do not know.

"But when I came to this city, visited yonder gallery; and* (after twenty long years) again saw my Laura just as she was in the days of her youth, then the old wound broke out afresh, — and you know that I go daily to look at her."

VIII.

WITH formal solemnity, as befitted the comptroller of the household of a Prince of P—, and a man of ancient Castilian family, had Don Pedro de San Montanjo Ligez related his history. When he had finished it, he drank some Xeres, raised his hat, wiped his forehead and chin, and said to the young man by his side: "That which I have confided to but few, I have narrated circumstantially to you, Don Fröbenio; but not in order to induce you to requite me with a similar confidence, although your secret would rest as securely in my breast as doth the dust of the King of Spain in the Escorial! — Yet I am all attention to learn in what way this lady interests you. — But curiosity is not seemly in the old; and, best so."

Fröben thanked the old man for his communication. "I will, with pleasure, give you my little romance in the best way I can," he said smiling; "no lady's secrets

are implicated in it, and it is already finished at the point at which others begin. But, if you will allow, I will relate it to you to-morrow; for it is, indeed, too late for it to-day."

"Entirely as accords with your own pleasure," replied the Don, pressing his hand. "I know how to show respect to your confidence."

Thus they parted; the Spaniard courteously accompanied the young man to the entrance of the ante-room, and Diego lighted him to the street.

According to custom, Fröben went on the following day to the gallery; he stood before the portrait for a long time; but, certainly on this day, he thought more of the old man than of the lady it represented; he waited for more than an hour—the old man did not come. At the stroke of two o'clock he went to the gardens, walked slowly round the lake, took out his glass frequently, and looked all down the promenade through it: but it did not reveal the venerable figure of his old friend: in vain did he seek for the thin black legs, the peaked hat; in vain for Diego and his gay clothes, with the umbrella and cloak; they were not to be seen.

"Can he have been taken ill?" he asked himself; and involuntarily he went to the Castle-square, and then to the "King of England" hotel to call upon Don Pedro.

"The whole household are gone, up and gone!" was the head-butler's reply to his question, "only yesterday evening the Prince received despatches; and to-day, before noon, His Highness and his suite took their departure in six carriages for W—: the comptroller

of the household (he travelled in the second carriage) has left a card for you."

Fröben greedily seized this last token of friendship. There was nothing to be read upon it but Don Pedro de San Montanjo Ligez, Major Rio de S. A. etc. Fröben was sadly putting this cold adieu into his pocket, when he perceived some words written on the back with a lead pencil; he read, "Farewell, dear Don Fröbenio; you must remain in my debt as regards your story; greet and kiss Donna Laura."

He smiled at the old man's commission: and yet, when he again on the next day stood before the picture, he felt more melancholy than ever; for a blank was left in his life by Don Pedro's departure. He had had such pleasure in conversing with the old man; he had for the first time, for a long while, lived again in intimate intercourse with man; and he now felt more completely than ever that only the solitary, the utterly hopeless, are altogether wretched. If the portrait that enchained him by its strange witchery had not existed, he would long ago have left Stuttgart which possessed no other charm for him. For this reason when, one day, the Herr Boisserée showed him a faithful copy of this loved portrait, a lithograph, and presented him with it, he received it as a token from fate, tore himself from the original, packed up the copy carefully, and quitted the city as quietly as he had entered it.

IX.

FRÖBEN'S residence in Stuttgart had simply been continued on account of the picture that he had found in the gallery. When he halted at the capital of

Württemberg, he was on a journey to the Rhine, and thitherwards he now again proceeded. He owned to himself that the last few months had rendered him almost effeminate. He felt, not without shame and a slight shudder, that his melancholy, his meditations, and whole conduct had bordered upon imbecility. It was true he was independent, that he had destined this year for one of travel without having placed before himself any fixed plan or object, and he tried to attribute this long interruption of his journey to the charming situation of the city, to its beautiful environs. But had he really found the city so attractive? Had he sought to become acquainted with its inhabitants? Had he not much rather avoided them, because they disturbed the solitude which had become so dear to him? Had he been enjoying the beauties of the environs? "No," said he smiling to himself, "one might be tempted to believe in witchcraft. I have deceived myself like a fool! I have shut myself up in my room that I might read. And have I read really? Was not her image standing at my side? Did my steps ever lead me further than to her, or now and then up and down among the crowd of people? Is it not pure madness to seek for a shadow in such wide paths, to gaze attentively in the face of every young girl to see whether I cannot recognize the little mouth of my unknown beloved one?"

Thus did the young man lecture himself; and believed that he had formed steady resolves; but how often, if his horse went more slowly up hill, did he not forget to quicken its pace at the summit, because his mind was wandering in other paths; how often, in the evening when he opened his valise, and the roll

fell down into his hand, did he not involuntarily unfold the portrait of his beloved one, and forget to lay himself down to sleep?

But the enchanting mountain-districts of Neckar, the magnificent plains of Mannheim, Worms, Mayence, did not fail to make their peculiar impression upon him. They distracted his thoughts, they filled his mind with new and kindly ideas. And when he departed one morning from Bingen, one image alone stood before his eyes, one form, that on this day he was to behold. Fröben had travelled in France and in England with a fellow-countryman who, from his companion, had by degrees grown to be his friend. It was true that when he reflected upon their friendship, he was obliged to own to himself that it was not similarity of character that had led to it: yet, indeed, it frequently happens that those who are dissimilar are more attached to each other than those who are alike. Baron von Faldner was rather rough and uncultivated; even this tour, and the exciting life of two capitals like Paris and London, had only resulted in softening and polishing his exterior to some degree. He was one of those men who, because (either through the fault of others or of themselves) they disdain elegant literature, the more refining and deeper sciences, and the polishing influences of art, take up the notion that they are practical men; that is, men who possess by intuition what others must labour to learn; who possess a natural knowledge of agriculture, management of cattle, husbandry, and similar subjects, and look upon themselves as born farmers, as practical managers; who fancy they can attain in the simplest way that which the mass must seek from books. This egotism

made him happy; for he did not perceive on what a slender foundation his information stood; he would, indeed, have been still happier, if this self-appreciation had existed only with regard to his occupations: but he carried it about with him wherever he went; bestowed advice without there being any one to receive it, esteemed himself (what certainly no one said of him) a wise fellow; and, owing to all this, he became a disagreeable companion; and at home, perhaps, even a petty tyrant, from the simple reason that he was so wise, and always in the right.

“Will he be as full of wise sayings as ever?” Fröben asked himself smiling; “that inevitable, ‘I told you so!’” How often when he least expected that anything would happen just as it did, how often has he seized my hand and exclaimed: ‘Say now, friend Fröben, did not I foretell a month ago that this would come to pass? Why did you not follow my advice?’ And when shown, as clearly as noon-day, that he had, perhaps, maintained the very contrary, then he would not on any terms allow himself to be persuaded and was sulky for three or four days.”

Fröben trusted that experience, and the influences with which lovely nature had surrounded him, might have now made his friend wiser. His property was situated in one of the most exquisite spots of the valley of the Rhine, in the vicinity of Kaub; and, the nearer the traveller approached, the more joyously his heart throbbed at the sight of the grandeur of the mountains, and the majesty of the river; and now, and more frequently, did he say to himself: “No! he must be altered, in the midst of such surroundings one could not but be self-denying, kindly, sympathizing; and, in

the enjoyment of such scenes, one would be compelled to forget a dispute even if one had really been in the right, which, unfortunately, is very seldom the case with him.

X.

HE reached his friend's property towards evening; at the house, he gave his horse to a servant, inquired of him for his master, and was shown into the garden. There he soon recognized in the distance the figure and voice of his friend. He seemed at this moment to be in warm dispute with an old man who was working at a trench by a tree. "And if you had done it in the same way as this, old idler, for a hundred years instead of fifty, still the tree *must* be taken up, as I said. Now, quickly to work, old man; it would be evident to any one that this has been wisely considered." The labourer put on his cap with a sigh, looked once more at the beautiful apple-tree with an expression of melancholy; and hastily, and it seemed almost spitefully, thrust his spade into the ground, and began to dig. The baron whistled a tune, turned round, and before him stood a man who greeted him with a friendly smile, and extended his hand to him. The baron looked at him with surprise.

"What do you want?" he asked shortly and quickly.

"Do you not recognize me, Faldner?" replied the stranger. "Have you forgotten London and Paris in your nursery-garden?"

"Is it possible, my friend, Fröben?" exclaimed the other, and he hastened to embrace his friend. "But,

good Heavens! how you are changed; you are so pale and thin; that must be from too much sitting-still and work; because you never will follow any advice; yet I have often told you it is not good for you."

"My good friend," answered Fröben, whom this reception involuntarily reminded of his meditations on his way hither; "my good friend, pray, think a moment; did not you always tell me that I was not fit for a farmer, nor for a forester, nor for any similar occupations; and that I ought to adopt a legal or diplomatic profession?"

"Ah, my good Fröben!" said the other, with a doubtful smile, "and so you still suffer from shortness of memory! Did I not say at that very time——?"

"I beg pardon, you are right, do not let us argue about it," interrupted his guest, "let us rather talk of something more interesting: how has the world fared with you since we saw each other, what is your mode of life?"

The baron ordered wine to be brought to an arbour, and then related his doings and ways of life. His story consisted of scarcely anything but complaints of the badness of the times, and the folly of mankind. He gave it plainly to be understood that with his clear head, and with the knowledge which he had acquired during his travels, he could have brought the art of husbandry to great perfection during these few years. But now, his neighbours, unasked, began to dissuade him from this and that; now, he had himself to encounter indescribable opposition from his work-people, who would all fancy they knew better than he did; and, in their blindness, would rely on long experience. In short he lived, as he owned, a life full of unceasing

anxiety and labour, full of quarrels and wrath; and, even the few untroubled hours that the care of his property left remaining for him to enjoy, were embittered by a law-suit on a question of boundaries. "My poor friend!" thought Fröben as he heard this tale; "thus then you are still riding the same hobby; and, like the wildest of race-horses, he runs away with you without your having power to restrain him."

But the turn to narrate his history came also to the guest; and, in a few words, he told his friend that he had been dividing his time among the embassies at different courts, that he had found little amusement anywhere, that he had asked for a long leave of absence, and was now travelling for a time about the world again.

"Fortunate fellow!" exclaimed Faldner; "how I envy you your position! to-day here, to-morrow there; you know no restraints, and can travel whither, and for however long, you please. There is something glorious in travelling! I wish, I could once more be so free to go about the world!"

"Well, what hinders you?" cried Fröben laughing; "surely not your large estate? You might let that any day to a tenant, order your horse to be saddled, and come with me!"

"Ah, my good fellow! You do not understand these subjects!" replied the baron with a faint smile. "For one thing, as regards the property I cannot be a single day absent without all going wrong, for I am the life of the whole. And then — I have done a stupid trick — but let that pass: there is no more travelling for me."

At this moment a servant came into the arbour,

and announced that his mistress had returned, and had desired him to ask where the tea should be served.

"In the room upstairs I think," said he, colouring slightly, and the servant went away.

"What! You are married?" asked Fröben astonished. "And I only hear of it now for the first time! Well, I congratulate you. But tell me — I should have dreamed of the fall of the heavens sooner than of this news; and since when?"

"Six months ago!" replied the baron in a low voice, and without looking at his guest; "but why should this surprise you so much? You may imagine in my large property, if I superintended everything that —"

"Ah, yes! I allow it is quite natural and proper: but when I remember how you used to talk about marriages formerly, I never could have supposed that any girl could ever please you."

"No, pardon me," answered Faldner; "I always said, and even at that very time —"

"Yes, indeed, you said so always, and at that time, and at that time and always I said, that you would never find any one to come up to your requirements; for that these were founded upon an ideal that I should not have chosen, and that, indeed, could not be found anywhere. However, once more! my hearty congratulations to you. But as a lady is in the house and invites us to tea, I really cannot appear in this travelling-dress: wait a little while, I will soon be with you. Good-bye, till we meet again."

He quitted the arbour, and the baron gazed after him with a sad expression. "He is not wrong!" he whispered.

But at this moment a tall, female figure entered the arbour. "Who is it that has just left you?" she asked quickly and sharply. "Who said this, 'Till we meet again?'"

The baron rose, and looked at his wife with surprise: he noticed how the delicate colour in her cheeks had heightened into a glowing red. "No, this must not go on!" he exclaimed vehemently; "Joseph, how often must I tell you that to country people of your constitution every violent exertion is strictly forbidden. No doubt, you have again been taking a long walk, and have heated yourself; and now, contrary to all common sense, you come down into the garden where the air is already chilly. I must ever and always be repeating all this to you, as if you were a child. For shame!"

"Ah! I only wished to call you in," said Joseph in a trembling voice: "but do not be angry, I certainly did walk all the way, yet I am not at all over-heated: so do not be angry."

"Your cheeks contradict you," he continued, sullenly. "Must I then always be preaching to you? And you have not thrown your shawl around you as I told you to do, whenever you should come down to the garden in the evening: why am I to fling away money on such things if they are never to be used? Oh, heavens! I might often well be in a passion. You will not do even the least thing to please me; your self-will will be the death of me. Oh! indeed, I might often ——"

"Forgive me, Franz, I beseech you," she entreated sadly, whilst she drove back the large tears in her eyes, "I have not seen you the whole day long, and I wished to surprise you here; alas! did not

think of the shawl and of the evening-air. Forgive me — will you forgive your wife?"

"Very well, leave me in peace then. You know I do not like such scenes; and, least of all, tears. For heaven's sake, cure yourself of that fatal weakness of crying at every trifle. — We have a guest, Fröben, of whom I have already spoken to you; he travelled with me. Conduct yourself rationally, Josepha, do you hear? Let nothing be wanting; so that I may not be forced to take the cares of housekeeping upon me, in addition. We will drink tea in the drawing-room."

He walked in silence before her down the avenue to the castle. Josepha followed him sorrowfully; a question trembled on her lips: but much as she wished to utter it, she locked this question up in the depths of her heart.

XI.

WHEN, late at night, the baron accompanied his guest to his apartment, the latter could not refrain from congratulating him upon his choice. "Indeed, Franz," said he, shaking him warmly by the hand, "you needed such a wife. You were always a favourite of fortune; but I never could have dreamed that, with your extraordinary maxims and requirements, you could have brought such an amiable, lovely girl to your home."

"Aye, aye, I am contented with her," replied the baron drily, as he snuffed his candle afresh; "one cannot have everything; one must, in truth, accustom oneself to this reflection in this imperfect world."

"Man! I would fain hope you are not ungrateful

towards one so lovely. I have seen many women; but, God knows, not one so faultlessly beautiful as your wife. Those eyes! What a touching expression! Does not one imagine that bright dreamings may be read in her fair brow? And that graceful, slender form! And yet I know not whether her fine tact, her correct judgment, her cultivated mind, are not even more worthy of admiration?"

"You are quite bewitched," smiled Faldner; "but, in old times, you always read too much, and saw too little of what was practical; I always said so — with women it is a nice point," he continued, sighing; "believe me, in a household, one who understands it and manages it briskly is often better than a so-called cultivated person. Good night, rejoice that you are still free, and — do not choose in too great a hurry."

Fröben, vexed, followed him with his eyes as he quitted the room. "I believe the brute is even now not contented with his lot: his choice has fallen on an angel; and, by his absurd requirements, he makes a hell of his house. Poor woman!"

It had not escaped him how anxiously in all that she did and said, she hung upon her husband's looks; how he often glanced fiercely at her, if according to his ideas she made any mistake; how he often made a sign to her with his hand, bit his lips, and sighed, when he thought he was not observed by his guest. And with what angelic patience she bore all this! She had made a deep, a wonderful impression upon him. Her rich, fair hair, which encircled a broad forehead, might have led one to expect blue eyes, rosy cheeks, perhaps, even a little nose that by its pretty pertness is more becoming to blondes than to brunettes.

THE BEGGAR GIRL

But none of these. Beneath her fair eyelashes, like moonlight behind a thin cloud, reposed a brown eye which startled, not by its sparkle, nor by its great vivacity, but by a certain something of pensive melancholy; which Fröben, as he seldom found it, yet loved infinitely in handsome women. Her nose approached the Grecian in form; her cheeks were usually pale, only tinted by the slightest shade of pink; and the solitary bloom on her face was, instead of rose on her cheek, rose on her lips, at the sight of which one could not help thinking of two red, ripe cherries.

"And her splendid figure," continued Fröben, in his meditations; "so refined, so regal, and that almost seems to be floating as she moves across the room. Floating? As if I had not observed that she has much to bear, that within these lips are locked up many an expression of grief, that these eyes only wait for solitude to weep over the conduct of her rough husband. No, it is impossible," he continued after meditating for a while, "that she can have married him from love. The world that lies created beneath those eyes is too extended for Faldner's understanding, the heart of his wife is too tender for the rude thralldom of her home-tyrant. I do pity her!" During these last words he had moved to a press in which the servant had placed his luggage. He opened it, his first glance fell upon the well-known roll, and he coloured. "Have I not been untrue to thee this evening?" he asked. "Has not a new image stolen into my heart? Yes, and have I not detected myself in reflections concerning the wife of my friend which do not become me, and which can in no case be of use to her?" He unrolled the portrait of his beloved one,

and stood confounded. Now, for the first time, the idea that Frau von Faldner was wonderfully like this picture (which had been hitherto slumbering within him dreamily and confused) awoke to life. It was true that her hair, her eyes, her forehead, were completely different from those in the picture. But he was convinced that he could trace a surprising similarity in the nose, mouth, and chin, and even in the turn of the lovely throat. "And her voice!" he exclaimed. "Did not the tones of her voice strike upon me from the beginning with a familiar sound? What ails me? What, if it were possible that the wife of my friend should be the young maiden whom I have but once seen, and, indeed, then only half saw, yet whom I love unchangingly and whom, from that moment, I have sought in vain! This form — aye, she, too, was tall; and when, as she rested on my breast, I put my cloak around her, I perceived that her figure was graceful and slender. And have not my eyes this evening often met hers looking at me scrutinizingly? Can she then have recognized me? But — fool that I am! How should Faldner with his distrust, his stringent maxims regarding nobility and irreproachable reputation, have married — an unknown beggar-woman?"

He looked again closely at the picture; one moment he imagined he was quite certain, at the next he doubted again. He complained of his treacherous memory. Might not this picture have become so mingled with his former recollections that he could not now think of the unknown except as resembling this portrait? And now, when he had stumbled upon a new and striking likeness, did not he stand in a

labyrinth of doubts? He threw the picture on one side, and buried his burning forehead in the pillows of his bed. He longed for a deep sleep that he might escape from these doubts, and that the true form might rise before him in his dreams with all-conquering power.

XII.

WHEN Fröben on the following morning entered the room in which he was to breakfast, his restless friend had already ridden out to inspect the progress of a dam on the borders of his estate. The servant who gave him this information added with an air of importance, that his master would hardly be able to return home before the middle of the day, because he would also be obliged to inspect his new steam-mill, some felling in the woods, a new pleasure-ground, together with several other things. "And your mistress?" inquired the guest.

She had already been an hour in the garden, gathering beans, and would now soon come in to breakfast.

Fröben walked about the hall and meditated over the previous evening. How differently all images appear to us in the morning-light from what they did in the mists of evening! And so it was with him, as regarded the troubled thoughts that had floated up and down within him yesterday: he laughed at himself, and at the doubts which wild fancy had excited in him.

"The baron," said he to himself, "is after all a kindhearted man; he has certainly many peculiarities;

some roughnesses, but this is chiefly in outward manner. But, on living longer with him, one gets accustomed to *that*, and accommodates oneself to it. And Josepha? How hastily one often judges! How often have not I fancied I discovered touching grief, deep anguish of mind, resignation, in the eyes and demeanour of a woman; and, blinded by a demon, have wished tenderly to comfort and console her; and all the time it was a delusion of my own imagination; she was, perhaps, when watched more narrowly, a very commonplace woman who, with the expressive eyes in which I read melancholy, was anxiously counting the stitches in her knitted stocking; or, beneath the sorrow-stricken brow, was pondering what she should order to be cooked for supper." He pursued these reflections to chastise himself with irony, to chase away the tender emotions, the impressions which now seemed to him to be foolish and exaggerated. Sunk in these reveries, he approached the mirror, and read over the visiting cards which were stuck in it: one fell into his hand which announced Faldner's own wedding. He read the delicately-engraved words: "Baron F. von Faldner and his bride, Josepha von Tannensee."

"Von Tannensee!" Like a flash of lightning this name explained to him every dim resemblance that he had discovered between the wife of his friend, and his beloved picture. "What! She may, perhaps, be the daughter of that Laura whom my kind Don Pedro once loved. What joy for him if it should be so, if I should be able to give him tidings of the lost one! Did not he discover in this extraordinary portrait a most striking likeness to his cousin? May not the daughter resemble the mother?" He quickly concealed

the card, for he heard the door open; he looked round — and Josepha entered. Was it the becoming morning-dress that enveloped her graceful form, or was daylight more favorable to her than candlelight? She appeared to him at this moment to be infinitely more attractive even than yesterday. Her hair floated carelessly round her brow, the fresh morning-air had brought a delicate bloom to her cheeks; she smiled her greeting to him in such a friendly manner; and yet at this moment he was forced to chide himself as a fool, for her eyes seemed to him to look sad, and to have been weeping.

XIII

SHE invited him to sit down to breakfast with her. She told him that Faldner had gone out riding at daybreak, and had charged her with his excuses; she enumerated the many business-affairs that he had planned for the day, and which would detain him until noon. "He has a life full of labour and anxiety," said she, "but I believe that these occupations have become necessary to him."

"And has it only lately been so?" asked Fröben; "is there just now more than usual to be done on the property?"

"Not at all," she replied, "he is going on in his usual way, it has been so, ever since I have known him. He is indefatigable in his works. During this spring and summer not a day has passed in which he has not been occupied on his estate."

"But then you must often feel very lonely," said the young man, "so completely secluded in the country, and Faldner absent the whole day."

"Lonely?" she answered in a trembling voice, whilst she stooped down to a little table by her side, and Fröben saw in the mirror how painfully her lips quivered. "Lonely? Oh, no! Recollections haunt the lonely; and besides," she added as she tried to smile, "do you suppose that the mistress of a large household has not a great deal to do and to manage? So that one is never lonely or — ought not to be."

"*Ought not to be!* Poor girl!" thought Fröben; "does your heart forbid the dreams of memory that haunt you in your solitude, or does this harsh friend forbid you to be lonely?" There had been something in the tone in which she had said the words that had seemed to contradict her smile.

"And yet," he continued, in order to give a different turn to his feelings and to her words; "and yet women appear to be destined by nature specially for quiet and solitude; at least, in all ages amongst those nations who have produced the greatest men, the women have been confined principally to their own apartments, as among the Greeks and Romans, so also during our middle ages."

"I should not have thought that you would have brought forward these examples," replied Josepha; whilst her eyes rested on him as if examining his features. "Believe me, Fröben, every woman, even the most insignificant, very soon discovers in a man, before she has been made acquainted with any of his circumstances, whether he has lived much in the society of women, or not. And, indisputably, there exists in such society a something which bestows that fine tact, that gentleness of feeling, of always selecting in conversation those subjects which are best adapted to

women, which interest us most; a degree of refinement which no man ought to be without. You will be the less inclined to contest this with me," she added, "because evidently you owe to my sex a portion of your own refinement."

"There is some truth in this," answered the young man, "and I will grant even the last assertion that women influenced my mode of thought as well as the manner in which I should express those thoughts. Circumstances have compelled me latterly to live much in the great world, and in the society of ladies. But even in these circles it has been very evident to me how little in truth woman, or to express myself better, how little in harmony with woman was this life of splendour and of bustle."

"And why?"

"I will tell you, even at the risk of your becoming angry with me. It is a creditable advance of modern times that in the higher circles one sees that cards are simply a subterfuge, or else a fashionable cloak for poverty of intellect. Whist, Boston, Faro, and such games are therefore given up to old gentlemen and to some fine ladies who cannot make conversation. Certainly in France men of from twenty to thirty years of age play in company; but they are only poor creatures who model themselves after some English dandy, or who feel that they are deficient in the wit that they would need for conversation. Since then now, be the circle large or small, so-called conversation must be found (that is, people must stand before the fire, or in Germany plant themselves on the sofa to drink tea and carry on uncommonly witty talk) women have been brought quite out of their proper sphere."

"Pardon me, you are quite too severe; how then should ——"

"Let me speak out," continued Fröben eagerly; "a lady in so-called good society receives evening visitors every week at home; six days in the week she returns their visits. At these parties the young people only dance occasionally at most, unless it be some grand ball which takes place but seldom. The remaining circle of gentlemen and ladies converse. There are exceedingly cultivated, really clever men who are silent and heavy in the company of men, but who are extremely witty and talkative before ladies, and who display a wealth of accomplishments and of universal learning that astonishes every one. It is not vanity that makes these men brilliant and eloquent; it is the feeling that the most interesting portion of their acquirements is more appropriate to women than to men who are more systematic, and who raise their demands higher."

"Good, I can imagine such men; but go on."

"By their means conversation receives (as a picture) form, back-ground, life; women, especially clever women, will not converse among themselves with nearly so much vivacity when this occurs; even if only one man be sitting by as a witness and an umpire. When these various witty and interesting subjects are brought forward by such men, women enter into an unnatural competition. In order to say a word, in order to appear clever, and well-informed, they must summon all their energies, strain every power of their mind, that they may contribute their full share to the general tide of conversation in which the company are revelling. And yet, forgive me, the fund is soon exhausted

imagine, to be compelled to be witty every evening throughout a whole winter; what misery!"

"No, no; you make things out too bad, you exaggerate ——"

"Indeed not. I only tell you what I have myself seen and experienced. Since in these modern days, such conversation became the fashion, young girls are educated quite differently from in former times; poor things! What must not they learn now between their tenth and fifteenth year! History, geography, botany, physical science, the higher branches, so-called, of drawing and painting, æsthetics, the history of literature, not to mention music, singing, and dancing. These branches of education a man generally begins to be at home in at about eighteen or twenty years of age; he learns them by degrees, and has been well-grounded in them; he learns much for himself, and also knows better how to make use of it; and, when at three and twenty, or later, he enters this circle, even if he have only an indifferent knowledge of the world, and natural versatility, he brings with him plenty of self-confidence. But a young girl! I ask your forbearance! If the unfortunate child, crammed full of varied learning and accomplishments, enter the great world in her fifteenth year, how strange everything must at first appear to her! Although she would often far rather be alone in her own room, she is dragged mercilessly to every party, must sparkle, must talk, must parade her acquirements, and — how soon will she not come to the end of them! You smile? Listen further. She has now no longer time to prosecute her school-room studies; soon still larger demands will be made upon her. She must be able to converse equally well with

her parents upon objects of art, on literature. Then during the day she collects all possible technical terms and reads the newspapers that she may give an opinion on the newest book; and every evening is in reality an examination, a school-inspection to you at which she must produce in her most skilful manner what she has acquired. You can easily believe that a man of really cultivated mind, of real learning dislikes this chatter, this half-education; at first, he thinks this fashion laughable, then dangerous: he will curse this over-civilization which drags women out of their quiet circle and makes half men of them, whilst men become half women because they accustom themselves to chatter and talk scandal like women; for nobler women he will wish a return to that domestic quiet, that retirement in which they are at home and, in all cases shine more brilliantly than amid a circle of wits."

"There is some truth in what you have now said," replied Frau von Faldner; "but I cannot altogether pass judgment, because I have never had the good, or bad fortune to move in such circles. But it seems to me in this, as in everything, that little good is to be gained by exaggeration. What you say is true, that a narrower sphere is appointed for us women in those domestic duties which are our vocation. We should be wanting in real stability, we should wander in a plain of uncertainty if we completely forsook this sphere. But would you rob us entirely of the pleasures of intellectual intercourse with men? It is true that seven evenings of it in the week must necessarily lead to what is unnatural, to over-cultivation or to exhaustion: but can one not imagine that there may be a middle course?"

"I have, perhaps, expressed myself too strongly, I wished ——"

"Permit me also to speak out," said she, checking him gently, "you yourself said that women seldom carry on a so-called clever conversation long among themselves. I know all too well, how disagreeable in a company of ladies a would-be clever woman is, to whom all that is not abstruse and of great interest appears frivolous. We feel ourselves shrinking up, and would after all with our modicum of knowledge, blush rather before a man than before a woman.

Generally when only women or young girls are present, economy, household-affairs, the neighbourhood, perhaps the news of the day, or the fashions are discussed; but are we then to be confined solely to such a circle? Ought all that is generally interesting and improving to be completely strange to us?"

"Good Heaven! You mistake me; would I wish to say this?"

"It is true," she continued more earnestly, "that men possess that deep, systematic culture, that acquired clearness which forbid, and esteem lightly, all semi-education, or mere appearance of knowledge. But with what pleasure do we women listen to a conversation among men which touches upon subjects that do not lie too far above us; for instance, upon an interesting book that we have read, or picture that we have seen; we surely learn a great deal when we listen to, or, perhaps, join in the conversation; our judgment formed by us in our quiet hours, becomes educated and more accurate; and such intercourse must be pleasant to any well-informed woman. I can scarcely believe," she added smiling, "that men would blame

us for this, if only we do not shine too brilliantly ourselves, if we do not desire to quit the modest sphere which has been allotted to us."

XIV.°

How lovely she looked at this moment! The conversation had tinged her cheeks with a deeper rose: her eyes sparkled, and the smile with which she concluded had in it something so winning, so bewitching, that Fröben did not know whether to admire most the beauty of the lady, or her mind, and her simple, pretty mode of expressing herself.

"Certainly," said he, losing himself in her glances, "certainly we should be very unfair if we did not respect such just and gentle claims; for *I* could not but deem that woman unhappy who, possessing a cultivated mind, taking pleasure in reading and in intellectual conversation, should find no sympathy with these in the persons around her; indeed, shut up so much within herself, she must of necessity regard herself as very unfortunate."

Josepha blushed, and a cloud of sadness overspread her fair brow. She sighed involuntarily; and Fröben perceived with horror, that such a woman as he had just described was now sitting at his side. Yes, without wishing it, she had betrayed her own grief. For how could her rough husband fulfil her gentler requirements? He who looked upon his wife merely as his head-housekeeper, who lightly esteemed as unpractical those attainments which inspire interest in, and are thought admirable by other men; how could he satisfy these longings for the enjoyment of intellectual con-

versation? Was it not to be feared that he even intentionally deprived her of it?

But before Fröben had recovered sufficient presence of mind to give a general turn to his proposition, and to divert the whole conversation from the subject, Josepha said, not allowing him to feel his mistake: "we country-ladies certainly seldom enjoy this pleasure; yet we are not usually so much alone as strangers might perhaps suppose; we exchange visits so often; only look what a number of visitors that mirror announces." Fröben glanced towards it, and the special card came to his memory. "Ah, yes!" said he, as he took it out, "I have already committed a little theft there;" and he produced it, and showed it to her. "Would you believe that I did not know until yesterday that my friend was married? And it was only just now that I learned from this card what your name was. It was Tannensee?"

"Yes," she answered smiling, "and this unknown name I exchanged for the handsome one of Faldner."

"Unknown? If your father were Colonel von Tannensee your name was certainly not an unknown one."

She blushed. "Ah, my good father!" she exclaimed. "Yes, I have indeed been told of him that he was esteemed as one of the emperor's brave officers, and — he was a general when they buried him. I never knew him; I only saw him once when he returned from a campaign, and never afterwards."

"Was not he a Swiss?" Fröben inquired further.

She looked at him in astonishment. "If I am not mistaken, my mother said that he had relations in Switzerland."

"And your mother, was not her name Laura, and was not she of a Spanish family?"

At these words, Josepha turned pale and trembled. "Yes, she was named Laura," she replied; "but Heavens! What do you know about us, and how?—of a Spanish family?" she continued with more composure. "Nay, there you are mistaken; my mother spoke German, and was a German."

"What! Is your mother dead?"

"These three years," she replied in a sad voice.

"Oh, do not be angry with me, if I ask further whether she had not dark hair, and brown eyes like yours? Was there not a strong likeness between her and you?"

"Did you know my mother?" she exclaimed anxiously, whilst she trembled exceedingly.

"No; but listen to a strange incident," replied Fröben; "I must be greatly deceived if I have not become acquainted with a distinguished relation of your mother's." He then told her about Don Pedro. He described to her how they had met before the portrait; he sent for the copy to be brought from his room, and showed it to her. He told her how they had become more intimate, and how Don Pedro had narrated his history to him. But he repeated this last with great delicacy: he related every circumstance with a certain tenderness, and concluded by saying that, although Josepha had called her mother a German, he was convinced that her mother Laura, and the Donna Laura Tortosi of the Spaniard, his Swiss Captain Tannensee, and her father the colonel, were the same people.

Josepha had become thoughtful; she rested her

forehead on her hand in meditation; and, when he had finished, she seemed to him not even to be able to answer.

"Oh! do not be angry with me," said Fröben, "if I have allowed myself to be carried too far in seeking to make this strange coincidence clear."

"Oh! how could I be angry with you!" said she with emotion, while tears forced their way from her lovely eyes. "It is, indeed, only my hard fate which this mystery recalls to my mind. How could I expect ever to be perfectly happy?"

"Good Heaven! what have I done?" exclaimed Fröben, as he saw that her tears flowed thicker and faster. "It is all only a foolish supposition of mine. Your mother certainly was German. You and your relations must know all about her better."—

XV.

"My relations!" said she, amid tears. "Alas! it is just my misfortune, that I have none. How blessed are they who can look back to many generations, who are united by ties of relationship to worthy men; how sweet are the words, uncle, aunt; they are like second father, second mother: and what a peculiar charm lies in the name of brother! Indeed, if I could envy any one, I should often have envied this or that young girl who possessed a brother; he was to her the dearest, the most natural, the truest, of friends and protectors."

Fröben paced uneasily up and down: without intending it, he had struck a chord in Josepha's heart that resounded painfully; disclosures were approaching

which he involuntarily dreaded. He was silent; she dried her tears, and proceeded;

"Fate has tried me strangely on many occasions. I was the only child of my parents, and thus I was quite deprived of the great blessing of having sisters; we lived among strangers; and I had no relations. My father appeared not to be on the best of terms with his relatives in Switzerland, for my mother told me that they were angry with him because he had married her instead of a rich young lady in Switzerland whom they wished to force upon him. Of my father I saw very little; he was in the army, and you know how unquiet times were under the emperor. So no one was left me, but my dear mother; and truly she made up to me for all relatives. When she died, I did, indeed, stand alone in the wide world; for among its millions there was no one to whom I could go, and could say: 'she who brought me up, and was my protector is dead; will you be a parent to me?'"

"And your mother's name then was not Tortosi?" said Fröben.

"I called her nothing but mother, and she never spoke to me of the relations of her early life; alas! when I grew older she was always an invalid. My father called her simply Laura; and, in the few papers that were found, and that were given over to me after her death, she was called Laura von Tortheim."

"Well, then!" cried Fröben joyfully, "it is now as clear as day. Your mother's name was Laura, Tortheim is nothing but Tortosi altered by the fugitive lovers. This captain in Valencia was named Tannensee; he was your father Colonel Tannensee; and more still, do not you yourself say that this portrait resembles

exactly your mother Laura, and did not my worthy friend Don Pedro recognize his Donna Laura in the original? You are now no longer alone, you have, at least, one excellent cousin, Don Pedro de San Montanjo Ligez! Ah! How my friend will rejoice at the honorable relationship!"

"Oh, Heaven! My husband!" she exclaimed in agony and buried her face in her handkerchief.

It was inexplicable to Fröben why she should view everything in such a different light from what he did: he could think of nothing amid it all, but the joy of his friend Don Pedro in finding a daughter of his loved Laura. He was rich, unmarried, still retained within him all his old enthusiasm for his beautiful cousin, and from this wondrous relationship Fröben augured a splendid inheritance. He took Josepha's hand, and drew it from her eyes; she was weeping bitterly.

"Oh, you know very little of Faldner," said she, "if you think that these conjectures will afford him a pleasant surprise. You do not know his suspicious nature. Everything ought to go on just in the usual way, everything be quite decorous and in proper order; and whatever is out of the usual course he hates from the bottom of his heart. I must ever," she continued, without any bitterness in her tone, "I must ever look upon it as a favour that so wealthy and so highly-esteemed a man should have married me, that he should have been satisfied with the few documents which were all that I could give him concerning my family. Am not I forced," she said, her tears flowing faster, "am not I forced every day to hear how he might have united himself to families of the first importance, how

he might have married this or that rich young lady? Does he not tell me whenever he is angry with me that my nobility is of recent date? that no one knows anything at all of my mother's family, and that even many of the Tannensees in Switzerland have dropped the *von* and have become tradespeople?"

A fearful light now broke upon the young man. "Then I have come to a house of misery, to find a marriage of utter wretchedness," said he to himself. "Alas! she did not marry him from love, but from necessity, because she stood alone; and Faldner, I know him well, married her, because she was beautiful, and he could shine with her in society. Unfortunate woman! And the barbarian reproaches her with her misfortunes, and even makes her feel what she owes to him!" A mixed sensation of displeasure towards his friend, of compassion and respect for the lovely and unhappy wife, drew him to her; he endeavoured to infuse courage and confidence into her mind.

"Look upon all this as though it had never been said," he whispered; "I see, it grieves you; of what avail is it to Faldner? Let us be silent as to the foolish conjectures that I hazarded, and which may besides lead to nothing."

At these words Josepha looked at him full in the face; the tears cleared from her widely-opened eyes, and Fröben thought he could read a certain pride in her air. "Sir," said she, and her form seemed to draw itself up to a greater height, "it is impossible for me to believe that you can be in earnest in what you say; you ought to know that under no circumstances, will the wife of Baron von Faldner share

any secret with you that is not to be told to her husband."

With these words she pushed the breakfast-tray impatiently from her, rose, and with a distant bow quitted her astonished guest. Fröben would have followed her, would have begged her pardon for what he had said, would have made friends again, but she had vanished through the door before he had regained sufficient self-possession to rise from the sofa. Annoyed, he went down to the garden; he did not know whether to be most angry with himself or with the sensitiveness of the lady which at this moment seemed to him to be rather exaggerated. But as generally happens in such cases his excited blood began by degrees to flow more quietly, and his mind gained time for self-recollection. And now he discovered much that served to excuse Josepha. "She does not love him," he said to himself; "he treats her roughly, perhaps; shows himself more the master than the husband. She was touched when I talked to her of the higher enjoyments of life; I perceived how frightened she was when she betrayed herself to me, as she confessed the blank that weighed upon her even in the midst of outward prosperity. And must not she have felt painfully distressed at having betrayed this blank to a friend of her husband? And again when I told her all, everything, as I did with a certain decision, about her own descent; when I, perhaps, rather roughly, touched chords which no one had touched before, would she not naturally lose her self-possession? And when she reflected upon the distrust, the scepticism of the baron, did she not become more and more uneasy, more and more embarrassed? And I," he continued,

striking his forehead, "I could ask her to share a secret with me, that she was not to tell to her nearest friend, her husband! Must she not have feared, if she thus concealed it, to be completely in my power? Must not the proposal have appeared strange and unkind to her? How lofty, how exalted, did the character of this woman seem to him, when, young as she was, for at most she could not have been more than nineteen, she evinced such strength, such discretion, such unusual refinement, such nice perceptions of propriety. He felt, perhaps, for the first time in his life, that in women there is an innate refinement, a subtlety of perception, a strength, a self-control, in short a something mysterious, that is not bestowed on man, not even on proud, important man."

XVI.

BARON VON FALDNER returned for dinner, and Josepha received him with her accustomed sweetness, perhaps, even a little more warmly than usual. But he tore himself from her embrace.

"Is it not enough to drive one mad, Fröben?" he exclaimed, without paying any further heed to his wife, "I ordered a steam-engine from England at an enormous cost, had it smuggled here to avoid the danger of its coming to harm (for you know the law on the subject) and now, when I think I am going to be well off, for I had reckoned on eighty or a hundred per cent, now it will not work!"

"Franz!" cried Josepha, turning pale.

"It will not work?" repeated Fröben.

"It will not work!" reiterated the unfortunate proprietor. "The joints do not fit, the machinery stands still, there must somewhere be something lost. I ordered, as you know, Josepha, I ordered any outlay necessary; I sent at heavy cost for a mechanist from Mayence. I laid the plan of it before him. 'Nothing can be easier than this,' the fellow said, and now, when I give him A for A, B for B, (for it is all numbered and marked) never the deuce can it be put together; it is enough to set one mad!"

They sat down to the table all out of tune. The baron suppressed his inward vexation at his disappointed hopes, and the probable loss of capital: he drank a great deal of wine and excited himself with bad jokes. Josepha was even paler than usual; she quietly fulfilled her duties as mistress of the house, and Fröben only knew in some degree how to understand her feelings, for she avoided looking at him. Every mouthful he took seemed to choke him: he saw in the demeanour of his friend annoyance at hopes deceived; in the behaviour of his friend's wife, spirit, determination, and yet, with these, again that unmistakable look of anxiety: sometimes it seemed to him as though with his coming unhappiness had first fallen upon this house. During dinner conversation had lagged on rather wearisomely and by starts; but when the dessert was put on the table, and the servants had retired at a signal from Josepha, she drew one or two long breaths, her cheeks took a deeper hue, and she said: "you lost a very curious conversation between your friend and myself this morning. As you know, we have already often lamented the want of relations on my side: now all at once a new light seems to be

gleaming for me, for he introduces several, and very grand relations of our family."

Faldner looked at his friend with astonishment, and enquiringly; the latter was perplexed for a moment; for it was necessary to treat this subject with great circumspection. He now felt surprisingly, the superiority that a man of the world has over the narrow, almost uncivilized mind of a Baron Faldner; and with more calmness, and a guarded account of the circumstances, he related the strange story of the portrait, and of his acquaintance with Don Pedro.

Contrary to all expectation, the baron became visibly more cheerful during the narration; "hal wonderful!" now and then escaped from him; and when Fröben had finished, he exclaimed: "what can be clearer than this? Donna Laura Tortosi and Laura von Tortheim, the Swiss Captain Tannensee and your father, are identical. And rich, you say, dear Fröben, the comptroller of the household is rich? Possessed of property, unmarried, and still cherishing the old affection for his Dulcinea of Valencia? Ah! The deuce! Josephine, you may yet have a rich inheritance of piastres!"

Josephine had certainly not expected this speech: the guest perceived that she would rather have listened to these vulgar words without a witness; yet a heavy weight seemed to have been removed from her heart; she pressed the hand of her husband, perhaps, only because he had said something less bitter than usual to her, and with a little elation he added, "There seems to me to have been a special intervention of fortune in the strange meeting between our friend and the Spaniard; indeed, I do believe that those were Spanish

songs which now and then my mother used to sing to her guitar when she was alone. Perhaps too, this is the reason why I was not educated in your faith, although my father as I know for certain was of the Reformed religion. Well, the best thing will be for our friend to write to Don Pedro."

"Yes, do me that favour," said Faldner; "write to the old Don that you have found, not his Laura, but clearly her daughter; it may lead to something: you understand me: to whom should he leave his wealth but to you, you darling? I always said it, and I said even to Countess Landskron when I made my offer to you, 'if she has not much, indeed, nothing whatever, yet with her a blessing will come into my house.' And have we not the blessing now? How much, did you say, you think the Spaniard worth?"

XVII.

THE baron had ordered fresh bottles of wine; and, at these last words, Josepha rose and retired. The roughness of his friend towards this lovely, noble-minded being was incomprehensible to Fröben; he was conscious how ashamed she must feel at her husband's vulgarity in his presence; he felt it also, and replied rather ungraciously; "How should I know! Do you suppose that I ask the people with whom I associate, like an Englishman, how much are you worth?"

"Ah! I know your strange fancies on this point, of old," laughed the baron. "A needy fellow if he only possess sentiment, so-called, and *savoir vivre*, is as good to you as a rich man who has an income of a couple of hundred thousand pounds; but seriously we

must enter into explanations with the Don, and I count upon you."

"Yes, indeed; you may rely implicitly on me. But what was this about the Countess Landskron? You have never yet told me how you became acquainted with your wife?"

"Well, it is a very short story," replied Faldner, as he filled his own, and his friend's glass, with the fresh wine; "you know my practical disposition, and my great tact in such affairs. It is true that choice was open to me among the daughters of the landed gentry, the rich, the moderately-dowered, the handsome, the pretty, all waited for my words. But I bethought me, all is not gold that glitters, and I sought for a skilful house-wife. I came, by accident, to the mansion of Countess Landskron. At that time Josepha was still, as Fräulein von Tannensee, her companion. The active, busy, little girl pleased me. She knew how to pour out tea, to peel apples, to gather beans, to water flowers, in short she knew how to do every thing so nicely and so tidily, that I thought, 'she will make me a good house-wife, or no one will.' I spoke about it to the countess. It is true that I was, at first, discouraged by the meagre account that she could alone give me of Josepha's relations. She told me that she had known Josepha's mother; and, at her death, had taken the girl into her own house. Fortune she had none, but the countess gave her a suitable dower. The marriage certificate of her parents, and the certificate of her own baptism were accurate;—and, in love-affairs one is generally a fool, and so I married her."

"And are surely indescribably happy with this charming creature?"

"Well, well, so I am; she is not in the very least practical, and I should be obliged regularly to confiscate her stupid books^o only that I make her useful in the house and garden; for how could one live here in the country if the mistress of the house were to sit grandly on the sofa, reading romances and newspapers, and were sentimental (for which she has a great inclination) and took no care of either kitchen or garden?"

"But, good Heavens! you might keep maidservants to do all that!" remarked Fröben whom the wine and conversation had excited, and put out of humour.

"Maidservants!" asked Faldner laughing, and gaping at him. "Maidservants! Here one detects the theoretical man again! My friend, you understand nothing about it! Would not the maidservants, when one's back was turned, sell half the garden, the finest vegetables, fruit and salad? and the same in the kitchen. When can even wood and butter enough be provided when everything is entrusted to maidservants? No, the wife must look after everything; and alas! in this I am not well-treated by Josepha; but never mind, rub on; the Don will make all right."

Fröben, deeply as his heart and his finer feelings were wounded, did not venture to say anything in reply to this speech. He followed the example of the master of the house when the latter rose; received his embrace patiently; and even (though rather that he might not see Josepha so soon after these events than from any pleasure in the society of the baron) accepted the invitation to accompany him to the new steam-

mill. The horses were brought round, the men mounted, and Fröben was just turning the corner when he looked back, and perceived Josepha's figure at the window; she took her handkerchief from her eyes, looked sadly after them, and signed to them with her fair hand. "Your wife is making signs wishing us good-bye," he exclaimed to Faldner; but the latter laughed at him. "What do you mean?" he said, when they had ridden on. "Do you fancy that I have accustomed her to be so weak and soft-hearted that we take leave for an afternoon with kisses and embraces, farewells, and waving of handkerchiefs? Heaven defend me! That is how men spoil women; and if it ever chance to you that you marry, for Heaven's sake, do as I do. Not a word beforehand of a journey or a ride. The horse is brought round. 'Where are you going, dear?' she asks the first time or two. No answer; but your gloves are pulled on. 'But would you leave me all alone?' She then asks further and strokes your cheek; you take up your riding-whip with a cheerful air, and say, 'yes, I am going this evening to the farm; there is this and that to be done. Adieu! And if I should not be at home until nine o'clock you need not wait supper.' She is alarmed; you pay no heed to it; she would follow you, you sign her back with your whip; she rushes to the window, leans out with her tear-bedewed handkerchief, and bids adieu! and waves her white flag backwards and forwards. Let her weep on, and pay no attention to it. Put spurs to your horse, and be off: I swear to you this instils respect into women. The third time my wife did not question; and, thank God, the whining has come to an end."

During this edifying speech the baron had with

great composure filled his pipe, and struck a light; and he was now smoking as he surveyed his fields and woods, without appearing to expect any reply from his guest: the latter pressed his lips tightly together whilst the words of this rough man seemed to press still more tightly on his full heart. "Oh, you human dog," he said to himself, "far worse than a dog, since to you God has given reason. How to ride a horse, or to plant a tree in the ground you have learned; but how to treat a noble spirit, how to understand a loving heart, lies beyond your capabilities. How she gazed after him, so full of melancholy because he had not taken leave of her; so full of angelic patience, for she had already again forgiven his rough words; with a look so full of love! Of love? *Can* she then love him? Must not her sensitive heart be wounded by him a thousand times over? Must she not see that he treats his hound with more gentleness than he shows to her? or what?" he continued, in his reverie, "can she, because once become his wife, feel affection for him to whom she is so superior in mind, and whom nevertheless — she fears? Or must it ever and always be the lot of poor humanity that among hundreds *one* only can truly love, that others endowed by nature with a grand capacity for tender, noble love grow up, bloom, die without ever knowing what true love is? Yet this thought would be even more endurable to me than the other, that she could really love him! No, that cannot, may not be!"

By a hasty movement he had unintentionally spurred his horse at this last reflection; it plunged and dashed forward. "Ho! ho! Youngster! do you want to ride against me for a wager?" the Baron cried after him,

putting his pipe in his pocket. "I will give you two hundred paces, and then will overtake you." He calculated the distance between them with an artistically correct eye, and, when he thought that Fröben had advanced the prescribed paces, he struck into a gallop; and, to his no small triumph, arrived at the steam-mill at the same instant with his friend.

XVIII.

THE mechanist, a modest man, but one who had a reputation for great skill, received them at the door. "No advance yet?" asked Faldner as his brow darkened. "Assuredly, either my correspondent in London is a rogue and deserves to be hung, or you, Meister Fröhlich, may, indeed, be able to put watches together but not to set up a steam-mill as you represented to me."

The man appeared to be keenly wounded by these words from the baron; a deep flush overspread his countenance, and a sharp answer trembled on his lips; but he repressed it, and passed his hand over his sleek hair as though he would smooth down his inward annoyance like his hair. "I beg your pardon, Herr Baron," he replied, "if the plan and description of an engine are placed before me, and an accurate list of the screws and wheelwork is provided, then I will put it together although I may never have seen it before. But I must have free play given me, and then I will undertake that all shall go right; but if——"

"As that I have been helping you a little, do you mean? Is it all to be put off upon that? You yourself say that you never in your life saw such a machine: but I have seen one, two, three in France and in Eng-

land; and know right well that the large wheels are fitted in the middle of the cylinders, and the smaller ones are brought over —”

“But, good Heavens! allow me, my lord,” replied the scientific man impatiently; “this steam-mill of yours is of quite a different structure: one may see that at once by the plan.”

“Plan here, or plan there, steam-engines are steam-engines, and one has just the same appearance as the other. I have been deceived, and am misled on all sides into throwing my money into the gutter.”

Meantime, Fröben had taken up the plans and had looked through them. He found that the structure of this mill was very simple and beautiful; and that if the wheels and screws indicated in the plan corresponded, it should be very easily set up. In former times, he had studied mathematics and physical science thoroughly; he had seen the most celebrated pieces of mechanism at the same time as his friend, and had learned to understand them; but, because he seldom talked about them, Herr von Faldner, who was uncommonly proud of his own knowledge, took up the idea that he understood little or nothing of machinery.

As Faldner's ill-temper threatened to increase, Fröben turned to the mechanist, asked for this and that piece which was marked in the plan; and when the latter produced them, when he saw how accurately they fitted into each other, he said to Faldner: “I will bet you have not been deceived at all, for F and H fit here so well into P. — You see these are the principal points by which the stamping mill is placed in conjunction with the oil-press — the remainder will also surely fit as well.”

"Ah! Providence has certainly sent you here," exclaimed the mechanist in delight; "since you have put this together so simply. Yes. F is the main part; H here fits on to the rod, here the wheel K L is made fast."

"The machine is very simple," continued Fröben, "and the error of my friend has entirely arisen from this, that he has had before his mind the structure of much larger works which certainly have quite a different appearance. You may, however, recollect that at Sir Henry Smith's in Devonshire we saw an oil-mill which was constructed almost exactly on this plan."

The baron concealed his astonishment beneath an ironical smile which he turned now on his friend, and now on the mechanist. "Do as you will," he said with indifference; "I give up the whole thing as lost; it would have been wiser if I had ordered an English mechanist to come with it. Try on your luck with this unfortunate screw work; when I return to fetch you some hours hence, I fancy you will have had enough of this machine A B C." He left the building, whistling, mounted his horse, and rode into the woods.

Fröben immediately ordered the pieces which had been joined together according to the baron's arbitrary plan to be again laid apart. The numbers were arranged, and in the course of his work he grew more and more cheerful, for it dispelled the gloomy images in his mind; and, not without a smile, he observed how the mechanist watched him with beaming eyes, how his companion and assistant looked upon him respectfully as a master of their art. Life and gaiety now reigned in the workshop where in this morning

nothing had been heard but the orders and oaths of the baron, and the entreaties and replies of the artist: all was soon in order, and when the baron returned from the woods in the evening to fetch his guest, he was amazed, and did not at the first moment seem to be much rejoiced, by the evident progress of the work. He had expected to find all in perplexity and confusion; but the mechanist, smiling, handed the plan to him, led him to the cylinder; and, pointing alternately to the paper and to the work, showed him with proud delight what they had even already accomplished. "If all continues so well," added the mechanist, "and if the strange gentleman yonder will give us as good a helping hand again to-morrow, I will guarantee that we shall be ready before Sunday."

"Foolish nonsense!" was all the baron's reply as he returned the plan, and Fröben was uncertain whether they were imprecations or thanks that his friend was murmuring now and again as they rode back together to the castle.

The successful progress made in putting up the engine, and, perhaps, also the glowing prospect of Don Pedro's Spanish doubloons, put the baron into a more cheerful mood on the following day.

Fröben had written to the Spaniard at W. and his host had made him give a promise to remain with him until the answer should arrive from W. Towards Josepha Faldner also behaved more courteously: and, probably, more out of regard for his friend than for her, he even allowed her to curtail her household duties, and, if business detained him, permitted her morning or evening to listen to Fröben's reading and to take walks with him. And during these few days she visibly acquired

a new life. Her walk became firmer, a flush of quiet happiness tinged her cheeks, and many times when a bright smile was playing round her lips, bringing merry dimples with it, Fröben confessed to himself that he had seldom beheld a more lovely woman; indeed, her look often also perplexed him so completely that he imagined his dreams of a loved image were realized, that half-buried memories were called back to life, that even her voice when she was excited or affected, seemed familiar as though he had not heard it now for the first time. In these days he less often took out the picture that once he used to gaze at for hours, and if it accidentally dropped into his hand when he unrolled it, when he looked into the eyes of his unknown love, he felt ashamed, he deemed that he needed to ask pardon of the lifeless portrait for his neglect. "Yet," said he to himself as though obliged to excuse himself, "is it wrong to make some few days of my poor friend's joyless life pass more pleasantly? And how little suffices to gladden this fair being, to make her happier! To read a nice book with her, to converse with her, to accompany her in a stroll to her favorite spots, this is really all that she needs to make her cheerful and gay. What a heaven Faldner might make his home, if he would only sometimes share this or that trifling pleasure with her!"

Besides, without fully owning it to himself, the young man felt agreeably flattered and touched by Josepha's friendship for him. Did not each morning, each evening seem to be a new festival for her? When he came down to breakfast had she not everything already prepared with neatness and elegance? Sometimes she had selected the hall which opened upon a magni-

ficient view of the distant Rhine; sometimes the terrace, from which they had before them a country scene of the labourers in the fields and vineyards, so near that they could see everything as distinctly as in a picture, and yet distant enough not to disturb the enjoyment of the morning; sometimes she had sought out an arbour in the garden where the outer world was shut out on all sides by luxuriant planes, and admittance was granted only to the fresh morning air and rosy morning rays.

Thus she appeared ever in a new light, and full of surprises; and when her guest entered, how joyfully would she rise, how cordially extend her hand in greeting; in what a lively manner, when he (completely lost in reverie at the sight of her) could find no words to utter, did she know how to begin the conversation, to relate this or that; and by her wit and fine powers of observation, to give a peculiar charm, a grace of her own to all that she said! And afterwards, when she had put the breakfast-things neatly and quietly on one side, when he took out his book, when she seated herself opposite to him with her work which she seldom laid down, and hung on his lips full of expectation, then it often seemed to him as though all, the whole world, were forgotten; and for one little short, blessed moment he dreamed that he was a happy husband and was sitting here by the side of a dearly-beloved wife.

XIX.

It raised Josepha in no small degree in the estimation of her friend that she had chosen exactly the same poet for her favorite who attracted him beyond all others. It is true, he was often obliged during their readings of Jean Paul's magnificent poems to come to her aid, and explain this or that obscure simile; but she was quick of comprehension; her natural tact and her tender feelings which sympathised so fully with the poet, enabled her to guess at much even before her friend had given her certain information.

"There lies," she one day said, "a world full of thought in this Hesperus! Every human emotion of joy and pain, of love and grief is analysed there before us; he knows, even whilst we are imbibing the sweet fragrance of a flower, how to describe to us its innermost portions, its tender petals, its delicate stamens, without destroying it or tearing its leaves. And this, I think, is the great and deep secret of this master-poet; not that he paints every deep emotion, but describes it; and again, that he does not only describe it cursorily, but by the fine microscope of a simile permits us to take a deep look into the human soul, where thought surges upon thought, and the eye amazed, yet ravished by the wondrous creation, becomes blinded by tears."

"It seems to me," replied the guest, "that you have exactly told his secret. I confess honestly that there is nothing more opposed to my innermost feelings than the evident pains which authors take to make everything that their hero or heroine, or some third or

fourth person here or there, thinks or feels, plain and clear to the reader. But our poet! How grand, how rich are his conceptions in this respect! We live, we think, we weep involuntarily with Victor; and Clothilde's pallid cheeks, her uncomplaining grief, touch us more deeply than any words can say; whilst the gentle, flowing happiness of the lovers makes us wish to be a ray of that evening sun whose beams dance in the bower, and around their mutual embrace; or the nightingale whose trilling notes celebrate the festal day of their happiness."

"It is strange," observed Josepha, "that the plan of this romance, what one might call its outline, if presented to us by others, would not be in the least interesting; nay, perhaps, would even appear artificial and tedious. Six lost, exchanged, and restored sons, instead of only one, as Walter Scott, for instance, generally has; or even two as the author of Walladmor is content with in his parody; a young lady who is to her sorrow beloved by the brother, but is herself in love with his friend; a small, simple house in Duodez, a parsonage full of rats and children, and a nobleman's seat where any but nobles live; imagine these commonplace materials in succession, and you have one of our ordinary novels of lost sons etc.; but not so much as one real grief, so to express myself, as, for example, the murder of Le Beau by the page, or the tragic end of the lord in the fifth act. But what a new life, what a new creation springs up, when this poet throws his mantle of flowers around these characters! What a celestial atmosphere, fairer and purer than anything earthly, floats around us in the revering affection of Victor and Clothilde for their master Emanuel; what melan-

choly do we not feel in the disappointment of a chilled life when Victor and this amiable being misunderstand each other; what delight at last when beneath the starry midnight heavens, and amid the pangs of separation, their souls are united!"

"Yes!" cried the young man, "our poet is a great musician. He has an ancient, an oft heard theme before him; but whilst he retains the melody of the old song, he leads our thoughts on by a spell which is to us so new and so surprising, that we forget the theme and only listen to the variations in which he transcends: on which, as by a heavenly ladder of sound, he, like an angel, ascends and descends, showing us a glimpse of the opening heaven of happiness in our dream: whilst, perhaps, we, like Jacob, are lying in reality on the hard stony ground. For his tones are sometimes tender as those of a flute; penetrating like those of the oboe; sometimes full, heart-touching like those of the forest-horn in the distance; sometimes he utters the deep majestic roar of the grandest bass, at others he gently moans as an Æolian harp, or gives play to melancholy in tones like those of the harmonica."

"How grateful I am to him," said Josepha softly, "that he reconciles them, that he heals the wounds of our melancholy! It would have been quite in his power to allow Clothilde to fade away beneath the grief of unrequited love; before her death she might have said to Victor 'I loved thee above all,' and she would have died with a smile. Imagine our intolerable pain, our bitterness against fate, if we had beheld these beings wrecked without hope, without consolation! But, indeed, that would not have been possible; Victor

would not have loved with so much constancy, he would have devoted himself to Joachina, or to the princess; for a man cannot love long, unless he is loved in return."

"Do you really believe this?" replied Fröben smiling sadly, "oh, how little can you know us, how lightly can you think of us, to deem, that we do not possess fortitude enough to love faithfully throughout this short life, even though unloved."

"I do think it possible for women," said this lovely being; "unrequited love is a great misery, and women are better fitted than you are, for enduring silent life-long sorrow. A man would fling such grief from him, or else the fiery affliction would destroy him."

"Neither — for, indeed, I live still and love," said Fröben looking straight before him in an absent manner.

"You love," cried Josepha, and in so strange a tone, that the young man looked up in alarm; she cast down her eyes, when his look met hers; a deep flush overspread her face, and changed as quickly into a deadly pallor.

"Yes," he said, though he succeeded with difficulty in speaking lightly; "the case that you suggest is mine; and I still love, perhaps, more calmly, but not less fervently, than on the first day; I even love almost hopelessly, for the mistress of my heart knows nothing of my love; and notwithstanding, as you see, grief has not yet killed me."

"And may I know," said she confidentially, but, as it seemed to Fröben, in a trembling voice, "may I know who the happy being is?"

"Alas! look you, that is the great misfortune; even

I do not know who she is, nor where she lives, and yet I love; you will think me a second Don Quixote, when I own that I only saw her transiently some few times; can only recall some of the features of her face, and yet am roving about the world to seek her, because no peace is left for me at home."

"Strange, indeed," observed Josepha, as she looked thoughtfully at him; "strange; it is true I can imagine such a case, but still you form an unusual exception, dear Fröben; but do you know whether you are loved? Whether the lady is true to you?"

"I know nothing of all this," replied he gravely, and with suppressed grief, "I know nothing but that I should be happy if I could call this being mine, and I know all too well that I must, perhaps, resign her for ever, and never become perfectly happy."

In proportion as the young man had seldom given utterance to these feelings, so did all the pangs of recollection of those grief-filled hours rise before him at this moment with increased vividness, and a melancholy came upon him, such as he had never experienced before. He rose quickly, and left the harbour, going towards the castle. Josepha gazed after him with looks of infinite anxiety, tear after tear welled from beneath her trembling lashes, and it was only when they fell like fountain drops upon her hand, that Josepha awoke from her dream. Ashamed, as though she had surprised herself in a secret sin, she blushed, and pressed her handkerchief to her traitor eyes.

. XX.

THE prediction of the old mechanist was fulfilled, for with the last day of the week, the machinery of the steam-mill was set up, and ready.

Ill-tempered as he had been at first, the baron was at heart delighted when the first trial proved quite successful; he dismissed the old man and his assistants with handsome presents, and on Sunday invited all his neighbours in the surrounding district to inaugurate the establishment of his mill with a little banquet. Though he was so happy and cheerful on this day, received his guests so merrily and so jovially, yet it did not escape Fröben's attentive eye that he tormented poor Josepha with a hundred orders and arrangements, so that she could do nothing to please him. Now she must be in the kitchen to urge on the servants and to help them herself; now he would improve this or that in her dress; then fall into impatient despair if she did not fly down the stairs quickly enough to receive the guests at the entrance; then he would have the table laid one way, then another; now he would have coffee in the garden, then in the drawing-room. She bore all these annoyances with angelic patience and with a resignation that was incomprehensible to their friend. She was everywhere, took care of all, and even knew how to find a moment to ask their guest why he was so sad to-day, and to invite him to take a part in the universal rejoicings.

The beauty of the mistress of the house, her ready attention, charmed every one; the men congratulated the baron on having such a treasure in his home, and

several of the old ladies expressed to him unreservedly their admiration of the rare talents for housekeeping, the judgment and good management, shown by so young a wife.

"Do you see," the happy man whispered to Fröben, "do you see how discipline such as mine works wonders? I am in every way quite satisfied with her to-day; but if I had not been privately helping her, myself, with everything, where would the domestic honours of the mistress of the house be then? But it answers. I always said so, it answers."

The general mirth and the wine together, elated Faldner more and more; and, at last, it became high time to rise from the table. for he and some gentlemen from the neighbourhood were already indulging in jokes and jests which offended more refined ears.

They went to the new steam-mill, inaugurated it formally amid jokes and laughter, returned and were all astonished at the tasteful and comfortable arrangements that Josepha had in the mean time made in the garden. She had ventured, following her own fancy, to order a large commodious bower to be hastily erected; in it, all possible refreshments were awaiting the guests; and their unanimous applause worked a marvel; for the baron was not in the least angry that young ash- and fir-trees from his woods were twined to form the bower, or that his own plan of pitching a boarded and carpeted tent, had not been followed. He kissed his wife's brow, and thanked her for the pleasant surprise.

The guests seated themselves in cheerful rows. The men applied themselves diligently to their host's old wine, and a general hilarity soon pervaded the

company. They played at witty and amusing games, and, as the jocular mood of the men increased, even games of forfeits were not despised. Thus it happened that in redeeming them, it came to Fröben's turn to redeem his by some penalty; and Josepha, to whom the infliction of the penalty was assigned ordered him to relate some true story from his own life. General approbation was bestowed on her selection, the baron clapped the hand of his clever wife in his delight, and when Fröben hesitated, and began to reflect, he exclaimed, "Then I will relate one for you, out of your life! Perhaps the piquant history of the girl at the Pont des Arts?"

Fröben reddened, and looked disapprobation at him; but the company, who, probably, anticipated an amusing secret, exclaimed, "The story of the girl! The story of the Pont des Arts!" and, probably in order to escape further indiscretions from his friend whom the wine had already driven rather beyond his usual bounds, he agreed to relate it: but the baron promised the guests that immediately that the narrator should deviate from the exact truth, he would give notes to the history, as he had himself been present.

XXI.

"I do not know," began Fröben, "whether the company are aware that several years ago, I made a tour with our friend Faldner, and, actually stayed with him for some time in Paris when we lived in the self-same house? We pursued almost the same studies, visited in the same circles, each introduced the other to his own former acquaintances, and we were thus

inseparable. We had a mutual friend, amiable as he was learned, Dr. M. a landed proprietor who lived in the Rue Taranne which, as you know, leads into the Rue S. Dominique, and lies on the left bank of the Seine. Our usual evening-walk was, through the Champs Elysées, across the beautiful bridge into the Champ de Mars, and from thence through the Faubourg S. Germain to our friend's house, where we often remained till deep into the night talking of our fatherland, of France, of what we had seen, of all imaginable topics. I should add, that we lived in the Place des Victoires at some little distance from the Rue Taranne, and on our return home generally chose the route by the Pont des Arts, that we might take the short cut through the Louvre and save a long circuit through the side-streets. One evening, it might have been about eleven o'clock, — there had been some rain, and the wind was blowing cold and cutting, and especially so down near the river. — We went as usual by the Pont Malaguais and across the Pont des Arts. The Pont des Arts is only passable for foot-passengers, and thus it was that about this time there was very little stir up and down the bridge. Wrapping our cloaks more closely round us, we crossed over the bridge in silence; I was on the point of hastening down its steps on the opposite side when an extraordinary spectacle arrested me.

A slender and rather tall female form stood leaning against the bridge, a small black hat was tied down closely to her face, and to this was still further added a mass of green veil. A black silk cloak hung from her shoulders, and the wind which at this moment pressed her drapery tightly to her figure, betrayed an

unusually graceful and youthful waist: a little hand holding a plate peeped out from under the cloak; in front of her was standing a small lantern whose flame flickered uneasily, and its rays fell on a beautifully-shaped foot. Perhaps nowhere so much as in this city, does the most abject misery live close to the most magnificent splendor and wealth; and yet one sees but a small proportion of beggars. They seldom press rudely upon one, and they are never to be seen running after a stranger, and persecuting him with their entreaties. Old and blind men sit or kneel at the corners of the streets, holding out their hats in silence, and leaving it to the passer-by to decide whether he will take notice of their imploring looks. These bashful beggars seem always, at least to my mind, the most touching objects, standing in a corner at night motionless and almost as if they were lifeless, with their heads muffled, and a torch burning before them; many of my friends in Paris assured me that one might be certain that the greater part of these people were of a better class who have fallen so low through misfortune that they must either seek work, or (if too much ashamed or, perhaps, too weak to work for their bread), seize upon this last resource, before like so many unfortunate beings, they resign their lives to oblivion in the Seine.

The female figure on the Pont des Arts, whose appearance had so irresistibly attracted me, was of this class of beggars. I looked at her more closely; her limbs seemed to tremble with the frost even more than did the little flame of the lantern; but she remained silent, and left her wretchedness, and the cold night-wind, to plead for her. I felt in my pocket for some small

change; but not a sou, not a single franc, was to be found. I turned to Faldner, and asked him for some money; but he, cross at being exposed by my delay to the biting cold, called out to me, in our native language: "Leave the beggar-folk to themselves, and make haste home to bed; I'm perishing!" "A couple of sous only! kind friend;" I entreated; but he seized me by the cloak and would have dragged me away.

The muffled figure now exclaimed in a trembling, but musical voice, and to our astonishment, in good German: "O, kind sirs! be merciful!" The voice, the words, and our mother-tongue, had something in them so touching to me, that I again begged him for some money. He laughed. "Well, then! Here are a couple of francs for you," he said, "try your luck, but leave me out of the bargain." He pressed the money into my hand and went away still laughing. I was at this moment really perplexed as to what I should do; she must have heard what Faldner said; at the least, I might wound a child of misfortune. I approached her hesitatingly. "My child," said I, "you have chosen a very bad standing-place here; very few people will pass by here this evening." She did not answer immediately. At last, after a pause, she whispered almost inaudibly, "Would that even these few may have some feeling for misfortune!" This reply surprised me; it was so artless and yet so much to the point. The noble bearing of the young girl, the accent with which she said these words, all betrayed education. "We are fellow-country-people," I continued, "may I not beg of you to tell me, whether I can not, perhaps, do more for you than is generally in the power of a mere passer-by?" "We are poor," she answered with in-

creased courage as it seemed to me, "and my mother is ill, and without aid."

Without further deliberation, simply impelled by a vague feeling that attracted me to this young girl, I said: "Take me to her." She was silent; the proposal appeared to surprise her. "Regard this," I continued, "as nothing but an honest desire to help you, if I can."

"Then come," returned the veiled figure; and she took up her little lantern; extinguished it; and concealed it, together with the plate, beneath her cloak.

XXII.

"WHAT?" cried the baron laughing loudly as Fröben paused, "will you not tell any more? Will you serve us to-day as you served me at that very time? So far, ladies and gentlemen, he has narrated all with the greatest historical accuracy. He, perhaps, fancied me far off, but I was standing under the gateway of the palace not ten paces from this edifying Samaritan scene, watching it; whether the dialogue ran precisely thus I do not know, for the cruel wind bore away the words; but I saw how the lady extinguished her lamp, and went back over the bridge with him. The night was too cold for me to pursue him in his gallant adventure, but I would wager that in the end he saw no sick mamma, nor anything like one, but that the lady of the Pont des Arts had only sung the old song to a new tune."

He laughed at his own wit, and the men joined in his rough laughter, but the ladies cast down their eyes, and Josepha seemed to be as much annoyed at

the words of her husband as at the strange tale of his friend; for, pale as death, she held her cup between her hands, made a rattling with it, and cast one glance across towards the young man, for which at this moment he could only discover a very embarrassing interpretation. "It is true," said he, interrupting the laughter of the men, with a steady voice, "that I supposed I had redeemed my forfeit; but my own credit requires that I should not permit such an explanation of this adventure as my friend appears to put upon it. Permit me, therefore, to continue; and, upon my soul," he added, whilst his cheek flushed, and his eye flashed brightly, "I will tell you the exact truth. The girl turned back over the bridge from whence I had come. Whilst walking in silence rather behind than beside her, I had time to observe her well. Her figure so far as her cloak allowed it to be seen, her whole manner, especially her voice, were very youthful. Her walk was quick, but light, and graceful. She had refused my arm when I offered it, asking her guidance. At the end of the bridge she turned towards the Rue Mazarin. "Has your mother been long ill?" I asked, as I stepped up beside her, and endeavoured to see something of her features through her veil. "For two years," she answered sighing, "but for the last eight days she has been in great misery." "Have you been often before at that place?" "Which?" she asked. "At the bridge." "This evening for the first time," replied she. "Then you did not choose a good place, other thoroughfares are more frequented." But already while I was speaking, I repented of saying this; for it must, indeed, have wounded her.

Amid suppressed tears she whispered "Ah, I am

so unknown here, and, I was ashamed to go among the crowd." How boundless must have been the misery that drove this poor creature to beg! It is true, I confess, that some such thoughts as those of Faldner crossed my mind once or twice; but they always vanished again, because they were contrary to reason and sense; if she belonged to the vicious classes, why should she take her stand in this lonely place? No, hers was assuredly real wretchedness, and that timid bashfulness of guiltless poverty, which makes misfortune so inexpressibly touching.

"Has your mother a doctor?" I asked again after a little while. "She had one; but when we could no longer pay for physic, he wished to have her brought into the hospital for incurables, and that I could not bear. Ah, my God! My mother in an hospital!" how much deep pain was expressed in these last words of this poor girl.

She wept; and, beneath her veil, pressed her handkerchief to her eyes. Whilst the lantern and plate which she carried in her other hand prevented her from holding her cloak together, the wind blew it open, and I perceived that I had not been deceived; she had a slight, graceful figure, and so far as my hasty glance could discover, her dress was homely, but very clean. She caught at her cloak, and as I assisted her to wrap it round her again, I touched her soft delicate hand.

We had already passed the Rue Mazarin, Rue S. Germain, and École de Médecine, and from thence had traversed some back-streets, when all at once she stopped and lamented that she had lost her way. I enquired of her in what part she lived, and she said S. Severin. I was in a dilemma, for I did not myself

know how to find this street. Whether from anxiety or cold, I perceived her trembling still more violently. I looked round; I saw a light still burning in a cellar in which brandy was sold; I told her to wait, went down, and made enquiries. They directed me, and I thought I should be able to find the way. When I came up again, I heard loud talking close by; by the dim light of a lantern, I saw the young girl struggling between two men, one of whom had seized her hands and another her cloak; I sprang up, tore away her hands which he had seized, from the one, and ordered the other to release her cloak. Speechless, and weeping, she almost clenched my arm. We went on; the poor child still trembled very much, she continued to hold my arm tightly, she almost sank on the ground.

"Courage," I said to her, "S. Severin is not far off, you will soon be at home." She did not answer, but continued to weep. When we reached the street which, according to the directions, must have been S. Severin, she again stood still. "No, you must not come any further with me, sir," she said, "it must not be." "But why not then, since you have brought me thus far with you? I pray you, trust me, I have no sinister intentions" At these words, I had unconsciously seized her hand, and perhaps, pressed it; she withdrew it quickly, and said, "Forgive me that I have been guilty of the impropriety of bringing you so far; I entreat you, leave me now!"

I felt that the previous scene had so much alarmed her, that she was, perhaps, inspired with some distrust of myself, and even this, affected me indescribably; I took out the silver that Faldner had given me, and would have given it to her, but the thought of how

little help this trifling donation could afford to her restrained my hand, and I gave the small sum that I had with me in gold.

Her hand shook, as she took it. She appeared to suppose it silver, thanked me in a trembling voice of emotion, and was going away.

"One word more," I said, and detained her: "I hope your mother will recover, but she may still be in need of some assistance; and you, my child, are not fitted for such evening-walks as this. Will you not come on this day week, at the same hour to the École de Médecine that I may be able to make enquiries after your mother?" She appeared irresolute; at length she said "Yes."

"And wear your hat, and the green veil again, that I may recognize you," I added; she assented, thanked me again, went quickly down the street, and was soon lost in the darkness of night.

XXIII.

WHEN I awoke on the morning after this adventure, it seemed to me as though I had only dreamed it all. But Faldner who came in soon after, and began to tease me in his usual tender manner, soon dispersed all doubts. The affair, viewed quietly by the light of morning appeared, however, to me quite too fabulous for me to be able to relate it to my incredulous friend.

In these modern times, we have arrived at a pitch of civilization which touches on the borders of immorality. In many instances, a man would much rather appear wild, somewhat wicked, and bad, would

rather give an ambiguous meaning, than be deemed a fool, eccentric, a person of weak understanding, or taking narrow views of life.

But in my inmost heart, a uneasiness, a something that I did not know how to explain, troubled me more than the quizzings of Faldner. I reproached myself that I had not caught even one glimpse of her face. To what end, said I to myself, to what end was this overstrained reticence? If I make a present of a couple of Napoleons, surely I may ask the favour of having a veil raised. And yet when I recalled the whole behaviour of the young girl, which simple as it was, yet resembled in no way that of the lower classes; when I remembered her noble bearing, the refined tone of her answers, I was compelled though half angry with myself, to exonerate myself. There is a something in the human voice, which even before we see the eyes, or features, or are aware of the rank of the speaker, gives a key to the tone in which we should converse with him. How infinite, not so much in the words as in the mode of utterance, is the difference between the educated and uneducated; and the tones of this young girl's voice were soft and gentle; her short replies were often spoken from her inmost heart. During the whole day I was unable to banish these thoughts. Even in the evening, the poor girl with her little black hat, her green veil, and her shabby cloak, accompanied me to a brilliant assemblage of ladies.

On the next day, I was vexed with myself at my folly which was the cause of my not being able to see the young girl again for a week; I counted the hours till the next Friday, and it seemed to me as though this metropolis of the world, as its inhabitants call it,

could possess no greater attraction than the beggar-girl of the Pont des Arts.

At last, at last, Friday came. I used every possible stratagem to free myself on this evening from Faldner and other friends; and, when it was dark, I set out on my way. I had more than a mile to go, and time enough to reflect as I went.

"To-day," said I to myself, "to-day you will come to a conclusion as to what you should think of this person. You will offer to accompany her; if she accepts, you have deceived yourself in one thing. And to-day she will be obliged to show her face."

I had walked so quickly that it was not yet ten o'clock when I arrived at the Place de l'École de Médecine, and I had not appointed to meet her until eleven. I went into a café, and listlessly turned over the leaves of a host of newspapers; at last it struck eleven o'clock.

There were but few people in the square, and so far as I could strain my eyes, no green veil to be seen. I remained on the side of the École, because more lights were burning there. Moments of such expectancy are painful. "What, if your money sufficed her, and she should not come at all? What, if she laughed at your kindness of heart," thought I, as I paced up and down the square for at least the tenth time. Half past eleven struck. I had begun to rail at my own folly, when something green fluttered in the light of a lamp at about thirty paces distance from me. My heart beat quickly; I hastened forward; it was herself.

"Good evening," said I, as I offered her my hand; "you keep your promises well; I almost thought you would not come."

She bowed, without taking my proffered hand, and moved to my side. She appeared to be much affected.

"Sir, my noble countryman," said she in a tone of emotion, "I was obliged to keep my promise, that I might thank you. I do not assuredly come to-day to draw upon your kindness. Ah! how noble, how generous a present did you bestow on us! Can the heart-felt thanks of a daughter, can the prayers and blessings of my sick mother repay you?"

"We will not talk of that," I replied. "how is your mother?"

"I trust, I may again cherish hopes," she answered, "'tis true, that the doctor says nothing decided, but she herself feels stronger. Oh! how can I thank you? By means of your present, I have been able again to procure strengthening food for her; and, believe me, the thought that there are still such good men in the world has strengthened her almost as much."

"What did your mother say, when you reached home?"

"She was very anxious about me because it was so late," she answered. "Ah! She had so unwillingly given me permission to go on this errand, and she had pictured to herself every misfortune that could befall me. I related everything to her; but when I opened my handkerchief, and took out the gifts which I had collected, and there was gold among the copper and silver-coins, then she was astonished and —" She hesitated, and seemed able to say no more. I thought her mother might have accused her of wicked doings, and enquired further, but she confessed with touching candour that her mother had said, their generous countryman must have been either an angel

or a prince. "Neither the one, nor the other," I said to her, "but how far was it sufficient for you? Have you money left?"

"Oh, we have," she replied cheerfully, to all appearance, but it did not escape me that at the same time she sighed, perhaps involuntarily.

"And what have you left?" I said somewhat more decidedly and pressingly.

"We paid a bill at the apothecary's out of it, and a month's house-rent and I bought food for my mother out of it, but there is still something left."

How meagre must be their fare, when with this money they could pay an apothecary's bill, a month's house-rent, and provide food for eight days. "But I wish to know exactly," I continued, "what and how much you still have."

"Sir!" said she offended, as she retreated a step.

"My good girl, either you do not understand," said I, as I approached nearer to her, "or else through overstrained sensitiveness you will not confess; but I ask you seriously, if you should be reduced to two francs, have you any assistance to expect?"

"No," she said, timidly and softly, "none."

"Think of your mother, and do not disdain my help." With these words I offered her my hand. She seized it hastily, pressed it to her heart and extolled my kindness.

"Now, then," I continued, as I laid her arm on mine, "come with me; unfortunately I did not take the straight road from home, when I came hither, and did not anticipate your need. You must, therefore, have the kindness to accompany me through several

streets to my house, that I may give you something to take home with you to your mother."

She permitted me to lead her on in silence; but pleasant as was the thought of being able to assist her still further, yet it was annoying to my feelings that she should be willing so completely without opposition to come to the dwelling of a stranger man.

But all turned out quite differently from what I thought.

"No, it cannot, it must not be!" she exclaimed, bursting into tears.

"What has distressed you all at once?" I asked in astonishment, "what must not be?"

"No, I shall not, I may not go with you."

"But, good Heaven!" I replied, while I pretended to be somewhat angry, "you certainly show very little confidence in me; if it were not for your mother, assuredly I would quit you now; you pain me."

She took my hand, she pressed it with emotion.

"Have I then offended you?" she exclaimed, "oh, God knows, I did not intend that. Forgive a poor inexperienced girl; you are so generous, and could I offend you!"

"Well then, come," I said, as I drew her on further, "there is no time to lose, and the distance is long."

But she remained standing still, and wept, and murmured, "No, at no price can I go further."

"But of whom are you afraid? No one knows you here, no one will see you, you can safely come with me."

"For Heaven's sake, I entreat of you, leave me. No, no, it may not be; do not urge me further."

She trembled; I felt, indeed, that if I again repre-

sented to her very pressingly the necessities of her mother, she would go, but the anguish of the young girl affected me deeply. "Will you then remain here?" said I. "But tell me, perhaps, you are able to work?"

"Oh, yes, sir," replied she, drying her tears.

"Perhaps, you could undertake the care of my fine washing?"

"No," answered she, very decidedly, "we have not accommodation for that."

"Here is a white handkerchief," I continued, "could you buy half a dozen such, and get them ready for use?"

She looked at the handkerchief, and said, "With pleasure, and I will make them very neatly."

However, to my own abashment, I was now obliged to produce some money, though I had previously denied having it.

"Buy six handkerchiefs with this," I continued, "can you have three of them ready by Sunday evening?"

She promised it; I gave her something more for her mother, and told her, that I was not provided with more on this day, but on Sunday, should be able to do something for her.

She thanked me heartily; it seemed to please her that I had given her work. Once more she talked of how pretty she would make the handkerchiefs, and if I am not mistaken, she even asked me whether she might not stitch them with an English hem. I agreed to all, but when she wished to take leave, I detained her firmly. "One more thing you must do to please me," I said, "you can do it well and easily."

"What " asked she, "how gladly shall I do any thing for you."

"Permit me to raise this envious veil, and to see your face that I may have yet one remembrance more of this evening?"

She avoided me, and held down her veil more firmly.

"I pray you, ask me not that," she replied, and appeared to be somewhat struggling with herself. "You have assuredly the blessed remembrance of your good deeds. My mother strictly forbade me to lift my veil. And I assure you," she added, "I am as ugly as the night; you would only be horrified."

But this opposition only excited me the more. A really ugly girl, thought I, would not speak thus of her ugliness.

I would have seized her veil, but she slipped aside like an eel. "Dimanche au revoir," she exclaimed, and hastened away.

I looked after her in astonishment; at about fifty paces from me she stood still, waved my white handkerchief towards me, and in her silvery voice said, "Good night."

XXIV.

THROUGHOUT the next day I was occupied with reflections, as to the position in life to which this young girl might belong. The more vividly I recalled to mind her educated accent, her refined feelings, the higher did I rank her in my conjectures. She must, at least, give me information on this point, I determined,

and I resolved not to allow myself to be put off again, as I had been about the veil.

Sunday came. You will still remember that afternoon, Faldner, when we sat with our friends at Montmorenci in the garden of the great poet. You did not wish to go home till late at night, but I pressed constantly for an earlier return, and when you remained in spite of me, I came away notwithstanding your scoldings. You certainly at that time did not believe what I gave out, that I could not bear the night-air; but neither could you have imagined that I was hastening to a rendez-vous with the beggar-girl of the Pont des Arts. This time she was first at the place, and as she had the handkerchiefs to bring to me, she was already becoming uneasy lest I might have missed her, and thought she did not keep her word. She prattled with almost childish delight, and it seemed to me, with even greater confidence than formerly, whilst she shewed me the handkerchiefs by the light of a street-lamp.

She appeared pleased to hear that I approved of her work. "Sec, I have also marked your name upon them," said she, as she pointed out to me the pretty "E. v. F." in the corner. She wished to return a quantity of silver to me as the surplus money; and it was only by my firm declaration that I should be annoyed thereby that she could be induced to accept it as payment for her work. I gave fresh orders again for work because I perceived that such a mode of making my gifts accorded with the tender feelings of the young girl; and this time I ordered frills and ruffles. Her mother had not become worse, but could

not yet leave her bed. However, even this intermediate state appeared consolatory to her.

When we had spoken of her mother, I ventured to ask her plainly what were her exact circumstances.

The history which she gave me in a few words is one of such every day occurrence in France that it might serve for the tale of almost all poverty. Her father had been an officer in the "grande armée;" had been placed on half pay at the first restoration of the Bourbons; had afterwards, during the hundred days, again taken up arms; and had fallen with the guards at Mont St. Jean. His widow lost her pension, and had lived from that time in poverty and misery. During the last two years she had eked out a scanty livelihood chiefly by the sale of her little possessions, and had now fallen to the lowest depth of misery in which nothing is left to the poor but to quit the world for ever.

I asked the girl whether she could not have improved their condition; whether she had sought to support her mother in any other manner.

"You mean if I had taken service?" she replied without any annoyance. "You see that was not possible. Before the illness of my mother I was much too young, scarcely more than fourteen years old, and then all at once she became so ill, that she could not leave her bed; and thus needed some one always to be with her, and how could I then give up the care of her to a stranger? If, indeed, she had remained well, then I would gladly have given up all our former position, would have gone into some milliner's shop, or as governess into some respectable family; for I have learnt a great deal, sir; but such was not the case."

This time did I also in vain entreat her to raise her veil. The explanations which she had given of her age, I confess, excited still more my desire to see the face of this girl who could be but little more than sixteen. But she entreated me so earnestly to desist; her mother had given her such cogent reasons, why this should never be.

From this time we met every three days. I had always some little employment for her, and she was ready with it punctually. The more firmly I adhered to the line of conduct which I had adopted towards her, the more rigidly I kept within the bounds of courteous deportment, the more confiding and unreserved did the good little girl become. She confessed to me that during the three days she had been continually thinking of our next evening. And was it otherwise with me? Day and night I had been occupied with this wonderful being who by her refined mind, by her exquisite tenderness of feeling, by her peculiar relations to myself, became every day more and more interesting to me.

In the meanwhile spring had fully set in, and the time had arrived which I had long ago fixed upon with Faldner for a journey to England. Many will perhaps think what I say to be very silly, but it is true that I thought of this journey only with aversion. Paris in itself had no longer any interest for me, but this young girl had so enchained all my thoughts, that I could only think with melancholy of a long separation. I could not draw back without making myself ridiculous, for no valid ground existed for giving up the journey. I even blushed for myself and placed before myself the full folly of my conduct. I resolved

on departure; but assuredly no one ever enjoyed himself so little in England as I did.

XXV.

EIGHT days beforehand I told the young girl. She was startled, she wept. I entreated her to ask her mother whether I might not call upon her. She promised me that she would. But at our next meeting she very sorrowfully brought me the answer that her mother entreated me to give up this visit which would be much too agitating in her state of mind. I had really only sought for the visit in order to see the little girl by day-light, and without her veil; therefore, I now urged this anew, and she begged me to come yet once more on the evening before my departure, and she would importune her mother unceasingly until she should receive permission to raise her veil.

This evening can never be forgotten by me. She came, and my first question was whether her mother had granted permission; she said "yes," and raised her veil herself. The moon shone brightly, and tremblingly, anxiously, I looked under her hat. But the permission appeared to have been only partially given; for my fair one wore a so-called Venetian mask which concealed the upper part of her face. But how beautiful, how charming was that portion which was uncovered! A delicate well-shaped nose, beautifully-rounded, blooming cheeks, a small lovely mouth, a chin moulded as of wax, and a slender throat of dazzling whiteness. I could not clearly see her eyes, but they appeared to be dark and sparkling. She blushed, as I, enchanted, gazed at her for some time.

"Do not be angry," she whispered, "that I put on this half-mask; my mother, at first, gave a complete refusal; afterwards she only insisted on this as a condition. I was myself very angry about it, but she gave me several reasons which convinced me."

"But what are these reasons?" I asked.

"Ah, sir," she replied sorrowfully, "you will live for ever in our hearts, but you must quite forget us. You must never, never see me again; or if, indeed, you should see me, must never recognize me."

"And do you imagine that I shall not recognize your lovely features even though I may not see your eyes and forehead?"

"My mother thinks," she answered, "that it could not well be possible; for if one sees only the half of a face, recognition must be difficult."

"And why then, may I not see you again, or recognize you?"

She wept at this question, pressed my hand and said, "Indeed, it must not be. Of what consequence can it be to you to recognize an unfortunate girl? — and — my mother is right; it is better so."

I told her that my travels would not last long; that I might probably be in Paris again in two months; that I hoped to see her again.

She wept bitterly, and negatived it. I pressed her to tell me, why she thought I should see her no more.

"I have a foreboding," she replied, "that I see you to-day for the last time. I do not believe that my mother will live much longer, and then, indeed, all will be over. And even if she lingered on, you would in London soon forget a poor girl like me."

Her grief affected me inexpressibly. I encouraged her; I vowed truly not to forget her; I won from her a promise that she would always come to this spot on the first and fifteenth of every month; so that I might be able to find her again. She agreed smiling, but amid tears, as though she had but little hope.

"Now farewell till I see you again," I said, as I clasped her in my arms and slipped a small simple ring into her hand. "Farewell, and think of me, and do not forget the first and fifteenth."

"How could I forget you?" she exclaimed as she looked up at me, weeping. "But I shall never see you again; you are taking leave of me for ever."

I could not restrain myself from imprinting a kiss on her lovely lips. She blushed, but received it graciously. I put a bank-note into her little hand. She looked at me once more very earnestly, and clung more closely to me.

"Till we meet again," said I, as she disengaged herself gently from my arms. The last moment of leave-taking appeared to give her courage. She drew me once more to her heart; I felt a warm kiss on my lips; "For ever, farewell for ever!" She said with anguish, tore herself from me, and hastened across the square.

I have never seen her again. After a stay in London of three months I returned to Paris. I went on the fifteenth to the Place de l'École de Médecine. I waited for more than an hour; the young girl did not appear, yet I often repeated these visits on the first and fifteenth; often I went through the street St. Severin, looked up at the houses, and, indeed, in-

quired for a poor German woman and her daughter, but I have never learned anything of them, and the lovely being was right when she said to me at our leave-taking, "For ever."

XXVI.

THE young man had related his tale with a warmth which betokened truth, and which appeared to make a deep impression at least on the female portion of the company. Josepha was weeping bitterly, and the other ladies, old and young, put their handkerchiefs to their eyes now and again. The men had become graver, and appeared to listen with great interest; the baron alone smiled strangely now and then; and at this or that part nudged his neighbour, and whispered to him his observations.

When Fröben had finished, he broke out into a loud laugh; "I call that getting well out of the affair," cried he, "I always said my friend was a cunning fellow; only see how well he knows how to touch the ladies' hearts, the rogue! Truly my wife is howling, as if the priests had refused her absolution. This is charming, on my honour! Poetry and truth! Ah, you have stolen that from Goethe; poetry and truth! It is a splendid joke!"

Fröben felt hurt by these words.

"I have already told you," said he in an annoyed tone, "that I would throw poetry and fiction quite on one side, and only speak the truth. I hope you will regard it as such."

"Heaven forbid!" laughed the baron, "in truth

you visited the girl, my friend; that is the real history, and out of your evening-calls at her house, you have made a little romance for us. But it is well told, well told, that I will admit." The young man reddened with anger; he noticed how Josepha was looking at her husband fixedly and anxiously. He fancied he perceived that she shared in the distrust, and thought ill of him also. He would not at least allow himself to be deprived of the esteem of this lady, by a vulgar jest.

"Let us say no more of it, I beg," exclaimed he, "I have never in my life had occasion to conceal or to distort anything, and I could not patiently endure it, if another were to discolour this affair. I tell you for the last time, Faldner, and upon my honour, that everything took place as I have related it."

"More's the pity," replied the other, as he slapped his hands together, "then out of greatly exaggerated generosity, and theoretical tenderness, you have thrown away a couple of hundred francs on an avaricious girl, who decoyed you by a commonplace story of poverty and a sick mother, and you got nothing for it but a paltry kiss. Poor devil! To let yourself be made such a fool of in Paris!"

This jeering compassion, and the laughter of the company who applauded the low wit of the baron at his expense, irritated the young man even more than the previous accusation. Wounded in the tenderest part, he would even have quitted the party, when a strange and alarming spectacle detained him. Josepha had slowly risen, pale as a corpse; she seemed to wish to say something in reply to her husband; but at that moment she sank down insensible, as though dead.

Everyone sprang up in alarm; all rushed forward together; the women raised up the lifeless girl; the men, confused, asked each other why this had happened so suddenly, and the baron muttered curses on the sensitive nerves of women, railed at the boundless modesty, the painful propriety of deportment with which they fainted; now endeavoured to restore composure to the company, now ran back to his wife; everyone talked, advised, and exclaimed together, and no one listened to, or understood the others.

After a few minutes, Josepha regained consciousness; she asked to go to her room; they took her thither, and the ladies and young girls crowded after her, anxiously and officiously. They suggested a hundred means to be used against fainting; they related how the same thing had happened to themselves in this place or that; they were unanimous in agreeing that this circumstance must necessarily have been occasioned by the great exertions of Frau von Faldner who had had many cares, and much to do on this day; and her anxieties for which the baron might, perhaps, blame himself, as he had behaved very unbecomingly before now, might probably have accelerated the affair.

Meanwhile the baron sought to restore the former order among the men. He had the glasses assiduously refilled; drank gaily with this one and that, and endeavoured to set himself and his guests at ease, by various consolatory reflections.

"It arises from nothing," he said, "but a fashion of modern times; every woman of position now-a-days has weak nerves; for, if she has them not, she is not thought a person of distinction; to become faint is part

of a good style. The deuce himself has invented these insane notions. And hence it is, one no longer dares to call anything by its right name. Everything must go on in such a delicate, prudish, refined, genteel manner that one is ready to jump out of one's skin. Thus she changed colour just now when I ventured on a few jokes which give a zest to society, and because, instead of forgetting myself in emotion and anguish at that tender tale of over-refined feeling, I permitted myself to indulge in a few practical conjectures,—what of that! among friends such things must always be permitted, and I should have thought you, friend Fröben, more sensible than to have taken such in ill part."

But he, to whom the baron addressed the last portion of his speech, had for some time been no longer among the guests. Fröben had gone to his own room, vexed and angry with himself and all the world. Yet could he not solve this strange enigma. His heart, still partly agitated with anger at the rudeness of his friend, partly a prey to alarm at the accident to his hostess, was still too full, too vehemently excited to give room to quieter thoughts and reflections. "And will she also not believe me?" said he, full of grief to himself; "will she too give more weight to the contemptible words of her husband than to the simple unadorned truth which I related? What was the meaning of those strange glances which she occasionally cast at me during my narrative? Why should this adventure take such hold upon her, that she should turn pale and tremble? Can it then be really true that she feels kindly towards me; that she takes a heartfelt interest in me; that she was vexed at the

sneers of my friend which must have lowered me so much in her eyes? And what did she intend when she stood up, and was going to speak? Did she wish to check the uncourteous words of Faldner, or did she even wish to defend me?"

During these words he had been pacing hastily up and down the room; his eye now rested on the roll which contained the picture; he unrolled it, and looked at it with a bitter smile. "But how then can I drive from me a feeling of shame at having opened my heart to men who cannot understand me, at having spoken of things which are so strange to such very would-be superior people? That which is bad and vulgar is, indeed, preferable to them; appears more natural to them than that which is uncommon; how *could* I have spoken to these puppets of thy loved cheeks, of thy sweet lips? Oh, poor, poor child! How much nobler art thou in thy misery than these fox-hunters and their gang who are only acquainted with real grief and modest poverty by hearsay, and who laugh at a virtue which rises above the common level of a child's fable. Where can you now be? And do you still think of your friend, of those evenings which made him so happy?"

Tears came into his eyes as he gazed at the portrait, as he thought what bitter injustice had been done to this unhappy being on this day. He endeavoured to suppress his tears, but they only poured down the faster. There was one corner in the heart of the young man wherein, as in a deep grave, all sombre thoughts, all the repressed tears of grief, had long lain together, hidden and undisturbed; but moments such as these in which the pangs of memory, and his own

utter hopelessness, pressed upon him so heavily, burst open the covering of this grave, and caused the long pent up sorrow to pour forth so much the more vehemently, the more his broken spirit gave way to its melancholy.

XXVII.

ON the following morning Fröben reflected over the events of the previous day; and was divided within himself as to whether he would not rather leave a house in which a longer stay might, perhaps, expose him even more frequently to such annoyances, when the door opened, and the baron entered, subdued and ashamed.

"You did not come to the table yesterday; you have not permitted us to see you to-day," he began as he came nearer, "you are angry with me; but be reasonable and forgive me; things went strangely with me; I had taken too much wine during the day, had become excited, and you know my weak side, how I cannot avoid bantering. I am sufficiently punished in that so bright a day ended thus unhappily, and that my house will now be the talk of the country round for the next month to come. Do not embitter my whole life, but be friends with me as formerly!"

"Rather leave the whole matter at rest," replied Fröben gloomily, as he offered him his hand; "I do not wish to speak any more on such a subject, but to-morrow I will proceed on my journey; I will not remain here any longer." "Do not be a fool," cried Faldner, who had not expected this, and was really alarmed. "You would go off at once, on account of a

scene such as this! I always said indeed, that you were just such a hot-head! No! that cannot be done; besides, did you not promise to wait until letters should arrive from the Don, from W—? No, you must not go away from me already; and you have nothing to be ashamed of as regards the company; for they all, and especially the ladies, lectured me severely; they did you full justice, and said, I was to blame throughout."

"How is your wife?" enquired Fröben, in order to cut short these reminiscences.

"Quite recovered; it was only a little alarm because she was afraid lest we should quarrel in earnest; she is waiting to have breakfast with you; come down then now, with me, and be sensible, and listen to reason. I must go out riding; do not take it unkind; the mill is to begin work to-day. You will be just the same again, as ever, then?" "Well then, yes," said the young man in a vexed tone. "Once more, let the whole thing rest!" With strange feelings such as he could not rightly explain to himself, he followed the baron; who delighted at this speedy reconciliation with his friend, hastened on before him, hurriedly acquainted his wife with what he had done, and quitted the castle to set his mill to work.

But had to-day then all at once completely transformed everything, or had he himself alone altered? Josepha's features, her whole being, seemed to Fröben to have changed, when he entered her breakfast-room. A calm melancholy, a tender sorrow appeared to have shed themselves over her countenance; but her smiles were sweet and cordial as she bade him welcome. She ascribed her illness of yesterday to over-exertion, and

seemed altogether disinclined to speak of the whole affair. But Fröben, to whom the good opinion of his friend was of so much importance, could not bear that she should almost designedly avoid touching upon his narrative. "Nay," cried he, "I can not permit you to escape thus, fair lady. What judgment the rest might pass upon me troubled me little; why should it vex me if such commonplace people did measure me by their own vulgar standard! But it would, indeed, pain me inexpressibly if you also formed a false estimate of me, if you also could give place to a thought that must sink me so low in your eyes; if you also doubted the truth of the tale which I would never willingly have made known to such ears. Oh! I conjure you, tell me candidly what you think of me, and of my story?"

She looked at him for a long time; her large, lovely eyes were filled with tears, she pressed his hand; "Oh, Fröben, what I think of it?" she said, "if the whole world should doubt your veracity, I should still have known surely that you had spoken the truth: you cannot, indeed, tell how well I know you."

He coloured with joy, and kissed her hand. "How good you are, not to misunderstand me! And assuredly I related all, everything, with exact truth."⁴

"And this young girl," she continued, "is doubtless the same of whom you were lately talking to me? Do not you recollect when we were conversing about Victor and Clothilde, that you confessed to me that you loved hopelessly? Is it the same?"

"She it is," he replied sorrowfully; "no, you will not laugh at me for this folly; you feel too deeply to be able to find anything to laugh at in this. I know all that can be said in return; I reproach myself often

enough as a fool, a monomaniac who pursues a shadow, I do not even know whether she loves me ——”

“She does love you!” exclaimed Josepha involuntarily; then, blushing at her own words, she added, “she must love you; can you imagine that such great generosity could fail to make a deep impression on the heart of a girl of sixteen? and in all her expressions, as you related them to us, there lay, or I must deceive myself very much, there certainly breathed a very considerable amount of affection.”

The young man seemed to listen with rapture to her words, “how often have I told myself this,” he said, “when I was quite inconsolable and was reflecting sadly on the past; but to what purpose? Perhaps only to make myself still more unhappy. I have often struggled with myself, have sought for distraction amid the crowds of men, for deadening of feeling in a press of business; but I could never succeed. This lovely, this unfortunate being floated ever before my eyes; my one only desire was, to see her once more. It is still my wish; I may own this to you, for you know how to appreciate my feelings; even this journey I only undertook because my yearnings impelled me to seek her, to try to see her once again. And then when I reflect much upon this longing, I often find myself dwelling on the thought of possessing her for ever! You turn away your eyes, Josepha! Oh! I understand; you think that I ought not to select a being, who was once so deeply sunk in misery, whose connexions are so dubious; you think of the opinion of men; I also have often thought of all this; but so truly as I live, if I were to find her again the same as I left her, I would consult but my own heart.

Would you then judge me very severely, Josepha?" She did not answer him; still turning away, her head resting on her hand, she offered him a book, and begged him to read to her. He took it slowly; he looked inquiringly at her; this was the only occasion on which he did not know how rightly to understand her behaviour; but she signed to him to read, and he obeyed, although he would willingly have allowed his heart to speak yet longer. At first he read abstractedly; but, by degrees, the subject attracted him, diverted his thoughts more and more from the previous conversation, and, at last, bore him away so completely that in the flow of words he did not perceive how the beautiful lady turned on him a countenance filled with melancholy, how her looks hung on him replete with kindness, how her eyes would often fill with tears which she could with difficulty suppress; not till too late had he finished; when Josepha had so far recovered herself as to be able to talk with composure of what had been read; and yet it seemed to the young man that her voice trembled here and there, as though the former kindly confidence which she had shown in her husband's friend had become weakened. He would have felt unhappy, if that beaming light of warm emotion which shone forth from her eyes had not perplexed him in making his observations.

XXVIII.

As the baron would not return until evening, and Josepha had, after the reading, retired to her own apartment, Fröben resolved to escape from his vexatious thoughts at least for a while, and to sleep away the

hot noonday-hours before dinner. He stretched himself on a mossy bank in the bower which had become endeared to him by the many pleasant hours which he had spent there with his amiable hostess, and quickly fell asleep. He had left his cares behind him; they did not follow him through the gates of dreamland; pleasant memories alone mingled together, and melted into new and enchanting forms; the young girl from the Rue S. Severin with her liquid voice hovered near him, and talked to him of her mother; he blamed her for having made him wait for her so long, for he had always repaired here on the first and fifteenth; he tried to give her a kiss as a punishment; she resisted, he raised her veil, he turned the chin of the fair girl upwards, and behold — it was Don Pedro who had dressed himself in girl's clothes, and Diego, his servant, was laughing himself to death at the capital joke. Then again, with one bold leap of dreaming fancy, he was in Stuttgart at the collection of pictures. They had been differently arranged, and he sought in vain through all the rooms for his beloved portrait; it was not to be found; he wept, he began to call and lament aloud; then one of the gallery-servants came up to him and begged of him to be quiet, and not to wake the pictures who were now asleep. All at once he perceived the portrait hanging in a corner, yet not a half-length likeness as it used to be, but large as life; it looked at him nodding with arch looks, then it stepped out from the frame alive, and embraced the unhappy man; he felt a fervent kiss on his lips. As it often happens in dreams that we imagine we have awoke, and still dreaming, tell ourselves we have only dreamed; so it now seemed to this young man. He

fancied that, awakened by the long kiss, he opened his eyes and behold — bending over him was a blooming, rosy face which appeared familiar to him. Delighted with the balmy breath, with the loving kiss which he had received, he again closed his eyes; he heard a voice, and opened them again; and saw a form in a black cloak, small black hat, and green veil, vanishing away; just as she was about to pass round a corner, she turned her face once more towards him; they were the features of the loved maiden; and grudgingly, as of old, she had resumed the half-mask. “Ah! But then it is only a dream!” he said to himself with a smile, as he tried to shut his eyes again; but the feeling of being awake, the sighing of the wind amid the trees of the bower, and the splash of the fountain grew too distinct for him not to become completely alive and awake. The strange and vivid image of his dream still remained in his imagination; he gazed at the turn at which she had disappeared; he looked at the spot where she had stood, where she had bent over him, he fancied he could still feel the kiss of the beloved one on his lips. “Has it then come to such a pass with you,” he said to himself, with horror, “that you dream when awake, that you see her near you when possessed of full consciousness? To what pitch of insanity will this lead you? No. That one can dream so distinctly, I never could have believed. It is a sickness of the brain, a fever of the imagination; truly there is not much more wanted to make me even maintain that the figures in dreams are able to leave their footmarks behind; for these prints in the sand are not of my feet.” His glances fell on the bank where he had lain; he saw a neatly folded paper,

and took it up in astonishment. It was without address; it had exactly the appearance of a "Billet doux;" he hesitated for a moment whether he should open it; but curious to know, who in this place could write in this manner, he unfolded the paper — a ring fell towards him. He held it in his hand and perused the letter hurriedly; he read thus, "I am often near thee, my noble benefactor and saviour; I hover around thee with that boundless love, which my gratitude enkindled, and which will not cease to glow even with my life. Thou hast travelled through many countries to seek for me; but in vain dost thou weary thyself thus; forget so unhappy a being; what dost thou wish of me? If, indeed, my highest happiness consisted in the thought of being thine for ever, yet could that never be! For ever! I said it to thee formerly; yes, for ever I shall love thee; but — fate wills that we should be separated for ever, that never at thy side, and perhaps only, even in thy tender remembrance I should live,
The beggar-girl of the Pont des Arts."

The young man fancied himself still dreaming, or dreaming anew; he looked around him distrusting, whether it could be that his imagination had so completely misled him that he was still really living in the world of dreams; but all the objects around him, the well-known bower, the bank, the trees, the castle in the distance, all still stood as hitherto; he looked at all, he was awake, he was not dreaming. And these lines were then really true, were not a vision of his dreaming fancy? "Can they, perhaps, have wished to play off some joke upon me?" he asked himself. "Surely so, it certainly all comes from Josepha; per-

haps, that apparition was a mask?" As he squeezed up the paper, he felt in his hand the ring which had been concealed in the note. He took it out with a feeling of curiosity, looked at it, and turned pale. No, here at least there was no illusion, it was the very same ring which he had given to the maiden on that night on which he had taken leave of her for ever. Sorely tempted as he was at the first moment to believe in the existence of the supernatural in this place, yet the thought that he had received a token from the loved being, that she was near him, filled him with such rapture, that he no longer remembered the words of the letter, he did not doubt for a moment but that he should find her, he pressed the ring to his lips, he rushed out of the bower into the garden, and his glances travelled down every path, into every bush in search of the cherished form. But he sought in vain; he asked of the labourers in the garden, of the servants in the castle, whether they had not seen a stranger; no one had remarked her. He came to the dinner-table perplexed, almost incapable of thought; in vain did Faldner enquire the reason of his perturbed looks; in vain did Josepha ask whether he were still disturbed about yesterday.

"Something has happened to me," he answered, "which I should term a miracle, if my reason did not rebel against the supernatural."

XXIX.

THIS extraordinary occurrence, and the words of the note which he read over at least ten times during the day, rendered the young man very thoughtful.

He began to meditate whether it were, indeed, possible that spiritual beings could influence the life of mortals. How often had he laughed at those enthusiasts who believed as in the gospel itself in apparitions, in messengers from another world, in guardian spirits hovering around mankind! How often had he even proved to them the physical impossibility that incorporeal beings should yet appear in a visible form, that they should be able to accomplish this or that! But how could he explain that which had happened to himself? He often determined to forget it all, to think no more about it, but the next moment he tormented himself by permitting his recollections to rise vividly before him; her features now became more distinct than ever; he saw her plainly again just vanishing round the corner; he beheld those rosy-tinted cheeks, that chin, that slender throat! He brought out the portrait, it resembled her, feature for feature, he covered the eyes and forehead of the lady with his hand, and there was the same lovely face just as it had beamed forth from beneath the half-mask! —

On the following morning, as Josepha was too much busied in the house to converse with him, he again betook himself to the bower. He was reading, and whilst reading, was incessantly occupied with the thought, whether she would appear to him. The heat at mid-day had a stupifying effect upon him; he tried hard to keep himself awake; he read more zealously, and with great effort; but little by little, his head sunk back, the book fell from his hands; he slept.

He awoke at almost the same time as on the preceding day, but no figure with a green veil was to be seen far or near. He smiled at himself for having

expected her; sorrowful and dissatisfied, he had risen to go back to the castle, when he perceived near him a white handkerchief which he could not recollect to have placed there; he looked at it; yes, certainly it must belong to him, for his initials were worked in one corner.

“How did this handkerchief come here?” he exclaimed with emotion, when, on closer inspection, he perceived that it was one of those handkerchiefs which the young girl had prepared for his use, and which he kept locked up as sacred relics. “Can this be a fresh token?” He unfolded the handkerchief, and searched it, if perhaps some few lines might be hidden within it. It was empty; but in another corner of the handkerchief, he perceived some more letters which were embroidered like his initials; there, distinctly and clearly stood the words, “For ever!” “Here again to-day then!” cried the young man with vexation, “and I could sleep in this shameful manner, in presence of the dear apparition! Why did she give me a new sign? Why repeat these mournful words, which in former times, and again yesterday rendered me so miserable?” On this day also he questioned the whole circle of servants, as to whether any stranger had been in the garden. One and all replied in the negative, and the old gardener said that for the last three hours no one but his mistress had passed through the garden.

“And how was she dressed?” asked Fröben strangely surprised.

“Ah, sir, there you ask too much,” answered the old gardener, “she was certainly dressed in handsome clothes, but in what, I really do not know how to

describe; as she passed me, she nodded kindly, and said, "good day, Jacob!"

The young man took the old man on one side; "I conjure you," he whispered, "tell me did she wear a green veil? Had she not on large black spectacles?"

The old gardener looked at him distrustfully and shook his head. "Black spectacles?" he repeated, "my mistress, large black spectacles? Eh! Good heavens! What are you thinking of? She has eyes as bright and clear as a chamois, and should she wear spectacles on her nose? Great black spectacles, such as, saving your presence, squeeze the noses of the old women in church, so that they snuffle when they would sing? No, good sir, you must drive such evil thoughts out of your head; they are nonsense; and do not take it ill, but you ought to have a cap this hot weather for fear of a sunstroke." Thus spoke the old man, and went away still shaking his head; but with numerous contemptuous taps of his forefinger on his forehead he explained to the other servants that all could not be right up there with the young guest.

XXX.

ON this occasion also Fröben could come to no other conclusion, but that the conduct of the young girl whom he loved so fervently was incomprehensible; and this mysterious trifling with his agony, with his anxieties, occupied him so exclusively, that much escaped his notice which must otherwise have astonished him.

Josepha came to table with weeping eyes; the baron was out of humour, and laconic; and the inward dissatisfaction which clouded his brow, and spoke plainly

in his eyes appeared compelled to vent itself now and then in an oath at the bad cookery, and still worse housekeeping. The unhappy wife endured all patiently, and in silence. Sometimes, as though she sought for help and consolation, she cast a passing look towards Fröben. Alas! She did not perceive how her husband watched these looks; how his forehead became of a deeper red, when his eyes caught hers on their road.

All this fell upon Fröben's eye and ear, as something to which he had become accustomed; he did not give himself the trouble to enquire of Josepha the reason of this unpleasant feeling. It did not occur to him that she was more reserved towards him in Faldner's presence. He attributed it to the usual busy ways of his friend that, on the following days, he required of him to go with him here and there on the property, and often to pass a great portion of the day in the woods and in the fields, making measurements and calculations.

But one morning when Faldner, already booted and spurred, was waiting for him, a slight indisposition served as a pretext for escaping from the disagreeable visits to the fields; and when he innocently observed that he must once more read something to Josepha, then it struck him as strange that the baron exclaimed angrily, "No, she shall read nothing more at all; everything has gone contrary for some time past. I can fully account for this when she has spent the whole morning in reading, and has such romantic ideas in her head as I have already seen haunting some other people. For Heaven's sake, read to yourself, dear Fröben, and do not take it unkindly if I find

other amusements for my wife. You, Josepha, go into the garden after breakfast; there are vegetables that must be planted out to-day. Afterwards you will be so good as to go to the clergyman's; you have owed a visit there for a long time."

With these words he took up his riding-whip from the table, and strode out.

"What is the meaning of this? What is the matter with him to-day?" enquired Fröben of the young wife who could scarcely restrain her tears.

"Oh, he is much as usual," replied she, without looking up. "Your presence took him for a time out of his usual ways, but you see, he is now again the same as before."

"But, good Heavens," he cried with annoyance, "pray, send out a maid into the garden."

"I dare not," said she decidedly, "I must see about it myself; he will have it so."

"And the visit to the clergyman's?"

"I must pay. You have heard this, that I *must* pay it. Let us not talk of it, it cannot be helped. But you, my friend," continued Josepha, "you appear to me to have altered within these last few days; not to be so cheerful or cordial as formerly. Perhaps, you are no longer able to amuse yourself here, or my husband or I myself am the cause of your dissatisfaction?"

Fröben looked embarrassed. He was on the point of confessing the wonderful occurrences in the garden to his friend, but the thought of exposing his weakness to a simple-minded young woman deterred him.

"You know," said he evasively, "that within the last few days I have received letters from S— and if

I appear to be out of humour, let these letters bear the blame."

She looked at him doubtfully. An answer seemed to hover on her lips; but when she read a want of confidence in the looks of the young man, and felt herself wounded by it, her beautiful mouth closed firmly and suppressed the reply. She rang the bell in silence; ordered her maid to bring her hat and umbrella; and, without inviting him to accompany her, went down into the garden to work.

Some hours after, when the young man also went down into the garden and inquired for Josepha, he was told that she had gone to the clergyman's house. He hastened to the arbour, and sat down there with a throbbing heart. To-day he determined not to go to sleep.

"I shall then see," said he to himself, "whether this being, who flits around me so mysteriously, has a third token for me. I will lie down as if asleep; and so sure as I live, if the vision appears again, I will seize it and see of what nature it is."

He read until it was past noon; then he lay down, without shutting his eyes. Real sleep would often have fallen upon him; but expectation, anxiety, and his strong determination subdued the poppy influence and kept him awake.

He might have lain so for about half an hour, when the leaves of the bower began to rustle. He opened his eyes the least bit possible, and saw how two white hands carefully parted the boughs, probably to open a view of the sleeper.

Then soft, soft steps tripped along the sand; he cast stolen glances at the entrance to the bower, and

his heart could have made him bound forward with joyous impatience when he beheld the young girl in her black cloak and hat, her green veil drawn back, the black half-mask bound over the upper part of her beautiful face.

XXXI.

SHE approached on tiptoe. He perceived how, as she drew nearer, a deep blush suffused her face. She watched the sleeper for a long time; she sighed deeply, and appeared to be drying her tears. Then she came close; she bent down over him; her breath fanned him like a messenger from heaven announcing the proximity of her lovely lips. She bent still lower, and her mouth touched his gently as the morning-red touches the hills.

He could restrain himself no longer; he quickly flung his arm around her, and with a short cry of distress she sank upon her knees. He sprang up in alarm, he thought she had fainted, but she was only speechless and trembling violently; he raised her up, and filled with joy at seeing her again he drew her to his side on the bank; he covered her with kisses, and pressed her to his heart.

"Oh then, at last, at last, I have found thee again, beloved one!" he exclaimed, "thou art no phantom. Thou art alive; I hold thee in my arms as formerly and love thee as then, and am happy and blessed, for thou also lovest me."

A deep glow overspread her cheeks; she did not speak, she sought in vain to disengage herself.

"No, I will now leave thee no more," said he, and

tears trembled on his eyelashes. "Now I hold thee fast, and nothing in this world shall tear thee from me. And now, away with this envious mask; I will now look full in thy lovely face; ah, it has ever lived in my dreams!"

She appeared, with a last effort, to wish to draw his hand from the half-mask; she breathed heavily, she resisted.

But the mad eagerness of the young man on finding himself so inexpressibly happy after so long a trial afforded him an easy victory. He held her hands in one of his own; with the other he tremblingly pushed back her hat, loosened the mask, and beheld—the wife of his friend!

"Josepha!" he cried, as if he were plunged into an abyss, and his thoughts all in confusion, "Josepha!"

Pale, transfixed, and tearless, she sat by his side, and said with a melancholy smile, "yes, Josepha."

"Then you have deceived me," said he bitterly, as all the hope, all the happiness of the former moment fled from him. "Oh, you might have saved me this farce! Yet," continued he, as a thought flashed through him like lightning, "for Heaven's sake, where did you get the ring?"

She blushed anew, she burst into tears, she hid her face in her hands.

"No!" cried he, "an answer I must have. It is my ring, the handkerchief—I conjure you, say how both came into your hands? How did you get the ring?"

"From you," she whispered; as abashed, she pressed nearer to him.

A beam of light now flashed into Fröben's mind;

yet this almost too bright ray dazzled him; but he raised her head gently, and cast upon her looks of admiration and affection.

"You are she? Am I dreaming again?" he said, when he had looked at her for a long time. "Did not you say that you were my sweet lady? oh Heaven! What a veil has been drawn over my eyes! Yes, there are your fair cheeks, there is your lovely mouth, which has not to-day kissed me for the first time."

A rich glow overspread her cheeks, she looked at him full of joy and delight.

"What would have become of me, without you, you noble-hearted man?" cried she, as tears dimmed the lustre of her eyes. "I bring you the blessing of my kind mother; you made her last days easy, and relieved the weight of misery which lay so heavy on her sick heart. Oh, how can I thank you? What would have become of me but for you! Yet," she continued, as she covered her face with her hands, "What *am* I become, the wife of another, the wife of your friend!"

He perceived how her breath came and went with irrepressible agony; how her tears poured down like a torrent between her taper fingers. He felt how fervently she had loved him, and not a thought of reproach that she should belong to another than him, entered his heart.

"So it is," said he mournfully, while he pressed her closer to him, as though notwithstanding he could not bear to lose her; "So it is, we will believe it best so, since thus it has been decreed. For, perhaps, we should have been too happy. Yet at this moment you are mine. Imagine that at this moment you are com-

ing to the Place de l'École de Médecine, and that I am expecting you. Oh, come hither, and embrace me as formerly. Alas! only this once more!"

Lost in memory of the past, she clung to his heart; all thought of the reality appeared buried beneath her sad looks. Clearer and clearer, whilst remembrance arose brightly and more brightly, tenderly and ever more tenderly a sweet smile played round on her mouth, and rested in soft dimples on her cheeks.

"And did you then not know me?" said she smiling.

"And did you not know me?" he asked, looking at her with affection.

"Ah!" she answered, "I had in former times studied your features, engraved them deeply on my heart. But in truth, I should not have recognized you. That might, indeed, arise from my never having seen you except at night, wrapped up in your cloak; your hat pressed over your brow, and besides how could I suppose — Certainly when, on the first evening, you called out to Faldner 'Au revoir,' the voice sounded familiar to me, as though I had heard it before; but I laughed at myself for the foolish idea. After that, every now and then it seemed to me that you must be he whom I imagined, yet I ever doubted again; but on Sunday directly you named the Pont des Arts, a peculiar sunshine beamed in your face; you appeared to live entirely in the memory of the past, and at your first words it became clear to me, that it was you, yourself! But assuredly you could not have recognized me; is it not true that I have grown very pale?"

"Joseph," he replied, "where were my senses, my eyes, my ears, that I did not recognize you? A joy-

ous surprise passed over my heart at the very first sight of you; you strongly resembled that picture which I met with in the strange course of events; and loved for being like you, but the discoveries as to your mother's family put me on a wrong track; I only beheld in you the daughter of the lovely Laura who resembled her; and often whilst I was sitting near you, my mind was wandering far distant, far off, to — yourself!" "Oh — Heavens!" cried Josepha, "is it then true? Is it possible? Can you then still love me?"

"Can I? But may I? Ye heavenly powers! You are now Frau von Faldner; tell me, for goodness sake, how did all this come about? Why then, could you not wait for me once more?"

XXXII.

SHE checked her tears; and with difficulty composed herself sufficiently to speak.

"You see," she said, "it was as though an adverse fate ordered everything so as to make me thoroughly miserable. When you were gone, I no longer had any pleasures; those evenings with you had been so much to me. You know that from the very first moment in which you asked your companion for money in our dear mother-tongue, from that moment my heart beat for you; and when you provided for us with such boundless generosity, and with so much sympathy, ah! how often could I have pressed you to my heart, and confessed to you that I worshipped you as a being of a higher order! I do not know what would have been too hard for me to do for you; and how generously,

how nobly, did you behave towards me! You went away, I wept for a long time, for a painful foreboding warned me that we had parted for ever; eight days after your departure, my mother died very suddenly. What you had previously given me sufficed to bury her, and to prevent any dishonour attending her memory. A lady, the Countess Landskron, who lived in our neighbourhood, and heard of us poor people, made me come to her house. She questioned me about everything; she carefully examined my mother's papers, which she made me give to her; appeared satisfied, and took me as a companion. We travelled, I will not describe to you how my heart bled when I was obliged to leave Paris; only fourteen days were wanting until the time should come which you had destined for your return; then I should have gone first to the Place, have spoken to you once more, have taken leave of you once more! But thus it was not to be. As we passed from the Rue S. Severin, through the familiar Place de l'École de Médecine, I said to myself, 'For ever!' Edward! I never heard again from you, your name was unknown to me. You must surely long have forgotten the beggar-girl; I lived on the charity of strangers; I had many bitter trials to bear; I bore them; they were not the most grievous of my trials. But when the countess moved to her property in this country, when Faldner paid his addresses to me, when I perceived that she approved of it as a good provision for me, and, perhaps, also was tired of me—well, I had once in my life been happy, but could never hope to be so again; I was indifferent to every thing else, and became his wife."

"Poor child! This Faldner, why were you with

such a tender heart, with such refined feelings, with so high a claim to at least a more noble lot than this, why were you destined to be his wife? Yet so it is, Josepha, I can not, I dare not remain here a day longer. With all his roughnesses, I once called him my friend, am now his guest, and even, were not all this the case, it is not permitted to us to be happy together." Inexpressible pain breathed in his words; he kissed the eyes of the lovely lady, only that he might not be made weak by the grief which spoke in them.

"Oh, only for one day," she whispered gently, "I have only just found you again, and you are thinking of flying away already. You know that when you shall have gone, the door of my happiness will have closed again and for ever. I shall be obliged to bear much that is harsh, and I must, therefore, reserve to myself one little memory on which to live in the dreary wilderness."

"Listen, I will confess everything to Faldner," said the young man, after a little reflection, "I will picture everything to him in such a manner, that it must touch even him; he does not love you, you do not love him, and are unhappy; he shall resign you to me. My house does not stand in so fine a situation as this castle, you can overlook my property from the Belvidere on the roof; you will quit a high position here; but when you enter my house, I will spread my arms as a covering over you, with my hands will I support you, you shall be queen in my house and I your chief and faithful servant."

She looked up to him sadly, and wept bitterly. "Ah yes! if I were of your creed, all then would be well; but we are married as good Catholics, and death

alone can part us. Oh, great Heaven! how miserable these laws often make us! What a happiness, to be with you in your home, providing always for you, hanging on your glances, and daily by tender affection to recompense you some thousandth part for all you did for me, and my dear mother."

"And yet, for ever," he replied mournfully, "only to-morrow, and after that we part for ever."

"For ever," she murmured scarcely audibly.

"Here then you are to be found, you mean creature!" cried, at this moment, a third person, who stood near the pair.

They sprang up terrified. There stood the baron, trembling with rage, gnashing his teeth with fury, holding in one hand a paper, and in the other a horse-whip, which he raised at this moment as if to let it fall upon the lovely shoulders of the unhappy woman. Fröben seized his arm, deprived him of the whip, and threw it away to a distance.

"I implore you," he said to the enraged man, "do not make such a scene here. Your work-people are in the garden; you will injure yourself and your house by such a disturbance."

"What!" cried the baron, "is not my house already sufficiently disgraced by this miserable person, this beggarly creature whom I have had in it? Do you think I do not know your handwriting?" he continued as he extended the paper towards her, "this, indeed, is a tender letter to Sir Galan here, the hero of romance. So then, I must needs marry a girl, to whom you had been engaged, and when you are tired of the affair, the honorable Faldner may make her mistress of his house, and six months after, you must needs

come to see how things go on. You shall account to me for this, you scoundrel! But this beggar-woman may go back again, and stand with her plate and lantern on the Pont des Arts; my servants shall hunt her from the castle with horse-whips."

XXXIII.

AT such moments the man of firm mind possesses a decided advantage over the uncontrolled man, who, carried away by his passion to rashness, is uncertain what he shall do. One look at Josepha, who sat on the bank of moss, pale, trembling, and speechless, convinced Fröben what should now be done. He offered her his arm, and conducted her from the bower to the castle. The baron looked after them with rage; he was on the point of calling his servants together to carry out his threat; but the fear of increasing his disgrace restrained him.

He rushed up to the drawing-room, where Josepha lay on the sofa, her weeping face concealed in the cushions, and where Fröben was standing in the window, and staring out of it as if unconscious of what was passing. He paced up and down the saloon scolding and swearing; he cursed himself for having joined his fate to that of such a person; "There is no justice left in the country if I cannot get quit of her!" he cried, "she has falsified the certificate of baptism, and everything; she has given herself out as of noble birth, the beggar! the marriage is null and void!"

"That is of all things the most sensible," interrupted Fröben, "there only needs then (as you view

things) in order that you may not blame yourself any longer——”

“Ha, sir!” cried the baron wild with rage, “you jest with me, after by your immeasurable impudence you have brought all this disgrace upon me? Follow me; for *our* parting, no law-court is needed; it can be effected immediately. Follow me.”

Josepha, who understood these words, sprang up; she threw herself before the furious man; she conjured him to let the blame fall upon her alone, for his friend was completely innocent. She pointed to the piece of paper in his hand, which she acknowledged; she swore that Fröben had learned on this day for the first time who she was

But the young man himself interrupted her entreaties; he raised her up, and led her back to the sofa.

“I am accustomed,” said he coldly to the baron, “to arrange my affairs previous to such events, and you will do well not to neglect this either. First of all your wife must leave the castle, for I will not sanction her remaining, when I shall no longer be here to protect her from your ill-treatment.”

“You behave as if she were your own property,” replied the baron, laughing angrily; “but I had almost forgotten, madame was once bound to you. Whither shall the sweet angel be conducted? To a poor-house, or a hospital, or to the nearest hedge-side, for you to continue your wooings?”

Fröben paid no heed to him; he turned to Josepha; “Does the countess still live in the neighbourhood?” he asked her; “Do you think you could find a refuge there for the next few days?” “I will go to her,” she whispered.

"Very well. Faldner will have the goodness to have you driven thither. There you must await the future; whether he will perceive the injustice he has done us both, or whether he will persist in being separated from you."

XXXIV.

JOSEPHA was driven to the house of the countess. Her friend advised her, on her arrival, only to propose a visit of a few days; whilst in the meantime he would give her notice of the decision of his friend, and whether it were possible to persuade him to become reconciled to her.

"No!" cried she vehemently, as she went down from the terrace to the carriage, "I will never return within these doors again; I now turn my back for ever on these walls. You may believe that a woman can bear much; I have long been obliged to suffer, and my heart has often nearly broken. But he has insulted me too deeply this day for me to forgive him. And if I should be obliged again to return to the Pont des Arts to intreat passers-by for a couple of sous, I will do that rather than subject myself any longer to such base treatment from this rude man. My father was a brave soldier, and an officer much esteemed in France; his daughter ought not to degrade herself to be the servant of a Faldner."

After her departure, the young man had written a few letters, and was just occupied in arranging his little luggage when Faldner entered the room.

Fröben looked at him with surprise, and expected

a fresh outburst of anger; but he said, "The oftener I read these unfortunate lines, which I found at mid-day in your room, the more I believe that you are really innocent in this miserable story, namely that you knew nothing until now, and did not recognize this person. That I discovered my wife in your embrace, I forgive you, for that individual ceased to belong to me when she wrote this insane letter to you. I have wished for the sake of our old relations to each other that you should thus view the affair, and principally also, because by these means, I obtain the opportunity of speaking to you calmly and quietly about Josepha."

"And first I give you my sacred vow that nothing has ever passed between her and me either on this day or formerly, which could be in the least injurious to her reputation; that she was poor, that she was once compelled to ask the aid of her fellow-creatures, ——"

"Nay, rather say that she begged," called out Faldner hotly, "and that at night she made the rounds of the streets, and bridges of a vicious metropolis, to collect money; indeed, at that time I might have had the pleasure of a more intimate acquaintance with her, for I too was at the touching scene on the Pont des Arts. No, though I believe all you say, yet I am disgraced; the family of Faldner, and a beggar!"

"Her father and her mother were of good descent ——"

"Fables, fiction! That I should have let myself be so caught! I might as well have married the barmaid from the tap, if she bore a beer-glass in her escutcheon, and brought a false certificate of birth!"

"That in my eyes is the least part of the affair; the chief thing is, that from the beginning, you have

treated her as your servant, and not as your wife; she could never love you; you are not suited to each other."

"That is just the right expression," said the baron, "we are not suited to each other; the Baron von Faldner and a beggar-girl could never be a fit match; and now I am delighted that I followed my own way, and did treat her thus; the girl deserved nothing better. Indeed, I always said, she had something very vulgar about her."

This coarseness angered the young man; he would have said something bitter in reply; but controlled himself that he might be of some use to Josepha. He discussed with the baron what should be done in the business, and they agreed that he should bring the whole affair before the civil court, and should adduce their mutual aversion as ground for a separation. Certainly under the circumstances of their creed, neither of the two parties could hope to find consolation in a new union; but no lot appeared so hard to Josepha, even when she looked forward to a hopeless future, as not to seem endurable in comparison with the ignominious treatment which she had undergone in Faldner's house; and if the baron also were seized with repentance during many lonely hours, still he sought for distraction in occupation, and for consolation in the thought that no one was aware of his disgrace in having made a beggar-girl of doubtful character Frau von Faldner.

XXXV.

A FEW weeks after these occurrences Fröben was walking up and down the bridge over the Rhine at Mayence, whither he had retired in order to be in the neighbourhood of Josepha.

He was meditating on the strange tale of circumstances; he was thinking of many chances which might yet, perhaps, make him and the beloved lady happy, when a travelling-carriage whose extraordinary build had already in the distance attracted the attention of the young man, drove upon the bridge. But his eyes were soon fixed upon the servant who sat on the box; this merry yellow-brown face, which was looking with curiosity on all sides, seemed to him as familiar as the grey colour of the livery. When the carriage which had as yet only advanced a few paces on the bridge, came nearer, the servant also perceived the young man, and exclaimed:

“St. Jago de Compostella, there he is, himself!”

He threw down the window which separated him from the inside of the carriage, and spoke some eager words within. Immediately a window at the side of the carriage was let down, and the well-known face of Don Pedro de San Montanjo Ligez looked out. The carriage stopped; the young man sprang forward joyfully to open the door, and the old man sank in his arms.

“Where is she? Where have you her, the daughter of my Laura? oh, for the sake of the holy Virgin, have you her here? Tell me, young man, where is she?”

The young man in confusion remained silent. He conducted the old man further across the bridge and then told him that she was staying not far from this town, and that he would take him to her on the morrow. Tears of joy were in the Spaniard's eyes.

"How can I thank you, for the intelligence you have given me?" he said. "Immediately that I received leave of absence, I put myself with Diego into the carriage, and have travelled from W— post haste every day, for I could endure it no longer. And is she living happily? Is she like her mother, and what does she tell about Laura Tortosi?"

Fröben promised to answer all these questions in his own room. As soon as the Spaniard was a little rested, and had changed his dress, Fröben ordered some sherry to be brought, filled the glasses, Diego (as in old times) handed the cigars, and when Don Pedro was comfortably seated, the young man began his tale. The Spaniard listened to him with ever-heightening interest; to Diego's great vexation, he let his cigar go out for the first time for twenty years; and when the young man came to the exciting scene between Faldner and the unhappy wife, he could contain himself no longer, his old southern blood boiled; he pressed his hat down deep over his brow, rolled his cloak round his left arm, and cried with flashing eyes, "Bring me my long rapier, Diego, I'll chill his blood so surely as I am a good Christian and a Spanish nobleman. I'll stab him to the ground; and though he have a crucifix at his heart, I will kill him. I will send him to another world without absolution and without the sacraments, that I will! Bring me my sword, Diego."

But Fröben drew the old man, now trembling and exhausted with rage towards him. He tried to make him understand how all this was unneeded, for that Josepha was already freed from the power of this coarse man, and was living separated from him. To soothe the old man still further, he brought the portrait, and unfolded it before Don Pedro's astonished gaze. The Don looked at it with delight.

"Yes, it is she herself!" he cried, forgetting everything else, "my poor unhappy Laura!" And he embraced the young man with tears, called him his dear son, and thanked him in broken accents for all that he had done for the unfortunate mother and her poor daughter.

On the following morning he went with Fröben to the house of the countess. It was a touching sight to see how the old man held the lovely and youthful form of Josepha in his embrace; how attentively he examined her lineaments; how his own manly features relaxed; how he kissed her eyes and lips with emotion.

"Yes, yes, you are Laura's daughter!" he cried, "your father has given you nothing but his fair hair. There are her dear eyes, this is her mouth, there are the lovely features of Tortosi. Be a daughter to me, dear child; I have no relations, and I am rich. By the ties of kindred, of my heart, and of a grief of twenty years' duration, you belong more to me than to any one else in the world."

Her glances, which fall over her shoulder towards Fröben, did not appear quite to confirm this last assertion; but she kissed his hand tenderly, and called him her uncle, her second father.

The joy of meeting again, however, lasted only for a few days; the Don declared very decidedly that business summoned him to Portugal; and, at the same time, he did not appear to perceive what could prevent Josepha from following him thither.

His principles were too strong regarding the articles of his church for him to entertain as possible the idea that Fröben could wish to marry Josepha, the divorced wife of another. How the lovers had discussed this knotty point, we do not know. So much as this alone, is certain, that Fröben had several times hinted, that she ought to return to the Evangelical faith; however she, with infinite pain, it is true, but very decidedly, negated the suggestion.

In despair at the approaching separation, the young man would often have proposed to her, that she should allow Don Pedro to go alone, that she should live by herself and remain in Germany; and, if he could not become her husband, he would always be near her as a friend.

But this also she refused; she confessed plainly to him that she felt herself too weak to live in such a position; and, rendered prouder by her misfortunes, she shrank trembling from the thought of an indecorous intimacy with a man whom she esteemed as highly as she loved him. Alone with herself, she did, indeed, confess to herself that an even more magnanimous feeling guided her steps. "Ought he," said she to herself, "to waste the bloom of his life on an unhappy being who may never be more than a friend to him? Ought he for my sake to give up the rich enjoyment of domestic bliss, the happiness of assembling around him children and grandchildren? No, he has already

lost me once, and time will now again soothe his grief. He will forget the unhappy one, who will for ever think of him, love him, pray for him."

Thus these prophetic words of Josepha's "for ever," appeared to be in the way of fulfilment. Don Pedro, with his new relation, quitted the house of the countess to go through Holland to the sea-coast. Fröben, who perhaps, only entertained the thought of speedily following Josepha into Portugal, and becoming her friend there, accompanied his beloved one on the journey through Germany and Holland; and, so often as she entreated him not to make the days of separation still more bitter by longer companionship, so often did he implore with tears in his eyes,

"Only so far as the sea; and then 'for ever.'"

XXXVI.

IN August of this year, an English ship, which was taking cargo and passengers to Portugal, became visible at Ostend. It was a beautiful day, the fog had cleared off, and the weather appeared to promise favorably for the voyage.

It was about nine o'clock in the morning, when a gun sounded from the Englishman, as a sign that the passengers were to betake themselves down to the shore; and at the same time a boat steered thither and a plank was arranged to bring the travellers on board. Many persons with their luggage walked down the plank, the boat was soon filled, and the first instalment taken on board. Before the boat came ashore the second time, four persons were seen to approach the

strand who differed from the other poorer passengers, in their walk, their bearing, and their dress. A tall old man advanced with proud steps. He had on a broad, turned-up hat, and his cloak hung so artistically and comfortably over his shoulders, that a sailor, who saw him coming, exclaimed, "Eat me up, if that is not a Spaniard!" Behind him was a younger gentleman leading a beautiful lady of slender figure. The young man was very pale, and appeared to be struggling with his deep grief, in order by his persuasions to soothe a still greater one on the part of the lady. Her beautiful face was reddened about the eyes and forehead with violent weeping; her mouth painfully compressed, and her cheeks, and the lower part of her face, were of a deadly pallor; she tottered along, supported by the arm of the young man; a little hat with a waving ostrich-feather, a flowing dress of heavy black silk, rich gold chains around her throat and neck, all appeared ill suited for a journey; and from them, one might have supposed that she was only accompanying the young man on board. Behind these two, walked a servant in gay clothes; he carried a large umbrella under his arm, and had drawn a Spanish net over his dark hair. When they had come down so far as the sand was still wet from the previous tide to the place where the plank was to be thrown out from the boat, the handsome young pair looked at the ship, and then at each other; and the lady laid her head on the shoulder of the man so that the ostrich-feathers played around his face, and concealed his silent tears from the eyes of the curious. The old man stood not far distant; and, looking gloomily at the sea, wrapped himself closely in his cloak, while his eyes

blinked, one did not know whether from a tear, or from the reflection from the waves.

Now the boat came splashing to the shore, the plank was thrown out, and a thundering shot from the ship startled the pair from their embrace. The old man stepped forward, offered the young man his hand, shook his warmly, and then quickly strode across the plank. His servant followed when he, also, had heartily shaken hands with the young man.

The young people now embraced each other once more; the man disengaged himself first, and conducted the lady to the plank.

"For ever," whispered she with a melancholy smile.

"For ever," replied the young man as he gazed at her tremblingly, and with tears.

One more pressure of the hand, and she turned to pass over the plank. She stood on it; the coxswain, a stout Englishman, was waiting by the plank, and stretched out his broad hand to receive the beautiful lady; and was prepared with some kindly-meant words of consolation. She then turned her dim eyes from the boundless sea upon the young man once more. Her tall and noble form trod boldly over the narrow plank, her slender throat was bent towards the land, the floating feathers of her hat appeared to wave a greeting. He stretched out his arms; the bliss of love was mingled in his features with the pain of parting. She then seemed no longer able to control herself; she sprang across the plank on to the shore, and before the boatman could clap his hands in astonishment, she was hanging on the young man's neck.

"No, I cannot go across the sea!" she cried, "I will stay; I will do everything as you wish; I will cast from me the fetters of a faith which would prevent me from following my better feelings. You are my fatherland, my family, my all; I will stay."

"Josepha, my Josepha!" cried the young man, as he pressed her to his breast in a transport of delight, "mine, mine for ever! Heaven has guided your heart. I should have perished beneath the weight of this separation."

They were still folded in each other's arms, when the old man came with hasty steps across the plank to the shore, and advanced towards the pair.

"My children," said he, "once would have been enough to have taken leave. Come, Josepha, this is of no avail; they will fire soon for the third time."

"Let them fire cannon-balls, Don Pedro," cried the young man, his face illumined with joy, "she will stay here, she will stay with me."

"What do I hear?" replied the other very gravely; "I will not suppose it can be as the chevalier says. You will follow your relation, Josepha."

"No," cried she with spirit, "when I stood yonder at the edge of the boat, and looked out over those waves which were to separate me from him, what I ought to do came powerfully before me. My mother has pointed out the way to me. She once followed the man of her heart into the wide world, left father and mother for love; I know what I also have to do; here stands he to whom my mother owed her last happy hours, to whom I owe life, honour, all things; and should I forsake him? Greet the graves of my ancestors in Valencia for me, Don Pedro, and tell

them that one of the race of Tortosi still lives to whom love is of more value than life!"

Don Pedro relented. "Then follow your heart; perchance it counsels you better than an old man; I at least know you to be happy in the arms of this honorable man; and his high mind assures me of this that our honor will not be of less value to him than his owl."

"But, Don Fröbenio, what will you say to your proud relations when you present this child of misfortune to them? Shall you have the courage to bear the jeers of the world?"

"Farewell, Don Pedro," said the young man, with a brave look, as he offered him one hand for leave-taking, and passed the other round his beloved one. "Be comforted, and do not doubt me. I will shew her to all the world, and if any one ask me, 'But who was she?' I will reply with proud delight, 'she was the beggar-girl of the Pont des Arts!'"

THE EMPEROR'S PICTURE.

THE EMPEROR'S PICTURE.

I.

SOME years ago, on one of the finest days of September, two young men were travelling in the coupé of the diligence which runs twice in the week, from Frankfort to Stuttgart.

One of them had got up one stage from Darmstadt, and by his pleasing exterior, and his friendly greeting as he seated himself next the young passenger, had completely relieved the latter from the fear that this circumstance might give him an unpleasant neighbour. The course of the journey proved that he had not judged erroneously when he took his travelling-companion for a well educated gentleman-like man.

All he said was, if not indeed cheerful, still straightforward and sensible. Not unfrequently the traveller was even surprised by the carelessly thrown out expressions and thoughts of his neighbour, which bore evidence of his education, experience of society, and an amount of reading which he could not have expected from beneath the somewhat coarse hunting-coat, and the unsightly leather-cap. In fact it seemed to the second traveller that the further he proceeded south, so much the oftener he was obliged, and not without shame, to make excuses for the country and for the

prejudices of the inhabitants which, especially at the age of four and twenty, one so easily accepts on hearsay. How differently had this country been described in Brandenburg! It is true that many travellers had praised this Bergstrasse, this valley of the Neckar; yet their descriptions appeared feeble and poor beside the wonders of Switzerland, to which they had hastened along this route. But in the native country of the first passenger there could be only one opinion respecting the inhabitants. Here, just close to Darmstadt, began Suabia; so in Berlin they told the young traveller, with a look of pity at the map, and with another of still greater pity at him who wished to visit these countries. Here all social life, all refinement expires; here dwell a rough, uncivilized people who cannot even speak good German. And alas! not the lower classes alone suffer from this deficiency; those also of better position possess a sort of circumscribed, unchivalrous nature, and talk such wretched German, that, in order to avoid blushing for themselves, they speak French before strangers. This was the farewell they gave him to take with him into Suabia; and during the charming leisure which the sandy highroads and drinking postillions of his fatherland afforded him, these traditions took such strange shapes in the young and romantic head of the juvenile Brandenburger that he seemed to himself to be like one of those well-born young cavaliers in a Scottish novel who, overwhelmed with melancholy recollections in the most refined circles, in the theatre, and in all the enjoyments of the great world, journey from London to visit the Highlands and their barbarous inhabitants.

But when the magnificent world of these mountains,

covered with fruit and vines, and of these fertile valleys, opened upon his gaze: when the pretty villages, with their red roofs, with their clean cheerful inhabitants appeared before his astonished eyes; when here or there, among beautiful beech-woods, arose a town or castle with glittering windows; then he almost fell into the opposite extreme. He burst forth into raptures of praise and admiration, and pitied the poor level plains, their barren sandy soil, their meagre fir-trees, and their pale inhabitants; thousands of whom probably departed this life, without having even seen one of those luxuriant clusters of grapes which sparkled in endless profusion throughout these bowers of green. It was but poor comfort to his patriotism that by greater knowledge, a more euphonious language, and more refined culture, Nature had at least given his countrymen something as a compensation.

The young man at his side, although his speech betrayed the Southern accent, appeared also to comprehend the laws of society not less well than the Brandenburger.

At least none of his questions betrayed any curiosity to discover anything regarding the position of the latter, his country, or the object of his journey. He behaved politely, but with dignity, seemed more inclined to reply than to question; and without feeling it a trouble, undertook to give the stranger information as to the names and histories of the castles and towns which attracted his attention.

But calmly and composedly as the young man in the hunting-dress gave particulars respecting these things, there were two points on which he spoke more warmly and more at length. On one occasion, when

his neighbour propounded some of his strange ideas as to good society in Suabia, the young man in green looked at him with astonishment, and asked him whether he had ever formerly gone into Suabia by any other route; and when the other answered in the negative, he replied,

“I am aware that in several places, especially in *North Germany*, people entertain extraordinary notions about us. Whether with justice, you will yourself be able to decide when you have remained some time among us. But I would advise you to observe dispassionately the possible causes for such opinions. I grant that a certain disadvantageous view of my native country has existed for some centuries. At least the follies of the Suabians have not first become known in our days. Yet a great portion of these absurd things appear to spring from a certain jealousy of the race, and from that tone of thought in the petty towns, which has at all times prevailed in our beloved Germany. For instance in Suabia, all those strange things with which others charge us, are related of the Austrians, and there are two important reasons why this prejudice has not become weakened even in modern times, even by the progress of civilization, and more active social life; and the greater blame does not lie on the side of Southern Germany.”

“Pardon me,” cried the Brandenburg traveller somewhat incredulously, “I should not then suppose—”

“People form their opinion of our manners from those of my countrymen whom they see in North Germany. Now, even if these were our most sensible men, they would still possess two faults, which would

place them at a disadvantage in your eyes. Their language to begin with —”

“Pardon me,” replied his companion courteously; “for instance, you express yourself charmingly.”

“I express myself as I think, and so do also a large number of my countrymen; but because we pronounce the diphthongs differently from you, and either change the last syllables according to our ancient custom, or hurry over them in our speech, our pronunciation sounds to you unpleasing, harsh, and almost vulgar. Most of the Suabians, whom you see in your country, are young men who come from the university to visit the institutions in North Germany; or merchants who carry on their business there. Now, your countrymen measure these men throughout by their own standard, and thus do great injustice. In your country much attention is paid to the external moulding, and to the manners of boys and young men. They are early introduced into the social circle. With us, on the other hand, this often takes place some eight or ten years later.”

“Now that is exactly what I said,” replied the other, “no one can gain this moulding from himself, and this then is one fault in your education —”

“Always supposing that this moulding is really so important as to be that which it is of all things necessary and useful to impart to a future citizen.”

“That indeed it is not; but yet he would do well to take it with him on the road,” said the stranger.

“If he takes only this with him, he will lose it after a while,” replied the Suabian, “but that is not the point on which we are talking. I merely maintain that you are wrong in Northern Germany in judging

of our manners, and of our state of society from people who have not really entered into society, and who have perhaps been sent out into the world for the purpose of improving their manners. Or would you, from some few young students who have come straight to you from the school-room, and who shew themselves, perhaps, untutored in language and in manners, would you judge of their countrymen by them?"

"Certainly not; but confess, yourself, that one does hear very extraordinary reports even of good society in Suabia, of your manners and customs, of your wives and daughters."

"Perhaps scarcely so strange," replied the sportsman smiling, "as those that we hear among us of the manners of your ladies; for our young girls certainly always picture the North German ladies to themselves as with some learned book or other in their hands. But the second cause of error regarding my fatherland arises from your travelling fellow-countrymen, and the peculiar circumstances of our domestic life. In Northern Germany, it is not difficult to obtain admission into the family circle, and through one acquaintance to gain ten. In Suabia it is otherwise; people are gay and sociable among themselves; the stranger will be stared at as something unusual, but rather avoided than invited, yet you would always find compensation for this apparent coldness. Your countrymen open the door, but seldom the heart; my Suabians are more cautious, but they bind themselves to those they love with a heartiness you would seek for in vain in people of more artificial and polished manners."

"And then, the second source of our prejudices," said the stranger, "lies in this, that my countrymen

can never really become domesticated in your family circle?"

"Certainly," said his companion. "If fortune favour you, you will obtain admission into the circles of our higher ranks and learn to know us more intimately; do not allow yourself to be led astray by your own opinions as to manners and ways of life, and you will discover a good warm-hearted people, sufficiently intelligent, if only the right string be touched, to compare with the most intelligent; sensible enough to keep firmly within the bounds of good manners, and to laugh at what is ridiculous in a want of manners."

The stranger from the plains smiled. "He loves his country," thought he, "and he defends it with warmth; either because he will not let it lose position, or because he has seen nothing better."

He excused the eagerness of the Suabian to himself, but notwithstanding he could not deny himself the enjoyment of a little triumph over him. With that fluency of speech, and power of talking quickly, and a great deal about nothing, which is met with more frequently in the Northern than the Southern portion of our country, he called his attention to some other great advantages which the Northern provinces of Germany possess over the Southern. He counted at least twenty authors and poets of his own country against one of the South, and the Suabian could at last only check the tide of his loquacity, when as they turned a corner of the road, he pointed out the magnificent ruins of Heidelberg; the stranger looked at them with astonishment and delight. The red masses of stone were tinged with a still deeper hue by the setting Autumn sun, and the evening-light made the trees and

bushes which grow amid the fallen masses of wall, appear of the darkest and most wondrous green.

Through the high, open, window-frames the Black Forest was seen; the summit of the mountain was shrouded in that misty veil which lends to all objects so peculiar and mysterious a charm; and the rosy evening-clouds, and the dark blue sky, were mirrored below in the waters of the Neckar.

“And have you such poetry in the plains?” asked the sportsman with a good-natured smile.

The stranger appeared not to hear, his gaze was fixed immovably on the exquisite scene; he may perhaps have felt that in such a spot it was not well to dispute about poetry. Besides after this occurrence, its previous repose and composure returned to the countenance of the sportsman. He did not discuss any one subject, and even appeared to be careful how he expressed himself about many things. But when the advancing night put a stop to their observation of the country, and the conversation of the two travellers turned upon several fresh subjects and upon politics, it seemed to the young man from the plains, although he could no longer well distinguish the features of his neighbour, that his breath came faster, and his words warmer, in short that they had hit upon a subject of discussion which was of the deepest interest to the Suabian. They spoke of the outline and of the internal strength of Germany. With a certain bitterness, the Suabian drew a parallel between the present and the past, which certainly did not redound to the advantage of modern days. The stranger, whose principles could not, on the whole, accord with these views, yet yielded the last points though not without some

self-consciousness. He began his sentence in this unfortunate manner, "I am a Prussian," and thereby involuntarily excited the young man's displeasure still more, for now the latter forgot every regard for prudence; with an eloquence, which in any other place would have been admirable, he sought to bear out his opinions, and nothing was too high for him not to measure it by his own standard. The Prussian, who only knew such people by hearsay and by the dangerous name, "Köpeniker," was horror-struck at these expressions; might not the postilion, might not some passenger in the interior of the diligence, have heard this speech?

Spandau, Köpenik, Jülich, and all possible fortresses, floated before his excited imagination, and the best means of reducing his neighbour to silence seemed to him to be, that he should crouch into the corner, and pretend to be sleeping.

II.

WHEN the two travellers awoke on the morning after this perilous night they saw the towers of Heilbronn rising at a little distance through the fog. "Here ends my journey," said the gentleman in the green coat, as he pointed towards the town, "and I have to thank you," he added, with a friendly look towards his neighbour, "that on this occasion I quit the diligence unwillingly; how pleasant it would have been for me to have spent a day more in your company!"

"Such has been my lot for the last fortnight," replied the Brandenburger. "The confined space makes

one neighbourly. People who, in a large town (even if they occupy neighbouring apartments) would never have interchanged a single word for years, are drawn together by this natural impulse to intercourse. The place by my side has changed occupants more frequently than in a battle; yet I should have congratulated myself, could I at least have had you so much longer for my neighbour; for then I should have been introduced in the pleasantest manner to your country."

"Shall you remain long in Würtemberg?"

"I am going to visit relations of my mother's," replied the stranger; "according as my residence among them pleases me, I shall remain a longer or a shorter time."

"We shall scarcely meet again," said the man in green, "at least I do not know what should take me to Stuttgart. But do not forget what I have said to you as to the character of my country-people. If you are able, in some degree, to follow their mode of thought and their ways of life, you will everywhere be sought for, and be welcome. As a foreigner, you will be all the more interesting to our ladies; and to our men—but that will depend on the circle in which you mix; only," he added with a smile, which bore a doubtful expression between irony and goodhumoured friendship, "you must not make it too clear and plain—"

"Well?" cried the stranger, full of expectation, when the other came to a stop.

"That you are not a German, but a Prussian."

The shrill horn of the postilion, and the rattling of the heavy diligence on the pavement drowned the

answer of the stranger. A short stoppage was allowed the passengers in this town, and the stranger wished to have given his companion of the diligence yet one more invitation to breakfast; but already, beneath the very entrance of the posthouse, an old groom handed several letters to the latter; he tore one open hastily, and with a blush; and his companion remarked in passing that it was in the handwriting of a lady. The stranger somewhat annoyed, went into the inn, and to the window; he perceived the sportsman talking earnestly with his servant, and soon afterwards two handsome horses were brought round. At this moment the gentleman in green hastily entered the saloon, his eyes sought and found his travelling companion; he advanced towards him, but only to take a hurried, though cordial, farewell; and thus the Brandenburger, to his great vexation, was unable to make a single enquiry of him about the house and family of Kätchen von Heilbronn, an enquiry which he had marked among his travelling notes, and had doubly underlined. But the look of the sportsman as he swung himself lightly into the saddle on his proud beautiful horse, as he rode majestically through the market-place, reconciled him to the almost uncourteous haste with which his friend had taken leave of him. He confessed to himself that he had seldom seen so well-formed a figure united with so handsome and expressive a countenance.

"Who is that gentleman in the green dress?" enquired he of the waiter, who was watching the horseman from the other window.

"I cannot give you his name," replied the latter, "I only know that he is called the 'Lord Baron,' that

his father has property some miles from here on the Neckar, and that they are very rich; he seldom comes into the town."

Not quite contented with this explanation, the young man seated himself again in the diligence. His father, who had formerly been once in this country, had told him so many wonderful things of the Suabian barons, that he could never have supposed that his amiable and clever travelling companion was one of them. His new neighbour who (in the very first quarter of an hour) confided to him that he was a hop-merchant from Bavaria, only made him feel the loss he had sustained more keenly; and, as he found little to converse about in the cultivation of hops, he occupied himself in reflections upon the character of the young man who had just quitted him; and then, in once more recounting all the expectations and hopes he had formed of the new relations to whom he was travelling.

He promised himself but little amusement from his uncle who, according to his reckoning, must be advancing towards sixty; five and twenty years ago, his father had known him to be cross, unsociable, and obstinate; and such characteristics are not wont to improve with advancing years. But so much the more amusement did the young man promise himself with Fräulein Anna, his cousin. She had been spoken of to him by one of his friends, who had resided a long time in Suabia, as the beauty of the neighbourhood. Five or six weeks of agreeable, intimate, intercourse appeared to him very desirable; and so eager was his enumeration of the means of rendering himself attractive which stood at his command, so fully

was he conscious of the impression which his person and his qualities could not fail to make, so easy did he deem it to effect a conquest of the heart of a young lady in Suabia, that it never once entered his thoughts that his fair cousin Anna might possibly be already engaged.

Arrived in the city, he immediately ordered himself to be conducted to the house in which his uncle formerly lived;

But like a thunder-clap,
Fell on his ear the words,
He whom thou seekest —

has been a long time living on his property in the country; and they will not return even next winter, and the house itself no longer belongs to them.

The traveller from Brandenburg quickly resolved what to do. He made use of this day in becoming acquainted with the interesting town, and then hastened back by the same road by which he had come hither, to the valley of the Neckar where the country-seat of his uncle was situated.

The nearer he approached this delightful district, the more agreeable was the thought that he was to pass some weeks in this country. He knew from his own experience that in the country, cut off from the amusements of the town, and relieved of those forms which are there considered to be proper and necessary, but which here are held to be superfluous and burdensome, one quickly becomes acquainted, and on friendly terms; that limited to a small society, one is sooner on an intimate footing.

About a mile from the estate, the road turned off the highway; the coachman, whom he had hired, pointed

to a footpath which led into the wood; the carriage-road, he said, wound all round the mountain; but by this path the Castle Thierberg might be reached in a much shorter time on foot. The young man alighted; he had hitherto been travelling on the ridge of a hill, but now saw before him a vast eminence covered with forest, and as he had heard that his uncle's castle lay in the Valley of the Neckar, he came to the conclusion that he might from these heights obtain the enjoyment of an extensive view of the valley. He ordered the carriage to proceed, and ascended the by-path. He entered a forest of magnificent beeches; never before had he seen these trees in such solid, majestic, growth; mixed with them he perceived here and there oaks, beautiful ash-trees, and, to his no small surprise, wild cherry-trees of an unwonted height. Little by little the ascent became more difficult; the mountain appeared all at once to rise more steeply, and he was often tempted to curse the inconvenient elegance with which his Berlin tailor had dressed him. At last he reached the summit, but still no prospect opened before him. The trees appeared to become thicker as the path descended again; and when, to increase his impatience, the small footpath divided into two smaller ones which ran in opposite directions, he railed at the coachman and at his own folly which had beguiled him into losing himself in a strange forest. At last he struck into the path on the right; and when he had proceeded about a hundred paces he saw, to his great joy, a gaily-coloured dress moving amid the foliage.

He redoubled his steps, and was not a little confused, when he found himself suddenly standing before a young lady, who was sitting on a bank under the

shade of an old oak-tree. In her hand she had a book from which, when she heard his step among the fallen leaves, she slowly and calmly raised her beautiful eyes; yet she appeared confused, when it was a young and fashionably-dressed gentleman whom she beheld standing before her in this solitude. She blushed for a moment, but did not lower her eyes, which were fixed enquiringly on the unexpected visitor. The young man bowed several times before he knew what to say. "Is this beautiful girl really my Cousin Anna?" was all that he was able to think or ask himself at this moment; and, when he had quickly answered this question to himself in the affirmative, he immediately advanced nearer to the young lady, who in the mean time had shut up her book, and risen from the bank.

"I beg your pardon," said he, "if I have disturbed you; I was afraid I had left the right road. Can I, by this path reach the castle of the Master of Thierberg?"

"Not well by this footpath, if you are not known there," she replied in a melodious voice. "Up above, you passed a footpath on your left which leads to the castle."

With these words she bowed, and the young man returned on his way; but scarcely had he proceeded a few steps when an irresistible feeling drew him back. The beautiful girl rose again from her seat, when she saw him returning, but this time alarm seemed to suffuse her cheeks, and her large eyes betrayed a certain uneasiness.

At the risk of being thought impertinent the traveller asked, "Whether, perhaps, he had the honour of addressing Fräulein von Thierberg?"

"That is my name," she replied with some embarrassment.

"Eh bien, ma chère cousine," said he smiling as he bowed politely, "then I have the pleasure of introducing to you your Cousin Rantow."

"What, Cousin Albert!" cried she joyfully, "and have you at last kept your word? How pleased my father will be, and how is my uncle? and my dear aunt? and how did you travel?"

Thus one question after another crowded from her beautiful lips, and Cousin Rantow, lost in his delight at possessing such a charming relation, could not find words to answer them all in turn.

How sweet, how natural, did her words sound to him! He could not say that she had sinned against any rule of style, and yet it seemed to him that hers were quite different words, quite different tones, from those which he had heard in his native country. He felt that he had travelled too quickly to have become gradually prepared for this contrast.

"This is my favorite walk," said she, as she strolled slowly beside him; "true, the road in the valley is still pleasanter, the Neckar winds so beautifully; old castles adorn the heights, and in this, ours does not play the worst part; at least, so far as antiquity is concerned; and here and there in the valley one may see villages, and even a little town; but the back-way up to the castle is steep and tiring, and on the road there are too many people for me. Here, the forest does not lie higher than the castle, one can come here in a short half-hour, and then one is as delightfully alone, as if sitting in the boudoir with locked doors."

"Until such an event as the arrival of a cousin

from Prussia must needs break in to destroy the delicious solitude," interrupted Rantow.

"But taken altogether," she continued, "even in the castle there is not much noise. It is as lovely as any haunted castle in the 'Thousand and one nights;' except the household-servants, (and in the back-wing the bailiff, whom we never chance to see) we, my father and I, are the only occupants; indeed, the solitude in the castle is often so terrible and so mournful, that I prefer to fly to the solitude of the woods, where the rustling of the trees, and the song of the birds, announce that there is still some life left."

III.

THE young man stood still in astonishment when, by a turn in the pathway, they all at once emerged from the thick wood and saw the castle standing before them. The inhabitants of Southern Germany are, from their youth, accustomed to prospects of this kind. In Franconia and Suabia, one seldom meets with a valley a few miles in length, in which a castle or at least a ruined tower and half a gateway, may not be seen. The natural formation of the country, the many hills and small streams, and moreover the peculiar position of the numerous nobility in former days, favoured, or necessitated, these fortified dwellings. But the Northern portion of our country bears fewer traces of these ancient times; the broad plains afford no such natural fortifications as the rocks, and mountain spurs, of the South; and if here and there some such fortress had remained in the plains, it would only have been given over more early to ruin and destruction.

Neighbours there shared the beloved stones in a brotherly manner, and their memory was borne away on the winds which blow across the plain. Therefore, it was a surprising sight to the young man from the flat country to find himself standing in such close proximity to one of these ancient castles; and all the more strange, because he was to enter the deep, gloomy portals as a guest and to sojourn within these mouldering walls. But after a moment, no idea entered his mind but the picturesque scene, which presented itself to him. The old, dark grey, watch-tower was, on its southside, overhung from the top to the moat with a mantle of ivy. Boughs, and green tendrils, were sprouting from the crevices in the walls; and round the gateway was twined a broad espalier-vine whose tender leaves and fibres clung with gentle strength around the rusty hinges and chains of the drawbridge. On the right side of the castle, the dusky wood intercepted the view; but on the left, the eye could stretch past the high walls down into the depths of the beautiful and fertile valley of the Neckar; then wandering up along the river, rested on villages and hamlets; and then, far over the vineyards, upon the blue mountains in the distance.

"This is our Thierberg," said the young lady, "it would seem that the country has some charms for you, cousin; and I would certainly advise you to look out of the windows very often that you may not be terrified by our loneliness, and by this ugly old building."

"Do you call this old castle an ugly building?" cried the guest, "could one possibly see anything more romantic than this tower overgrown with ivy, this gateway with its ancient coat of arms, these ramparts and

moat? Might not one fancy that one was looking at the castle of Bradwardine or at some other from one of the Scotch romances? Might one not expect that a Sickingen or a Götze would even now come to meet us at the very gate?" —

"More likely a 'Thierberg,' this time," replied the young girl laughing, "and one such still haunts these fatal walls. Put into a romance, I like such walls and battlements exceedingly; but to live within them is solitary; and in the winter, when the wind howls round the keep and the eye can no longer rest on anything green, when that ivy yonder on the tower — oh, cousin! it makes me shiver again even now, if I only think of it. But come Sir Knight, the lady of the castle will herself conduct you within it."

The cool deeply-shaded court into which they entered in some degree chilled the enthusiasm of the guest. He looked hastily round him as they passed through it, and observed that the square could hardly have been large enough for a tournament; he shrank at the sight of a half-ruined tower whose battlements hung threateningly over the walls. He was astonished at the sharp tooth of time which had gnawed large rifts in the massive walls, and had opened to the eye a full view of the valley below; and already on the ascending steps of the winding staircase, where a keen wind whistled through the ill-closed windows, he gave full assent in his heart to the remarks of his cousin as to the comfort of the building. In the large, paved hall six or eight dogs greeted the young lady with friendly barks, and waggings of their tails; and a chained eagle which sat in a corner on a perch, set up a shrill cry and flapped its wings.

"This is our ante-room, and these our attendants," said Anna, as she pointed to the animals, "bewitched princes and princesses whom you may disenchant. But let us come in here," she added, in a little time, more gravely, "my father is in this room."

She opened a high, heavy folding-door; and, in the apartment, which was furnished in the old Franconian style, the young man's eye fell upon a venerable man who was seated in one of the deep recesses of the windows immersed, as it appeared, in a newspaper. He looked up at his daughter's greeting; and, as soon as he perceived the stranger, and Anna announced him by name, he rose and advanced to meet him with a slow, but firm, tread.

His nephew looked with astonishment at the tall, commanding form that reminded him involuntarily of the watch-tower of this castle which many ages had not been able to overthrow, and whose antiquity was only evidenced by the ivy which had twined itself around it. It was true that time had made furrows in the forehead that had seen five-and-sixty years; thin, gray hair fell around the temples; and the beard and eyebrows had become silvery white; but his eyes still beamed clearly, and he carried his head as erect as in the days of his youthful strength; while his hand gave an almost harder grip than his nephew was able to return.

"Welcome to Suabia," said he in a strong, deep voice; "it was a wise thought of my sister's to send you. Make yourself at home; sit down beside me in the window; and do you, Anna, bring some wine."

Such was the reception at Thierberg. But hearty and cordial as it was, the young man could not for

several hours repress a certain feeling of discomfort. He had pictured his uncle as something quite different. He had expected, from the description his father had given him, to find a rough, but jovial, old country-gentleman; hunting his hares, adjusting the quarrels of his peasantry with good temper, liking to talk of his horses, and occasionally when thirsty, taking a glass with his friends and neighbours. He did not consider the effect that five-and-twenty years, and the lapse of a time so eventful, as that which had intervened, must have had upon this man. The calm, earnest, eye of his uncle which seemed to dwell enquiringly on his features, the simple but important questions with which he examined his nephew as to his life and doings up to the present time, the ironical smile which now and then played around his mouth at some of the young man's expressions; all these, and altogether the grave bearing of the old man, impressed him in a manner that was exceedingly uncomfortable to him. He could not find courage to behave with such cordiality to his uncle, as the latter did to him; he appeared to himself to be like a young officer to whom a minister is granting an audience; and, to his no small vexation, this was the second time in which he had found himself wrong in his estimate of the country-gentlemen of Suabia.

His cousin also appeared to be quite different from what he had pictured her. It was true that he found in her all that amiable artlessness, all that unconstrained, unaffected, manner which people had talked of to him in the daughters of this country; but this ease of manner appeared not to arise from ignorance, but from delicate and unfailing tact; and all that she

said bore evidence of a mind so cultivated that her unaffectedness seemed only to consist in this, that whatever she said that was clever, whether it were witty or in a higher strain, she uttered as something natural and inborn; so that it never appeared to be anything acquired, or artificial. What vexed him the most was, that after the first hour she seemed to read completely through him. The studied compliments that he paid her, she turned into comedy; his delicate attentions, she evaded in an inexplicable manner; when he would have acted the attentive, Berlin-educated, young man, then she was certain always to call him Herr von Rantow. And yet he was obliged to own to himself that he had never before seen such perfect harmony of movement, manner, and voice. Her whole being seemed to him to resemble the dress she now wore. It was simple and quiet in colour, and yet it draped her slight, delicate, figure with that tasteful grace which lends a mysterious charm to the most unassuming attire; a secret of the toilette of which, so far as the young man could remember, no book of fashions had ever given an explanation; and which seemed to him to be rather the proof and symbol of a harmonious spirit than the consequence of a careful education.

He fancied that he discovered a similar harmony between the old gentleman and the apartment into which he had first been introduced. It was the departed splendour of a former century which had met his eye in the walls and furniture. The heavy tapestry-work, fastened with clasps which had once been gilded and which still glittered with a tarnished brown colour; the large arm-chairs with their curved and handsomely-

carved legs; the couch, its grey covering richly embroidered and adorned with parrots, flower-pots, and pictures of lap-dogs buried long since; how many winter-days must not his ancestresses have sat at this wearisome work, which they perhaps deemed the most perfect that human taste had ever devised, but which appears now to their descendants untasteful, heavy, and, if so many honored remembrances were not connected with it, almost ludicrous. And yet, in the presence of the venerable form of his uncle, all these presented themselves to his view as consecrated by antiquity, and by long custom of years. He saw that in Thierberg they were above changes of fashion; and when, in addition he remembered what his father had told him of the numerous misfortunes, and the difficult circumstances that had attended his uncle, he felt ashamed that he had, even for a moment, been able to see anything grotesque in these surroundings. He felt that he could not withhold respect from blameless poverty when it presented itself to him in such a grave and dignified form. Yes, in the presence of these walls, of this furniture, and of the plain, coarse, coat of his uncle, he appeared to himself, when he cast a glance on his own fashionable and exceedingly inconvenient dress, like a fool under the dominion of a phantom whom a wise man allows to pass with a smile.

Such were the impressions which the first evening in Thierberg made upon the mind of young Rantow; but, grave as they might be at their close, he could not repress a smile, when with the stroke of eight, which the old castle-clock gave tremblingly, and hesitatingly, a folding-door at the end of the apartment

sprang open, and a little man in a faded, embroidered coat, which hung loosely around his body, walked in, bowed three times, and then said solemnly:

“Le souper est servi.”

“S'il vous plait,” said the old man with a grave countenance, and a bow to his nephew. He gave his arm to the beautiful Anna; and, with slow steps, proceeded to the dining-room.

IV.

UPON the opening of the folding-doors of the dining-room, and at the first glance that he cast within, a large field of reminiscences extended itself before the guest from Brandenburg. His mother had often told him of this painted ceiling which depicted the creation of the world; of the massive chandelier, which represented the Angel Gabriel as the sun emerging from the clouds; and of the heavy curtains of yellow silk, when talking to him of her paternal castle in Suabia, and of the extraordinary splendour introduced into the family, and into the handsome apartments at Thierberg, by her late grandmother, the daughter of a rich minister. His mother had, even in her childhood, regarded these magnificent objects with great respect on account of their age; and, since that time, they must have seen at least thirty or forty additional years.

“This is the family-hall,” said old Thierberg during their meal, as he observed the look of curiosity with which his nephew examined the apartment. “In former times they called this the ‘Bower,’ and my ancestors used to drink their wine here. But it was my late grandfather who had it thus fitted up, and ornamented.

He was a man of great taste; and, in his youth, had spent many years at the court of Louis the fourteenth; my grandmother also was a stately lady, and together they had the interior of the castle arranged and decorated in this manner."

"At the court of Louis the Fourteenth!" cried the young man in astonishment, "that is a long time ago. How many different guests must this hall have seen since then!"

"Many men, and strange times," replied the old man. "Yes, all was once splendour at Thierberg; and our guests found themselves not less well entertained here than in the palaces of the princes of the empire. No merrier laughter was to be heard than in this castle, so long as our nobility still flourished; then our voice, and our authority, still possessed an influence. A nobleman was a man as good as the King of France; and a baron was a free man who acknowledged no superior but his gracious master the Emperor, and his God. Now—"

"Father," interrupted Anna, as she perceived that the veins in his forehead had swollen, and that a deep flush, omen of an approaching storm, had mounted to his cheeks; "father," she cried in gentle tones as she took his hand, "no more on this subject. You know how it always exhausts you."

"Foolish girl," replied the old man half angry, yet half touched, by the imploring voice of his pretty daughter; "why should not a man be strong enough, after the lapse of years, to speak of that which he was strong enough to bear and to suffer? Your cousin is only acquainted with our circumstances as they now are. He was born at a time when these storms were

raging most wildly, and has grown up in a country where the order of things has long been quite different. He cannot, therefore, rightly know what his mother's ancestors were; and for this reason I wish to tell him."

With these words the baron took his large goblet of chased silver on the cover of which the coat of arms of his house was engraved, and drank a long, deep, draught to give him strength for his harangue. Anna then looked across to their guest with anxious, entreating, eyes. He understood this look, and tried to lead his uncle away from the subject.

"It is true," he began, almost before the other had put the cup down on the table, "that circumstances are quite different in Prussia. But, acknowledge yourself, can a country in Europe be found which resembles my fatherland? I own that other countries far surpass us in area and population; but nowhere, within so small a compass, can a power be found of such might, and carrying such weight through its intrinsic virtues; it is the Sparta of modern days. And this greatness has not been achieved by a fertile soil, or a mild climate; but the genius of great men has created a Prussia, because they understood how to arouse dormant powers, and pointed out to the people themselves what position they should occupy; Prussia has arisen, because the people themselves became Prussians."

The old gentleman listened quietly to his nephew; but, at these last words, his face wrinkled with an expression of such irony that the Brandenburger coloured.

"The son of my neighbour, General von Willi, would say if he heard you, 'Oh Germany, Germany,

now one may see how thy miseries spring from the dissensions within thyself; you will no longer be called Greeks; but Platans, Corinthians, Athenians and even — Spartans; I only wish," he added smiling, "that the Spartans may not a second time find an Epaminondas in the field; the battle of Leuctra was no masterpiece of the art of war for our modern Spartans."

"Our misfortunes at Jena," said the young man in a vexed tone, "cannot be ascribed either to the people, or to the king; and I think we have sufficiently revenged ourselves on Napoleon. We have not only made Germany free, but have also taken his throne from him."

"How? When did you do that?" asked the uncle. "Heaven knows till now I have done great injustice; for I ascribed this event to the half-million of soldiers that were opposed to him throughout the whole of Europe. But perhaps you were there yourself, nephew? Probably you can speak as an eye-witness?"

His nephew coloured; and cast an uneasy look towards Anna, who could scarcely repress her smiles.

"I was still at school at that time," he answered, "and I have often been vexed since that I was not present. I allow that others also assisted, but in all the battles it was the Prussians alone, who decided them. Only remember Waterloo."

"Be convinced that I remember it," said the old man, with great earnestness; "and I think of it with pleasure. If any one be an enemy to that man, I am; for he has made us, and every one miserable; and has turned the grand old Empire inside out like a glove. But, as regards your country-people, you are not well-informed. I can scarcely believe that your young

soldiers, even if they were as enthusiastic as people say, could on that eighteenth of June have withstood so many attacks on their centre as the English, who had already served in all parts of the world."

"It is not years," said the other, "which give strength at such moments, but self-consciousness, the pride of a nation, and the enthusiasm of soldiers in their profession, and these the Prussian possesses in abundance."

"I, too, served for a couple of years in my youth," said his uncle; "in the year '85 with the troops of our circle; at that time our soldiers were not enthusiasts, therefore I do not understand what the thing is; but my neighbour, the general, will soon come to see me; you must talk to him about it."

"Be that as it may," continued the guest, "I am heartily rejoiced that you agree with me on the main point; in indignation against the French, and in hatred of this Corsican. With us at home, they maintain that in Southern Germany he is still rather looked upon as a sort of hero; and, absurd to say, is still even venerated by many as a benefactor of mankind."

"Do not speak too loud, friend," replied the old gentleman, "if you would not lose yourself entirely in the good graces of this young lady; she is completely on the Napoleon side."

"You must not think the worse of me;" said Anna, blushing deeply, "because I cannot entirely condemn a man, whose inexcusable fault was, that he was a great man."

"A great man!" cried the old gentleman with flashing eyes, "what the deuce, a great man; what do you mean by that? that he spied out the right moment

to steal a throne like a thief; that, with his bayonets, he overturned a splendid empire; shattered its beautiful, natural constitution, without putting anything better in its place; a great man!"

"You say so, because —"

"Anna, Anna," said he interrupting his daughter, "do you think that I only speak thus because he brought misery to ourselves; because he tore from me this valley and forest; because he gave to others these people who had served me and my ancestors as their masters? Because the unbidden guests, whom he sent us, stole and wasted the remnants that were left to me? It is true that, in that day in which a strange seal superseded the old coat of arms of Thierberg; in which they counted and set a price on my cattle; in which they measured my vineyards by the foot, thinned my forests, and took my finest taxes from me; in that day I thought only of myself, and of the fall of my house; but did things fare better with any of the nobility of the empire? Were we not even compelled to see the day when a man from the island of Corsica declared that a German Emperor, Germany itself, no longer existed?"

"Heaven hear our lament!" said young Rantow, "truly he treated us no better."

"You! that was entirely your own fault," continued the old man, more warmly, "you had long loosened yourselves from the empire; you had no longer any heart for the public good; you wished to have a name of your own, and made too much of yourselves; perhaps, you even saw with pleasure how we were divided one by one, because, so long as the remaining spears kept together in one band men were afraid of us.

Have you not observed how things happened long ago when in Sparta they called every Greek a stranger? Accursed were the discord and selfishness of this century; accursed the world of fools who called self-love and thirst for power, greatness."

"But, dear father" — the young girl would have replied in gentle terms; but the old gentleman had risen hastily at his last words; and, at a signal from him, the little man in the Thierberg livery had hastened to bring two candles.

"Good night," and he turned again towards his nephew, "do not be annoyed if you find me sometimes warm-tempered; it is my nature. Sleep well, my children," he added more calmly, "when present times are bad, one must dream of better."

Anna kissed his hand with emotion; and the tall form of the old gentleman strode slowly to the door. Rantow was so much struck with all that he had heard and seen, that he failed to notice what a comical figure the servant made who lighted his master to bed. The wide, state-livery he wore, hung almost down to the ground, and the long embroidered cuffs completely covered his hands in which he carried the silver candlesticks. To look at, he was like a tall pilgrim ascending the hill of Calvary on his knees; thus the contrast with the man who followed him was all the more striking; as he strode through the old Franconian hall among the family pictures of his ancestors, he looked like a wandering spirit of the good old times.

When the old gentleman had quitted the apartment, the young lady arose with a bow to her guest, and retired to a window. The young man felt by her silence, that he must on this evening have touched

chords which he ought probably to have carefully avoided. She looked out at the night, and Rantow moved to her side; he had often experienced how much more easily misunderstandings are set right when turned into a joke, than when spoken of gravely and with regret. With such a joke, he wished to become reconciled to Anna; but when he came to her side at the window, the look that she cast upon him was so startling, that not a single word of mirth could pass his lips. He had never yet beheld the deep, dusky, and yet clear blue, that only a Southern sky possesses in moonlight. The moon shed strange streaks of light over the forests and vineyards; and in the valley, the rippling waters of the Neckar reflected its beams and the spire of the gray church-tower. The yellow rays of this light of night cast a pallor over Anna's features, and a tear glistened in her beautiful eyes. Now, when all was so still and silent, were first heard in the distance the sustained notes of a flute; and these tones harmonized so sweetly with the soft light of the moon that one might almost have been tempted to believe that they were her beams which were sinking in melody to the earth.

A smile of joy passed over Anna's face; her sparkling eyes were fixed on a rising portion of the wood which extended far into the valley, and her deeply-drawn breathings seemed to answer the flute.

"How magnificent even night is in your valley," said the guest after a pause, "how beautiful is the vaulted sky above, and the moon appears to have been created on purpose for this quiet corner of the earth."

Anna opened the large bow-window. "How warm

and mild it is outside," she said, as she looked with pleasure at the valley; "there is not a breath of air."

"But the trees are bending back and forwards," he replied, "they rustle, certainly stirred by the wind."

"Not a breath of air," she repeated, and held her white handkerchief outside. "Do you see this light handkerchief does not move in the least? Do you not know the old legend about the trees? It is not the night-wind that stirs their leaves; but at this hour, they whisper and talk to each other, and he who understands their language may learn many a secret."

"Perhaps then one might also learn who the flute-player is," said her cousin as he looked at Anna more keenly, for already had he become so jealous of his pretty cousin, that the sweet tones from the wood and her handkerchief, which she still held out of the window, seemed to him to be an exchange of signals.

"I can discover *that* to you without the help of the trees," replied she smiling, as she drew in her handkerchief, "that is some merry-hearted huntsman who is serenading his mistress."

"But the distance is almost too great for that," he continued, "many of the tones could hardly be heard."

"Down below in the village they can be heard much better than up here," said she with indifference, shutting the window; "as the proverb says speaking of this; the ear of love hears at even a greater distance than that of jealousy."

"Well said," cried the young man, "yet the eye of jealousy sees further than that of love."

"You are right," she returned, "but only by day, not by night."

These words, said as it seemed without any de-

sign, surprised the young man so much that he cast down his eyes abashed. He reproached himself for his folly in having supposed for a moment that it could be a lover of this innocent child who was serenading yonder in the forest.

"And now, good night, cousin," said Anna, as she took up a candle, "dream something very pleasant, for they say that the first dream in a house comes true. Hans, light the baron into the right-hand turret-room."

"And one thing more," she added, in French as the servant drew nearer, "avoid talking to my father on subjects which excite him so much. He is very warm-tempered, but his anger is not directed to the person, only to the opinions. It was my fault for not having warned you before-hand. To-morrow I will give you further instructions. Good night."

Musing of this strange but amiable being, the guest followed the servant; and the gloomy, hollow passages and winding staircases; the square, vaulted room, with its strange, pointed arches; the antique, curtained bed; the many objects which otherwise he would have examined so attentively on this occasion, made no impression on his mind which was exclusively and intently occupied in testing and reviewing the character and conduct of Anna.

V.

On the following morning as, after a careful toilette, he guest was going downstairs to breakfast with his relations, he could not, at first, find his way in the old building. A servant whom he met conducted him to

the hall; and, by the staircases and passages, through which he had to pass, he now first observed, what had not struck him on the preceding evening, that he had slept in the most remote portion of the castle. In reply to his questions, the servant confessed to him that his apartment was the only one which was still habitable in this wing; and that, in addition to the sitting-room with the worked tapestry, the sleeping-apartment of the old gentleman, the hall, and the little room in the other tower occupied by Miss Anna, there only remained the enormous servants' room which had formerly been used for a kitchen, and the bailiff's rooms, which were in any degree inhabitable; the remaining apartments were either half-ruined, or were used for store-rooms and similar purposes.

The proud disposition of the uncle, and the cheerful sweetness of his daughter, stood forth in strange contrast with these desolate walls and ruined staircases, with these speaking pictures of high-born poverty. The young man was accustomed, if not to splendour, yet to a certain neatness and elegance in all that surrounded him, even in staircases and walls; and, therefore, he could not but deem his relations, who lived in such very evident discomfort, to be very unhappy. The romantic interest which the first sight of this castle had excited in him vanished before this mournful reality; and when he reflected how the gaps and rents in the walls, through which the warm morning-sun was now pouring in, must also give free admission to the storms of winter, he could easily explain Anna's dread of that season. "And such a tender being exposed to these rough storms," he said to himself; "a mind so superior, and cultivated, to be without society,

perhaps without books, confined for a whole long winter within these walls by snow and stormy weather, alone with this grave, solemn, old man! And this venerable man, who once knew better days, thrown by adverse fate into unmerited poverty and want!" The heart of the young man was of so kindly a nature that, when he reached the door of the hall, he half resolved (in order to set pretty Anna at liberty) to take her with him into the plains, or, if life in Suabia should please him better, to go with her to the capital, and have Thierberg put in order again for the summer.

The old man received him with a hearty greeting, and a warm shake of the hand, whilst Anna seemed to be still more friendly and cordial to him than she was yesterday. Orders were given in his presence for the daily work of the servants; and, with satisfaction, he saw Anna display a skill for housekeeping that he could not have expected in this refined young lady. The inhabitants of the castle also talked about their own occupations; the old gentleman wished during the morning to settle accounts with his bailiff, whilst Anna would entertain the guest, and walk with him down to the valley. After dinner, she wished to pay visits to some ladies in the neighbourhood, the old man wished to inspect the part of the forest which still belonged to him, and Albert was to accompany him. In the evening, they were all to join in some amusement. Pleasant as the prospect of passing a whole morning with his pretty cousin might be to the young man, he was alarmed at the thoughts of so long a walk in the woods with his grave uncle, who betrayed every moment the most extraordinary and varied knowledge; and who, even in his old age, possessed a memory which

the other dreaded. "What if he should question you during the whole afternoon as to what you have learnt?" said he to himself, "how much will he then discover to your injury, of the lectures and drawing-rooms, that you have not frequented, and how quickly will he suspect which you have frequented." The fluency of his speech was some consolation to him; as was also a little art for disputation, the only thing which remained to him of the instructions of his tutor. But as a criminal condemned to the gallows will still make merry over the last meal that the jailer dresses and serves to him, so his perturbed mind took comfort in the agreeable present. And what a Heaven burst upon him, when his uncle, after he had taken up his hat and stick, turned once again to his nephew; "One word more!" said he to him, "so long as Thierberg has stood it has been the custom that near relations of similar degrees of descent should use 'du'* in conversation with each other; I hope that you will not make any exception with Anna merely because you were born a hundred miles further north."

Anna smiled, and seemed to take it quite as a matter of course; but the young man assented with cheeks that glowed with joy; he cast grateful looks after his old uncle who appeared to him at this moment a love's messenger. Unfortunately he forgot just then that this "du" was not the sweet confiding "du" of love; and, that such intimate relations, favorable it is true to friendship, might prove an obstacle to the growth of love.

"And yesterday evening you wished to give me

* "Thou;" but this not being the English idiom, it has not been adopted in the translation. (T.)

some further instructions," said he, as he seated himself in the window by the side of the young lady; "it would be a pleasure to me if you were to tell me a great deal about my uncle; for I have only formed my opinion of him from what others have said, and hence arose my blunder of yesterday evening."

"What opinion then have you formed of him?" asked Anna.

"Well, from what my father and mother told me, I formed a picture that certainly is not like. It must be some thirty years or more since my father was gentleman of the bed-chamber at your court, and from thence took my mother home to Prussia. At that time my uncle must certainly have been about five or six-and-thirty years of age, but he was always called the 'youngster,' because my grandfather Thierberg was still living. My father gives a very comical description of him when he talks of him. He grew up here in the castle under the care of his father and mother. I can picture my good grandparents to myself; they must have sat in the flowered and embroidered arm-chairs bolt-upright, and with hair duly frizzled; grandmamma in a blue silk dress with a hoop; grandpapa in a faded court-dress. They were the ruling family in their neighbourhood; the clergyman and the steward forming their household. Then the crown prince did not learn much more than how to bow gracefully, to kiss hands, to ride and to hunt; and the princesses must have very far excelled him in education. Two years of life in a garrison, with the troops of the circle, certainly did not improve him; and he must have been serving thus, to the great delight of his relations, when about the time at which annually the remounts are

brought from Leipzig he came to the capital. My mother was then being educated at the house of my uncle, Wernau, and my father came every day to the house. When then your father came to visit there in the autumn, he made it no secret that he had only come to inspect the handsome horses for remounts; he passed the whole day with horse-dealers, and in the stables; he was charmed at being able to exhibit his great knowledge of horseflesh; and in the evening he amused a brilliant company at Wernau's by his strange manners which, it is true, were neither awkward nor ungraceful, but in the highest degree naïve, unaffected, and comical. My father has often said he was a picture of the good old days, not of those stiff times when in every corner of the land, they affected court-manners and dresses with hoops, but of a much earlier period. He was the pattern of a Suabian country-squire."

The young man stopped in his description when he saw that his listener was smiling.

"Perhaps, you think those characteristics incorrect," said he, "because they do not exist now, and yet I assure you —"

"When you called this the picture of a Suabian country-squire," replied she, "that book occurred to me in which a country-squire in Pomerania is described with almost the same characteristics. You transplant him to my native country, to this very castle, but it is strange that scarcely a single trait is correct. One ought to recognize the well-painted portrait of the youth even in the features of the old man; but here —"

"That is just what I was going to say; I find my

uncle so thoroughly and completely different, that I cannot myself understand how he ever could have been such a naïve and jovial young man."

"I do not willingly talk with men about men," began Anna, "I do not think it becoming in young ladies. Besides I have never, scarcely ever, talked about my father," added she blushing; "but I will make an exception in your favour. It is true that I have never known my father other than he now is; it is possible that thirty years ago he may have been different in some things; but think, cousin Albert, what a school he passed through! Those fearful times destroyed all, every thing, that was once dear to him, and valued by him. And can you think that his relations, strange and unnatural as, perhaps, they may appear, had not become endeared to him? How often when the old gentlemen of the ancient nobility have been in the hall, and have been talking of the good old times, how often could I not have wept with pity for the old men who find all so strange in this new order of things!"

"But did the whole of Europe fare better? Think of Spain, France, Italy, Poland, and all Germany," replied the guest.

"I know what you would say," she continued earnestly, "amid the misfortunes and the revolutions of a continent one should forget the small grievances; but in truth, so far as this goes, we are not yet more than human. At that time it was let him raise himself who can; but I think his magnanimity could afford little consolation either for himself or the public. And I would still maintain this above all things, that among many who have suffered everywhere, the knighthood

here did not suffer the least. Other wounds that are only struck at property, may be healed by time; but in cases where ancient and long-familiar bonds are severed and constitutions, which seemed to be founded to last for ever, are overturned, so that one portion is lopped off here, and another there, then our inmost hearts are wounded and our dearest interests. When the old chiefs and members of nobility, when companions of Orders and German knights are now seated round the table, one might fancy one sees ghosts and shades from another world. Yet when one thinks that all in which they once delighted has gone to the grave so long before them, and that these titles are no longer understood by the young world around them, it makes one very mournful with sympathy for them."

"That is true," observed the guest, "and we must be just; from their early youth they were brought up to feel respect, and a knightly zeal, for those old forms. They were, perhaps, shining with the first brilliance of the dignity of newly-acquired office, when misfortune burst in and destroyed all; and how difficult it is to renounce old customs, to lay aside old prejudices!"

"And all the more difficult," added Anna, "when one believes one has a right and lawful claim to retain them. If these bands had been broken up by degrees, people would little by little have become accustomed to it; but it was the work of a moment. Fortune, position, and dignities, were lost at a blow; and many people were intentionally injured. Thus dissatisfaction at the changes grew into bitterness. My father has often told me how in one day all his old family weapons were torn down from the walls, a price put on his

cattle, his horses carried away, a seal set upon his breweries, and all declared to be the property of the state; my mother was ill, my father driven beside himself by the scornful conduct of the new functionaries; and, to make his misfortunes complete, they quartered seventy-five Frenchmen in this castle, who did not openly plunder, but were permitted to rob with impunity; and when they went away it was only to make room for as many new guests."

"By my faith!" cried Albert. "Such a fate might, indeed, well make the merry young man become grave."

"How it happened, I do not know; only so much as this I have gleaned from conversations, that from that time he became completely changed. He remained a great deal in the house, read much, and studied many subjects. He passes now in the country for a man possessed of great knowledge, and his advice is called for on many occasions. But now, to come to the instructions I wanted to give you; you may frame them for yourself from what I have told you. Never touch on the political relations of former times, if you do not wish to make him melancholy; never speak of the Emperor." —

"Of what Emperor?" interrupted her cousin.

"Well! of Napoleon, I should have said; he looks upon him as the author of all his misfortunes; and, if the general should come during your visit, do not join in any political conversation; they have already disputed so hotly."

"But who is the general?" inquired Albert. "Did not your father ask me yesterday to talk to him about modern military discipline?"

"General Willi is our neighbour," answered Anna, "and lives about half-a-mile down the Neckar. He belongs as completely to modern, as my father to ancient times, and I can blame him as little as my father for his manner of thinking. He ran a very rapid career in the early campaigns; and in that of 1809 the Emperor himself persuaded him to quit our service, and to enter the Imperial Guard. He was with him in Russia; was taken prisoner at Chalons; and after that, retired altogether. He has now purchased a property here, is a very rich man, and lives tranquilly in the memory of the past. You may imagine that a man who passed the best years of his life under such circumstances is still much interested in the cause for which he once fought; he is what people call an 'obstinate Napoleonist,' and has, at least, as good grounds as any one for being so."

"If he had been a Frenchman," returned Albert, "one might grant him that; but in a German it is really not seemly. It was no system of policy for which he fought, but a phantom."

"Do not let us quarrel about it," interrupted Anna; "I am certain that when you become acquainted with this amiable, noble-hearted man, you will forgive him his enthusiasm."

"How old is he then?" asked her cousin with embarrassment.

"A good fifty," answered Anna smiling; "but as I said, he seems to me to have as good a right to his sentiments as my father. All that appeared great and lofty to him was also destroyed and disgraced; and you know this is not the way to reconcile men to what is new. The two old gentlemen have taken a great

liking to each other, although they oppose each other so roughly in argument. The dispute between them often becomes so hot that I dread a real breach in their neighbourly relations. I think that, if more ladies were present, things would not go so far; but, unfortunately, the general also lost his wife some years ago. She was an excellent woman, and my mother valued her highly; but my father could never forgive her for having been a citizen's daughter; the general's sister, who is now staying with him, always returns home after a short time."

The old master of Thierberg, who returned at this moment from his business with his bailiff, interrupted the conversation which the young man would have liked to continue for a much longer time; for his cousin Anna as she spoke with animation, as her eyes sparkled more and more brightly whilst talking, and her delicate features mirrored her every emotion, seemed to him to become more and more attractive and loveable; and, from the pleasure which the conversation with him seemed to have afforded her, he thought he was not wrong in drawing an inference favourable to himself.

VI.

OF all his ancient baronial rights, the only one left to the old master of Thierberg, was the nomination, or as they called it the presentation, to the office of schoolmaster; and when, in the afternoon, he saw two candidates for the appointment coming to the castle with the clergyman of Thierberg, he wished that even this last remnant of former greatness had departed

with the rest. He begged his nephew to go to the wood alone, and promised to follow him soon. The young man wandered slowly along the path over which Anna had first conducted him. He often stood still to look back at the ancient castle, and his eyes lingered with pleasure on that turret whose small room was occupied by Anna. How much he loved her bright, calm, unaffected nature, coupled with so much grace and delicate refinement! He could remember no one resembling her; it was true that, in his mind, the ladies of the plains contended often with this Suabian girl for precedence. The young man thought he had seen more graceful figures, heard more talented and fascinating conversation; he recalled to mind each individual beauty who had once charmed him; but he owned that it was specially her ease, her composure, which struck him as so surprising, so new, so loveable. "She is too sensible, too calm, too cheerful, to have been ever yet really in love," he continued in his thoughts, "but she will appreciate me, she will take an interest in me. And her very cheerfulness, her mode of thinking of life, must long have made some better, and different position desirable in her eyes. A comfortable, well-furnished home, handsome dress, carriages, horses, servants, and a select library, these are the things which supply the place of love in such cold hearts. She is so unconstrained, and yet knows so well how to play the lady, it will certainly seem delightful to her to be Frau von Rantow."

During these dreams of a bright future, the young man had attained an eminence from whence he could look over a portion of the lovely Valley of the Neckar. Before him, on the left, he perceived a rising wood

which extended for some distance, and concealed from him the view of the other portion of the valley. He compared it with the situation of the castle, and found that this must be the very same mountain-spur from which the sweet tones of the lute had resounded yesterday. Anna had told him that from thence an extensive and open view could be obtained of the whole valley; and he rashly resolved not to wait here for his uncle, but to give full scope to his thoughts whilst in the enjoyment of the beautiful prospect at that end of the wood. He carefully observed the direction, and it was not long before he reached this charming spot. At this corner of the hill, the valley wound round in a beautiful curve past Thierberg; on the right, and very much closer than he had supposed, lay the castle separated from this point by a broad woody ravine. With a good telescope, one could easily see in at the windows of Thierberg, and the young man amused himself for a long time with watching the clergyman, and his uncle, who were standing in the window in earnest conversation. Anna's turret-window was also open; but, instead of her lovely features, he could only see a little orange-tree which she had put there in the sun. In the middle of the valley, the Neckar made several small windings, forming many pretty peninsulas; and the young man discovered at a little distance a modern castle in whose windows the midday-sun was reflected. It was built in a pretty, Italian style; the pillars and the balcony, which were slender and ornamental, formed a strange contrast to the dark heavy walls of Thierberg on his right; and as this castle was situated on the north-side of the mountain on a steep wooded height, so the pretty pleasure-castle rested on the

south-side opposite to a cheerful, vine-covered, hill whose neat and well-trained plants, on their poles and espaliers, extended to the water's edge.

Albert's attention was absorbed by this enchanting scene; and he was reflecting on the contrast which the two castles presented as representations of ancient and modern times, when the heavy steps of a man sounded in the copse behind him, and roused him from his meditations. He turned round, and was probably no less astonished than was the man who now made his way through the last bush and stood before him. It was his companion of the diligence. He had a game-bag slung over his shoulder, and carried a gun under his arm; and two large greyhounds bounded from the bush behind him.

"What! Is it possible?" cried the sportsman, as he stood still in astonishment, "I should sooner have expected to come upon an eagle here than upon you."

"You see I have followed your advice," said the young man, "I am searching in every corner of your country for all the lovely views."

"But how did you come to this place?" continued the other, as he looked at him more attentively; "and you are not travelling, I perceive. Have you taken lodgings in the neighbourhood?"

Albert pointed with a smile to the old castle; "there; and acknowledge," said he, "that I could not have chosen a more lovely spot."

"At Thierberg?" cried the sportsman with increasing wonder, as a slight flush passed momentarily over his face; "What! is it possible, in Thierberg! But, perhaps, the Thierbergs were the relations whom —"

"Whom I was going to visit in the town, and found here at their country-seat; and I thank the good taste of my uncle," added Albert with a bow, "which has brought me again into the vicinity of my pleasant travelling-companion."

"Then, perhaps, you are one of the Rantow family in Prussia?" enquired the sportsman.

"Exactly so," replied the other, "but why did you infer this? Perhaps you are acquainted with my uncle?"

"I visit him sometimes," answered the sportsman with a long side-look at the castle, "I like going there; but I was very near having the good fortune of making your acquaintance even before this time. A year ago, I was travelling in your country; and, in case my road should lie by Fehrbellin, I was provided with a letter to your parents, with one from your uncle himself. But did I say too much when I talked of the beauties of our Valley of the Neckar? Do you not find here a union of every thing that one can desire to please the eye?"

"I was thinking so only just now," replied Rantow, "how different in character are these two mountains on either side of the valley! Here this dark wood, these ravines and cleft rocks from which the streams are gushing forth; the old castle, half a ruin, rising from this precipitous broken rock. On the other side, the peaceful, undulating, vine-covered hill, with its bluish-red soil, and the soft green of the vines; and this contrast combined with the most lovely of valleys, and a river that winds now here, now there, among the hills. There could, indeed, be nothing more de-

lightful than to lead a secluded and poetic life on one of these green peninsulas."

"Yes," replied the sportsman laughing, "if the river would but not overflow its banks every year, and threaten to carry away Damon, his huts, and his Daphne. But have you been in the valley yet?"

"Not yet; and if your road lies at all in that direction, I shall gladly accompany you."

The sportsman called his dogs, and then struck down a side-path which led into the valley. Rantow, who walked behind him, admired the slight figure, the firm step, and the graceful movements, of the young man. He was several times tempted to ask him who he was, and where he lived; but there was something so determined, so commanding, in his whole appearance that he always postponed this question till some more convenient time. In the valley, the sportsman turned down the stream. Children, and old people, all whom they met, greeted him with a pleased and confiding air. Many even stood still and gazed after him. He often stopped, and drew the attention of his friend to some beautiful spot; talked to him of the mode of living of the people, of their customs, and of their country festivities.

The road now wound round the hill, and suddenly they stood opposite to the modern castle which Albert had looked down upon from the heights.

"What a magnificent building!" he cried, "how picturesquely it is situated among these vineyards! To whom does this castle belong?"

"To my father," replied the sportsman in a friendly tone, "I propose that you cross over with me, and try the wine which grows on these hills."

The young man willingly accepted this cordial invitation. They went to the bank where the sportsman unloosed a boat; he made his guest get into it, and rowed him easily and quickly across the river. They went up well-kept gravel walks, and through high espaliers of vines, to the castle whose beautiful simplicity of architecture became more evident and pleasing on a nearer approach, than when looked at from a distance. Beneath the shady portico, supported by four pillars, a man was seated who was attentively reading a book. As the two men drew nearer he stood up, and came some paces to meet them. He was tall, upright, and thin, and might have been between fifty and sixty years of age. A black sparkling eye, a sharp hooked nose, dusky complexion, and a high prominent forehead, together with his whole bearing, gave him a remarkable and striking appearance. He wore a plain, military frock-coat, a red ribbon in his button-hole; and, even before he was introduced to him, young Rantow knew by all these, that it was General Willi who was standing before him. He himself was introduced by young Willi as a cousin of the Thierbergs, and his own travelling-companion.

The general had a deep, but pleasant voice. He answered, "My son has told me about you. I know your mother well; I saw her formerly in the capital. When we were on the march to Silesia, I was sent to Berlin; I remained four weeks with the out-post there, and during that time frequently rode over to Fehrbellin to visit your parents."

"By my faith!" cried the young man, "I remember having seen several French and German officers in our house at that time. I must be much deceived, General,

or I still remember you. Your uniform was green and black, and you wore a large green tuft in your cap. You rode a powerful black horse."

"Ah yes, old Leda!" said the general, "she held out well, up to Berezina. She lies there on the moor, twenty paces from the bridge. She was a good animal, and among the guard, they called her 'Le Diable noir.' A green tuft do you say? Right, I was serving at that time with the Black-troopers of Württemberg; a brave corps, by heavens! How they fought at Lintz!"

"Was it at that time," observed Rantow, "that Marshal Vandamme, whom Heaven d—, exclaimed 'Ces bougres-là se battent comme nous!'"

"You have made a strange play on the name Vandamme but, — ah, you are a Prussian! well, I allow General Vandamme was hated, especially in the army of South Germany. He knew it very well too; he might, perhaps, have expressed his admiration of the bravery of the soldiers more politely, but he could not have done so with greater truth."

"During these words they had arrived under the portico; an open book was lying there; young Willi looked at it with a smile, and said, "For the sixth time, my father!"

"For the sixth time," replied the latter; as a slight smile also passed over his own grave features. "You see, Herr von Rantow, one often educates children so that they afterwards educate their parents in return, thus he cannot bear that I should read certain books over and over again; and yet it is a wise maxim not to read many books, but to read a few good ones frequently."

"You are right," replied Rantow, "and may I ask what book it is you are reading for the sixth time?"

The general offered it to him in silence; "ah, the beautiful history of 1812," cried Albert, "the campaign of Count Segur! Well, a fiction such as this one may read continually, especially when, like you, one has known the subject of it."

"You call it a fiction?" said the general inquiringly; "as you are not able to speak from experience, doubtless General Gourgaud is your guarantee; but I can assure you that, in this book, there is so much fearful truth, such sad certainty, that one may well forget in it the little that is poetic. The figures in these pictures are alive; one can see their staggering march across the fields of ice; one may see their brave comrades perishing in the snow; one sees a gigantic work, that large army, accustomed to the perils of war, broken up into a thousand mournful wrecks by the cruelty of fate. But I love to wander amid these wrecks; I love to follow these sad men, tottering over the ice; for I shared in their prosperity, and in their misfortunes."

"I only wonder at your patience, father," replied his son, "that you can read over and over again these French tirades which would appear almost ludicrous if they were translated into sober German. I remember a certain place in this famous book which was very touching to the feelings; but which afterwards made me, at least, laugh. The army has retreated behind Wilna in great disorder; the Russians are on the track; for a long time the rear-guard of the army keeps them in check; but this soon fails; and, as they press through a narrow pass, the foremost of the Russians are already

mixed with the hindmost of the French. Segur closes his period with these words, 'Ah, there is no longer any French army!—yet there is one,' continues he, 'for Ney is still alive; he will rush in immediately, weapon in hand,' and so on. In short, the noble marshal in his excess of zeal still fires a few shots at the enemy; and immediately represents, in his own person, the half-million of soldiers whom Napoleon led into the field against the Russians. Is not this more than poetic? Does it not amount to the ludicrous?"

"I still remember that moment very well; and, so adverse was our fate, so pressed our retreat, that there were only some few moments left us in which to accord our admiration to this warrior and to his true old-world bravery. When you reflect of what great importance it was that he with his few brave men should hold the defile against the enemy for a certain length of time; and that he and his men were certainly at this moment the only real combatants who disputed the heights with the Russians, then this impression will not appear strange to you; for my part, I thank Segur that he has left us a record of this critical moment."

"Then is the scene a true one?" asked Rantow.

"Most certainly; and a grand idea is contained in it; in that thus we know who of all that large army struck the last blow against the Russians; that it was Ney who even amid all the wide-spread fame which accrued to him from this retreat did not forget the part of the common soldier. He was, like Hannibal, the last in the retreat."

"But what do you say of him who was first in the army, and first in the retreat?" observed Rantow; "I

imagine twenty years earlier he would have defended every step with his guards —”

“And twenty years later also,” interrupted the general; “and might, perhaps, as an old man, have died a nobler death with his guards. But in the year 1813 as you well know, he was Emperor of a country from which he was distant many hundred miles, without means of information or assistance. But what kept him with the army after our misfortunes became decided? Do you not think that we had a presentiment of something similar to the revolt of your York? Was he not obliged to bring fresh men from France?”

“Why did he go to war with an Asiatic power?” said Rantow smiling satirically, “if he had a foreboding that the Prussians were lurking there in his rear to give him his death-blow? Was this the far-famed prudence of the first man of his century?”

“Believe me, young man,” said the general, “the Emperor was far above entertaining such suspicions. He knew that your King was a man of honour who would not fall upon him in the rear; he knew also that Prussia was much too wise to grapple alone, Don Quixote-like, with the ‘Grande Armée.’”

“Prussia was not to blame,” cried the young man, colouring; “everyone knows how Buonaparte himself kept his treaties of peace. No one was to blame for waiting until it should please the great man to make a declaration of war. The captive has a right to break his fetters at any favorable moment; even though he should, in so doing, be obliged to destroy him who imposed them on him.”

“Now, father,” added young Willi, “that is exactly like what I said long ago when I sided with the in-

urrection in all Germany. Who gave the French the right to put us in fetters and bonds? Our folly and their strength. Who gave us the right to wrest the sword from them, and to turn its point against themselves? Their folly, and our strength."

"I grant," replied the general calmly, "that among the people, and perhaps also among politicians, they may and do speak thus; but a soldier should never use such expressions to excuse a wicked action. There have been many brilliant treacheries in history; at the times at which they occurred, people were so absorbed in the present that they even lauded the traitor; but posterity, who look at events by a clearer light, have always judged justly; and have inscribed many brilliant names in the black register of crime. Posterity will also judge the deeds of the Emperor. But this much is certain, that throughout all ages, so long as soldiers exist, he who deserts his colours will ever be held to be a scoundrel."

"I grant this," replied Rantow, "but I do not see how this can excuse the over-hasty expedition to Russia."

"Do you then suppose that the state of Prussia was so unknown to us?" asked the general, "it was well-known how things were going there. I was in the Emperor's suite from Mayence to Smolensk; and, especially in the German provinces, frequently by his side because I knew the localities, and I often had to put questions in his name to the inhabitants. In the principal provinces of Prussia, both he and all of us were struck by the behaviour and appearance of the young people. The whole country seemed to be full of people making holiday, and yet they were always

only the young men who had been born and brought up there. Their hair was cut in military style; their bearing was erect and orderly; they seldom stood still, like idle loitering gazers when the Emperor and his followers passed by. No, they formed a front when they saw him; their feet standing firmly fixed; the left arm straightened and pressed to the side; the eyes took the direction according to rule; and with their right hand they made a military salute. These were no country boors, but soldiers; and the Emperor, at least, knew that the whole Prussian army would not join him."

"He left a dangerous and insulted enemy in his rear," observed Rantow.

"An affronted snake may sometimes be a dangerous enemy, Herr von Rantow; but not an army, not men of honour. The Prussian army had united itself with the 'Grande Armée;' and so soon as this took place, they stood under the command of the officer at the head of this army; in this character we had nothing to fear either from them, or from those who remained behind; the inferiors bound their oaths to their colours; and the generals, the representatives of those colours, pledged their honour. If you will look at the affair from this natural point of view, you will discover nothing hasty or imprudent in the conduct of the Emperor in beginning this unfortunate campaign."

"The German army that marched with him by compulsion," replied the young man, "did not belong to this Emperor of the French; but to their rightful king, and at that same moment in which they were released from their duties to their commander —"

"They might have turned their weapons against

us," interrupted the general, "you are quite right there; they might have formed their squares, and have refused obedience to us; and, in case of compulsion, might have poured a fire upon our columns, might have allied themselves to the Russians in presence of the whole army; they might have done all this —"

"Well, yes, that is exactly what I meant —"

"No, sir, it was not," continued the other warmly; "only *then*, do you understand, only *then* when their king released them from their oath would they refuse obedience, and even then they would have been in danger of being ruined. So long as this was not the case, they, if they behaved as our enemies, would have behaved as traitors to their honour, and even to their king; for the honour of the king who had selected the commander was also the security for their conduct."

"Well! if I concede this about the commander," replied Rantow, "then at least the army always did their duty."

"In this case, not at all," cried the general; "if the chief cannot produce any order from his king in vindication of his course, and yet does not perform his duty, or even becomes a traitor; and in his treachery, not only acts himself but takes a whole corps with him, then every soldier has a right to shoot him as he rides in front of his army."

"What, father!" cried young Willi.

"Good heavens! you do not mean this," exclaimed his guest at the same moment; "shoot a general-in-chief on the back of his charger?"

"And if they omit to do so," continued the other with flashing eyes, "then they neglect their own duty. But I know right well the history of those evil times,

and the motives which then governed men's actions; they became wolves and tigers, they cast off all man-like nature; truth, honour, faith, were all lost; and acts passed for heroism which formerly were held to be disgraceful."

"Well, but yet you cannot deny that something of the noble and sublime was displayed at that period," said Rantow, "the universal enthusiasm with which the whole nation rose was truly sublime and wonderful."

"The whole nation? General rising?" said the general with a bitter laugh, "all Germany might have risen from the dead, before the Germans would have stirred. With many, the motive was a fascinating but unwise zeal; with others, hatred; with many, insolence; with most, it was a matter of fashion; and you forget that Austria, Bavaria, Würtemberg, Suabia, and Franconia did not, what you call rise; and yet they too were a part of Germany; and your enthusiasts, — we were certainly never driven out of Saxony by them."

"If it were a question with them regarding every acknowledged attribute of old-service soldiers, in truth, their will was ready, their deeds great, their union, their self-sacrifice made amends for much."

"Union! Self-sacrifice! We maintain that it was only on French ground that one such person was taken prisoner. He was a young, well-dressed man. The Emperor had heard speak of these volunteers; their dress, their carriage, had been somewhat comically described to him; so he ordered the prisoner to be brought before him. When this man saw the Emperor, he became apparently insane; remembered no longer that he himself had been a soldier, and had taken

the past," replied the general smiling, as with a tear in his eye, he glanced down at his breast.

There was something so peculiar, so lofty, in the man as he said these words that Rantow, blushing as though he committed an error, turned his eyes from him and looked in confusion to the son. But the latter did not appear to have taken notice of the conversation; he was gazing steadfastly and eagerly at a little grove by the river near which the splash of an oar was heard. At this moment the branches of the willows were moved aside, and the face of a pretty young lady peeped out from between them with a smile.

VII.

"Our fair neighbour," cried the general gaily, and hastened towards her to offer her his hand; the young men followed; and, by the aid of his excellent eyeglass, Rantow perceived, to his no small pleasure, that it was Anna who was appearing here so suddenly, like a Naiad from the stream. The general kissed her on the forehead, and then offered her his arm. She gave his son a short, but kindly, greeting; enquired cursorily after the general's sister, and then stopped with an expression of astonishment in front of her guest.

"You here, cousin Albert?" she cried, as she offered him her hand. "Now I must confess, with all respect to your excellent judgment, that I had not deemed you so wise as to be able immediately to find out the pleasantest society in all the neighbourhood. What magician was it that brought you here?"

"My son," said the general, "had the good fortune

to become acquainted with your cousin during his little journey; and finding him in your wood opposite —”

“He invited me to accompany him hither,” proceeded Rantow, “where already I have had the same misfortune as yesterday of entering into a dispute, and contradicting with warmth. You smile, Anna? But it seems to me as though this sort of thing belonged to the climate of this place; at home I am the most peaceable fellow in the world, and perhaps do not argue so much there in two years as I have done here in two days; and why should I begin to wrangle with gentlemen like the general and my uncle?”

“Is it possible?” asked the general, “Has he been arguing, Annie, with Herr von Thierberg, with your father? I certainly thought, as you disagreed so much with me in your political views, that you must have taken up your uncle’s principles.”

“But yet a third or a fourth difference of opinion is not wholly impossible,” observed young Willi with a smile; “I certainly am not of your way of thinking in politics; and believe that something might still have been done in the world, though you had not reformed it with fire and sword, and intimidated nations, fifteen years ago. But on this very subject I live in perpetual warfare with Herr von Thierberg; and we, too, have long given up the attempt to convert each other.”

“Demagogues fight with all the world,” replied Anna with a smile, and yet as it would seem with a little dissatisfaction. “You are an incurable in this hospital of nations; have you ever heard that one similar political knight, him of La Mancha, one such errant reformer of the world, became thoroughly cured?”

“I see you would carry the war into my country,”

said Robert, "you would, as usual, make my opinions the target for your good-natured wit; but you shall not succeed in disconcerting me; at least certainly not to-day. You, Rantow, do not yet know thoroughly the brilliant qualities of your lady-cousin, have a care how you trust yourself to her."

"My friend," replied Rantow, "here in South Germany, I feel myself no longer like myself; all is quite different; people think and speak in a manner quite unlike that to which I am accustomed; and, therefore, I cannot rely upon any opinions, at least not on any as regards Anna."

"General," cried Anna, "I hope that, after this, you will undertake my defence against your son."

"Now, listen to me, Rantow," said young Willi; "that this young lady is the most beautiful in the whole Valley of the Neckar from Heidelberg to Tübingen, is not only maintained by all the travelling students, but she herself also knows it only too well and acts accordingly. She is as proud of it as Leandra in the history of Don Quixote just quoted. As to her political views, for she is a thorough-going politician, she is amphibious. She now supports ancient, now modern, times. She is uncommonly proud that she can reckon sixty-four ancestors, that she lives in her paternal castle, and that a Thierberg purchased a field, so far back as the year 950. On the other hand, she is a thorough-going adherent of Napoleon; she has read that arch-liar of his times, the 'Moniteur,' oftener than the Bible; wears a little piece of cloth that Montholon sent to my father, and which pretends to have been taken from Napoleon's last couch, in a ring; sings nothing but the imperial songs of Beranger and Dela-

vigne; and in short adores that man with an enthusiasm which casts the splendour of her sixty-four ancestors quite into the shade."

"Have you finished?" asked Anna with a quiet smile, as she pressed her ring to her lips; "but do you know, cousin, that, in his generosity, he has kept silence as to the most grievous cause of complaint, my blackest crime in his eyes? Namely this, that I am no so-called German maiden, that I do not now practise spinning in my room as becomes a German girl, and weave no wreath of bays for the brows of a future conqueror. And do you know who this gentleman is? That he is a member of a gigantic secret league, and after having been nearly the chief, will return to be an inferior; well, with you there must also be many such statesmen. But, Herr von Willi, this occurs to me; is it true, as I have lately been told, that among your secret laws is one especially directed against young ladies of rank, which runs thus, 'If an honest German knight shall woo a young lady who formerly belonged to the ranks of the nobility, and such an one from foolish pride shall refuse him her hand, then her name shall be made publicly known and she herself shall be looked upon as mad?'"

The pathos with which Anna pronounced these words was so comical, that the general and Rantow involuntarily burst into a laugh; but young Willi coloured, and replied with some annoyance, "Why will you always make fun of things which lie so completely removed from you that you cannot in the least sympathize with them? I allow that to you in your circumstances, in your position, it may appear very witty and agreeable because you know nothing of free-

dom of law and of unartificial customs, have no notion of them. *But why treat with scorn, feelings which at least work powerfully, and with an elevating effect in the breast of man, and incite him to do all that is noble and good?*"

"How uncivil," replied Anna, "it was you who began with sneers, and ill-treated my ancestors, and the Emperor of the French; and now you take offence because I joke about the democratic gentlemen and their visions! Indeed, if your father were not so brave a man, and my most faithful ally, you should suffer for this. But, as a punishment, I will question you about the poem you promised me for my father."

Thus saying she took Robert's arm and walked with him down the avenue; and Albert Rantow would have given much at this moment to have been able to walk beside her in young Willi's place; for her eyes had never seemed to him so beautiful, her voice so rich, and expressive, as at this moment.

"She is a strange, but charming girl," said the general as he looked after her with a smile; "would she could but talk all his fancies out of his head! But he will never be happy; what do you think, Rantow? There are often times in which it seems to him absurd, and even outrageous, that he should live in my comfortable castle, and that our neighbours George and Michael, who are also Germans, must content themselves in a poor little hut. He is a strange youth; this is what in these days they call a love of liberty; and yet with all this he is a brave and sensible young fellow."

"An amiable and excellent man," observed Albert, whilst he was allowing frequent uneasy glances to

"wander towards the trees beneath which Willi and Anna were strolling. "I may say to you that I was astonished at his versatility, at the delicate refinements of society which he evinced so naturally; he must have lived long and much in the best circles; and yet with all this, such extraordinary republican plans!"

"He has been in London, Paris, and Rome," said the general quietly, "and, during his residence in them, he lived among my friends. I think Lafayette and Foy spoilt him for me."

"What! Lafayette, Foy! Has he seen them?" asked Rantow in astonishment.

"He was daily in the company of both these men, and they discovered more in the boy than I could have expected. Then he listened to the conversation of Americans, and of the great people on the opposite side; and as he knew many of the disputants of highest rank as my old friends, he fancied in his youthful zeal that all they said must be true; and, in the end, thought it right for himself to enter on the work of reform with them. Thus he is now intimate with all the uneasy spirits in this peaceful Germany; not a week passes that he does not bring to my house one of these German radical reformers, with their long hair, moustache, battle axes, and extraordinary coats; they call him 'brother,' and are such strange creatures that they begin all their letters to my Robert, 'O German, greeting to you!'"

"I know these people," replied Albert in a slighting manner, "they are to be found also amongst us at home; but how can a man possessed of such brilliant qualities for a career of high position and for good society as Robert, associate with vulgar men who find

their chief pleasure in beer, who go smoking about the streets, who herd together in common ale-houses, and think lightly of every thing that is noble and refined?"

"Vulgar, dear Herr von Rantow, I have never found them," replied the general smiling, "not what I understand by vulgar; that they smoke, makes them at most only unpleasant to a non-smoker; that they drink beer, certainly arises from poverty, for they have never despised my wine; and as to 'la bonne société' they think of it very much as I do; they weary of it, and feel its stiffness a constraint, and its affectation ludicrous. In other respects, I have found them well-educated and sensible; and it is only in their dress, and in their visionary schemes that, like Anna, I have been reminded of Don Quixote; and have thought it somewhat comical that they should have fancied themselves commissioned to free the world from all that is evil."

The young man bowed to the general in silence, as though by this gesture to express his agreement with him; but in his heart he thought, "I'll be hanged if he does not smoke himself, and does not prefer Stettiner and Josti to French wine; but one may forgive an old soldier, if he is somewhat rough and unpolished." At the same time he glanced again towards Anna; the conversation appeared to be proceeding with great interest on both sides; the presence of the general prevented him from making use of his eye-glass, yet he had never needed it so much as at this moment; for he fancied that he saw young Willi take Anna's hand and — carry it to his lips. Perhaps the general perceived the uneasiness and distraction of the young man; he turned down the avenue with him; and, when

Anna saw them, she advanced with Willi to meet them. The general's sister, a worthy lady, for whom Anna's visit was intended, also joined them at this moment; and, as nothing political could be discussed in her presence, nothing that might lead to disputes, the company preferred to accept her invitation and to taste the general's wine, and the exquisite fruit of his garden in the castle-hall. It was resolved, that on the following day the general and his son should return the visit at Thierberg; and, when their guests returned to the boat, the two Willis took leave of Anna with respect, and of Rantow with the cordiality of old friends.

VIII.

THE guest from the Marches, although at home he could enter any circle of ladies with that assurance which is obtained by education and proper self-confidence, although in Berlin he had gained the name of having made several difficult conquests, yet never in his life felt more embarrassed than on this evening on which he returned with Anna to Thierberg by the Neckar. A thousand doubts vexed and tormented him; and then first, when he observed the last glance which Anna cast towards young Willi, too tender for mere esteem, too prolonged for mere acquaintance, then first did he feel how strong his jealousy of his fair cousin had already become. It was true that when he measured his own appearance, his expressive countenance, his speaking eyes, his refined and fluent utterance, his graceful figure, the decision and versatility of his mind, in short, when he measured all his own excellencies

against the characteristics of Robert Willi he thought that he might console himself without being presumptuous; for even though the latter might make a favorable impression, yet he was wanting in the accent and cadence of voice that cannot be imitated; although his gentlemanlike deportment and dignity were not to be disputed, yet he was deficient in the extreme finish and refinement, in that inherent feeling of good taste, that must be inborn in a fashionable phoenix (*Incroyabilis* Linn.); he was deficient, so the Berliner decided within himself with a secret smile, in that "*je ne sais quoi*" which impresses a mortal with the seal of nobility and perfection belonging to a god; and which makes, even of the most commonplace man "*un homme comme il faut!*" "But Anna lives quite in the country here; she has grown up in Suabia," he continued; "before she saw me, she might look on Robert Willi —, "Anna, one question," said he anxiously to her after they had proceeded a considerable time in silence, "and, I beg of you, do not take this question amiss; are you attached to this young Willi; are you engaged to him?"

Fräulein von Thierberg blushed slightly at this question, but this blush might as easily have been caused by the question as by the circumstances he referred to.

"What has given you this idea, cousin?" replied she. "And do you suppose, even if I had the good fortune to be attached to Willi which, however, has never yet occurred to my mind, that I should choose you for my confidant in the affairs of my heart, because I have known you for two whole days? Good

heavens, cousin," she added with a mischievous laugh, "what idiots you must be in Prussia!"

"I certainly do not, by any means, wish to force myself into your secrets, most stern and noble lady," said he, "but do you then suppose that your long, and, as it seemed, interesting conversation with him failed to attract my attention? Do you suppose I believe that you were only talking of those verses?"

"But if I say that we did only talk of the verses," said she warmly, "then you must believe me. Evil befalls them who evil think; but on this occasion, your acuteness has not deceived you. The principal part of our conversation turned upon something quite different from the verses; upon a secret, a very important secret."

"What then?" cried the young man with an incredulous air, "Tell me, what then?"

"Then," answered she smiling, "and because you are so courteous, I will also admit you into our secret; perhaps you may be of some use; he himself advised me to disclose it to you."

"What," returned he bitterly, "do you think that I have come to Suabia only for this purpose, to become the bearer of Herr von Willi's love messages to my cousin? Then, indeed, you greatly mistake me. I will tell your father the whole story first, and I do not think that he will select a member of these societies, such a reformer and demagogue, for his son-in-law."

Anna remained astounded, as she listened to this furious outburst of his passion. "Have the goodness to listen first to what I am going to ask you," said she, as it appeared not without some displeasure; "but this I know, if I were a young man, and especially a

Berliner, I would, at least, behave somewhat differently towards a lady."

Albert, in confusion, wished in reply to say something to excuse himself; but with a more kindly manner, and less displeased look, she continued, "You know, and have heard for yourself to-day, how much the general loves and honours Napoleon. Now his birthday, which happens to fall on the same day as one of the Emperor's famous battles, is approaching; and his son wishes to please him by giving him something connected with Napoleon. Through an acquaintance in Berlin he has obtained a copy of that famous picture by David which represents Napoleon on horseback, at the time when he was still First Consul. It is not an ill-conceived picture, for thus he looks his best; he is still young and slight, and the interesting, animated countenance beneath the hat with the tricolor plume is better adapted for the ideal of a hero, than those portraits painted in later years. And this picture of the Emperor is our secret."

"But what am I to do in the affair?" asked Albert who breathed more freely now than no other, and much-dreaded, revelation threatened him.

"Listen again. The picture will arrive this very day, not at the general's house it is true, but at ours. It will remain in my room till the evening before the birthday; and then we must together take care that the general shall not be at home while the picture is being conveyed across; or, at least, that he shall be so occupied as not to notice anything. Then, during the night, the picture will be hung up in the breakfast-room and crowned with a wreath; and, when kind-hearted Willi enters the room in the morning for his breakfast,

behold his hero waiting to give him the first greeting on this festive day!"

"Very well thought of," replied Rantow smiling; "and, if only it were not this identical hero, I would very willingly offer my aid; yet — even so, I will join in your plot, for is it not you who have asked me?"

His tones were so tender as he said these words that Anna looked at him with surprise. He noticed it; and continued, as he drew her arm close to his heart;

"But, indeed, you might ever lay any commands upon me, Anna; ah! if you would only direct me always! How rejoiced I am that you do not yet love any one, that you are not yet engaged! May I ask my uncle for your hand?"

A struggle appeared to be going on in Anna's heart whether she should laugh off these words as an absurdity, or whether she should burst into tears of anger. At least, the colour in her fair face changed from red to pale, and from pale to red, in an extraordinary manner. She hastily withdrew her arm from his hand, and said:

"This much I can tell you, cousin, that to us in Suabia nothing is more unendurable than sentimentality and coquetry; and that we look upon those people as fools who would form an eternal bond after two days' acquaintance."

"Anna," began the young man with an imploring gesture, "do you not believe in the omnipotence of love? Although its duration is eternal, yet is its beginning the work of a moment, and I—"

"Not a word more, Albert," cried she with displeasure, "if you do not wish me to tell all to my

father, and beg his protection against your folly. It would be a pleasant way," she continued smiling and more composedly, "of passing your tedious time at Thierberg to play at a little romance. Play at it, by all means, if you do not know what better to do with yourself; perhaps you will entertain me very much by it; only do not ask me to take the second character."

"Oh, Anna!" said he sighing, "do I deserve these jests? I mean it so truly, so sincerely. The lot that I can offer you is not brilliant, but it is one in which you may be content and happy."

"Do not be tragic," she replied; "I would rather listen to anything than to such pathetics. You deserve to be laughed at in any case, and it may at least cure you. Come, be sensible; accompany me home in a quiet and becoming manner. But be assured that if one single word more of this kind crosses your lips, I will make you ashamed of yourself before the next respectable peasant we meet, and will call him to accompany us; and if you continue these follies after we reach the castle, I will never be alone with you again."

The tone in which she said these words sounded, it is true, decided, spirited, and commanding; yet her roguish eye and smiling mouth, seemed to contradict the stringent order; and Rantow, perplexed by these contradictory expressions, contented himself with remaining silent, with sighing, with casting speaking glances, and with postponing a renewed attack until a more favorable moment. With great composure and self-possession, she began to converse about the general; and thus they arrived at Thierberg with less of discomfort than one might have supposed.

The old man made them relate where they had been, and appeared not displeased that Albert should have found this new acquaintance. "They are brave men, these Willis, and the whole valley has to thank them for their good deeds. There are few officers, even of rank, who have the cultivation, and eminent knowledge, of the general; and I have already taken special notice of the young man, and have discovered that he is possessed of solid and well-grounded information, and that he prosecutes his studies with an ardour which is seldom found in the present day. A shrewd, clever, enthusiastic, young fellow; but, but — oh! these perverse, overstrained views. I believe he would attack me in my own house if I were to say that the boors will always remain boors; and that if they were to be made ever so free from taxes, ever so learned, the commonalty would still remain in their old beat, and could never become refined, polished, and moulded to take a higher part in the state. But this only arises from the fact that the old fool married below his position; therefore the young man wishes to make the best of the mistake by ranking high the cousins, and all the circle of relatives, of his late lady-mother of citizen memory."

"But, father," observed Anna, "you cannot really affirm that he thinks thus, for this reason. I admit that he places all of us somewhat low, and raises others to be our equals; but then he is an enthusiast, and has notions of freedom and popular rights which can never be carried into effect."

"Do not give me a lesson in knowledge of the world, child," said the old man smiling, "vanity is the real original text in every one, though they may

give what name they please to the variations of it. But what do you think of the father, nephew?"

"He would be stoned in our country if he were to say openly the things I have been obliged to listen to to-day. Yes, if he were to utter but one such in a company of Prussians, I believe they would respect neither his age nor his position. His whole conversation is one song of triumph upon past, and one tirade against present times. I believe he looks upon it as a great sin that we shook off the ignominious yoke, and freed, with ourselves, other nations; perhaps, even against their will. A disgrace that a German only can esteem as such. But at the next opportunity, I will tell him how from the bottom of my heart I detest his Emperor, and all Frenchmen."

"He has already often heard that from me," replied Herr von Thierberg, "more than twenty times. I hate them all, every one of them, like old Nick himself."

"All, father, all?" asked Anna with emphasis.

"No, you are right, child, I except one man whom I would laud, and praise every day of my life. If he had not spoken such desperately good French I might have thought him to be an angel from heaven. Unfortunately he was, and ever must be, only a Frenchman."

"And who then is the one man whom you except in this solemn manner?" asked Albert.

"Listen, it is a strange story," continued his uncle; "but I will tell it to you, for it is also a pretty one. In the year 1800, I took a journey into Italy with my late wife. Before we could leave the country, the war broke out, and as we were informed that Moreau was going to make an expedition against Germany, I re-

solved to leave my wife in Rome with a family who were friends of ours, and to return to Suabia alone, that I might be able to travel more quickly. I selected the route that I took, partly because in it I least expected to come upon Frenchmen; partly because a cousin of mine commanded the garrison in the little fortress of Bade; partly because of the novelty of the country, as regarded the road over the great St. Bernard, which soon afterwards became so famous by the passage of the Consul Buonaparte. There, at the foot of the mountain on the Swiss side, five ragged churls from the French army (whom certainly I did not expect to meet with here), made an attack upon me. I shewed them my pass, but it availed nothing; they dragged me and my groom old Hans, whom you may still see here, from our horses, took off our coats and boots, deprived me of my watch and purse, and were on the point also of rifling my valise when a terrific voice behind us thundered, 'Halt!' The robbers looked round, and let their arms fall as if stunned by a clap of thunder; for it was a French officer who was just behind us on horseback; and, for one must give even the old gentleman himself his due, they maintained a severe discipline.

"'Who are you, sir?' he enquired, as soon as he had dismounted. I gave him a short account of my position, and the object of my journey. He took my pass, looked through it, and asked me whether I had shown it to the soldiers. When I answered in the affirmative he turned to the ruffians who were still standing bolt upright, and covered with confusion. 'Are you soldiers, are you Frenchmen?' cried he with indignation; and in spite of his shabby frock-coat, he

appeared to be a person of distinction. 'Dress this gentleman and his servant instantly; arrange his baggage, and then proceed whither you may be ordered.' Never in my life was I waited on with such alacrity; one young fellow wished to put my boots on for me against my will, and entreated me with tears in his eyes to allow him to do so. I had never witnessed such obedience in the army of the empire. I even said so to the officer who, as soon as we were ready, sat down beside me on the grass, and begged me to excuse and forgive his country-people. I told him that the whole annoyance was fully counterbalanced by the sight of such splendid discipline. Before I was aware of it, we were engaged in a deep conversation upon the events of the times, and especially upon the fate of the nobility. I did battle strenuously for our ancient nobility; but in a short, and decisive manner, though as courteously as possible, he knew how to confute my best arguments. I perceived throughout all, and indeed he confessed openly, that he was a 'Ci-devant;' he also owned that in modern times a republic presented great difficulties, and was almost unnatural; that an institution like that of the nobility was useful, and even in a certain degree necessary; but he maintained that these noble classes should everywhere be created anew, and the rank should be only attainable by military fame."

"What?" interrupted Rantow, "were the opinions which the so-called Emperor afterwards carried out even at that time so prevalent in the army? That is strange."

"Afterwards," continued the old master of Thierberg, "when Napoleon created the Legion of Honour,

and various other dignities, the words of my kind-hearted captain often occurred to me. During this one hour in which we conversed together I became as much attached to him as though he were not a Frenchman, as though we had been the friends of years. At last the military music of a regiment approaching from a distance warned him to be ready for departure. I presented him with my silver flask which he only at last accepted with a smile after a long dispute; he gave me in return a little edition of Tacitus, and one of the colored feathers from his cap, such as those which the Republican officers at that time wore. The bayonets of the regiment glittered over the nearest hill, and the band struck up, 'Allons enfants,' just as he mounted; he gave me a few more directions; and, amid the sounds of 'Marchons, ça-ira,' he rode up the hill. To this day, this amiable, interesting, young man stands before my mind's eye as he rode up the foot of the Alps, the wind stirring his cloak and waving his plume, as he turned his intellectual countenance upon me once more in a farewell greeting. At that moment, but only for an instant, and I do not now know why, my heart beat high with these Frenchmen; and, so long as I could hear the band, I sang 'Allons enfants,' and 'Marchons, ça-ira' with them. Afterwards indeed, I was ashamed of my weakness, hated the nation as much as before; and now my helper in time of need, my good captain, stands alone in my remembrance."

"An extraordinary circumstance throughout," said Rantow, when, not without emotion, the old man came to a pause; "No doubt there were courteous and honest men amongst these troops, but good discipline was ex-

ceedingly uncommon. I should like to have seen the horror of those five soldiers."

"Well, Hans," said Anna to the servant who had been listening with attention and interest, "you, of course, saw them?"

"I assure you, my kind mistress, that they stood before the captain as if they were carved out of stone, and he cast looks upon them like those of the dragon on the good knight St. George. Afterwards, when the French marched through our country, I often stood for half the day on the high-road to Heidelberg, and let regiment after regiment defile past me; but the captain was never among them; no doubt he was long since dead."

"Honour and blessing be to his memory if it should be so," said the old master of Thierberg. "If he were dead, then he could have had nothing to do with all which was unjust and wicked that afterwards took place in the world. Perhaps he even retired from the service when the Dictator made himself Emperor; for my brave captain, who had such noble thoughts, could have been no friend to the haughty Corsican."

Anna smiled; but she would not mar her old father's favorite theme, the history of the good Frenchman, by a defence of that great son of a small island.

IX.

They separated earlier on this evening than on the preceding one; and Albert, whom sleep as yet refused to visit, stood in the bow-window of his ancient apartment, and gazed down into the valley. He reflected upon all the words of his fair cousin; he discovered so

much reason for accusing her, and for condoling with himself, that for the first time in his life he found himself dejected in good earnest. After so many histories of passing flirtations, he was now plainly and clearly conscious that he was seriously in love; never before had he given a thought to domestic life, nor dreamt of the happiness of marriage; and it was this bright and unaffected being who had first succeeded in suggesting to him graver views for his future, in elevating his feelings. He was astonished at having been so plainly repulsed, where he meant all in good faith; it was strange to him that he should appear to be fickle, and a coquet, in those very eyes which had attracted him so irresistibly, and had thus enchained him; he was ashamed that his advantages, which had been so fully acknowledged everywhere else, should be quite powerless with this child of nature; he saw in it an evil omen, for his experience up to this time had taught him that surprise, that the first impression, had generally been decisive. He was disturbed in these thoughts by a flute whose sweet tones resounded through the forest, as on the previous evening. The idea was again excited in his mind that this serenade must certainly be on Anna's account; he looked more keenly towards the wood, and he was not mistaken; it was from that very corner, which he had visited during the day, that the sounds proceeded. He quickly threw his cloak around him, hastened downstairs, and asked old Hans to open the door for him; he pretended that he had left a pocket-book on a seat in the wood not far from the castle, which might be injured by the night dew. The strains of the flute, which were becoming more and more soft and liquid, served to guide

him to the corner of the wood; he pressed on still more eagerly through the copse, for he had cast a look up to the castle, and had perceived that a white handkerchief was floating from Anna's window. He could already distinguish the outline of the figure of the flute-player; and had just cried, "Stop, musician, I will play the second part," when a dog dashed out close beside him, and as he sprang on one side in alarm, he fell with some violence over the roots of an old oak. When, in a little time, he recovered his feet again, and went to the place where the man with the flute had been sitting, he could find no trace of either him or the dog; but lower down on the hill he heard the bushes rustling, and the copse-wood crashing. Ashamed of himself, he turned back and looked up at the castle. A bright light was in Anna's window; but there was no handkerchief, as he had supposed, only the moonlight reflected on the glass. He reproached himself for his folly, his hastiness and hurry, his suspicions, his jealousy. He accounted for the disappearance of the flute-player on common and prosaic grounds, he was determined to think Anna blameless; but, nevertheless, he was not at ease.

He was standing gazing at the castle, which was bathed in a flood of moonlight, when he suddenly started with a cry of horror, for a cold hand touched his. He looked round, and a dark form stood before him. Before he could ask a question, before he could even recover his presence of mind, he felt a paper pressed into his hand; and immediately afterwards this mysterious being plunged into the depths of the wood; but was of no such ethereal nature as to avoid breaking the branches, and cracking the brushwood, as its

downward progress. Albert becomes now quite uneasy in this spot. His excited blood, the unbroken stillness of the night, the awful darkness of the beech-wood, the old gray castle with its windows so weirdly lighted by the moon that he fancied he saw supernatural shadows gliding to and fro in the high rooms; all combined to make him so nervous that he hastened back along the path and trod with as noisy steps as he could, for the sake of hearing some sound in this ghostly silence.

Old Hans' lantern shed a consolatory light towards him from the gate; he hastily told the old man to precede him with the lamp and went to his room. He then unrolled the paper, and was struck with a strange horror, for the few lines ran thus; — "I only received your letter to-day, the answer another time. S. Z. N. and three others were arrested early this morning, and taken to the fort. I do not know whether you feel yourself implicated, but it would be prudent if you were to make a start. In your position, it can do no harm. I send these lines to the usual place; God grant that they may find you! Whatever you do, Robert, be discreet, and do not mention my name."

Albert now perceived plainly who the unfortunate flute-player was; but, too generous to take advantage of this mistake, he boldly resolved to rescue young Willi. Yet strange and unknown in this country, it seemed to him impossible to effect this alone. He sent old Hans hurriedly to the tower which Anna occupied; he bade him entreat her urgently to give him two minutes' audience on a very important subject. He followed the old man as far as the door of the Hall, and remained there in the large, spacious apartment

alone to await his cousin. The scene which here presented itself to him would at any other time have made a powerful impression upon his mind; an uncertain light glimmered through the windows, and fell upon the pictures of his ancestors. Their forms appeared to stand forth as if alive, their faces were paler than ever, and the outstretched hand of a lady of Thierberg, long since dead, almost seemed to move. The trees outside were rustling in the wind, and the river rushed on in so strange a manner that one might have fancied the sounds proceeded from beneath the drapery of the dead. But, during these moments, he had no ear for anything except the gentle sounds of the steps of the old man; his eyes rested on the door, full of expectation; his heart throbbed uneasily with a certainty that must have been anything but pleasant to him.

Very soon steps were again heard in the corridor; he strained his ear to catch the light tread of his cousin; the door opened, and she appeared with Hans and her maid; by her eyes, and her dress, he perceived that she had not yet retired to rest. Before putting any questions to her he hurriedly gave her the note, and told her in French, and in a few words, how he had received it. A deep blush mounted to her lovely face; so long as he was speaking, she did not venture to raise her fair eye-lids, but she had scarcely thrown a glance at the lines, before she turned pale, looked at him in alarm with wide-opened eyes, and trembled so violently that she was obliged to hold the table to support herself.

"I must ride over immediately," said he, as he advanced towards her; "and I have only requested you

to be sent for in order that you may contrive some means by which I may cross the river. I would not willingly excite suspicion among the servants."

"Ride, ride quickly," cried she hurriedly, as she seized his hand with an imploring gesture; "swim your horse across, and then ride with all speed to Neckar-eck."

"But at night," replied he hesitating. "I do not know the places at which one can swim across; the river is deep and strong."

"Bring my father's horse round for me, Hans," said she turning to the startled servant, "quick, and do you accompany me; I will go over myself."

"Bring it round, old man, but for me," interrupted Rantow in a tone of annoyance; "how can you so misunderstand me, Anna? You shall show me the road to some place where I can cross the Neckar."

"No, that will not answer," said she weeping, and she sank down into a chair; "you will never cross; take him down through the village, Hans; loose our boat, and row my cousin across. You must go on foot, Albert, you can be there in half-an-hour. Oh, Heaven! I have long had a misgiving that this would happen. Tell him, he must not delay; I would rather know that he was anywhere than in a prison."

The young man pressed her hand in silence, and signed to the old man to go forward. He had never until now deemed himself capable of so quickly renouncing such bright hopes, but thoughts of the pretty Anna, whom hitherto he had always seen smiling, but who was now so full of grief, spurred him on to an ever-increasing pace; and, in a heart not yet completely choked by selfishness, the feeling of rendering

help and assistance in a moment of peril is so powerful, that at this instant he only regarded young Willi as a man in misfortune and not as Anna's lover.

Arrived at the river's bank, the old man quickly unloosed the boat, and bade the guest sit still in it; but Albert could not altogether obey this direction, for when they had reached about the middle of the Neckar, they heard plainly the stroke of horses' feet, and the rolling of a carriage along the high-road which at this place lay close to the bank. Despite the grumblings of the old man, and the uneasy rockings of the boat, he stood up; and, by the light of some lanterns, saw a carriage with four horses passing by, accompanied, as it appeared, by several armed horsemen.

"Is this a main road?" he enquired of old Hans, "can that be a mail which is going along it?"

"I have never yet seen one here," replied the other sullenly, "and I do not care to run the chance of a cold bath in the Neckar for the sake of seeing a mail coach."

"Quick! which is the way to Neckareck, to the general's house?" asked Albert who was filled with anxiety lest he should be too late; "make haste, old fellow."

"But allow me first to make the boat fast again," said Hans; "well! if you are in a hurry, follow the road here to the left, it leads straight up to the castle; I will overtake you immediately."

Young Rantew ran rather than walked; the old man came panting after him with difficulty; and, as often as he came up with him, the other ran on again still faster as though he were pursued. At last he saw the castle with its white columns glimmering through the

duskiuess of night. With a feeling of pain, he perceived that several of the windows were lighted up; and, as he drew nearer, he could clearly distinguish men running backwards and forwards past the windows. The terrors of the night, and the unusually rapid motion, had almost exhausted his strength; but this alarming sight urged him on to still greater speed, and in a few minutes more he arrived at the castle; but he was compelled to lean against the door and draw breath before he entered.

The first person whom he met on the well-lighted staircase was a guardsman, an old Frenchman and comrade-in-arms of the general, who now acted rather as a Major-domo than as a servant. He looked paler than usual, and was gliding down the staircase with a sorrowful countenance.

"Where is your young master?" cried Albert hurriedly, "take me to him with all speed."

"*Sacre bleu*," replied the guardsman in astonishment, as he recognized the young man, "does *Fräulein Anna* know it already? oh, *la pauvre enfant!*"

"Where is Robert?" cried Rantow, more urgently.

"*Il est prisonnier*," replied the man mournfully, "taken away to the fortress '*comme ennemi de la patrie, comme démocrate*;' four '*dragons de la gendarmerie*' formed his escort — oh, *mon pauvre Monsieur Robert.*"

"Take me to the general," said Rantow, when he heard these tidings.

"*Monsieur le Général est sorti.*"

"Where?" cried the young man, annoyed at being obliged to cross-question the old soldier at every word.

“With his son ‘à la Capitale,’ to enquire of what Monsieur de Willi is accused.”

When Rantow found that nothing more could be done in this quarter, he made search for another of the servants, and desired him to relate to him all the circumstances connected with the arrest. He heard that late in the evening, and during Robert's absence, a commissioner had arrived who had, after a short consultation with the general, searched young Willi's papers, and sealed up some of them; that Robert came home just afterwards, and without any opposition consented to follow the commissioner; he pledged his father his word that he should be found innocent; the general had, at the last moment, desired a servant to go to Thierberg on the next morning, and tell the master of Thierberg and his family; he had then mounted his horse and had ridden from the castle, accompanied only by one servant. Young Willi himself had left no message either for Thierberg, or elsewhere. This much Albert learnt; but such intelligence was not calculated to make him more cheerful on his way home; he could build no great hopes on the consolatory assurance which Robert had given to his father, and he dreaded above everything that moment in which he should be compelled to announce the distressing tidings to the sorrowing Anna.

X.

SEVERAL weeks had passed since this mournful night; to poor Anna, they seemed like so many months. The leaves on the trees were already beginning to turn to brown, the harvest had been gathered in in the valley

with all its joyous accompaniments; mirth and song resounded from the vineyards, and the gay sounds were answered from the river which bore onwards the boats heavily laden with grapes; the crack of rifles and pistols was also heard from the vineyards, as if some rash enemy having penetrated into these hills were now making an attack; but, instead of a cry of rage from repulsed columns, shouts of joy arose from a jubilant throng whenever the fire-arms went off with a loud report, or the circling hills re-echoed ten-fold the deep sound of the cannon-shots.

The inhabitants of the Castle Thierberg gazed down upon these joyful doings from the old terrace with very varied sensations. Young Rantow looked fixedly, and with sparkling eyes, on this scene which was as new to him as it was attractive. In his own home, and in the circles of intimate friends, he had often remarked how wine, the gift of heaven, coloured the cheeks with a warmer glow, unloosed the tongue, and carried away the gravest into confidential conversation, indeed, even into song; but he had never supposed that such rapturous glee, such a glad jubilee, could be united with the preparation of this exhilarating beverage. How poetic did this gay picture appear to him! What fresh, natural, images did his opera-glass exhibit to him! These groups had arranged themselves by chance, and yet they seemed to him more graceful than any that art had ever devised.

"Look!" said he to Anna who sat opposite to him with her beautiful head resting on her arm, whilst she sometimes cast an earnest gaze along the valley, "look yonder at that old man with his hoary locks; how many such autumn scenes must he not already have

witnessed? Indeed, I might find a study of his life's history in the group around him. The fair boy, who has just brought in the large cluster of grapes, is certainly his grandson; the young man who teases the girls by slapping them, and stops their work by his jests whilst pretending to urge them on, I take to be his younger son; see! that girl has returned his jesting blow in good earnest; she must certainly be the sweetheart of the merry young fellow; for they are all laughing at her, and joking him. That sun-burnt, square-set man about forty, who has just lifted the immense basket filled with grapes on his shoulders, is decidedly the eldest son and father of the fair boy. Thus you have the four ages of man, which all must run through without much variety."

"Truly without much variety and without much pleasure," remarked the old master of Thierberg who was looking on with indifference; "the eternal round for many centuries past. The little boy down there will now soon be sent to school, and be caned every day by his schoolmaster, just as his grandfather was long ago. The young man will soon become a soldier, or a servant for a couple of years in the town. If then he should come home again, and his father should be dead, he will obtain his little piece of ground, and think he ought to marry; and if he should have four children, then, when he too shall die, they will divide the miserable inheritance among them and become just four times poorer than himself. Thus things go up and down; they have been boarding during the whole year for the gunpowder which they have expended to-day, that they might have one day in which they might be able to deafen themselves; and this they call mak-

ing merry. The town-people call this a festival, a picturesque rejoicing of the peasantry."

"Nay, you look at it too gloomily, uncle," replied the guest, "I confess there seems to me to be a wonderful deal of poetry in these gatherings; these people are so sprightly, so lively, so orderly. If you were to put my Mark-men here, how clumsily and awkwardly would they behave! I am now ashamed of the ignorance which I lately showed; I took her bowed knife from a pretty girl in one of your vineyards, and promised to help her; when I cut the first bunch of grapes, and laid it on the little basket, the young girl only examined the stalk of the cluster, and said with a smile, 'Certainly he has not often cut grapes;' and look you, instead of dividing it cross-ways I had cut it straight through. No! This vintage seems to me to be a lasting festival-day of nature, a lovely embodiment of poetry."

"Poetry!" said Anna as she cast a mournful, melancholy look on the opposite hill, "a poetry which pierces my heart. This gay rejoicing seems to me like a picture of life; in the midst of protracted grief and trouble comes one day of joy which, by its clear, friendly rays, renders the dreary darkness around still more visible, but does not illumine it! Oh, if you were but better acquainted with the life of these poor people! If you could but see them at the first awakening of spring! Every winter makes a desert of their steep gardens; the snow loosens the earth, and carries down with it the best and most fertile soil; but young and old go forth to work unwearied. The earth which the water took from them, they carry up again, and lay it carefully round their vines. From earliest morning,

through the glare of noon, and till late evening, they are mounting the steep, narrow, steps, with their heavy loads. What happiness then if the vines remain in good order! but at the same time, how great is their anxiety, for the slightest frost may destroy their tender plants. And if a chilling dew falls, or a cold night comes, how sad it is then to watch their activity! All, even the smallest children pour into the vineyard before day-light. There they lay old pieces of cloth, and rags around the vine-plants, and burn them so that the rising smoke may protect the tender plants. They glide amid the small flickering fires, and through the mists which the smoke raises round them, like unfortunate spirits burning in purgatory. The little ones run about; they can not yet estimate the amount of misfortune they see, but the men and women know it too well; it is but one cool morning-hour which suffices to destroy the work of long, weary weeks, and to plunge them without redemption still deeper into poverty —”

“Indeed! you are ill, Anna,” said the old gentleman, as he came towards her with a smile, yet laid his hand on her fair forehead, not without some bitter anxiety, “Formerly you used always to be so merry in harvest-time; you gave no room to such melancholy thoughts, and rejoiced with the mirthful. Are you ill?”

Anna blushed, and endeavoured to appear more cheerful than she felt.

“I am not ill, my dear father,” she replied, “but yet I am old enough to have the so-called harvest reflections forced upon me. One cannot always be cheerful and — oh, heaven,” she exclaimed as she

sprang up with a heightened colour, "Is it not he? — Look yonder!" —

"Willi!" cried Rantow in astonishment, and he turned towards the direction in which Anna pointed.

"Who is it?" said the old man as he looked now at his trembling and confused daughter, and now at his guest. "What made you think of Willi? Who should be coming? Tell me."

But at this very moment the man who had excited Anna's exclamation came close to them; it was the old guardsman. He had scarcely reached the terrace when Anna, forgetful of all other considerations, flew to him, seized his hand, and endeavoured to give utterance to a question for which her breath failed her. The old soldier smiling, withdrew his hand, saluted in military style, and related in the form of a military report, that the general would come home this evening, and —

"Is he free?" interrupted Anna.

"And will bring with him his son who, upon his word of honour, and the security which the general has given, has been released from imprisonment."

Tears rushed to Anna's eyes; she trembled violently, and sat down. The old master of Thierberg astonished at this scene, pressed his lips firmly together, and viewed his daughter with disapprobation; whilst Albert who read in the features of his uncle that the latter suspected a secret in which until now he had himself been the only participant, felt embarrassed; he was fearful for Anna; and now, at this moment, it became evident to him that it would be much better for himself not to mix himself up in any way in the affair.

"I beg to return my thanks to the general and to congratulate him," said Herr von Thierberg to the

grenadier after an uncomfortable pause, and he made a sign to him to go away. "I only wish," he continued as he paced up and down the terrace with hasty strides, "I only wish that the fortnight's imprisonment may have had a good effect upon this gentleman who would upset the world! A couple of months would have done no harm, if it were only to cool down his heated blood and to curb his hasty tongue. But all this is the inheritance he has received from his sagacious lady-mother. A young man of unsullied nobility of birth would never have gone so far astray, but this is what comes of such marriages; when she perceived that in our circles her origin was not forgotten, she inculcated into her son these foolish republican ideas, and has made a ruined man, if not a fool, of him."

Hurriedly, and angrily, he poured forth these and similar expressions, then suddenly stood still before his daughter, looked fiercely at her, and said, "Now, indeed, I believe you are more ill than I thought; go to your room; I will dine alone with your cousin this evening. Go."

The poor child went away without saying a single word. Perhaps she might have known her father's disposition, and have been aware that any contradiction would only increase his anger. She might also have felt what must be passing in his mind at this moment, in which she had possessed too little self-control to be able to keep her secret.

After she had gone, the old man continued to walk up and down for some time in silence. He then advanced towards his nephew, and asked in a voice of emotion, "What do you say to the scene we have just witnessed? Could you really have believed it possible?"

"I do not understand you, dear uncle."

"Not understand me, young man? Must I then needs tell you myself? Listen; I have discovered that Anna is attached to — that man down below — well, to the general's son. What the deuce, boy! You do not answer? How can you look on with — with such indifference when I am talking of what concerns the honour of your family. Speak out."

"I can see nothing in it," replied the young man perversely, "which can in any way trench upon the honour of the Thierbergs. The elder Willi is of noble birth, is a general of repute, is rich —"

"Then are we to allow our honour to be bought and sold? Fellow, if you were not my nephew — Heaven forgive me, but I do not know myself when I am in a passion — Rich? Look you, even I do not deem my child so mean and base as that she can have taken that into consideration. Look around you; so far as you can see, all, all was once mine; I now own nothing more than these ruined towers, and a hide of land like the commonest peasant; but let me be deprived of these this very night; let me be thrown into prison; let my goods be seized; my old scutcheon cut in two, if ever I agree —"

"Uncle!" interrupted his nephew, turning pale, "recollect yourself first before you utter such words. Wherein is this young man to blame, that his father is rich? Does he ever, for that reason, conduct himself haughtily? Does he arrogate anything to himself on account of his riches? It was only thoughtlessly that I said so a little time ago."

"No; certainly, the Willis do not either of them," answered the old man after a little pause; "That is

their good point, but that does not make him any the better. They are his principles which I hate; he is my bitterest foe."

"But how can this be possible?" said Rantow in a soothing tone, "How can he be your personal enemy?"

"How a personal enemy?" cried Thierberg hotly, "I acknowledge no such enmity towards anyone, and my enemy would have to be a very different sort of person from this boy; but I am a foe to the death to this stir, these novelties; this Germanism, citizenism, cosmopolitanism, or whatever name they give these follies; and this young man is just one of the staunchest supporters of all these. The first quarter of the nineteenth century a confounded taste existed for these disturbances, and we shall see what will happen in present times if these men and their notions increase; but so true as heaven is above, no one shall ever be able to say of the last Thierberg, that in his old age he extended a helping hand to one of these regenerators of the world."

"But, uncle," interposed Albert, to whom it appeared no sin to speak at this critical moment contrary to his own convictions, "Is there in this century one single family which, if one examined its members individually, would not be found to contain within itself the most varied opinions? And is any one person the worse because he entertains different notions from ourselves? Are not Protestants and Catholics equally estimable in the eyes of sensible people? Does not the general himself differ completely in opinion from his son?"

"Leave creeds out of the question, nephew," replied

the other, "it does not concern either you or me to judge of them; but besides, as regards the general, who worships my deadly enemy as his tutelar saint, and looks upon this Buonaparte as St. George who killed the dragon in ancient times, this man one of my family! It would kill me!"

"But do you then know whether young Willi is attached to your daughter? Has Anna acknowledged anything about it?"

On this enquiry the old man gazed at his nephew for a long time in alarm. After a little reflection, he then proceeded with more composure,

"No, I do not think her capable of such dishonour. Do you suppose that my daughter would become attached to such a man unless he had led her on by a thousand artifices? No, she has ever been too good a daughter to me for that, but I will make certain."

He spoke thus; and, before Rantow could stop him, the old man had hastened away to call his daughter to account. His guest from the Marches looked after him gloomily. "In truth, if things stand thus, I shall be neither groomsman nor wedding guest at Thierberg," said he, "the old man must either by some miracle be changed to a demagogue, or the demagogue into an orthodox worshipper of the old nobility of the Empire."

XI.

It had cost General Willi no small trouble to avert the misfortunes of a longer imprisonment from his son. True, his influence had not through the change of circumstances and opinions lost its weight in the capital

of that country in which his property was situated; he was still respected as a man of high merit, of bravery, and of military renown; and there were many who admired him for his true and stedfast adherence to that man who once held the fate of Europe in his right hand. There were also many who, if they did not share in this admiration, yet wished him well on account of the constancy and strength of character which he had displayed in the time of misfortune. Nevertheless he was obliged to summon all his influence, to open many doors, in order to be useful to his son upon whom the suspicion rested of being in league with other suspected persons.

The general was a man of too much right feeling to have taken these steps for his son had he really believed him guilty. But he was satisfied with Robert's simple assurance.

"I share," the latter had said to him, when he was arrested, "I share in general with the feelings of those men who are now brought under surveillance, but I neither participate in their plans, nor in the opinions which they hold in regard to the means for attaining their object. I have only reflected, never taken an active part; have lived to myself, not with others; and accusations which may touch others can never affect me."

Thus his father's efforts had succeeded in setting young Willi at liberty; for so long a time as until stronger evidence, which might be brought against him, should render his presence before the judges necessary; a forbearance for which he had only to thank the intercession of his father, and the confidence placed in the security given by General Willi.

They could both easily imagine what an excitement this event must have caused in the country around Neckareck; if they had lived in a town, they would indeed have been satisfied with giving their acquaintances intelligence of their return; but custom requires much greater attention towards good neighbours in the country; one must visit five or six families within a circle of three miles, must satisfy their curiosity minutely regarding such an event; in short, one must show oneself among one's friends as one would do after an illness of long continuance, and return thanks for their sympathy. But when on the third day after their return the general started for Thierberg with his son, it was quite a different reason from courtesy towards good neighbours that led them thither. Young Willi might, perhaps, have found time during the solitary weeks of his imprisonment to reflect over his life and doings; he might have discovered that those political dreams in which he had indulged could not bring satisfaction, that there was some higher and purer interest in life by which his existence could attain value and worth, and his soul contentment and repose. The general smiled when Robert disclosed to him the terms on which he stood with Anna, and ventured to give utterance to the wishes which were combined with his thoughts of the beloved one. He laughed, and confessed to his son that he had long suspected this circumstance, that he had also wished that the restless ideas of the young man might subside into a more steady course.

"I acknowledge to you," he said to him, "that if you had been young in those times in which we made the circuit of Europe waging war, then if your imagin-

ation had with all its energies seized on the magnificent visions of military fame, then I would have found the first opening for you, and you yourself should have made your own career. I cannot think ill of you because you do not wish to serve during these calm, leisure days of our century. You are tired of wandering about in the world; life in the saloons of the city does not please you, therefore remain with me; take care of my property for me in my stead; I shall by this only be a gainer; I shall obtain time to myself, and for my reminiscences; I shall gain you and," he added with a kindly pressure of the hand, "if you are also certain of your position, I shall gain Anna."

They discussed this subject once more on their way to Thierberg, and Robert authorized his father to make a proposal to the old man for the hand of Anna for him. They did not conceal from themselves that no trifling difficulty might arise from the character of the old Master of Thierberg. Their ideas had so often crossed his in a manner that had rendered them almost inimical to each other. They had so often quarrelled on the subject of their opinions, had so often been dissatisfied, and almost out of temper with each other. But they consoled themselves with this, that he had never yet shown any personal dislike; and the advantages that would accrue to the house of Thierberg from this union seemed so evident, that as they rode over the drawbridge, the general fancied he already saw himself in imagination the father of the lovely Anna; and full of confidence he pointed out the Thierberg coat of arms over the old gateway.

"'Courage wins,' is what they bear as the motto in this coat of arms," he whispered to his son, "that is

most appropriate; for do you not know what was the motto of your ancestors?"

"The will is strong," cried young Willi with a flush of joy, "Courage wins — and the will is strong!"

Rantow received the visitors in the castle-yard. He made excuses for his uncle on account of a slight attack of gout which prevented him from coming down the steep staircase to meet his guests. He said this hurriedly, and not without some little embarrassment, which he endeavoured to conceal under a multitude of congratulations to Robert Willi. Under the circumstances which existed at present within the ancient walls of Thierberg, nothing could well have been more agitating than this visit. It was true that the cousin from the Marches had not been taken into the secret. The father appeared to repent that he had said even so much to his nephew; and Anna had not, during the last few days, uttered one word to him regarding Willi; whether it were owing to a prohibition from her father, or whether from a suspicion that he might have betrayed her secret to the old man. However, ever since that evening on which the return of Robert had been announced, an estrangement had existed, which was rendered the more annoying because though the company was composed of three parties, yet it only consisted of three persons.

Anna spoke but little; and confined herself, for the most part, to her own apartments to which Albert had never yet received an invitation. The old man was sullen, more irritable than usual towards his servants; cordial to his guest, but graver, and more laconic; to his daughter cold and indifferent. In spite of the imploring glances which Anna ventured occasionally to cast

towards him, he drank more wine than usual; then abused the whole world, spent the afternoon in sleep, and ordered the steward to be sent for in the evening to make up a game at cards with him. Anna would then seat herself in a window, and allow her cousin to read aloud to her; but the tears which now and again fell on her hand betrayed to the young man how little her mind was occupied with that which he was reading. The attack of gout which came upon the old gentleman made things even worse, if possible. They perceived how he exerted all his strength to suppress his pain, only in order that he might the less need the natural help of his daughter; and if circumstances occurred in which he could not refuse her assistance, when the fair girl knelt before him with pallid cheeks and tears in her eyes, wrapping his leg in warm clothes, then he would turn and whistle some old song, call himself a man who must soon sink into the grave, and pronounce it a fine thing that a son-in-law was on the spot ready for Thierberg, when the last of the name should be laid in his tomb.

It was true that Rantow was aware that his uncle would not violate the rights of hospitality towards his neighbours; but these last few days made him feel heavy at heart as he conducted the visitors up the staircase, and he perceived beforehand that the two Willis would assuredly not contribute to dispel the disquietude.

Their reception was, however, more cordial than he had expected. There is a certain friendly courtesy which one may habitually practise without being aware of it. This characteristic is especially remarkable in the greetings of men of whom we know that they are

incapable of any hypocrisy; but who yet, either through their opinions or from circumstances, stand opposed to each other. Thus the old Master of Thierberg had not sufficient influence over himself on this occasion to exchange his accustomed, "Ah! excellent, excellent! I am delighted; pray, sit down," for a more cold and formal greeting; and the hospitable feelings which had reigned in this castle for five centuries seemed to enfold the unwelcome guests in their protecting arms. One look at Anna told young Willi what had taken place. He found her pale, her voice less firm than usual, an expression of grief lay in her lovely mouth, and her eyes seemed to have grown softer. In his heart he praised her judicious tact, in that she talked more to the general than to him; for, startled by her appearance, he would not have had sufficient self-possession to speak to her with indifference. Rantow who had expected quite a different scene, was astonished that, even in this "straightforward Suabia" where, until now, all had appeared so open and candid, four men standing so near to each other should be able to play so false a game among themselves, should know how to conceal their emotions beneath so calm an exterior. He looked in wonder, sometimes at young Willi and the old Master of Thierberg who were conversing quite composedly, and with interest on the events of the last week; sometimes he listened to the conversation between the general and the lady with whom his son was in love, who were discoursing only with variations on the same theme, in which Anna evidenced such calmness that she never put eager questions, nor asked anything but what was natural and appropriate.

Whilst they were talking, the general turned round,

and walked slowly with her up and down the hall. At last, he stood still, as if by accident in a deep bow-window; and it did not escape Albert's notice that he then bent down hastily towards the fair girl, and whispered something to her which sent a deep flush to her cheeks. She seemed alarmed; she seized his hand, she said something softly, and eagerly to him; but he smiled, appeared to be calming and comforting her; and his brow wore an expression of pride and confidence; his features looked as though at this moment he were going to lead his division under fire to render a doubtful victory decisive.

The guest from the Marches perceived that yonder, in that bow-window, some resolve was taken or communicated which concerned Anna's fate; and his heart throbbed when he reflected on the iron obstinacy of his uncle. In the meantime the servants had brought in some wine; the company placed themselves in one of the large windows; and, if the feelings of the five people who sat round the little table had only been less embarrassing, the lovely day and the view of the magnificent valley which lay before them must have excited them to ever-increasing mirth.

The general, to whom it seemed to be annoying that the conversation began little by little to flag, asked Anna for a song, and a sign from her father seconded the request. Her guitar was brought down; young Willi tuned the strings, but whether it were the words of the general, or her father's look, or the long-desired presence of her lover which confused her, so it was that she blushed, and owned that at this moment she did not know how to sing a single pretty song. One was proposed, another rejected, until it occurred

to Rantow how a famous and beautiful singer had once been rescued in Berlin from a similar perplexity. He cut some small pieces of paper, and made every one write the name of a song on one. He then folded up the papers carefully and neatly, shook them up together like lottery tickets, and told the singer to draw one.

She drew; she opened the paper, and blushed visibly as she looked at the general with anxiety.

"No one but you could have written that," she said, "but why this particular song? It is not always politic to sing a political song."

"But what if it be my favourite?" replied Willi, "I appeal to your father, was not the choice left perfectly free?"

"Certainly," answered the old man; "and if the song does refer to politics, well, one can always endure politics in poetry."

She expressed her obedience by a nod; but from the very moment in which after a short, yet spirited prelude, she began her song, a sort of inspiration appeared to pervade her lovely features. A soft blush suffused her cheeks, her eyes sparkled, and around her beautiful mouth, from which the tones poured forth round and full, a smile at first was playing which, by degrees, faded into melancholy. It was a French ode, some passages of which were in recitative. The melody, now lively and exciting, now lofty and triumphant, now grave and slow, adapted itself to the changing metre, and to the train of thought in the stanzas; and her voice was so sweet, her recitation so expressive, her whole manner as she seemed to lose herself in the song so enthusiastic, that the gentlemen, even though

they entertained the most varied opinions as to its subject, were yet carried away by the flow of the music. How dignified was her expression, as she sang,

Cachez ce lambeau tricolore!
C'est sa voix; il aborde, et la France est à lui.

Solemnly, almost mournfully, yet not without an expression of triumph, she proceeded;

Il la joue, il la perd; l'Europe est satisfaite,
Et l'aigle, qui, tombant aux pieds du Léopard,
Change en grand capitaine un héros de hasard,
Illustre aussi vingt rois, dont la gloire muette
N'eût jamais retenti chez la postérité;
Et d'une part dans sa défaite,
Il fait à chacun d'eux une immortalité.

When she had finished she laid down her guitar; and whilst the gentlemen were still sitting in silent embarrassment, she hastened quickly away.

"Il la joue, il la perd," said the old Master of Thierberg smiling, "a great truth! And this poet, be he who he may, could not have depicted the man better; his entire greatness consisted wholly in this, that he played rouge et noir for the highest stakes possible; and the old saying, that the most cold-blooded player wins in the long run, was confirmed with him. The leopard then made a rush at the bank, and Wellington himself need not think it any grievance, if one calls him, 'Héros de Hasard!'"

"How laughable such hyperboles are!" cried Rantow, "as though twenty sovereigns had to thank this king of a summer's day for their fame, their immortality! At least, so far as concerns us, it must be confessed that the renown of the Prussian arms is more ancient

than that of the so-called conqueror of Italy; they were not then first ennobled by our great nation."

"And yet," replied the general with great calmness, "yet in future ages it will not be said, 'that was Buonaparte, who lived in the time of this or that king;' people will say rather, Herr von Rantow, that those kings were contemporaries of Napoleon. Then, as regards the commander-in-chief of the English army in the battle of Mont St. Jean, it may be a question whether the title 'Héros de Hasard' would be very agreeable to him; so much at least is certain, that he did not win that battle, but only did not lose it."

"It is fortunate for the world," observed Thierberg with a smile, "that one may turn what you say upon yourself, and that then it contains a still greater truth. It is true that your lord and master did not win that battle, but very much more certain, that he did lose it."

"He did lose it," answered the general, "what the world lost by it, I will not say. That strophe with which Anna concluded her song expressed who, even on the evening of that unhappy day when Cæsar and his fortunes were crushed by a superior force, when my brave comrades drew their last breath 'on Mont St. Jean, who even then was the greater man."

"The greater? And can you still ask this, General?" replied the young man from the Marches, impetuously. "When the beams of the evening-sun wandered over that memorable field casting their light on the disgrace of France and her discomfited army, when the English army, bleeding but unconquered, covered the hill; and the German troops descended with proud tramp into the plain to decide the struggle victoriously,

picture that sublime moment to yourself, I entreat you; and tell me, who then was the greater man?"

"The God of Fortune," replied the general, "at least, he was more powerful than that well-known hero, who, even in his last day of battle, bore evidence of what a boundless gulf is placed between genius and rude, though well-fostered animal courage. He fell, not because England or Germany gained an ascendancy over him; but because, sooner or later, he must of necessity fall; because he carried on a war of destruction against himself which undermined his strength. Can you prove to me that he was conquered on that day at Waterloo by the genius of the English commander, or by your Blücher either?"

"Let us be just," interrupted young Willi, "we admit that none of his military opponents were superior to him; but yet this is not a proof of that mental greatness, of that elevation of soul, which makes a man carry his contemporaries with him; which forms his age, and brings a blessing even on the latest posterity. Napoleon was a great soldier, but not a great man."

"Son," replied the general, "how can you be great in any branch of knowledge, superior to any man of your century, without being a great man? It is not the machine, it is not the body that makes one great, it is the soul. The ancient forms of the states of Europe, devised a thousand years ago by wise men, collapsed because they were only forms which the spirit had quitted; they were shattered before the lightning of his genius; they met the fate of those corpses which are shut up in vaults disguised in their regal, burial splendour, which endure for ages, because the

imprisoned air of their sepulchre, does not permit them to moulder. Touch them with a living hand, let the free air breathe upon them, they fall to ashes."

"This proves nothing against me," said Willi.

"And besides, where is the large and mighty empire which this great man founded?" interrupted Thierberg. "You compare our grand old institutions, may Heaven forgive you! to a corpse. But what was then the imperial throne of that Corsican, what his state-policy, but a house of cards?"

"I never said that Napoleon was the man to found a great state," answered the elder Willi; "under him, France was a camp whose outposts were formed by the states of the Confederacy of the Rhine. He might, perhaps, have met an end which would have been unworthy of himself, or of France, if he had reigned for some years in unbroken peace and repose."

"Then was the end which he accepted worthy of him?" asked Rantow, with a smile.

"It is not the ground on which we stand," replied the general, not without some melancholy in his tone, "it is not the space in which we move, be it large or small, that can bring us either dignity or ignominy. It is we ourselves who ennoble or disgrace ourselves, and our position. The world laughed and jeered when the greatest intellect of the century was banished to a barren island. There, on the highest summit of a rock, they confined the noble old man, where he could only look on the sun, the broad ocean, and some few faithful hearts. But they did not reflect how much occasion for laughter they were giving to posterity; for it was not justice that banished him thither; who in Europe could punish him? It was fear. Thus it

must have been that people always saw in him the Dreaded One, and many hearts which had turned away from him, now began again to love him; thus misfortune is wont to conciliate men, and — there was, indeed, no one to succeed him who could cause him to be forgotten.”

“Do you think, my good neighbour,” said Thierberg, “that it was necessary for such an Attila to spring up to maintain the interest of the newspaper-writers? Forgotten indeed his name will not be for long, but he will be cursed.”

“Many have a personal right to do that, and I can only pity, not excuse, him for this, that his career in the world was not made along the beaten track. But people will also remember him with other feelings. The great ones of the earth appear, it is true, not to have learned much from him, but perhaps the lesser ones learned all the more. He sketched out his path as skilfully as Alexander; he followed it like Cæsar; he has been described as like Hannibal; he lived on that rock like Seneca; and his last days were worthy of a Socrates.”

“We shall never agree on this point,” replied the old Master of Thierberg, “as for myself, it appears to me that he began his career as an adventurer, followed it like a robber, dealt with his plunder like a desperate gamester, and finished like a comedian.”

“We are not his posterity,” observed Robert Willi, “in those times when all parties who speak from personal interest shall have vanished from the earth, then for the first time will people judge with unprejudiced eyes. He is not my hero; but in his Italian campaigns

he appears as a being of a higher order; and this at least you also will admit, Herr von Thierberg."

"That is possible," replied the old man, "he formerly excited my wonder and my admiration, but how quickly was I cured of my predilection! If at that time he had given back the throne to the Bourbons (he had the power to do so) then he would have appeared to me to be an angel."

"This was impossible, on account of his army who thought differently," answered the general.

"You may remember," continued the old man, "that I have often talked to you of a French captain, who rescued me in Switzerland from a great strait; the only Frenchman whom I esteem, and for him I would, even to this day, do anything in the world. On that occasion I talked to him on this point. I told him that France would be lost without redemption if it continued a prey to these eternal, and incessantly-arising revolutions. A king at the head of affairs could alone save it. He agreed; he told me that the Bourbons had a strong party in Paris, and that my idea might perhaps be fulfilled. I asked him what the Consul Buonaparte, who was at that time at the head of the government, thought on the subject. 'He does not express any opinion,' said the captain in reply; 'but, if I am able to understand him aright,' he added with a smile, 'France will soon have only one master.' At that time I understood this expression of my new friend to refer to the return of the Bourbons; unfortunately, its fulfilment was accomplished by Buonaparte himself."

At the beginning of this speech young Willi had risen; he had heard Anna's father relate the history of

his captain some dozen times already, and at this moment his blood was rushing too uneasily through his veins for him to be able to listen to it again. He walked up and down the hall at a loitering pace; and, when the old Master of Thierberg began, in his conversation with the general, to touch upon the present position of France, a point upon which they never differed, young Rantow also joined company with young Willi. He made him repeat to him his history during the last week, took him unperceived into the next room, and then into the spacious entrance-hall. He then suddenly stood still, and whispered in the ear of the amazed young man, "you need no longer have any secret from me; Anna has disclosed everything to me, and you may rely upon my assistance."

Robert was in doubt for a moment, because this intelligence came upon him so suddenly and unexpectedly; but when Rantow entered into details, and related to him what had happened on that fearful night, when he explained to him how unfavourable circumstances were at the present time, then the former no longer hesitated to accept the aid which was offered him; he entreated Albert, if it were possible, to make some opportunity for him to speak to Anna.

The guest from the Marches reflected for a few moments whether this could be rendered feasible. Anna, it was true, had never herself invited him to her boudoir in the tower; but he trusted that, thus accompanied, he might not be unwelcome. The only thing which could have deterred him was the dread of his uncle's anger in case the interview should be discovered; but the desire, (though he could not himself play the principal part) of at least assisting in the

little plot, overcame every other consideration; he signed to young Willi to follow him.

The passage to Anna's turret was not unknown to him. By the position of her window, her apartment must necessarily be situated two stories higher than the dining-hall. They mounted a steep, narrow, wooden staircase which, carefully as they trod, groaned beneath their every step. To their no small horror, they were met on the first floor by old Hans who looked at them with astonishment. Albert signed to his companion to go steadily forwards. He himself, without reflecting in his surprise whether it were judicious, took the old servant on one side. "Hans," said he, "if you breathe a word to your master."

"Oh," said Hans, laughing slyly, "there is no fear of it; as little as on that night when you nearly threw me into the Neckar; I am as dumb as a dead dog."

Rantow, set at ease, followed the lover. They soon reached the top of the staircase and then stood in a sort of ante-room: the cleanliness and elegance which pervaded everything, led them to imagine that here they found themselves not very far from Anna's apartments. Two doors opened upon this landing. They chose at random that nearest to them, knocked — no answer. They knocked again; the other door was now opened, and Anna appeared on the threshold.

She blushed when she saw the two young men; then, as though this visit did not in any way offend her, she invited them by a friendly nod to approach.

"I suppose you have come to look at the fine view from my turret?" said she; "and now I remember that you were never here, Albert; but I am so much ac-

customed to this beautiful prospect that it never once occurred to me to invite you here."

XII.

THE room was small, the furniture belonged to a former age; but, notwithstanding this, all was so cheerful, and so tastefully arranged that Rantow, when he had looked at the view, had inspected the surrounding country, and had examined everything carefully, pronounced this room to be the prettiest in the castle. There was only one large box knocked together of rough wood, and standing on a chest of drawers, that seemed to him not to harmonize with the rest of the furniture. Unwilling as he might be to disturb the two lovers who, apparently absorbed in the view down the valley, were however, whispering eagerly together; yet was his curiosity to know what was concealed in the mysterious case too great for him to refrain from questioning his cousin about it.

"I had almost forgotten the best thing of all," she exclaimed, "the picture for your father arrived to-day, Robert; I had it placed here because my father never comes here, and also because I wished to look at it myself."

With these words she removed the cover of the case; Willi assisting her in taking it down, and the figure of a horseman, rushing up a hill on a fiery charger, became visible.

"Buonaparte," cried Rantow, as the marked and intellectual features seemed to spring from the canvas to meet him.

"Do you recognize him?" asked Anna smiling.
"That was the conqueror of Italy."

"I could not have believed that the copy could have been so successful," observed Willi, "but, indeed, David was a great painter. How grandly is this figure depicted; how happy the idea of representing this aspiring man, not in the commanding position of general-in-chief, but at the moment of an exhibition of strength combining within itself the evidences of a powerful will, and at the same time the most sublime composure."

"I know the original," said Rantow; "it hangs in the gallery at Berlin, and I think this copy excellent; to an admirer of the subject this picture possesses all the greater interest because the idea of it originated with Napoleon himself. It is said that David wished to paint him as a hero on the battle-field with his sword in his hand; but, that Napoleon replied in these remarkable words, 'No, one does not win battles by the sword. I will be painted in repose, on a fiery steed.'"

"Thank you for this anecdote," returned Anna; "it makes the picture all the more interesting to me; and, Robert," added she, "is it not true that your father will be the more delighted with it on account of its origin?"

"Anna!" broke in upon the group a hollow but familiar voice. They looked round; and the old Master of Thierberg, supported by his servant, stood trembling before them with a flushed and angry face. The general, who was a little on one side, appeared embarrassed and uneasy. But so sudden was the shock, so great was Anna's dread of her father, so fearful his look, that she began to totter; and, if the general had not supported her, she would have sunk upon her knees.

"Are these the boasted manners of that gentleman your son?" said the old man, turning with a bitter laugh to the general, whilst he looked, now at the father, now at the son. "Can this be termed, what you sought to describe to me, as confining oneself within the most scrupulous limits of propriety? Sir, how happens it that you are alone with my daughter in her apartments?"

"Uncle!" cried Rantow, that he might set him right.

"Silence, boy!" answered the indignant old man, as he continued to glare on young Willi, with looks of fury.

"I think," replied this latter, calmly, and with proud composure, "the education of your daughter, and Anna's own ideas of propriety, should be your security that a man, even if he came alone, might venture to pay her a visit; always supposing she chose to receive him, and on this last point the decision, according to all the laws of good society, rests with the young lady herself, and not with you, Herr von Thierberg."

These words appeared only to inflame his anger still more; he drew a deep breath; but at this moment his nephew courageously stepped between them, and addressed him in a manner which, as his short residence with the Thierbergs had already taught him, could not fail to have its effect.

"Herr von Thierberg," he said, in a determined and grave manner, "a little while ago, you bade me keep silence; but I will not be silent when any one trenches too closely upon my honour. I, it was, who conducted Herr von Willi hither. I, it was, who detained him here; and he accompanied me hither, because I asked him to do so."

"You were here?" asked his uncle in a somewhat milder tone, "But what the deuce! have you to do with the apartments of my daughter? What did you come here to search for?"

With a theatrical movement, and dramatic gesture, his nephew turned to the further side of the room; pointed towards it with an outstretched arm, and said, "Yonder stands that which I sought."

The old man advanced with steps as hasty as his infirmities allowed. He looked at the picture, and then stood still with an expression of astonishment. His haughty demeanour vanished; the frown left his brow; his flashing eyes now sparkled only with pleasure and emotion.

"Great Heavens!" he exclaimed, as he took off the little cap he usually wore, "who brought this? Where, where did you find him? Who has painted him exactly according to my recollections? Who has stolen these features, these eyes, out of my very heart?"

The gentlemen looked at one another in astonishment. Anna, in perplexity, arose; and advanced towards her father; for she feared that he was talking in delirium.

"Who placed this picture here?" enquired he after a pause, as he turned round, and they all saw tears glistening in his eyes.

"I did, father," said Anna, in a hesitating voice.

"Oh, my kind child," he replied, as he clasped her in his arms, "what injustice I did you! a little time ago when I entered this room I thought you had wounded me deeply; and now, what inexpressible joy you have bestowed upon me!—Do you know him, Hans?" said he, turning to his servant, "Do you know him again?"

"Heaven forgive me! it is himself," replied the groom, "just such awe-inspiring eyes did he cast on the five foot-pads who robbed us; oh! he was a brave gentleman!"

They who heard the gentleman and his servant talking thus, could scarcely get over their astonishment. They looked smilingly at each other, as though they foresaw some extraordinary dispensation of fate; as though a heavy storm were passing away from them with a shower of blessings. But the general, who with beaming eyes had been watching sometimes Anna, and sometimes the picture, stepped forward; and asked the old Master of Thierberg, whom then it was that he recognized in this picture.

"He is the very same good captain," answered he, "who, at the foot of St. Bernard, rescued me from the power of those wicked soldiers. Well, he is the same person of whom I have so often talked to you; the model of a brave man, of a highly-educated, and experienced soldier."

"Then I implore you," said the general with inward emotion, as a tear also glistened in his eye; "I implore you in the name of this man, whom I also knew, that you will forgive him if later on, he behaved in a different manner from what you at that time thought he would do."

"What! you knew him!" cried the old man vehemently, as he seized the hand of the general, "who was he? What was his name? Is he still alive?"

"He is dead — the whole world knew his name — he is ——"

"Well?" said the old man eagerly to the general, whose voice appeared to falter, "Who? but not —"

"This man," cried the general, with a glowing look at the picture, "this man was — Napoleon Buonaparte, the Emperor of the French!"

The old man replaced his cap; he pressed his hand to his eyes, and his countenance betrayed a struggle between annoyance and emotion. But when, after a pause, he again looked at the picture, he seemed not to have sufficient control over himself to be able to view the proud horseman with aversion.

"You it was then," said he to him; "you were that undaunted man? That then was your opinion; you gave me back my clothes, my cap, and my purse, only that afterwards you might rob me of my all?"

"But, father," said Anna, soothingly, "how privileged you were! The first man of the age conversed so confidentially with you."

"Yes, that we did," replied the old man smiling, and not without some pride; "we conversed in a very friendly manner, I and he; and he seemed to take a pleasure in my society, I have never heard of the first Consul having spoken so candidly to any one as he did at that time to me! France will not be much longer without a king! were his own words. You fulfilled them, young rogue! Ha! And he looked just like this. Just thus he threw back his proud head once more when he spurred his horse up the hill, and the military music of the regiment resounded on all sides. General Willi, his was indeed a great mind."

"Assuredly," said the general with joyful emotion, as he pressed the hand of the old man; "but how did this picture come into your room, Anna?"

"Shall I keep it secret, Robert?" she answered, "No, for now he has already seen it. Your son wished

to surprise you with it on your birthday; and I gave permission that in the meantime the picture should be placed here."

The old Master of Thierberg listened attentively; he seemed surprised, and went up to young Willi, to whom he offered his hand.

"Young man," said he, "a little time ago, I did you bitter injustice; now I perceive that a nobler object led you to this room than I at first supposed; will you forgive my hasty words, my warmth?"

Robert coloured, "Certainly, Herr von Thierberg," he answered, "and if you had been ten times more hasty, you might indeed have wounded me, but you could never have offended me. There is nothing here to forgive."

"Really?" replied the old gentleman in a very friendly tone, "and if I may ask, where did you buy the picture? Might one not be able to purchase another copy? I should like to have the 'grand Capitaine,' my captain, in my room."

"If I know my father," said the young man, "he will probably rather see this picture in your house than in his own. Permit me, I entreat you, to hang it up there."

"You are making me a handsome present, dear Robert," said Thierberg, "what has become of our opinions? I believe that, in reality, we think alike of this Buonaparte; and it is you who offer him to me, and it affords me pleasure to receive him. I have only a few pictures, but have some few that are old and good; make a search among them, and take any that you like from my castle."

"Stop," cried the general; "I, too, am interested

in this transaction, I know the unfortunate taste of my son, and am aware how little he values old pictures. Will you not give him a modern one for it? Thierberg, in front of this picture, which is now full of meaning for you also, I repeat my suit; your Anna for this Napoleon."

The old gentleman was astounded. He cast looks of perplexity on those who stood around him. At last, his eyes remained fixed on David's picture.

"You have done much wrong," said he, "you have upset the old institutions of Europe; and now, after your death, would you still mix yourself up in the affairs of my household?"

"My Lord Baron," said old Hans in a voice of emotion, "do not take it ill of an old servant; but do you still remember what you said to the brave captain, and what you have often told me? 'Monsieur,' you said, 'if one day you should pass through Suabia, and come to our country, do not forget to call at Thierberg that you may not leave me your debtor for ever!'"

Herr von Thierberg passed his hand thoughtfully over his forehead, cast one more hesitating look at the picture, and then led Anna to Robert Willi.

"Take her," he said firmly and gravely; "I have not wished to do this, but perhaps it is well that all has happened thus. Take her."

The general embraced the old man with deep feeling; and whilst Robert, happy and surprised, pressed his bride's lips to his own, we do not know whether it was for the first time, the guest from the Marches, that he might not appear quite unsympathetic, shook the old servant cordially by the hand.

Albert related afterwards that, at this moment, he

thought himself to be a staunch Napoleonist, in spite of all his inward struggles to the contrary; and that, for the first time in his life, he felt and acknowledged the power and ascendancy which that great mind had been wont to exert over the hearts of others.

He also said that the old Master of Thierberg never repented of this strange exchange. He discovered qualities in his son-in-law for which he had never given him credit; and, when Robert assisted him with his advice and energy in the management of the property of his ancestors, he lived his own youth over again in the happiness of his children.

The guest from the Marches did not voluntarily talk of the marriage of the young pair. One might see that he would have preferred to have walked himself to the altar in company with the amiable Anna; but one feature in this brilliant day he took care never to forget in his repetitions of the story; perhaps merely for the sake of placing the enthusiastic follower of Napoleon, and his own newly-converted uncle, in a comic point of view. He said that the general's old guardsman had taught all the servants, and some young village boys, how to give cheers; and had admitted the fair bride into the secret; that he stationed his troop before the door of the great hall in the castle of Thierberg; and when several toasts had been given, Anna stood up with her large glass in her hand, and in her sweet voice gave the honour of a toast to "the Emperor's picture." The rejoicings then became uproarious; the guests touched glasses; Hans and the guardsman waved their caps as the signal, and from some fifty voices burst forth an exultant, "Vive l'Empereur!"

THE COLD HEART.

THE COLD HEART.

THE traveller through Suabia ought not to forget also to penetrate some little distance into the Black Forest; not so much on account of the trees (although one does not often find such a multitude of magnificent pines) as on account of the people who are quite unlike those of the surrounding neighbourhood.

They are taller than ordinary, broad-shouldered, and strong-limbed; and it would seem as though the invigorating fragrance with which the pine-trees perfume the morning-air had endowed them from youth with freer breathing, with a clearer eye, and with higher, if ruder, courage than belong to the people of the plains and valleys, who dwell outside the forest. And they differ from these, not only in size and bearing, but also in dress and in manners.

The inhabitants of the Baden side of the Black Forest, dress in the most picturesque costume. The men allow the beard to grow as nature has ordained; and their black jackets, their enormous tightly-plaited trowsers, their red stockings and broad-brimmed, peaked hats, impart to them a peculiar, but at the same time a grand and dignified appearance. The occupation of these people, is the manufacture of glass; they also make clocks which they carry about the neighbourhood for sale.

A people of the same race dwell on the opposite side of the forest, but their mode of labour has imparted to them habits and customs very different from those of the glass-makers. They trade with their forest; that is, they fell and hew their pines, float them down the river Nagold to the Neckar, and from the Upper-Neckar to the Rhine, far down into Holland; so that even on the sea-coast the Black Foresters, and their floats, are familiar objects. They halt at every town on the way down the rivers; and tarry with proud dignity to see whether any one desires to purchase planks and beams from them; but their strongest and longest beams they sell at high prices to the Dutch Mynheers for ship-building purposes.

These people are accustomed to a rough and wandering life. Their great delight is in floating down the stream on their rafts; their grief, in being obliged to wend their way home along the banks. Then their employment causes their gala-dress to differ widely from that of the glass-makers in the other portion of the Black Forest. They wear jackets of dark lincloth, broad green braces over the wide chest, and black leathern breeches, from a pocket of which a brass rule peeps out as a token of dignity; but their real pride is in their boots, which are probably the largest to be found in any part of the world; for they can be drawn up fully two spans above the knee, and thus these raftsmen are able to walk through water three feet in depth without getting their feet in the least wet.

Up to within a recent date the inhabitants of the Black Forest believed in wood-spirits; indeed, it is only in quite modern times that they have been in-

duced to give up this foolish superstition. It is curious that (according to the traditions of the forest) even these wood-spirits present a similar difference in costume. Thus we are assured that the little glass-man, (a good little spirit not more than three feet and a half in height) never showed himself in any dress but that of a peaked hat with a broad brim, a jacket, trousers, and red stockings.

Dutch Michael, on the contrary, who frequented the other side of the forest, is said to have been a broad-shouldered giant in the garb of a raftsman; and several who saw him assert that all their fortune would not suffice to pay for such a calf's skin as was required to make his boots. So large, they say, were these, that without any exaggeration, an ordinary man could stand up to his throat in one of them.

With these wood-spirits a young Black Forester is said to have met with an adventure which I will relate.

There lived in the Black Forest a widow, Frau Barbara Munkin; her husband had been a charcoal-burner; and after his death, she gradually trained her son, a boy sixteen years of age, to the same business.

Young Peter Munk, who was a smart boy, was very well content; because at home he had never seen men do otherwise than sit the whole week over a smoking kiln, or go (all black and sooty, objects of aversion) down into the town to sell their charcoal. Now a charcoal-burner has plenty of time for reflection, and thus it happened that when Peter Munk was sitting beside his kiln, the dark trees of the forest that were all around him, and the deep silence that reigned everywhere, excited involuntary melancholy and yearn-

ings within his breast. He felt troubled and uneasy; wherefore, he did not know. At length, he discovered the cause of his discomfort; and this was — his position. "A solitary, black, charcoal-burner!" said he to himself; "it is a wretched life. How respectable the glass-makers, the clock-makers, and even the musicians look on Sunday evening! But if Peter Munk were washed clean, and nicely dressed in father's best jacket with silver buttons and in bran-new red stockings, and some one walking behind me were to say to himself: 'who is that genteel lad?' and were to praise my stockings and my stately walk in his heart, see! so soon as he should have passed me, and should turn round to look, he would certainly exclaim: 'Oh! it is only Peter Munk, the charcoal-burner.'"

The raftsmen on the other side of the forest were also objects of his envy. Whenever these forest-giants came over with their fine clothes, carrying a half hundred weight of silver upon their persons in buttons, buckles and chains; when, with out-stretched legs, and haughty mien they looked on at the dance, swore in Dutch and smoked (like the most distinguished Mynheers) out of Cologne pipes an ell in length, then he represented a raftsman to himself as the very ideal of a happy man. And when these favourites of fortune dived into their pockets, and brought out whole handfuls of thalers and would throw the dice for six batzners (pieces of silver-coin) and lose or win five florins here, ten there, he would lose all self-possession and glide away sorrowfully to his hut. For on many a holiday he had seen one or another of these timber-lords lose more at play in one evening than poor Father Munk had earned in a year.

There were three of these men in particular, of whom he knew not which to admire most. One was a large, stout man with a red face, who passed for the richest man in all the country round. He was always called "Fat Ezekiel." He went twice every year to Amsterdam with timber for building; and had the good fortune always to sell at such a much higher price than any one else that instead of returning home on foot like the others, he was always able to drive grandly in a coach.

The next was the tallest and thinnest man in all the forest, he was called "Lank Schlurker," and Munk envied him chiefly on account of his extraordinary audacity; he would contradict the most respectable people; and, even if the public-house were crowded to excess, would insist on requiring and occupying more space than four of the stoutest men; for he always either planted his elbows on the table, or bent up one of his long legs beside him on the bench, yet no one dared to thwart him because he was so immensely rich.

The third was a young, handsome man who danced better than any one far or near, and who was for this reason nick-named the "Dance-room king." He had been quite a poor man and had been servant to one of the timber-lords; suddenly he became very rich. Some said he had found a pot of gold under an old pine; others maintained that, at a spot in the Rhine not far from Bingen, he had with the pole, which the raftsmen frequently thrust at fish, brought up a parcel of gold pieces which parcel belonged to the great Nibelungen treasure lying buried there. Be that as it may, he suddenly became rich, and was looked upon as a prince by every one, young and old.

Peter Munk often thought of these three men when he was sitting alone in the pine-forest. True, all three of them had one grand fault which caused them to be hated, and this was their insatiable avarice, their total want of feeling towards those who were either in debt or poor, for the Black Foresters are in general a very kind-hearted people. But every one knows what happens in these cases; although they were hated for their avarice, yet they were held in consideration for their wealth, for who could, like them, throw away thalers as though money were to be shaken off the pine-trees?

“Things cannot go on as they are much longer,” Peter said to himself one day, in a fit of troubled melancholy, (for the previous day had been a holiday, and the inn had been full of people); “if I do not soon meet with better luck I shall do myself some mischief. Oh! that I were rich and a person of importance like fat Ezekiel, or lank Schlurker; or a man of fame able to throw my thalers instead of kreutzers to the musicians like the ‘Dance-room king?’ where did the fellow get his money from?”

He pondered over every possible means of getting money; but none pleased him. At length, he bethought himself of the old traditions of his people, and how in ancient times men had become rich by means of Michael the Dutchman, and of the glass-man. During his father’s lifetime, other poor people had often come to pay visits at the house, and had talked a great deal of wealthy men and in what way they had become rich. In these narrations the glass-man played a conspicuous part. Indeed, when Peter came to reflect, he could almost recal the verses that were to be uttered

at the summit of the mountain in the heart of the pine-forest, in order to cause the glass-man to appear.

They began thus:

Hearken, thou for ages past
Master of the forest vast!
Thou whose treasured gold is laid
Deep beneath the pine-trees' shade,
Thou whose elfin form is shown —

But strain his memory as he would, he could not recal a single line more. Sometimes the thought occurred to him whether he should ask this or that old man how the incantation proceeded; but a certain feeling of dread lest he should betray what was passing in his thoughts withheld him from doing so. Besides he came to the conclusion that the legend of the glass-man could only be known to very few; for there were not many rich people in the forest; and why had not his father and the other poor people tried their luck?

At last he led his mother on to talk about the little man. She repeated what he already knew; she could only tell him the first line of the invocation; but said that the spirit would only show himself to those who were born on a Sunday between the hours of eleven and two. He then exactly answered the requirements, if he did but know the lines; for he had been born on a Sunday at twelve, at noon.

When Peter Munk, the charcoal-burner, heard this he became almost beside himself with delight and with eagerness to undertake this adventure. It seemed to him that to know a portion of the lines and to have been born on a Sunday were sufficient to compel the little glass-man to show himself.

Therefore one day when he had sold all his char-

coal, he lighted no new kiln, but dressed himself in his father's best jacket, and in his new red stockings, put on his Sunday hat, took his five foot black-thorn stick in his hand, and bade his mother farewell in these words; "I must go to the office in the town; for the lots will soon be drawn for service in the army, and I wish to remind the officer that you are a widow and I your only son."

His mother praised his intention; however, he went straight to the pine-grove.

The pine-grove stands at the summit of the Black Forest; and in those days there was not a village, not a hut within a circle of three leagues from it, for the superstitious people deemed its vicinity unsafe. Also, tall and magnificent as were the pines, yet within this district no one would willingly fell timber; for it had frequently happened when wood-cutters had felled trees there that the axe-head had sprung from the haft and had wounded them in the feet, or that the trees had fallen suddenly, carrying the men down also and injuring or even killing them; and one of the finest trees from the grove had been useless except for fuel, since the raftsmen would never take a single stem from the pine-grove upon their floats, for the tradition was current that if a tree from the pine-grove were on the float both men and timber would be unlucky.

This was the reason why the trees grew so thickly and so tall in the pine-grove that even in broad noon-day it was almost as dark as night. To Peter the whole scene was fearful; for he could hear no sound of an axe; no voice, no step but his own; the very birds seemed to shun this thick pine-grove.

Peter Munk, the charcoal-man, had now reached

the highest point of this pine-grove, and was standing before a pine of enormous circumference for which a Dutch ship-owner would have paid down many hundred florins on the spot.

This, thought he, is a very likely place for the keeper of the treasure to live in; he then took off his large Sunday hat, made a low bow before the tree, cleared his voice and said in trembling tone, "I wish you a good evening, Herr Glass-man," but he received no reply, all was silent as before.

"Perhaps I ought to repeat the verses" he thought, and then he murmured:

Hearken, thou for ages past
 Master of the forest vast!
 Thou, whose treasured gold is laid
 Deep beneath the pine's green shade
 Thou, whose elfin form is shown --

As he said these words, he saw, (to his great horror) a very small, strange figure peeping out from behind the thick trunk of the pine. He fancied he saw the glass-man just as he had been described: the little black jacket, the red stockings, the little hat, all were there; and he thought he perceived even the pallid, but delicate and intelligent face of which he had heard talk. But alas! just as suddenly as this little glass-man had peeped out, just so suddenly did he disappear!

"Herr Glass-man!" exclaimed Peter after some hesitation; "be so kind as not to take me for a fool, Herr Glass-man, if you fancy that I did not see you, you are very much mistaken, I saw you plainly peeping from behind the tree."

Still there was no reply, but sometimes he thought he could distinguish a low, hoarse laugh behind the

tree. At length, impatience overcame the fear which had restrained him until now.

"Wait a while, you little rogue," he cried, "I will soon catch you;" and with one bound he sprang behind the pine-tree; but there was no treasure-keeper in the green pine-wood, nothing but a pretty little squirrel that ran up the tree.

Peter Munk shook his head, he perceived that he had brought the charm to a certain point and that, perhaps, only one rhyme was wanting to enable him to entice forth the little glass-man; he thought now of this, now of that, yet could discover nothing. The squirrel sat on the lowest branches of the pine and seemed sometimes to encourage, sometimes to mock him. It cleaned itself, it curled its beautiful tail, it looked at him with its intelligent eyes: but, at length, he became almost afraid of being alone with the animal. For now the squirrel appeared to have the head of a man and to wear a three-cornered hat, then it looked like any ordinary squirrel, except that on its hind feet it had red stockings and black shoes. In short, it was a comical creature; yet charcoal-Peter was afraid of it, for he thought all was not right about it.

Peter retreated with quicker steps than those with which he had come. The twilight of the forest seemed to grow deeper and deeper, the trees to stand more thickly together, and he began to be so alarmed that he broke into a run, and it was not until he heard the barking of dogs in the distance, and perceived the smoke of a cottage among the trees that he became more calm.

When he approached and could distinguish the dress of the people in the hut, he perceived that in his anxiety he had taken exactly the wrong direction, and

had arrived in the district belonging to the raftsmen instead of that of the glass-men. The people who lived in this hut were wood-cutters; an old man, his son the master of the house, and some grown up grandchildren.

They received charcoal-Peter, who requested lodging for the night, hospitably, without asking his name or place of abode; gave him some apple-wine, and in the evening a large mountain-cock, the most dainty dish of the Black Forest, was put on the table.

After supper the good woman of the house and her daughters seated themselves at their distaffs round the large blaze which the younger ones fed with the choicest pieces of fir-resin. The grandfather, the guest, and the master of the house smoked and looked on at the women, and the boys were occupied in carving wooden spoons and forks.

The storm howled outside in the forest and roared among the pines; heavy blows were heard in different directions, and it often seemed as though whole trees were falling and crashing against each other. The courageous boys wished to run out into the forest to look at this fearfully beautiful scene, but their grandfather restrained them with grave words and looks. "I would advise no one to go outside the door just now," he cried; "for by Heavens! he will never come back again; the Dutchman Michael is this night felling a new raft-load in the forest."

The young people stared at him in astonishment; they might certainly have heard before of the Dutchman Michael; but now they entreated their grandfather to tell them something about him.

Peter Munk, who had heard Dutch Michael spoken

of on the other side of the forest in a vague manner, also joined in their request, and inquired of the old man, who and what Michael was. "He is the lord of this forest; and I suppose from your not having heard of him at your age that you must either live on the other side of the pine-forest, or else that you have never been far from home. But I will tell you all that I know of the Dutchman Michael, and what tradition says concerning him. Some hundred years ago, (at least so my grandfather used to say) there were far and near no more honest people in the world than the Black Foresters. In these days, since so much money has come into the country, men have grown dishonest and wicked. The young men dance and sing on Sunday, and swear, so that it is fearful to hear them. In former times they were quite different, and though the Dutchman Michael were to look in at the window at this moment, I would say as I have often said before, that he is to blame for all this evil.

"There lived some hundred years ago and more, a wealthy timber-lord who had many servants; he carried on his trade far down the Rhine, and his work prospered, for he was a pious man. One evening a man came to his door, such as he had never seen; his dress resembled that of the young men of the Black Forest, but he was a full head taller than any of them, and no one would have credited the existence of such a giant. This man asked the timber-lord for work, and the latter looking at him and seeing that he was strong and able to carry heavy loads, agreed with him for his wages and they concluded the bargain. Michael was a workman such as this timber-lord had none other. In felling trees he was equal to three other men, and if six dragged at

one end he would lift the other by himself. When he had been felling timber for half a year, he went one day to his master and said to him, 'I have now been here long enough hewing trees and I should like to see what becomes of my timber; how would it be if you allowed me this time to take it down the river?' The timber-lord answered, 'I will not stand in your way, Michael, if you wish to go out a little into the world; it is true that for felling trees I require strong men such as you are, whereas for the river much dexterity is required; but be it so for this time.'

"And so it was; the raft with which he was to go had eight divisions, and the last of these was filled with the largest beams. And what happened on the evening before starting? sturdy Michael brought down eight more beams to the waterside, thicker and longer than any that had ever been seen, and he carried them on his shoulder as though they were poles, so that every one was amazed. To this day no one knows where he felled them.

"The timber-lord laughed in his heart when he saw this, for he calculated how much these beams would sell for. But Michael said, 'Herr, these are for me to travel on, I could not journey on those little chips yonder.' His master was going to give him a pair of raftsmen's boots as a token of thanks, but he threw them on one side, and brought out a pair such as never could be matched, my grandfather assured me that they weighed a hundred pounds and were seven feet in length.

"The raft started; and if Michael had previously astonished the woodcutters, he now astonished the raftsmen; for instead of the raft making slower progress

as one would have expected on account of the enormous beams, it flew forward like an arrow directly they reached the Neckar.

“In places where the Neckar took a bend and where the raftsmen usually had some trouble in keeping the rafts in the middle of the stream, and in avoiding to run either on the gravel or sand, Michael always sprang into the water, and with one pull drew the raft right or left, so that he glided by without danger. Then when he found a straight passage, he would run to the first joint, make all the poles fast, thrust his enormous beams into the gravel, and with one push the raft would dash forward so that the land, trees, and villages seemed to be flying past. Thus they arrived at Cologne on the Rhine, where they usually sold their load, in half the time generally required. But when here, Michael said; ‘you without doubt are skilled traders and understand your own interest! but do you suppose that these men in Cologne need all this timber that comes from the Black Forest for themselves? not so; they purchase it from you for about half its value, and then sell it at a high price in Holland. Let us sell the small timber here and go on to Holland with the larger, and all that we gain above the ordinary price will be our own profit.’

“Thus spoke the subtle Michael, and the others were content; some, because they were well pleased to go to Holland; others, on account of the money. One solitary man alone was honest, and tried to dissuade them from running the property of their master into danger, and from cheating him of the higher price; but the others would not listen to him; they soon forgot his words, but the Dutchman Michael did not forget them.

“Thus they went down the Rhine with the timber. Michael managed the raft and brought them speedily to Rotterdam. There, they were offered four times the former price, and large sums were paid especially for Michael’s gigantic beams. When the Black Foresters beheld all this money they did not know how to contain themselves for joy. Michael divided it; one share for the timber-lord, the other three shares among the men. And now they consorted with sailors and all sorts of bad company in the inns, and squandered or gambled away their money; but Dutch Michael sold the brave man who had given them the warning to a crimp and nothing more was heard of him. From that time forward, Holland became a paradise in the eyes of the men of the Black Forest, and Dutch Michael was their king; for a long time the timber-lords knew nothing of this traffic; and money, swearing, evil habits, drunkenness and gambling crept in from Holland unperceived.

“Dutch Michael was, so tradition says, at length nowhere to be found; yet he is not dead; his spectre has appeared in the forest within a hundred years; and it is said that he has been of great assistance to many in getting rich, but at the cost of their souls; more than this I will not say. But this much is certain; that on stormy nights like this, he chooses out the finest pines in that pine-grove where it is said that no mortal can fell trees, and my father has seen him break a trunk four feet thick like a rush. He makes a present of such to those who turn from the right path and go to him; about midnight they float the raft and he goes with them to Holland. If I were king and master in Holland, I would order grape-shot to be fired into

them; for a ship which has but one plank in her bottom of Dutch Michael is sure to sink. Hence it is that one hears of so many shipwrecks; were it not so how could a strong, fine vessel as large as a church founder at sea? But so often as Dutch Michael on a stormy night fells a pine in the Black Forest, so often an old plank springs out from the joints of some vessel; the water rushes in, and the vessel is lost with all on board.

"This is the legend of Dutch Michael and it is certain that every evil in the Black Forest originates with him. Oh, yes! he can make a man rich!" added the old man in a mysterious tone; "but I should not like to take anything from him, I would not stand in the shoes of fat Ezekiel or lank Schlurker at any price; the Dance-room king is also said to have sold himself to him."

The storm had lulled during the old man's narration, the girls lighted their lamps timidly and went away; the men laid a bag of leaves on the stone-bench as a pillow for Peter Munk and wished him good night.

Charcoal-Peter Munk had never had such troubled dreams as those of that night. Sometimes he fancied that the dark gigantic form of Dutch Michael had burst open the window and with his monstrous arm was pushing in a bag filled with gold pieces which, jingling one against the other, made a pleasant, ringing sound. Sometimes he saw the friendly little glass-man riding round the room on an immense flask, and he thought he could again hear the subdued laugh, as he had heard it in the pine-grove. Then came a murmuring sound at his left ear:

In Holland is gold
 To be had at your will;
 For a trifle 'tis sold
 So your money-bags fill,
 With gold! gold! gold!

Next, at his right ear he heard the ditty of the treasure-keeper of the pine-forest, and a gentle voice whispered; "Stupid charcoal-Peter, stupid Peter Munk that can find no rhyme to 'shown' and yet wast born at twelve o'clock on a Sunday! Rhyme, stupid Peter, rhyme!"

He sighed, he groaned in his sleep, he wearied himself to find a rhyme; but as he had never made one in all his life his labour in his dream was in vain. However, when he awoke with the first glow of dawn, his dream rose before him with strange vividness; he seated himself at the table with folded arms, and meditated over the whispers which seemed still to sound in his ears. "Rhyme, stupid charcoal-Peter Munk, rhyme," he said to himself, and he rapped his forehead with his finger; but no rhyme would come. Whilst he was sitting thus, and looking straight before him with a troubled gaze, thinking of a rhyme for "shown," three young men in the forest passed in front of the house, and as they passed one was singing:

"At eve from the summit above
 I anxiously gazed o'er the vale
 And I looked on my heart's dearest love
 She was riding all tearful and pale.
 Alas! gloomy morning hath shown
 She hath bidden adieu to the glen
 She hath left me for ever alone
 No, ne'er may I see her again!"

The words fell like an electric shock on Peter's ear. He rose hurriedly, rushed out of the house,

(though he thought he could hardly have heard aright) sprang after the three young men and seized the singer hastily and roughly by the arm. "Stop, friend," he cried; "what rhyme have you there for shown? Do be kind enough to repeat to me what you were singing?"

"What business is it of yours, fellow?" replied the forester. "I may sing what I choose; and let loose my arm or—" "Nay, you must tell me what you sang!" exclaimed Peter, almost beside himself and holding him still more tightly. However the two others, when they saw this, hesitated no longer but fell upon Peter with heavy blows and gave him a sound drubbing till, from sheer pain, he loosed his hold on the third, and sank on his knees exhausted.

"Now you have your deserts," they said, laughing; "and, mark you, silly boy, never again attack people like us in the open road."

"Ah! I will mark it well!" answered Peter with a sigh, "but since I have had all these blows, be so kind as to tell me distinctly what that man sang."

They laughed still more and mocked at him; but he who had sung the song, repeated the words to him, and they proceeded on their way laughing and singing.

"Then," said the poor beaten fellow, as he raised himself with some difficulty, "alone rhymes to shown; now, little glass-man, we will try again to speak a word together."

He went into the hut, fetched his hat and long stick, bade farewell to the people of the cottage, and took his way back to the pine-grove. He walked slowly and thoughtfully; for he had to bethink himself of the verses. At last, when he had already reached the precincts of the pine-grove, and the pines were be-

coming thicker and higher, he had recalled the verse to mind, and joyfully he bounded to the summit. A colossal man in the dress of a raftsman, with a pole as long as a mast in his hand, stepped out from behind the pines. Peter Munk almost sank to the earth when he saw this man turn towards him with measured steps; for he thought, it was Dutch Michael and none other. The fearful figure remained silent and Peter peeped at him occasionally with terror. He was, indeed, taller by a whole head than the tallest man that Peter had ever seen; his face was no longer that of a young man, neither was it old, though covered with furrows and wrinkles: he wore a linen jacket, and the enormous boots drawn over his leathern trowsers seemed familiar to Peter from the legend.

"Peter Munk, what are you doing in the pine-grove?" enquired the forest-king at length, in a deep, threatening voice.

"Good morning, Landsmann," replied Peter, who tried to appear quite at his ease, although trembling violently; "I am wishing to go home through the pine-grove."

"Peter Munk," rejoined the other, casting at him a terrific and penetrating glance, "your road does not lie through this grove!"

"No, not my direct road," said Peter, "but it is so warm to-day that I thought it would be cooler this way."

"Do not tell falsehoods, charcoal-Peter," exclaimed Dutch Michael in a voice of thunder, "or I will strike you to the ground with my staff. Do you fancy that I did not see you importuning the little man?" he added in a more gentle tone. "Well, well! that was

a stupid trick, and it is lucky that you did not know the charm. He is a niggard, that little fellow, and does not bestow much, and he to whom he gives, has not a merry life. Peter, you are a poor simpleton, and I am sorry for you. Such a handsome, gay, young fellow who might do something in the world, and yet you only burn charcoal. Where others can shake out thalers or ducats by the armful, you can scarcely chink a couple of farthings together, it is a miserable life!" —

"That is true; you are quite right; it is a wretched life!"

"Well, I will not stop at this," continued the terrible Michael; "I have already helped many a brave boy out of poverty and you would not be the first. But tell me, how many hundred thalers do you want to begin with?"

With these words he jingled the money in his gigantic pockets, till it sounded as it had done in the night in Peter's dream. But Peter's heart thrilled with fear and anxiety at the words; he became hot and cold, for Dutch Michael did not look as though he would give away money from mere compassion, without requiring something in return. The mysterious words of the old man regarding those who had become rich, recurred to his mind; and, a prey to inexpressible distress and alarm, he exclaimed, "Many thanks, sir, but I do not desire to have any dealings with you and I know you already;" he then ran away as fast as he could.

But the wood-spirit with his giant strides kept close beside him, and muttered in a hollow, threatening voice; "You will think better of it, Peter; it is written in your forehead, it may be read in your eyes; you can-

not escape from me. Do not run so fast; do but listen to a word of reason: here is my boundary close!"

But when Peter heard this, and saw a little ditch not far from him, he hastened on still faster that he might cross the boundary, so that at length Michael was obliged to run faster and pursued him with oaths and threats. The young man cleared the ditch with a bound of despair, for he saw how the wood-spirit stretched out his pole and would have let it fall heavily upon him; he reached the opposite side in safety, and the pole splintered in the air as if against an invisible wall, and a large piece fell across near Peter.

He took it up triumphantly to throw it back to Dutch Michael; but at this moment he felt the piece of wood move in his hand; and to his horror, he saw that it was an immense snake that he was holding and which was already gaping at him with foaming tongue and lightning glance. He let go of it, but it had already twisted itself firmly round his arm, and was pushing its vibrating head nearer and nearer to his face. Suddenly an enormous mountain-cock flew down, seized the head of the snake in its beak, and carried it up with it into the air; whilst Dutch Michael who had seen all this from the ditch, howled and roared and raged as the snake was carried away by a stronger than itself.

Trembling and exhausted, Peter proceeded on his way; the path became steeper, the country wilder, and he shortly found himself at the giant pine. As on the previous day he made his reverence to the invisible little glass-man, and then began:

Hearken, thou for ages past
Master of the forest vast!
Thou whose treasured gold is laid
Deep beneath the pine's green shade
Thou whose elfin form is shown
To the Sunday-born alone!

"You have not quite succeeded, but since you are a Sunday-child, charcoal-Peter Munk, that will suffice," said a soft, gentle voice near him. He looked round with astonishment, and saw, sitting under a handsome pine, a little old man in a black jacket and red stockings, with the usual large hat upon his head; he had a pleasing and friendly countenance, and wore a little beard as fine as a spider's web; he was smoking a pipe made of blue glass which had a very strange appearance; and as Peter drew nearer he saw to his astonishment that the clothes, shoes, and hat of the little man were also all made of coloured glass; this was as flexible as though still hot, for it yielded to his every movement.

"You have met that churl Dutch Michael," said the little man, whilst between each word he gave a peculiar cough, "he tried to frighten you, but I have got his staff from him and he will never attack you again!" — "Indeed, Herr Treasure-keeper," replied Peter with a low bow, "I was very much alarmed; you then were doubtless that gentleman, the mountain-cock, who bit the snake and killed it; I offer you my most hearty thanks. But I am come to ask counsel of you; things fare ill and uncomfortably with me; a charcoal-burner cannot advance himself; and as I am young, I have thought that I might do better for myself. I often see others who have done so in a short time; take, for instance, Ezekiel and the Dance-room king, with whom money is as plentiful as straws."

"Peter," said the little man very gravely, and puffing the smoke from his pipe far up into the air; "Peter," said he, "say nothing to me of these men. What do they gain by having for a few years the appearance of happiness, only that afterwards they should be the more unhappy? you should not despise your trade. Your father and grandfather were estimable men, and they also followed it. Peter Munk, I will not believe that it is love of idleness that brings you to me."

Peter was frightened at the seriousness of the little man and coloured; "no," said he, "I know, my Lord treasure-keeper of the pine-grove, that idleness is the parent of all vices, but you cannot think ill of me if some other position in life be more pleasing to me than my own; a charcoal-burner is, indeed, but little esteemed in the world, and glass-men, raftsmen, and clock-makers are all so much more esteemed!"

"Pride often comes before a fall," answered the little lord of the pine-forest in a rather more kindly tone; "you are a strange race, you men! It is seldom that any one of you is fully content with the position in which he has been born and brought up; and it is certain that if you were a glass-man you would wish to be a timber-lord; and if you were a timber-lord then it would be the appointment of forest-keeper or the house of the bailiff that would suit you; if you will promise to work bravely I will help you to something better, Peter. It is my practice to grant three wishes to every Sunday-child who knows how to find me; the two first are unrestricted, the third I can refuse, if it prove foolish. Therefore wish now for something; but, Peter, let it be for something good and useful."

"Hurrah! you are an excellent little glass-man, and are rightly named the treasure-keeper, for the home of all treasures is with you. Well then, if I may wish for whatever my heart most desires; for the first thing, I will wish that I may be able to dance even better than the Dance-room king, and have as much money in my pockets as fat Ezekiel."

"You fool!" replied the little man angrily, "what a pitiful wish is this, to be able to dance well, and to have money for play! Are you not ashamed, silly Peter, to delude yourself thus as regards your happiness? of what use will it be to either your mother or yourself that you are able to dance? what will your money avail you when, according to your wish, it is to be spent at the inn and to remain there like that of the Dance-room king? Thus you will have nothing left for the whole week and will be as poverty-stricken as before; one more wish I will allow you subject to no control, but take heed that you wish with more discretion!"

Peter scratched his ear; and after a little hesitation, he said, "Then, now I wish for the handsomest and most luxurious glass-house in the whole of the Black Forest, with money and everything necessary for living in it."

"Nothing more?" inquired the little man with anxiety, "nothing more, Peter?"

"Well! you might add a horse and a little carriage."

"Oh, foolish charcoal-Peter!" cried the little man, and in his displeasure he threw his glass-pipe at a large pine so that it broke into a hundred pieces. "Horses! a little carriage! good sense, I tell you, good

sense, sound common sense, and judgment you ought to have wished for, and not for horses and carriages. However, do not look so melancholy; we shall see that it will not be altogether an injury to you, for the second wish was not entirely a foolish one; a good glass-house gives shelter to its owner and master; but if you had added thereto good sense and discretion, the carriage and horses would have come of themselves."

"But, Herr Treasure-keeper," replied Peter, "I have still one wish left, so that I might yet wish for good sense, if it be so necessary for me as you think!"

"Not so; you will find yourself in many perplexities in which you will be glad that you have one wish left; now go home. Here," said the spirit of the pine-forest, "are two thousand florins, and this is enough; do not come to me again to ask for money; for if you do so, I shall be obliged to hang you up to the highest pine; for thus I have done ever since I have lived in the forest. Old Winkfritz, who had the large glass-house in the lower forest, died three days ago. Go thither to-morrow early, and make a fair offer for the business. Behave well, be industrious, and I will visit you sometimes and will help and advise you, since as yet you have not asked for sense and judgment. But, and I say this very seriously, Peter, your first wish was a bad one. Beware of running to the inn, Peter, it never did anyone good for any length of time."

Whilst thus speaking the little man had taken out a new pipe of most beautiful glass, and filled it with dried fir-cones and put it into his little toothless mouth. He then drew out an immense burning-glass, moved into the sunshine, and lighted his pipe. When he had

finished, he offered Peter his hand in a friendly manner, gave him some kind instructions about his road, smoked and puffed more and more quickly, and at length vanished in a cloud of smoke which (like that from real Dutch tobacco) gradually and slowly disappeared, curling amid the summit of the pines.

When Peter arrived at home he found his mother in great anxiety about him; for the good woman believed nothing less than that her son had been carried off for a soldier. He, however, was in very good spirits, and told her how he had met with a kind friend in the forest who had advanced him some money that he might set up in some other business than that of charcoal-burner. Although his mother had already lived for thirty years in a charcoal-burner's hut and was as well used to the appearance of sooty men as a miller's wife is to the floury face of her husband, yet she had pride enough to despise her former circumstances so soon as Peter suggested a more brilliant lot to her; and she said; "Yes! as the mother of a man who owns a glass-house I shall be something different from neighbour's Grete and Bete, and henceforward I shall take a seat in church among the rich."

Her son soon came to an agreement with the inheritor of the glass-house; he retained the workmen whom he found there, and manufactured glass day and night. At first, the occupation pleased him; and he used to go to the glass-house at his ease; he walked about with his hands in his pockets and with an air of importance, peeped about now here, now there; spoke to this one and that, at which his workpeople often laughed not a little; and his great delight was to see the glass blowing. He often worked at this

himself and blew the strangest forms from out of the soft mass. But he soon became tired of this occupation; and began to come to the glass-house for only one hour in the day, then only once in two days, at last only once in the week, and his workmen did as they liked. All this arose from his frequent visits to the inn. On the Sunday after he had come from the pine-grove he went there; and who should be already bounding in the dancing-room, but the Dance-room king, whilst fat Ezekiel was sitting behind his tankard, throwing the dice like a prince.

Peter quickly felt in his pockets to see whether the little glass-man had kept his word; and behold! his pockets were full of gold and silver; and his legs began to thrill and tremble as though he must of necessity spring forward and dance. When the first dance was ended, he placed himself with his partner close by the Dance-room king, and when the latter made a bound three feet high, Peter made one of four feet; and when he danced in peculiar and graceful steps, then Peter twisted and turned his own feet in such a manner that all the spectators were lost in delight and admiration. But when it became known in the dance-room that Peter had purchased a glass-house, and when it was seen that in dancing as he passed the musicians, he threw them silver-coin, astonishment was unbounded. Some opined that he had found treasure in the forest; others supposed that he had received a legacy; but all respected him now, and held him to be a made man, simply because he now had money. Indeed, on that very evening he lost twenty florins by gambling and yet the money in his pockets rattled and jingled as though there were still a hundred thalers left there.

When Peter saw how highly he was esteemed he hardly knew how to contain himself for joy and pride. He threw his money about on all sides and shared it liberally with the poor; for, indeed, he knew well how heavily poverty had once pressed upon himself. The skill of the Dance-room king was cast quite into the shade by the supernatural art of the new dancer, and Peter now received the name of "Emperor of the Dance." The most enterprising gamblers on that Sunday did not stake so much as he did, but neither did they lose so much. And yet the more he lost, the more he won; for everything happened just as he had desired of the little glass-man. He had wished always to have in his pockets as much money as fat Ezekiel; and this was exactly the man to whom he lost his money; thus when he lost twenty or thirty florins at a time, directly that Ezekiel pocketed them, he had the same sum again in his own pockets.

By degrees he carried his carousing and gambling to a greater pitch than did the most idle people in the Black Forest; and he was called "Gambling Peter" more often than "Emperor of the Dance;" for now he played on almost every working-day. Hence his glass-house fell to ruin by degrees; and Peter's want of sense was the cause. He ordered as much glass as possible to be made; but he had neglected with the house to buy also the secret as to where the glass could best be sold. At length, he did not know what to do with the accumulation of glass, and he sold it off to travelling traders that he might have wherewith to pay his workmen.

One evening he was returning home from the inn; and, notwithstanding the quantity of wine which he

had taken to keep up his spirits, he was thinking with grief and horror of the ruin of his property, when all at once he perceived that some one was walking beside him. He looked round, and see! it was the little glass-man. He fell into a great passion, assumed a haughty manner, and swore that the little man was to blame for all his misfortunes; "what shall I do now with the horse and carriage?" he exclaimed, "of what use is my house and all my glass? I lived more happily when I was only a charcoal-burner, and I had then no cares; now I know not at what moment the bailiff may not come, value my goods and sell them by auction on account of my debts!"

"Is it so?" replied the little glass-man, "So! The blame is then to be laid on me if you are unfortunate! Is this your gratitude for my benefits? Who told you to make such foolish wishes? You wished to be a glass-man and were quite ignorant where you should sell your glass. Did I not tell you that you should be careful in wishing? You have been wanting, Peter, in common sense and discretion."

"What! common sense and discretion!" cried the other, "I am as prudent a fellow as any, and will prove it to you, my little glass-man;" and with these words he seized the little man rudely by the collar, exclaiming, "Have I caught you now, Sir Treasure-keeper of the pine-wood? Now I will make my third wish and grant it you shall. Here on the spot I wish for two hundred thousand thalers, and a house and — oh! unfortunate me!" he cried wringing his hand, for the little forestman had changed into molten glass and burned his hand like a flame of fire. But the little man himself was no longer visible.

For several days Peter's swollen hand kept his ingratitude and folly in his remembrance; but he stifled his conscience and said, "If they do sell my glass-house and all that I have, still fat Ezekiel will remain the same; and so long as he has money on Sundays, I shall not want."

True, Peter! But suppose he has none! And thus it happened one day, and it was a strange warning.

One Sunday that Peter drove up to the inn, the people were stretching their heads out of the windows, and one said, "Here comes gambling Peter!" another, "yes, the Emperor of the Dancers, the rich glass-man;" whilst a third shook his head and said, "people may talk much of his wealth, but they are also talking everywhere of his debts, and a man in the town was saying that the bailiff will not much longer delay to seize his goods!"

Meanwhile, rich Peter was courteously but pompously greeting the guests at the windows; he alighted proudly from his carriage saying, "Good evening, landlord, has fat Ezekiel arrived?"

A deep voice answered, "within, Peter! your place has been kept for you, we are already here and at cards."

Peter Munk entered the room, felt in his pockets immediately, and perceived that Ezekiel must be well supplied with money, for his own pockets were full to the brim.

He seated himself at the table with the others, played, and won and lost here and there; thus they went on playing till, when evening came, the other respectable people went home; then they played on by

candlelight, till two other players said, "We have had enough now, and must go home to wife and child!"

But gambling Peter asked fat Ezekiel to stay; for a long time he would not consent, but at last he exclaimed, "very good! now I will count my money and then we will throw the dice; five florins a point, for lower is mere child's play!"

He took out his purse, counted his money, and found a hundred florins; gambling Peter then knew how much he himself had, and had no occasion to count. But if Ezekiel had won before, now he lost point after point and swore fearfully in consequence. Whenever he threw a triplet, Peter immediately threw one also and always two pips higher. At last, he put down his last five florins on the table, and cried, "once more, and even if I lose this I will not leave off, for you can lend me some of your winnings, Peter; one good fellow will always help another!"

"As much as you like, even if it be a hundred florins," said the Emperor of the Dance, elated by his gains; fat Ezekiel rattled the dice and threw fifteen; "a triplet," he cried, "now we shall see!" but Peter threw eighteen, and a hoarse, familiar voice behind him said, "Done, that was the last!"

He looked round, and there large as a giant, stood Dutch Michael behind him; terrified, he let fall the money which he had taken up. Fat Ezekiel did not see the apparition, but demanded that gambling Peter should hand him ten florins to bet with. Half in a dream, the latter put his hand into his pocket, but there was no money there; he searched the other pocket, but neither could any be found there; he turned his coat inside out, but not one red copper fell out; and

now first did he bethink himself of his wish, always to have as much money as fat Ezekiel. All had vanished like smoke.

Both the landlord and Ezekiel looked at him in amazement, as he sought everywhere and could not find his money; they would not believe that he had none; but, at length, when they themselves had searched his pockets, they grew angry and swore that gambling Peter was a wicked enchanter and had wished away both his own money, and that which he had won, to his own home. Peter defended himself stoutly; but appearances were against him. Ezekiel said he would tell the horrible story to every one in the Black Forest, and the landlord told him that he would go into the town with early morning and make a complaint of Peter as an enchanter; and he added, they should live to see him burnt. They then fell upon Peter, tore his jacket off him, and flung him out at the door.

Not a star was visible in the sky as Peter slunk home in melancholy mood; and yet he could perceive that a dark figure was striding close to him, who at length spoke thus: "All is over with you, Peter Munk, all your grandeur is at an end, and I could have warned you of this before, when you would not listen to me, but ran away to the stupid glass-man. Now you see what happens when people despise my counsel. But try your fortune once more with me; I am concerned at your fate; none ever repented who had recourse to me; and if you are not afraid of the path, I shall be all day to-morrow in the pine-grove ready to talk to you if you call me."

Peter knew well who it was that spoke thus to

him, and he was seized with horror; he made no reply but ran quickly home.

When Peter went to his glass-house on Monday morning there were no workmen there; but there were instead people whom one does not like to see; namely, the bailiff and three officers of the law.

The bailiff wished Peter a good morning, inquired how he had slept, and then drew out a long paper in which Peter's creditors were enumerated.

"Can you pay, or can you not?" asked the bailiff with a stern look; "make your answer short, for I have not much time to wait, and it is three good hours' walk to the fort."

Peter, grown desperate, confessed that he had no longer anything, and left it to the bailiff to value his house, yard, factory and stables, carriage and horses; and whilst the bailiff and law-officers were going round examining and valuing everything, he thought, "it is not far to the pine-grove; as the little man has not helped me I will for once make trial of the great man."

He ran to the pine-grove with as much speed as though the officers of justice were on his track. As he passed the spot on which he had first spoken to the glass-man it seemed to him as though an invisible hand would have detained him; but he shook himself free and ran on further to the boundary which he had marked so well before. Almost breathless, he had scarcely called, "Dutch Michael! Dutch Michael!" before the giant raftsmen stood before him, staff in hand.

"Are you come!" he said with a smile. "Have they tried to flay you and to sell you to your creditors?"

Well! be calm! all your misfortunes spring, as I have said, from the glass-man, from this strait-laced over-pious little fellow. If a fellow give anything he should give heartily, and not like this niggard. But come!" he continued, turning towards the forest, "follow me to my house and there we will see whether we cannot strike a bargain!"

"Strike a bargain!" thought Peter, "what can he desire of me, what can I sell to him? Am I to render him some service or what would he have?"

They went at first up a steep wood-path, and then suddenly stood by a dark, deep, ravine; Dutch Michael sprang down the rock as though it were a marble staircase; but Peter became paralysed with dread; for as soon as the former had reached the bottom of the ravine, he made himself as tall as a church-tower and stretched out an arm like a weaver's beam, and from it a hand as large as the inn-table, and exclaimed in a voice which resounded like a funeral bell; "Stand on my hand and hold yourself steady by my fingers, and you will not fall."

Peter, trembling, did as he was ordered; took his stand on the hand and held on by the fingers of the giant.

Down he went deep and far; and yet, to Peter's astonishment, it did not grow darker; on the contrary, the daylight appeared to become brighter in the ravine, and his eyes could hardly bear it.

As Peter descended, Dutch Michael made himself small again; and he now stood, in his original stature, in front of a house of similar excellence with those inhabited by the richer peasants of the Black Forest. The room into which Peter was conducted differed in

no way from that belonging to ordinary mortals, except that it seemed very lonely.

The wooden-cased clock against the wall, the immense stove of Dutch tiles, the broad benches, the furniture were all the same here as elsewhere.

Michael offered him a seat at the table, went out, and soon returned bringing a flask of wine and some glasses. He filled these and then they began to talk. Dutch Michael discoursed so much of the enjoyments of the world, of foreign countries, of beautiful towns and rivers that Peter conceiving a great longing to see all these, told the Dutchman so plainly.

"If you had the courage and strength of body to undertake some enterprize, still a few pulsations of your silly heart would make you tremble; and then the mortifications caused by feelings of honour, by misfortune, why should a sensible fellow care for such as these? Were you annoyed when you were lately called a deceiver and a wicked fellow? Did it vex you when the bailiff came to turn you out of your house? What, tell me, what part of you was it that felt uncomfortable?"

"My heart," said Peter as he pressed his hand on his throbbing breast, for it seemed to him as though his heart were moving to and fro in anguish.

"You have," said Dutch Michael, "do not take it ill that I say so, you have thrown away many hundred florins on miserable beggars and other unworthy peopler of what use has this been to you? They have wished you blessings and good health in return, but have you been really any more healthy on that account? For one half of the money you have squandered you could have kept a physician. Blessing, yes, a pretty bless-

ing, when one is seized for debt and thrust out of one's house! And what was it that impelled you to feel in your pocket whenever a beggarman took off his ragged hat? Your heart, I repeat it, your heart; neither your eyes nor your tongue, nor your arms, nor your legs, but your heart."

"But how can one become so used to this as not to feel it? I have taken great pains to repress feeling and yet my heart will still beat and make me uneasy."

"It is true," replied the other laughing, "that you, poor fellow, can do nothing to prevent this, but give me your now scarce throbbing heart, and you shall see how comfortable you will then feel."

"You! my heart!" cried Peter with horror, "I should have to die on the spot. No, never!"

"Yes, if one of your surgeons wished to take your heart out of your body you would indeed die; but with me it is quite a different thing. Come here and convince yourself." With these words he stood up, opened the door of a room and led Peter inside. His heart contracted convulsively as he crossed the threshold, but he did not notice it, for the spectacle presented to him was both strange and astounding. On several wooden shelves were ranged glasses filled with transparent fluid and in each of these glasses lay a heart, there were also labels on the glasses with names written on them which Peter read eagerly. There was the heart of the bailiff in T.; the heart of fat Ezekiel; the heart of the Dance-room king; the heart of the chief forester; there were six hearts of corn-dealers, eight of recruiting officers, three of brokers; in short, this was

a collection of the hearts of people held in high esteem within a district of twenty hours' journey.

"See," said Dutch Michael, "all these have cast aside the cares and anxieties of life; none of these hearts beat any more with pain or uneasiness, and their estimable owners are very comfortable in having banished the unquiet guest from their houses."

"But what do they carry about within them instead?" asked Peter, who felt almost ready to faint at what he saw.

"This," replied the other, and he extended to him from a bag a heart of stone.

"What," replied Peter, unable to repress the shudder which passed through him, "a heart of marble? But hark you, Herr Dutch Michael, this must feel very cold lying within one's breast."

"Well, very pleasantly cool; and why should a heart be warm? In winter its beat is of no use to you; a good cherry cordial would be of more good than a warm heart; and in summer, when all is so hot and parching, you would not believe how cooling such a heart is; whilst, as I have said, it never throbs with anguish or fear, with foolish pity or any other uncomfortable emotion."

"And is this all that you are able to give me?" asked Peter discontentedly, "I hoped for money and you would give me a stone."

"Well, I think that with a hundred thousand florins you will have enough for the present; if you manage it skilfully you will soon be a millionaire."

"A hundred thousand," cried the poor charcoal-burner joyfully, "but do not thrust so violently at my

heart; we shall soon come to terms with each other; well, Michael, give me the stone and the money and you may take this pendulum out of its case."

"I always thought you were a sensible fellow," said the Dutchman with a friendly smile, "Come let us have another glass of wine and then I will count out the money to you."

They then sat down together over the wine in the other room and drank again and again till Peter fell into a deep sleep.

Charcoal-Peter Munk awoke at the joyous sound of a post-horn; and behold, he was sitting in a handsome carriage, driving along a broad road; and, as he leant out of the carriage, he saw the Black Forest lying behind him in the blue distance. At first he could scarcely believe it was himself who was seated in the carriage, for even his clothes were no longer the same as those he had worn on the previous day. However he remembered everything so clearly that at last he gave up meditating, and cried, "Charcoal-Peter Munk am I, that is certain, and none other!"

He was astonished at himself that he did not feel at all melancholy now that he was for the first time quitting the quiet home and the forest where he had lived so long; not even when he thought of his mother, who was sitting helpless, and in misery, did a tear rise to his eye nor could he give one sigh; all appeared to him matters of such indifference.

"Ah! truly," he then said, "tears and sighs, homesickness, and melancholy, all come from the heart and, thanks to Dutch Michael, mine is cold and of stone." He laid his hand on his breast; all was still there; not a throb.

"If he keep his word as well with the hundred thousand florins as he has done about my heart, I shall be delighted," he said, and he began to examine his carriage.

He found clothes of every kind that he could desire, but no money; at last, he came upon a pouch and discovered several thousand thalers in gold, and bills on various houses in different large towns.

"Now I have all I wish for," he thought, and he seated himself comfortably in a corner of the carriage and drove out into the wide world.

He travelled for two years; gazed out of his carriage right and left at all the houses he passed; when he stopped he merely looked at the sign of his inn, then went out into the town and caused all the objects most worthy of note to be shown to him; but nothing gave him any pleasure, no pictures, no houses, no music, no dancing; his heart had no share in anything and his eyes and ears were dulled for all that was beautiful. No pleasures now remained to him but those of eating, drinking and sleeping, and thus while he was travelling about the world he lived without any object, eating for amusement and sleeping from ennui. Now and then, it is true, he recollected how he had been more happy, more gay when he was still poor and obliged to work for his bread. Then all the beautiful views in the valley, then music and singing had given him the greatest delight; then he had been for hours long pleased with the simple fare that his mother was used to bring him at the kiln. When he thought thus of the past, it seemed very strange to him that now he could never smile when formerly he used

to laugh at the slightest joke; now when others laughed he would move his lips out of courtesy, but his heart never laughed with them. He felt that he was indifferent about everything, but contented he was not. It was not home-sickness nor melancholy, but a blank, wearisome, joyless life which at length brought him home.

When he drove from Strasburg and perceived the dark forests of his home, when for the first time he beheld again the powerful forms, the true, friendly faces of the Black Foresters, when his ear caught the sounds of home, full, deep but cheering, he put his hand quickly to his heart, for his blood flowed faster and he fancied that he must needs both weep and rejoice at the same time; but—how could he be so foolish? had he not a heart of stone, and stone is inanimate and can neither weep nor laugh.

He went first to Dutch Michael who received him with his old friendliness of manner. "Michael," he said, "I have now travelled and seen everything, but all is uninteresting, and I am weary of all. It is true that this thing of stone which I carry in my heart is a great protection to me, for I am never angry and never sad, but then neither do I ever feel any pleasure and it seems to me as though I were only half alive. Could you not make this stone heart capable of some little emotion, or, which I would prefer, give me back my old heart? I had become used to that in the course of five-and-twenty years, and if sometimes it were a little troublesome, yet it was a gay and a merry heart."

The wood-spirit laughed grimly and bitterly, "when

you are dead, Peter Munk," he answered, "you shall no longer be without it; then you shall have your soft, sensitive heart again, and then you will feel whatever arises, be it joy or grief; but in this world it can never be yours any more. Well, Peter, you have indeed travelled; but in the manner in which you lived travelling could not be of any use to you. Settle yourself now somewhere in the forest, build a house, marry, increase your fortune; you only need employment; you were wearied because you were idle, and now you would lay all the blame on this innocent heart."

Peter perceived that Michael was right as to the punishment of idleness and he devoted himself to making himself richer and richer. Michael presented him with another hundred thousand florins, and parted with him as his true friend. The report very soon spread in the Black Forest that charcoal-Peter Munk, or gambling Peter had returned again and much richer even than before.

Now all went on as formerly; when he was a beggar he was flung out of the door, but now when, on one Sunday afternoon, he made his appearance, every one shook him by the hand, praised his horse, asked him about his journey; and when he sat down again to play for hard cash with fat Ezekiel, he stood as high as ever in public estimation. He did not now carry on the business of glass-making, but ostensibly traded in timber. His principal trade really was in corn and money. Half the people in the Black Forest became in debt to him by degrees; he lent money at ten per cent or sold corn at three times its value to the poor who could not pay. He was now firm friends with the bailiff, and if any one could not pay Herr

Peter Munk to the day, the bailiff would ride out with his officials, value the house and goods, sell them instantly and turn father, mother and children into the forest. At first, this caused rich Peter some annoyance; for the poor people who were ruined besieged his door in numbers, the men entreated for forbearance, the women endeavoured to soften his stony heart, and the children moaned for a piece of bread; but when he had provided himself with a couple of good mastiffs this "cats-music," as he called it, quickly ceased; for he whistled and hounded on his dogs, and the poor people fled with cries. But his greatest encumbrance was the "Old Woman;" who, however, was none other than Frau Munkin, Peter's mother; she had fallen into poverty and misery when his house and premises had been sold; and her son, when he returned rich, had no longer paid any attention to her; old, weak, and infirm, she now sometimes came to a tree in front of the house; further she never ventured, for once he had sent her away; it was a grief to her to be obliged to live on the benevolence of other people because her own son had condemned her to a neglected old age. But his cold heart was never touched by the sight of the pale, familiar features, by the imploring glances, by the withered out-stretched hand, by the tottering form; and when, on Saturday evening, she would knock at the door he would sulkily pull out a small coin, fold it in a piece of paper, and send it out by a servant; he then heard her trembling voice, as she spoke her thanks and wished that he might prosper in the world; he heard her glide coughing from the door, but he thought no more about her except that he had spent the money to no purpose.

At length, Peter resolved upon marrying; he knew that any father in the whole Black Forest would willingly give him his daughter; but he was difficult to please; for he wished that, in this matter, every one should praise his good fortune and good sense.

He, therefore, rode throughout the whole forest, and looked now here, now there; but none of the fair maidens of the Black Forest seemed to him to be lovely enough. At length, after he had sought in vain in every dancing-room for the fairest of her sex, he heard one day that the most beautiful and most virtuous girl in the whole forest was the daughter of a poor woodcutter. She was living quietly and in seclusion, taking care of her father's house with skill and industry; and she never allowed herself to be seen at dances, not even at fair-time or Whitsuntide.

When Peter heard of this marvel of the forest, he resolved to pay his addresses to her and rode to her hut which had been pointed out to him. The father of the lovely Elisabeth received the grand gentleman with astonishment, and was still more amazed when he heard that was the wealthy Herr Peter who wished to become his son-in-law.

He did not take long to consider, for he thought that all his poverty and anxiety would now come to an end; he agreed without even asking Elisabeth, and the good child was so docile that she became Frau Peter Munkin without making any opposition.

But the poor girl did not fare so well as she had dreamed. She thought she understood her household duties thoroughly, yet she could not give satisfaction to Herr Peter. She was compassionate to the poor;

and as her husband was rich, she thought that it could be no sin to give a penny to a poor beggar woman, or something to drink to an old man; but when Herr Peter saw her do this one day, he said in a rough voice, and with angry looks; "Why are you wasting my property on beggars and tramps? What did you bring with you into the house that you should be giving away? The beggar's staff of your father would scarce suffice to warm up one supper, and you throw money about as if you were a princess. If I catch you doing this again you shall feel the weight of my arm." The lovely Elisabeth wept in her own room over the harsh disposition of her husband, and she often wished that she were at home in her father's poor hut rather than living with the wealthy, but stingy and hard hearted Peter. Oh! if she had known that he had a heart of marble, and that he was not able to love her nor any one, truly she would not have been surprized. But now whenever she was sitting at the door and a beggar man passed and took off his hat and began his moan, she would shut her eyes tightly that she might not see his misery, and clench her hand firmly lest she should involuntarily put it into her pocket and bring out a copper coin. Thus it came to pass that the beautiful Elisabeth was decried throughout the whole forest, and that she was said to be even more stingy than Peter Munk.

One day Frau Elisabeth was sitting in front of her house, spinning and humming a song; for she felt gay because the weather was fine and because Herr Peter had ridden out into the fields. It happened that a little old man was passing that way, carrying a large, heavy sack, and already in the distance she could

hear him panting. Frau Elisabeth looked at him with compassion, and thought that so old and so small a man ought not to be thus heavily laden.

Meanwhile the little man approached, staggering and out of breath; and when just opposite to Frau Elisabeth, he almost fell beneath the weight of the sack. "Oh! have pity on me, lady, and give me just one drink of water," said the little man, "I cannot go any further and am fainting away!"

"But at your age you ought not to carry such heavy burdens," said Frau Elisabeth.

"That would be true if I were not by reason of my poverty obliged to go on errands to gain my livelihood," replied he; "ah! so rich a lady as you, does not know how poverty presses, nor how grateful is something cool to drink, in such a heat."

When she heard this, she hastened into the house, took a pitcher from the shelf and filled it with water; but when she came back, and was within a few steps of the little man, and saw how he was sitting on the sack, in such sorrow and misery, she felt deep compassion for him; and remembering that her husband was not in the house, she put the pitcher of water on one side, took a cup and filled it with wine, placed a large piece of rye bread on it and brought them to the old man.

"Here, a draught of wine will do you more good than water at your great age," said she; "but do not drink it too quickly and eat the bread with it."

The little man looked at her in astonishment till large tears stood in his eyes; he drank it, and then said, "I am old, but I have seen very few people who

are so full of pity and who know how to bestow their gifts so generously and so heartily as you, Frau Elisabeth; you will prosper for this even on earth, such a heart does not remain unrewarded."

"No! and she shall receive her reward on the spot," cried an awful voice; she looked round, and there was Herr Peter with a face red as fire; "and you pour out my best wine for beggars and my own cup you put to the lips of tramps; yes, take your reward."

Frau Elisabeth started to her feet and implored forgiveness, but the heart of stone knew no pity; he swung round the whip that he held in his hand and struck her so heavily with the ebony handle on her beautiful forehead that she sank lifeless into the arms of the old man.

When Peter saw this he seemed to repent of the deed on the spot; he stooped down to see whether some life did not remain in her, but the little man said in a well-known voice; "Do not trouble yourself, charcoal-Peter, she was the fairest and loveliest flower in the Black Forest, but you have crushed her and she will never bloom again." The blood left Peter's cheeks and he said, "Then it is you, Herr Treasure-keeper; well, what is done is done and it was destined to be so. But I hope you will not denounce me to justice as a murderer."

"Miserable wretch," replied the little glass-man, "how would it benefit me to bring your mortal body to the gallows? it is not earthly judgment that you have to fear, but another and far more severe, since you have sold your soul to the Evil one."

"And if I did sell my heart," cried Peter, "no one is to blame for it but you, and your deceitful gifts; you treacherous spirit! you led me on to destruction, you drove me to seek help from another and on you lies the whole responsibility."

But he had scarcely uttered these words when the little glass-man began to grow and increase in his proportions, becoming tall and large; his eyes grew as big as a plate and his mouth like a heated oven from which flames burst forth. Peter threw himself on his knees and his stony heart did not protect him from trembling like an aspen in every limb. The wood-spirit seized him by the neck with claws like those of a vulture, whirled him round as the wind does a dead leaf and threw him to the ground till his ribs cracked again.

"Worm of earth!" he cried in a voice which rolled like thunder, "I could annihilate you if I would, for you have sinned against the lord of the forest; but for the sake of this dead lady who gave me food and drink I will grant you eight days respite. If you do not then return into the right path I will come again and grind your bones to powder and you shall go hence in your sins."

It was evening when some men who were passing discovered rich Peter Munk lying on the ground. They turned him over and tried to see whether any life were left in him, but for a long time their efforts to restore him were in vain. At length one of them went into the house, brought out some water and sprinkled him with it. Peter then drew a long breath, groaned and opened his eyes; he looked about him for some time

and then asked for Frau Elisabeth, but no one had seen her. He thanked the men for their help, went quietly into the house and looked all around, but Frau Elisabeth was neither in the cellar nor upstairs, and that which he had deemed a fearful dream proved a bitter reality. Now that he was so completely alone, strange thoughts came into his mind; he was afraid of nothing, for his heart was still so cold; but when he thought of the death of his wife, thoughts of his own death followed, and how he must pass into another world heavily laden, laden with the tears of the poor, with the thousand curses which had been unable to soften his heart, with the woes of the miserable creatures upon whom he had hounded his dogs; laden with the silent despair of his mother, with the blood of fair, good Elisabeth; and, even in this world, what satisfaction would he be able to give to the old man, her father, when he should come and ask, "Where is my daughter, thy wife?" How would he bear the questions of that Other to Whom all forests, seas, mountains, and the life of man belong? He was tormented even at night in his dreams, and at every moment he was awoke by a sweet voice which cried to him, "Peter, get a warm heart for yourself," then when he woke he would quickly close his eyes again, for the voice seemed to be that of Frau Elisabeth who was giving him this admonition.

On the following day he went to the inn to distract his thoughts and there he met fat Ezekiel. He seated himself beside him; they talked of this thing and that; of the fine weather, of the taxes, of the war, and at last of death, and how here and there one and another had died so suddenly. Peter then asked the

fat man what he thought of death and of what came after it? Ezekiel replied that the body was buried, but that the soul either went up to heaven or down to hell.

"Then is the heart buried also?" inquired Peter anxiously.

"Yes, certainly; that is also buried."

"But suppose one has not one's heart?" continued Peter.

At these words Ezekiel looked at him with horror, "What do you mean by that? Are you jesting with me? Do you mean to say that I have no heart?"

"Oh, heart enough; as firm as a stone," replied Peter.

Ezekiel stared at him with wonder, looked round to see whether any one was within hearing and then said,

"How do you know that? But perhaps your own has left off throbbing?"

"It throbs no more; at least not here in my own breast," answered Peter Munk, "but tell me, since you know now what I mean, what will happen to our hearts?"

"Why should this concern you, friend?" said Ezekiel smiling, "You have plenty to live on in this world and that is enough. This is exactly one thing that is so convenient with our cold hearts, that no feeling of fear troubles us at thoughts of death."

"Very true; but still one thinks; and although I do not now know what fear is, I remember well how much I dreaded hell when I was a little innocent boy."

"Well, nothing good will come to us," said Ezekiel; "I once asked a schoolmaster about it and he told me that after death, men's hearts were weighed to see how heavy they had become through sin. The light hearts rose, the heavy sank and I fancy our stones will be a good weight."

"Certainly so," said Peter, "and I often feel uncomfortable that my heart should be so unconcerned and indifferent when I think of such things."

Thus they conversed; but on the next night, Peter five or six times heard the familiar voice whisper in his ear, "Peter, get a warm heart for yourself." He felt no penitence for having killed his wife, but when he said to the servants that she had gone on a journey, he always thought, "And whither may she have travelled?"

Six days passed thus, and at night he always heard this voice and always thought of the forest-spirit and of his fearful threat; but on the seventh morning he sprang up from his bed and exclaimed, "Now then I will see whether I can procure a warmer heart; for the senseless stone in my breast makes life wearisome and desolate."

He put on his best clothes, hastily mounted his horse and rode to the pine-grove.

In the pine-grove, at the spot where the trees grew thickly he dismounted, made his horse fast, and went with rapid steps to the summit of the hill; and as he stood before the large pine-tree he began his incantation,

Hearken, thou for ages past
Master of the forest vast!

Thou, whose treasured gold is laid
Deep beneath the pine's green shade,
Thou whose elfin form is shown
To the Sunday-born alone.

The little glass-man came out; not with a kind and friendly aspect as before, but grave and sorrowful. He wore a little coat of black glass, and a long crape streamer fluttered from his hat. Peter well knew for whom he mourned.

"What would you of me, Peter Muuk?" he asked in a hollow voice.

"I have still one wish left, Ferr Treasure-keeper," answered Peter with down-cast eyes.

"Can hearts of stone wish then?" said the other; "You have everything that you can need for your evil disposition and I shall not readily grant your wish."

"But you promised me three wishes and I have still one left."

"I can deny it if it is foolish," replied the forest-spirit; "however I will hear what you would say."

"Then take the dead stone from me and give me my living heart," said Peter.

"Was it I who made the bargain with you?" said the little glass-man, "Am I Dutch Michael who has tons of wealth and cold hearts? Go, you must search for your heart with him."

"Alas, he will never give it back," answered Peter.

"Bad as you are you make me sorry for you," said the little man after a moment's reflection, "Since your wish is not a foolish one I cannot at least refuse my help. Listen then; you can never obtain your heart

by force, only by stratagem; that may perhaps not be difficult, for Michael is still but stupid Michael, although he is so wise in his own eyes. Go then straight to him and do as I tell you."

He now instructed Peter in all that he should do, and gave him a little cross of pure glass.

"He cannot deprive you of life, and he will let you go free if you hold this to him and pray to it; then, if you receive what you desire, come back to me at this spot."

Peter Munk took the little cross, imprinted all the words on his memory and proceeded to Dutch Michael's dwelling. He called him by name three times, and immediately the giant stood before him.

"So you have killed your wife," the giant exclaimed with a hideous laugh, "and it was well done; for she would have given all your fortune to the beggars; however, you must go out of the country for a time; for when it is found out there will be a noise made about it. I suppose you need money, and are come to seek it?"

"You have guessed rightly," answered Peter, "and a great deal this time, for it is a long way to America."

Michael went first and conducted Peter into his house. There he opened a chest in which was a store of money and took out whole rouleaus of gold. Whilst he was counting them out on the table, Peter said,

"You are a rogue, Michael, for you have deceived me; I wished to have a stone instead of my heart and that you should have my heart."

"And is it not so?" asked Michael in astonishment; "can you feel your heart? Is it not as cold as

ice? Have you any sensation of fear, or grief, or of repentance?"

"You have only made my heart stand still; it is within my breast the same as formerly, and so is that of Ezekiel who told me you had deceived us; you are not the man who could tear the heart out of one's breast without danger and without our knowing it; to do that you would be obliged to use enchantment."

"But I assure you," cried Michael sullenly "that you and Ezekiel and all rich people who deal with me have these cold hearts, and I have their real hearts here in my room."

"Ah, how glibly falsehood comes from your tongue!" smiled Peter, "you would impose upon any one. Do you think that in my travels I have not met with similar artifices by the dozen? The hearts here in your room are all imitations in wax; you are a wealthy fellow, I admit, but an enchanter you are not."

The giant grew furious and burst open the door of the room "Come in, and read the labels; there, that is Peter Munk's heart; do you see how it throbs, could one make that of wax?"

"And yet it is of wax," answered Peter, "a real heart does not beat like that, and I have mine still within my breast; no, you cannot use enchantment."

"But I will prove it to you," cried the other angrily, "you shall feel for yourself that this is your heart."

He took it, tore open Peter's jacket, took the stone out of his breast and showed it to him. Then he took the heart, breathed on it, and put it carefully in its proper place. Peter immediately felt how it throbbed and how he was able again to rejoice thereat.

"How do you feel now?" asked Michael smiling.

"Assuredly you are quite right," answered Peter, taking his little cross carefully out of his pocket, "I could not have believed that such a thing could have been done."

"Was it not true? and true that I can use enchantment? but come, now I will put the stone back for you."

"Softly, Herr Michael!" cried Peter, retreating a step and holding the little cross towards him; "Mice can be caught with bacon, and this time you are the person deceived," and immediately he began to pray in the first words that he remembered.

Michael now became gradually smaller and smaller, fell down and wriggled about like a worm, sighing and groaning whilst all the hearts that were around them beat and throbbed till the sound was like that in a watchmaker's shop. Peter was afraid and began to feel very uncomfortable; he ran out of the room and out of the house; and, urged forward by alarm, he climbed up the wall of rock, for he heard how Michael had risen and how he was stamping and sending imprecations after him. When he reached the top he ran towards the pine-grove; a fearful storm now arose; the lightning played around him right and left, rending the trees; but he arrived safely within the territory of the little glass-man.

His heart throbbed with joy; joy that it was able to throb. He now looked back with as much horror on his past life as on the storm which had desolated the beautiful forest behind him. He thought of Frau Elisabeth, his good and beautiful wife whom he had

killed from avarice; he appeared to himself to be an outcast among men; and when he reached the hill belonging to the little glass-man, he was weeping violently.

The treasure-keeper was seated under the pine-tree smoking his little pipe, but he looked more cheerful than before.

"Why are you weeping, charcoal-Peter?" he asked, "Have you not recovered your heart? is that cold stone still within your breast?"

"Alas, sir!" sighed Peter, "when I bore within me that cold heart of stone I never wept; my eyes were as dry as the country is in July; but now my old heart is almost broken on account of what I have done. I have hurried my debtors into misery; I have set my dogs at the poor and — but you yourself know how my whip fell on that beautiful forehead."

"Peter, you have been a great sinner," said the little man, "money and idleness were your ruin, so that your heart became turned to stone and no longer knew either joy or suffering, penitence or pity. But repentance atones for much; and if I were sure that your past life were really a source of grief to you, I might be able to do something for you."

"I wish for nothing more," said Peter drooping his head mournfully, "all is over with me now, life has no joys left for me; what should I do all alone in the world? my mother can never forgive me for my conduct to her, and perhaps I have brought her to the grave; monster that I am! and Elisabeth, my wife — rather kill me, Herr Treasure-keeper, and put an end to my miserable existence at once."

"Well," replied the little man, "if you wish for nothing else you can have that, for I have my axe at hand." He then quietly took his little pipe out of his mouth, put it out, and replaced it in his pocket. He rose slowly and went behind the pine-tree. Peter sat weeping on the grass; his life was no longer of any value to him, and he patiently awaited his death stroke. In a few minutes he heard gentle steps behind him and thought, "now he is coming."

"Look up once more, Peter Munk," cried the little man.

Peter dashed the tears from his eyes, looked round and saw — his mother and Elisabeth, his wife, who were gazing at him tenderly.

He sprang up joyfully, "Then you are not dead, Elisabeth? and you also are here, mother, and have you forgiven me?"

"They will forgive you," said the little glass-man, "because you feel true repentance, and all shall be forgotten. Now go home to your father's hut and be a charcoal-burner as formerly. If you are a true and honest man, you will be an honour to your trade, and your neighbours will love and respect you more than if you had ten tons of gold."

With these words the little glass-man took leave of them.

The three praised and blessed him, and then went home. The magnificent house of the wealthy Peter was no longer standing; the lightning had struck it and burnt all his treasures; but his paternal hut was not far distant. They turned their steps thither, and the great loss Peter had sustained did not distress

them. But how astonished they were when they reached the hut! It had become a beautiful farm-house and everything in it was simple but neat and good.

"The kind little glass-man has done this," cried Peter.

"How beautiful!" said Frau Elisabeth, "and all here looks to me so much more comfortable than in the large house with our numerous servants."

From this time forth Peter Munk became an industrious, true-hearted man. He was contented with that which he had, and followed his business cheerfully; and thus it happened that, prospering by his own exertions, he became beloved and respected throughout the whole forest. He no more quarrelled with Frau Elisabeth, he honoured his mother and relieved the poor who knocked at his door.

When after a year and a day Frau Elisabeth presented him with a handsome boy, Peter went to the pine-grove and repeated his incantation. But the little glass-man did not show himself.

"Herr Treasure-keeper," cried Peter aloud, "pray, listen to me; I wish for nothing but to ask you to be Godfather to my little son."

Still there was no answer, only a breath of wind sighed through the pines making some cones to fall down on the grass.

"Then since you will not allow yourself to be seen, I will take these with me as a remembrance," cried Peter, and he put the cones into his pocket and went home.

But when he reached home and took off his Sunday jacket, and his mother turned the pockets inside out before putting it by in the chest, four grand rolls

of money fell out and when they opened them, they were all good new thalers, not one bad coin among them. And this was a Godfather's present from the man of the pine-forest to little Peter.

Thus they lived on quietly and happily; and often in after years when Peter Munk had become grey, he would say, "It is better to be content with a little than to have gold and wealth and a 'COLD HEART.'"

THE END.

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