SELECT WORKS OF LUDWIG TIECK.

Tales from the "Phantasus,"

ETC.

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Ludwig Tieck.

Tales

From the "Phantasus," etc.

of

Ludwig Tieck.

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PREFACE.

GOETHE says of himself, that the first sight of a work of genuine art was always displeasing to him. There was no correspondence between his own mind and the object he was contemplating. It would not fit—became galling. He was made conscious of a deficiency in himself; and the result was, a feeling of annoyance and irritation at the cause of it. Yet if he could overcome this aversion, and set himself to work to understand it, in faith that ultimately he would find himself repaid, he never failed to make the most delightful discoveries; new powers developed themselves in himself, and beauty after beauty came out in the object.

It is to this cause that we attribute the comparatively small success which the works of Ludwig Tieck have hitherto met with in England—just because they *are* genuine; and we venture to affirm, with some confidence, that if people will take the same pains, they will find their efforts attended with a similar result to that above mentioned. There is nothing strange in all this: there is a deep gloomy earnestness about Tieck, an unprepossessing sternness, which makes people

feel uncomfortable, without exactly knowing why. They cannot make out his way of thought. They feel it is deep and strong; but as they do not start with any confidence in him as a teacher, it serves only to make them painfully conscious of their own dimensions, and afraid of what the strong man may do with them. For all they know, he may be a tyrant, using his powers only for destruction; breaking in and wasting all their beautiful gardens, and leaving them nothing but ashes, and torn-off leaves, and withering flowers.

More or less, there is always something awful in a purely ethical writer. Tieck's works do not profess to be religious writings. He is concerned wholly with the nature of man as he finds him, and with the working of the moral laws, the natural tendencies of virtue and vice in the system of the universe; and in this way he contrasts strikingly with writers like Fouqué, whose works have so much of a distinct religious character. The wild preternatural spirit which breathes through all his tales forms but a subservient part. It does but represent the elements in which our moral nature hangs; and is, in fact, nothing more than the very element in which we all live, only held in a certain light that we may see it. Why he does not introduce the real influences of the other world as revelation makes them known to us, is a question which we need not ask ourselves; it is enough that it was not his purpose.

But perhaps we shall find the clue to the general tone of his mind in the state of things in Germany, and the general condition of European feeling at the time in which he was brought up.

His mind broke into consciousness at the stormy close of the eighteenth century, when Europe was rocking to her foundation, and all faith in God was dead. The seven thousand who would not bow the knees to the Deity of man were hanging off in fear and trembling, and watching for the doom of the world. In France, old Voltaire worshipped as a god. In Germany, the students at the universities caricaturing the sacrifice of the mass

at the doors of the beerhouses, and one riding through the streets of Göttingen upon an ass, to try, as he said, what must have been the feelings of the Saviour (Goethe, *Wahrheit und Dichtung*). It was a time of which Jean Paul said, "Now strikes the twelfth hour of the night; and the foul birds of night are screaming, and spectres dance; the dead walk abroad, the living dream."

Tieck was born in the Roman Catholic Church; but he was brought up without any religious teaching; and the Church herself in those dark hours possessed but few or none of those outward marks of holiness which could make him feel safe in trusting himself implicitly to her guidance: the poison of infidelity was in her very heart; disgraced by the grossest idolatry, her enemies battering furiously at her from without, and she apparently helpless to resist them. It is not so now: she too has felt the warm breath of spring that has since swept over the face of the earth, and is waking her up to new life and energy; yet, if even now such scenes as those of last summer at Treves can shock the senses of the cultivated world, what must it have been then? She was like a cracked bell that would not ring when it was struck.

In a country, then, where there was no religion to which he could trust,—no philosophy but an infidel one; in despair of external guidance, Tieck was forced to the bold step of trying for himself what all these systems were made of; of going down himself, and searching the foundations on which they rested; what this nature of his really was. He dared stand boldly up before the world, and look it in the face, and ask it what it was. And the still more awful questions he asked of his own heart: What am I? How came I here? What is my business here? It is a fiery trial; and woe to him who fails! Better he had never been born! It is a sphinx he has to answer: if he find not the solution of the riddle, the monster will devour him. And few hearts but will quail, and few cheeks but will blanch, and few heads but will reel, with those bottomless abysses of scepticism

yawning round. But it is like the Catholic legend of the purgatory of St. Patrick. Few of those who ventured in ever returned to tell the tale; but those who did were safe for ever. A man knows too well the value of the true, when he has been at such cost in the pursuit of it, to risk the losing of it again. "Abdallah" and "William Lovell," the two first books of any importance which Tieck published, shew him in the centre of the fearful struggle, wrestling with those two first unanswerable questions. And so at last he was content to leave them. To the last question he wrung out an answer from the depths of his own being; he comes now to offer it to us—a true teacher, if a stern one: and we shall do well to listen to his words; for the solemn earnestness which breathes through every line he has written shews how deeply he has read the mystery of life. The tales in the present volume were written in the first period after he emerged into a calmer and clearer light; and to these for the rest of this Preface we shall confine ourselves. We have said enough to account for their peculiar character externally; and the consideration of his later writings had better be left to another opportunity: to speak of them now would be but criticism without an object; before long some of them will be produced before the public, and what is to be said will be said then. Great things have happened in Germany since that time: a literature has sprung up almost without parallel for depth, and richness, and originality; and schools of poetry and philosophy various as those of Athens. Tieck has led one school, Goethe another; and if officious followers attempted to push them into rivalry, each knew his own place too well for such unnatural feud to endure.

The first startling feature, then, in all the characters in these tales is their terrible reality. In all the circumstances of the wild and wonderful, the supernatural working visibly, and interfering in the direction and control for good and evil of the affairs of the world; instead of finding the persons of the same fantastic character, such as we might naturally expect, as harmonising better with

the elements in which they work; instead of saints with power of working miracles, or the ideal heroes of the age of chivalry,—we have the very men and women which we ourselves are, and such as we see every day around us. Excepting, perhaps, Goethe, no one knew his own age better than Tieck: he is a modern poet in every sense of the word; and that is why we claim so high a place for him.

The true poet of any time is he who can make that time transparent—who can let his readers in behind the curtain of their own souls and that of the society in which they live, and shew them what they are all doing, hoping, fearing—clear up their cloudy perceptions, and say for them what they would say for themselves if they could. This is exactly what Tieck does. His Emilius's, Egberts, Ludwigs,—what are they all, but the very men of whom every day he walked into the street he saw thousands? No matter what the conditions be under which he pictures them working, his men are real men, not fantastic; and that is all we have any right to require.

Yet I may say something about these marvellous conditions in which they appear; for perhaps even they are not so unreal as they seem.

It is only because we are used to them that this world and the beings that inhabit it do not seem wonderful. There is nothing in the phenomena which surround us abstractedly more reasonable than any other set might be which worked by fixed rules. As a matter of fact we experience one class, but that is all. It is not that one is wonderful and the other simple, as people seem to assume. This world we live in is, indeed, teeming with wonders. The poet has but to hold a magnifying-glass before it, and forthwith a thousand new forms of beauty start out before our eyes; and what before seemed most beautiful has become a monster. There are, indeed, poets who can produce the highest effect without any such magnifying; and the world as mirrored in their minds appears transfigured, its form and proportions continuing all

the same. Yet the number of such spirits as have appeared on this planet of ours we may count upon our fingers, and of those who are fit to read and understand them the ratio is the same. Even Shakspere does not at times disdain the aid of the supernatural; and the idea of nature, as Tieck offers it, even its wildest and most fantastic form, is far deeper and nearer the truth than is the dull, common-place, lifeless thing which most men seem to regard it as. The question, however, is one which he will best qualify people to answer for themselves.

Most of the tales in the present volume belong to the "Phantasus." A party of persons meet together for conversation on various subjects of art and literature, and these stories, with sundry other dramas, are read aloud by different members of the society. They are introduced with the following prefatory dialogue: —

"It is not at every moment, nor every time we choose to turn to her," said Antony, "that Nature will unfold her secrets to us; or rather, it is not always that we are in the mood to feel her sacredness. There must first be a harmony in ourselves, if we are to find what surrounds us harmonious; otherwise we do but cheat ourselves with empty phrases, without ever rising to a true enjoyment of beauty. It may be, perhaps, that there are times when unexpectedly some blessed influence descends out of Heaven upon our hearts, and unlocks the door of inspiration; but towards this we can add nothing. We have no right, no means of looking for it; it is a revelation within us we know not how. So much is certain, that it is not above twice, or at most three times, in a man's life that he has the fortune, in any true sense, to see a sunrise. When we do see it, it does not pass away like a summer cloud before our minds; rather it forms one of the great epochs in our lives. From such ecstatic feelings as we receive then it is long and long ere we recover; by the side of these exalted moments years dwindle into nothingness. But it is only in the calm-

ness of solitude that these high gifts can descend upon us. A party collecting itself to see it as a sight on the top of a mountain, is only standing as it were before an exhibition at a theatre, and can bring from it nothing but the same kind of empty pleasure and foolish criticisms."

"Still stranger is it," said Ernest, "that the great majority of men are so dead to that awe and wonder, that fearful amazement with which Nature often fills some minds. If they can feel it, it is only as an obscure bewildered sensation of they know not what."

"It is not only on the dreary peaks of the St. Gothard that we can feel the terribleness of Nature. There are times when the most beautiful scene is full of spectres that fly shrieking and screaming across our hearts. Such strange shadowy forms, such wild forebodings, go often hunting up and down our fancy, that we are fain to fly from them in terror, and rid ourselves of our phantom rider, by plunging into the dissipations of the world. While under such influences wild poems and stories often rise up in us to people the dreary chaos of desolation, and adorn it with creations of art; and these forms and figures will be unconscious betrayers of the tone and temper of the mind in which they spring. In these kind of stories the beautiful mingles itself with the terrible, the sublime with the childish, goading our fancy into a kind of poetic madness, and then turning it to roam at will through the entire fabric of our souls."

"Are the stories you are going to read to us of this kind?" asked Clara.

"Perhaps," replied Ernest.

"And not allegorical?"

"As you please to call them. There is not, and there cannot be any creation of art which has not some kind of allegory at the bottom of it, however little it may let itself be seen. The two forms of good and evil appear in every poem; they meet us at every turn, in every thing man produces, as the one eternal riddle

in an endless multiplicity of forms, which he is for ever struggling to resolve. As there are particular aspects in which the most every-day life appears like a myth, so it is possible to feel oneself in as close connexion with, as much at home in the middle of the wildest wonders as the ordinary incidents of life. One may go so far as to say, that the commonest, simplest, pleasantest things, as well as the most marvellous, can only be said to be true, can only exert an influence on our minds, in so far as they contain some allegory as their groundwork, as the link which connects them with the system of the universe. This is why Dante's allegories come so home to us, because they pierce through and through to the very heart and centre of reality. Novalis says, there is no real history, except what might be fable. Of course, there are many weak and sickly poems of this kind, which merely drag wearily on to the moral, without taking the imagination along with them; and these of all the different sorts of instruction or entertainment are the most tiresome. But it is time to proceed to our tales."

And here we would gladly leave this matter, and let the tales tell their own story. What their idea is as a whole, they speak plainly enough; and it would be to destroy their effect, as well as to misunderstand the whole theory of this kind of fiction, to translate them into a series of moral reflections, and append a didactic sentiment to them as to one of Æsop's fables. And yet English readers will not be content with a suggestion of allegory; they will be asking for meanings, and requiring to have the whole matter laid out before them in fair, plain characters of black and white; so that notwithstanding my full consciousness of the general undesirableness and the unphilosophical nature of such a

proceeding, I will offer a few general remarks, in the way of elucidation, for three or four of these stories, which shall put people on the scent to find the real meaning, not only of these stories in particular, but in general of any such as may be brought before them. Consoling myself, therefore, with the reflection that a preface is always read, as it is written, the last thing in a book, and that in that case my explanation can hurt no one, and may be of some profit to those who have failed to see any thing for themselves, I proceed.

"Egbert," "Eckhart," and the "Runenberg," naturally form into a group together. They are different exhibitions of very similar ideas, and it will be enough to explain one. I should advise people, however, to read the three together straightforward, and then try to analyse for themselves the impression left upon their minds. Perhaps it may be something of this sort: that a single sin unrepented of and unatoned for becomes a destiny; a seed from which, however diminutive and trifling it may look, a whole life of crime and wickedness shoots up as a matter of course, perhaps inevitably. Cause and effect, effect and cause, going on producing and reproducing each other, each successive step leading further and deeper into the mire, return becoming more and more difficult, and at last impossible.

Look at Christian in the "Runenberg." He is born to a calm and serene life of tranquillity and peace; affectionate parents—a simple routine of the gentlest and most beautiful of all nature's choicest occupations—far away from all temptation—secure from every danger—a home that ought to have given him all, and more than all, of enjoyment and content,—whose life could promise more happily than his? Yet he has no love, no heart, no feeling for it. His sense of duty is not strong enough to set him to work; he finds it dull and uninteresting; he craves for excitement, for something new. The *plain* life is not grand enough to suit his exalted aspirations: he must go to the mountains, to the ups and downs, and rough and rugged ways of the world, where he may

climb, and hunt, and seek a broader range for activity and enjoyment; he does not think of asking leave—he goes; he never regrets leaving home; and at first finds all bright, and gay, and delightful sunshine. The happy, happy hunting-time; and who so happy in it as Christian? But it soon palls—it does not satisfy. The cup is poisoned, there is a gall and wormwood in the taste the sweet leaves behind; and again he thinks of home. He sings his old song; but the words come wearily and listlessly—he has no heart for hunting any more. He wishes to be at home again; but he makes no effort. The mysterious mandrake in sympathy with his old life wakes up and speaks to him. It is the warning-voice of conscience; but he dreams on. The tempter comes, and he is lost irretrievably. The moment of return is offered—now or never! and he refuses. He does not stay among the mountains; he flies away to the plains beyond; he flings off, as he fondly believes, the dark mysterious incidents of that night, as a wild and impious dream; he thinks he is what he was; away he goes again to the plains to his old employment, and he is happy, industrious, contented in it. Every thing again looks smooth, and bright, and beautiful; but he has not *gone back*, and now he may not. What should have been for his peace, now is but a further snare to make him fancy all is right with him. He does indeed set out to seek his father, but wearily and unwillingly. His way would have led him back over the mountains; but there he is not permitted to go. The object of his journey comes to meet him; they go back together; he becomes more and more prosperous, and sinks deeper and deeper into his fatal delusion. Yet the fatal tablet is in his heart, the bond by which he is bound to evil; even on his wedding-night he cannot forget the giver. At length the long-smothered poison burst out with all its fury, and flowers touch his heart no more. He curses them and nature; the warning mandrake, instead of the voice of conscience, is but a revelation of the power of evil. It has but taught him to despair, and seek his friends elsewhere; and he is lost for ever.

Of the more awful person in this fearful story I will not speak; but for the outline of the fate of Christian, who can look round him into the most ordinary life, and not see innumerable instances of it? The burden of the other two stories is very similar: the way to understand them is to try and analyse the feelings left on our mind by the whole, and not distract ourselves by assuming a fancied meaning, and speculating with the particulars to make each fragment fit our theory. Do not let us perplex ourselves to find out what the little dog is, what is the meaning of the bird, and the old woman. They may have many meanings; but we shall never find them by beginning at that end. It is only by the light of the whole that the parts become intelligible.

"The Love-charm" is a work of a different nature; it is one of the most remarkable of all Tieck's writings, and, as far as we know, stands alone among the productions of modern art. With the help of a popular German superstition, he has woven a tragedy out of the ordinary events of every-day life, the spirit of which approaches as near as modern thought can be made to approach to the fatalism of the Greek drama. A destiny of some kind, either moral or external, is essential to tragedy. What we mean by "the terrible" as applied to human action, is, that the free will of man is laid under the influence of some external power, which he has little or no ability to resist, which hurries him on through a series of action and incident, from which, if in full possession of his self-control, he would shrink in horror. Thus, in common life the crimes men commit under the influence of any of the loftier passions, such as love or revenge, or when goaded on by famine or despair, or which men do in ignorance, when the ignorance may partially, but not entirely, be their own fault, are terrible, and therefore tragic. The individual seems to be sacrificed, not to deserve all that has fallen on him; his fate becomes one of the startling mysteries of life. The meaner or more selfish the passion under which the crime is committed, or the cooler and more deliberate

the action, the more what he does loses the character of tragic, and becomes merely disgusting. Pity goes with terror, and in such cases there can be no pity. The destiny in Shakspere's tragedies is a moral one; not an external power constraining, but an internal power impelling; working not against, but in and through the will. Such was the influence of his father's spirit on Hamlet, Hecate and the Witches on Macbeth, Iago's intellect on Othello, and so on with the rest. The Greek destiny, though in our way of thinking less human, is more terrible even than that of Shakspere. The sins of the fathers visited on the children, curses continuing to work generation after generation, and the helpless struggle of the victim only precipitating him into a darker doom—there is a stern grandeur about this form of thought; it is a feature of a broader philosophy than ours to bear to see the individual sacrificed, and believe that in some mysterious way the well-being of the whole is furthered by it, "with calm self-surrender to hear the murderer's hand upon a brother's throat, yet stand with upturned unquailing eyes before the everlasting Providence." It is a scheme of thought so unlike ours that we can hardly realise it, it is so like a monster to us. Yet this Love-charm is an attempt to do it; and although the spell is but over a single person, and forms no portion of a broad scheme of Providence; although for the stately forms of kings and heroes stalking across the stage, we have but the ball-going ladies and gentlemen of the eighteenth century, and but an old witch for the Delphic oracle, or the gods appearing in visible form; few people can rise from reading it without having been made to feel that this life, after all, is a stranger thing than they have been in the habit of imagining.

Emilius's character is eminently tragic. He has every feature which can interest us, without that moral or religious force in him which would make us feel shocked at his fate. The Greeks felt that good and holy men were no fitter subjects of tragedy than very wicked ones. There is something revolting (*μιαρόν*) in the

idea that a good man can be allowed even in ignorance to fall into crime. Whatever be the mysterious ways of Providence; whatever fearful power there may be abroad, working on and influencing the destinies of mankind; what indeed is the meaning of the prince of the power of the air, or whether there be really such an element as chance; this, at least, we must believe, that the good man is in the hands of the Highest, and that the laws of nature would sooner be reversed than he be let fall from His hands. But Emilius is a dreamer, whose power exhausts itself in speculation, and never acts at all except on impulse: without firmness, without will to give oneness of design and consistency to his actions, this character—which is *no law* to itself, which will not command itself, no matter how pure may be in general its purposes, or how lofty its aspirations — is exactly the one most open to be laid under the spell of some other force. Every man's life, taken from beginning to end, looked back upon presents an exhibition of some one law or principle; whatever it be, in the end it is found to be tolerably uniform and consistent: its principle may be an internal one of will and conscience; if it is not this, if it grows not out of self-command, it is pretty sure to be some more fatally perilous one.

Emilius is admirably worked throughout. Contrast his feelings towards man and nature, and life and love, as they appear in the first short poem, and what they have become a few hours later, merely from the excitement and irritation produced by the ball. The scene of the village-marriage, the young man's warmth and nobleness, and exquisite susceptibility, are introduced to heighten our pity for his fate; while the way in which he is led to it, in a dreamy mood, listlessly yielding to the caprice of a wayward companion, and not from any real wish to find out want and relieve suffering, reduces the value of the action to a mere gratification of a passion, and thus, while it deepens our sympathy, adds nothing to our respect. The concluding scene is so magnificent, that we cannot run the risk of injuring its effect by offering any

criticism on it; and with these few words we leave the "Love-charm."

In "Eckhart" and the "Runenberg" we have seen some of the moral trials which meet men on first starting into life. In the "Friends" we have the lighter kind of speculative. A very little philosophy serves to teach us how very unreal every thing is that passes before our eyes; how it all takes a colouring from our spirits; how the very same thing appears almost contradictory to different people, or to the same person in different moods; that we do not so much see things themselves, as our own image thrown into them. Accordingly, men begin to crave for a truer insight; they try to clear their intellect of the gauzy film of feeling, and see things as they are. Ludwig, a young indolent dreamer, full of all this kind of sentimental longing to be rid of sentimentality, is on his way to visit a sick friend. He sits down in the heat of the day under a tree to indulge in the pleasure of a little disconsolate reflection on his friend's melancholy letter, and insensibly falls off into a sleep, and dreams. At once he finds all the difficulties of the world solved for him, all his highest aspirations satisfied. The chasm that divides the worlds of sense and spirit is bridged over; his mind meets its true objects. The earth he despised he is now relieved from; the deceptions of nature all vanish; he sees things as they are; he is in the real world of truth and beauty; nothing is subjective any longer; he breathes a real genuine objectivity; all mortal weaknesses, and with them love, may not enter here; the phantoms of his childhood flit before him again, but no longer as they were; they are transfigured into the cold sublimity of Grecian goddesses. Alas! he is far from satisfied; after the first few days of rapture, he would gladly be on earth again. He wished to be as the gods; his wish is granted, and among the gods he cannot live. This cold world may be a very grand place, but it is not for such as him. Like Lessing's Phœnix, at first sight the dwellers here seem beautiful beyond all conception; the second glance shews that if a man will be like

them he must be content to be the only one of his race, with none to love him and none that he can love. "He is like the spirits he can comprehend, not like them." The truth he sought, he finds he has left behind; the old earth is his true home; and men, be they what they will, are his brothers. His friend comes to meet him; but he does not know him again, because here for the first time he sees him as he is, while before he had only seen in him the image of himself. If this be truth, he is sick of it; he sighs for the deception again, if deception it was that had been so delightful; he wakes to find his vision but a dream, in the sweet reality of his friend's embrace.

The "Elves," the last story which we shall notice, is of a far more solemn character; with all its beauty, it has a sad dirge-like tone. Written fourteen years later than the others, it is now the true poet's lament over the hard insensibility of the world to its true good. The world of spirit lies stretched out under the eyes of the children of earth; the invisible visible; but from earth and to earthly perceptions, dull, gloomy, unattractive. To the busy practical man of business, to the prudential economist, the man of understanding, the workers in it seem but idle, worthless vagabonds; these lazy good-for-nothings, that scarcely till the ground, are never seen at church, and shew no symptom of respectability; why do they cumber the earth? the talk is of cage and pillory for them; no child of theirs may approach the unhallowed precincts. Accident leads a young girl beyond the boundary, and then how changed is every thing! The dull scene has become more brilliant than the gardens of Aladdin; scales fall from her eyes; now it is the old world that is dark and gloomy. Down among the mysteries of the fountains of Nature, she sees her now no longer yielding reluctantly an unwilling pittance to the sweat of the labour of man, but *uncursed*. At the word of the dwellers in that enchanted land, her choicest fruits and flowers she pours out in lavish abundance. The spirits of the elements work visibly there, and the mortal sees them, and knows now who are the true bene-

factors of mankind. Time and space exist not for these pure beings. Seven years are gone in one night, and the narrow fir-clump contains the garden of Eden.

The mortal goes back to earth: what she has seen she may not tell. These esoteric secrets of the poet are not for the crawling animal who cannot hold himself upright, nor turn his eyes to heaven, and who only knows the sun by the sight of his own shadow: but one of them she weds; and the child of these two—oh, what may we not hope from that child! Alas, in vain! In vain, from the secret labours of these beautiful beings, the brooks run fresh and full, and the fields overflow with plenty. Men will not see; in the midst of their abundance they curse the author of it. In an evil hour of weakness the initiated betrays the secret, and then all is gone. The gloom of the fir-clump vanishes; it becomes like any other. The gipsy rabble are gone; what all men hated, they are relieved of; but with this comes the loss, too, of all they prized—their corn, their wine, and fruitful trees. Famine comes, and drought and pestilence; the elfin child dies, and all is ruin and disaster. They see not their tokens. There is not one prophet more. What a deep philosophy runs through all this!

Have we heard our prophets? At the end of the last century one said:—

"Yes, another era is already dawning upon earth, when it shall be light, when man shall wake from high and lofty dreams; and these dreams he shall find realised, and that he has lost nothing but sleep.

"The rocks and stones which two veiled figures, Sin and Destiny, like Deucalion and Pyrrha, fling behind them at their true prophet, shall rise and be new men.

"And at the sunset gate of this age stands written, 'Here lies the way to wisdom and to virtue;' as at the west gate of the Chersonese the proud writing, 'Here lies the way to Byzantium.'

" O eternal Providence, thou wilt that it shall be light!"

Whether this prophecy be fulfilled or fulfilling, and whether Germany has yet done any thing to the accomplishment of it, is for time to shew. So much is clear, that not here in England only, but all Europe over, there is a move forward—a cry of hunger and thirst for something deeper and truer; and to this move no living man has more contributed than Ludwig Tieck. He is the last, the only survivor of the noble band of German poets; and Europe has not a man of whom she is more justly proud.

The morning of his life broke in storm and tempest. Like some infant river just starting from its snowy cradle in its native mountains, foaming and dashing down its narrow bed, bounding from rock to rock, and powdering the air with vapour, which catches the sun's rays as it rises, and shivers them into a thousand brilliant hues,—his strong mind broke fiercely and impetuously from the clouds of error, and unbelief, and freezing scepticism, in which it was nurtured; at first, with loud questionings of fate, troubled and dark, yet, with all its fallings, flinging round itself in the wildest profusion rays and flashes of exquisite beauty. It rolls on down from its mountains; it has swept now over every rock and shoal, and flows on calm, serene, and deep, and clear through smiling fields, and woods, and villages, and happy men and women, bearing on its broad bosom all who trust themselves on it for profit or enjoyment, from the tiny pleasure-boat of the young lover to the tall ship sweeping proudly forward, laden with the choicest fruits and produce of every clime. As the heavens draw up the water from the ocean, and, lading their clouds with it, bear it off into the centre of huge continents, and with it start new fountains into life, which again, winding as veins through all lands, and scattering blessings as they go, flow back at last into their parent sea,—so in all ages pure wisdom, entering into lofty spirits, sends them down through their generation, scoring out deep channels on it as they pass: the stream of life and light

makes its way again to the source from which it came; but with this mortal life it ceases not to flow: its recipients become the veins of the world, and while the world lasts they endure—as the channels of truth where men drink and live. And one of them is TIECK.

J. A. F.

The Reconciliation.

TWILIGHT was already gathering, when a young knight, mounted on his charger, trotted through a lonely vale: the clouds grew gradually darker, and the glow of evening paler: a little brook murmured softly along, concealed by the mountain bushes that overhung it.

The knight sighed, and surrendered himself to thought; the bridle hung loose on the horse's neck; the steed itself no longer felt the rider's spur, and now paced slowly along the narrow path that wound round the precipitous rock.

The noise of the little brook waxed louder; the clang of the hoof rung through the solitude; the shades of evening grew deeper, and the ruins of an old castle lay won-

drously poised on the precipice of the opposite mountain. The knight became more and more absorbed in thought; he gazed fixedly and vacantly on the darkness, scarcely noticing the objects that environed him.

Now the moon rose behind him: her splendour tipped tree and shrub with gold: the valley narrowed apace, and the shadow of the knight reached to the opposite hill: the streamlet went foaming, all silver, over the broken rocks, and a nightingale began her ravishing song, till it soon sounded clearer from the forest. The knight now saw a crooked-grown willow before him, that fell over the brook, while the water flowed through its weeping branches. On a nearer approach, its dark outline assumed a more decided form, and he now distinctly descried the figure of a monk, bending low over the stream. He let the faint ripple flow through the hollow of his hand, while a low and plaintive voice exclaimed, "She comes not, she comes not! ah, in an eternity she'll not float by!"

The steed shied: a sudden dread took possession of the rider: he struck both spurs into his charger's flanks, and loudly neighing, it galloped away with him.

The narrow path now grew wider, and led into a thick wood of oak, through whose densely woven branches the moon could but sparely shoot her beams. The knight soon stood before a cave, from which a small fire shone invitation towards him: he alighted, tied his horse to a tree, and entered the hollow.

Before a wooden crucifix kneeled an aged hermit in deep devotion; he was not aware of the knight's entrance, but still continued in fervent prayer. A long white beard flowed down over his breast: years had ploughed deep furrows in his brow: his eyes were dim: he had the seeming of a saint. The knight took his stand at some distance from him, folded his hands across his breast, and repeated some Ave-Marias. Then the old man arose, dried a tear in his eye, and observed the stranger in his dwelling.

"Welcome to thee!" cried he, and offered the stranger a hand trembling with age.

The knight pressed it warmly; he felt his soul yearn towards him, and his reverence was transmuted into love.

"You did right to turn in here," continued the hermit, "for you will not find a village or a hostelry for many a league. But why so silent? Draw near to the fire and rest, and I will serve up such a little meal as this cave of mine can best supply."

The knight took the helmet from his head: his brown locks fell adown his neck: the old man gazed on him with a searching glance.

"Why does your eye wander so shily and unfixedly about?" he resumed, in a friendly tone.

The knight seemed to be collecting his thoughts. "A strange feeling of awe," replied he, "has seized on me since riding through that valley. Explain to me, if you can, the singular phenomenon which I there beheld: or perhaps it is not a spirit, but an inhabitant of these parts: and yet that is impossible; I saw him wave to and fro like the misty vapour in the gleam of the rising moon; and a cold thrill of fear drove me this way. Explain to me the riddle and the words which I heard through the whispering of the bushes."

"You saw the apparition?" said the hermit inquiringly, in a tone which betrayed a warm interest in the event; "well, be seated at the fire, and I will tell you the unhappy tale."

Both took their places. The old man appeared lost in thought. The knight was all attention; and after a short silence the hermit began:

"It is now thirty years since I roamed the land in quest of adventures and strife, just as you do now; since my locks flowed, just as yours do, over my shoulders, and my glance with equal boldness confronted danger. Grief has made me a decrepit old man before my time; not a trace can you now discover of the lusty warrior, who at

that time won the respect of knighthood and the hearts of lovely girls. All is as a dream to me now, and my joys and sorrows are shrouded in the twilight distance. Farewell, ye happy days! scarce a faint glimmer from you now can reach my cold worn heart.

"I had a brother, who was only two years older than myself. We were like each other in form and feeling, except that he was more impetuous and stormy, and more especially inclined to be passionate. We loved each other fondly; we shared no pleasure apart; in every conflict he fought at my side; we seemed to live but for one another.

"He became acquainted with a lady, whose love soon formed him to an accomplished man. Her tenderness tempered his boisterous spirit; she taught him that gentleness which is essential to every man who will appear amiable in the eye of his friend. Clara became his wife; and after the lapse of a year, the mother of a boy. Nothing now seemed wanting to his happiness.

"About this time the signal of the cross was again raised against the infidels. Fired with holy zeal he girt on the sword, took the sign of the Redeemer on his cloak, and marched forth with the enthusiast throng to peril and to fame. My entreaties and his wife's tears were too weak to detain him; the fervour of his enthusiasm tore him from our arms. Ah, heavens! I still hoped at that time that we should have the delight of seeing him once more: I foreboded dangers for him, but not those sad events which have beguiled my life of every joy.

"We now looked in vain for news: our anxious impatience suggested to us a thousand mishaps, and fed us again with increased hope. Week after week, and month after month passed away without our expectation being in the smallest degree satisfied. To be sure, we heard that on their march to the Holy Land discomforts of a thousand kinds had befallen the crusaders; that they had been attacked by savage hordes, and given up to misery and

want; that the greater part of them had been scattered in the woods, there to become a prey to hunger or the wild beasts. But we had no special news of my brother, and we were obliged to accustom ourselves to the thought that he too belonged to the greater number of those unfortunates. His desolate widow wept for him daily, and gave little ear to the weak grounds of consolation that issued from the dejected heart of a suffering brother.

"Five long sorrowful years were thus passed in lamentation and tears, when I beheld at a tournament the daughter of William of Orlaburg. Oh, sir knight, let me dwell for a moment on this brilliant epoch of my life, and refresh my soul on the beautiful past. Ah, a rapturous spring rose upon me, but winter returned all the colder to my heart: not a flower remains to me of all those sunny days; a spiteful hurricane has snapt them all away. Ida of Orlaburg was the most charming creature of her sex; graceful and full of majesty, her lofty figure claimed respect of every one, and her charitable temper won every heart. She united the loveliness of woman with the nobility of manly strength.

"At a tournament given by her father, she saw Clara; her soul was interested by the deep sorrow which spoke in the features of the desolate wife. In misfortune, friendships are the most quickly and the most lastingly formed. They saw each other very often; they loved each other like two sisters, that had grown up together and shared each other's every thought; and on the death of Ida's father, Clara had her friend a constant guest at her castle. Ida it was who at last dried the tears from eyes that were dim with weeping; who taught her to smile again at the rising of the sun, and who, as I saw her so often, at last robbed me of my heart and of my peace.

"I experienced all the torments and all the ecstacies of love; my nights were sleepless, my days without repose; the world lay extended more beautifully before me; a charm and a loveliness sprang up every where beneath my

footsteps; an impetuous longing hurried me to her; and yet in her presence my heart beat still more madly.

"Am I not a child to speak to you so diffusely of my folly? In a few months I disclosed to her my love; with an angel voice she assured me of her attachment; we were betrothed, and—oh, who could participate in my sense of happiness!—in two months we were to be married. How did I reckon up every day and every hour! The tide of time flowed past me in vexatious dilatoriness; I wanted to see it roll along in a foaming torrent at my feet.

"At last a messenger reached us with news of my brother. It was a knight from Spain who had seen him in Africa. Corsairs had taken the vessel in which he sailed, and sold him as a slave in Tunis. A very high price was set on his liberty.

"We were more pleased than saddened by this news, because we had already taken his death for certain. Clara now dried her tears, and surrendered herself to her joy. She got together the required sum as quickly as possible, and made preparations to travel to her husband.

"The stranger knight was in fact returning to Spain, and Clara proposed setting out in his company; while Ida, who found it impossible to part from her friend, resolved to accompany her in knightly costume.

"My most urgent expostulations were in vain, and I was at last obliged to yield to their united entreaties. My brother's infant son was consigned to the protection of a convent. They took their departure, and, full of foreboding, my weeping eye followed them.

"How I burned with desire to accompany them! but I was entangled in a feud, in which I had promised a friend my succour, and my pledged word bound me to Germany. Ah! in an ill-fated hour they departed; I never beheld them more.

"From that moment begins the dark period of my life. I was successful in the feud. Oh, that I had fallen beneath the sword of an enemy, to have escaped long

years of torture, and the frightful hours in which I first—oh, forgive me these tears! they still often flow at the remembrance of Ida and my brother: age cannot so blunt our sympathies that pain may not sometimes return with new force to our bosoms.

"On their journey Ida was seized with the unhappy fancy of not discovering herself to my brother till they all should have reached their native country again, in order that she might then surprise him the more joyfully as my bride. They arrived in Spain, and sent the required sum to Tunis. The prisoner was liberated; on the wings of affection he hastened over the sea, and forgot on Clara's bosom, in one moment of rapture, the sufferings which he had endured for years.

"Ida was soon presented to him as a friend; he received her kindly, and enjoyed for some days in the society of his spouse that happiness which he had so long been deprived of. But his eyes were soon rivetted on Ida: he observed the tender connexion subsisting between her and his wife, and suspicion kindled in his soul. 'She is untrue to me,' cried he when alone; 'she divides her heart between me and this hateful stranger!'

"He now watched them both more closely than before, and soon thought his suspicions justified; he thought he could discover a tenderness which neither of them even took pains to conceal. By degrees he became colder towards his wife, hiding the wound she had inflicted; whilst she on her part, unconstrainedly and without the shadow of fear, shared her affections with her consort and her friend.

"Jealousy raged in my brother's bosom; he began to hate Clara and her companion; he imputed a significancy to every look and every gesture; the rancour within him robbed him of his sleep, or suspicion appalled him in hideous dreams.

"'For this, then, I came across the sea,' said he to himself; 'these are the joys of meeting; these, then, are the delights of my love. I am come to be the prey of

racking torture. I find my home again at the side of a faithless wife, and she herself meets me only that she may the earlier proclaim to me her effrontery and her broken vows.'

"He made an old squire the confidant of his chagrin: both now watched the two friends with an indefatigable vigilance; they beheld a thousand proofs of the supposed infidelity, without in the least conjecturing the true posture of affairs; my brother's fury rose more and more, and a dark resolve at last began to ripen in his breast.

"It happened that he was with them and a faithful servant in a small boat. The moon was up, and the shallop drifted slowly down the gentle stream; he sat in cold unconsciousness by Clara, who had laid her hand in his. He caught her eye with a searching glance; her husband seemed strange to her, and abashed she sunk her head. Ida had seized her other hand.

"'Traitress!' cried he of a sudden; 'impostor! who sport with the peace of a man, with truth, and truth's best vows!' Ah! at that moment his good genius forsook him!—gnashing his teeth, he plunged his dagger into Clara's bosom: Ida sank lifeless at the side of her friend; he grasped the bloody poniard, raised the reeking blade, and smote my Ida to the heart.

"The dying Clara discovered to him his error. Her blood floated down the stream. The film gathered in her eye. For a long time he stood like one entranced; then sprang into the river, swam unconsciously to land, and, deaf and dumb, without sensation or words of woe, he set out on his return to Germany.

"Thus, then, an ill-starred jest was the wreck of my every hope and joy. In the mean time, I stood at a window of the castle, anxiously awaiting the return of those I loved. Often was I aroused from my musing mood by the hoof-tramp of horses: my eye wandered vacantly over field and hill, while a joyful thrill passed through me at the sight of a female figure.

"At length came a knight dashing up on a black charger: it was my brother. But ah, my joy was vain; his countenance was haggard, his eyes rolled wildly, his heart beat impetuously.

"'Where are Ida and Clara?' cried I.

"A tear was the answer; he hung speechless on my neck.

"'In the grave,' said he at length, violently sobbing.

"O heavens! those were fearful hours that I then went through! My fist trembled, my heart throbbed convulsively; a low voice whispered murder and vengeance in my ears: but I saw my brother's wretchedness—I forgave him; and well it is for me that I did so.

"Oh, that he could have forgiven himself! But his misery and his crime were present day and night to his soul. Clara came back to him in his dreams, and shewed him the dagger reeking with her heart's warm blood. From that hour he never smiled again.

"'I am condemned to the most ghastly misery,' cried he, as he grasped me by the hand; 'nor on the other side of the grave shall I be at rest; my spirit will wander still in quest of Clara, and still never find her: a fearful future drags its slow length in review before me. Ah, my brother! even in death there is no more hope for me.'

"My heart was broken; but my life seemed now granted that I might console him. We left the castle, and laid aside our knightly garb; we shrouded ourselves in holy weeds, and thus we went wayfaring through the dark woods and over the desert plains, till this cavern at last received us.

"Often would my brother stand for long, long days by that rivulet, gazing vacantly on the waters; even in the night he was sometimes there; and then he would sit on a sundered fragment of the rock, while his tears trickled down into the stream. My efforts to console him were all in vain.

"At last he revealed to me that Clara had appeared to him in a dream; but she never could be reconciled, she said, till her blood should float down that little brook; and for this reason he sat on the bank, counting and watching the waves, in the eager hope of again finding the drops that had gushed from her heart in that fatal hour.

"I wept at the sight of my brother's madness; I tried to rid him of the thought, but it was impossible. 'Ah!' cried he, 'and in distant Spain her blood was shed; it flowed down the stream into the sea: how long will it be before it returns hitherward to the springs?'

"Now he scarcely ever left the brook—his sorrow and his delusion increased with every day: at last he died of a broken heart. I buried him by my cave.

"Since then I have often seen his ghost sitting beside the stream: it was always watching the passing ripple, and softly sighing, 'She comes not—she comes not.' A thrill of horror runs through me every time, and I pray till midnight for the peace of his soul."

The hermit ended; he cast down his eyes and silently counted his beads. The knight had listened to the tale with anxious interest, and after a few moments he inquired—

"And where was your brother's son left?"

"We sought him in the convent," replied the old man, "but he had clandestinely made his escape from the monks."

"Your name?"

"Why do you so fix your gaze upon me?—Ulfo of Waldburg."

"O my uncle!" cried the knight, and threw himself on the bosom of the astonished hermit. "Doubt not," cried he; "ah! that unhappy shade by the rivulet is the spirit of my father."

"Your father! his name was"—

"Charles of Waldburg. I ran away from the monks because their lonely cloisters appeared a prison to me. I took service with a knight; and now for some years I have been seeking you and my father."

"O my son!" cried the old man, and locked him more fervently in his arms; "yes, you are he: I know you by that sparkling eye; those are your father's features and his chestnut locks."

"O my unhappy father!" sighed the youth; "would that I could procure his wandering spirit peace! would that my prayers could conciliate Heaven and my mother's shade!"

He stood in a musing mood, with his hands folded: "Uncle," cried he, "what, if I have read aright the import of the dream? what, if my mother's spirit had wished to direct the wretched man to me? Oh, come now!"

They left the cave. Clouds shrouded the moon; a hallowed stillness spread its mantle over the world; they went into the lonely forest as into a temple. Charles kneeled down on his father's grave.

"Spirit of my father," said he in fervent prayer, "oh, hear thy son! hearken to thy son, O my mother! and, gracious Heaven, let me not implore thee in vain! Give rest to the unhappy one, and let the dread pilgrim find a lodging in the grave. Oh, let me hear from thee, spirit of my father, whether I conceived aright the sense of the prophecy! Oh, grant me some sign that thou art reconciled with my mother's ghost!"

Like the soft echo of a flute came a breathing through the tree-tops: two bright apparitions floated downwards in closely-wound embrace. They came nearer. "We are reconciled," whispered a more than earthly voice. Two hands were stretched forth over the kneeling one; and like a light zephyr the words passed over him, "Be true to knighthood!"

A cloud glided away from before the moon; and the phantoms dissolved in her silver radiance. In glad amazement the two mortals gazed long and lingeringly after them.

THE

FRIENDS.

IT was a beautiful spring morning, when Lewis Wandel went out to visit a sick friend, in a village some miles distant from his dwelling. This friend had written to him to say that he was lying dangerously ill, and would gladly see him and speak to him once more.

The cheerful sunshine now sparkled in the bright green bushes; the birds twittered and leapt to and fro on the branches; the larks sang merrily above the thin fleeting clouds; sweet scents rose from the fresh meadows, and the fruit-trees of the garden were white and gay in blossom.

Lewis's eye roamed intoxicate around him; his soul seemed to expand; but he thought of his

invalid friend, and he bent forward in silent dejection. Nature had decked herself all in vain, so serenely and so brightly; his fancy could only picture to him the sick bed and his suffering brother.

"How song is sounding from every bough!" cried he; "the notes of the birds mingle in sweet unison with the whisper of the leaves; and yet in the distance, through all the charm of the concert, come the sighs of the sick one."

Whilst he thus communed, a troop of gaily-clad peasant girls issued from the village; they all gave him a friendly salutation, and told him that they were on their merry way to a wedding; that work was over for that day, and had to give place to festivity. He listened to their tale, and still their merriment rang in the distance on his ear; still he caught the sound of their songs, and became more and more sorrowful. In the wood he took his seat on a dismantled tree, drew the oft-read letter from his pocket, and ran through it once more:—

"My very dear friend,—I cannot tell why you have so utterly forgotten me, that I receive no news from you. I am not surprised that men forsake me; but it heartily pains me to think that you too care nothing about me. I am dangerously ill; a fever saps my strength: if you delay visiting me any longer, I cannot promise you that you will see me again. All nature revives, and feels fresh and strong; I alone sink lower in languor; the returning warmth cannot animate me; I see not the green fields, nothing but the tree that rustles before my window, and sings death-songs to my thoughts; my bosom is pent, my breathing is hard; and often I think the walls of my room will press closer together and crush me. The rest of you in the world are holding the most beautiful festival of life, whilst I must languish in the dwelling of sickness. Gladly would I dispense with spring, if I could but see your dear face once more: but you that are in health never earnestly

think what it really is to be ill, and how dear to us then, in our helplessness, the visit of a friend is: you do not know how to prize those precious minutes of consolation, because the whole world receives you in the warmth and the fervour of its friendship. Ah! if you did but know, as I do, how terrible is death, and how still more terrible it is to be ill,—O Lewis, how would you hasten then to behold once more this frail form, that you have hitherto called your friend, and that by and by will be so ruthlessly dismembered! If I were well, I would haste to meet you, or fancy that you may perhaps be ill at this moment. If I never see you again — farewell."

What a painful impression did the suffering depicted in this letter make upon Lewis's heart, amid the liveliness of Nature, as she lay in brilliancy before him! He melted into tears, and rested his head on his hand.—"Carol now, ye foresters," thought he; "for ye know no lamentation; ye lead a buoyant poetic existence, and for this are those swift pinions granted you; oh, how happy are ye, that ye need not mourn: warm summer calls you, and ye wish for nothing more; ye dance forth to meet it, and when winter is advancing, ye are gone! O light-winged merry forest-life, how do I envy thee! Why are so many heavy cares burdened upon poor man's heart? Why may he not love without purchasing his love by wailing—his happiness by misery? Life purls on like a fleeting rivulet beneath his feet, and quenches not his thirst, his fervid longing."

He became more and more absorbed in thought, and at last he rose and pursued his way through the thick forest. "If I could but help him," cried he; "if Nature could but supply me with a means of saving him; but as it is, I feel nothing but my own impotency, and the pain of losing my friend. In my childhood I used to believe in enchantment and its supernatural aids; would I now could hope in them as happily as then!"

He quickened his steps; and involuntarily all the re-

membrances of the earliest years of his childhood crowded back upon him: he followed those forms of loveliness, and was soon entangled in such a labyrinth as not to notice the objects that surrounded him. He had forgotten that it was spring — that his friend was ill: he hearkened to the wondrous melodies, which came borne, as if from distant shores, upon his ear: all that was most strange united itself to what was most ordinary: his whole soul was transmuted. From the far vista of memory, from the abyss of the past, all those forms were summoned forth that ever had enraptured or tormented him; all those dubious phantoms were aroused, that flutter formlessly about us, and gather in dizzy hum around our heads. Puppets, the toys of childhood, and spectres, danced along before him, and so mantled over the green turf, that he could not see a single flower at his feet. First love encircled him with its twilight morning gleam, and let down its sparkling rainbow over the mead: his earliest sorrows glided past him in review, and threatened to greet him in the same guise at the end of his pilgrimage. Lewis sought to arrest all these changeful feelings, and to retain a consciousness of self amid the magic of enjoyment,—but in vain. Like enigmatic books, with figures grotesquely gay, that open for a moment and in a moment are closed, so unstably and fleetingly all floated before his soul.

The wood opened, and in the open country on one side lay some old ruins, encompassed with watch-towers and ramparts. Lewis was astonished at having advanced so quickly amid his dreams. He emerged from his melancholy, as he did from the shades of the wood; for often the pictures within us are but the reflection of outward objects. Now rose on him, like the morning sun, the memory of his first poetical enjoyments, of his earliest appreciations of that luscious harmony which many a human ear never inhales.

"How incomprehensibly," said he, "did those things commingle then, which seemed to me eternally parted by

such vast chasms; my most undefined presentiments assumed a form and outline, and gleamed on me in the shape of a thousand subordinate phantoms, which till then I had never descried! So names were found me for things that I had long wished to speak of: I became recipient of earth's fairest treasures, which my yearning heart had so long sought for in vain: and how much have I to thank thee for since then, divine power of fancy and of poetry! How hast thou smoothed for me the path of life, that erst appeared so rough and perplexed! Ever hast thou revealed to me new sources of enjoyment and happiness, so that no arid desert presents itself to me now: every stream of sweet voluptuous inspiration hath wound its way through my earth-born heart: I have become intoxicate with bliss, and have communed with beings of heaven."

The sun sank below the horizon, and Lewis was astonished that it was already evening. He was insensible of fatigue, and was still far from the point which he had wished to reach before night: he stood still, without being able to understand how the crimson of evening could be so early mantling the clouds; how the shadows of every thing were so long, while the nightingale warbled her song of wail in the thicket. He looked around him: the old ruins lay far in the background, clad in blushing splendour; and he doubted whether he had not strayed from the direct and well-known road.

Now he remembered a phantasy of his early childhood, that till that moment had never recurred to him: it was a female form of awe, that glided before him over the lonely fields: she never looked round, yet he was compelled, against his will, to follow her, and to be drawn on into unknown scenes, without in the least being able to extricate himself from her power. A slight thrill of fear came over him, and yet he found it impossible to obtain a more distinct recollection of that figure, or to usher back his mind into the frame, in which this image had first appeared to him. He sought to individualise all these singular sen-

sations, when, looking round by chance, he really found himself on a spot which, often as he had been that way, he had never seen before.

"Am I spell-bound?" cried he; "or have my dreams and fancies crazed me? Is it the wonderful effect of solitude that makes me irrecognisable to myself; or do spirits and genii hover round me and hold my senses in thrall? Sooth, if I cannot enfranchise myself from myself, I will await that woman-phantom that floated before me in every lonely place in my childhood."

He endeavoured to rid himself of every kind of phantasy, in order to get into the right road again; but his recollections became more and more perplexed; the flowers at his feet grew larger, the red glow of evening more brilliant, and wondrously shaped clouds hung drooping on the earth, like the curtains of some mystic scene that was soon to unfold itself. A ringing murmur arose from the high grass, and the blades bowed to one another, as if in friendly converse; while a light warm spring rain dropped pattering amongst them, as if to wake every slumbering harmony in wood, and bush, and flower. Now all was rife with song and sound; a thousand sweet voices held promiscuous parley; song entwined itself in song, and tone in tone; while in the waning crimson of eve lay countless blue butterflies rocking, with its radiance sparkling from their wavy wings. Lewis fancied himself in a dream, when the heavy dark-red clouds suddenly rose again, and a vast prospect opened on him in unfathomable distance. In the sunshine lay a gorgeous plain, sparkling with verdant forests and dewy underwood. In its centre glittered a palace of a myriad hues, as if composed all of undulating rainbows and gold and jewels: a passing stream reflected its various brilliancy, and a soft crimson æther environed this hall of enchantment: strange birds, he had never seen before, flew about, sportively flapping each other with their red and green wings: larger nightingales warbled their clear notes to the echoing landscape:

lambent flames shot through the green grass, flickering here and there, and then darting in coils round the mansion. Lewis drew nearer, and heard ravishing voices sing the following words:—

Traveller from earth below,
Wend thee not farther,
In our hall's magic glow
Bide with us rather.
Hast thou with longing scann'd
Joy's distant morrow,
Cast away sorrow,
And enter the wish'd-for land.

Without further scruple, Lewis stepped to the shining threshold, and lingering but a moment ere he set his foot on the polished stone, he entered. The gates closed after him.

"Hitherward! hitherward!" cried invisible lips, as from the inmost recesses of the palace; and with loudly throbbing heart he followed the voices. All his cares, all his olden remembrances were cast away: his inmost bosom rang with the songs that outwardly encompassed him: his every regret was stilled: his every conscious and unconscious wish was satisfied. The summoning voices grew so loud, that the whole building re-echoed them, and still he could not find their origin, though he long seemed to have been standing in the central hall of the palace.

At length a ruddy-cheeked boy stepped up to him, and saluted the stranger guest: he led him through magnificent chambers, full of splendour and melody, and at last entered the garden, where Lewis, as he said, was expected. Entranced he followed his guide, and the most delicious fragrance from a thousand flowers floated forth to meet him. Broad shady walks received them. Lewis's dizzy gaze could scarcely gain the tops of the high immemorial trees: bright-coloured birds sat perched upon the branches: children were playing on guitars in the

shade, and they and the birds sang to the music. Fountains shot up, with the clear red of morning sparkling upon them: the flowers were as high as shrubs, and parted spontaneously as the wanderer pressed through them. He had never before felt the hallowed sensations that then enkindled in him; never had such pure heavenly enjoyment been revealed to him: he was over-happy.

But bells of silver sound rang through the trees, and their tops were bowed: the birds and children with the guitars were hushed: the rose-buds unfolded: and the boy now conducted the stranger into the midst of a brilliant assembly.

Lovely dames of lofty form were seated on beautiful banks of turf, in earnest conference. They were above the usual height of the human race, and their more than earthly beauty had at the same time something of awe in it, from which the heart shrunk back in alarm. Lewis dared not interrupt their conversation: it seemed as if he were among the god-like forms of Homer's song, where every thought must be excluded that formed the converse of mortals. Odd little spirits stood round, as ready ministers, waiting attentively for the wink of the moment that should summon them from their posture of quietude: they fixed their glances on the stranger, and then looked jeeringly and significantly at each other. At last the beautiful women ceased speaking, and beckoned Lewis to approach; he was still standing with an embarrassed air, and drew near to them with trembling.

"Be not alarmed," said the fairest of them all; "you are welcome to us here, and we have long been expecting you: long have you wished to be in our abode,—are you satisfied now?"

"Oh, how unspeakably happy I am!" exclaimed Lewis; "all my dearest dreams have met with their fulfillment, all my most daring wishes are gratified now: yes, I am, I live among them. How it has happened so, I cannot comprehend: sufficient for me, that it is so. Why should

I raise a new wail over this enigma, ere my olden lamentations are scarcely at an end?"

"Is this life," asked the lady, "very different from your former one?"

"My former life," said Lewis, "I can scarcely remember. But has, then, this golden state of existence fallen to my lot? this beautiful state, after which my every sense and prescience so ardently aspired; to which every wish wandered, that I could conceive in fancy, or realise in my inmost thought; though its image, veiled in mist, seemed ever strange in me—and is it, then, mine at last? have I, then, achieved this new existence, and does it hold me in its embrace? Oh, pardon me, I know not what I say in my delirium of ecstacy, and might well weigh my words more carefully in such an assemblage."

The lady signed; and in a moment every minister was in motion: there was a stirring among the trees, every where a running to and fro, and speedily a banquet was placed before Lewis of fair fruits and fragrant wines. He sat down again, and music rose anew on the air. Rows of beautiful boys and girls sped round him, intertwined in the dance, while uncouth little cobolds lent life to the scene, and excited loud laughter by their ludicrous gambols. Lewis noted every sound and every gesture: he seemed newly-born since his initiation into this joyous existence. "Why," thought he, "are those hopes and reveries of ours so often laughed at, that pass into fulfilment sooner than ever had been expected? Where, then, is that border-mark between truth and error which mortals are ever ready with such temerity to set up? Oh, I ought in my former life to have wandered oftener from the way, and then perhaps I should have ripened all the earlier for this happy transmutation."

The dance died away; the sun sank to rest; the august dames arose; Lewis too left his seat, and accompanied them on their walk through the quiet garden. The nightingales were complaining in a softened tone, and a won-

drous moon rose above the horizon. The blossoms opened to its silver radiance, and every leaf kindled in its gleam; the wide avenues became of a glow, casting shadows of a singular green; red clouds slumbered on the green grass of the fields: the fountains turned to gold, and played high in the clear air of heaven.

"Now you will wish to sleep," said the loveliest of the ladies, and shewed the enraptured wanderer a shadowy bower, strewed with soft turf and yielding cushions. Then they left him, and he was alone.

He sat down and watched the magic twilight glimmering through the thickly-woven foliage. "How strange is this!" said he to himself: "perhaps I am now only asleep, and I may dream that I am sleeping a second time, and may have a dream in my dream; and so it may go on for ever, and no human power ever be able to awake me. No! unbeliever that I am! it is beautiful reality that animates me now, and my former state perhaps was but the dream of gloom." He lay down, and light breezes played round him. Perfume was wafted on the air, and little birds sang lulling songs. In his dreams he fancied the garden all around him changed: the tall trees withered away; the golden moon fallen from the sky, leaving a dismal gap behind her; instead of the watery jet from the fountains, little genii gushed out, caracoling over each in the air, and assuming the strangest attitudes. Notes of woe supplanted the sweetness of song, and every trace of that happy abode had vanished. Lewis awoke amid impressions of fear, and chid himself for still feeding his fancy in the perverse manner of the habitants of earth, who mingle all received images in rude disorder, and present them again in this garb in a dream. A lovely morning broke over the scene, and the ladies saluted him again. He spoke to them more intrepidly, and was to-day more inclined to cheerfulness, as the surrounding world had less power to astonish him. He contemplated the garden and the palace, and fed upon the magnificence and the wonders that he met there. Thus he

lived many days happily, in the belief that his felicity was incapable of increase.

But sometimes the crowing of a cock seemed to sound in the vicinity; and then the whole edifice would tremble, and his companions turn pale: this generally happened of an evening, and soon afterwards they retired to rest. Then often there would come a thought of earth into Lewis's soul; then he would often lean out of the windows of the glittering palace to arrest and fix these fleeting remembrances, and to get a glimpse of the high road again, which, as he thought, must pass that way. In this sort of mood, he was one afternoon alone, musing within himself why it was just as impossible for him then to recall a distinct remembrance of the world, as formerly it had been to feel a presage of this poetic place of sojourn,—when all at once a post-horn seemed to sound in the distance, and the rattle of carriage-wheels to make themselves heard. "How strangely," said he to himself, "does a faint gleam, a slight reminiscence of earth, break upon my delight—rendering me melancholy and dejected! Then, do I lack anything here? Is my happiness still incomplete?"

The beautiful women returned. "What do you wish for?" said they, in a tone of concern; "you seem sad."

"You will laugh," replied Lewis; "yet grant me one favour more. In that other life I had a friend, whom I now but faintly remember: he is ill, I think; restore him by your skill."

"Your wish is already gratified," said they.

"But," said Lewis, "vouchsafe me two questions."

"Speak!"

"Does no gleam of love fall on this wondrous world? Does no friendship perambulate these bowers? I thought the morning blush of spring-love would be eternal here, which in that other life is too prone to be extinguished, and which men afterwards speak of as of a fable. To confess to you the truth, I feel an unspeakable yearning after those sensations."

"Then you long for earth again?"

"Oh, never!" cried Lewis; "for in that cold earth I used to sigh for friendship and for love, and they came not near me. The longing for those feelings had to supply the place of those feelings themselves; and for that reason I turned my aspirations hitherward, and hoped here to find every thing in the most beautiful harmony."

"Fool!" said the venerable woman: "so on earth you sighed for earth, and knew not what you did in wishing to be here; you have overshot your desires, and substituted phantasies for the sensations of mortals."

"Then who are ye?" cried Lewis, astounded.

"We are the old fairies," said she, "of whom you surely must have heard long ago. If you ardently long for earth, you will return thither again. Our kingdom flourishes when mortals are shrouded in night; but their day is *our* night. Our sway is of ancient date, and will long endure. It abides invisibly among men—to your eye alone has it been revealed."

She turned away, and Lewis remembered that it was the same form which had resistlessly dragged him after it in his youth, and of which he felt a secret dread. He followed now also, crying, "No, I will not go back to earth! I will stay here!" "So, then," said he to himself, "I devined this lofty being even in my childhood! And so the solution of many a riddle, which we are too idle to investigate, may be within ourselves."

He went on much further than usual, till the fairy garden was soon left far behind him. He stood on a romantic mountain-range, where the ivy clambered in wild tresses up the rocks; cliff was piled on cliff, and awe and grandeur seemed to hold universal sway. Then there came a wandering stranger to him, who accosted him kindly, and addressed him thus:—"Glad I am, after all, to see you again."

"I know you not," said Lewis.

"That may well be," replied the other; "but once

you thought you knew me well. I am your late sick friend."

"Impossible! you are quite a stranger to me!"

"Only," said the stranger, "because to-day you see me for the first time in my true form: till now you only found in me a reflection of yourself. You are right too in remaining here; for there is no love, no friendship — not here, I mean, where all illusion vanishes."

Lewis sat down and wept.

"What ails you?" said the stranger.

"That it is you — you who were the friend of my youth: is not that mournful enough? Oh, come back with me to our dear, dear earth, where we shall know each other once more under illusive forms—where there exists the superstition of friendship! What am I doing here?"

"What will that avail?" answered the stranger. "You will want to be back again; earth is not bright enough for you: the flowers are too small for you, the song too suppressed. Colour there, cannot emerge so brilliantly from the shade; flowers there are of small comfort, and so prone to fade; the little birds think of their death, and sing in modest constraint: but here every thing is on a scale of grandeur."

"Oh, I will be contented!" cried Lewis, as the tears gushed profusely from his eyes. "Do but come back with me, and be my friend once more; let us leave this desert, this glittering misery!"

Thus saying, he opened his eyes, for some one was shaking him roughly. Over him leant the friendly but pale face of his once sick friend. "But are you dead?" cried Lewis.

"Recovered am I, wicked sleeper," he replied. "Is it thus you visit your sick friend? Come along with me; my carriage is waiting there, and a thunder-storm is rising."

Lewis rose: in his sleep he had glided off the trunk of the tree; his friend's letter lay open beside him. "So

am I really on the earth again?" he exclaimed with joy; "really? and is this no new dream?"

"You will not escape from earth," answered his friend with a smile; and both were locked in heart-felt embraces.

"How happy I am," said Lewis, "that I have you once more, that I feel as I used to do, and that you are well again!"

"Suddenly," replied his friend, "I felt ill; and as suddenly I was well again. So I wished to go to you, and do away with the alarm that my letter must have caused you; and here, half-way, I find you asleep."

"I do not deserve your love at all," said Lewis.

"Why?"

"Because I just now doubted of your friendship."

"But only in sleep."

"It would be strange enough though," said Lewis, "if there really were such things as fairies."

"There are such, of a certainty," replied the other; "but it is all a fable, that their whole pleasure is to make men happy. They plant those wishes in our bosoms which we ourselves do not know of; those over-wrought pretensions—that super-human covetousness of super-human gifts; so that in our desponding delirium we afterwards despise the beautiful earth with all its glorious stores."

Lewis answered with a pressure of the hand.

THE ELVES.

"WHERE is Maria, our child?" asked the father.

"She is playing on the green," replied the mother, "with our neighbour's son."

"Do not let them run away," said the father anxiously; "they are so thoughtless."

The mother attended to the wants of the little ones, and gave them their supper.

"The weather is hot, mother," said the boy; and the little maiden longed exceedingly to have some red cherries.

"Be careful, child," said the mother; "do not run too far from the house, or into the wood; your father and I are going into the field."

"Oh, do not be anxious on that account," was the

prompt reply of young Andrew, "for we are all afraid of the wood; we will remain here sitting at home, where we are near to the men."

The mother went in, and soon returned with the father. They closed their cottage, and turned towards the fields to look after the peasants, and to see the hay-harvest in the meadows.

Their dwelling was situated on a little green eminence, fenced round by an ornamental hedge, which enclosed a fruit and flower garden; the town lay a little lower down; and still further there rose in the distance the towers of the baronial castle. Martin rented a large farm of the lord, the proprietor, and lived in a happy state of contentment with his wife and only child, as he was enabled, year by year, to lay by something in reserve for the future, with the prospect of becoming one day himself a man of property; for through his toil and industry the land was fruitful, and the Count did not oppress him with undue exactions.

As he was walking towards the fields with his wife, he gazed joyously around, and said, "How is it, Bridget, that the country about here is so different from that in which we formerly lived? Here it is so green and verdant; the whole town is beautified with thickly planted fruit-trees; the soil teems with rich vegetation and shrubs; all the houses are gay and cleanly—the inhabitants prosperous; indeed, it would appear to me that the woods here are more majestic, and the sky more blue; and as far as the eye can scan, we have pleasure in beholding the bountiful earth."

"But," said Brigitta, "to pass over to the other side of the river is to migrate into quite another region, every thing there wears so gloomy and withered an aspect; but as for our own hamlet, every traveller confesses it to be the prettiest in the whole district."

"Come, then, to the fir-plantation," answered her husband; "look back and see how dark and dreary that spot seems in the distance, in the midst of such a gay and

animated landscape; the dusky huts behind the dark firs; those detached buildings fallen into ruinous heaps; and even the very stream flowing onwards so sadly and sluggishly."

"That is true," said she, as they both stood still to gaze upon the scene. "As often as one approaches the spot, one becomes sad and sorrowful, one knows not why."

"Who can the people really be? and why should they keep themselves at such a distance from all the neighbourhood, avoiding any intercourse with us, as though they were inwardly conscious of deeds of darkness?"

"They are poor folk," said the young farmer; "seemingly of a gipsy-tribe, who rob and pilfer at a distance off, and make this spot perhaps their head-quarters: I wonder only that the baron allows them to remain."

"Possibly," said the woman kindly and compassionately, "they are poor people, ashamed of their poverty; for, to speak the truth, we cannot lay any crime, or even any trivial injury, to their charge; still it is remarkable that they never go to church; and how they contrive to subsist is strange enough, for their little garden, in itself a perfect wilderness, cannot support them, and they have no pasture-land."

"God only knows," continued Martin, as they proceeded on their way—"God only knows what they do; this at least is certain, that they hold no intercourse; no stranger ever comes from, or goes to them; for the spot where they dwell is bewitched and under ban, so that the boldest young townsmen would hardly venture into it."

This conversation continued through their walk to the fields.

That dark district of which they spoke lay beyond the town in a hollow that was surrounded on all sides by firs; there appeared to be a hut, and several domestic buildings fast falling to decay. Smoke was seldom seen to curl from it, still less frequently were any human beings visible; at times some persons, led on by curiosity to venture some-

what nearer, had seen on the rising ground in front of the hut frightful old women, clad in uncouth rags, dandling equally frightful and dirty children on their laps; black dogs prowled about continually before the stream; and in the evening a monster of a man, whom no one knew, passed over the bridge, and disappeared into the hut; then several figures, like dim shadows, flitted along in the darkness, and danced round about a fire which was heaped up on the earth: this gloomy sport, the dark firs, and the ruinous huts, formed a most singular contrast to the gay green landscape, the clear white houses of the town, and the splendid new castle.

The two children had eaten up all their fruit, and then began to run races; and the little buoyant Maria outran, on each occasion, the tardy Andrew.

"That's no proof of your skill," he cried; "come, let us try a longer distance, and then we'll see who shall be the conqueror."

"As you please," said the little Maria; "only we must not run towards the stream."

"No," said Andrew; "but at the summit of that hill stands a large pear-tree, about a quarter of a mile off. I will run to the left past the fir-plantation, and you can go to the right through the fields; and we shall not know, till we meet, which of us is the fastest runner."

"Good," said Maria, immediately starting off; "we shall not hinder each other by going the same way, and our father says it is just the same distance to the top of the hill, whether we go on this side, or by the gipsy-huts."

Andrew had already started off, and Maria, who ran towards the right, saw him no more.

"How very stupid he is!" said she to herself; "for if I could only summon up courage enough to run over the bridge by the hut, and then again out across the yard, I should certainly get there much sooner than he will." She was already standing facing the stream and the fir-hill.

"Shall I?—No, it's too terrible." A little white dog stood on the other side, keeping up a loud and continued bark at her. In her fright the little animal appeared a perfect monster, and she sprang back trembling. "Oh dear," said she, "Andrew has by this time got such a long distance before me, while I'm stopping here to consider." The little dog still barked on; and as she looked at it more attentively, it no longer struck her as being so terrible, but, on the contrary, she was quite charmed with it. It had a red collar, to which was affixed a tiny glittering bell; and as often as it raised its head and shook it, while barking, the tinkling noise it produced was to her ears most musical. "Oh, I'll venture," cried little Maria; "I'll run as fast as I can, and I shall soon be on the other side; they surely can't eat me entirely." With this the young courageous child sprang on the bridge, and quickly passed the little dog, who immediately ceased his barking to fawn upon her. And now she was standing on the dread spot; and the black firs, that were thickly grouped together, shut out from her view the home of her fathers, and the rest of the pretty landscape. But how amazed was she at the spectacle before her!

Around her was a most brilliant expanse of flower-garden, in which roses, lilies, and tulips, intertwining with one another, shone in all those gorgeous colours in which Nature loves to garb her bright creations; blue and golden butterflies fluttered about from blossom to blossom, glittering as the sunbeams danced upon their fairy livery; birds, whose plumage borrowed the tints of the rainbow, and whose tiny throats quivered again as each note swelled forth more delicious than the last, hung on cages and on glittering perches; children in short white garments, with golden hair hanging in luxuriant curls, and clear blue eyes, sported about, some leading little pet-lambs, others feeding the birds; some culled the fragrant flowers, and wove garlands for one another; others were tasting the delicious fruits—pears, large clusters of grapes, and red apricots:

no hut was visible, but a large handsome mansion, with gates of brass and wood of exquisite workmanship, towered on high in the middle of this paradise. Maria was rivetted to the spot; indeed, the beauty of the garden and the magnificence of the mansion had taken so firm a hold on her fancy, that some moments elapsed ere she recovered her surprise even partially. But, as it had ever been the study of her parents to enable her to appear composed, whatever novelty might offer itself to her, she approached fearlessly the nearest child, and with extended hand wished it good day.

"So you have come to see us then at last," said the little girl; "I have often seen you dancing and sporting without there, but you were afraid of our little dog."

"Then you are not gipsies and strollers, as Andrew says you are. Ah, truly, he's very stupid, and talks a great deal too much."

"Only stop with us here," said her new friend; "you shall be so happy."

"But we are running for a wager, and—"

"Oh, you'll get back to him very soon; take some of our fruit." Maria tasted it, and it proved so delicious to her palate, that she declared she had never before eaten any like it; and from this moment Andrew, the race, and the prohibition of her parents, were altogether forgotten. Then a more elderly female, whose dress was still more beautiful than any thing Maria had hitherto seen, stepped forward, and made inquiry about the stranger-child.

"Most beautiful lady," said Maria, "I ran in here by accident, and now they wish to keep me here."

"You know, Zerina," said the beautiful lady, "that there is a short time only allowed her; besides, you should first of all have asked my permission."

"I thought," said the child, "as she had been allowed to cross the bridge, that I might keep her; we have often seen her running about in the fields, and you have yourself

been pleased with her gay and spirited air; and she will be obliged to leave us soon enough."

"No, I will stay here," said Maria, "it is so charming here; and I find the best things to play with here are strawberries and pears; it is not half so fine outside."

The golden-dressed lady now retired, smiling; and many of the children playfully sported about Maria — laughing, and inviting her to join their dance. Some brought her a pet-lamb or wonderful toys, others brought novel instruments and played and sang to her; but she preferred the little playfellow, her first friend, for she was the most gentle and good-natured of all. The little Maria constantly cried out, "I will always stop here, and you shall be my sisters;" at which all the children smiled and embraced her.

"Now then," said Zerina, "we shall have a fine game;" and running hastily into the palace, she returned with a little golden basket, in which were very fine glittering seeds. She took some in her delicate little fingers, and strewed the grains upon the green turf; and immediately they saw the grass heave and float about, as it were in waves; and after a few moments, beautiful rose-trees sprang from the ground, grew rapidly up, and suddenly burst themselves into their full beauty, exhaling the sweetest odours that floated round them in the air. Maria herself took some of the seed, and scattered it; and immediately there sprang up at her feet white lilies and cloves of every hue. At a motion of Zerina's, these flowers all disappeared, and others still more beautiful sprang up in their place.

"Now," said Zerina to the astonished child, "prepare yourself for something still greater." She then placed two pine-cones in the ground, and stamped on them violently with her feet: instantly two green shrubs stood before them. "Grasp me firmly," said she; and Maria threw her arms around her delicate waist, and felt herself rising up into the air; for the trees grew beneath them with surprising quickness. The tall pines swayed to and fro at

the will of the breeze, and the two children, locked in each other's arms, kissed each other, while floating backwards in the red clouds of evening. The other little ones clambered up and down the stems of the trees with elastic step, and if by chance one impeded the progress of another, the whole number raised a loud shout of laughter. Maria at length grew terrified; and at some mystic words uttered by the little one, the trees sank again gently into the earth, setting them down in the spot from which they had raised them up. They then went through the brazen gate of the palace; here many women, some younger, some older, all of that degree of beauty that no pencil could portray, were seated round a circular hall, feasting on the most delicious fruits, and listening to a concert of most delightful and invisible harmony.

Round the ceiling of the hall, which was studded with gold and gems, representing the starry sphere, were palm-trees, plants, and shrubs, between which children clambered and sported in most graceful groups. The figures varied and glowed in more burning colours, according to the tones of the music. At one time, green and blue, sparkling like clear rays of light, prevailed. Then the colours paled away, and purple and gold burst forth: then the naked children, amid the fanciful clusters that the different flowers wove, seemed to be full of life, and to inhale and exhale breath with their ruby-red lips, so that their beautiful white teeth were visible, and the bright glances of their clear blue eyes were seen from beneath their dark fringe. From the hall, some steps of marble and jasper led into a large subterraneous chamber. The floor of this room was covered with vast heaps of gold and silver; diamonds, pearls, and gems of all colours dazzled the eyes; large deep vessels stood around the walls, all filled with precious stones, and gold wrought into curious devices, and mystic characters, with such ingenuity as no artisan, however skilful, could form. Many little dwarfs were occupied in sorting the precious heaps, and in filling

vessels with the riches; others, with crooked legs and long red noses, dragged in heavy sacks, as millers carry their corn, and bending forward, poured out the grains on the earth: then they jumped to the right and left, and seized the treasures as they rolled away; and it often happened, that through their zeal and eagerness to recover them, they rolled one against the other and fell heavily on the ground. They made frightful faces whenever Maria laughed at their grotesque manner and hideous deformity. Behind sat a little old man, wrinkled by age, whom Maria saluted very respectfully, but he merely bent his head in answer to her deferential salutation: he had a sceptre in his right hand, and a crown encircled his brow; all the other dwarfs seemed to look up to him as their chief and superior; his fiat was instantly obeyed, though his commands were given by signs and motions.

"What is the matter now?" said he in a surly tone, as the children approached nearer to him. The timid Maria kept silence, but her little playfellow answered, that they had only come to see the chamber.

"What," said the old man peevishly, "will there always be these childish freaks? is there never to be an end to this idling?" He then turned his attention again to his work, and ordered the pieces of gold to be weighed and collected together. Some of the dwarfs he despatched in different directions; many, too, he scolded right heartily.

At length Maria's curiosity got the better of her fear, and in an eager manner she said to her little friend, "Who is that old man?"

"Our metal-prince," said the little one, as they left the chamber.

They soon found themselves in the open air, by the side of a large lake; still no sun had appeared hitherto, nor could they see any sky above them. Here a little boat received them, and Zerina took the helm and steered their course very skilfully. They floated rapidly down the lake, and when they had arrived at about the middle, Maria saw

that a thousand canals, streams, and rivulets, branched off in every direction from this miniature sea.

"These waters," said the bright-beaming child, "flow exactly under your garden, irrigating the soil around; and hence it is that your flowers bloom more beautifully and more fragrantly than others, and that your fruits are so superior in flavour; from this stream we launch into the great canal." On a sudden there rose to the surface from every branch of these blue waters a countless number of beautiful children, swimming and plunging up and down among the mimic waves; many wore graceful coronets of flags and water-lilies, glittering as though with gems from the drops of spray; others waved branches of red and white coral; others again carried curious horns, tastefully decorated with blue ribbons; then several beautiful women rose to the surface, swimming about among the group of younger naiads, and at times the children might be seen hanging on the necks of the women, covering them with kisses. They all saluted the stranger party; and through the midst of this grouped assemblage the little barque floated on from the main stream into a smaller rivulet, which became gradually narrower and narrower, and at the same time the depth of water diminished till the little boat grounded on the shore. Here the group of naiads, who had accompanied their tiny vessel, took leave of them; and Zerina knocked against the rock, which immediately opened like a magnificent doorway to admit them, and a female figure, of a glowing red colour, assisted them to disembark.

"Is all going on merrily?" inquired Zerina.

"Ay, merrily indeed," replied the other; "you are ever on the wing;,no cloud of sorrow ever darkens your brow, but the sunshine of happiness always lights up those features of yours, curling that lip with a smile of joy."

They mounted a winding staircase, and Maria suddenly found herself in a most glittering hall, so that on entering, her eyes were dazzled with the brilliant lights that burst

in their full splendour upon her. Deep-red tapestry covered the walls with a brilliant glow; and as soon as her eye was familiar with the unusual halo that invested the whole chamber, she perceived figures moving gracefully up and down in the tapestry, of such exquisite beauty and delicate symmetry of form, that her imagination could not paint any thing more lovely. Their bodies appeared to be formed of crystal of a reddish tint, and so transparent, that one might see the life-blood circulating in their veins. They smiled at the stranger-child, and bowed courteously: but when the little Maria wished to approach nearer, Zerina held her back forcibly, exclaiming, "You will burn yourself, little Maria; what you are gazing upon is all fire."

Maria perceived the heat, and said to Zerina, "Why don't these charming creatures come out and play with us?"

"It is impossible," answered Zerina; "as you live in air, so they live in fire; if you were to be taken out of your peculiar element, you would languish and droop; in the same manner, if you were to transport them into your element, they would perish."

"Only look," said Maria, "how happy and joyous they seem; listen how they shout and sing."

"Below," said her little friend, "the fire-streams spread in every direction throughout the whole earth, imparting heat to the vegetation, and ripening the seed, till it shoots upward into a fruitful plant: hence you have your flowers and fruits. These fire-streams go side by side with the water-streams; and to their mutual agency you owe all the herbage of your pasture-land, all the beauties of your flower-garden, all the luscious produce of your orchards: they are your great benefactors: without them your present fruitful land would be a desolate wilderness; your flower-gardens overrun with noxious weeds, and your orchard-trees blighted and dying away. In consequence of such benefits resulting from them, they are ever active, ever

happy. But this heat is too great for a child of air; come, let us return to the garden."

There had been a great change in the atmosphere; the moonshine lay on all the flowers, the birds were hushed, and the children were slumbering on the greensward.

"Happy, holy calmness," thought Maria; "Peace has certainly chosen her retreat in these lovely regions; Contentment is linked with her; and wherever they roam hand in hand, all is joy, all is tranquillity."

But did Maria slumber? No; she and her little friend felt no weariness; they roamed through the live-long summer night amid the groves and sylvan avenues, prattling in youthful eloquence on the wondrous spectacles that were before them. At day-break they refreshed themselves with fruits and milk; and Maria said to her little companion, "Let us go out to the fir-trees yonder; it will be a change for us."

"With all my heart," said Zerina; "then you can see our sentries at the same time, and they will be sure to please you. They take their stand upon the rampart between the trees."

They walked on through the flower-garden, through beautiful thickets peopled with nightingales; then they mounted the vine-hills, and following the course of a clear crystal stream in its winding channel, they arrived at the firs, and the high ground that formed the boundary of the district.

"How is it," said Maria, "that we have had such a long walk to reach the firs here within, when the circuit on the outside is so small?"

"I cannot say how it is," said the other; "but so it is."

They ascended the hill to the dark firs, and the cold breeze blew upon them from without. A dark cloud, extending far across the horizon, seemed to hang over the whole district; and above them stood wondrous forms with whitened faces, not unlike the hideous heads of the white

owl, and clad in folding mantles of coarse and shaggy wool, fanning themselves from time to time with bats' wings.

"How I long to laugh!" said Maria; "but yet I'm afraid."

"Those," said Zerina, "are our careful watchmen; they stand here in order to strike awe and consternation into any that may venture to approach, and to deter any curious folks from getting an insight into our regions. You see they are wrapped up closely, and protected from the weather; that is because it is raining and freezing without; but neither snow, nor wind, nor hail, can penetrate here within: here is eternal spring — here the bright garb of summer never fades. Our sentinels are very devoted to us; so that, although they are seldom relieved, yet they willingly keep watch at their posts."

"But who are you?" at length asked Maria; "have you any names by which we may call you?"

"We are called Elves," said her little friend; "they speak well of us too in the world, as I understand."

On retracing their way into the flower-garden they heard a great shout in the meadows, which grew louder as they approached nearer to the spot.

"A large beautiful bird has arrived," shouted the children, as they followed the flight of the majestic creature, as it sailed through the air: all pushed on hastily in its track, and Maria and her young friend could see young and old all pressing forward to the spot with hasty steps: songs of rejoicing were heard on every side, and a sweet strain of triumphal music from within came floating through the air to them. They entered the hall, and saw the whole circuit filled with the elfin-tribe, all gazing up at a vast bird of beautiful plumage, which was describing slowly many revolutions around the dome of the building. The music burst forth more gaily than ever, and the colours and lights in the ceiling revolved more rapidly, and shot forth again in brighter colours and more fantastic groups. At length the music died away softly, and the majestic bird

fluttered down upon a splendid throne, suspended mid-way from the ceiling, beneath the window which lighted the apartment from above. His plumage was a mixture of purple and green, through which the most brilliant golden streaks were to be seen; on his head was a clear, shining coronet of feathers, glittering as though it were studded with precious stones; his beak was of a deep red tint, and his legs of bright blue. When he rose again into the air, all the colours blended together so uniquely that the eye was perfectly enraptured with the gorgeous galaxy of magnificence which it presented. But soon he opened his brilliant beak, and warbled sweet melody more delicious than that of the nightingale: his song swelled forth and grew more powerful, gushing out like lovely rays of light, till the whole assembly shed tears of delight.

When he had ceased his song, all present bowed low before him; again he flew around the cupola in circles, and sailing swiftly through the entrance, soared again up to the blue sky, where he was soon lost to the eye, appearing for a time a mere bright speck upon the horizon.

"Why are you all so glad?" asked Maria, bending down to the beautiful child, who appeared to her smaller than the day before.

"The king is coming," answered the child; "many of us have never yet seen him; and wherever he goes, thither happiness and prosperity follow him. We have been eagerly longing for his presence for some time past, and looking forward to his coming as anxiously as you children of air look forward to spring and spring-flowers after a tedious winter. And now he has announced to us his approach through that beautiful and intelligent messenger, the Phœnix. He dwells afar off in Arabia, and there only appears one of the species at the same time in the world: when he grows old, he builds himself a nest of balm and incense, and, setting it on fire, burns to death, singing at the same time as beautifully as you have heard him to-day; then from the odoriferous ashes he rises again into a new

existence, and soars aloft with fresh vigour and beauty. But now, dear little Maria, you must go; the period of your stay with us has expired: when the king comes, no stranger must dwell with us, nor even see him once."

"But he will soon leave you again," said Maria fondly, "and then I will return to you, and never quit you."

"It cannot be," answered her friend; "the king will stay here twenty years, or even longer; but he will make every thing change for you for the better: there will be no storms to harm your crops, no hail to destroy the early blossoms of your fruit-trees, no floods to overflow your pasture-land."

Here the golden-dressed lady stepped up to Maria.

"You must indeed go," she said; "though we must all be sorry that the time for your visit has elapsed. Take this ring, and wear it always in remembrance of your elfin friends; but remember, when you quit this spot, never to mention to any living soul the place where you have been staying — never to reveal aught of the wonders you have been permitted to see here. Should you ever be tempted to disclose this great secret, beware of the evil results that must ensue — they will fall heavily upon you, as well as upon us: we shall be obliged to quit the spot for ever, and your fruitful fields will be transformed to a desolate wilderness. Come, kiss your little playfellow once more, and then farewell. Remember my last caution."

Maria bade them a sad farewell, and retraced her steps to her own home. As she was crossing the bridge, the little white dog barked at her again, as he had done when she first approached, and shook his little bell. She crossed over, and began for the first time to think of her parents, and the happy home she had deserted through her disobedience. She pictured to herself the anguish of a loving mother, the silent though deep sorrow of her father, the alarm of the whole hamlet, as soon as the news of her disappearance was noised abroad. She then thought of Andrew's glee when he reached the winning-post, and how

his eager eye was turned in the direction that she had agreed to come by, expecting to see her downcast look. She then called to mind the caution she had received not to make the communication known, for fear of the evil results: "however," said she, "if I were to tell them, and insist upon the truth of my statement, I should find no one to credit my story." As she was indulging in her reveries, two men passed her and saluted her.

"What a pretty girl!" said they, "where can such a beautiful creature have come from?"

She quickened her pace; but on looking round her she was struck with amazement: the flowers that she had left yesterday so lovely and fragrant were dead, and their sweet odour was gone; the trees, yesterday so verdant, were now leafless and withered; new buildings had sprung up around her—indeed it would seem that some mystic agency had been at work on the spot—that the spirit of enchantment had passed over the district, and wrought a change indeed.

"Then it must all be a dream," said Maria, rubbing her eyes as though wakening up from a deep slumber; "it must all be a dream; and the strange and wonderful sights I have seen must be the effects of fancy.—No, it certainly is reality, and I am standing near the bridge where our house stood yesterday."

She proceeded on to her home, perfectly bewildered by the change that a day had wrought; and, with a feeling of embarrassment that can be more naturally conceived than portrayed, she opened the door, and saw her father sitting behind a table, at which were seated a lady and a youth, both of whom Maria fancied she had never seen before.

"Father, dear father," cried Maria, gazing round her with a look of deep amazement, "say, where is my mother?"

The lady immediately rose from her seat, and, rushing towards her, looked at her with an earnestness of feeling that itself would have told the grand secret, that it was no

other than her mother, and exclaimed, "Yes, you are,—no;" and then she seemed for a minute to distrust her powers of recollection,—"yes, you are our dear, lost Maria;" and the mother and daughter were instantly clasped in each other's arms.

Still Maria scarcely seemed to credit her senses.—"How," said she to herself, "can one single day have produced this change?—not only are the buildings altered, and the general appearance of the country, but my mother also wears a more aged appearance: can this be the effect of one little day?"

"Who, then, is that young man?" she inquired of her mother, who was by this time fully satisfied of her daughter's identity.

"That," replied Martin, "is your old playfellow Andrew; you surely have not entirely forgotten him; though certainly a lapse of seven years must have made some little change in all of us. Seven years have now passed away since you disappeared so suddenly; and so many continued years of sorrow and anxiety rarely, I trust, fall to the lot of any mortals. Where have you been this long time? Why did we not hear of you?—for, although we all rejoice exceedingly to receive you again, still you must satisfy us with the cause of your disappearance, and with an account of what has befallen you in your separation from us."

"Seven years!" exclaimed Maria; "seven years do you say have passed?"

"Yes," said Andrew, "it is so indeed. I arrived first at the pear-tree, and that was seven years ago; and as you have only this moment returned, I think I can claim the prize as victor."

"You remember," said her father, "our leaving you with Andrew, while we went into the harvest-field: on our return you were missing. Andrew told us the story of the race, and that he saw no more of you after the start. We searched diligently for you, and everybody through the hamlet offered their assistance to endeavour to discover

you. But our attempts were fruitless, and we returned to our home broken-hearted, having lost all we prized on earth, our only child. But tell us, how did you contrive to lose yourself?—we thought you were so well acquainted with the whole district as to render it a matter of impossibility. Where have you been? how have you been living?"

These questions embarrassed the poor Maria in no slight degree: for how could she tell of the wondrous elves—of her dear little playfellow Zerina—of the gold and precious stones, the lovely fruits, the variegated flower-beds, the streams of gentle water, the children sporting in the rivulets? How could she describe the crystal fire-beings—the beautifully-feathered phœnix, the palace of the elf-king, with its brazen-wrought gates, and its highly decorated ceilings? How could she trace to their imaginations the hideous form of the metal-prince, and the strange figures of the sentinels on the rampart? But even if she had been able to depict all the spectacles she had witnessed in their proper colours, would such a strange story have appeared credible, or even plausible? But she had not forgotten the last parting admonition of the golden lady—no, it was still ringing in her ears—"tell not aught of the things you have seen or heard; evil results will happen to you and us:" and then the smiling features of her little elfin friend were visible to her mind's eye,—and could she harm so dear a head? No, it was not in her disposition to injure any one, even should it not be likely to draw down danger upon herself.

"Where have you been?" again asked Martin.

"As soon as I started off in the race," said Maria, "I was snatched up, and carried off to a distance. I did not know the country," she continued, "and could not get any communication to you: I seized the first opportunity to make my escape, and have once more reached you."

However strange and incredible this may have appeared, as it certainly did, to her parents, still they were so happy to receive their lost child, and to heap blessings

on her head for cherishing such feelings of love and affection towards them during her long absence, that they forgot the mystery that seemed to invest her statement, in the joy they experienced in having her again beneath the roof of her fathers. He who can appreciate the joy with which a parent clasps to her bosom a long-lost child, can readily pardon the seeming indifference as to the cause of her separation. Andrew remained the whole evening, and shared their frugal supper. But how great was the change to poor Maria! Where were the chambers glittering with gold and gems? where the costly tapestries? where the sweet odours floating about in the air? where the strains of divine harmony that were wafted to her ears but yesterday by every breeze? They were no longer — they lived but in her memory. And she gazed with a dissatisfied air at the meanness of her father's dwelling; and thought how gloomy it was after the brightness of the palace; and, indulging her fancy, she dreamt of Zerina and the little elves, and gladly availed herself of an opportunity to seek her chamber for the night, where she might dwell upon the strange events of one day apparently—of seven years in reality.

Andrew returned on the following morning, seemingly anxious to spend as much time as possible in the society of his first playfellow, Maria. The news of her return spread rapidly through the hamlet, and many were the hearty congratulations poured forth, mingled with blessings, on her youthful head. It at length reached the ears of the noble proprietor of the castle, who sent for her, and listened to her statement with no little surprise and wonder: they were struck with her vivacity of spirit, tempered with unassuming modesty, and with her plain unvarnished tale; — so well hitherto had she concealed in her own bosom any feeling that might have thrown a shade of suspicion on her story, and brought to light the awful secret of which she was possessed. It was now the month of February; but the whole country wore that rich ap-

pearance which a more matured season of the year induces: the trees were clad in their brilliant green livery; the nightingale's notes were already to be heard in the woods; and never had such an early or so lovely a spring gladdened the earth before in the recollection of the most aged villager. The hills seemed to increase in size; the vines planted on them shot forth more numerous tendrils, and the thick clusters, that promised an abundant vintage, were already peeping forth among the leaves; the fruit-trees were covered with blossoms, and there had been no hail to crush the produce in the bud, no blight to destroy the hopes of the farmer at a more advanced season. The following year wore the same happy appearance; the harvest was still more abundant than before, and at the conclusion of their toil Maria assented to the wishes of her parents and crowned their joy by becoming Andrew's bride. Still she would often dwell upon the happy days that were passed behind the fir-trees, till she grew silent and serious, but more beautiful each succeeding day. It pained her too, as often as Andrew talked of the gipsies and vagabonds, and prayed that the Baron might some day purge his estate of such worthless characters, as he styled them. On such occasions the temptation of defending her benefactors was great indeed; but whenever Andrew mentioned the subject she was more silent than before, in consequence of her knowledge of the result of such a communication. Thus matters went on steadily for a year, at the end of which time they were blessed with a daughter, whom Maria named Elfrida—the name doubtless having reference to those kind beings whose home she had once shared, and who were at that time the secret agents in working the grand changes that had taken place.

Elfrida was a very intelligent child from her birth, and ran about alone and prattled ere a twelvemonth had passed over her head. As she grew older, her singular beauty was the remark of every one, and her quick perception astonished them: she did not associate with other children, but

seemed to shun their sports, and avoid their company, retiring frequently into an arbour or some secret spot, and passing the hours in reading or working, and indulging her love of solitude. Old Martin rejoiced to see the bloom of health on the cheek of his grandchild, and to trace the rapid development of her intellect; but Brigitta was constantly saying, "That child will not see many years—she is too good, too beautiful for earth; she will smile on us here for a time, but she will soon be carried off to a happier home than we can give her." The child was never in need of any assistance—she rose with the lark, and was off immediately to her chosen retreat: but on one occasion, when they were going to the castle, Maria insisted on dressing her child, who resisted her with prayers and tears, begging and entreating that her mother would leave her. Maria persevered, and on stripping her discovered a singular piece of gold, corresponding exactly to the treasures which she had seen in the elves' chambers, fastened to her bosom by a silken thread. The child, terrified at the discovery, declared that she knew not how she had come by it, but at the same time prayed that her mother would not remove it, but allow her still to keep the treasure. At the child's earnest entreaty Maria replaced it by its thread, and took her to the castle; but it made a deep impression on her heart, and she was from that moment full of thought.

By the side of old Martin's house were some detached buildings, erected as storehouses for fruits and corn; behind them was a grass-plat, where stood an old arbour, which no one was in the habit of visiting, in consequence of its distance from the new dwelling-house. This was the favourite retreat of Elfrida, and no one disturbed her, even though she were to spend the greater part of the day there in solitude. One afternoon Maria went to the arbour to find an article she had mislaid, and observed a bright stream of light issuing through a chink in the wall: she hastily removed a few loose stones, and, peeping in, saw Elfrida

seated on a little rustic bench, and by her side Zerina, sporting with her. The elf embraced the child, and said, "Ah, my dear little thing, I played with your mother once as I do with you, when she visited us: you are growing so fast, and becoming so rational—'tis a sad pity."

"How I wish," said Elfrida, "how I wish I could remain a child all my life, to please you!"

"Ah," said Zerina, "it is with you as with the blossoms of the trees: how beautiful the bloom is! but ere you have had time to admire the bud, the warm sun shoots down on it, the blossom bursts and comes to its full maturity."

"How I wish I could see you in your home, if it were only once!" said the child.

"That is impossible," said Zerina; "since our king has come, no child of earth can visit us: but I can come often to you—no one knows it, either here or there; I fly to and fro like a bird; so that we can be happy with one another as long as we live."

"What can I do to please you, dear Zerina?" said the child.

"Let us make a crown again," answered Zerina, taking a golden box from her bosom. She shook two grains upon the earth, and there arose a greenish bush with two red roses, which bent towards each other, and seemed to kiss. They plucked the two roses, and the bush sank again into the earth.

"I wish my rose would not die so soon," said the child.

"Give it to me," said the elf; and breathing on it she kissed it three times, and gave it back to the child, and said, "now it will live till the winter."

"How sweet!" said Elfrida; "I'll set it up in my room like a picture, and kiss it morning and evening."

"Now, dear Elfrida, I must leave you," said Zerina; "the sun is going down, and my time has passed;" and she disappeared from the arbour, and soon regained her fairy home.

From this moment Maria looked with a certain degree of awe and reverence upon her child, and let her roam at her will even more than she had done before—soothing and quieting her husband whenever he wished to go in search of the little fugitive. Maria frequently crept to the hole, and always discovered the elf there playing or chattering with the child.

"Should you like to be able to fly?" asked the elf one day of her little friend.

"Willingly," replied Elfrida.

Zerina embraced her, and they floated up together from the earth to the top of the arbour. The mother, in her anxiety for her darling child, leant forward from her hiding-place to look for them, when Zerina perceived her, and, holding up her finger in a threatening manner, she smiled sweetly on her, and brought down the child to earth again, and disappeared.

Maria was in the habit of shaking her head kindly at her husband in their disputes concerning the occupants of the district behind the fir-plantations: on one occasion she said, "You are unjust in your ideas of them;" but when pressed by her husband for an explanation, she was silent. Scarce a day passed without a serious conversation between them on the same subject; and on another occasion Andrew was more than usually enraged against them, and said, "The Baron ought to expel them; they are injurious to the hamlet."

"Silence!" cried Maria, "they are benefactors, and no vagabonds!" and, binding him by a promise never to divulge aught of what she was about to mention, she related to him the story of her youth, with all the particulars of the elfin regions. As he continued incredulous, she led him to the arbour, where he saw the elf caressing his child. On his approach Zerina grew pale, and trembled exceedingly, and lifted her finger in a threatening manner at Maria, no longer smiling as before. "It is not your fault," said she to the child, "but I must leave you for ever;" and

embracing Elfrida, she flew in the form of a raven, with most discordant shrieks, towards the fir-plantation.

The little child silently kissed her rose, and wept incessantly; Andrew spoke little. At length night came on: the trees moaned as the blast swept by, the owls whooped mournfully, the thunder boomed along the sky, and the earth rocked violently. Maria and Andrew lay trembling with fear, and endeavouring to shut out all the fury of the storm, and the roar of the thunder from their thoughts. How eagerly did they long for the morning! At length day dawned, and the sun shone forth again. Andrew dressed himself hastily, and, opening his door, looked forth on the scene around him. What a change was there! — the prospect could not even be recognised; the verdant freshness of the wood was gone, the hill had sunk into the ground, the stream wound slowly on, with scarce a sufficient depth of water to cover its channel; the sky wore a grey gloomy hue, and the fir-trees, that had ever been so unusually dark, wore the same appearance as the rest of the vegetation. Maria looked at her ring, the gift of the elf, and saw that the stone was of a strange palish colour, having lost all its fire and brilliancy.

The villagers, in different groups, were discussing the events of the singular night; some had passed over the heath by the gipsy-huts early in the morning, and found no trace of living creature. The huts were certainly still standing, but they were tenantless; and the whole spot was so entirely changed that there was no feature in it to distinguish it from the hamlet in which they themselves dwelt. In the course of the day Elfrida sought a conference with her mother, and said, "I was so restless last night, dear mother, I could not close my eyes; and, being terrified by the storm, I prayed fervently for safety during the many dark hours that still remained before morning dawned; and in the midst of my prayers the door opened suddenly, and my little playfellow entered to take leave of me. She was equipped as though for a long journey, and

had a pilgrim's staff. She was angry, dear mother, very angry with you; for she has undergone severe and painful punishments on your account, and that too when she was so fond of you: and even amid all this trouble, resulting from your want of prudence, she says she is sorry to leave the district on your account." Maria begged her to conceal the whole matter from her father, and to mention it to none of the villagers.

Meantime the ferry-man, who plied on the stream near which their gardens were situated, came, with terror depicted on his face, to tell the strange things he had seen and heard. "At twilight," said he, "a man of gigantic stature called to hire the ferry till sunrise this morning, on one condition, that I would promise to keep myself within doors, and not venture to peep forth to see what was being done. I was afraid that some trick was to be played off; and although I retired to rest, I could not sleep for thinking on the strange bargain. I crept silently to the window, and looked forth; the dark dusky clouds chased one another restlessly through the expanse of sky; the distant woods moaned heavily, strange noises floated in the air, and the cottage shook from its very foundations. Suddenly I saw a white stream of light, brightening ever and anon, like many thousand twinkling stars; it floated on from the direction of the firs, waving to and fro over the fields, and spreading towards the stream. I heard a tramping of footsteps, and a buzzing, rustling noise, which grew by degrees more and more distinct: then I saw many thousand glittering figures—men, women, and children—pass on to the ferry-boat and embark, and the gigantic man ferried them across; many beautiful creatures swam over by the boat, and lively clouds of white and blue floated over their heads; melancholy music was wafted by the breeze around me, and the sounds of lamentation, as though of colonies parting for a distant country from their father-land: the stroke of the oar fell heavily on my ear, and then all again was silence for a while. Then the boat

returned, and was laden anew: many hideous dwarfs rolled along heavy vessels; but whether they were demons of earth or not, I cannot say. Then there came a brilliant and stately procession, in the midst of which appeared an aged man, on a small white horse, the head of which was adorned by precious stones of every colour. The old man's head was surrounded by a coronet, which shone so vividly, that, as he passed, methought the sun was rising, and that the beams of early day were piercing through the mists of midnight. This procession lasted during the whole night, till at length, worn out with fatigue, I fell into a deep slumber. In the morning all seemed quiet; but when I rose to look after my ferry-boat, I observed that the stream was almost dry, and the water so low, that I must altogether remove my ferry."

This was the strange recital on the part of the ferryman, who had been an eye-witness of the wondrous spectacle. In the same year a dreadful famine prevailed through the whole district; the corn was blighted; the fruit-trees withered away; the foliage of the woods became of a sickly yellow colour; the springs dried up; and soon that pretty hamlet, which had been for years the delight of the traveller, was nothing more than a barren desert, naked and sterile; a vast expanse of sand, with here and there a tuft of grass, and even that discoloured and dying. The vines, that were formerly the pride of the district, afforded no more rich clusters; and the whole spot wore so melancholy and gloomy an aspect, that in the following year the Count and his family removed from the once magnificent castle, which soon afterwards fell to ruins.

Elfrida gazed fondly at the rose day and night, and kissed it, dreaming of her dear little playfellow; and as the flower drooped and faded, so did her little head droop; and ere the balmy breezes of spring returned with their freshness, she was gone. Maria would often stand before the door of the cottage, weeping for her lost child, and

dreaming of that happiness once her own, never again to return. On her fell all the misery that was predicted by the golden lady, if she should ever divulge aught of the elves or their fairy regions: she bowed her head to the stroke, and like her child faded slowly away, and followed her to the grave. The broken-hearted parents could no longer dwell in the spot, embittered as it was by the recollection of former days of happiness, and the prospect of heaviness and gloom for the future; and since the link that bound them to all that was dear had been rudely snapt asunder, old Martin, Brigitta, and Andrew, quitted the spot, and retired to a district where the old man had passed his first happy days.

THE

WHITE EGBERT.

HIGH up in the Hartz Mountains there lived in a castle a knight who was known by the name of the White Egbert. He was about forty years old, rather below the middle height; and he obtained his name from the quantity of short, smooth, white hair which covered his pale haggard cheeks. He lived a peaceable retired life, never involved in feuds with his neighbours; indeed, he was seldom seen beyond the walls of his small castle. His wife loved quiet as much as he; they were passionately attached to each other; and their only cause of sorrow was that Heaven had not blessed their union with children.

It was seldom that a guest was seen at the castle; and if ever such an event did happen, it never was allowed to interfere with their ordinary way of going

on. No advance was made upon the frugality — almost meanness — with which the establishment was conducted; the only difference being that at such times Egbert assumed an air of lightness and gaiety, whereas when alone he was observed to be reserved and melancholy.

His most frequent visitor was Philip Walters; a man to whom Egbert had attached himself, because he observed in him, on the whole, a general resemblance to himself in his ways of thinking. This person was a native of France, and spent the greater part of his time there; but he was often for more than six months together in the mountains in the neighbourhood of Egbert's castle, looking for grasses and minerals, of which he was a collector. He had a small property of his own, and was independent of every one. Egbert often accompanied him on these expeditions, and every year a closer attachment formed itself between them.

There are hours in every man's life in which, if he has a secret from his friend, he becomes suddenly in labour with it, and what before he may have taken the greatest pains to conceal, he now feels an irresistible impulse to throw out of himself — to lay bare the whole burden of his heart, that it may form a new link to bind his friend to him. Friendship ebbs and flows, and is subject to singular influences. There are moments of violent repulsion; there are others when every barrier is dissolved, and spirits flow together and mingle into one.

On a dark cloudy evening, one day late in autumn, Egbert was sitting with his friend and his wife Bertha round the fire in the castle-hall. The flame flung a bright ruddy glow along the walls, and played and flickered in the deep oak roof. The night looked in gloomily through the windows, and the trees outside shook with the wet and the cold. Walters complained of the distance he had to go to his house, and Egbert pressed him to stay and spend half the night talking over the fire, and then accept a room in the castle till next morning. Walters agreed to do so;

wine and supper were brought in; fresh logs of wood were thrown upon the fire; and the friends' conversation became more and more easy and confidential.

When the things were taken away, and the servants had retired, Egbert took Walters' hand, and said, "My dear friend, you must let my wife Bertha tell you the history of her younger days; it is a very strange one, and well worth your hearing."

"With the greatest pleasure," said Walters; and they again drew their chairs round the fire-place.

It was toward midnight; dark masses of cloud were sweeping across the sky, and the moon looking fitfully out between. "Do not think I am forcing myself on you," Bertha said. "My husband tells me you are so noble-hearted a person, it is a shame to conceal any thing from you. Singular as it may sound, the story I am about to tell you is true.

"I was born in a village in the plains. My father was a poor herdsman. Our housekeeping was none of the best, and my parents often did not know where they were to get a mouthful of bread. What was to me most distressing of all was, that they often quarrelled because they were poor, and each brought the bitterest complaints against the other for being the cause of it. Of me, they and every one else said I was a stupid, silly little creature; that I could not do the commonest thing properly; and, indeed, I was a good-for-nothing helpless child. Whatever I took up, I was sure to let fall and break. I could neither sew, nor spin, nor knit, nor could I learn. I could not help in managing the house; all I knew was that we were poor and miserable. I used often to sit in a corner and think how I would help my parents if I was all of a sudden to get rich; how I would shower gold and silver on them, and what fun it would be to see how surprised they would look; and I used to fancy all sorts of spirits sweeping round me, and shewing me treasures buried under ground; or giving me little pebbles, which suddenly turned to precious stones.

In short, the strangest notions got hold of me; and when I had to get up and help at any thing in the house, I was all the stupider about it, because my brain was running upon these sort of ideas.

"My father was often very angry with me for being such an idle, useless burden upon him. He sometimes spoke to me very harshly, and it was seldom that I ever got a kind word from him. So it went on till I was about eight years old; and now matters got serious—I must learn to do something. My father thought it was wilfulness and obstinacy in me, and all I wanted was to spend my time in amusement. Enough: one day, after a number of threats which all proved fruitless, he gave me a dreadful beating, and declared I should have the same every day till I had learned to turn myself to some purpose or other.

"All that night I lay on my bed crying; I felt so wretched and miserable that I wished to die. I was afraid of the daylight, because I did not know what to begin about. I wished and wished for every possible accomplishment, and I could not conceive why I was stupider than other children that I knew. I was almost in despair. When morning began to break, I got up; and hardly knowing what I did, I opened the door of our little cottage. I ran out into the open fields, and presently into a wood close by, which was so thick that daylight could hardly find its way into it. I ran on and on without ever looking behind me. I did not feel the least tired; all I was afraid of was that my father would catch me, and beat me again worse than before for running away.

"When I had got to the other side of the wood, the sun was by this time high in the air, and I saw a dark heavy mass beyond me, covered with a thick mist. Presently I had to scramble up some hills, and then to follow a winding rocky path; and now I felt sure I must have found my way into the neighbouring mountains, and I began to be afraid; living as I did down in the plains, I had never seen them before; and the name of mountains,

when I heard people speaking of them, had a somewhat fearful and ominous sound about it. Still, I could not find courage to return; worse fears drove me forward; I often started and looked round as the wind moaned among the fir-trees, or a distant woodman's axe echoed among the hills; and at last when some of the coalmen and miners met me, and I heard them speaking a language I did not understand, I was almost frightened out of my senses. Soon, however, I got used to them, and begged my way on through a number of villages. People gave me enough to eat and drink, and I had always an answer ready for any questions that might be asked me. I had gone on this way for four days, when I fell into a narrow footpath; I followed it, and it led further and further away from the main road, through a wholly different sort of country, where the aspect of the mountains was entirely altered, and became wilder and stranger,—among rocks and cliffs tumbled rudely one upon another, and looking as if the first gust of wind would bring them all crashing down. I did not know whether I should go on or not. It was the middle of summer, so that hitherto I had spent the night either in the woods or in some one or other of the shepherds' huts; but here I saw no signs whatever of any thing like a human habitation, nor in so wild a spot could I hope to find any. The cliffs grew steeper and more precipitous; often I had to pass along the edge of abysses that made me giddy even to look at; at last the very path came to an abrupt conclusion. Now I gave myself up for lost; I cried and screamed, and all the answer was the echoing of my voice along the rocky valley; darkness came on, and I looked for a bank of moss to lie down upon. I could not sleep, for all night long I heard strange wild noises round me, which sometimes sounded like the howling of wild beasts; at others, like the screaming of the mountain-birds, or the moaning of the wind among the rocks and cliffs. I prayed to God to protect me; and towards morning I fell asleep.

"Day had broken when I awoke. There was a steep hill immediately before me, which I climbed up, in the hope of finding some way out of the wilderness; when I had got at the top, however, all around me, as far as my eye could reach, every thing was buried in fog; in the dull grey light I could find nothing but rock, rock, rock, not a tree, not a blade of grass, not a shrub to be seen, only here and there a branch of heather projecting, with a sad lonely look, from a cleft or chasm in the mountain's side. I cannot tell you how I craved for the sight of a human being, if it was only to be afraid of him. I was hungry and exhausted, and I flung myself down, and determined to lie there and die. In a little while, however, the desire of life got the better of this feeling; I raised myself up and walked on, crying and sobbing all that day through. At last I hardly knew what or where I was; I was so tired that I had almost lost all consciousness; I scarcely wished to live, and yet I was afraid to die.

"Towards evening I approached a part where the country resumed a softer and milder look; and my heart began to beat again, and the desire of life tingled in all my veins. I fancied I caught the sound of a mill-wheel in the distance; I redoubled my speed; and oh! how light and happy I felt when at last I found myself at the end of the rocks and mountains, and saw once more the woods, and meadows, and soft swelling pleasant hills, spread smiling out before me! It seemed as if I had broke at once from hell into Paradise, and I cared no more for being alone and helpless. Instead of the mill I hoped to find, I came upon a waterfall, which a good deal diminished my exultation. I was stooping down, however, to drink some water out of my hands, when on a sudden I fancied I heard some one cough at a short distance from me. Never had I a more agreeable surprise than at that moment. I went towards the place the sound seemed to come from, and on turning the corner of a wood, I saw an old woman sitting down, apparently resting herself. She was dressed all in

black, a black cap covering her head and half her face; in her hand she had a crooked stick.

"I went up to her, and asked her to help me. She bade me sit down at her side, and gave me some bread and a little wine. While I was eating she chanted a sort of hymn in a harsh, rough voice; and as soon as I had done, she rose and told me to follow her. Strange and odd as the old woman's voice and appearance was, I was delighted at this invitation; she limped away before me, helping herself along with her stick; and I followed, at first hardly able to keep from laughing at the strange faces she made at every step. We soon left the mountains behind us; we walked on over soft grassy meadows, and then along a forest glade; as we came out again into the open country the sun was just setting, and the splendour of that evening, and the feeling it produced in me, I never shall forget. The sky was steeped in gold and crimson; the trees stood with their tops flushed in the evening glow; a gleam of enchanting beauty lay upon the fields; every leaf was hushed and still; and the pure heaven looked down as if the sky-curtain was withdrawn, and Paradise lay open to our eyes; the brook bubbled along the valley; and from time to time, as a soft air swept over the forest, the rustling leaves appeared to gasp for joy. Visions of the world, and all its strange and wondrous incidents, rose up before my chilled soul. I forgot myself and my conductress, and eyes and heart were lost in ecstacy in gazing on those golden clouds.

"We went up a gentle hill which was planted with chestnut-trees; from the top of which we saw down into a green valley, in the middle of which, surrounded by a clump of chestnuts, lay a little cottage. Presently a burst of merry barking greeted us, and a bright beautiful little dog came bounding and jumping up against the old woman, and frisking round us with every sign of the greatest satisfaction. Then he turned to me, and, after looking me all over, seemed tolerably satisfied, and ran back again to his

mistress. As we descended the hill, I heard a strange kind of song, which seemed to come from the cottage, and to be sung by a bird:

'In my forest-bower
I sing all day,
Hour after hour,
To eternity.
Oh, happy am I
In my forest-bower!'

These few words were repeated over and over again: the nearest description I can give of the sound is, that it was like the effect of a bugle and a cornet answering each other at a great distance over water.

"My curiosity was at the greatest possible stretch of excitement; and without waiting for the old woman's permission, I ran into the cottage. The twilight was beginning to fall; and, by the sinking light, I found a neat, well-arranged little room, a few cups and glasses on a sideboard, and some singular-looking boxes on a table. In a very beautiful cage in the window hung a bird; and it was indeed from it that the song came which I had heard. The old woman was coughing and panting, hardly able to recover her breath. She took scarcely any notice of me—did not even seem to know I was present—but patted her little dog, and then turned and talked to the bird, which only answered with singing the same song. All this time I stood watching her movements; and it almost frightened me to see how eternally her face kept working and twitching; her head, too, shook as if age had loosened its hold on her shoulders; and altogether she looked so odd and strange, that, do what I would, I could not make out what her features were like.

"When she had got her breath again, she lit a candle, threw a cloth over a little table, and put out some supper. At last she turned round to me, and told me to take one of the twisted-cane chairs, and sit down. I did so, and seated

myself exactly opposite to her, with the light between us. Then she folded her lanky withered fingers together, and said a long prayer, making all the time such strange contortions with her face, that again it was all I could do to help bursting out laughing. But I was afraid of making her angry, and checked myself. After supper, she said another long grace, and then shewed me a bed in a little narrow chamber adjoining, she herself sleeping in the room in which we supped. I was tired and half stupified, and so soon fell asleep. I awoke several times, however, in the night, and heard the old woman coughing and talking to her dog, and the bird now and then—which seemed to be in a dream—bringing out single words and lines of its song. The chestnuts rustled outside the window; far away a nightingale was singing; and all these sounds together made so odd a mixture, that I could hardly persuade myself I was awake, and that I had not fallen into another still stranger dream.

"In the morning the old woman woke me up, and presently set me to work. I had to spin, and I soon learnt how to do it; and besides this, I had to take care of the dog and the bird. I very quickly got into the way of managing the household matters, and of knowing the uses of the different articles. One can get used to any condition, and I was no exception: I soon ceased to think there was any thing odd about the old woman, that the cottage was remarkably situated, and that one never saw any other human being there, or that the bird was so very extraordinary a creature. I was delighted with its beauty; all its feathers glittered with every conceivable colour, the brightest sky-blue alternating with deep scarlet over its head and body; and when it sang, it swelled itself out so proudly, that the colours shewed more brilliantly than ever.

"The old woman often went out in the morning, and did not return till evening, when I used to go out with the little dog to meet her; and she would call me her child,

her little daughter. In one's childhood one soon takes to people, and I became exceedingly attached to her. In the evenings she would teach me to read, and I was quick and ready in learning; and this afterwards, when I was much alone, became a source of infinite amusement to me; for she had a number of old manuscript books in the cottage, full of fairy-tales, and all sorts of queer old stories.

"There is something very odd about my recollections of the way I went on then. Not a human creature ever came near us; our home family-circle certainly was not an extensive one; and the dog and the bird make the same impression on me now that the recollection of long and well-known old friends produces; yet, often and often as I must have repeated it, do what I will, I cannot call back again the singular name of the little dog.

"So things went on for some four years or more; and I must have been about twelve years old, when the old woman took me at last deeper into her confidence, and revealed to me a secret. Every day the bird laid an egg; and in each egg was a pearl, or some other precious stone. I had often observed before that she had some mysterious doings with the cage; but I had never troubled myself much about it. Now, however, she gave me a charge while she was absent to take these eggs, and put them by carefully in the odd-looking boxes. Leaving me sufficient food in her absence, she would now be away sometimes weeks and months at a time; and my wheel went round, and the little dog barked, and the bird sang, and all was so still in the country round, that while I was there I do not remember a single storm. No foot of man ever strayed there; no wild beast ever came near our dwelling; I worked on there day after day, and I was happy. Oh, fortunate indeed would men be, if they could but go on through life in such peace and quiet to their graves!

"From the little that I read, I made myself a set of notions of what the world was, and what men were; and

very queer ones they were; for they were all taken from myself and the society in which I lived. If we talked of gay, bright, happy people, I could only fancy them like the little dog; beautiful stately ladies must look like the bird, and ancient dames like my old woman. My stories contained something about love, and I made myself the heroine of many wonderful adventures: I pictured for myself the most beautiful knight the world had ever seen; I adorned him with every grace and every perfection; and though, after all my trouble, I could not tell exactly what he was like, I could feel the most passionate despair if he did not return my affection; and I had all sorts of eloquent speeches to make—which I would often repeat aloud—to win his love. You smile! Ah, well, we are none of us young now!

"I was much the happiest when I was by myself; for then I was absolute mistress in the cottage. The dog was very fond of me, and did all that I wished; the bird replied with his song to all my questions; my wheel went round merrily; and I never for a moment felt a wish for any change. When the old woman came back from her long expeditions, she would praise me for being so good and attentive. Her household, she said, was much better attended to since I had been there; she was pleased with my growth, and the general healthiness of my appearance; in short, she spoke to me and treated me exactly as if I had been her daughter. 'You are going on well indeed, my child,' she said one day, with a roughish coarse voice: 'if you continue in this way, you will never come to any mischief. But, you may depend upon it, it never fails, if once one gets out of the right road, but sooner or later we shall be punished for it.' I took little notice of this at the time she said it; for in all I did and said I was a lively, thoughtless child; but by and by, in the night, her words recurred to me, and I could not conceive what she meant. I thought them all over and over again. I had often read about riches and wealth, and so on; and at last it occurred

to me that those pearls and precious stones must be of great value. This soon became more plain to me; but what could she have meant by the right road? I could not make any thing of it, do what I would.

"I was now fourteen years old; and it is unfortunate for people that generally they only get their understanding to lose their innocence by the light of it. I now came clearly enough to comprehend that it would be easy for me, while the old woman was away, to take the bird and the jewels, and go with them into the world that I had read about; and then very likely I might find my beautiful knight, who still continued in my thoughts.

"At first this idea was no more than any other, just flashing across my mind and then gone again; but when I sat by myself at my wheel, in spite of myself it kept coming back to me, till at last it completely took possession of my mind; and I already saw myself dressed with the greatest magnificence, with knights and princes standing round me; and so I would let myself dream on, and then when I started up and found myself in a little narrow room, I felt vexed and disappointed. For the rest, so that I did what I was told, the old woman did not trouble herself about what was passing in my mind.

"One day she went away again, telling me that this time she would be absent longer than usual; I was to see that every thing was kept right, and do what I could to prevent the time hanging heavy on my hands. I took leave of her with some distress, as I felt a misgiving that I should never see her again; I stood watching her a long time as she hobbled away, almost without knowing myself why I was so unhappy. It seemed as if my purpose was already before my mind, and yet I was not actually conscious of it.

"Never did I take so much care of the dog and the bird as now; they seemed closer to my heart than they had been before. The old woman had been gone some days, when one morning I got up with the fixed purpose

to leave the cottage with the bird, and go and look for what was called the world. Still I felt unhappy and miserable. I wished to stay where I was, and yet this thought had got too strong a hold on me; there was a singular struggle going on in my soul, as if two opposite spirits were fighting in me. One moment came the sweetness of that sequestered spot before me, looking so beautiful; and then the next, the ravishing idea of a new world, and all the wonderful things in it. I hardly knew what to make of myself. The little dog kept jumping up upon me incessantly. The sunshine lay spread out brilliantly over the green fields, and the chestnut-leaves glistened as it fell on them. Suddenly I felt a strong impulse seize me; I caught the little dog and tied it up in the cottage, and then took the cage and the bird under my arm. The dog whined and struggled at this unusual treatment; he looked up at me with imploring eyes, but I could not venture to take him with me. One of the boxes of precious stones I took and made fast to my girdle, the rest I left in their places. The bird stretched and strained with his head in an odd wild way as I went out with him through the door; the dog sprung at his chain to follow me; but he was bound fast, and he was obliged to stay. I avoided the road that led to the mountains, and went down the valley the opposite way. The little dog kept whining and barking incessantly, and I felt for him in my heart; the bird made one or two attempts to sing, but it seemed he did not like being carried, and would not go on.

"For a long time I heard the barking of the dog, getting weaker and fainter, however, as I got further away; at last it ceased altogether. I cried, and had almost turned about and gone back again, but the craving for something new urged me forward. I was soon over the hill, and I walked on through wood and meadow till towards evening, when I found myself near a village. I felt rather frightened at first in going into an inn among strange people; but they shewed me into a chamber with a bed, and I slept

there very comfortably, only that I dreamed of the old woman, who seemed to threaten me.

"My journey had very little variety; but the further I went, the more I was haunted by the recollection of the old woman and the little dog. The poor little thing, I thought, would be sure to die of hunger, without me to help it; and at every turn in the forest I expected to see the figure of the old woman coming to meet me. Sighing and weeping, I travelled on: whenever I stopped to rest myself, and set the cage down upon the ground, the bird would sing his strange song, and then bitter feelings of regret would come upon me for the dear old cottage. So forgetful is our nature, I thought my first journey had not been half so miserable as that, and I craved to be again once more as I was then.

"I had parted with some of the jewels, and at last, after a long round of walking, one day I came to a village. I felt a strange emotion on entering it; I was overcome by something, and could not tell why. Very soon, however, I recollected myself, and found I was in the village where I was born. How surprised I was! a thousand reminiscences came pouring back upon me, and the tears ran down my cheeks. It was very much altered. New houses had sprung up; others, which were new when I went away, were crumbling to the ground; I found traces of burning also; and every thing looked much smaller and more confined than I had fancied. I was infinitely delighted, however, at the thought of seeing my father and mother again after so long an absence. I found the little cottage; the well-known doorway; the handle of the door was exactly as it used to be; it seemed like yesterday that I had had it in my hand. My heart beat and throbbed; I opened the door hastily; but all the faces in the room were strange to me; they stared at me as I entered. I asked for old Martin the shepherd; but they told me he and his wife had been dead for three years past. I drew back as quickly as I could, and went crying out of the village.

"I had been thinking how delightful it would be to surprise them with all my riches; the strangest accident had realised the dreams of my childhood—I could make them happy—and now all was vain. They could not share with me; and what all my life long had been the dearest object of my hope was lost to me for ever.

"I went to a pleasant-looking-town, where I rented a small house with a garden, and took a servant to live with me. I did not find the world quite the wonderful place I expected; but I soon learnt to think less and less of the old woman and the cottage I had lived in with her; and so altogether I lived on pleasantly enough.

"For a long time the bird had left off singing, so that I was not a little frightened when one night he began again with a different song.

'My forest-bower,
Thou'rt far from me;
Oh, hour by hour
I grieve for thee:
Ah, when shall I see
My forest-bower?'

I could not sleep all night. The whole thing came back again into my thoughts, and I felt more clearly than ever that I had done what I ought not. When I got up, the bird's head was turned towards me; he kept watching me with a strange expression, and seemed to be reproaching me. Now he never stopped singing; and his song came louder and deeper I thought than it had ever been before. The more I looked at him, the more uncomfortable he made me. At last I opened the cage, thrust in my hand and caught him by the neck. I pressed my fingers violently together; he looked imploringly in my face; I let him go; but he was already dead: I buried him in the garden.

"After this I was haunted by a fear of my servant; my conscience told me what I had done, and I was afraid that

some day or other she would be robbing, or perhaps murdering me. Shortly, however, I became acquainted with a young knight, who pleased me exceedingly. I gave him my hand; and here, Herr Walters, is my story ended."

"Ah, you should have seen her then," Egbert broke in hastily; "her youthful freshness and beauty; and what an indescribable charm she had received from her retired education! She came before me as a kind of miraculous being, and I set no bounds to my affection for her. I was poor myself; indeed I had nothing; but through her love I was placed in the position in which you find me. We withdrew hither, and neither of us has ever, for a single moment, regretted our union."

"But see, with our talking and chatting," interrupted Bertha, "it is already past midnight; we had better go to bed."

She rose to retire to her chamber; as they parted Walters kissed her hand, and wished her good night. "Thanks, noble lady," he said, "for your story. I think I can see you with your strange bird, and feeding the little Strohmian."

Walters, too, retired to sleep; but Egbert continued restlessly pacing up and down the hall. "What fools we men are!" he said to himself. "Was it not I that prevailed on my wife to tell her story? and now I am sorry it should have been told! Will he not make use of it for some evil purpose? Will he not blab, and let our secret out to others? Is he not very likely (it is just what a man would naturally do) to feel some accursed hankering after one's jewels, and lay some plan or other to get hold of them?"

It struck him Walters had not taken leave of him with as much heartiness as he naturally would have done after being admitted into such a piece of confidence. When once a man has admitted a feeling of suspicion into his breast, every trifle becomes a confirmation of it. Then for

a moment he would feel ashamed of so ungenerous a distrust of his noble-hearted friend; and yet he could not fling it off; all night long these feelings kept swaying to and fro through his breast. He slept but little.

The next morning Bertha was unwell, and could not appear at breakfast. Walters did not seem much to distress himself about it, and of the knight also he took leave with apparent unconcern. Egbert could not well make it out; he went to his wife's room, she was in a violent fever; she said she supposed telling her story the preceding night must have over-excited her.

After that evening Walters came seldom to his friend's castle; and when he did he never stayed, but went away again almost immediately with a few unmeaning words. Egbert was excessively distressed at this behaviour: he never said any thing about it, either to his wife or to Walters; but they must both have seen that there was something which made him uneasy. Bertha's illness too was another subject of distress to him. The physician became alarmed; the colour faded from her cheeks, and her eyes grew of an unnatural brightness. One morning she called her husband to her bedside, and sent the servants out of the room.

"My dear husband," she began, seriously, "I have something to tell you, which, however unmeaning and trifling it may seem to you, has been the cause of all my illness, and has almost driven me out of my senses. You know that whenever I have spoken of the events of my childhood, in spite of all the trouble I have taken, I have never been able to think of the name of the little dog that was so long with me. The other evening as Walters took leave of me, he said, suddenly, 'I fancy I see you feeding the little Strohmian.' Can it be accident that he hit upon the name? or does he know the dog, and said what he did on purpose? In what mysterious way is this man bound up with my destiny? At times I try to persuade myself that it is all fancy; but no, it is certainly true, too

true. I cannot tell you how it has terrified me to be so helped out with my recollection by a perfect stranger: what do you say, Egbert?"

Egbert regarded his suffering wife with the deepest emotion. For some time he could not speak, but stood lost in his own reflections. At last he muttered a few words of consolation, and left her. He retired to a remote apartment, and paced up and down in indescribable uneasiness. Walters had for many years been his only companion; and now was this man the only one in the world whose existence was a pain and grief to him. Could this one being be removed out of his path, all, he thought, would then be well with him. To dissipate his unpleasant reflections, he took his cross-bow and went out into the mountains to hunt.

It was a rough stormy winter's day; the snow lay deep upon the hill-side, and the heavy branches of the pine-trees bent under their burden. He scrambled rapidly on; the sweat stood upon his brow; but he could not light on any game, and that increased his ill-humour. Suddenly he saw a figure moving at some distance from him: it was Walters, who was gathering moss from the trunks of the trees. Hardly knowing what he did, he levelled his cross-bow at him; Walters looked round, and raised his hand with a menacing gesture; but the bolt was sped to its mark, and he fell to the earth.

Egbert now felt relieved from a heavy burden. Yet a feeling of terror drove him hastily back to his castle. He had a long way to go; for he had wandered far away into the forests. When he reached it, Bertha was already dead: on her deathbed she had spoken incessantly of Walters and the old woman.

Egbert now lived for a long time entirely alone. He had always been dark and gloomy enough; for his wife's strange history troubled him, and he was continually afraid some terrible misfortune would befall them. His own conscience made him uneasy also. His friend's murder was

for ever before his eyes, and his life was an eternal self-upbraiding.

As some relief to his feelings, he went from time to time to the next great town, where he could find society and forget himself in feasting and dissipation. He longed to find a friend to fill up the dreary chasm in his soul; and then again when he thought of Walters, he shrunk in terror from it, as he felt convinced that any friend must only be a source of new misery to him. So many years he had lived with Bertha in their sweet seclusion, Walters' friendship had so long been his greatest delight; and now both were suddenly snatched away from him. There were many moments when it all seemed to him like a strange, wild romance, and that he only dreamt that he was alive.

A young knight, Hugo, attached himself to the silent, gloomy Egbert, and seemed to be inspired with a real deep affection for him. Egbert was very much surprised, and came forward to meet this new offer of friendship the more readily because it was so entirely unexpected. The two were now continually together. The stranger shewed Egbert every possible attention. Neither ever rode out without the other; in short, wherever they were, they appeared inseparable.

Yet it was only for a very brief interval that Egbert allowed himself to feel happy; for he was too sure that Hugo only loved him because he did not know his history. His friend was in an error respecting him; and he felt the same impulse as he had done before to unbosom himself to him, that he might be assured whether he was indeed his friend or not. Then, again, caution kept him back, and the fear of becoming an object of abhorrence to Hugo; there were times when he was so terribly oppressed with a sense of his unworthiness that he could not believe any one who was not an utter stranger to him could entertain the slightest regard for him. For all that, however, he could not contain himself; and one day as they were walking by themselves, he told his whole history, and

then asked whether he could still love a murderer. Hugo was touched, and tried to comfort him; and Egbert returned with a lighter heart to the town.

Yet it seemed to be his curse that a feeling of suspicion must arise even in the hour of confidence; for hardly were they returned to their room, and the glare of the candle was thrown upon his friend's face, than he found something there which displeased him. He fancied he could trace a malicious laugh. It struck him too that Hugo did not seem so ready to talk to him as usual, and that his attention was almost entirely given to the other persons present. There was an old knight in the party who had never been a friend of Egbert, and used to ask unpleasant questions about his wife, and where he got his money from. . . To this person Hugo attached himself, and the two held a long mysterious conversation together, while their looks were from time to time directed towards himself. Here he saw all his suspicions at once confirmed. He believed he was betrayed, and his fierce and gloomy temper now got complete mastery over him. As he stood with his eyes fixed on them as they talked, suddenly he saw Walters' face, his air, his gesture—the whole figure so familiar to him. He looked again; and now he was convinced that it was no one but Walters that was speaking with the old knight. . . In unutterable terror, almost beside himself, he rushed out of the room, and that night left the city, and returned as fast as possible to his castle.

He wandered restlessly from chamber to chamber; not a thought could he find to soothe him; sleep fled from his eyes, and from one terrible imagination he could only fall into another yet more terrible. He thought he must be mad, and that what he had seen was but a crazed dream; but Walters' features had been too vivid, and all was again a riddle. He resolved to leave the castle, and set out upon his travels, to bring his mind again into order: every thought of friendship, every wish for society, he had now given up for ever.

He set out without having made up his mind which way he would go; indeed he thought little of the country through which he passed. One day he had been riding for some time at a rapid pace among the mountains, when he found himself suddenly involved in a labyrinth of rocks, from which he could not discover any way of escape. At last he fell in with an old countryman, who shewed him a path leading past a waterfall. He offered the old man some money as a reward, but he declined to accept it.

"What is the matter with me?" said Egbert to himself; "I could have fancied this was Walters again." He looked round, and Walters it certainly was. Egbert spurred his horse on at its utmost speed; he flew away over rocks and through woods and meadows, until at length it sunk exhausted under him to the earth. He did not pause to think of this, but continued to hurry on on foot.

In a kind of half-dream, he climbed a little hill; he fancied he heard the lively barking of a dog somewhere near him. Tall chestnuts rustled in the wind, and he caught the strange wild strains of a song:

"In my forest-home
Again sing I,
Where pain hath no life;
No envy and strife.
Oh, am I not happy
In my forest home?"

Egbert was completely stupified, his senses reeled; all seemed a dark painful riddle to him. He could not tell whether he was dreaming now, or whether he had not dreamt of a Bertha as his wife. The common and the wonderful were so strangely mingled together; the world round him was enchanted. . . His thoughts and recollections swam confusedly before his mind.

A crooked hump-backed old woman came panting up the hill with a crutch.

"Are you come to bring me my bird? my pearls?

my dog?" she screamed to him; "see how wickedness is its own punisher! I was your friend Walters—I was Hugo."

"God in heaven," muttered Egbert to himself, "to what dreadful place have I wandered? Where am I?"

"And Bertha was your sister."

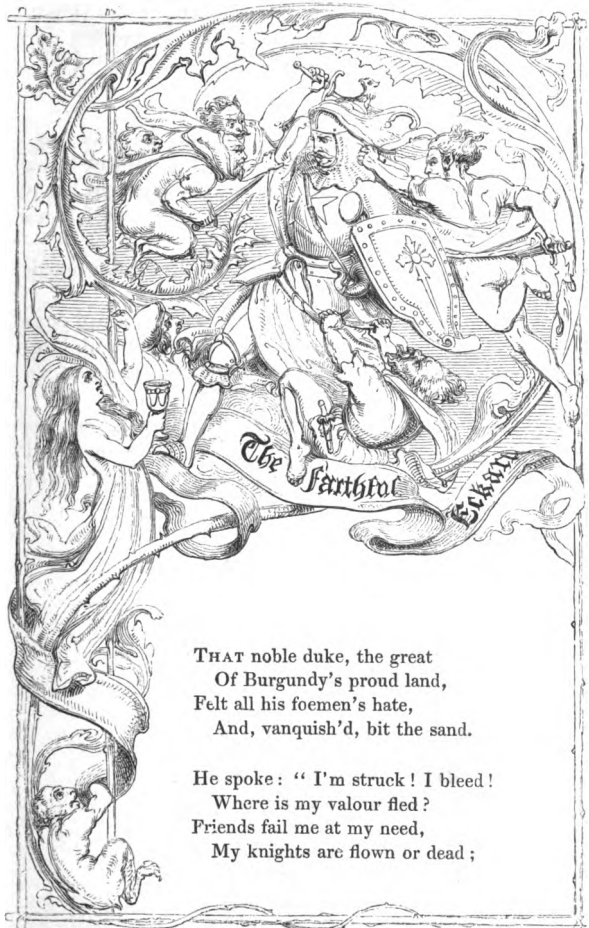
Egbert fell to the ground.

"What made her run away from me in that way? the time of trial was almost over, and thus all had ended well. She was the daughter of a knight; he sent her to the herdsman to be brought up. She was your father's daughter."

"Oh, why, why have I ever had this dreadful foreboding?" cried Egbert.

"Because when you were young you once heard your father speak of it. He could not let her stay with him, for he was afraid of his wife; she was the child of an earlier marriage."

Egbert's heartstrings burst; he lay gasping out his life upon the ground; faintly and more faintly he heard the old woman speak, the dog bark, and the bird chant on his unwearying song.



THAT noble duke, the great
Of Burgundy's proud land,
Felt all his foemen's hate,
And, vanquish'd, bit the sand.

He spoke: "I'm struck! I bleed!
Where is my valour fled?
Friends fail me at my need,
My knights are flown or dead;

J. Franklin del. O. Smith sc.

I cannot hold the field—
I faint! My strength, my pride,
Has left me here to yield—
True Eckart's from my side.

It was not thus of old,
When war raged fierce and strong—
The last to have it told,
He loved his home too long.

Now, see they trooping come—
Not long my sword is mine:
Flight's made for the base groom—
I'll die as died my line."

With that he raised his sword,
And would have smote his breast;
When, truer than his word,
Good Eckart forward prest.

Back spurn'd the vaunting foe,
And dashed into the throng;
Nor was his bold son slow
To bring his knights along.

The bold duke saw the sign,
And cried, " Now, God be praised!
Now tremble, foemen mine,
My drooping hopes be raised!"

Again he charged and cheer'd,
True Eckart wins the fight;
" But where's his boy?" he heard;
" No more he sees the light."

When now the foe was fled,
Out spoke the duke aloud;
" Well hath it with me sped,
Yet Eckart's head is bow'd.

Though many thou hast slain,
For country and for life;
Thy son lies on the plain,
No more to join the strife."

Then Eckart's tears flow'd fast,
Low stoop'd the warrior down;
Embraced and kiss'd his last,
And sadly made his moan.

" Sweet Heins, how died'st so young,
Ere yet thou wert a man?
What boots it that I'm strong,
And thou so still and wan?

Yet thou hast saved thy prince
From his dread foeman's scorn!
Thou art his — accept him, since
He never will return!"

Bold Burgundy then mourn'd
To see a father's grief;
His heart within him burn'd,
But could not bring relief.

He mingles tears with tears;
He clasps him to his breast;
The hero he reveres,
And speaks his deep distress:—

" Most faithful hast thou been,
When fail'd me all beside;
Henceforth we will be seen
Like brothers, side by side.

Throughout all Burgundy,
Be lord of me and mine;
And could more honour be,
I'd freely make it thine."

He journey'd through the land,
Each liege-man hail'd him home;
To each he gave command,
True Eckart to welcome.

It was the voice of an old mountaineer that sung this song, resounding far among the rocks, where the faithful Eckart was sitting upon a declivity, weeping aloud. His youngest boy stood near his father, and said, "Why do you cry so bitterly, my dear father? Why are you so much better and stronger than other men, if you are afraid—can you be afraid of them?"

Meanwhile the duke, at the head of a hunting-party, was leisurely proceeding homewards; Burgundy himself was mounted upon a stately, richly caparisoned steed. His princely gold and silver trappings sparkled in the evening sun; insomuch that the young Conrad could not sufficiently admire the fine procession as it passed. Faithful Eckart raised his eyes, and looked darkly and sorrowfully towards the place; while his tender Conrad began to sing, as he lost sight of the princely cavalcade in the distance:—

"If you'd wield
Sword and shield,
And have good steed
With spear at need
And harquebuss,—what must you do?
You must feel
Your nerves like steel,
Strong in heart and spirit;—
Manhood good
In your blood
To bear you stoutly through with merit."

The old warrior pressed his son to his heart, and looked earnestly at his large clear blue eyes. He then said,

"Did you hear the song of the good mountaineer, my boy?"

"Did I?" repeated the boy: "surely he sang loud enough. And are you, then, still that faithful Eckart whom I was glad to hear so praised?"

"That same duke is now my enemy: he holds my second son in durance,—yea, hath already laid him low, if I must believe all that the people of the country say."

"Then take your great sword, father, and bear it no longer," exclaimed his brave boy: "they will tremble when they see you; the good people will uphold you all the country round, for they say you are their greatest hero."

"No, I must not do that, my boy; for then I should prove my enemies' worst words true. I must not be unfaithful to my native prince. I will not break my fealty and the peace of the country, to keep which I have sworn."

"But what does he want to do with us?" inquired Conrad, impatiently.

Eckart had risen, but he again seated himself, and said, "Dear boy, the whole of that history would sound too harsh and strange in thy young ears. Enough to know that great people always bear their worst enemy in their own heart, and live in fear night and day. The duke now thinks he has trusted me too much, and been all along only cherishing a viper in his bosom. Yet in the country they call me the prince's sword—the strong sword that restored him life and land;—all the people call me Faithful Eckart, and the wretched and oppressed cry unto me for help in the hearing of the court. This the duke cannot bear. His envy hath turned to rage, and they who might help, set him against me, and have turned his heart from love to hatred."

The aged hero then related how the duke had spoken evil words, and banished him from before his face for ever; and how they now became quite strange, like enemies, because envious men had said that he was going to deprive the duke of his dominions. More sadly did he proceed to

tell, as he passed his hand across his eyes, how the duke had seized upon himself and his son, and accused them of wanting to take his land and life; "Yea, 'tis said he hath even doomed my son to die."

Young Conrad spoke not to his father, seeing he wept. At length he said, "Father, let me go to the court, and I will talk to the duke, that he may be brought to understand you, and treat you better. Should he have hurt a hair of my brother's head, he is so bad a man that you shall punish him; yet it can scarce be that he hath so soon forgotten all your services."

"Alas! don't you remember the old proverb, poor boy?—

> 'When the mighty want your hand,
> They 'll promise you both gifts and land;
> When the evil day hath pass'd,
> Their friendship flieth too as fast.'

Yes, and all my long and painful life has gone for nothing. Wherefore did he raise me high above my peers, only to plunge me into the lowest ignominy? The love of princes is like a fatal poison, which they ought to reserve only for their enemies, and which finally often proves the ruin of its heedless possessor: so it hath ever been."

"I will hasten to him," said Conrad; "I will plainly remind him of all you have done and suffered for him; and then he will treat you as well as he did before."

"You forget," replied Eckart, "that they have pronounced us traitors: we had better seek refuge together quickly in some foreign land, where we shall, perhaps, be more fortunate than here."

"What, father, in your old age!—and will you turn your back upon our sweet home? Let us rather try any way but this," said Conrad. "I will see the Duke of Burgundy; I will appease and make him friendly to us; for what harm can he do *me*, though he does hate and fear you?"

"I do not like to let you go," replied Eckart; "for my mind misgives me sadly; yet I should like to be reconciled to him, for he was once my kind friend, and for the sake of your poor brother, who is lingering in prison, or perhaps dead."

The sun was now casting its last wild beams upon the green earth; and Eckart sat down, absorbed in deep thought, leaning against the root of a tree. He looked at Conrad earnestly a long while, and at length said, "If you will go, my son, then go now, before the night gathers in: the lights are already up, you see, in the windows of the duke's castle. I can hear the trumpets sounding at a distance for the festival;—perhaps his son's bride is arrived, and he may feel more friendly disposed towards us."

His son was instantly on his way; yet he parted with him unwillingly, for he no longer put any faith in his own good fortune or the duke's gratitude. Young Conrad was bold and hopeful; doubting nothing but that he should touch the duke's heart, who had heretofore caressed him on his knees.

"Art thou sure thou wilt come back to me, my sweetest child?" cried the old man; "for were I to lose thee, I have seen thee for the last time—the last of thy race." His young son then kissed and comforted him, promising that he would be with him very soon; and they separated.

Conrad knocked at the castle-gate, and was admitted. The aged Eckart remained seated where he was, exposed to the night-winds, all alone. "And I have lost him too; I am sure I have lost him." He cried bitterly in his solitude, "These eyes will never rest upon his dear face again." While thus lamenting, he saw an old wayfaring man leaning upon his crutch, and trying, at great hazard, to make his way down the mountain. A precipice yawned beneath him; and Eckart, aware of his danger, went and took him by the hand. "Whither are you going?" he

inquired, as he assisted him down to the place where he had himself sat.

The old man sat down, and wept till the tears ran over his furrowed cheeks. Eckart sought to comfort him with gentle advice; but the other seemed too much afflicted to pay attention to him.

"What terrible calamity can it be that thus overpowers you?" inquired Eckart. "Only try to speak."

"Alas, my children!" exclaimed the aged man.

Then Eckart again thought of Conrad, of Heins, and Dietrich, and became himself inconsolable.

"I say nothing," he added, "if your children are all dead; for then your grief is, indeed, great."

"Oh, worse than dead!" exclaimed the other. "No, they are not dead," he repeated in a still more bitter voice; "but they are lost to me for ever! Yea, would to Heaven that they were only dead!"

The good old hero almost shrieked at hearing these words, and besought the unhappy father to explain so horrible a mystery: to which the latter replied, "We live in a wonderful world; and these are strange times. Surely the last dreaded day cannot be far from hand; for alarming signs and omens are daily abroad, threatening the world more and more. All evil things seem to have broken loose beyond their ancient boundaries, and rage and destroy on every side. The fear of God restrains us not—there is no foundation for any thing good; evil spirits walk in the broad day, and boldly scare the good away from us, or celebrate their nightly orgies in their unholy retreats. O my dear sir, we are grown grey in the world, but not old enough for such prodigious things. Doubtless you have seen the great comet—Heaven's portentous lightning in the sky, which glares so prophetically down upon us. Every one forebodes disasters; but none think of reforming their lives in order to escape the threatened evil. As if this, too, were not enough, the ancient earth discovers her trouble, and casts up her mysterious

secrets from the deep, while that portentous light serves to reveal them from above. And, hark! have you never heard of the strange mountain which the people round call Venus-berg?"

"No, never," said Eckart, "though I have travelled far and wide here around the hills."

"At that I wonder much," replied the old man; "for the dreadful thing is now become as well known as it is true: for that, good sir, is the very mountain whither the devils fled for refuge in the centre of the earth, when the holy Christian faith began to wax strong, and pressed hard upon the heathen idols. There, they now say, that fatal goddess Venus holds her unblest orgies; whither the infernal powers of worldly lust and ambition, and all forbidden wishes, come trooping in myriads for their prey; so that the whole mountain hath become forsaken and accursed from time immemorial."

"On what side lies the mountain?" inquired Eckart.

"There is the mystery; it is a secret," whispered the old man, "which those who know dare not tell, and none know but those who are in the power of our great adversary; and indeed none but wicked persons will ever venture the discovery. Once only a wandering musician by miracle appeared again; but he came commissioned by the powers of darkness to traverse the world; and he plays strange notes upon a pipe—sounds which are heard to echo first in the distance, then more loud and sweet. Those who approach too close within his sphere are seized with a strange unaccountable delirium; and away they run in search of the mountain, heedless of every obstacle, and never weary — never satisfied until they gain the fatal summit, which opens for them, and whence there is no return. Their supernatural strength forsakes them only in the infernal abode; when they continue wandering round its unhallowed precincts like unblest pilgrims, without the least hope of salvation. I lost all hope of comfort

in my two sons long ago: they grew wilful and abandoned; they despised their parents, and our holy faith itself. Then they began to hear the strange music; and they are now fled far into the hills—the inhabited world is too narrow for them; and they will never stop until they reach the boundless regions below." And the old man wrung his hands.

"And what do you think of doing in this matter?"

"What should I do?—with this crutch, my only support, I have set out in pursuit of them, being determined either to find them or to die."

At these words he rose with a resolute effort, and hastened forward as fast as his feeble steps could bear him, as if fearful of losing a moment; while Eckart gazed after him with a look of pity, lamenting his useless anxiety and sorrows yet to come.

"To all his other evils," cried Eckart, "even madness itself does not seem to have brought any relief."

Night came, and passed away;—the morning broke, yet no signs of young Conrad. The old warrior wandered among the hills, and cast his eyes wistfully towards the castle; still no one appeared. Then he heard a tumult, as if proceeding from the place; and, unable to restrain his anxiety, he at last mounted his steed that was grazing near, and rode hastily towards the castle. He no longer disguised himself, but spurred boldly among the troops and pages surrounding the castle-gates, not one of whom ventured to stop or lay a hand upon him. All opened to him a path.

"Where is my son Conrad?" inquired the old hero, as he advanced.

"Inquire nothing," said one of the pages, casting down his eyes: "it would only grieve you;—better turn back."

"And Dietrich," added the old man,—"where is he?"

"Mention his name no more," said an aged knight;

" the duke's rage was kindled, and he thought to punish you through him."

Hot scorn flushed the face of the old hero when he heard these words; grief and fury took possession of him, and he rode through the castle-gates with speed. All opened a way for him with fear and reverence; and he soon threw himself from his horse at the palace-doors. With trembling step he mounted into the marble halls.

" Am I here," he cried, " in the dwelling of the man who was once my friend?" He tried to collect his thoughts; but dreadful visions seemed to rise before him: and he staggered wildly into the duke's presence.

Not aware of his arrival, Burgundy uttered a cry of alarm, as he found himself confronted with the old man. " Art thou the Duke of Burgundy?" asked the old hero.

The duke replied, " I am."

" And hast thou caused my son Dietrich to die?"

The duke answered, " Yes."

" And my youngest boy! my Conrad!—was not he too good and beautiful for thy sword?—hast thou killed him too?"

" I have," said the duke again.

And Eckart replied, as he shed tears, " Oh, say not that! say not that, Burgundy!—for I cannot bear those words: recall them. Say, at least, that it repents you of all you have done; and I will yet try to take comfort, though you have now done your worst to break my heart."

The duke answered, " Away! thou faithless traitor! hence from my sight! thou art the bitterest enemy I have on the face of the earth."

Eckart stood firm, and said, " Heretofore thou didst call me thy best friend; but good thoughts are now become strange to thee. Never did I aught against thy honour: nay, I have revered and loved thee as my true prince, so help me God! or here, with this hand upon my good sword, I could take speedy and bitter vengeance for all my wrongs. But no; I will for ever banish myself

from your presence, and end my few and evil days in solitude and woe."

Having uttered these sad words, Eckart turned away; while Burgundy, agitated with hateful passions, called aloud for his pages and his lancers, who surrounded the old hero, and followed him with the points of their spears out of the duke's palace; none venturing, though at their lord's command, to put him to death.

Away he spurred at speed,
Eckart that noblest knight;
And spoke, "No more I heed
The world, nor wrong, nor right.

My sons are gone, and I
Am left to mourn alone;
My prince would have me die;
And friends I have not one."

Then made he to the woods,
And with full heart did strive
To bear his dismal moods—
To bear his woes and live.

"I fly man's hated face!
Ye mountains, lakes, and trees,
Be now my resting-place,
And join your tears to these.

No child beguiles my grief;
Their lives were sworn away;
Their days were all too brief—
My last one they did slay!"

Thus wild did Eckart weep,
Till mind and sense were gone;
Then madly down the steep
He spurr'd his true steed on.

He bounded, leaped, and fell,
Yet Eckart took no heed;
But said it was right well,
Though sadly he did bleed.

He next ungirt his horse,
And lay down on the ground;
And wish'd it had happ'd worse—
That he his grave had found.

None of the duke's peasantry could say whither the faithful Eckart had fled; for he had taken to the wild mountain-woods, and been seen by no human being. The duke dreaded his great courage and prudence, and he repented that he had not secured him, blaming his pages that they had suffered him to escape. Yet, to make his mind more easy, he proceeded at the head of a large train, as if going to the chase; being determined to ride through all the surrounding hills and woods until he should find the spot where Eckart had concealed himself, and there put him to death.

His followers spread themselves abroad on all sides, and vied with each other in the hope of pleasing the prince, and reaping the reward of their evil deed; but the day passed, and the sun went down, without their discovering any traces of him they sought.

A storm was now gathering, and the great clouds came darkling over the woods and hills; the thunder began to peal along the sky; the lightning flashed athwart the heavens, smiting the largest oaks; while torrents of rain fell upon their heads. The duke and his followers ran for shelter among the rocks and caves; but the duke's steed burst his reins, and ran headlong down the heights; while his master's voice was lost in the uproar of the storm, and separated from all his followers, he called out in vain for assistance.

Wild as the animals of the forest, poor Eckart had

wandered, unconscious now of his sorrows or whither he went. Roots and berries, with the water of the mountain-spring, formed his sole refreshment: he would no longer have known any of his former acquaintance; the day of his despair seemed at length to have gone by. Yet no! As the storm increased, he suddenly seemed to recover some portion of his intellect, and to become aware of objects around him. Then he uttered a loud cry of horror, tore his hair, and beat his aged breast, as he bethought himself of his children. "Dear as the life-blood of my heart," he cried, "whither, my sweet boys, are ye all gone? Oh, foul befall my coward spirit that hath not yet avenged ye! Why smote I not your fell destroyer, who hath pierced my heart through and through, worse than with a thousand daggers? Mad wretch that I am! I deserve it all—all; for well may your tyrant murderer despise me, when I oppose not the assassin of my own children. Ah, would that he might once come within the reach of my arm!—for now I long, when it is all too late, to taste the sweetness of revenge."

Thus he spent the night, wandering, and weeping as he went. At last he thought he heard a distant voice of some one crying for help. He turned his steps towards the direction in which it came; and finally he approached a man, whom the darkness hid from his sight, though he heard his voice close to him. This voice beseeched him piteously to guide a stranger into the right path. Eckart shrieked as it again fell upon his ear—he knew it; and he seized his sword. He prepared to cut down the assassin of his children—he felt new strength—and drew nigh, in the hope of full vengeance; when suddenly his oath of fealty, and all his former promises, when he was the duke's friend, came across his mind. Instead of piercing him to the heart, he took the duke's hand, and promised to lead him into the right path. They passed along conversing together, although the duke trembled with fear and cold. Soon they met some one. It was Wolfram,

the duke's page, who had been long in search of his master. It was still dark night—not a star cast its feeble rays through the thick black clouds. The duke felt very weak, and sighed to reach some habitation, to refresh himself and repose; besides, he was in dread of encountering the enraged Eckart, whose strange feigned voice he did not yet know. He feared he should hardly survive till morning, and trembled at every fresh blast of wind that shook the trees, or the thunder as it rolled more awfully above their heads. "My good Wolfram," cried the duke, "mount this lofty fir, and cast a keen glance around thee to discover some light—whether from house or hut it boots not, so that we can but live to reach it."

The page obeyed at his life's risk, as the storm bent the strongest branches of the huge tree as if it had been a tender reed. Its topmost boughs sometimes nearly touched the ground; while the boy appeared little more than an acorn growing on a branch of the tree. At length he cried out, "In the plain below us there I perceive a glimmering—I can see the way we ought to go." At the same time he carefully descended, and took the lead. In a short while the friendly light greeted the eyes of all three—the very sight of which greatly restored the fallen spirits of the duke.

Absorbed within himself, Eckart uttered not a word. He walked along, striving with the bitter feelings that rose in his breast, leading the duke by the hand.

At length the page knocked at the cottage-door; and an infirm old woman appeared. When they had entered, Eckart loosed the duke's hand, whom he had led along; and the latter fell trembling upon his knees, to return Heaven thanks for his deliverance from the perils of that terrific night.

Eckart retired into a dark corner; where he found, stretched in sleep, the same old man who shortly before had been bewailing his unhappy fate in regard to his sons, whom he was then in search of.

The duke having finished his prayers, thus spoke:—"This has indeed appeared a miraculous night to me. I feel the goodness and almighty power of God more than ever I had before reason to do. Yet my heart hath failed within me, and I feel that I must shortly die; only wishing for time, before I depart, to entreat forgiveness for my manifold sins and offences against the Most High; but I will take care to reward you both, my faithful companions, before I go, and that as handsomely as I can. To thee, my trusty page, I bequeath the two castles which lie close to the next mountain here, on condition that, in remembrance of this terrific night, thou dost in future call them the Tannenhäuser, or Fir-houses.—And who art thou, good man, that hast laid thy weary limbs in the corner? Come forth, that I may reward thee quickly, according to thy great services and many kind offices shewn me during this terrific night."

Then up rose Eckart, like a thing
That starts from out the dim moonlight;
His furrowed cheek betrays the sting
Of many a woful day and night.

The soul of Burgundy sighed sore
To witness thus that aged face;
The blood forsook his veins—he tore
His hair, and swooned for dire disgrace.

They raise him from the low cold ground,
His limbs and temples warmly chafe:
"Then, O my God, at last he's found,"
He cried; "true Eckart's here—he's safe.

O whither shall I fly thy look?
Was't thou didst bring me from the wood?
And was it I thy dear babes struck—
Thou that to me hast been so good?"

And Burgundy, as thus he said,
He felt his heart was breaking fast;
On Eckart's breast he laid his head,
And thought he there would breathe his last.

His senses fled! Then Eckart spoke:
"I reck not, master, of their fate—
That so the world may see, though broke,
True Eckart's heart's yet true and great."

Thus passed the night. In the morning the followers of the duke arrived, and found him very sick. They placed him upon their mules, and carried him back to his castle. Eckart stirred not from his side; and often the duke took his hand, and, pressing it to his bosom, looked up at him imploringly; when Eckart would embrace him, and speak soft words of comfort till he was again still. The duke next called together his council, and declared that such was his confidence in his faithful Eckart, the bravest and noblest of all his land, that he would leave him governor of his sons. Having said which, he died.

Eckart then took the reins of government into his own hands, fulfilling the trust reposed in him in such a humane and prudent way as to excite the admiration of all the country. Shortly afterwards, the report spread more and more on all sides, of the arrival of the strange musician from Venus-berg, who seduced his victims with the strange sweetness of his tones; so that they disappeared without leaving a trace behind. Many gave credit to the report—others not; while Eckart again bethought him of the unhappy old man whom he had seen so forlorn and crazed upon the mountain.

"I have now adopted you as my children," he said to the young princes, as he one day sat with them on the hill before the castle; "your happiness is now become my inheritance; I shall continue to survive, after my departure, in your welfare and your good conduct."

They all stretched themselves on the hill-side, whence they could look far into the distant and lovely prospect beyond; and Eckart would then strive to subdue the regrets he felt for his own children, though they would appear as if passing over the mountain before him, while in the distance he thought he heard the faint echo of delicious music gradually growing louder.

Hark! comes it not like dreams
Before the morning beams?
From some far greenwood bowers,
Such as the night-bird pours,
So sweet, and such its dying fall?—
Those tones the magic song recall;
And Eckart sees each princely cheek
Flushed with the joys its victims seek;
Wild wishes seized each youthful breast
For some far unknown bourne of rest.

"Away to the mountains!" they cried; "the deep woods
Where the trees, winds, and waters make music for gods:
Sweet, strange, secret voices are singing there now,
And invite us to seek their blest Eden below."

In strange attire then came in view
The unblest sorcerer, and anew
Inspired the maddening youths, till bright
And brighter shone the sunny light.
Trees, streams, and flowers danced in the rays;
Through earth, air, heavens, were heard the lays;
The grass, fields, forests, trembling join'd
That magic tumult wild and blind.
Swift as a shadow fade the ties
That bind the soul to earth, and rise
Soft longings for unearthly scenes;
And strange confusion intervenes
Between the seen and unseen world,
Till reason from her seat is hurl'd,

And madly bursts the soul away
To mingle in the infernal fray.

The trusty Eckart felt it,
But wist not of the cause;
His heart the music melted,
He wondered what it was.

The world seems new and fairer,
All blooming like the rose;
Can Eckart be a sharer
In raptures such as those?

"Ha! are those tones restoring
My wife and noble sons?—
All that I was deploring—
My lost beloved ones?"

Yet soon his sense collected,
Brought doubts within his breast:
These magic arts detected,
A horror him possessed.

His children fade in air—
Mocks of infernal might;
His young friends vanished were—
He could not check their flight.

Yes, these his princely trust,
Late yielded to his power,
He now desert them must,
Or share their evil hour.

Faith, duty to his prince,
Is still his watchword here;
He still thinks of him, since
His last sad look and tear.

So boldly doth he now
Advance his foot and stand,
Arm'd proof to overthrow
The evil powers at hand.

The wild musician comes;
Eckart his sword has ta'en;
But ah! those magic tunes
His mortal strength enchain!

From out the mountain's side
Come thousand dwarfish shapes,
That threaten and deride,
And leap and grin like apes.

The princes fair are gone,
And mingled with the swarm;
True Eckart is alone,
And faint his valiant arm.

The rout of revellers grows,
Gathering from east to west,
And gives him no repose—
Around—before—abreast.

True Eckart's 'mid the din,
His might is lost and gone;
The hellish powers must win—
He of their slaves be one.

For now they reach the hill
Whence those wild notes are heard;
The dwarfish fiends stand still,
The hills their sides uprear'd,

And made a mighty void,
Whence fiercer sprites glower'd grim.
"What now will us betide?"
He cried:—none answered him.

Again he grasped his sword;
He said he must prove true:
Eckart has spoke the word,
And rushed amid the crew.

He saved the princes dear;
  They fled and reach'd the plain;
But see, the fiend is near—
  His imps their malice strain.

Though Eckart's strength is gone,
  He sees the children safe;
And cried, "I fight alone—
  Now let their malice chafe!"

He fought—he fell—he died
  Upon that well-fought field;
His old heroic pride
  Both scorn'd to fly or yield.

"True to the sire and son,
  The bulwark of their throne,
Proud feats hath Eckart done;
  There's not a knight, not one,

Of all my court and land,"
  Cried the young duke full loud,
"Would make so bold a stand,
  Our honour to uphold.

For life, and land, and all,
  To Eckart true we owe;
He snatch'd our souls from thrall,
  For all it work'd him woe."

And soon the story ran
  Through Burgundy's broad land,
That who so venture can
  To take his dangerous stand

Upon that mountain-side,
  Where in that contest hard
True Eckart fought and died,
  Shall see his shade keep guard,

To warn the wanderers back
Who seek th' infernal pit,
And spurn them from the track
That leads them down to it.

THE TANNENHÄUSER.

About four centuries had elapsed since the death of the Faithful Eckart, when there lived a Lord of the Woods who stood in high reputation as a counsellor at the imperial court. The same lord had a son, one of the handsomest knights in all the land, highly esteemed and beloved by his friends and countrymen. Suddenly, however, he disappeared under very peculiar circumstances, which occurred previous to his departure; and no one could gather any tidings of him whatsoever. But from the time of the Faithful Eckart, a tradition respecting the Venus-berg had become very prevalent among the people, and it was asserted by many that he must have wandered thither, and there been devoted to eternal destruction.

Among the whole of his friends and relatives who lamented the young knight's loss, none grieved so much as Frederick of Wolfsburg. They had been early companions, and their attachment had grown with their years, insomuch that their subsequent attachment appeared rather the result of necessity than of choice. Meanwhile the Lord of the Woods died, having heard no account of his son; and in the course of a few years his friend Frederick married. He had already a playful young circle around him. Years passed away, and still no tidings arrived as to the fate of his friend, whom he was at length reluctantly compelled to number with the dead.

One evening, as he was standing under the tower of

his castle, he observed a pilgrim approaching at some distance, in the direction of the castle-gates. The stranger was very singularly dressed; his whole appearance, and particularly his gait, striking the young knight as something odd and unaccountable. As the pilgrim drew nigh, he went to meet him; and, on examining his features, thought he could recognise them. He looked again, and the whole truth burst upon him: it was indeed no other than his long-lost friend—the young Lord of the Fir-woods himself. Yet he shuddered, and uttered an exclamation of surprise, when he contemplated the ravages which time had made in the noblest face and form—the theme of his former admirers,—of which only the ruins were to be traced;—no, he no longer appeared the same being.

The two friends embraced, while they still gazed at each other as upon perfect strangers but newly introduced. Many were the confused questions and answers which passed between them; and Frederick often trembled at the strange wild glances of his friend: the fire seemed to sparkle in his eyes. He agreed, however, to sojourn with him; but when he had remained a few days, he informed Frederick that he was about to go upon a pilgrimage to Rome.

Their acquaintance in a short time grew more familiar, and resumed its former happy and confidential tone. They recalled the mutual adventures and plans of their early years, though the Lord of the Woods seemed to avoid touching upon any incident which had occurred since his late disappearance from home. This only raised Frederick's curiosity the more; he entreated to be informed, and with yet more earnestness as he found their former regard and confidence increase. Still the stranger long sought, by the most friendly appeals and warnings, to be excused; till at last, upon fresh solicitation, he said, "Now, then, be it so! your wish shall be fully gratified; only never in future reproach me, should my history excite feelings—lasting feelings—of sorrow and dismay."

Frederick took him in the most friendly manner by the arm, and led him into the open air. They turned into a pleasant grove, and seated themselves on a mossy bank; the stranger then giving his hand to his friend, turned away his head among the soft leaves and grass, and, amidst many bitter sighs and sobs, gave way to the sad emotions which the recollection seemed to inspire. His friend, pressing his hand, tried every means to console him; upon which the stranger, again raising his head, began his story in a calmer voice, to the following purport:—

"There goes an ancient tradition, that several hundred years ago there lived a knight known by the name of the Faithful Eckart. It is farther believed that there appeared a mysterious musician at that time from one of the wonderful mountains, whose unearthly music awakened such strange delight and wild wishes in the hearts of his audience, that they would irresistibly follow him, and lose themselves in the labyrinths of the same mountain. At that period, hell is supposed to have kept its portals open there, in order to entrap, by such sweet irresistible airs, unhappy mortals into its abyss. Often have I heard the same account when I was a boy, and sometimes it used to make me shudder. In a short time it seemed as if all nature, every tone and every flower, reminded me, in spite of myself, of that same old fearful saying. Oh, it is impossible for me to convey to you what kind of mournful thought, what strange ineffable longing, one time suddenly seized me, bound me, and led me, as it were, in chains; and particularly when I gazed upon the floating clouds, and the streaks of light ethereal blue seen between them; and what strange recollections the woods and meadows conjured up in my soul. Often did I feel all the love and tenderness of nature in my inmost spirit; often stretched forth my arms, and longed for wings to fly into the embrace of something yet more beautiful; to pour myself, like the spirit of nature, over vale and mountain; to become all present with the

grass, the flowers, the trees; and to breathe in the fulness of the mighty sea. When some lovely prospects had delighted me during the day, I was sure to be haunted with dark and threatening images that same night, all of which seemed busy in closing against me the gates of life. One dream, in particular, made an indelible impression upon my mind, although I was unable to recall its individual features clearly to my memory.

"I thought I could see an immense concourse of people in the streets,—I heard unintelligible words and languages, and I turned away, and went in the dark night to the house of my parents, where I found only my father, who was unwell. The next morning I threw my arms round both my parents' necks—embracing them tenderly, as if I felt that some evil power were about to separate us for ever. 'Oh, were I to lose you,' I said to my dear father, 'how very lonely and unhappy should I feel in this world without you!' They kissed and consoled me tenderly, but they could not succeed in dispelling that dark foreboding image from my imagination.

"As I grew older, I did not mingle with other children of my own age in their sports. I wandered lonely through the fields; and on one occasion it happened that I missed my way, and got into a gloomy wood, where I wandered about, calling for help. After searching my way back for some time in vain, I all at once found myself standing before a lattice, which opened into a garden. Here I remarked pleasant shady walks, fruit-trees, and flowers, among which were numbers of roses, which shone lovely in the sunbeams. An uncontrollable wish to approach them more nearly seized me; and I eagerly forced my way through the lattice-work, and found myself in that beautiful garden. I bent down and embraced the plants and flowers, kissed the roses over and over, and shed tears. While lost in this strange feeling, half sorrow, half delight, two young maidens came towards me along the walk, one older, and the other about my own years. I was roused

from my trance, only to yield myself up to fresh amazement. My eye reeled upon the younger, and at that moment I felt as if I had been suddenly restored to happiness after all my sufferings. They invited me into the house; the parents of the young people inquired my name, and were kind enough to send my father word that I was safe with them; and in the evening he himself came to bring me home.

"From this day forth the uncertain and idle tenour of my life acquired some fixed aim;—my ideas recurred incessantly to the lovely maidens and the garden; thither daily flew my hopes and all my wishes. I abandoned my playmates, and all my usual pastimes, and could not resist again visiting the garden, the castle, and its lovely young inmate. Soon I appeared to become domesticated, and my absence no longer created surprise; while my favourite Emma became hourly more dear to me. My affection continued to increase in warmth and tenderness, though I was myself unconscious of it. I was now happy! I had not a wish to gratify, beyond that of returning, and looking forward again to the hour of meeting.

"About this time a young knight was introduced to the family; he was acquainted likewise with my parents, and he appeared to attach himself in the same manner as I had done to the fair young Emma. From the moment I observed this, I began to hate him as my deadliest enemy. But my feelings were indescribably more bitter when I fancied I saw that Emma preferred his society to mine. I felt as if, from that instant, the music which had hitherto accompanied me, suddenly died away in my breast. My thoughts dwelt incessantly upon hatred and death; strange feelings burned within my breast, in particular whenever I heard Emma sing the well-known song to the lute. I did not even attempt to disguise my enmity; and when my parents reproached me for my conduct, I turned away from them with an obstinate and wilful air. I wandered for hours together in the woods and among the rocks, in-

dulging evil thoughts, chiefly directed against myself;—I had already determined upon my rival's death.

"In the course of a few months the young knight declared his wishes to Emma's parents, and they were received with pleasure. All that was most sweet and wonderful in nature, all that had ever influenced and delighted me, seemed to have united in my idea of Emma. I knew, I acknowledged, and I wished for no other happiness—nothing more—nothing but her. I had even wilfully predetermined that the loss of her and my own destruction should take place on one and the same day; neither should survive the other a moment.

"My parents were much grieved at witnessing my wildness and rudeness of manner; my mother became ill, but it touched me not; I inquired little after her, and saw her only very seldom. The nuptial-day of my rival was drawing nigh, and my agony proportionably increased: it hurried me through the woods and across the mountains, as if pursued by a grizzly phantom by day and by night. I called down the most frightful maledictions both upon Emma and myself. I had not a single friend to advise with—no one wished to receive me—for all seemed to have given me over for lost. Yes! for the detested fearful eve of the bridal-day was at hand: I had taken refuge among the rocks and cliffs; I was listening to the roaring cataract; I looked into the foaming waters, and started back in horror at myself. On the approach of morning, I saw my abhorred rival descending the hill at a little distance; I drew nigh—provoked him with bitter and jeering words; and when he drew his sword, I flew upon him like lightning, beat down his guard with my hanger, and—he bit the dust.

"I hastened from the spot—I never once looked back at him; but his guide bore the body away. The same night I haunted the neighbourhood of the castle where dwelt my Emma now. A few days afterwards, in passing the convent near at hand, I heard the bells tolling, nuns

singing funeral-hymns, and saw death-lights burning in the sanctuary. I inquired into the cause, and was informed that the young lady Emma had died of the shock on hearing that her lover had been killed.

"I was in doubt what to think, and where to remain; I doubted whether I existed; whether all were true. I determined to see my parents; and the night after reached the place where they lived. I found every thing in commotion; the street was filled with horses and carriages; pages and soldiers were all mingled together, and spoke in strange broken words;—it was just as if the emperor were on the eve of undertaking a campaign against his enemies. A single light was dimly burning in my father's house; I felt a strange sensation, like strangulation, within my breast. When I knocked, my father himself came to the door, with slow soft steps; and just then I recollected a strange dream I had in my childhood, and felt, with horrible truth, that it was the same scene which I was then going through. Quite dismayed, I inquired, 'Why are you up so late to-night, father?' He led me in; saying, as he entered,—'I may well be up and watching, when your mother has only this moment expired.'

"These words shot like lightning through my soul. My father sat himself thoughtfully down; I seated myself at his side; the corpse lay upon a bed, and was appallingly covered over with white fillets and napkins. My heart struggled, but could not burst. 'I myself keep watch,' said the old man, 'for my poor wife always sits near me.' My senses here failed me. I raised my eyes towards one corner, and there I saw something rising up like a mist; it turned and motioned, and soon took the well-known lineaments of my mother, who seemed to regard me with a fixed and serious air. I attempted to escape, but I could not; for the figure motioned to him, and my father held me fast in his arms, while he softly whispered me, 'She died of grief, my son, for you.' I embraced him with the most terrific, soul-cutting emotion. I clung to him for

protection like a feeble child,—burning tears ran down my breast; but I uttered no sound. My father kissed me, and I shuddered as I felt his lips, for they were deadly cold—cold as if I had been kissed by the dead. 'How is it with you, dear father?' I murmured in trembling agony; but he seemed to sink and gather into himself, as it were, and replied not a word. I felt him in my arms, growing colder and colder. I felt at his heart, but it was quite still; yet, in the bitterness of my woe, I held the body fast clasped in my embrace.

"By a sudden glimmer, like the first break of morning, which shot through the gloomy chamber, I there saw my father's spirit close to that of my mother; and both gazed upon me with a compassionate expression, as I stood with the dear deceased in my arms. From that moment I saw and heard no more. I lay deprived of consciousness; and I was found by the servants delirious, and yet powerless as a babe, on the ensuing morning.

"The memory of that hour is still as fearfully impressed upon my mind, and I am at a loss to conjecture how I was so unfortunate as to survive it. For it was now, indeed, that this once fair earth, with life, and all that life had to afford, became worse than dead and perished for me;—became a lone waste and wilderness, with all its soft airs, sweet flowers, pure streams, and blue starry skies. I stood like one, the last of a sudden overwhelming wreck, saved only to regret that he had not perished with all that was dearest to him on earth. How I lived on from day to day, I know not; till at last, unable longer to contend with the fiends of remorse that grappled me, I flew to society for relief. I joined a number of dissipated characters, who sought, like me, to lose the sense of their follies and enormities in the most dissolute pleasures. Yes, I sought to propitiate the evil spirit within me by obedience to its worst dictates. My former wildness and impatience revived, and I no longer placed any restraint over my wishes.

"I fell into the hands of an abandoned wretch of the name of Rudolf, who only laughed at my lamentations and remorse. More than a year thus elapsed; my anxiety and horror, in spite of all efforts to control them, daily gaining ground upon me, until I was seized with utter despair. Like all who experience that stage of such a malady, I took to wandering without any object. I arrived at distant and unknown places—spots unvisited by other feet; and often I could have thrown myself from some airy height into the green sunny meads and vales below, or rushed into the cool streams to quench my soul's fiery and insatiable thirst; yet though I had no fear, something unaccountable always restrained me. I made many attempts towards the close of the day; for I longed to be annihilated: but when the morning returned, with its golden beams, its fresh dews, and odorous flowers, I felt I could destroy nothing; and hope and love of life revived within my breast. A conviction then seized me, that all hell was conspired together to work my utter perdition; that both my pleasures and my pains arose from the same fiendish source; and that a malicious spirit was gradually directing all the powers and influences of my mind to that sole end. I yielded myself up to him, in order to dissipate these alternating raptures and agonies. On one dark and stormy night I went into the mountains; I mounted one of their highest and giddiest peaks, where foot of man never before trod; and there, with my whole strength of heart and soul, I invoked the foe of God and man to appear. I called him in language that I felt he must obey. My words were powerful—the fiend stood at my side, and I felt no alarm. While conversing with him, I could feel my faith in each haunted and wonder-working mountain growing stronger within me; and the base one taught me a song sufficiently potent of itself to shew me the right path into its labyrinths. It was thus I approached the strange mountain: the night was dark and tempestuous; the moon glimmered through a mass of dusky livid

clouds; yet boldly and loudly did I sing that song. A giant form arose, and motioned me back with its staff. I drew nigher. 'I am the faithful Eckart,' exclaimed the supernatural form; 'and, praise to the goodness of the blessed God, I am permitted to hold watch here, to deter the unhappy from rushing into the base fiend's power.' I pushed on. In passing, I found my way led through subterraneous passages in the mountain. The path was so narrow as to compel me to force my way: I heard the gushing of the hidden waters, and the noise of the spirits engaged in forging steel, gold, and silver in their caverns, for the temptation and perdition of man. I heard, too, the deep clanging tones and notes in their simple and secret powers, which supply all our earthly music; and the lower I descended, the more there seemed to fall as it were a veil from before my eyes.

"Soon I heard other music, of quite an opposite character to the last; and my spirit within me struggled, as if eager to fly nearer and catch the notes. I came into more open space; and on all sides strange, clear, glowing colours burst upon my eye. This I felt was what I had all along sighed for;—deep in my heart I welcomed the presence of something I had long looked for—the deep-seated master-passion, of which I then felt the ravishing powers playing in their full strength within my breast. A swarm of the mad heathen deities, with the goddess Venus at their head, ran forward to greet me;—all demons, that assumed those ancients' names, and were banished thither by the Almighty, their career being fully run upon earth; though they still continue to work in secret.

"All the delights so familiar to the world I there found and enjoyed in their fullest and keenest zest. My appetite was as insatiable as the delight was lasting. The long-famed beauties of the ancient world were all there—all that my most ardent wishes required was mine; and each day that world grew brighter, and appeared arrayed in more charming colours. The most costly wines slaked

our thirst; the most lovely and delicious forms played and wantoned in the air; a throng of loves hovered invitingly around me, shedding perfumes over my head; and tones of music burst forth from nature's inmost heart, and with their undulating freshness restored the ardour of our desires, while soft mists and dews stole over flowery fields, giving new essence to their ravishing odours.

"How many years thus passed, I am quite unable to state, for here was no time and no divisions; the luscious charm of virgin beauty burned in the flowers, and in the forms of girls bloomed the fragrant charm of the flowers; their colours seemed to enjoy a peculiar language; tones uttered new words; the world of sense was enclosed, as it were, within the glowing bloom of those luxurious flowers —the resident spirits within were ever engaged in celebrating their triumphant delights.

"How this was accomplished, I can neither explain nor comprehend; but soon, amid all this pomp of sin and unlawful pleasure, I began to sigh for repose, for the old innocent earth I had left, with all its virtuous, social endearments; and my desire grew as violent as it had formerly been to leave it for what I had there obtained. I wished to lead the same life as other mortals, with its mixed pains and pleasures. I was satiated with splendour and excess, and turned with thoughts of pleasure towards my native land. Some unaccountable mercy of the Almighty granted me the privilege of returning. I found myself once more in this present world, and still within reach of repentance and salvation; and I now think only of receiving absolution for my sins at the footstool of the Almighty Father, for which purpose I am on the way to Rome; that so I may again be numbered in the rank of other living men."

Here the sad pilgrim became silent; and Frederick fixed his eye upon him, with a searching glance, for some time. At last he took his poor friend's hand, and said: "Although I have not yet recovered from my astonishment,

and cannot, in any way, comprehend your narrative; yet I conceive it impossible that all with which you have been thus fearfully haunted can be other than a strong delusion of the mind. For Emma herself is still alive, she is my own wife; we two have never differed, much less engaged with our weapons, during the whole course of our lives. No, we never hated each other, as you seem to think, though you were missing just before my marriage from home. Besides, you never, at the time, gave me a single hint that you loved my Emma."

Then he again took his bewildered friend by the hand, and led him into another apartment to his wife, who had just returned from a visit of some days to one of her sisters.

The pilgrim stood silent and thoughtful in her presence, while he examined the form and features of the lady. Then, shaking his head repeatedly, he said, in a low voice, "By Heavens! this is the most wonderful incident of all!"

Frederick now related to him every thing which had occurred to himself since they parted, and attempted to explain how he must have been labouring under a temporary delirium during many years past.

"Oh! I know right well," answered the pilgrim, "how it is. It is now that I am bewitched and insane; and hell has cast this juggling show before me that I may not go to Rome and seek the pardon of my sins."

Emma tried to withdraw his attention from the subject, by recurring to scenes and incidents of his childhood; but the pilgrim was not to be undeceived. One day he suddenly leaped up, declaring he must instantly set out, and forth he went without even saying farewell.

Frederick and his Emma often discoursed of the strange unhappy pilgrim. A few months had elapsed, when, pale and worn, in tattered attire and barefoot, his poor friend entered Frederick's apartment, while he was yet asleep. He pressed his lips to his, and exclaimed hastily, "The holy father cannot and will not forgive me. I must away

and seek my former abode." And with this he went hurriedly away.

Frederick roused himself, and was going into his wife's chamber, when he met her women, who were all running to find him, in an agony of terror and alarm. The Tannenhäuser had been there: he had come early in the morning, and uttering the words, "She shall not stop me in my career!" had despatched her upon the spot.

Frederick had not been able yet to recall his thoughts, when a strange feeling of horror came over him. He could not rest; he ran into the open air, and when they wished to bring him back, he exclaimed, "that the pilgrim had kissed his lips, and that the kiss was burning him until he should meet with him again."

He then ran rapidly in a variety of directions in search of the Tannenhäuser and the mysterious mountain; and he was never afterwards heard of. It is reported by the people, that whoever receives a kiss from one of the dwellers of that mountain is unable to resist the enchantment; which draws him with magic force into its subterraneous depths.

The Runenberg.

A YOUNG hunter was sitting in the midst of the mountain-ranges, musing beside his fowling-floor, whilst the rush of waters and of the woods resounded through the solitude. He was thinking on his destiny; how he was so young, and had forsaken father and mother, and his familiar home, and all the acquaintances of his native village, to seek out for himself a new country, to escape from

the circle of recurring habits; and he looked up with a kind of wonder that he now found himself in this valley, and in this employment. Great clouds were passing over the heavens and sinking behind the hills; birds were singing from the bushes, and an echo answered them. He slowly descended to the foot of the hill, and seated himself beside a stream that was rushing over rugged stones with a foamy murmur. He listened to the changeful melody of the water; and it seemed as if the waves were telling him, in unintelligible words, a thousand things that nearly concerned him, and he could not but feel inwardly troubled that he was not able to understand their speech. Then again he looked around him, and thought he was joyful and happy; so he took fresh courage, and sang with a loud voice this hunting-song:

Joyful and merry amid the height
The huntsman goes to the chase;
His booty must appear in sight
In the bright green thickets, though till night
Its path he vainly trace.

And there his faithful dogs are yelling
Through the solitude sublime;
Through the wood the horns are telling,
And all hearts with courage swelling,
O thou happy hunting-time!

His home is clefts and caves among,
The trees all greet him well:
Autumnal airs breathe round him strong;
And when he finds his prey, his song
Resounds from every dell.

Leave the landsman to his labour,
And the sailor to the sea;
None so views Aurora's favour,
None so tastes the morning's savour,
When the dew lies heavily,

As who follows wood and game,
While Diana's smile doth shew,
Till some beauteous form inflame
His heart, that he most loved can name,
Happy hunting man art thou!

Whilst he thus sang, the sun had sunk deeper, and broad shadows fell across the narrow valley. A cooling twilight stole over the earth; while only the tops of the trees and the round summits of the mountains were gilded by the evening glow. Christian's heart grew still sadder: he liked not to return to his fowling-floor, and yet he might not stay; he seemed to himself so lonely, and he longed for society. Now he wished for those old books which once he had seen at his father's house, and which he never would read, though his father had often urged him thereto; the scenes of his childhood came before him, his sports with the youth of the village, his acquaintances among the children, the school that had so often distressed him; he wished himself back again amid those scenes, which he had wilfully forsaken to seek his fortune in unknown regions, on mountains, among strange men, in a new occupation. As it grew darker, and the brook rushed louder, and the birds of night with fitful wing began their devious wanderings, he still sat dejected and disconsolate, and quite unresolved what to do or purpose. Thoughtlessly he pulled out a straggling root from the earth; when suddenly he heard a hollow moaning under ground, which wound itself onward underneath, and only died away plaintively in the distance. The sound penetrated his inmost heart; it seized him as if he had unconsciously stirred the wound of which the dying frame of nature was expiring in agony. He started up, and would have fled away; for he had heard aforetime of the wondrous mandrake-root, which, on being torn, sends forth such heart-rending moans, that the person who has done it is fain to run away maddened by its wailings. As he was about to depart, a stranger stood behind him, and

asked him, with a friendly air, whither he was going. Christian had wished for society, and yet he was terrified anew at this friendly presence.

"Whither so hastily?" asked the stranger again.

The young hunter tried to collect his thoughts, and related how the solitude had suddenly become so frightful to him, that he wished to escape from it; the evening so dark, the green shades of the wood so dreary, the brook spoke in loud lamentations, the clouds traversing the heavens, drew his longing over to the other side of the mountains.

"You are yet young," said the stranger, "and cannot well endure the rigour of solitude. I will accompany you; for you will meet with no house or hamlet within a league of this. On our way we can talk together, and tell tales to each other; so your troublous thoughts will leave you. In an hour the moon will emerge from behind the mountains; her light will also dispel the darkness from your mind."

They went on, and the stranger seemed to the youth almost as an old acquaintance.

"How came you on these mountains?" asked the former; "by your speech I perceive you are not at home here."

"Ah!" replied the youth, "much might be said on that subject; and yet it is not worth the talk, not worth relating. I was forced away by a singular impulse from my parents and relations; my spirit was not master of itself; like a bird which is taken in a net, and vainly struggles, so was my soul ensnared in strange imaginations and wishes. We dwelt far from hence, in a plain where all around, you see no hill, scarcely a height: few trees adorned the green level; but meadows, fruitful corn-fields, and gardens, extended far as the eye could reach; and a broad river glided like a mighty spirit by them. My father was gardener to the castle, and wished to bring me up to the same employment. He loved plants and flowers

beyond every thing, and could devote himself the entire day long to the watching and tending of them. Indeed he went so far as to maintain he could almost converse with them; that he learnt from their growth and thriving, as well as from the varied form and colour of their leaves. I, however, was averse to the gardening occupation; and the more, as my father tried to persuade me thereto, and even with threats to compel me. I wished to be a fisherman, and made the attempt; but neither did a life upon the waters suit me: I was then apprenticed to a tradesman in the town; but soon came home from him also. Once on a time my father was telling of the mountains, which, in his youth, he had travelled over; of the subterranean mines and their workmen; of hunters and their occupation; and suddenly there awoke in me the most decisive impulse, the feeling that now I had found my destined way of life. Day and night I mused thereon, and imagined high mountains, caves, and pine-forests, before me: my fancy created for itself immense rocks; I heard, in thought, the din of the chase, the horns, the cry of the hounds and of the game; all my dreams were filled with these things, and therefore I had no longer any rest or peace. The plains, the castle, my father's little contracted garden with the prim flower-beds; the confined dwelling; the wide heaven extended all around so dreary, and embracing no heights, no lofty mountains,—all became more and more melancholy and odious to me. It seemed to me as if all men about me were living in deplorable ignorance, and that they would all feel and think as I did, if once the feeling of their misery could arise within their souls. Thus I harassed myself: till one morning I formed the resolution to leave my parents' house for ever. I had found in a book some descriptions of the nearest mountains, with pictures of the neighbouring districts, and thereafter I directed my way. It was in the early spring, and I felt myself quite light and joyful. I hastened with all speed to leave the plain; and, one evening, I saw in the

distance the dim outline of the mountain-chains lying before me. I could scarcely sleep in the inn, so impatient was I to tread the region which I regarded as my home: with the earliest dawn I was awake, and again upon my journey. In the afternoon, I found myself already below my much-loved hills; and, as a drunkard, I went on, then stopped awhile, looked backward, and felt as if intoxicated with the strange and yet familiar objects. Soon the plain behind me was lost to my sight; the forest-streams were rushing to meet me; beech-trees and oaks sounded down to me from steep precipices, with waving boughs; my path led me past giddy abysses; and blue hills were standing high and solemn in the distance. A new world was unlocked to me. I was not weary. So I came, after certain days, having traversed a great part of the mountains, to an old forester, who, at my earnest request, took me to instruct me in the arts of the chase. I have now been three months in his service. I took possession of the district in which I was to have my abode, as of a kingdom. I made myself acquainted with every cliff and cleft of the mountains; in my occupation, when at early dawn we went to the woods, or felled trees in the forest, or exercised my eye and my fowling-piece, or trained our faithful companions, the dogs, to their duty, I was completely happy. But now I have been sitting here for eight days upon my fowling-floor, in the loneliest part of the mountains; and this evening my mind grew so sad as never in my life before; I seemed so lost, so utterly unhappy; and even now I cannot rid myself of that melancholy humour."

The stranger listened attentively, as they both wandered through a dark alley of the wood. They now came into the open country; and the light of the moon, which above them was standing with its horns over the mountain top, greeted them friendly. In undistinguishable forms, and many sundered masses, which the pale glimmer again deceptively united, the cleft mountain-range lay before them; in the background was a steep hill, on which an

ancient weather-worn ruin shewed ghastly in the white light. "Our way parts here," said the stranger; "I am going down into this hollow; there, by that old mine-shaft, is my dwelling: the metal ores are my neighbours; the mountain-streams tell me wonderful things in the night-season; thither, however, thou canst not follow me. But see there, the Runenberg, with its rugged walls, how beautiful and alluring the old stone-work looks down to us! Wert thou never there?"

"Never," replied young Christian. "I once heard my old forester relate strange things of this mountain, which, foolishly enough, I have forgotten; but I remember my mind was horror-struck that evening. I should like at some time to ascend the height; for the lights are there most beautiful; the grass must there be very green, the world around very strange; and, perhaps, one might find up there many a wonder of the ancient time."

"You can scarcely fail," replied the other; "whoever only understands how to seek, whose heart is right inwardly moved thereto, will find there old friends, and all that he most ardently desires." With these words the stranger rapidly descended the hill, without bidding his companion farewell; he soon vanished in the thicket, and shortly after the sound of his footsteps also died away. The young hunter was not surprised, but only quickened his footsteps towards the Runenberg, whereto every thing beckoned him: thither the stars seemed to shine, the moon pointed out a bright path towards the ruins; light clouds rose up in that direction; and out of the depths the waters and rushing woods persuaded him, and spoke to him new courage. His steps were as if winged; his heart beat; he felt within a joy so great, that it almost rose to anguish. He came into places he had never seen before, where the rocks became steeper, the foliage disappeared, and the naked walls called out to him as with angry voices, while a lonesome moaning wind drove him on. Thus he hastened on without stopping, and came late after midnight

upon a narrow footpath which ran along by the side of an abyss. He heeded not the chasm which yawned beneath, and which threatened to devour him, so impelled was he by wild imaginings and unintelligible desires. Now his perilous way drew nigh a high wall, which appeared to lose itself in the clouds; the path grew narrower at every step, so that the youth was obliged to hold fast by the projecting stones to avoid plunging into the gulf below.

At length he could proceed no further; the path ended under a window; he was obliged to come to a stand, and knew not whether to turn or stay. Suddenly he saw a light, which behind the ancient wall appeared to be moving. He looked after the gleam, and discovered that he could see into an antique spacious hall, strangely adorned with various kinds of precious stones and crystals, that sparkled in manifold splendour, and mysteriously reflected each other from the wandering light, which was borne in the hand of a tall female form, who, in a thoughtful mood, was pacing up and down the apartment. She seemed not to belong to mortals, so large, so powerful were her limbs, so firm her countenance; but the enraptured youth thought he had never before seen or imagined such beauty. He trembled, and yet secretly wished that she might come to the window and perceive him. At last she stopped, set down the light upon a crystal table, and sang with a thrilling voice:

Where can the Ancients keep,
  That they do not appear?
From diamond pillars weep
  The crystals, many a tear,
In full fountain falling round;
And within sad tones resound.
In the waves so clear and bright,
And transparent as the light,
There is form'd the beauteous glance,
That doth the raptur'd soul entrance,
And moves the heart in glowing dance.

Come, ye spirits all,
To the golden hall;
Raise, from out the depths of gloom,
Heads that sparkle; quickly come,
Ye that are of wondrous power,
Be of hearts the masters now,
Where bright tears with passion glow;
Be the rulers of the hour.

As soon as she had ended, she began to undress, laying aside her garments in a splendid wardrobe. First, she took from her head a golden veil, and her long black hair flowed in full ringlets down to her waist; then she loosed her bosom-dress, and the youth forgot himself and the world in gazing at the superterrestrial beauty. After some time, she went to another golden cabinet, took thereout a tablet that glittered with inlaid stones, rubies, diamonds, and all kinds of jewels, and stood contemplating it with scrutinising look. The tablet seemed to form a strange unintelligible figure, with its several lines and colours; one while, as its brightness glanced towards him, he was painfully dazzled; then, again, a soft green and blue playing over it, refreshed his eye; but he stood devouring the objects with his looks, and at the same time absorbed in deep thoughts. In his inmost heart there was opened up an abyss of forms and harmony, of longing and desire; troops of winged tones and sad and joyful melodies passed through his spirit, that was moved to the very foundation: he saw a world of pain and hope arise within himself, mighty wondrous rocks of trust and daring confidence, deep torrents as of melancholy flowing by. He no longer knew himself; and he was terrified as the fair one opened the window, and reaching forth to him the magic tablet, spoke to him these few words: "Take this in remembrance of me!" He grasped the tablet, and felt the figure; the invisible within him immediately passed away, and the light, and the potent beauty, and the strange hall, had vanished. As it were, a dark night, with cloud-curtains, fell within

his inmost soul; he searched after his former feelings, after that inspiration and incomprehensible love; he gazed at the costly tablet, in which the sinking moon was mirrored faint and bluish.

He still held the tablet fast pressed within his hands, when the morning dawned; and he, exhausted, giddy, and half-asleep, fell headlong down the steep mountain-side.

The sun shone on the face of the stupified sleeper; who, on awaking, found himself again upon a pleasant hill. He looked around, and beheld far behind him, and scarcely discernible at the extreme horizon, the ruins of the Runenberg; he searched for the tablet, and could no where find it. Astonished and perplexed, he tried to collect his thoughts and unite his recollections; but his memory was as if filled with a confused mist, in which shapeless and unknown forms were wildly contending with one another. His entire former life lay behind him, as in a far distance; the strangest and the most familiar were so mingled together, that he found it impossible to sever them. After long struggle with himself, he at last thought that a dream, or sudden madness, must have befallen him that night; but still he could not understand how he had wandered so far into a strange and remote region.

Still, almost overcome with sleep, he descended the hill, and came upon a beaten path, which led him down from the mountains on to the open country. All was strange to him; he at first thought that he should find his native home, but he saw before him quite a different region, and at length conjectured that he must be on the southern side of the mountains, which in the spring he had trodden from the north. Towards noon he stood over a village from whose cottages a peaceful smoke was ascending; children clad in festal dress were playing on the green, and from the little church came the sound of the organ and the chant of the congregation. All seized him with a sweet, indescribable melancholy; all so stirred his heart, that he was

forced to weep. The narrow gardens, the little cottages with their smoking chimneys, the neatly parted cornfields, reminded him of the wants of poor human nature, of its dependence on the friendly earth, in whose beneficence it is obliged to trust; while the singing and the tones of the organ filled his heart with a devoutness he had never felt before. His feelings and wishes of the previous night appeared to him reckless and wicked; he wished again, in a childlike, dependent, and humble spirit, to unite himself to men as his brethren, and to withdraw from his ungodly purposes and opinions. The plain, with its little river that wound itself in manifold turnings about the gardens and meadows, seemed charming and alluring to him; he thought with fear on his abode in the solitary mountains amid the desolate rocks; he longed that he might dwell in this peaceful village; and with these feelings he entered the crowded church.

The singing was just ended, and the priest had begun his sermon, which was on the kindness of God in the harvest; how His goodness feeds all, and satisfies every living thing; how wonderfully in the corn He has provided for the support of the human race; how the love of God is incessantly communicating itself in bread; and therefore the devout Christian may, with thankfulness, perpetually celebrate a holy supper. The congregation was edified. The young hunter's looks were fixed on the pious preacher, and observed close by the pulpit a young maiden, who seemed, beyond all others, resigned to devotion and attention. She was slim and fair, her blue eye gleamed with the most piercing softness, her countenance was as if transparent, and blooming with the tenderest colours. The stranger youth had never felt himself and his heart so before; so full of love and so calm, so resigned to the stillest and the most enlivening feelings. He bowed himself in tears, when the priest at last spoke the blessing; he felt penetrated by the holy words, as by an invisible power; and the shadowy image of the night sank down behind

him, like a spectre, into the deepest distance. He left the church, stopped a while under a tall lime-tree, and thanked God in a fervent prayer, that, without his deserving, He had freed him from the snares of the evil spirit. The village was that day celebrating the harvest-feast, and all men were determined to be joyful; the children gaily dressed were rejoicing in cakes and dances; the young men on the village square, which was encircled with young trees, were preparing all things for the festival, where also the musicians were sitting and trying their instruments. Christian went again into the fields, in order to collect his thoughts and fix his contemplations, and then returned to the village, where now all were united in joyfulness and celebration of the festival. The fair Elizabeth was also there with her parents; and the stranger joined himself to the joyful throng. Elizabeth was dancing; and he had, in the mean time, entered into conversation with the father, who was a farmer, and one of the richest men in the village. The youth and speech of the stranger seemed to please him, and so in a short time it was agreed that Christian should remain with him as gardener. This he was able to undertake; for he hoped that now the knowledge and occupations he had so much despised at home would stand him in good stead.

From this time a new life began for him. He went to live with the farmer, and was reckoned with his family. With his station also he changed his dress. He was so good, so serviceable, and ever kind; so diligent at his labour, that soon all in the house, but especially the daughter, became friendly to him. So often as on Sunday he saw her going to church, he held for her in readiness a beautiful nosegay, which she received from him with blushing thankfulness: he missed her when the day passed without his seeing her; and then in the evening she would relate to him legends and pleasant stories. They became ever more needful to each other; and the old people, who observed it, seemed not to have any thing against it; for

Christian was the handsomest and most industrious youth in the village. They themselves, from the first moment, had felt a constraint of love and friendship towards him. After half a year, Elizabeth was his wife. It was again spring; the swallows and birds of song had come into the land; the garden stood in its gayest attire; the marriage was celebrated with all joyfulness; bride and bridegroom appeared as if intoxicated with their happiness. Late in the evening, as they went to their chamber, the young husband said to his beloved: "No, thou art not that form which once charmed me in a dream, and which I never can quite forget; yet am I happy in thy presence, and blest in thine embrace."

How joyful was the family, when, after a year, it was increased by a little daughter, that was named Leonora. It is true that Christian was at times somewhat more serious as he contemplated the child; but yet his youthful sprightliness always again returned to him. He scarcely ever thought of his former way of life, for he felt himself quite at home and contented. After some months, however, the thought of his parents occurred to him, and especially how his father would rejoice at his peaceful lot, at his condition as gardener and husbandman; it pained him that he had been able for so long a time to forget father and mother; his own child reminded him of what joy children are to parents; and so he at length resolved to put himself on the journey, and revisit his native home.

Unwillingly he left his wife; all wished him happiness; and in the fine season of the year, on foot he took his way. Already, after a few miles, he felt how painful was the parting; for the first time in his life he felt the smart of separation; the strange objects around seemed almost savage to him; he felt as if he were lost in a hostile solitude. Then the thought occurred to him that his youth was over; that he had found a home to which he belonged, in which his heart had taken root; he could almost lament the lost levity of former years; and he felt

the extremest dejection of spirit as at a village he turned into the inn to pass the night. He could not comprehend why he had left his affectionate wife and acquired parents; and peevish and discontented, he next morning set forth to continue his journey.

His anguish increased as he came near the chain of mountains; the distant ruins were already visible, and gradually became more distinguishable; while numerous hill-tops rose round and clear from out the blue mist. He went timidly on; often stopping and wondering with himself at the fear, at the horror, which more and more oppressed him at every step. "Madness!" he exclaimed, "I know thee well, and thy perilous allurement; but I will manfully withstand thee. Elizabeth is no idle dream; I know that she now thinks on me, that she is expecting me, and, full of love, counts the hours of my absence. Do I not already see forests as black hair before me? Do not the lightening eyes look towards me from the brook? The giant forms, are they not advancing to me from the mountains?"

With these words, he was about to lay himself down to rest beneath a tree, when he saw an old man sitting under its shadow, who was, with the greatest attention, contemplating a flower, now holding it towards the sun, then again shading it with his hand, counting its leaves, and striving in all ways to impress it strictly on his memory. As he approached nearer, the form seemed known to him, and soon no doubt remained that the old man with the flower was his father. He rushed into his arms with an expression of the most vehement joy; the other was delighted, but not astonished, at meeting him so suddenly.

"Art thou come to meet me already, my son?" said the old man; "I knew that I should soon find thee, but I did not think that to-day such joy would happen to me."

"How came you to know, father, that you would meet with me?"

"By this flower," replied the old gardener; "all my

life I have been wishing to be able once to find it, but never had the fortune; for it is very rare, and grows only on the mountains. I set out in quest of thee, because thy mother is dead, and the solitude at home was too oppressive and afflicting to me. I knew not whither to direct my way. At last I wandered through the mountains, dreary as the journey seemed to me. By the way, I sought for this flower, but could nowhere discover it; and now, quite unexpected, I find it here, where the beautiful plain lies stretched before me; thereby I knew that I should find thee soon; and, see! how truly the dear flower has prophesied!"

They embraced each other again, and Christian wept for his mother; but the old man grasped his hand, and said: "Let us be going, that we may soon lose sight of the mountain shadows. My heart is always sad at the steep wild shapes, the horrid chasms, the gurgling waterfalls. Let us again visit the kind, harmless level country."

They wandered back; and Christian became more cheerful. He told his father of his new fortune, of his child and of his home: his speech made him as if intoxicated; and, in talking, he now for the first time felt truly how nothing more was wanting to his happiness. Thus, amid tales joyful and melancholy, they arrived at the village. All were rejoiced at the speedy termination of the journey; most of all, Elizabeth. The old man took up his abode with them, joined his little fortune to their estate, and they formed, together, the most contented and united circle among men. The field increased; the cattle throve; Christian's house became in a few years one of the most considerable in the village; and he soon saw himself the father of several children.

Five years had in this manner passed away, when a stranger, on his journey, stopped, and took up his abode in Christian's house, as being the most respectable in the village. He was a friendly, communicative man, who related many things of his journey, played with and gave

presents to the children, and, in short, was kind to every one. He was so pleased with the neighbourhood, that he was resolved to spend some days there; but the days grew to weeks, and at length to months. His sojourn surprised no one, for all had already been accustomed to regard him as belonging to the family. Only Christian often sat musing; for it occurred to him that he had already aforetime known the traveller, and yet he could not recollect the occasion when he could have seen him.

At last, after three months, the stranger took his leave, and said, "My dear friends, a wonderful destiny and strange expectations impel me forward into the nearest mountains; a magical form, which I cannot withstand, allures me. I now leave you, and know not whether I shall return to you. I have a sum of money by me, which is safer in your hands than in mine, and therefore I pray you to take charge of it: should I not come back in a year's time, then keep it, and take it as a thank-offering for your kindness shewn to me."

So the stranger departed; and Christian took the money into his keeping. He carefully locked it up; and at times, in the excess of anxiety, looked over it, counted it to see that none was missing, and made himself much ado with it.

"This sum would make us right happy," he once said to his father, "should the stranger not return; we and our children would then be for ever provided for."

"Let alone the gold," said the old man; "therein lies no blessing: hitherto, praise God, we have wanted nothing, and by all means put this thought away from thee."

Christian often arose in the night to waken the servants to their labour, and himself to look after every thing. The father was anxious lest, through excessive diligence, he should injure his youth and health; therefore, one night, he arose in order to admonish him on the subject, when, to his astonishment, he saw him sitting at a table, and with the greatest eagerness counting over the gold.

"My son," said the old man, in sadness, "shall it

come to this with thee? has this cursed metal been brought under the roof only to our unhappiness? Bethink thyself, my son, or the wicked fiend will consume thy blood and life."

"Yes," said Christian, "I no longer comprehend myself; neither by night nor by day have I any rest; see now how it looks at me, till the ruddy glow goes deep into my heart. Listen how it clinks, this golden blood; it calls me when asleep; I hear it when music sounds, when the wind blows, when people are talking in the street. If the sun shines, I see only these yellow eyes, with which it blinks at me, and wishes to whisper secretly a word of love into my ear: so I am obliged nightly to get up, though only to satisfy its strong desire, and then I feel it inwardly exulting and rejoicing; when I touch it with my fingers, it grows ruddier and more glorious in its joy. Only look yourself now at the glow of its rapture!"

The grey-haired man, shuddering and weeping, took his son in his arms, prayed, and then said, "Christel, thou must turn again to the word of God; thou must more diligently and devoutly go to church: otherwise thou wilt languish, and in the saddest misery pine thyself away."

The money was again locked up. Christian promised to betake himself to other subjects; and the old man was composed. A year and more had already passed, and no tidings heard of the stranger: the old man at last yielded to the entreaties of his son; and the relinquished money was laid out in lands and other ways. The young farmer's wealth was soon talked of in the village; and Christian seemed extremely contented and joyful, so that his father thought himself happy at seeing him so well and cheerful; all fear had now vanished from his soul. What, then, must have been his astonishment when, one evening, Elizabeth took him aside, and told him, with tears, that she could no longer understand her husband; he spoke so wildly, especially at night; he had perplexing dreams; would often in his sleep for a long time walk about the

room without knowing it, and tell of wondrous things which oft made her shudder. But most frightful to her was his merriment in the daytime; his laugh was wild and boisterous, his look strange and wandering. The father stood terror-struck; and the troubled wife continued: "He is always speaking of the stranger, and maintains that otherwise he has long known him, for that this stranger-man is really none other than a woman of wondrous beauty; he also will no longer go out into the field, nor work in the garden, for he says that he hears underground a fearful groaning when he only pulls up a root; he starts and seems terrified at the plant and herbs, as if they were spectres."

"Merciful God!" exclaimed the father, "is the frightful hunger so fast grown within him that it has come to this? Then is his enchanted heart no longer human, but of cold metal; he who loves not flowers, has lost all love and fear of God."

The following day the father went for a walk with his son, and repeated to him much of what he had heard from Elizabeth; he exhorted him to piety, and to devote his spirit to holy contemplations.

Christian replied, "Willingly, my father; and often I feel quite happy, and every thing succeeds well with me: for a long time, for years, I can forget the true form of my inward being, and lead, as it were, a strange life with cheerfulness: but then suddenly, like a new moon, the ruling star, which I myself am, arises on my heart, and vanquishes the foreign influence. I could be quite happy, but that once, on an extraordinary night, a mysterious sign was impressed through my hand deeply within my soul; often the magic figure sleeps and is at rest; I think it has passed away, when suddenly it springs forth again as a poison, and makes its way in all directions. Then I can think and feel nothing else; all around me is changed, or, rather, is by this form swallowed up. As the madman shudders at the water, and the infused poison within him becomes more venomous, so it happens to me with every

cornered figure, every line, every beam; all will then unbind the form that dwells within me, and promote its birth; and my body and soul feel the anguish; as my spirit received it by a feeling from without, so into an outward feeling she desires, with agonising throes, to work it forth again, that she may be free from it and at rest."

"It was an unlucky star," said the old man, "that drew thee away from us. Thou wert born for a still life; thy mind tended to quietness and plants; then thy impatience led thee away into the society of savage stones; the rocks, the rent cliffs, with their rugged shapes, have overset thy spirit, and planted within thee the desolating hunger after metal. Thou oughtest ever to have been on thy guard, and kept thy view from the mountains. So I thought to bring thee up; but it was not so to be. Thy humility, thy calmness, thy childlike feelings, have been all overturned by obstinacy, wildness, and overbearing."

"No," said the son; "I remember quite distinctly that it was a plant which first made known to me the misery of the whole earth; only then I understood the sighs and lamentations which are every where perceptible in all nature, if only one will listen. In plants, herbs, flowers, and trees, there moves and stirs painfully only one general wound; they are the corpse of former glorious worlds of rock, they present to our eye the frightfullest corruption. Now I well understand that it was this which that root with its deep-fetched moaning wished to say to me; in its agony it forgot itself, and told me all. Therefore are all green plants so angry with me, and wait for my life; they desire to obliterate the loved figure in my heart; and every spring, with their distorted deathly looks, to win my soul. With unpermitted and malicious art have they deceived thee, old man; for they have gained complete possession of thy soul. Only ask the rocks, thou wilt be astonished when thou hearest them speak."

The father looked at him a long while, but could answer him no more. They went silently back to the house,

and the old man was likewise horrified at his son's mirth; for it seemed quite foreign to him, and as if another being was, as from a machine, sporting and awkwardly labouring within him.

The harvest-feast was again to be celebrated; the people went to church, and Elizabeth, with her children, set out to be present at the service; her husband also prepared to accompany them; but at the church-door he turned aside, and, deep in thought, went forth out of the village. He seated himself on the height, and looked down on the smoking cottages beneath him; heard the singing and organ-tones coming from the church; and saw children gaily clad dancing and sporting upon the village-green. "How have I lost my life in a dream!" said he to himself: "years have passed away since I went down this hill among the children; those who then were playing are to-day serious in the church; I also went into the sacred building; but Elizabeth is now no more a blooming child-like maiden; her youth is gone by; I cannot with the longing of that time seek for the glance of her eyes: thus have I wantonly neglected a high eternal happiness, to gain one that is only passing and transitory."

Full of strange desires, he walked to the neighbouring wood, and buried himself in its thickest shades. A shuddering stillness encompassed him; no breeze stirred amid the leaves. Meanwhile he saw a man approaching him from the distance, whom he imagined to be the stranger; he was struck with terror, and his first thought was, that he would demand back his money. But as the form came nearer, he saw how greatly he had been mistaken; for the features which he had fancied, dissolved away as into one another, and an old woman of the extremest ugliness came up to him. She was clad in dirty rags; a tattered cloth bound together some grey hairs; and she hobbled on a crutch. With frightful voice she spoke to Christian, and asked after his name and station. He answered her minutely, and added, "But who art thou?"

"I am called the Woodwoman," said she; "and every child can tell of me. Hast thou never known me?" With the last words she turned herself about, and Christian thought he again recognised among the trees the golden veil, the lofty gait, the majestic limbs. He wished to hasten after her, but he had sight of her no more.

Meanwhile something glittering drew his eye down to the grass. He took it up, and saw again the magic tablet with its coloured precious stones and remarkable figure, that he had lost so many years before. The form and its varied light pressed all his senses with a sudden power. He grasped it firmly, to assure himself that he had it once more in his hands, and then hastened back with it to the village. His father met him.

"See," cried he to him, "that of which I have so often told you, and which I thought only to have seen in a dream, is now truly and surely mine."

The old man contemplated the tablet a long while, and said: "My son, my heart quite shudders as I view the aspect of these stones, and foreboding guess the meaning of this inscription. See here, how cold they sparkle, what cruel looks they cast up, bloodthirsty, like the red eye of the tiger! Throw away this writing, which makes thee cold and cruel, which will turn thy heart to stone.

See the tender flowers beaming,
As from out themselves they waken;
Like as children from their dreaming,
In smiling loveliness are taken.

Their various hues in playful bliss
All turn they to the golden sun;
And when they feel his burning kiss,
'Tis then their happiness is won.

And on his kisses so to languish,
To pine in love and melancholy;
Then smiling in their dearest anguish,
Soon fade in soft tranquillity.

This is to them the highest joy,
The fond delight they love to cherish;
Themselves in death to glorify,
Beneath their lover's glance to perish.

Then all around their perfum'd treasure
They profluent pour in raptur'd calm;
Until the air grows drunk with pleasure,
Enliven'd with the odorous balm.

Love comes all human hearts approving,
Responsive touching every chord;
Well may the conscious soul record,
'Now I know the due reward,
The gladness, sadness, pain of loving.'"

"Wonderful incalculable treasures," answered the son, "must there still be in the depths of the earth! Could some one but explore them, raise them up, and snatch them to himself! Could he but so press to his bosom the earth as a beloved bride, that in anguish and love she would willingly grant to him what she had most precious! The Woodwoman has called me; I go to seek her. Close by is an old ruined shaft, which centuries ago some miner has dug open; perhaps there I shall find her."

He hastened forward. In vain the old man strove to detain him; he soon vanished from his sight. Some hours afterwards, the father, with much exertion, arrived at the old shaft: he saw footsteps impressed on the sand at the entrance; and returned in tears, convinced that his son had, in his madness, gone in, and been drowned in the depths of the old collected waters.

From that time he was always melancholy and in tears. The whole village mourned for the young farmer. Elizabeth was inconsolable; the children lamented aloud. Half a year after the old father died; Elizabeth's parents soon followed him, and she was obliged to take the sole management of the large estate. Her many avocations removed her somewhat from her sorrow; the education of

her children, the superintendence of her property, left her no time for care and grief. So after two years she resolved on a new marriage, and gave her hand to a young sprightly man, who had loved her from his youth. But soon all things in the house assumed another form. The cattle died; men and maid-servants were unfaithful; the barns filled with grain were consumed by fire; people in the town who owed them various sums fled away with the money. The landlord soon found himself compelled to sell some fields and meadows; but a failure in the crops, and a year of scarcity, only brought him into new embarrassments. It seemed nought else than as if the gold, so wondrously obtained, were in all ways seeking a speedy flight.

Meanwhile the family increased; and Elizabeth, as well as her husband, became careless and dilatory from despair. He endeavoured to drown his cares by drinking much of intoxicating wine, which made him irritable and passionate, so that Elizabeth often bewailed her misery with bitter tears.

As soon as their fortune declined, their friends in the village kept aloof; so that in a few years, they found themselves quite forsaken, and with the greatest difficulty could struggle on from week to week.

They had only a few sheep and one cow remaining; which Elizabeth herself often tended with her children. She was once sitting thus with her work on the grass, Leonora by her side, and a child at her breast, when they saw from the distance a strange form coming towards them. It was a man in a coat all in tatters, barefoot, his countenance sunburnt to a dark-brown, and still more disfigured by a long rough beard; he wore no covering on his head, but had a garland of green leaves twisted through his hair, which made his wild appearance still more strange and incomprehensible. On his back he carried in a fast-bound sack a heavy burden; in walking he supported himself on a young fir-tree.

When he came nearer, he set down his load, and heavily fetched his breath. He wished the lady good-day; she was terrified at his presence, the child clung closely to her mother. When he had rested a while, he said: "I have just come from a very fatiguing journey among the roughest mountains upon earth; but have, at last, succeeded in bringing with me the most precious treasures which imagination can conceive or heart can wish. Look here and wonder!" Hereupon he opened his sack, and emptied it; it was full of pebbles, mixed with large pieces of flint and other stones. "It is only," he continued, "that these jewels are not yet ground and polished, that they fail to take the eye. The outward fire, with its brightness, is yet too deeply buried in their inmost heart; but one has only to strike it out, and make them feel that no dissimulation will any more serve them, then you will see of what spirit they are the offspring." With these words, he took one of the hard stones and struck it vehemently against another, so that red sparks sprang forth between them. "Did you see the glance?" he cried. "Thus are they all fire and light; they illuminate the darkness with their laughter, but as yet they do it not willingly." So saying, he again packed all up carefully in his sack, which he tied fast together. "I know thee very well," he then said sadly; "thou art Elizabeth." She started with terror.

"How camest thou to know my name?" she asked, with foreboding shudder.

"Ah, good God!" said the unhappy one; "I am indeed Christian, who once came to thee as a hunter. Dost thou, then, know me no more?"

She knew not, in her horror and deepest compassion, what to say. He fell upon her neck and kissed her. Elizabeth exclaimed, "O God! my husband is coming!"

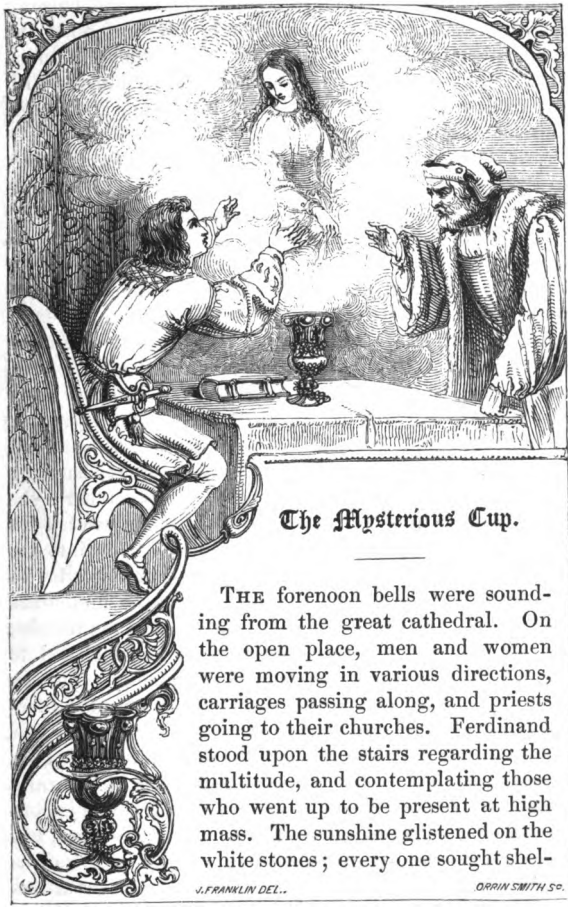
"Be tranquil," said he; "I am as good as dead to thee. There in the forest my fair one awaits me; the powerful one, she that is adorned with the golden veil. This is my dearest child Leonora. Come hither, my dear,

beloved heart; give me too a kiss,—one only,—that I may once again feel thy mouth upon my lips, then I will leave you."

Leonora wept; she clasped close to her mother, who, in sobs and tears, half turned her towards the wanderer; he half drew her to himself, took her in his arms, and pressed her to his bosom. Then he went silently away, and in the wood they saw him speaking with the frightful Woodwoman.

"What is the matter?" asked the husband, as he found mother and daughter pale and dissolved in tears. Neither would answer him.

But the unhappy one was from that day never again seen.



J. FRANKLIN DEL.. ORRIN SMITH SC.

The Mysterious Cup.

THE forenoon bells were sounding from the great cathedral. On the open place, men and women were moving in various directions, carriages passing along, and priests going to their churches. Ferdinand stood upon the stairs regarding the multitude, and contemplating those who went up to be present at high mass. The sunshine glistened on the white stones; every one sought shel-

ter against the heat; he only had been long standing in meditation, leaning against a pillar, under the burning beams, without feeling them; for he was lost amid the recollections which had risen up in his thoughtfulness. He thought on his former life, and inspired himself with the feeling which had penetrated his being, and extinguished all other wishes.

At the same hour he had stood here in the former year, to see the women and maidens going to service; with listless heart and smiling eye he had contemplated the various forms. Then there came across the square a youthful form in black, tall and noble, her eyes modestly cast before her on the ground; unembarrassed she ascended the stairs with lovely grace; her silken dress lay around the most beautiful of forms, and vibrated as in music about the moving limbs. She was going to mount the highest step, when unconsciously she raised her eye, and its azure beam met his glance. He was pierced as by lightning. She stumbled, and quickly as he sprang forward, he could not hinder but that for a moment she, in the most charming posture, lay kneeling at his feet. He raised her; she looked not at him, but was all a blush, nor answered his inquiry whether she was hurt. He followed her into the church, and saw only the image as she had knelt before him, and the loveliest of bosoms bent towards him. The following day he again visited the threshold of the temple; for him the place was consecrated. He had intended to take his departure, his friends were impatiently expecting him at home; but now from henceforth this was his fatherland; his heart was inverted.

He saw her often—she did not shun him—yet only for separate and stolen moments; for her rich family sufficiently watched her, still more a powerful and jealous bridegroom. They confessed to each other their love, but knew not in their situation what to counsel; for he was a stranger, and could offer his beloved no such great fortune as she was entitled to expect. Now he felt his po-

verty; yet when he thought on his former way of life, he seemed to himself surpassingly rich, for his existence was hallowed, his heart floated for ever in the fairest emotion. Nature was now friendly to him, and her beauty revealed to his meditations, he felt himself no longer a stranger to devotion and religion; and now he trod this threshold, the mysterious dimness of the temple, with far other feelings than in those days of levity. He withdrew from his former acquaintances, and lived only to love. Whenever he passed through her street, and only saw her at the window, that day was for him a happy one. He had often spoken to her in the twilight of evening, as her garden adjoined to that of a friend, who, however, did not know his secret. Thus a year had elapsed.

All these scenes of his new existence again passed through his remembrance. He raised his eyes; that noble form was even then gliding across the square—she lightened upon him from among the mixed multitude as a sun. A lovely song sounded into his longing heart; and as she approached, he stepped back into the church. He held towards her the holy water; her white fingers trembled as they touched his; she bowed graciously. He followed her, and knelt near her. His whole heart melted away in melancholy and love; it seemed to him as if, from the wounds of longing, his existence was bleeding away in ardent prayers; every word of the priest thrilled through him, every tone of the music gushed devotion into his bosom; his lips quivered as the fair one pressed the crucifix of her rosary to her ruby mouth. How had he not been able to comprehend this faith and this love before?

The priest raised the host, and the bell sounded. She bowed herself more humbly, and crossed her breast. Like lightning it struck through all his powers and feelings; and the altar-picture seemed alive—the coloured dimness of the windows as a light of Paradise. Tears streamed profusely from his eyes, and allayed the inward burning of his heart. Divine service was ended. He again offered her

the holy font; they spoke some words, and she withdrew. He remained behind, not to excite notice; he looked after her till the hem of her garment vanished round the corner. Then he felt as the weary bewildered traveller, who in the thick forest beholds the last gleam of the descending sun.

He awoke from his dream, as a dry, withered hand struck him on the shoulder, and some one called him by name. He started back, and recognised his friend the morose Albert, who lived apart from men, and whose lonely house was open only to the young Ferdinand. "Are you mindful of our engagement?" asked the hoarse voice.

"O, yes," said Ferdinand; "and will you keep your promise to-day?"

"This very hour," replied the other, "if you will follow me."

They walked through the city to a distant street, and there into a large building.

"To-day," said the old man, "you must give yourself the trouble to go with me to the back part of the house, into my most solitary chamber, that we may not be at all disturbed."

They passed through many rooms, then up some stairs, and along several passages; and Ferdinand, who had thought that he knew the house well, now could not but wonder at the number of the apartments, as well as the singular arrangement of the spacious building; but more than all, that the old man, who was not married and had no family, should occupy it alone, with only a single servant, and would never let out any portion of the superfluous room to strangers. At length Albert unlocked a door, and said, "Now we are at the place." They entered a large and lofty chamber, hung round with red damask, that was trimmed with golden listings; the seats were of the same stuff; and through heavy red silk curtains, which were let down, there glimmered a purple light.

"Wait a moment," said the old man, as he went into another room.

Ferdinand, in the mean time, took up some books, in which he found strange unintelligible characters, circles and lines, together with many curious plates; and from the little he could read, they seemed to him to be works on alchemy: he knew, also, that the old man had the reputation of being a gold-maker. On the table lay a lute, singularly overlaid with mother-of-pearl and coloured wood, and representing birds and flowers in splendid forms. The star in the middle was a large piece of mother-of-pearl, worked out in the most skilful manner into many intersecting circles, almost like the centre of a window in a Gothic church.

"You are looking at my instrument," said Albert, who had now returned: "it is two hundred years old; I brought it with me as a memorial of my journey into Spain. But now leave all that, and take a seat."

They sat down at the table, which likewise was covered with red cloth; and the old man placed something on it which was carefully wrapped up.

"From pity to your youth," he began, "I lately promised to foretell you whether or not you could become happy; and this promise I am willing to fulfil at the present hour, though you recently wished to treat the matter as a jest. You need not alarm yourself, for what I design can happen without danger. I shall make no dread incantations, nor shall any horrible apparition terrify you. The thing which I shall endeavour may fail in two ways; either if you do not love so truly as you have wished to make me believe, for then my labour is in vain, and nothing will shew itself; or if you should disturb the oracle, and destroy it by a useless question, or by a hasty movement leaving your seat, the figure would break in pieces. So you must keep yourself quite still."

Ferdinand gave his word; and the old man unfolded from the cloths that which he had brought with him. It was a golden goblet, of very costly and beautiful workmanship: around its broad foot ran a wreath of flowers,

twined with myrtles and various other leaves and fruit, highly chased with dim and brilliant gold. A similar ring, only richer, adorned with figures of children, and wild little animals playing with them, or flying before them, wound itself around the centre of the cup. The chalice was beautifully turned; above, it was bent back toward the lips; and within, the gold sparkled with a ruddy glow. The old man placed the goblet between himself and the youth, and beckoned him nearer.

"Do you not feel something," said he, "when your eye loses itself in this splendour?"

"Yes," said Ferdinand; "this brightness reflects into my very inmost being,—I might say, I feel it as a kiss in my longing bosom."

"It is right," said the old man. "Now let your eyes no more stray around, but keep them fixed on the glance of this gold, and think as earnestly as you can on your beloved."

Both sat still awhile, and, absorbed in contemplation, beheld the gleaming cup. But soon the old man, with mute gesture, first slowly, then more quickly, and at last with rapid movement, proceeded with extended finger to draw regular circles around the glow of the goblet. Then he paused, and took the circles from the opposite direction. When he had thus continued for some time, Ferdinand thought he heard music, but it sounded as from without in a distant street. Soon, however, the tones came nigher; they struck on his ear louder and louder, and vibrated more distinctly through the air; so that, at last, he felt no doubt but that they issued from the interior of the goblet. The music became still stronger, and of such penetrating power, that the heart of the young man trembled, and tears rose into his eyes. Busily moved the old man's hand in various directions across the mouth of the cup; and it appeared as if sparks from his fingers were convulsively striking and sounding on the gold. Soon the shining points increased, and followed, as on a thread,

the motion of his finger; they glittered of various colours, and crowded still more closely on one another, till they rushed altogether in continuous lines. Now it seemed as if the old man in the red twilight was laying a wondrous net over the brightening gold, for at will he drew the beams hither and thither, and wove up with them the opening of the goblet: they obeyed him, and remained lying like a covering, waving to and fro, and playing into one another. When they thus were fastened, he again described the circles around the rim; the music subsided, and became softer and softer, till it could no longer be perceived; and the bright net-work quivered, as if in agony. It burst in increasing agitation, and the beams rained down drops into the chalice; but out of the fallen drops arose a reddish cloud, which formed itself in manifold circles, and floated like foam over the mouth of the cup. A bright point darted up with the greatest rapidity through the cloudy circles. There stood the image; and suddenly, as it were, an eye looked out from the mist; above, golden locks flowed in ringlets; presently a soft blush went up and down the quivering shade; and Ferdinand recognised the smiling countenance of his beloved —the blue eyes, the delicate cheeks, the lovely red mouth. The head waved to and fro, raised itself more distinctly and visibly on the slender white neck, and bowed towards the enraptured youth. The old man kept on describing his circles around the goblet, and thereout issued the glancing shoulders; and at last the whole of the lovely image pressed from out the golden bed, and gracefully waved to and fro.

Ferdinand thought he felt the breath as the beloved form inclined towards him, and almost touched him with burning lips. In his ravishment he could no longer command himself, but impressed a kiss on the mouth, and endeavoured to grasp the beautiful arm, and quite to raise the lovely form out of its golden prison. Then a violent trembling suddenly struck through the image, as in a

thousand fragments the head and body broke together; and a rose lay at the foot of the goblet, in whose blush the sweet smile still appeared. Ferdinand passionately seized it, and pressed it to his mouth. At his ardent longing, it withered and dissolved away in the air.

"Thou hast badly kept thy word," said the old man, angrily: "thou canst only impute the fault to thyself."

He again wrapped up his goblet, drew aside the curtains, and opened a window. The clear daylight broke in; and Ferdinand, in a melancholy mood, and with many apologies, took his leave of the murmuring old man. He hastened with emotion through the streets of the city, and sat down under the trees without the gate. She had told him in the morning that she was to go that night with some relations into the country.

Intoxicated with love, he now sat, now wandered into the wood. Still he beheld the fair form as it ascended from the glowing gold: he expected to see her step forth in the splendour of her beauty, when the fairest of shapes broke in pieces before his eyes; and he was angry with himself that, through his restless desire and the bewilderment of his senses, he had destroyed the image, and perhaps his own happiness.

When, after the midday hour, the pathway began to be crowded, he withdrew further into the thicket, but watchfully still kept his eye upon the high-road, and curiously examined every carriage that issued from the gate. Evening drew on, a red glimmer was thrown up by the setting sun; when the richly gilded coach rushed out from the gate, and shone brightly amid the evening glow. He hastened towards it. Already her eye had sought his. Graciously smiling, she leaned her fair bosom from the window. He caught her loving look and greeting. Now he stood by the side of the carriage, her full glance falling upon him; and as she hastily drew back, the rose which had adorned her bosom flew out, and lay at his feet. He hastily took it up and kissed it; and it seemed to him as

if it prophesied that he should no more see his beloved one,—that now his happiness was destroyed for ever.

People were up and down stairs; the whole house was in commotion; all were making a noise and bustle about the morrow's great festival. The mother, as the most active, was also the most joyful. The bride heeded nothing, but retired, meditating her destiny, into her own chamber. They were still expecting the son, the captain and his wife, and two elder daughters with their husbands. Meanwhile Leopold, a younger son, was mischievously busy in increasing the noise and disorder, perplexing every thing, while he pretended to further it. Agatha, his still unmarried sister, endeavoured to make him reasonable, and to persuade him to meddle with nothing, and to leave the others in peace. But the mother said: "Do not disturb him in his folly; for to-day more or less of it does not signify. Therefore I only beg you all that, as I have already so much to think of, you will not trouble me about any thing that is not absolutely necessary. If the china should be broken, or some of the silver spoons be lost, or the strangers' servants break the windows,—with such trifles do not vex me by recounting them. When these days of disquiet are over, then we will have a reckoning."

"You are right, mother," said Leopold; "these are sentiments worthy of a governor. Also, if some of the maids should break their necks—or the cook get drunk, and set the chimney on fire—the butler, for joy, let the malmsey run or be drunk out,—you shall hear nothing of such childish tricks. But if an earthquake should overturn the house,—that, dearest mother, it would be impossible to keep secret."

"When will he ever become wiser?" said the mother. "What will thy sisters think, when they find thee again quite as foolish as they left thee two years ago?"

"They must do my character the justice," replied the lively youth, "that I am not so changeable as they or their

husbands, who, in a few years, have so very much altered, and not to their advantage."

The bridegroom now entered, and inquired for the bride. Her maid was sent to call her.

"My dear mother," said he, "has Leopold made known to you my request?"

"That I cannot tell," she replied; "for, amid the disorder now in the house, one can scarcely retain a reasonable thought."

The bride entered, and the young people saluted each other with joy.

"The request I meant," continued the bridegroom, "is, that you would not take it ill if I brought yet another guest into your house, which, in truth, is, for these days, too full already."

"You know yourself," said the mother, "that, spacious as the house is, I could hardly find another chamber."

"Nevertheless," exclaimed Leopold, "I have partly provided for that, by having the large room in the back of the house put in order."

"Why, that is not commodious enough," replied the mother; "for many years it has been only used as a lumber-room."

"It is splendidly restored," said Leopold; "and the friend for whom it is designed does not regard such matters—he is only anxious for our love. Besides, he has no wife, and prefers to be in solitude; so that it will be quite the place for him. We have had trouble enough to persuade him, and bring him again amongst his fellow-creatures."

"Not, surely, your morose gold-maker and conjuror?" asked Agatha.

"No other," replied the bridegroom, "if you please to call him so."

"Then, dear mother, do not let him," continued the sister; "what should such a man do in our house? I have sometimes seen him pass down the street with Leopold;

I have been frightened at his countenance. The old sinner, too, almost never goes to church; he loves neither God nor men; and it will bring no blessing on so solemn an occasion to have such infidels under the roof. Who knows what may spring from it?"

"How now thou speakest!" said Leopold, angrily: "because thou dost not know him, therefore thou condemnest him; and because his nose does not please thee, and he is no longer young and handsome, therefore, according to thy notion, he must be familiar with spirits, and a wicked man."

"Grant, dear mother," said the bridegroom, "a little place in your house to our old friend, and let him partake in our general joy. He appears, dear sister Agatha, to have experienced much misfortune, which has made him distrustful and misanthropic. He avoids all society, with the exception of myself and Leopold. I have much to thank him for: he first gave my mind a better direction; yea, I may say, perhaps he alone has rendered me worthy of my Julia's love."

"He lends me all his books," continued Leopold; "and, what is more, his old manuscripts; and, what is still more, money upon my bare word. He has the Christian disposition, my little sister; and who knows but that, when thou comest to be better acquainted with him, thou mayest not forego thy prudery, and fall in love with him, odious as he appears to thee at present?"

"Well, bring him to us," said the mother; "I have already been obliged to hear so much about him from Leopold, that I am curious to make his acquaintance. Only you must answer for it, that we cannot afford him a better lodging."

In the mean while travellers had arrived; they were members of the family, the married daughters and the officer, and had brought their children with them. The good old lady was delighted to see her grandchildren; all was welcoming and joyful talk; and when Leopold and

the bridegroom had also received and returned their salutations, they went away to look after their ancient melancholy friend. This latter lived, for the greater part of the year, about three miles from the city; but he also kept a little dwelling for himself in a garden near the gate. Here, by chance, the two young men had become acquainted with him: they now met him at a coffee-house, as they had previously appointed. As it was already evening, they after a little conversation returned back to the house. The mother received the stranger very graciously; the daughters kept themselves somewhat distant; Agatha especially was shy, and carefully avoided his glance. After the first general conversation was over, the eye of the old man turned fixedly on the bride, who had come into the company later; he appeared enraptured, and it was observed that he endeavoured secretly to dry off a tear.

The bridegroom rejoiced in his joy; and when after some time, they stood aside at the window, he took the hand of the old man, and asked him, "What do you say of my beloved Julia? Is she not an angel?"

"O my friend," replied the old man, with emotion, "such beauty and grace I have never yet seen; or rather I should say (for that expression is incorrect), she is so beautiful, so charming, so heavenly, that it seems to me as if I had long known her; as if she were to me, stranger as she is, the dearest picture of my imagination, that which had ever been at home within my heart."

"I understand you," said the young man. "Yes, the truly beautiful, great, and sublime, when it sets us in astonishment and admiration, still does not surprise us as something strange, unheard-of, never seen; but our inmost existence in such moments becomes clear to us, our deepest recollections are awakened, and our dearest feelings are made alive."

At the supper the stranger took but little part in the conversation; his gaze was intensely fixed upon the bride, so that, at length, she became embarrassed and alarmed.

The officer told of a campaign, which he had served in; the rich merchant, of his merchandise, and the bad times; and the landowner, of the improvements he had begun on his estate. After supper, the bridegroom took his leave, to return for the last time to his lonely habitation; for in future he was to live with his young wife in the mother's house, in chambers already furnished. The company separated, and Leopold conducted the stranger to his apartment.

"You will excuse it," he began, as they went along, "that we are obliged to lodge you somewhat far away from us, and not so commodiously as my mother wished; but you see yourself how numerous our family is, and other relations are coming to-morrow. You will, at least, not be able to run away from us, for certainly you could not find your way out of this spacious mansion."

They went through several passages, and at last Leopold took leave of his friend, and wished him good night. The servant placed two wax-lights on the table, and having asked the stranger if he should assist him to undress, which service being declined, he also withdrew; and the stranger found himself alone.

"How, then, does it happen," said he, as he walked up and down, "that to-day that image springs so vividly from my heart? I forgot the long past, and thought I saw herself; I was again young, and her voice sounded as of old; it seemed to me as if I was awaking from a heavy dream; but no, now I am awake, and the pleasing delusion was only a sweet dream."

He was too restless to sleep; he contemplated some pictures on the walls, and then the chamber. "To-day," he exclaimed, "every thing is so familiar, I could almost delude myself to imagine that this house and this apartment are not strange to me." He tried to fix his recollections, and took up some large books which were standing in a corner. When he had turned over the leaves, he shook his head: a lute-case was leaning against the wall; he opened it, and took out a strange old instrument, which was damaged

and wanted the strings. "No, I am not mistaken," he cried, astonished; "this lute is too remarkable—it is the Spanish lute of my long-deceased friend Albert; there stand his magic-books; this is the room where he wished to awaken for me the happy oracle: faded is the red of the tapestry, the golden embroidery is become dim; but wonderfully vivid in my mind is all pertaining to those hours. Therefore it was that I shuddered as I came hither through those long, complicated passages where Leopold led me. O heaven, on this very table rose the image, springing forth as if watered and refreshed by the redness of the gold. The same image smiled on me here, which this evening has almost made me frenzied in the hall—that hall where I have so often walked in familiar speech with Albert."

He undressed, but slept only little. Early in the morning he arose, and again surveyed the room; he opened the window and saw as formerly the same gardens and buildings before him, only that in the mean time many new houses had been built. "Forty years have since then vanished," he sighed, "and each day of that time contains a longer life than all the remaining period."

He was again called to the company. The morning passed away in varied conversation; at length the bride entered in her marriage-dress. As the old man noticed her he fell into such agitation, that every one in the company observed it. They proceeded to the church, and the nuptial ceremony was performed.

When they had returned to the house, Leopold asked his mother, "Now how do you like our friend, the good morose old man?"

"I had imagined him, from your description," she replied, "to be much more frightful; he is indeed mild and sympathetic, and might gain from one a real trust in him."

"Trust!" exclaimed Agatha; "in those frightful burning eyes, those thousandfold wrinkles, that pale contracted mouth, and that strange laugh which looks and sounds so scornfully! No, God preserve me from such a

friend! If evil spirits wish to clothe themselves as men, they must assume such a form as this."

"Probably a younger and handsomer one," replied the mother; "but I cannot recognise the good old man in thy description. One can see that he is of a hasty temperament, and has been used to lock up his feelings within himself; he may have experienced much misfortune, and so is become mistrustful, and has lost that simple openness which especially belongs to those who are happy."

Their conversation was interrupted by the coming in of the rest of the party. Dinner was served, and the stranger sat by Agatha and the rich merchant.

When the toasts were beginning, Leopold cried out, "Now stop a little, my worthy friends; we must have the festal goblet for this, which shall then go the round."

He was about to rise, but his mother beckoned him to keep his seat. "Thou wilt not be able to find it," she said; "for I have packed all the plate away." She went out hastily to seek it herself.

"How active and sprightly our old lady is to-day," observed the merchant, "for all her breadth and weight! and though she reckons full sixty, how nimbly she can move! Her countenance is always bright and joyful, and to-day is she especially happy, for she makes herself young again in the beauty of her daughter."

The stranger applauded his saying, and the mother returned with the goblet. They filled it full of wine, and from the head of the table began to pass it round, each proposing the health that was dearest. The bride drank the welfare of her husband; he, the love of his fair Julia; likewise every one in his turn. The mother lingered as the goblet came to her.

"Now quickly," said the officer, somewhat roughly and hastily; "we know well that you think all men faithless, and not one of them worthy of a woman's love. What, then, is dearest to you?"

The mother looked at him, as an angry seriousness sud-

denly overspread the mildness of her countenance. "As my son," said she, "knows me so well, and so severely blames my disposition, let me be permitted not to express what I was thinking, and let him endeavour by his constant love to falsify what he attributes to me as my conviction." She passed on the cup without drinking, and the company was for some time in silent embarrassment.

"It is reported," said the merchant, in an under-tone, leaning over to the stranger, "that she did not love her husband, but another who proved faithless to her; they say she was once the handsomest maiden in all the town."

When the goblet came to Ferdinand, he looked at it with astonishment, for it was the very same from which Albert had aforetime called up to him the beautiful shadow. He looked down into it and on the waving of the wine; his hand trembled; it would not have surprised him had that form again bloomed forth from the magic bowl, and therewith his evanished youth. "No," said he, after some time; "that which glows here is wine."

"What else should it be?" said the merchant, laughing. "Drink, and be happy."

A thrill of terror struck the old man, as he hastily pronounced the name, "Francesca!" and placed the goblet to his burning lips. The mother cast on him an inquiring and astonished look.

"Whence is this beautiful goblet?" said Ferdinand, who was ashamed of his embarrassment.

"Many years ago," replied Leopold; "even before I was born, my father bought it, with this house and all the furniture, from an old lonely bachelor, a reserved man, whom all the neighbourhood considered a magician."

Ferdinand did not like to say that he had known that man; for his whole soul was too much perplexed, as it were in a strange dream, to let the rest look into it, even from a distance.

After the cloth was removed, Ferdinand was left alone with the mother, while the young people withdrew to

make preparations for the ball. "Sit down by me," said she; "we will rest, for our dancing years are past; and, if the question is not too bold, pray tell me if you have ever seen our goblet elsewhere, or what was it that so very much moved you?"

"O, gracious lady," cried the old man, "pardon me my foolish vehemence and emotion, for since I have been in your house I feel as if I were no longer myself; every moment I forget that my hair is grey, that my loved ones are dead. Your beautiful daughter, who now celebrates the happiest day of her life, is so like a maiden whom I knew and adored in my youth, that I regard it as a miracle. But no, not like, that expression is too weak, she is her very self. Here, also, in this house have I often been, and once in the strangest manner became acquainted with this goblet." Hereupon he related to her his adventure. "On the evening of that day," he concluded, "I saw for the last time my beloved one, in the park as she went into the country. A rose fell from her, this I have preserved; but she herself was lost to me, for she became faithless, and soon after married."

"Merciful God!" cried the old lady, starting with emotion; "surely thou art not Ferdinand!"

"That is my name," said he.

"And I am Francesca," replied the mother.

They wished to embrace, but immediately started back. Each contemplated the other with searching glance; both endeavoured to develop again out of the ruins of time those features which erewhile they had known and loved in one another. And as in dark tempestuous nights, amid the flight of black clouds, for a few fleeting moments solitary stars ambiguously glimmer, immediately again to disappear,—so shone for the time to these two, lightening from the eyes, the brow, and lips, a transient glimpse of some well-known feature, and it seemed as if their youth wept smiling in the distance.

He bowed himself low, and kissed her hand, as two

big tears burst from his eyes; then they embraced each other heartily.

"Is thy wife dead?" asked the mother.

"I was never married," sobbed Ferdinand.

"Heavens!" cried the lady, wringing her hands; "then I have been the faithless one! Yet no, not faithless. When I returned from the country, where I stayed two months, I heard from every one, from thy friends, not from mine only, that thou hadst long since gone away and been married in thy fatherland. They shewed me the most credible letters, and pressed me vehemently, availing themselves as well of my despair as of my indignation; and so it happened that I gave my hand to another, a deserving man; but my heart, my thoughts, were ever devoted to thee."

"I never removed from this place," said Ferdinand; "but after a time I heard of thy marriage. They wished to part us, and they have succeeded. Thou art a happy mother; I live in the past: and all thy children I will love as if they were my own. But how wonderful that we should never since have met!"

"I seldom went abroad," said she; "and as my husband soon after assumed another name on account of an estate which he inherited, you could have had no suspicion that we both were living in the same city."

"I avoided men," said Ferdinand, "and lived only to solitude. Leopold is almost the only one that has again drawn me forth and led me amongst men. O my beloved friend, it is like a horrible spectre-story, how we lost and have again found each other!"

The young people, on their return, found the old couple dissolved in tears and in the deepest emotion. Neither told what had befallen them; the secret seemed too holy. But from that time the old man was the friend of the house; and death alone parted the two beings who in so strange a manner had again found each other, in order shortly after to be re-united.

THE

LOVE-CHARM.

EMILIUS was sitting in deep thought by a table, waiting for his friend Roderick. A light was burning before him; the winter evening was cold; and, glad as he was at other times to dispense with his companion's society, on this occasion he was particularly anxious for his presence, as he wished to tell him a secret, and to ask his advice. The shy, retiring Emilius, in the common business and the ups and downs of life, found such difficulties and so many insuperable obstacles, that Destiny seemed to have been in one of her ironical moods when she connected him with Roderick, who was, in all respects, the very opposite of his friend. Unstable and flighty, with the first impression

he was all on fire; there was nothing he would not undertake; he had plans for every thing; no project could be too difficult, no obstacle could deter him; while in carrying them out he soon tired, and flagged as rapidly as he had been eager and elastic at the outset; and difficulties, instead of being a spur to urge him to increased activity, then only caused him to fling aside in disgust what he had at first so enthusiastically undertaken. Hence he was for ever full of schemes of some sort, but throwing them away and forgetting them with as little reason as he had before thoughtlessly adopted them. Between two such contradictory tempers not a day passed without a quarrel, which threatened to be fatal to their friendship. Yet perhaps, what seemed at first sight only to be a cause of division, was, at bottom, one of the closest bonds that held them together. In their hearts they were exceedingly fond of each other, yet each found the greatest satisfaction in being able to complain of the way the other treated him.

Emilius was a young man of property. His father and mother were dead, so that he was his own master. He was of an imaginative though somewhat melancholy turn of mind; and being now on his travels to complete his education, he had been staying some time at a large town to enjoy the pleasure of the carnival, about which he did not care a straw, and to transact certain business with some of his relations whom he had not yet taken the trouble to call upon. On his way there he had stumbled upon the quicksilver Roderick, who was living not on the best possible terms with his guardians, and, to rid himself of them and their troublesome admonitions, had gladly availed himself of his new friend's offer to take him with him as a companion on his travels. Again and again they had been on the point of separating, but their quarrels had only served to shew them how indispensable they were to each other. When they came to any place of importance, they were hardly out of their carriage

before Roderick had seen every thing there was there worth notice — the next day most likely to forget all about it again. While Emilius, after first spending weeks in preparing himself with books, that nothing might escape his observation, out of indolence generally left the place having seen hardly any thing. Roderick went to all the public places, made a thousand acquaintances, and not unfrequently would bring them to the solitary apartments of his friend, and as soon as he began to be tired of them himself, leave them alone for Emilius to entertain. Emilius's modesty too was often severely distressed by the way in which Roderick would speak of his talent and knowledge to sensible, well-informed people; for he never confined himself to strict truth; and although for himself he said he could never find time to listen to what his companion had to say on these matters, yet he gave them to understand there was scarce a subject in literature, history, or art on which they could not derive from him the most valuable information. If Emilius was disposed to do any thing, Roderick was sure to have been at a ball the night before, or to have caught cold at a sledging party, and be obliged to keep his bed; so that in the society of the most restless and excitable of sociable mortals, he lived almost wholly by himself.

This evening, however, Emilius counted on him with some certainty, as he had promised faithfully to spend it at home, to learn what it was that for some weeks past had been weighing on his friend's spirits. Emilius spent the interval in composing the following verses:

Spring-time, it is blithe and gay
When the nightingale sits on the hawthorn-spray,
And every leaf and every flower
Quivers with joy at the music's power.

The play of the gentle evening air
In the golden moonlight is passing fair,

As over the tree-tops it whispering sweeps
And its wings in the linden's fragrance steeps.

The glance of the new-blown rose is bright
As the gleaming of stars on a summer's night,
Like a bride for the altar the garden arraying,
And love in a thousand flowerets playing.

Yet brighter, and fairer, and lovelier far
Is the pale little lamplet's trembling star
Which yonder my love in her chamber shews
As she lingers at night, to her couch ere she goes.

Her delicate tresses I watch her unbind,
From around her fair temples the rose-wreath unwind;
Her exquisite form to my rapturous gaze
With each motion the tightening nightdress betrays.

And oh, when the lute in her fingers she takes,
And stirr'd at her bidding sweet music awakes,
With a thrill at her exquisite touch, from the strings
The spirit of melody laughingly springs.

She sends out a song to recall him again,
The wandering rogue—but she sends it in vain;
For he flies to my heart with a shout of loud laughter
For shelter; and there the pursuer flies after.

Oh, out with thee, mischievous villains, away!
But together they bar themselves in as they say,
"Till this shall be broken we budge not from here,
And the Love-god we'll teach thee to know and to fear."

Emilius stood up impatiently. It was now dark, and Roderick was not come; he was craving to tell him of his love for an unknown beauty who lived opposite to them, and kept him all day watching at the window, and all night waking in his bed. A sound of footsteps on the stairs. The door opened without any one knocking, and in came two gay-looking figures with very ugly masks on their faces; one dressed as a Turk, in a long gown of blue

and red; the other as a Spaniard, in a doublet of red and light yellow, and a plume of feathers in his cap. Emilius was getting impatient, when the Turk took off his mask, and shewed the well-known, broad, merry face of Roderick.

"My dear fellow," he said, "what a dismal-looking face! that is not the way to look at carnival-times. I and my young officer friend here are come to carry you off. There is a great ball to-night at the saloon. I know you have sworn never to go about in any other dress than this dingy old every-day black; but come along as you are—it is late."

"As usual," replied Emilius very angrily. "You have forgotten our agreement it seems.—I am exceedingly sorry," he added, turning to the stranger, "that it is not in my power to accompany you. My friend is too hasty in making engagements for me. I cannot possibly leave the house, as I have subjects of importance to talk over with him."

The stranger, who understood Emilius's manner, and felt his visit was ill-timed, took his leave immediately.

Roderick, however, who took it all with the greatest coolness, put on his mask again and stood up before the mirror. "What an object it makes of me!" he said; "it is a miserable, tasteless device after all: don't you think so?"

"What a question!" said Emilius in the greatest indignation. "To make a caricature of yourself, and drown your senses in dissipation, is just the sort of thing you most enjoy."

"Because you do not like dancing," said the other, "and take it to be a pernicious invention, no one else is to amuse himself. How ridiculous it is when a man is made up of nothing but whims and fancies!"

"Yes, indeed," replied his irritated friend, "I am sure I have reason enough to remark it too of you. I had hoped that, as you promised, you would give this one evening to me, but ——"

"But it is the carnival," said Roderick, "and all my friends and a number of ladies are expecting me at the great ball to-night. Really, my dear friend, if you will but think of it, you will see it is mere disease in you to feel such extreme dislike to these things."

"Which of us two is most diseased," answered Emilius, "is a point I will not attempt to decide. Your astonishing levity, your craving for dissipation, your restless hunting after pleasures which do not reach the heart, but only leave it sick and weary, does not seem to me to indicate a very healthy frame of mind. Granted, however, if you will, that my feeling is mere weakness, you would do better in some things to let it take its way; and there is nothing in the whole world which drives me more frantic than a ball with its fearful music. Some one has said that to a deaf man, who cannot hear the music, a ball-room must look like Bedlam let loose; but to me this terrible music itself, these infernal tunes whirling and whizzing round with inconceivable swiftness faster and faster, seizing all one's thoughts, saturating one's body and soul, and haunting one like so many spectres,—is not this the very jubilee of frenzy and madness itself? If dancing is ever to be endurable to me, it must be to the tune of silence."

"Well done, Mr. Paradox," said his friend; "you have got to this, have you? to find the innocentest, naturalest, pleasantest thing in the world a horrid, unnatural monster."

"I cannot help my feelings," said he very seriously; "as long as I can remember, these tunes have made me miserable, have often driven me to despair. To me they are the fiends and furies of the world of sound; they squeak and gibber round my head, and grin at me with hideous laughter."

"Mere nervousness," answered the other; "it is just like your ridiculous horror of spiders, and a number of other innocent creatures."

"Innocent you call them," he said passionately, "be-

cause they do not affect you; but some people feel, and I am one of them, at the sight of these hideous creatures, such as toads and spiders, or that most odious of all nature's abortions, the bat, their very souls shaken with unutterable horror and loathing; to them they can be neither indifferent nor unmeaning, because their very being is the contradiction of their own. Truly one may laugh at unbelievers whose imagination is too weak for ghosts and hobgoblins, and other children of darkness that we see in fevers or in one of Dante's pictures, when the commonest life gives us master-pieces of all that is most horrible. No one can have a real love for the beautiful unless he feels a hatred of these monsters."

"Why feel hatred?" asked Roderick. "Look at the sea, the great water-kingdom, full of the strangest, comicalest, most amusing figures, the whole deep looking like a grotesque masquerade; why is one to find nothing there but the horrible phantoms your mind makes them seem to you? But these fancies of yours do not stop here; you make an idol of the rose, while for other flowers you have as passionate a hatred. What has the poor orange-lily done to offend you, and the many other beautiful children of the summer? So there are colours you cannot bear, and scents, and thoughts. And you never do any thing to overcome these repugnances; you yield to the first temptation; so that at last, instead of a person, you will be nothing but a bundle of whims and caprices."

Emilius was now angry to the bottom of his heart, and would not answer. He had given up all present purpose of making his communication; indeed, importantly as he had said he had a secret that he wished to tell, his volatile friend seemed to have no curiosity to hear it, but sat playing with his mask on the sofa in the greatest indifference. At last he cried out suddenly, "Be so good, Emilius, as to lend me your large cloak."

"What for?" he asked.

"I hear music in the church yonder," answered Ro-

derick. "I have never happened to be at home any evening at this hour before, and now it comes in just at the very nick of time. I can put on your cloak over my dress; and when the service is over, go on straight to the ball."

Emilius muttered something, and fetched the cloak from his wardrobe, which he flung to Roderick, who had just risen, with an ironical laugh.

"Take my Turkish dagger I bought yesterday, if you please," Roderick said, as he wrapped the cloak round him. "It is rather too serious an article to have about one as a plaything. Some trifle goes wrong, an angry word or two, perhaps, with some one, and no one knows how one might not use it. Adieu till to-morrow then. Peace be with you." He did not wait for an answer, but ran down the stairs.

As soon as Emilius was by himself, he tried to forget his indignation, and take his friend's behaviour as absurd. He took up the white, glittering, beautifully-wrought dagger in his hand, and looked at it. "I wonder," he said to himself, "how a man feels that has run this sharp steel into an enemy's breast? or suppose he was to hurt with it the object of his love." He ran it into the sheath, and then carefully turned back the shutters from his window, and looked across the narrow street. The house opposite was all dark; there was no light stirring; the dear form that dwelt in it, and at this hour was generally to be seen engaged in some household matter, seemed to be away. "Perhaps she is at the ball," thought Emilius; "and yet it is not like her retired ways." Suddenly a light appeared, and a little girl, that his beloved unknown had as a companion, and was usually with her a great part of the day, carried a candle across the room, set it down, and closed the window-shutters. A broken hinge prevented them from completely shutting, and an opening remained large enough for any one standing where Emilius was, to see over a part of the little room; and here he would sit in a trance of

happiness till long after midnight, watching every gesture, every movement of his beloved's hand. Delightedly he would observe her teaching the child to read, or giving it lessons in sewing and knitting. On inquiry he learnt that this child was a poor orphan whom the beautiful maiden out of compassion had taken to live with her, and was herself educating. It was a mystery to Emilius's friends why he was living in this narrow, out-of-the-way street, in such inconvenient lodgings, and what he could possibly be doing that he was seen so little in society. By himself, and doing nothing, he was most happy as he was; all that vexed him was, that he could not so far overcome his shyness as to seek a nearer acquaintance with this beautiful being, who had more than once encouraged him with a smile of greeting or thanks for some trifling compliment he had ventured to pay. He little knew that she would sit gazing over at him as intoxicated as he; he never guessed what wishes were working in her heart; of what an effort, what a sacrifice she was capable to gain possession of his love.

After walking uneasily up and down his room for some time, and the light and the child had again disappeared, he suddenly came to the resolution, contrary to his inclination and his nature, to go to the ball; it had struck him that his unknown must have made an exception to her usual retired way of living, and gone, for once in a way, to take a taste of the world and its dissipation.

The streets were brilliantly lighted; the snow crackled under his feet. Carriages rolled by, and masques in all sorts of guises past him, chattering and humming as they went along. In a number of houses he heard the odious music; and he could not prevail on himself to take the shortest road to the saloon, to which people were hurrying and streaming from all directions. He walked round the old church, and gazed at the tall spire as it rose up majestically across the sky; the loneliness and silence of the place forming a striking contrast to the thronging of the

town. The deep porch of the church was covered with all sorts of carved work, which he had several times examined with the greatest pleasure, and had called back into his memory the days of ancient art and times gone by; and he now stept aside into it for a few moments to give himself up to his meditations.

He had scarcely entered, when his attention was caught by a figure moving restlessly backwards and forwards, and apparently waiting for some one. By the light of a lamp, which was burning before an image of the Virgin, he was able to make out the face as well as the strange dress. It was an old woman with features of the extremest ugliness, which struck the eye the more because they were set off, in a singular manner, against a scarlet boddice covered with gold lace. She wore a dark petticoat, and her cap also glittered with gold. He thought at first it must be some tasteless masque that had missed his way and strayed there by mistake. As she passed under the light, however, it was plain that the old yellow withered face was no imitation, but a real one. Presently two men appeared wrapped in long cloaks; they seemed to approach the place with caution, stop, looking often from side to side, to see if any one followed them.

The old woman went up to them. "Have you got the candles?" she asked hastily, in a gruff, hoarse voice.

"Here they are," said one of the men. "You know the price; it is all right."

The old woman seemed to give some money, which the man counted under his cloak.

"I may rely on it," she said again, "that they are made exactly by the prescription, and that there is no fear of their working?"

"Small doubt about that," answered the man, and disappeared again with hasty steps in the darkness.

The other, who stayed behind, was a young man. He took the old woman's hand, and said, "Is it possible, Alexia, that these rites and forms and strange old words,

which I never can have any faith in, have power to fetter the free will of man, and force it to love and to hate?"

"Ay is it, young gentleman," said the old woman; "but one and one must make two before that can be. It is not these candles alone that can do the work, though they are steeped in human blood, and moulded at midnight under the new moon; nor the magic rites, nor the invocation; there are many other things wanted besides these, as the artists in these matters know well."

"Then I may depend on you?" said the stranger.

"To-morrow, after midnight, I am at your service," replied the old woman; "and you shall not be the first to have reason to complain of my skill. To-night, as you may have heard, I have some one else on hand, a fellow with sense and understanding, whom it may be my art shall produce some effect upon." The last words she muttered with a half laugh; and the two then separated and went off in different directions.

Emilius passed out shuddering under the dark arch, and raised his eyes to the image of the Virgin and Child. "Before thy eyes, thou blessed one," he said half aloud, "these children of darkness dare make their schemes for their infernal deeds! Oh, as thou holdest thy Child in thy embrace of love, so may the Invisible Love keep us continually in its all-powerful arms, and our poor hearts beat ever in joy and sorrow in the presence of One greater, who will never let us fall."

Clouds swept by over the tower and the sharp edge of the roof of the church. The everlasting stars looked down serene and calm; and Emilius with a strong effort flung off these horrors of darkness, and thought of the beauty of his unknown. He went back into the crowded streets, and approached the brilliantly illuminated mansion which contained the ball-room. A crowd was round the door, a confused din of voices and carriages rattling backwards and forwards, and at intervals the swell of the alarming music pealing upon his ears.

He had no sooner got into the room than he was lost in the rolling crowd. Dancers sweeping past him; masques running against him and pushing him from side to side; kettle-drums and trumpets dinning in his ear; life itself seemed on a sudden to be turned into a dream. He passed up and down among the rows of people with his eye alert only to find one pair of bright eyes and the brown tresses of one beautiful head. Never had he more passionately longed to catch a sight of her; yet, with the adoration he felt for her, he could not help being provoked to think she could find any pleasure in losing herself in such a stormy ocean of madness and dissipation. "No," he said to himself, "she cannot love me; no heart that loves could seek such an infernal scene, where human beings are turned to fiends, and wild shrieks of laughter, and these trumpets clanging, drown every pure and holy feeling in devilish scorn. The rustling trees, the bubbling fountains, lute-music, and the voice of noble song streaming out from the impassioned bosom, — these are the sounds amidst which is the home of love; but this is the very jubilee and thunder-cry of hell in all the madness of despair."

He could not find the object of his search, however, though he had three times gone up and down the saloon, and scrutinised carefully all the unmasked ladies, either dancing or sitting; and the idea that that beautiful face was concealed under one of the disgusting masks was too intolerable to be admitted for a moment.

"You are here after all, then?" said the Spaniard, who came up and joined him. "You are looking for your friend, I suppose?"

Emilius had really never thought of him. Somewhat ashamed, he replied, "Indeed I am surprised not to see him here. His mask is remarkable enough."

"Only conceive what the strange fellow is about," said the young officer. "He has not danced once since he has been in the saloon. Directly he entered he fell in with his friend Anderson, who, it seems, has just come back

from his travels. Their conversation fell upon literature; and as Anderson did not know the new poem which has just come out, nothing would satisfy Mr. Roderick but that they must shut themselves up in one of the back rooms; and there he is now with a single candle reading the whole production aloud to him."

"That is so like him," answered Emilius. "He is made up of whims and fancies. I have done all I could—I have even risked one or two friendly quarrels—to cure him of this way of living so altogether extempore, gambling away his existence in impromptus; but these follies are so grown into his heart, that he would sooner lose his dearest friend than part with them. This book you speak of he professes to be passionately fond of, and always has it about with him. The other day I asked him to read it to me, and he began to do so. We had scarcely got beyond the opening, and I had begun to enter into the beauties of it, when suddenly he jumped up, ran out of the room, and presently came back with the cook's apron on, made a prodigious fuss to light a fire, and all to do me a beef-steak, for which I had not the slightest inclination, and which, though he fancies he does them better than any one in Europe, few people that have tried once are very anxious to attempt a second time."

The Spaniard laughed. "Has he never been in love?" he asked.

"After his fashion," said Emilius bitterly; "as if he wanted to make a fool of himself and turn love into ridicule; with a dozen women at once, and, if you believe what he says, to desperation. In a week he has forgotten them all."

They were parted by the crowd, and Emilius went off to the room the Spaniard had pointed out to him, where he heard his friend's voice declaiming long before he reached it.

"Ah! there you are, are you!" Roderick cried to him; "you are come in the very nick of time; we are just at the place you and I left off at the other day; so sit down and listen."

"I am not in the mood at present," said Emilius; "neither do place and time seem the best adapted for the purpose."

"And why not, pray?" answered Roderick. "It is all in ourselves. Every time is the right time to employ oneself in a proper way. Or perhaps you want to dance? They want men; and at the expense of an hour or two skipping about, and a pair of tired legs, you may make half a dozen grateful young damsels fall in love with you."

Emilius was already at the door: "Good night," he said; "I am going home."

"Stay one moment," called Roderick after him; "I am going away early to-morrow morning into the country with this gentleman. I will look in upon you before I go, to say good-by; but if you are asleep, don't trouble yourself to wake, as I shall be back again in two or three days.—That is the strangest fellow," he said, turning to his new friend; "so solemn, so serious and soberminded, he is a regular kill-joy; or rather, he does not know what joy means. Every thing must be lofty, ideal, exalted, for him. His heart must take a part, even if it be a puppet-show he is looking at; and when things do not come up to his notions, as of course most things can't, then he gets upon stilts, turns tragical, and the whole world is going to the devil. Under every clown's and pantaloon's mask he looks for a heart overflowing with longings and supernatural impulses; harlequins must philosophise on the nothingness of human wishes: and if these expectations are not exactly realised, tears start into his eyes, and he turns his back on the pretty show in a fever of scorn and indignation."

"Is he melancholy?" asked his hearer.

"Not exactly that," said Roderick; "only his parents, I think, indulged him too much, and he has taken no pains with himself. He has let his feelings ebb and flow regularly, till it has grown into a habit; and if ever the usual set of emotions are put out, he cries, 'A miracle!'

and offers premiums to doctors to come and clear up a marvellous natural phenomenon. He is the best fellow in the world; but all the pains I have taken to cure him of these absurdities are thrown away: nothing does him any good. It is as much as I can do to keep in his good graces at all, he is so angry when I speak to him."

"A doctor would be the thing for him, I should think," said the other.

"It is one of his peculiarities," answered Roderick, "to despise the whole art of medicine from beginning to end. Disorders, he says, are all different in different persons, and all general rules and theories are mere absurdities. He would rather go to old women, and use their sympathetic simples. Again, on other grounds, he despises all prudential proceedings, and every thing like orderliness and moderation. From his childhood he has had his ideal of what a great man ought to be, and what his endeavour is to be to make of himself; and one of the points of this ideal is to have an utter scorn of all *things*, particularly of money; and so, that he may never be suspected of being economical, or not liking to give away, or indeed of thinking of money at all, he flings it away in the absurdest way in the world. Consequently, with all his fine property, he is always poor and in difficulties, and is made a fool of by every one who is not great in the sense in which he understands greatness. To be his friend is the most difficult of things; for he is so irritable, that if one does but cough, it is a sign one is not spiritual, and to pick one's teeth would throw him into convulsions."

"Has he never been in love?" inquired Anderson.

"Why, who is he to love?" answered Roderick: "he despises all the daughters of earth. If his ideal were to shew a fancy for a bow or a ribbon, much more to dance, it would break his heart. And if she did but catch a cold, I don't know what would become of him."

Emilius was again in the crowd; when on a sudden the shock and pain which such scenes and concourses often

produced came over him again, and chased him away out of the room and the house, along the now empty streets, to his house. It was not till he found himself alone in his own room that he recovered his self-possession. His servant lit his candle and placed it on the table; and Emilius told him to go to bed. The other side of the street all was dark as the grave; and he sat himself down to let the thoughts the ball had awakened in him flow off into a poem.

There was calm in the spirit's depths;
In chains the demons slept;
With purpose fell to work his ill
Uprose the wicked will.
"Fling wide," he cried,
"The prison-gate,
Come forth, ye demons all!"
With yell and shout
That hideous rout
Sprung out at the welcome call.

Tralala! Tralala!
Whoop, whoop, whoop, hurrah, hurrah!
Trumpet crash and cymbal clash;
Flute, and fife, and violin,
Squeaking, shrieking, clattering;
Clarions ring with deafening din;
Now hell's chorus shall begin,
Now the fiends of madness reign;
Gentle child-like peace is slain.

In and out, across, about,
Whither pass this tumbling rout?
Merry dance we, and the lights flash free,
Jubilee, jubilee, jubilee!
Kettle-drums bang and cymbals clang,
And the devil drown care in the pool of despair.

With smiling lip and flashing eye
Yon fair one bids me to her side;

Yet silent soon those lips shall lie,
And wither'd be her beauty's pride.
Death's clammy hand is on her brow—
Ha! 'tis a skull that's beckoning now!
She must die; yet what care I?
Well to-day and well to-morrow,
What have I to do with sorrow?
Ay, grin as thou wilt, thou pale spectre, at me;
I'll live and dance on, and I care not for thee.

To-day that face is fresh and fair,
To-morrow 'tis bleach'd, and white, and bare:
Come then, dearest, while we may,
Let us drain love's sweets to-day.
Oh, seize the moment ere it flies!
Anguish and tears,
Sorrow and fears,
Have mark'd thee for their prize.
The angel of death
Swept by on the blast;
On thee fell his breath
Or ever he past.
Gnawing worms and rottenness,
Death, decay, and nothingness:
These are thy doom — how soon, how soon!
Thou must die, and so must I.

One touch of thy robe, as the dance sweeps by,
One squeeze of the hand, one glance of the eye,
And the grim king has clutch'd thee—on! on! let us fly!
Thou art lost, thou art gone; and away stagger I.
So why should I care?
There is joy in despair:
More maids by dozens at my feet,
With tempting bait of proffer'd sweet.
Here's a fair dame would be my bride,
And she is fair as are the maids
That wander in Elysian glades:
Shall it be she, or shall it be another?
There's a bold beauty at her side,
That looks as if she'd like a lover,

Ready to take whate'er she can,
Provided only 'tis a man.

Oh, these mad pleasures and these sirens smiling,
With cheating hopes and mocking shows beguiling—
Hell's curse is on them! Is the blossom fair?
Hate, envies, murders, are the fruit they bear.
So fast we whirl along the stream,
Life is death, and love a dream;
Ebbing, flowing, wave on wave,
Soulless, lifeless to the grave.
Nature's beauty is a lie—
She is all deformity;
Flower and tree the mocking guise
Which cheat our fond believing eyes.
On then, ye cymbals, with your din;
Scream clarionets, and bugles ring:
Crash, crash, crash! 'tis the fiend-world's knell,
Yoicks forward — forward — home to hell!

He had finished, and was standing at the window. Then came she into the room beyond him, beautiful as he had never seen her: her dark hair was loose, and hung in long waving tresses on her ivory neck. She was lightly dressed, and it seemed she had some household matter to arrange before retiring to rest; for she placed two candles on stands in front of the window, spread a cloth on the table, and again disappeared.

Emilius was sunk in his sweet dreamy visions, and the image of his beloved was still playing before his fancy, when, to his horror, he saw the fearful scarlet old woman stride across the room, her head and bosom gleaming hideously as the gold caught the light from the candles, and again vanished. Could he trust his eyes? The darkness had deceived him; it was but a spectre his fancy had conjured up. But no; she comes again, more hideous than before; her long grizzled hair in loose and tangled masses floating down upon her breast and shoulders. The beautiful maiden is behind her, with pale and rigid fea-

tures, her fair bosom all unveiled, her form like a marble statue. Between them was the little lovely child, weeping and praying, and watching imploringly the maiden's eyes, who looked not down. In agony it raised its little hands and stroked the neck and cheeks of the marble beauty. She caught it fast by the hair, and in the other hand she held a silver basin. The old woman howled and drew a knife and cut across the little thing's white neck.

Then came there something forward from behind, which they did not seem to see, or it must have filled them with the same horror as it did Emilius. A hideous serpent-head drew out coil after coil from the darkness, and inclining over the child, which now hung with relaxed limbs in the arms of the old woman, licked up with its black tongue the spouting blood. And a green sparkling eye shot across through the open shutter into the brain and eye and heart of Emilius, who fell fainting to the ground. Roderick found him senseless some hours after.

On a beautiful summer morning a party of friends were sitting round a breakfast-table in a garden summer-house. They seemed very merry, laughing and chattering, and drinking the health of the young bride and bride-groom, and wishing them long life and happiness. The young couple themselves were not present; the beauty herself being still engaged at her toilet, while the bride-groom was wandering up and down the walks at the other end of the garden, to enjoy in solitude the sweetness of his own reflections.

"What a shame it is," said Anderson, "that we are not to have any music! All our young ladies are put out about it: they say they never longed so much for a dance, and it is not to be: it is said he cannot endure it."

"We are to have a ball though, I can tell you, and a right mad and merry one too," said a young officer; "every thing is arranged; the musicians are come, and we have stowed them away where no one shall know any

thing about them. Roderick has taken the direction on himself; he says we ought not to give way to him too much; and that to-day, of all days in the world, his whims and fancies must not be indulged."

"He is so much more sociable and like his fellow-creatures than he used to be," said another young man, "that I do not think he will be displeased at the alteration. The whole affair of this marriage has come on so suddenly, so little like what we expected of him, he must be changed."

"His whole life," said Anderson, "has been as remarkable as his character is. You all know how he came last autumn to the city on a tour he was making, and lived all the winter through there by himself, shut up in his room as if he was melancholy mad. He never went near the theatre, or any other of our places of diversion; and had very nearly quarrelled with Roderick, who was his most intimate friend, for trying to dissipate him a little, and prevent him from for ever indulging his gloomy humours. All this excitableness and irritability of temper was at the bottom nothing but disease, as the event proved; for four months ago, I believe you know, he fell into a violent nervous fever, and was so ill that every one gave him up. He recovered at last, and got rid of some of his fancies; but the strange thing was, that when he came to his senses again, his memory was entirely gone: his memory, that is, of all that had happened immediately previous to his sickness. He could remember his childhood, and all his boyish adventures were fresh as ever; but the last year or two were blanks. All his friends, even Roderick, he had to become acquainted with over again; and it is only by slow degrees that here and there faint glimmerings of the past are beginning to come back upon his recollection. When he was taken ill, his uncle took him into his own house, where he could be better attended to: he was just like a child in their hands, and let them do any thing they pleased with him. The first time he went out to enjoy the

fresh spring-air in the park, he saw by the road-side a young maiden sitting apparently in deep thought on a bank. She looked up as he passed; their eyes met, and, as if overcome by some indescribable feeling, he sprung out of the carriage, sat down at her side, caught her hands in his, and dissolved into a flood of tears. His friends were afraid that this outburst of feeling was a relapse into fever; he was quite quiet, however, and seemed happy and good-humoured. He paid a visit to the parents of the young lady, and the first time he saw her again he asked her to marry him. Her father and mother made no difficulty, and she consented. He was now happy; a new life seemed to have sprung up in him; every day he got better and stronger, and his mind easier: a fortnight ago he came here on a visit to me, and the place delighted him so much that nothing would satisfy him but what I must part with it to him. If I had pleased, I might have turned his inclination to my advantage: any thing I asked he was ready to give, so that the bargain be concluded immediately. He made his arrangements, sent furniture down, and his plan is to spend all the summer months here. And so it has come to pass that here we are all of us to-day gathered together at my old place for his wedding."

The house was large, and most beautifully situated; on one side it looked upon a river, with a garden sloping down to the water's edge full of flowers, which filled the air with fragrance; and beyond, a long range of hills skirting the bank of the river, and magnificently wooded. Along the front was a broad open terrace, with rows of orange and citron trees, and little doors leading to the various offices underneath the house. The other side a lawn extended out to the park, from which it was only divided by a light fence. This front of the house had a very beautiful though very singular appearance. The two projecting wings enclosed a spacious area, which was partly roofed over, and divided into three stories, forming

open galleries running along the centre of the building, supported on tiers of pillars rising one above another. From these galleries were doors opening into all the different rooms in the house; and the various figures passing along these spacious corridors, behind the columns above or below, and disappearing into the different doors, in their various occupations, produced a very singular effect. In one or other of them the party used to collect itself at tea-time, or for any games that might be going on; so that from below the whole had the air of a theatre, when it was the greatest pleasure to stand and watch the passing forms above, as in a beautiful tableau.

The young party were just rising, when the bride crossed the garden to join them. She was richly dressed in violet velvet, with a necklace of brilliants on her ivory throat, and her white swelling bosom gleaming through the rich lace which covered it; a myrtle sprig and a wreath of roses formed her simple though most tasteful head-dress. She greeted them kindly, and the young men were overcome by her extraordinary beauty. She had gathered some flowers in the garden, and was returning to the house to see after the arrangements for the banquet. The tables were set out in the lowest of the open galleries. Their white damask coverings, and the glass and crystal vessels on them, were of the greatest beauty. Multitudes of flowers of every hue and colour stood in elegant vases; the pillars were wound with wreaths of green leaves and roses; and how enchanting it was to see the bride moving up and down among the flowers, so gracefully passing between the table and the column, looking that all was right in the arrangement. Presently she vanished, and then appeared again for a moment at the upper gallery as she passed to her chamber.

"She is the most charming, the most beautiful creature I ever saw," Anderson cried; "my friend is a lucky man."

"And her very paleness," put in the young officer,

"enhances her beauty; her dark eyes flash so above those marble cheeks; and those lips, so glowingly red, make her whole appearance truly enchanting."

"The air of silent melancholy," said Anderson, "which surrounds her, adds to the majesty of her bearing."

The bridegroom came up to them and asked for Roderick. The party had already missed him for some time, and no one could guess what had become of him; they now dispersed in search of him. At last a young man they asked told them he was down below in the hall, playing off tricks at cards, to the great amazement of a troop of grooms and servants. They went down and disturbed the circle of gapers. Roderick, however, did not let himself be put out, but went on for some time with his conjuring. As soon as he had done, he went with the rest of the party into the garden, saying, by way of accounting for his employment, "I merely do it to strengthen those fellows' faith for them. Their groomships are setting up to be free-thinkers, and it is as well to give them a staggerer now and then — it helps to their conversion."

"I perceive," the bridegroom said, "that my friend, among his other accomplishments, does not think charlatanism beneath his notice."

"We live in strange times," he answered; "one must not despise any thing now-a-days; nobody knows what he may not come to."

When the two friends were alone, Emilius turned again into the retired walk, and said, "Can you tell me why it is that to-day, which is or ought to be the happiest of my life, I feel so deeply depressed? Whatever you may think of me, I assure you I am not fit for the duties that devolve on me; I have no skill to move up and down a crowd of people with a civil speech for every one; entertain all these hosts of her and my relations, with respects for fathers and mothers, and compliments for ladies; receive visitors, and see that horses and servants are taken care of — I cannot do it."

"Oh, all that goes right of itself," said Roderick. "Your house is capitally arranged for that sort of thing. There is your steward, a famous fellow, with omnipotence and omnipresence in his hands and legs; he is made on purpose to arrange these matters, and see large parties taken care of, and put properly in their places: leave it all to him and your pretty bride."

"This morning," said Emilius, "I was walking before sunrise in the plantation here: my thoughts had taken a very serious turn, for I felt, to the bottom of my soul, that my life was now become fixed and definite, and that this love had given me a home and a calling. As I approached the summer-house yonder, I heard voices. It was my beloved in earnest conversation. 'Has it not turned out as I predicted?' said a strange voice; 'exactly as I knew it must be? you have your wishes, so be content.' I could not prevail on myself to go in to them; and afterwards, when I came to the summer-house again, they were both gone. I can do nothing but think and think what these words could mean."

"Very likely she has long loved you," said Roderick, "and you have not known any thing about it: all the better for you."

At that moment a late nightingale began to sing, as if to wish all joy and good fortune to the lovers. Emilius became more and more gloomy.

"Come down with me into the village yonder," said Roderick; "I will shew you something to amuse you. You are not to suppose you are the only man that is to be made happy to-day. There is a second pretty couple. A young scamp, it seems, what with opportunity and having nothing else to do, got upon too intimate terms with a damsel that might be his mother, and the fool thinks he is in duty bound to make her an honest woman. They'll have dressed themselves out by this time. The scene will be rich; I would not miss it for the world."

The sad and gloomy Emilius let himself be dragged

away by his talkative friend, and they reached the cottage just at the moment the cavalcade passed out on their road to the church. The young countryman had on his every-day linen smock, and his only piece of smartness consisted of a pair of leather gaiters, which he had polished up to make look as bright as possible. He was a simple-looking fellow, and seemed shy and awkward. The bride was tanned by the sun, and her face shewed very few remaining traces of youthfulness. She was coarsely and poorly dressed, but her clothes were clean, and a few red and blue silk ribbons, rather faded, were pinned up in bows on her stomacher. The worst part of her figure was her hair, which they had pasted up with a daub of fat and meal, and done into a great cone with hair-pins straight up from her head, on the top of which they had placed the marriage-garland. She tried to laugh and seem in good spirits, but she was ashamed and frightened. The old people followed. His father was in the employ of the house; and the cottage, as well as the furniture and clothes, all betrayed the extremest poverty. A dirty-looking squint-eyed fiddler followed the troop, grinning and smirking, and scraping away on a thing professing to be a violin, which was made up half of wood and half of pasteboard, having three pieces of packthread for strings.

The cavalcade halted at the sight of the new landlord. Some saucy-looking servants of the house, young boys and women, began to laugh and cut jokes at the expense of the young couple, particularly the ladies'-maids, who thought themselves a great deal prettier, and saw that they had infinitely smarter clothes. A shudder passed over Emilius. He looked round for Roderick, but he had run away again. An impudent-looking boy, a servant of one of the visitors, who wanted to be thought witty, pressed up to Emilius, and said, "What does your worship say to this brilliant couple? neither of them know where they are to get a piece of bread for to-morrow, and this

afternoon they are going to give a ball, and have engaged the services of that good gentleman yonder."

"Not know where they are to get bread?" cried Emilius; "can these things be?"

"Oh, yes," the other went on; "every one knows how miserably poor they are; but the fellow says he will do his duty to the creature, though she has not a farthing. Yes, indeed, love is all-powerful: the ragamuffins haven't got so much as a bed; they have begged enough small beer to get drunk upon, and they are to sleep to-night in the straw."

There was a loud laugh at this, and the two unlucky objects of it did not dare to raise their eyes.

Emilius pushed the chattering fool in bitter anger from him. "Here, take this," he cried, and flung a hundred ducats, which he had received that morning, into the hands of the astonished bridegroom: the parents and the bridal pair wept aloud, threw themselves on their knees, and kissed his hands and clothes. He struggled to free himself. "Keep want from your bodies with that so long as it will last," he said, half bewildered.

"Oh, you have made us happy for our lives, best, kindest sir!" they all cried.

He scarcely knew how he broke from them. He found himself alone, and ran with tottering steps into the wood, where, in the most secluded spot that he could find, he flung himself down upon a bank and burst into a flood of tears.

"I am sick of life," he sobbed, in the deepest emotion. "I cannot enjoy it, I cannot, will not be happy in it. Oh, take me quickly to thyself, kind Earth, and hide me in thy cold arms from these wild beasts that call themselves men. O God in heaven, what have I done, that I sleep on down and wear silk apparel? that the grape spends her choicest blood for me, and men crowd round and cringe to me with love, and honour, and respect? This poor fellow is better, is nobler than I; yet misery is his nurse,

and scorn and bitter mockery wish him joy upon his wedding-day. Every dainty morsel I enjoy, every draught from my cut glasses, my soft couches, and all this gold and ornament, oh, they are tainted with the poison of sin, so long as the world hunts to and fro these thousands upon thousands of poor wretches that hunger for the dry crumbs that fall from my table, and have never known what comfort means. Oh, now I understand you, ye holy saints; though the proud world turned from you with disdain and scorn when ye gave your all, even the cloak upon your back, to poverty, and chose rather as poor beggars to be trodden under foot, and bear the scoffs and sneers with which pride and selfish gluttony drive misery from their tables, rather to endure yourselves the last extreme of wretchedness, than bear upon your consciences this vile sin of wealth."

The world, and all its forms and customs, swam as a mist before his eyes; he thought he would find now his only friends and companions among the abject and the vile, and renounce for ever the society of all the world's great ones.

They had been waiting for him a long time in the saloon for the ceremony to be concluded; the bride became anxious, and her father and mother went out into the park to look for him. After some time, when he was partially recovered from his emotion, and his feelings were easier, he returned, and the solemn knot was tied.

And now they all left the great saloon for the open gallery, where the tables were set out, bride and bridegroom first, and the rest following in order. Roderick offered his arm to a lively-looking, chattering young lady.

"Why do brides always cry and look so serious and solemn at a wedding?" said she, as they entered the room.

"Because they never felt before this moment the true mysteriousness of life," answered Roderick.

"But our bride here," said his companion, "exceeds

every thing I have ever seen; she looks perfectly miserable: I haven't seen her smile once."

"It is all the more honour to her heart," replied Roderick, who, strange to say, seemed really affected. "You do not know, perhaps, that some years ago she adopted a lone little orphan girl, and took her to live with her and educate her. She devoted the whole of her time to the child, and the love of the dear little thing was her sweetest reward. She was just seven years old, when one day she had gone out for a walk in the city, and never came home again; and notwithstanding all the trouble that was taken to recover her, no one has ever been able to tell what has become of her. This misfortune the noble-minded woman took so much to heart, that a silent melancholy has settled upon her ever since; and nothing has been able to distract her from her regret for her little playfellow."

"What an interesting story!" said the young lady. "Some time or other we may have a most romantic conclusion, and a pretty poem written about it."

They seated themselves at the table, bride and bridegroom in the centre, looking out upon the beautiful landscape. There was a great deal of chattering and talking and drinking healths, and every one seemed to be in the best possible spirits. The bride's parents enjoyed themselves exceedingly; the bridegroom alone was gloomy and abstracted; he did not seem to enter into any thing that was going on, and took no part in the conversation. He started as he heard music ringing down from above through the air; but he soon recovered himself: it was but the soft note of a bugle which floated for a few moments over the garden, then swept across the park and died away among the distant hills. Roderick had placed the musicians in the gallery immediately over the banquet, and this arrangement seemed to satisfy Emilius. Towards the end of the feast he sent for his steward. "My dearest," he said, turning to his bride, "shall not poverty

have a share of our abundance?" He desired that a number of bottles of wine, some roast meat, and a large portion of various other dishes, might be sent to the poor couple in the village, that they also might have reason to remember the day as a day of joy and happiness.

"Only see, my dear friend," cried Roderick, "how every thing hangs together in this world. This chattering and running about after every body else's business but my own you so often complain of in me, has given you the opportunity of doing this piece of kindness."

Many persons present began to say something complimentary about benevolence and compassionate hearts, and the young lady talked of generosity and nobleness of feeling.

"Oh, speak not so!" cried Emilius indignantly. "It is no kind action, no action at all; it is nothing. If the swallow and the linnet fill themselves with the refuse fragments of our abundance, shall not I think of a poor brother-mortal who has need of my assistance? If I followed the impulse of my heart, I should soon find little from you and the like of you but such scorn and laughter as ye gave the saints of old when they went out and made their homes in the wilderness, to hear no more of the world and its generosities."

No one spoke; and Roderick saw by the flashing eyes of his friend that he was violently displeased: he was afraid his excitement might lead him still more to forget himself, and endeavoured as quick as possible to give the conversation another direction. Emilius, however, had become uneasy and restless. His eyes were continually turned towards the upper gallery, where the servants, who occupied the highest floor of the house, were busily engaged.

"Who is that ugly old woman in a grey cloak, going backwards and forwards, making herself so busy there?" he asked at last.

"She is one of my servants," answered the bride;

"she is to have the overlooking of the ladies' maids and the younger girls."

"How can you bear to have so hideous a creature about you?" said Emilius.

"Oh, let the poor thing be," replied the bride; "ugliness must live as well as beauty, you know; she is a good honest soul, and can be of the greatest use to us."

They rose from table, and the party now pressed round the new bridegroom to wish him all joy, and to beg to be allowed to have their ball. The bride threw her arms round him affectionately as she said, "My first request, dearest, you cannot refuse; it will make us all so happy; it is so long since I have been at a ball, and you have never seen me dance — are you not anxious to know how I shall look?"

"I never saw you in such high spirits," said Emilius; "I will not spoil your pleasure, do just as you please; only don't expect me to jump and tumble about and make myself ridiculous."

"If you are a bad dancer," said she, laughing, "you may be sure you will be left in peace." She ran away to make the requisite alterations in her dress for the ball.

"She does not know," Emilius said to Roderick as they walked away together, "that there is a secret door into her room from the one adjoining; I will surprise her while she is dressing."

When Emilius was gone, and the ladies had also disappeared to put on their ball-dresses, Roderick took some of the young men aside and brought them to his own room. "It is getting late," he said, — "it will soon be dark; so now be quick all of you and get your masks on, and we will make this night a right mad and merry one. Any device you can think of, no matter what; the more hideous objects you can make yourselves, the better I shall be pleased — not a monster in creation but what I must have him—humpbacks, fat paunches, all of them. A wedding is such a strange piece of business, married people

find, all of a sudden, such a wholly new fairy-tale set of circumstances round their necks, that we cannot make it absurd and mad enough to start them properly in their altered condition, and set them rolling along their new road; so to-night shall be a right wild mad night-mare, and never listen to any one that tells you to be reasonable."

"Don't alarm yourself," said Anderson; "we brought a box of masks and dresses from town with us that will astonish even you."

"And only look here," said Roderick, "what a treasure I have got from my tailor! the tasteless wretch was going to clip it to pieces for lappets. He bought it, he said, from an old woman, who I fancy must have worn it at Lucifer's gala on the Block's berg. This scarlet bodice with its lace and fringe, and the cap here all over glittering with gold, will look infinitely becoming; and then with this green petticoat on, and saffron trimmings, and this hideous mask, I will go as an old woman at the head of the whole troop of travesters to their room, and we will lead off our young lady in triumph to the ball; come, be quick with you."

The bugles were still playing, and the company were either dispersed in groups about the garden, or sitting in front of the house. The sun was going down behind a mass of heavy clouds, and a greyish mist was spreading over the landscape, when suddenly its last beams burst out under the dark curtain, and all the landscape round, and the house itself, with its galleries and columns, and wreaths of flowers, was bathed in a blood-red glow. At that moment the bride's parents and the rest of the spectators saw the wild troop of figures sweep along the upper gallery, Roderick going first as the scarlet old woman; and after him humpbacks, fat-paunched monsters with huge periwigs, harlequins, clowns, pantaloons, spectral dwarfs, women with broad hoop-petticoats and yard-high frisures, all like the phantoms of a hideous nightmare. On they

went, tumbling, twisting, staggering, tripping, and strutting along the gallery, and disappeared into one of the doors.

Suddenly a wild shriek burst from the inner chambers, and out dashed the pale bride into the crimson light; a short white petticoat was her only dress; her fair bosom all open, and her hair floating in wild disorder down her back. With quivering features, and eyes starting from their sockets, she rushed madly along the corridors. Blinded with terror, she could find neither door nor stairs; and fast behind her flew Emilius, with the Turkish dagger gleaming in his uplifted hand: she had reached the end of the gallery and could go no further; he caught her. His masked friends, and the grey old woman, were close behind; but ere they reached him the dagger was in her breast, he had cut across her white neck; the red blood glittered in the evening glow. The old woman flung her arms round him to drag him off; but with one fierce effort, he hurled himself and her over the balcony, and fell, dashed in pieces, at the feet of his relations, who, in silent horror, had witnessed the bloody scene. Above and below, along the stairs and corridors, were seen the hideous masks rushing wildly up and down, like accursed demons come from hell.

Roderick took the dying Emilius in his arms. He had found him in his wife's room playing with the dagger; she was nearly dressed as he entered. At the sight of the scarlet dress his memory had returned; the terrible scene of that night rushed before his senses; gnashing his teeth, he had sprung upon his trembling flying bride to avenge that murder and those devilish arts. The old woman confessed the crime that had been committed before she died; and the whole house was turned suddenly to sorrow, and mourning, and woe.

THE BROTHERS.

THERE lived near Bagdad, Omar and Mahmoud, two sons of poor parents. On their father's death they inherited only a small property; and each resolved to try to raise his fortune with it. Omar set forth to seek a place where to settle. Mahmoud repaired to Bagdad, began business in a small way, and soon increased his property. He lived very thriftily and retired, carefully adding each sequin to his capital, as the ground-work for some new plan of making money. He thus got into credit with several rich merchants, who sometimes

assigned to him part of a ship's freight, and entered into speculations in common with him. With repeated good fortune Mahmoud grew bolder, ventured larger sums, and every time they brought him in a high interest. By degrees he became better known, his business extended, he had granted many heavy loans, had the money of many others in his hands, and fortune seemed constantly smiling. Omar, on the contrary, had been unfortunate, not one of all his ventures had been successful; he came, quite poor, and almost without clothes, to Bagdad, heard of his brother, and went to him to seek his aid. Mahmoud was rejoiced to see his brother again, though he deplored his poverty. Being very good-natured and sensitive, he immediately gave him a large sum out of his business, and with this money he at the same time established him in a shop. Omar began by dealing in silk goods and women's apparel, and fortune seemed more favourable to him in Bagdad: his brother had made him a present of the money, and so he had no occasion to worry himself about repayment. In all his undertakings he was less prudent than Mahmoud, and, for this very reason, more fortunate. He soon gained the acquaintance of some merchants, who till then had done business with Mahmoud, and he succeeded in making them his friends. By this his brother lost many a means of profit, which now fell to *his* lot. And Mahmoud too had just chosen a wife, who forced him into numerous expenses, which before that he had not had to make: he had to borrow of his acquaintances to pay debts; money which he was expecting failed to come in; his credit sank; and he was on the verge of despair, when news arrived that one of his ships had foundered, and nothing, not the least morsel of any thing, had been saved; at this moment a creditor appeared, pressingly demanding the payment of a debt. Mahmoud saw very clearly that his last hope of fortune depended on this payment; and he therefore resolved, in the greatest distress, to have recourse to his brother. He hastened to him, and

found him very much out of sorts on account of a trifling loss which he had just undergone.

"Brother," began Mahmoud, "I come, in the utmost perplexity, to ask a favour of you."

Omar. Of what nature?

Mahmoud. My ship has gone to pieces; all my creditors are urgent, and will not hear of delay; my whole happiness depends on this one day; do just lend me ten thousand sequins for a time.

Omar. Ten thousand sequins?—You're not talking nonsense, brother?

Mah. No, Omar, I know what that sum is very well; and just so much, and not one sequin less, can save me from the most disgraceful poverty.

Omar. Ten thousand sequins?

Mah. Give them to me, brother; I will do my utmost to return them to you in a short time.

Omar. Where are they to come from? I have much due to me that is still unpaid; I don't myself know what I am to do,—this very day I have been cheated of a hundred sequins.

Mah. Your credit will easily procure me this amount.

Omar. But not a soul will lend money now. There's mistrust on all sides; not that I am mistrustful, heaven knows, but every one would guess that I want the money for you; and you know best on what frail threads one's confidence in a merchant often hangs.

Mah. Dear Omar, I must confess I didn't expect these demurs from you. If we were to change sides, you would not find me so suspicious and dilatory.

Omar. So you say. I am not suspicious either; I wish I could help you. I call God to witness, how glad I should be.

Mah. You can, if you like.

Omar. All I have would not make the sum you require.

Mah. O heavens! I had reproached myself for not

making my brother the first of whom I asked assistance; and I am truly sorry that I have burdened him with a single word.

Omar. You are angry; you are wrong in being so.

Mah. Wrong? which of us neglects his duty? Ah, brother, I don't know you!

Omar. I have just lost a hundred sequins to-day; another three hundred are not at all safe, and I must make up my mind to the loss of them. If you had but come to me last week,—oh, yes, then most heartily.

Mah. Must I then remind you of our former friendship? Ah! how low can misfortune degrade us!

Omar. You talk, brother, almost as if you wished to insult me.

Mah. Insult you?

Omar. When one does all one can,—when one is in distress oneself, and in hourly fear of losing more,—can a man in such a case help being vexed when he receives nothing but bitter mockery and abject contempt for all his good-will?

Mah. Shew me your good-will, and you shall receive my warmest thanks.

Omar. Doubt of it no longer, or you will enrage me; I can keep cool a long time, and bear a good deal, but when I am irritated in such a deliberate way ——

Mah. I see how it is, Omar; you play the insulted man, only to have a better excuse for breaking friends with me entirely.

Omar. You would never have thought of such a thing, if you were not caught in such paltry tricks yourself. We are most prone to suspect others of those vices with which we are most familiar ourselves.

Mah. No, Omar;—but since such language as yours encourages me to boast,—I must say, I didn't act so towards you, when you came, a poor stranger, to Bagdad.

Omar. And so for the five hundred sequins which you then gave me, you want ten thousand from me now.

Mah. Had I been able, I would gladly have given you more.

Omar. To be sure, if you wish it, I must return you the five hundred sequins, though you can shew no claim to them by law.

Mah. Ah, brother!

Omar. I will send them to you:—are you expecting no letters from Persia?

Mah. I have nothing more to expect.

Omar. To be frank with you, brother; you should have lived a little more closely, and not have married either, just as I have kept from it to this very hour; but from your childhood you were always somewhat indiscreet, so let this serve as a warning to you.

Mah. You had a right to refuse me the favour I requested of you, but not to make me such bitter reproaches into the bargain.

Mahmoud's heart was deeply touched, and he left his ungrateful brother. "And is it then true," cried he, "that covetousness only is the soul of men? Their own selves are their first and last thought! For money they barter truth and love; do violence to the most beautiful feelings, to gain possession of the sordid metal that fetters us to the grovelling earth in its disgraceful chains! Self-interest is the rock on which all friendship is shivered. Men are an abandoned race. I have never known a friend nor a brother; and my only intercourse has been with men of trade. Fool that I was to speak to them of love and friendship! Money only it is that one must change and exchange for them."

Returning home, he took a circuitous path, in order to let his painful emotions subside. He wept at the sight of the noisy market-throng; every one was as busy as an ant in carrying stores into his dingy dwelling; no one cared for the other, unless induced by a sense of profit; all were hurrying this way and that, as insensible as ciphers. He went home disconsolate.

There his grief was heightened; he found the five hundred sequins, which he had once given with the greatest good-will to his brother; they were soon the prey of his creditors. All he possessed was publicly sold; one of his ships came into port, but the cargo only served to pay the remainder of his debts. Poor as a beggar, he left the town without even passing by his hard-hearted brother's house.

His wife accompanied him in his misery, comforting him, and seeking to dissipate his grief, but she succeeded very poorly. The remembrance of his misfortune was still too fresh in Mahmoud's mind; still he saw before him the towers of the town where the brother dwelt who had remained so cold and unmoved by his distress.

Omar made no inquiries after his brother, that he might have no occasion to compassionate him; he fancied, too, all might after all have passed off well. In the mean time his credit had suffered in some measure on his brother's account; people began to be mistrustful towards him, and several merchants were less ready than formerly in entrusting him with their money. In addition to this, Omar grew very miserly, and proud of the fortune he had amassed; so that he made many enemies, who took pleasure in any loss that he might suffer.

It seemed as if destiny were determined to punish his ingratitude towards his brother; for loss after loss followed in quick succession. Omar, who was all anxiety to recover these losses, hazarded larger sums, and these too were swallowed up. He ceased to pay the money which he owed; mistrust of him became general; all his creditors pressed him at the same time; Omar knew no one who could assist him in this crisis of perplexity. He saw no other resource left him, than clandestinely to quit the town by night, and to try if fortune would be more favourable to him in another quarter.

The small property which he had been enabled to take with him was soon exhausted. His disquietude increased

exactly as his money waned; he saw before him the most abject poverty, and yet no means of escaping it.

Full of pensive thoughts and lamentations, he in this state reached the Persian frontier. He had now spent all his money, except three small coins, which just sufficed to pay for a supper in a caravanserai; he felt hungry, and as the sun was already declining, he hastened his steps, in order to reach some place of shelter, where for that night, and perhaps for the last one, he might lodge once more.

"How wretched I am!" said he to himself. "How does fate pursue me, and claim me in my misery! What a frightful prospect lies open before me! I shall be obliged to live on the alms of compassionate souls, to bear contemptuous repulse, not dare to murmur when the profligate stalks unabashed by, without deigning to give me a glance, and then squanders a hundred gold pieces on some miserable toy. O poverty, how thou canst debase mankind! How partially and unfairly does fortune dispense her treasures! She pours the whole tide of her wealth on the vicious, and lets the virtuous perish of hunger."

The rocks that Omar surmounted made him tired; he sat down to rest upon a bank of turf by the road-side. There a beggar on crutches came hobbling past him, murmuring an unintelligible prayer. He was tattered and famished, his burning eyes lay deep in his head, and his pale form was enough to cut one to the heart, and compel one to pity. Omar's attention was drawn, against his will, to this object of abhorrence, that murmured still, and stretched forth his arid hand. He asked the beggar's name, and then, for the first time, remarked that the unhappy creature was both deaf and dumb.

"Oh! how indescribably happy I am!" cried he; "and do I still lament? Why can I not labour? why not satisfy my wants by the work of my hands? How glad, how happy would this miserable object be to exchange with me! I am ungrateful towards Heaven."

Seized with a sudden impulse of compassion, he took his last pieces of silver out of his pocket, and gave them to the beggar, who, after a mute expression of thanks, pursued his way.

Omar now felt extraordinarily light-hearted and cheerful; the Deity had, for his instruction, held a picture as it were before him of the misery to which man may sink. He now felt power enough within him to bear with poverty, or by activity to cast it off. He made plans for his sustenance, and only wished he could at once have an opportunity of shewing how industrious he could be. Since his noble-minded compassion for the beggar, and the generosity with which he had sacrificed to him his whole remaining stock of money, he had had sensations such as he had never known before.

A steep rock abutted on the road, and Omar ascended it with a light heart, to take a view of the country, made still more lovely by the setting sun. Here he saw, lying at his feet, the beautiful world, with its green plains and majestic hills, its dark forests, and brightly-blushing rivers, and over all this the golden web-work of the crimson evening; and he felt like a prince who ruled over the whole, and put forth his power over hill, and wood, and stream.

He continued sitting on the peak of the rock, absorbed in the contemplation of the landscape. He resolved to await there the rising of the moon, and then to continue his journey.

The crimson of evening vanished, and twilight dropped from the clouds: the dark night followed. The stars twinkled in the dark blue vault, and earth silently reposed in solemn quiet. Omar gazed fixedly on the night, till his eye wandered dizzily among the countless stars; he supplicated the majesty of God, and felt a holy awe thrill through his soul.

Then it seemed that a beam of light arose in the distant horizon; it ascended in blue coruscation, and passed

as a shining flame to the zenith of heaven. The stars retreated palely, and, like the light of new-born morning, it flickered over the firmament, and rained down in softly tinted beams of crimson. Omar was astonished by the wondrous phenomenon, and feasted his eye on the beauteous and unusual gleam; the forests and hills around him sparkled, the distant clouds floated in pale purple, and the radiance of the whole converged into a vault of gold over Omar.

"Hail, noble, compassionate, virtuous one!" cried a sweet voice from above; "thou takest pity on misery, and the Lord looks down on thee with well-pleased approval."

Like dying flute-tones, the night-winds whispered round Omar; his bosom heaved happily and pantingly, his eye was drunk with splendour, his ear with heavenly harmony; and from amid the effulgence stepped forth a form of light, and stood before the enraptured one; it was Asrael, the radiant angel of God.

"Mount with me in these beams to the abodes of the blessed," cried the same sweet voice, "for thou hast deserved by thy nobleness of soul to view the blessedness of Paradise."

"My Lord," said the trembling Omar, "how can I, a mortal, follow thee? My earthly body is not taken from me yet."

"Give me thy hand," said the form of light. Omar tendered him it with trembling rapture, and they soared through the clouds on the crimson beams. They traversed the stars, and sweet sounds waited on their steps, and the blush of morning lay in ambush in their path, and the fragrance of flowers filled the air with aroma.

Of a sudden it was night. Omar shrieked aloud, and found himself lying at the foot of the crag, with shattered arms. The dark red moon just rose from behind a hill, casting its first doubtful gleams on the rocky valley.

"Oh, thrice-wretched me!" cried Omar lamentingly,

on recovering his senses. "Was Heaven so little satisfied with my misery that it must dash me in a false dream from the peak of the rock, and shatter my limbs, that I might become the prey of hunger? Is it thus that it compensates my pity for the unfortunate? Oh, who was ever unhappier than I?"

A figure shuffled past him with pain, and Omar recognised him to be the beggar to whom he that very day had given the remainder of his money. Omar called out to him, and besought him in a pitiful strain to share with him the benefaction which he himself had bestowed, but the cripple went heedlessly gasping on his way; so that Omar did not know whether he had heard him, or was only dissembling, that he might seem to have a right to disregard him.

"Am I not more wretched than this outcast?" said Omar, lamenting amid the stillness of night. "Who will take pity on me, now that all is taken from me that could comfort me?"

He fetched a deep sigh, his arms pained him, a burning fire raged in his bones, and every breath was drawn in torture. Now he took a review of his fortune, and, for the first time, thought once more on his brother.

"Oh, where art thou, noble-minded one?" cried he; "perhaps the sword of the angel of death has already smitten thee; misery perhaps has consumed thee in the most wearing poverty, and thou hast cursed thy poor brother in the last hour of anguish. Ah! I have deserved this at thy hands; now do I suffer the penalty of my ingratitude, my hard-heartedness! Heaven is just!—And I too could stalk along so proudly, and call on God to witness my virtue! O Heaven, forgive the sinner who, without a murmur, bows to thy chastisement."

Omar buried himself in pensive thoughts; he remembered with what brotherly love Mahmoud had received him when, for the first time, he was destitute; he reproached himself for having neglected to save him, and

for not having repaid by that means his debt of gratitude: he longed for death, as the term of his penalty and his sufferings.

The moon shone brightly over the landscape, and a small caravan, consisting of a few camels, wound slowly through the vale. The lust of life again awoke in Omar; he cried out for aid to the passers-by, in a voice of wailing. They laid him carefully on a camel, that they might have his wounds bound up in the next town, which they reached by break of day. The merchant attended the unfortunate man himself, and Omar recognised in him—his brother. His sense of shame knew no bounds, as neither did the compassion of Mahmoud. The one brother begged for pardon, and the other had already forgiven; tears flowed down the cheeks of each, and the most touching reconciliation was solemnised between them.

Mahmoud had repaired to Ispahan after his impoverishment, and had there made the acquaintance of a rich old merchant, who soon grew fond of him, and assisted him with money. Fortune was favourable to the exile, and in a short period he recovered his lost wealth. At this moment his old benefactor died, making him his heir.

On his recovery, Omar travelled with his brother to Ispahan, where the latter set him up anew in business. Omar married, and never forgot how much he owed to his brother; and from that time forward both lived in the strictest concord, and afforded the whole town a pattern of brotherly love.