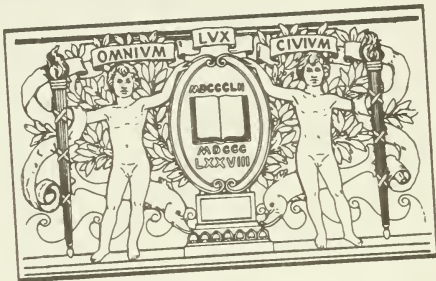


TALES FROM ALSACE

Trawn from Old Chronicles

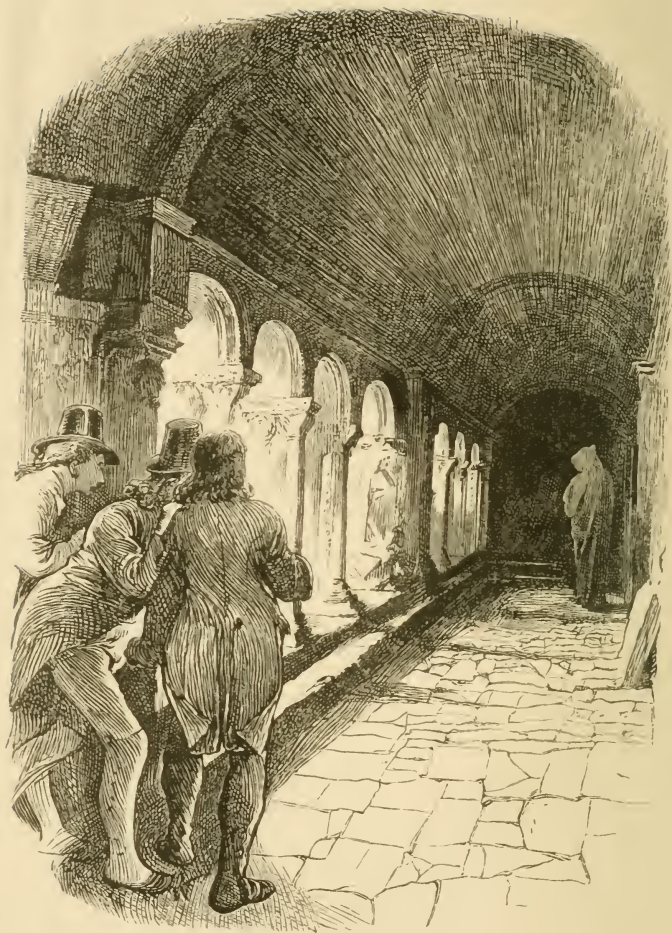




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TALES FROM ALSACE.



“The monk disappears like a shadow into the dark passages.”

TALES FROM ALSACE

OR

SCENES AND PORTRAITS FROM LIFE IN
THE DAYS OF THE REFORMATION

As Drawn from Old Chronicles

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

WITH INTRODUCTION APPENDED TO THE FRENCH EDITION BY
THE FRENCH TRANSLATOR, E. ROSSEUW SAINT-HILAIRE.

LONDON

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PREFACE BY THE FRENCH TRANSLATOR,
PROFESSOR ROSSEEUW SAINT-HILAIRE.

HAPPENING to be, some eight or ten years since, at Mulhouse, I was enjoying, in the home of my friend Pastor B., the sweetness of that Christian hospitality which the world knoweth not, and of which, were it not ignorant, it would be jealous. One evening my dear friend put into my hands a little pamphlet containing not much more than a printer's sheet, saying, 'Do read that! it is the best German tract I ever saw!' Now, it may be necessary to premise, for some French readers who may not know it, that a tract is usually a short narrative intended to bring out in strong relief some religious truth set in a very simple frame, usually borrowed from real life. That same evening I read the tract of which this volume contains a translation,— '*Master Nicholas.*' I was so much struck by its merit, by the elevated tone of feeling and graceful *naïveté* which mark it from beginning to end, that I at once promised myself the pleasure of translating it and making it known in France.

The next morning, as I thanked Pastor B. for his gift, my first question was one which my readers would doubtless be eager to put to me: 'Who is the author of this unknown *chef-d'œuvre* which you are disinterring for us from the depths of your remote Alsace?'

And here, I must confess, I have reached a point at which my embarrassment begins. This unknown author is no longer unknown to me. After having read the work I have had so much delight in translating, I hastened not only to break through the *incognito*, but to make the wished-for acquaintance. But the secret of the anonymous author I have no right to betray, and the veil of modesty with which *she* (for, as the reader may have guessed, it is a woman) has enveloped herself, cannot be more than partially withdrawn. She was once young, is so now no more, but her heart ever preserves its youth! She looks back upon life, which has now no illusions for her, but which has enriched her with treasures of experience manifest in each line that flows from her pen. If, dear reader, you long to know the writer of a little work at once so light and racy, and so truly deep, why, —now you know all of her that I have any right to tell. It only remains for you, if the little volume leads you to love its author, to find her out by means of it, and to complete, by working it out in your own thoughts, the rough draught I have tried to sketch for you.

I fulfilled my promise to myself, and translated '*Master*

Nicholas' with as much care as I could have lavished on any work of my own, and with all the freedom granted me by the author's friendship. I felt it, however, my duty to wait,—and long enough too, as may easily be perceived,—till one tract after another was added to the first-born to form this slender volume. During the interval, the author of 'Master Nicholas' (*Meister Klaus*) and of 'Little Mat' (*Der Kleine Matthis*) has, in the quietest way, advancing by gentle steps, attained, I will not say fame, too high-sounding a word for these little matters, but an ever increasing popularity. Not Alsace alone, but Germany, and especially that part of it which is contiguous with the frontier of France, is now familiar with 'The Strasburg Tracts' as such. But what touches the author most sensibly in the success of her anonymous work, is the assurance, so sweet to her heart, that she has been the means of doing some good. With the exception of some few masterpieces of literature, destined to last for ages, all books here below pass away nearly as quickly as their writers. Happy, then, the volumes, great or small, of which it may be said, as of the Master from whom their authors derived their every gift and inspiration, 'they go about doing good.'

I must plead guilty to having felt jealous on behalf of my country as regards this little work, which is in reality French, as being Alsatian, although originally written in German. One object in presenting it in its new form, is to

give it right of citizenship in France. Having obtained, by its means, some welcome rest amid more serious labours, I now offer it to the French reader, by no means without (I will not disguise it) a feeling of uneasiness on its behalf, arising from the state of the times and of current literature. In fact nothing can have less resemblance to the fashionable novels of the day than these tales, for they breathe the purest morality, and are inspired by the truest piety. The heroes of the little ideal world in which my author delights to dwell are almost always children; and to be able to succeed in painting them so well, it is necessary to have learned first to love them right well. As to the frame of her picture, it is always Alsace, so little known to France at large, yet so worthy of being known; Alsace, so German in its science, morals and manners, so French in its patriotism and its heart! Alsace, which, in a word, inscribed, in the sixteenth century, so many an honoured name in the pages of our martyrology, and which ought, at least, to be very deeply attached to that faith which cost her so dear!

The scene is often placed in our narratives in one of those fine old small towns of Alsace, which seem so fresh, so mediæval, as if but just exhumed, and as yet untouched by the levelling hand of our monotonous civilisation. In the first place there appears, as in the 'old St. Stephen's Tower,' one of those ancient edifices, dear to every burgess

as a living personification of his native town, till the luckless day dawn when the hammer of speculation must needs begin the work of demolition. Then again, incrusting in the old tower, one with it, living in its life, we behold some capital antiquated figure, characteristic of the good old days, like that of Melchior,—perhaps the most original of our author's creations.

But some reader, resolved to be amused only according to rule, and afraid of compromising himself by yielding freely to the pleasure he feels in reading these stories, may bethink him of inquiring for whom they are destined. 'Are they intended for children or for grown-up persons? You do not pretend that a reasonable man should waste time in reading children's tales?'

For whom are they written, gentle reader? In truth, I know nothing about it, and I doubt whether the author can tell more about it than I. What I do know is that they are addressed to all who have any heart. Only read them, and then tell me if I have deceived you, or if they have reached their right address. As for me, I have read them to grave personages, who, with a tear in the corner of the eye and a smile on their lips, have been surprised at finding themselves either melted or charmed by these despised children's tales; and when, by chance, children have heard them, they have been entranced and captivated on finding their own language so well understood.

Here, however, we touch on a question of more grave interest,—that of the nature and character of the German genius, so different from ours in France, and certainly among the richest of all the varieties of the human family. The German genius¹ may be described in two words: a poet and a little child coupled together! There is an indescribable mixture of the naïve and the lofty, the infantine and the sublime, connected with the perfect good faith of that primitive people, who have kept closer to Nature than we have, and who are gifted with an irrepresible youthfulness, still fresh after ages have passed over it. If there exist in this world two varieties of national genius made not to understand one another, assuredly they must be the German and the French. One is always ironical—always ready to laugh at others, and at himself too. The other, simple to a degree almost amounting to childishness, impatient of irony, which is ever repugnant to its nature, always quick to grow angry if feeling itself misunderstood. Now it strikes me that, in a style which at first sight may seem humble, our author truly reflects this double tendency of the German nature. Thus, I admire her audacity when I see her not afraid to condescend to certain details, so familiar that French taste, always rather mounted on stilts, would instinctively shrink from them. And again, all of a sudden, a little vignette of an Alsatian landscape sketched

¹ ‘*Génie*,’—a word scarcely capable of being adequately translated.

by a master's hand,—an unfolding (altogether unlooked for) of the workings of a human soul, laid bare with a deep penetration which surprises one, reveals, in the midst of a childish narrative, treasures of life-experience, and of acute and sagacious observation.

‘M. Josse, thou art a goldsmith!’ may be my reader's reply. So be it! But if I have succeeded in securing these precious pearls in a setting by which they lose nothing, if I have revealed to France the home life of a people now in such close contact with her, and a whole literature, so familiar, so charming, yet the existence of which is new to her, it appears to me that after all my time is not wasted. I have always loved Germany too well to believe in the possibility of a war between France and her! To draw together these two great nations, held aloof from one another by so many prejudices, one must first teach them to know one another, then to love one another, and to stretch out a hand mutually across that noble Rhine which rather unites than separates them.

I have travelled much and often in the north and in the south, and have been much struck by one fact. Wherever the Bible is not the corner-stone of education, of society, of life in general, there is no literature for children,—none for the people at large. Look at Spain, Italy, France itself—every land, in short, in which the Bible is not read. There is no reading for the child—none for the working man!

In Germany, in England, on the contrary, we find a mass of popular and juvenile Christian literature, in which the national genius is reflected as in a mirror. Instead of those fairy tales which repel one by their nonsensical character, or of those novels which rouse one's indignation by their immorality, you have immortal works such as *Robinson Crusoe* or *Uncle Tom's Cabin*,—writings for all ages, for all classes of society, calculated to charm every succeeding generation. Or, in a humbler rank, you have narratives such as those now offered to the reader, drawn from the living sources of faith and human sympathy, impregnated with all the tenderness of the family circle, addressed to and understood by all, but more especially by children and by unsophisticated readers. This is the juvenile and popular literature which I cannot but covet on behalf of my native land, accustomed as she is for two centuries to reign over Europe in the empire of mind, thanks to her immortal phalanx of great writers, to whom one art alone is lacking, that of speaking to the young and the popular mind, and of reaching it by frequent appeals to the heart.

I have hitherto dwelt on the tender and childlike side of this work. I must not conclude without saying a word on its more serious character, on the really historical value of these little tales. This it was which first peculiarly attracted my attention, and on this side I believe, dear reader, they will be found not unworthy to engage yours. You will find,

along with a profound acquaintance with Alsace and her ancient chronicles, a page, full of glory yet hitherto inedited, hereby added to that History of the Reformation to which each century and each people must contribute its own quota,—which must be evermore continued, never completed here below. The authoress has formed in her own mind a certain ideal, both religious and historical, of the annals of the Reformation, which she seeks to work out by availing herself of the old legends of her native country, only supplying by fancy that detail which historic narrative leaves blank.

In these stories, apparently detached and independent of one another, we may discern a secret plan which binds them all together, betrayed by the re-appearance of the same personages in altered positions and at different ages. I shall endeavour in a few words to draw an outline of this general framework of the whole, that the author's object and idea may be better understood.

'*The Manuscript of Father Arnulph*'¹ forms but a species of prologue, detached from the work, but preparing us for, and leading us on to it. It first introduces us into one of those ancient castles of Alsace, and into the home life of a noble family of the middle ages; then into a Benedictine cloister; there it reveals to us the secret pre-

¹ Part of the first tale, 'Uncle Balthasar's Relic,'—the other part being omitted in the French translation.

occupations of a pure soul, in earnest about its vocation, and about the holy gospel, which, so long lost, was to be as it were found again, four centuries later, by Martin Luther. We see the first germs of the Reformation deposited in the depths of this monastery, in the shape of the controversy of the Immaculate Conception, a more serious controversy than it might at first sight be imagined, between two orders, of which one, the Benedictines, represents science and piety, —the other, the Franciscans, ignorance and fanaticism, not however to the exclusion of ability in worldly affairs.

‘*Little Mat*,’ ‘*The Tower of St. Stephen’s*,’ and ‘*Crooked-Beak*,’ are ingeniously devised entablatures, destined to place in bold relief the early scenes of the Reformation, with that twofold character of simple *naïveté* and of mental conflict which marks its first steps on the soil of Germany.

In ‘*The Ministers of the Word*’ the author introduces us to the very heart of her subject, showing us all that Alsace and German Protestantism at large had to suffer before entering into peaceful possession of their faith. One feels penetrated with respect and pity as one enters the humble parsonage of Matthew Zell (the ‘*little Mat*’ of days of yore), in which the persecuted of all lands, fleeing from the jail and the stake, find a refuge, and share a common faith and its trials.

In ‘*Spitzi*’ the interest still grows, and the scene is so striking as to rise even to the dramatic. It is a fine and

touching creation, that of the poor pastor who only issues forth from his obscurity to go to the martyr's death, with that humble heroism of faith which leads him to regard martyrdom as one of the functions of his ministry!

A century has elapsed—the heroic age of the Reformers has passed away. With the baptism of blood of the Thirty Years' War, liberty of conscience has been gained by force of arms, at the expense of many lives lost, many tears shed. Protestantism in Germany can at last hold up its head and face the light of day! But since the fires of the stake have been extinguished, faith has waxed languid as well as courage. Already Rationalism germinates in that soil,—no longer fertilized by the blood of the martyrs, the seed of the Church! Germany needs a new Luther to restore to it the gospel. Nevertheless the old faith of its early days is preserved in some remote valleys of Alsace, and '*Master Nicholas*' shows us in the workshop of the aged cooper the dawn of a new religious awakening. Here we may see the hidden germs of *Pietism* in that pious childhood of *Spener*, as in like manner we see the grand traditions of Luther yet living and breathing in that manly and original conception, the master-cooper of Ribeauvillé.

Finally, in '*The Forest-House*' the author's hand touches with Christian sympathy another of the sore wounds of poor Alsace, one which liberty herself has failed to heal. I mean the religious condition of the Jews in that land,

where they are, by a strange paradox, at once more feared, more hated and more influential than in any other part of France. The old colporteur Simeon and his little daughter Leah afford striking types of that race, so richly endowed with Heaven's gifts, which, bowing under the weight of the Divine sentence, turned away from the things of heaven to look only at those of earth; a fallen and prostrate race, having now no religion left save its nationality. This affecting narrative will remind Christians, notwithstanding their prejudices (which often, alas! seem but too well founded, or at least more or less justified), that 'salvation is of the Jews,' and that, in spite of all their misdeeds, we ought to behold in them 'our fathers in the faith.'

ROSSEEUW SAINT-HILAIRE.

VERSAILLES, *December* 1867.

WHILE gratefully acknowledging Professor Rosseeuw Saint-Hilaire's great kindness in permitting the translation of his beautiful preface to be prefixed to this volume,—a preface which adds to the French edition, '*Légendes de l'Alsace*,' not only the prestige of his distinguished name, but also an intrinsic value and interest, as well as the *imprimatur* of an authority in historic literature,—the English translator has

only to call the reader's attention to the fact that '*The Fur Coat*,' published in the original only very shortly before the '*Légendes*' appeared, and therefore here unavoidably placed last, ought chronologically to stand immediately after '*The Ministers of the Word*.'

Professor Rosseeuw Saint-Hilaire's translation contains only a selection from the Strasburg Tracts,—not, as he has himself stated, owing to any partiality in his appreciation of the authoress's writings, but to reasons applicable to the French public alone, and of which he is certainly the most competent judge. The English translator ventures to hope, nay feels confident, that those tales which here complete the series, will, in Great Britain, be read with an interest not inferior to that inspired by those alluded to in the French Preface.

UNCLE BALTHASAR'S RELIC.

EXTRACTED FROM HIS PAPERS.

‘ One Lord, one faith, one baptism.’—EPH. iv. 5.

WE here at once usher our readers into the Reign of Terror, when Robespierre's bloody yoke was heavily oppressing the unfortunate kingdom of France, and his accomplice Schneider was perambulating our beautiful Alsace with the guillotine, like a pedlar with his wares ; only at that time the bargains were for property and blood, for our heads and for our lives. Not long since, the famous decree had been issued, ‘The Convention decrees that there is a Supreme Being,’ to which our blind poet Pfeffel replied with his characteristic satire—

‘ Thou, dear Lord God, art now again allow'd to be !
The dictum this of sov'reign power amid the Franks.
To Paris straight an angel embassy must come,
To bring from Heav'n th' Almighty's humble thanks ! ’

It was for every one a time of fear and anxiety ; we breathed heavily, as in the sultry air which precedes a thunder-storm ; and however patriotic we were in Strasburg, yet the wish was brooded over, especially by us young people, to shake off the bloody yoke, and to overthrow the tyrant.

Our older friends, who were more prudent than we young hot-headed fellows, advised us to take a journey on foot during the Whitsun holidays. It was to be into the Sundgau, to Pfirt, and thence over the Jura mountains to Basle. I was to go, however, a stage further, to dear Zurich, to Father Lavater, and to Frederica my beloved bride, whom I had not seen for a long time, and whom I would so gladly have brought home very soon to be the faithful mistress of my house. But in those dreadful days, when the ground shook under our feet, and threatened every moment to swallow us up, a rich man could scarcely think of building his house and of establishing his own fireside, far less I, since I never possessed either gold or silver.

The prodigious power of steam was at that time still unknown, and a journey from Strasburg to Basle, even without going the roundabout way of the Jura mountains, was considered such an undertaking as could not be begun without a formal farewell of the whole family. I had fastened my little knapsack, and for the ease of mind of my good sister Selma, and as the best passport in those times, had placed the red Jacobite cap upon it, which I would not have worn upon my head for any money, when my cousin Theobald came. He had been at St. Diedel, and brought me a packet of 'assignats' and a letter for M. Delille, who had fled to the monastery of Luppach, near Pfirt. My cousin Theobald had met M^{me} Delille at St. Diedel, and had promised her that he would send the money and the letter safely to her husband. I would willingly have done him the favour; but to deliver letters to emigrants was then

a state crime, and I, 'hero of the quill,' as my companions called me, had not the courage to take such dangerous goods with me. Selma suggested the idea of sewing the letter in the lining of my Jacobite cap, where certainly no one would look for it. My cousin was quite in ecstasy at the proposed idea, and I, *volens volens*, was obliged to agree to it. Our journey was favoured with the finest weather. It was during the Whitsun holidays. The trees were in full blossom, promising a rich harvest of fruit. The corn and the vines were growing luxuriantly, and the beautiful blue sky was smiling on the prosperous plains. But in poor human hearts it was far otherwise—anxious fears, suspicions, anguish and pain on the one hand, and on the other bold defiance, wild licentiousness, and barbarous covetousness. At Mulhausen, which at that time belonged to the Swiss Confederation, and which was surrounded by French soldiers, we saw the guillotine erected on the little square in front of the Crown Inn; and we were told that Schneider and his companions were then seated at the table at dinner. Some inhabitants of the town were silently surrounding the newly invented scaffold, which they contemplated with a kind of curious awe; but one saw by the determined countenances of these people of the Sundgau that they still felt themselves to be free, and that they were by no means inclined to bend their necks to the bloody yoke. We heard that Schneider was going to Altkirch, where he would arrive before the evening, and remain some time. That took away all our appetite for the good dinner we hoped for, and though we had intended to rest ourselves in

the little old Swiss town, yet now we hastened away from it as quickly as if we had wings, by the nearest gate ; and be it noticed, I was foremost in the flight—for the concealed letter caused me to sweat with anguish, and it burned like glowing coals upon my back. While I was thus running so quickly in advance, my red Jacobite cap dangled so comically round my knapsack that one of my companions, to tease me, shouted after me Pfeffel's verse—

' See on his coward cap how Ensign Hare
Aye to the back his colours bright lets fly !
His lady friends in glee—too well aware
'Tis *there* most sure to meet the foeman's eye !'

At last we made a halt. None of us wished to come into contact with Schneider and his improvised 'committees of the public safety.' Some advised us to return, but thus we should have met Schneider, and probably fallen into his hands. Some wished to go direct to Basle, and give up the Jura mountains, but they were the great object of the little journey. But at that moment a large waggon with two strong horses coming up, the driver, a good-natured peasant, offered to take us to Altkirch. From thence it was a distance of less than three hours to Pfirt. The road was good, and moreover there was moonlight, so that we could reach Pfirt quite comfortably ; and the next morning it was arranged that we should see the castle and the neighbourhood, and then take our wished-for flight to the mountains. ' And the cuckoo's pursuit will not equal the rapidity of Balthasar's flight,' cried out one of my merry companions again.

No sooner said than done. We drove to Altkirch ; there

took a guide, went through a very beautiful forest, and reached the old residence of the once powerful Counts of Pfirt, at nine o'clock in the evening, tired to death. We put up at the Bull Inn, kept by a citizen named Vogelweid, to whom I was to give the letter and the assignats for Delille. The intelligence of Schneider's arrival at Altkirch had spread general consternation, even in the peaceful little mountain village, and on our arrival we were immediately besieged with questions. We were obliged to relate when and where we had met him, and what we had heard of his plans. In the confusion around me I was very uneasy, and the unfortunate letter to Delille weighed me down like a millstone. In vain I sought to speak to the landlord of the Bull privately, in order to acquit myself of my commission: he was in the parlour, surrounded by so many people, and so taken up with their claims, that I could not get near him. During the whole night I was dreaming of Schneider, of hatchets and of the guillotine, and more than once I started up very much frightened. I rose early, and my companions were still all asleep when I slipped noiselessly out of the large room, where a night's lodging had been prepared for us on fresh straw. Silence reigned without. The 'décade' had happily fallen on a Sunday, and the morning was remarkably fine.

Hastily I passed through the stone gate, and over the portentous drawbridge of the old baronial castle, only occupied with the letter, and with the thought how I could best get rid of it.

But above, on the castle height, the finest point of our

beautiful Alsace, in the pure fresh morning air, I soon forgot my trouble, the letter, Schneider, and the guillotine. The glorious prospect, the quiet solemnity of the Sabbath, which seemed to come down in blessing from the azure sky above to the fruitful land below, as it lay spread out at my feet in the loveliest garb of spring, between the range of the Vosges and the Rhine and distant Black Forest, all raised my heart and mind to Him whose 'going forth is prepared as the morning' (Hosea vi. 3).

We had no longer any Sunday in poor France ; but here, on this height, it was really a primeval Sabbath, such as that must have been on which Christ rose triumphant o'er the grave. Down below, in the ruined chapel of the castle, knelt a monk, who, after he had performed his first orisons, laid a nosegay of fresh flowers, gathered from the forest, at the foot of the stone cross ; then he vanished under the ruins, like an apparition of bygone ages. Above, not far from me, sat the landlord of the Bull Inn on a mossy stone, rosary in hand, reading devoutly in his little book of prayers. That gave me confidence in him, for in those days of bold infidelity, when the little flock of the faithful were obliged to conceal themselves, the right hand of fellowship was stretched out to Christians of whatever name, and prayer was the token of recognition, like the sign of the Cross among the early Christians. I approached the landlord, and told him at once that I had been directed to him in order to deliver a commission for Mr. Delille.

'Ah ! for Mr. Delille ? Yes, he has been living here for several weeks in the monastery of Luppach ; but yester-

day it got wind that the red gang was approaching Altkirch, and thereupon he went to Blochmont.'

'Is that far from here?'

'A good walker can reach it in two or three hours; but Mr. Delille is safe up there, and the executioners with their infernal machine will not mount up thither as long as the good people of the Sundgau have fists. Rely upon that, citizen.'

I took the packet of assignats and the red cap out of my pocket.

'Here is money,' I said, 'and in the lining of the cap a letter for Mr. Delille. Would you have the kindness to send both to him at Blochmont, citizen Vogelweid?'

'The money I will send with all my heart, but let the letter stay where it is, citizen. Letters are dangerous goods now-a-days, and it has cost many a one his life who has taken charge of them.'

'But what must I then do with it? I cannot be burdened, as with a guilty conscience, during the entire journey,' exclaimed I, almost in despair.

'No, certainly not. I will take it, for there is One above who is more powerful than Schneider and his companions, and He is the Lord and Master of us all. Give it me here, in God's name, and it will not come to grief.'

I was proceeding to draw the thread out of the lining, in order to take the letter from its hiding-place, when suddenly we heard the sound of noisy voices ascending the mountain, and in a trice we saw ourselves surrounded by the whole swarm of my companions, and by several inhabi-

tants of Pfirt, and with lightning speed I again pocketed my red cap. There was a perfect Babel of confusion in the little town below, they informed us ; every moment fugitives from Altkirch and the neighbourhood were arriving. Some wished to go to Blochmont, others over the mountains into Switzerland, and others wished to remain in concealment at Pfirt. All desired counsel and aid from the gallant landlord of the Bull ; my friends also turned to him and wished to know the quickest way of getting out of this mouse-trap, and of reaching Mariastein in safety, *en route* to Basle. It was certainly confidence in his Lord and Master, to whom he had just been praying, that had given to the landlord of the Bull a peace and security which astonished me. With almost the bearing of a king, he stood in the midst of the anxiously embarrassed countenances around him.

‘ Only keep quiet and all will go well. I will go down with you and see what is to be done. To you, young gentlemen of Strasbourg, I say, however, that the Bull Inn will no longer hold you, and moreover it would not be pleasant for you there ; therefore, when you have seen enough of the castle rock, go down below into the monastery of Luppach ; I will send you your dinner there, and then immediately afterwards you can set out on the way to Mariastein.’

He whispered to me as we were going away, ‘ When you reach the monastery give the letter to Brother Wendelin.’

To Brother Wendelin ! But surely there was no living soul in the deserted cloisters of the monastery, where only our footsteps and the song of my friends resounded.

The most courageous among us had begun to feel rather uneasy, and therefore some of our party had struck up on the castle rock patriotic songs which were then in vogue. Secular songs, as well as sacred, exercise an irresistible influence. Secular songs intoxicate like stimulants; sacred song elevates, attunes, and calms the mind, as pure clear spring-water refreshes and revives our wearied limbs. My companions had been singing lustily, and were more vociferous now. They stormed in the empty cells, and made many very unseemly jokes on what they found in them. At last they came to a locked door, and after having for some time shaken and battered it in vain, they were about to make the attempt to break it in by main force, when all at once the figure of a monk glided noiselessly from a concealed side-door, and quickly vanished again like a shadow into the dark passages. 'Halt!' exclaimed the wild youths, 'stand still, and give an account of whence you come,' and on they went, in closed ranks, singing the air of the Marseillaise, 'To arms, citizens—form your battalions,' in pursuit of the poor monk, first through several passages, and then down a steep winding stair which led to the crypt of the monastery. The graves of the brotherhood encircled the crypt; they resembled small chests built into the walls, and each secured by a small black iron door. Many were standing open and empty, and the skulls and bones of the dead, which were lying around, sufficiently proved how the barbarous Vandalism of the Revolution spared not even this quiet habitation of the dead. In this dreadful place we found the monk, deadly

pale and motionless, standing before a door, which, as I afterwards learned, led to the mortuary chapel.

'The fellow stands there for all the world like a statue,' growled one of my companions, who hitherto had been foremost, but who now, visibly alarmed, followed in the reserve corps; and now again the most courageous stepped forward, and sang, or rather screamed, amid peals of laughter, '*Allons, enfants de la patrie, le jour de gloire est arrivé,*' and they so assailed the poor monk that he sank down, dropping a little black box and a skull, which he had concealed under his cowl, at the feet of this giddy crew.

I hastened to him, and put both my arms round him. At first he looked at me with terror, but when I nodded to him in a friendly way, he answered with a grateful, pathetic smile. The skull was now picked up, and game would have been made of it, but somehow my companions could not do so, and their countenances all expressed some degree of perplexity.

'What kind of a ticket has it got between its teeth, which causes it to grin at us so wrathfully?' asked one of them.

'Let me see,' cried another.

'Yes—it is in Latin, and that I do not understand. Balthasar must translate it for us, for he is the only student among us.'

I took the ticket and read:—

'As thou art now, so once was I,
As I am now, thou soon shalt be.'

They all remained as quiet as mice, and, while I was raising the box from the ground, and replacing a thick roll

of parchment which had fallen out of it, my brave companions went out of the vault noiselessly, and I was left alone with the monk. With great difficulty I got out of him that he was Brother Wendelin, and had remained in the service of M. Delille in the monastery, while the other monks had all escaped to Mariastein. He had taken us for Schneider and his companions, and had therefore fled in such terror. He had also believed that his last hour had come, and felt that he would prefer dying beside the holy relics of the monastery, because he would then hope with more certainty to have an interest in the intercessions of the saints, although he no longer had any fear of death, since the world, and even his beloved monastery, had become to him no better than purgatory.

He related all this to me with many digressions, and with overflowing thankfulness—for in spite of all I could say to him he fancied that I had saved him from Schneider, and also from the guillotine, which he had never seen, and wonderful visions of which had taken possession of him. In the mortuary chapel, whither he now conducted me, the good Wendelin had secreted the pictures of the Virgin and the Saints, together with the relics of the monastery, and it presented throughout a strange and motley appearance. There were glass coffins, in which were lying, on half-decayed satin cushions, the entire skeletons of different saints whose names I forget, although Brother Wendelin related to me the legends of each. He showed me also a piece of the wood of the true cross, the staff of many a pilgrim, rosaries, and other things, which the Crusaders had brought from the Holy Sepulchre,

and which had possessed miraculous power. But all that was now a thing of the past. It had been atheistically violated by these wanton and sacrilegious robbers.

‘And that little black box which you carry so carefully under your arm—what is its history?’

‘It is my own relic; it does not belong to the monastery.’

‘Is this the skull of a saint?’

‘I am not able to say what poor soul once dwelt in it. It always stood, however, together with the label which you translated to-day into German, on Father Hugo’s table, and therefore I prize it so highly.’

‘Who was this Father Hugo?’

‘Truth to tell, he was a Benedictine, and therefore did not belong to us, as we are of the holy Franciscan order—or rather were, for there is nothing left of us now,’ he added, with a deep sigh.

‘What made him come to Luppach?’

‘He came over from Mariastein, where he could not agree with the Fathers on the subject of the mother of God, who is worshipped there, and to whom so many go on pilgrimage; and though he experienced much harsh treatment from our prelate, and from him of Mariastein, he nevertheless remained steadfast in his opinion, that God alone must be worshipped.’

‘He was then a Jansenist perhaps?’

‘He was not so really, but very much of that sort. He knew every flower, herb and blade of grass; and when the spring came, he sallied forth with a large tin box and his Alpenstock, and said to me, “Now, Brother Wendelin, shake

off the dust from your feet, and come up to the beloved mountains. We will go and botanize together." He was a botanist, and the large folios in which he kept his dried plants he called his herbarium; and he knew not only the name of every plant, but also the particular property with which God had endowed it, and in every bad accident he could apply some healing herb. Yes, and the amount of suffering he has cured, and the pain he has soothed, are only known to One above, and to myself who always accompanied him in his wanderings, when, in spite of wind and weather, he climbed up the mountains to seek remedies for his poor patients.'

The monk was as if transfigured; his rigid face became animated, and an expression of deep feeling beamed from his death-like glassy eyes, so that I contemplated him with amazement.

During the conversation we had seated ourselves on the bier, and when I looked first at the dried-up bones around us, and then at the countenance of my companion, I thought involuntarily of a passage in Ezekiel xxxvii. 5: 'Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live.'

Brother Wendelin however continued: 'And the tending of fruit-trees he understood like no one else in the country. He brought our espalier apples and pears to a point of real magnificence; and the peaches! I do not exaggerate when I say that they were as large as my fist. This brought a great deal of money to the monastery, for all the persons of rank in the neighbourhood and from Basle

bought their fruit of us. And flowers! yes, dear sir, we had flowers in our garden as fair as those in Paradise! Father Hugo's auriculas and pinks were remarkably beautiful, and all the gentlemen, gardeners, and monasteries wished to have some of them. So he carried on a brisk trade with the monks of Upper Baden; and every autumn I have taken many a load of cuttings thither, and then have brought some from Baden back to our monastery.'

'You were very fond then of Father Hugo, Brother Wendelin?'

'And how could it be otherwise? When the warm sun appeared in spring, he would say to me: "Bestir thee, Brother Wendelin, and let us carry out our beautiful pots of auricula into the dear, bright sun;" and when I had done so, yes, it was a pleasure to see the tiny green leaves unfold themselves, and the tender buds raising their heads, as if to say: "Thank you, Brother Wendelin, now we are indeed glad." And before Father Hugo came to our monastery, I was just like the auriculas in winter—in a dark cellar, and I knew nought save the sweeping of cloisters and the performing of church services, and was always fearful and anxious. I was afraid of the Lord our God, and I trembled before His Holy Sacrament like an aspen leaf. But Father Hugo said to me, "What is the meaning of this? You seem to regard the Lord our God as if He were a cruel man and a tyrant, and yet He is your merciful Father, who loves you with all His heart." "Ah! that cannot be, Father Hugo! for no human being has ever loved poor Wendelin since he has been in this world—not even his father and

mother, for I never knew them, and came to the monastery as a little child; and that the Lord of heaven and earth should love me, the chief of sinners—no, Father Hugo, that is impossible!” “Listen, Brother Wendelin, do you think if we always allowed our auriculas to remain in the cellar, and never brought them out into the warm sun of God’s free heaven, that they would produce such exquisitely tinted flowers, and that they would afford such delicious fragrance?” “No, Father Hugo, their growth would certainly be stopped without air and sun.” “Then see that your poor soul does not perish in the dark cell of your slavish fear, but carry it out into the bright sun of heaven.” I did not, however, understand how a man could carry his soul into the sun, and looked at him therefore half-wonderingly. Then Father Hugo seized my hand, and, with a voice as tender as if it had come from heaven, he said: “Love is the sun of the soul, Brother Wendelin.” He then took out of that little black box (it always stood on his table) a thick roll of parchment—and, let me see, what did he call it? Oh! now I remember, he called it the book of the Gospel, and translated some of it for me into German;—how gracious and tender the Lord Jesus was—how He loved poor sinners—how He now appears for us, and is our Advocate before God’s holy judgment-throne. Oh! dear sir, that fell like heavenly music on my ears, and when again I felt anxious and overpowered with fear, I derived comfort from that beautiful verse which Father Hugo made me learn by heart: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”’

Here the good Wendelin folded his hands, a large tear rolled slowly down his haggard cheeks, and he said, with childlike fervour, 'Ah! Lord Jesus, how could I so have forgotten, during this reign of terror, that out of love to me Thou didst die upon the cross?'

Deeply moved, I seized the cold, withered hand of the good brother, and pressed it warmly in my own. He looked at me for a long time in silence, then with a friendly smile exclaimed, 'How truly you have done my heart good! Never have I felt so cheered since Father Hugo's death, and you have listened so patiently. But you must do me one more favour. Will you kindly take this little black box into your custody?—for the Lord our God has certainly sent you to the monastery expressly for that purpose.

'Your relics! What are you thinking of, Brother Wendelin? No; you must keep them yourself.'

'Oh! do take them, dear sir, I beg and pray of you. The book containing the Gospel is written in Latin, with which you must be well acquainted, and I have no longer any one who can read it into German for me; and there are besides beautiful stories about the former generation of the noble counts of Pfirt. Father Hugo has often related them to me, and he has also told me about a Benedictine monk, whom he rejoiced in the prospect of meeting in heaven, and whom he would immediately seek out on entering his eternal rest. Now he is with him, and, thank God, has not lived to see all the troubles of our time.'

'How long is it since he died?'

'Just five years. To-day is the anniversary of his death;

and when, in my mortal fright, you raised me so gently from the ground, and looked at me so kindly, it was to me as if my dear Father Hugo, grown young again, had come to my assistance from heaven. In his last hours he was continually pointing to the little black box, as if he wished to say something to me, which unfortunately I could not make out. After his death I took it, and kept it concealed, because I was always in dread lest it should contain something which might lead people to accuse him even in his grave—for poor Father Hugo suffered a great deal. Therefore I beg of you to take the box with you. I shall soon depart hence, and it will be a comfort to me when I die to know that it is in your hands.'

'Hallo, Balthasar!' exclaimed one of my friends from above on the winding stair; 'why are you hiding yourself? Come up from that musty vault to the clear light of day. Dinner is ready!'

We rose. I quietly took the letter out of the red cap, and begged the monk to let it be despatched as soon as possible to M. Delille.

'With all my heart,' replied he, placing the letter in his bosom, and pressing the black box into my hands with a significant and beseeching gesture.

Brother Wendelin became quite lively and talkative, even with my wild companions. He waited upon us at dinner, and accompanied us afterwards over the ridge as far as the road to Mariastein. While we were eating, he packed the black chest in my knapsack, and it was not without hearts full of emotion and tears in our eyes that we bade each other farewell.

At Basle I found letters from Zurich. My Frederica was in Upper Baden, and begged me to join her there. On the lovely banks of the clear Limma she helped me to look through the contents of the chest. With holy awe, we unfolded the yellow, almost worn-out leaves of the Testament, written in a very neat hand, and transcribed from the Vulgate. Two old manuscripts, also in the Latin tongue, interested me uncommonly. The first was written in the twelfth century by Father Arnulph, and another at a later period by Brother Benedict. I related their contents to Frederica, who was so fascinated that she made me promise that, when I had time and leisure, I would translate them into German, and have them printed. Father Hugo's diary gave us a deep insight into a very beautiful mind, which had honestly struggled after truth, and had found peace in the Word of God, and in faith in Jesus Christ.

'Oh!' said Frederica, 'how it warms one's heart to look at the record of these noble men! How closely are we united to them by the bond of love, which embraces all the children of God, from Abel and Enoch to our own times! "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all?" In Him we are all one in holy fellowship, here below and there above!'

Brother Wendelin, of whom I had much to tell, had become the hero of our little company at Baden. Frederica prepared for him a little agreeable surprise. She knitted a very pretty little purse, into which every one of the company put his mite, and the wealthy several dollars; then, from the monastery where Wendelin was still had in remem-

brance, flowers were bought, and packed in a large box, besides Baden bonbons and all kinds of sweetmeats and delicacies. A lady from Basle offered to take the box with her, and to deliver it in safety to the landlord of the Bull Inn. I wrote to the latter to ask him to receive it, and added a few lines for Brother Wendelin. We had all been as happy as children during the purchasing and the packing, and we felt how much better it is to give than to receive. The black chest, which is made of ebony lined with silver, and adorned with wonderful scrolls and pictures of saints, has since become my beloved relic, and to me a holy sepulchre, to which, till the great morning of the resurrection, I have confided my fondest and most lovely memories. I left Baden happy, and with a heart full of early love and hope : a few weeks later, my Frederica died of a low fever, and the Lord then said to me, 'Thou shalt go through life alone.'

The same day that I received Frederica's papers from Zurich, a letter came from Father Lavater, and another from the landlord of the Bull at Pfirt. I will give them both as follows :—

'Among the heavy afflictions which lie upon me, my dear deeply-tryed Balthasar, one is, that I cannot fly to you in person, instead of sending a few lines of brotherly consolation and heartfelt sympathy. I felt your sad loss, that I can truly say. I was ashamed that I could do absolutely nothing for my friend under so afflictive an event. My heart's desire and prayer is, that God's healing finger may touch you. Ah ! what should we be without these touchings of God's hand ? Daily do I feel this more deeply. May we in everything that happens to us be led to recognise God's love comfort-

ing us from on high! Dear brother in the Lord, believe where you do not see; and let this fiery trial be to you a pledge and seal of sweet and heavenly consolation! Amen and Amen!

JOHN CASPAR LAVATER.

‘ In great haste.’

‘ Greeting to you, Citizen Balthasar,—

‘ I hereby inform you that we this morning buried Brother Wendelin. He had desired to be most kindly remembered to you, and to thank you very much for all the benefits bestowed upon him from Upper Baden. They were a source of great pleasure to him. The money came at an acceptable time, as thereby we were able to nurse him well during his illness, and to let him want for nothing; and early yesterday he spoke to me unreservedly, and said, “Landlord, send some one to Mariastein; a brother must come to me with the Holy Sacrament, for I shall very soon die. Last night Father Hugo appeared to me and said, ‘ Now, Brother Wendelin, shake off the last dust from your feet, and come up with me into Paradise, where much fairer flowers bloom than on our mountains;’ ” and then the Brother folded his hands, and said with a loud voice, “ Praised be the Lord Jesus Christ,” to which I, as it became me, replied, “ World without end, Amen.” Then all was over with him, and he died in the name of the Lord. He was indeed an honest fellow, good Brother Wendelin!

‘ M. Delille was very grateful to you for the letter and the money. The rule of red republicanism cannot last for ever, for the pitcher is only taken to the fountain till it is broken, and the Lord our God is ever the Master of us all.

‘ I hope you are in good health, and that you will come again in more peaceful times to Pfirt, and under more propitious circumstances than on that Sunday when everything was topsy-turvy.—I remain your obedient servant,

‘ VOGELWEID, Landlord of the Bull Inn.’

Years have now passed away ; the day is declining ; the pilgrim's dress is laid aside, and soon the weary wanderer will go home. I have employed the quiet hours of life's eventide in carrying out Frederica's wish, and have translated both the Latin manuscripts. I have had neither the courage nor the leisure to do so sooner ; but after I had translated them I felt that I ought to relate how those dear relics came into my hands, and in doing so I became quite young again. Those were certainly the happiest days of my life which I spent in dear Baden beside my Frederica, and the remembrance of them has been for my withered heart what the warm spring sun was for Brother Wendelin's auriculas. The withered leaves unfold and grow green again, and the crushed bud of life uplifts its bowed head. ‘ Because I live, ye shall live also,’ our Lord and Master has said, and therefore there comes to us animating as a vernal breeze from across the grave, the sound of those words,—Resurrection,—Re-union.

Here follows the translation of Father Arnulph's manuscript. The second, by Brother Benedict, which is a fascinating episode in the history of the Counts of Pfirt, will appear later, if the Lord will, and our life is spared.

TRANSLATION OF THE LATIN MANUSCRIPT OF
FATHER ARNULPH.

' Sanctify them through Thy Truth, Thy Word is Truth.'—JOHN xvii. 17.

*Written A.D. 1175, in the Monastery of Veldpach,¹ by me,
Brother Arnulph, of the holy Order of St. Benedict,
lately Domestic Chaplain to the noble Counts of Pfirt.*

In the year A.D. 1144, Frederick the First, Count of Pfirt, together with his consort the Countess Stephanie, and his son Louis, the present reigning Count of Pfirt, founded the monastery of Veldpach, for the glory of God and for the salvation of their immortal souls, and by a deed authorized the venerable Abbot of Cluny to found there a colony of monks of the holy Benedictine order, so that, under the direction of a prior, they might serve God without distraction, and do their parts towards the extension of His kingdom upon earth. At that time I was sent by the Right Reverend Ortlieb, Bishop of Basle, from the cathedral school of that town, where I had been a pupil, to the Fathers of Cluny in the monastery of Veldpach, in order that I might study divinity there, and especially that I might become familiar with the writings of the Abbot of Clairvaux, now called St. Bernard; and I was subsequently received into the holy Benedictine order, and later still, during the lifetime of the noble Count Frederick the First, appointed chaplain of the castle of Hohen-Pfirt. In this difficult post I have neither

¹ Now called Feldbach, situated between Altkirch and Pfirt.

said nor done anything, in my public capacity, knowingly and willingly, for which I could not answer at the Great Day before God's holy judgment-throne. I am, however, compelled on account of my great weakness, and of the sin which always cleaves to me, to acknowledge that in sight of the Omniscient God, who tries the heart and reins, I must always stand as a great sinner ; and while I was an inmate of the baronial castle, I have often grievously sinned through anger, harsh and unseemly words, and too severe judgments, which may our merciful God not lay to my charge, but by His grace forgive, for the sake of the merits of the blood of our crucified Redeemer Jesus Christ. After this sincere acknowledgment of sin, I will then, according to the wish of our venerable prior, relate why and wherefore I was deprived of my office as domestic chaplain to the noble Counts of Pfirt, and I will deposit the manuscript among the archives of our monastery, so that our holy order may not incur any suspicion of having denied our common faith, for which faith the Apostles and Martyrs, and the holy Fathers of our Church, 'loved not their lives unto the death,'—the belief in the holy Trinity, in the person of the Mediator, in the Holy Ghost, in the grace of God, and in our common redemption by the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross¹—a faith for which I am ready to die, acknowledging it with my last breath before God and men ! Amen.

The circumstances I am about to relate occurred during the administration of my holy office at the castle of Pfirt. In the beginning, that is to say as long as the old Count

¹ Wilhelm, Abbot of St. Thierry, 1139.

lived, everything went on well, and I was enabled to fulfil the duty confided to me by God, as the pastor and confessor of the different members of the noble family, conscientiously, and to the best of my ability. Old Count Frederick was a brave man, and he ruled in his lands and in his house in a spirit of chivalry.

He placed his son, the young Count Louis, under my management and instructions. The latter, however, had a very feeble character, without a grain of his father's ability and firmness of will, or of his mother's impetuous nature; and he preferred poring over books to tilting, wrestling, and hunting. This seriously displeased the Count, and he often said to me, 'Rouse that boy, Father Arnulph, and do not make either a soft fellow or a monk of him, for he must one day rule over a country and people, to defend them, and preserve them from all injustice.' 'Yes, most noble Lord,' I then replied; 'but God is the potter, and makes out of His clay what He pleases. We cannot change wood into iron, nor clay into steel; hence I cannot make a lion-hearted knight or a brave warrior of our young man; since the Lord our God has given him neither the taste nor the power for it.'

But we got on, nevertheless, with the help of God, for the head and heart of the old Count were in the right place, and the mind of the young Louis was open to the reception of the sacred truths of Christianity, and he was willing to be led and instructed in the fear of God; but he was a trembling reed, moved by every breath; and as unfortunately the wind always blew from two opposite quarters with

the Count and Countess, and very often whirlwinds followed, it was frequently a hard case with the young Count, especially when the hot, scorching wind of his mother inclined this trembling reed of a young soul towards the sinful lust of the flesh, towards luxury and haughtiness of demeanour, and towards riot, revellings, and the lust of the eye.

In course of time, Count Frederick asked the hand of the pretty young Countess Richenda of Habsburg for his son, and Count Louis was over head and ears in love, and was transported into the third heaven over the lovely maiden who had been brought to him from the good lands of Switzerland.

During the marriage festivities at the castle there was no end of mirth and rejoicing, of singing and the sound of music.

After the celebration of the wedding, however, everything resumed its ordinary course, and the two ladies, the Countess Stephanie and her daughter-in-law, were obliged to remain within bounds, and to behave most properly as long as the old Count lived. The latter had the joy of seeing two grandchildren come into the world, namely the dear little Herzelande, who was the apple of her grandsire's eye, his comfort and joy; and also the little boy Frederick, the hereditary Count of Pfirt and Egisheim, who turned the heads of both his mother and his grandmother, and they vied with each other in spoiling and mismanaging the child, so that he threatened to become an Absalom. The old Count could not prevent this, unfortunately, as he died when the little boy was still in swaddling clothes.

After his departure, and when we had buried the wearied

body, according to his wish, in the church of our monastery at Veldpach, then, by the will of God and his own right, his son Louis was to wear the Count's crown, and to be Lord of Pfirt and the surrounding lands. He sincerely desired to tread in the footsteps of his deceased father, and in the fear of God to rule his lands and people, as one who knows that he has a Master in heaven—a just Judge, who has no respect of persons. Of good Count Louis it might however be said, 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' He was so craftily ensnared and sung to sleep by his mother and his beautiful young wife, that, though he wore the crown on his head, the two ladies nevertheless ruled the roast, and acted without any control, according to their own pleasure, especially the Countess Stephanie, for during the time that her brother, the old childless Count Ulrich of Egisheim, was lying on his sick-bed, and she foresaw that the castles and territories of the family of Egisheim, together with her entire domain, would be inherited first by Count Louis, and then by her idol, that little imp Frederick, there was no limit to her extravagance; and things were carried on in a grander style at our castle of Pfirt than at the Emperor's palace,—what with pages, maids of honour, minstrels, festive banquets, tournaments and dances, eating and drinking, carriages and horses, wrestling and hunting, and a cart-load of costly furniture, splendid attire, and valuables of gold and silver, pearls and precious stones, and other things of that description. When, however, Count Ulrich of Egisheim died soon afterwards, and the rich inheritance devolved on the house of his sister, our Countess Stephanie,

then the tempter came to her and led her up to a high mountain, viz., the balcony of her high castle, and showed her all the surrounding country from the Rhine to the Vosges, and to the most distant boundaries of Burgundy, and then he spoke these words to her heart : 'All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them : for that is delivered unto me ; and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.'

And the poor Countess did not look unto Jesus, who alone could have saved her poor soul, and have given her the strength to ejaculate, 'Get thee behind me, Satan. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.' But she suffered her covetous eyes to rest complacently on the riches of this world which lay spread out at her feet.

'All that is mine,' her proud heart repeated after the tempter. She held out her hand to him in the unholy covenant, and the compact was made which would carry her to everlasting destruction.

I too, Father Arnulph, then suffered myself to be sifted like wheat by the devil, and thus deeply sinned. I was lacking in love, and forgot what manner of spirit I should be of, and I dealt out hard words, threats, and reproofs against the unchaste and immoral creature, like St. Peter with the sword. I called the Countess Stephanie a haughty idolatrous Jezebel, and the Countess Richenda an adulterous Herodias ; and especially, I addressed Count Louis harshly, and told him that God would require of him the soul of his little son, and that he was severely

to blame for letting the boy be brought up under such a bad system, and for allowing him to indulge all bad passions. I accused him of being another Eli, who honoured his mother, wife and child more than God; and prophesied that he would share Eli's fate. But 'grievous words stir up anger,' the wise man says; the anger against me was great among the noble family, and they derisively called me only 'Father Wolf.' The Countess Stephanie would certainly have driven me from the castle, and deprived me of my holy office, if it had been within the bounds of secular power to do so, and if Count Louis would have permitted it. But God, in His great grace and mercy, had placed a gentle dove in this falcon's nest, namely the child Herzelande, who stood there like a rose among the thorns. She was her father's darling, and his guardian angel. He clung with his whole soul to the child, and the child to him, and she was a real blessing.

It was about the same time that Father Weridon, of the Franciscan order, came to the castle. He possessed the wisdom of the serpent, but unfortunately not the harmlessness of the dove. At first he wished to speak kindly to everybody, and behaved extremely well to me. He wanted to drag me into the controversy between our two orders as to the Immaculate Conception. This, however, I evaded. In short, he ingratiated himself with everybody, but I was not at all charmed, and I withdrew myself more and more from him. In this my retirement I began to examine myself, and the grace of the Lord led me to discover the leaven of wickedness in my heart, and by the mouth of a holy inno-

cent, namely that of the child Herzelande. He caused a little word to touch my heart to the quick. I became ashamed on account of my passionate wrath, and humbled myself before God, and prayed for a spirit of love. As they had begun to take scarcely any notice of me at the castle, and to act as if I were no longer there, and as the little Herzelande was equally left to herself,—seeing that the old falcon hen looked upon the little dove as a surreptitious egg which did not belong to her brood,—it was a natural consequence that the child and myself were much together. I related to her many things, while she devoured the words which fell from my lips, especially when I told her the beautiful stories out of the Bible concerning the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I often sat with the child on the little stone seat, or by the castle well, which the old Count, with great trouble and expense, had caused to be hewn out of the rock, 115 fathoms deep, in order to supply his castle with fresh water; and it often seemed to me as if God had appointed me to pour the living water of His Word upon the hard rock of human hearts; but as I had sinned against the Lord, like the Israelites, and like Moses had doubted His grace and great mercy, I feared I should never succeed in leading the souls committed to me into the heavenly Canaan.

Above the stone garden-seat two sparrows had built their nests in the wall, to the great delight of Herzelande, and while the swallow was sitting hatching her eggs, the child had made it so tame with her gentle ways that it would eat grains of corn out of her hand, and Herzelande often stood

for hours on the bench, and watched with a solemn gaze the struggling efforts of the birds; for the old steward of the castle had told her that the beautiful black and white swallows wore mourning for the Lord Jesus, and therefore they ought not to be eaten, and that it was a deadly sin to take away the life of one such. And when the young ones came out of the eggs, the old ones took the grains of corn from Herzelande's hand into their open beaks, and they began to be fledged, and to spread their little wings. The child, in the joy of her heart, more than once fell upon my neck, old grumbler that I was, and called out, 'Oh! be glad too, Father Arnulph, that our young sparrows will soon be able to fly.' Then with the dear little girl I soon forgot all else, and rejoiced with her so much over the birds, that I almost seemed to have become a child again. And it often seemed to me as though I understood now for the first time the blessing of the holy innocence of childhood, and also that saying of Christ,—'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' But unfortunately, there was another child at the castle, who had almost made me disbelieve these words of God. The little boy Frederick was malicious as a little panther, and cruel as though, like the Pagan twins Romulus and Remus, he had been suckled by a fierce she-wolf, and had never lain on a loving human mother's breast. It seemed to afford him a really diabolical delight if he could either deprive his good little sister of a pleasure, or else mar and damp it. When at last Herzelande's wish was realized, and the young swallows flew for the first time, and the child had been rejoicing at it, then the wicked little boy watched like a lurk-

ing cat, and pounced upon one of the helpless little birds, and, amid peals of mocking laughter, pulled out its little feathers. I came up as the waiting-maid was screaming and remonstrating, and Herzelande, trembling and deadly pale, was vainly endeavouring to release the tortured bird from the bloody fingers of the little boy. When I reproved him severely for it, he made a mocking face at me, saying, 'What is that to you, Father Wolf?' and he flung the poor writhing creature at my feet. Then my wrath quite getting the better of me, I gave the young aristocratic monster a sharp box on the ear, picked up the swallow, and threw it into the castle well, in order to put an end to its sufferings. Thereupon the little boy raised a cry of murder, threw himself down on the ground like a madman, crying out, 'Oh, grandmother, grandmother, Father Wolf has struck me!'

The Countess Stephanie rushed out in her rich silk dress, very red in the face; she looked at me fiercely, and in an angry voice inquired, 'How have you dared, Father Arnulph, to raise your hand against my noble grandson?' I then related the circumstances to her quite calmly, and added, 'Therefore, most noble Lady, I exhort you, in God's name, and in virtue of my holy office, if you love the little boy, and if you have the welfare of your house at heart, remember that God's holy Word says, "He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.'"

During my conversation the Countess became quite pale, and I could not help noticing what a transformer of the human countenance anger is. In one moment it can paint it

red as crimson, and in another, white as ashes. The Countess Stephanie forthwith asked the waiting-maid to lift the little boy from the ground, and to carry him into the castle. This however was no easy task, for the furious child began to kick like an unmanageable foal ; he bit the hands of the poor girl, and struck her in the face with his clenched fist ; and when I stepped forward and wished to help the trembling girl to control him, the Countess pushed me away roughly, and exclaimed, ' Do not touch him, and let me never see you again ! ' Then she took the boy in her arms, and rushed away with him as hastily as she had come.

I now found myself again alone with Herzelande, who was sitting on the stone garden-seat, and had concealed the other young swallow in the bosom of her frock, and the old birds, after having tamely fluttered about for some time, were now sitting one on the shoulder and the other on the head of the child. Herzelande was sobbing without intermission, and when I seated myself beside her, and wished to comfort her, she asked in her gentle little voice, ' Oh ! Father Arnulph, why did you throw the poor little swallow into the castle well, where it must have been instantly drowned ? '

' Because I pitied it, my child ; it had been dreadfully handled, and it would have been a sin to let it writhe and suffer any longer.'

' But could not the Lord Jesus have cured it, and made its beautiful little feathers grow again ? '

' Yes certainly, my child, if He thought it good so to do ; for with Him all things are possible ; but I knew beforehand that He would not do so.'

‘And why not?’

‘When a poor animal is tortured to death, and needlessly deprived of its life, then God does not bring it to life again. He, however, who has committed the wicked deed, will as little escape punishment as those ungodly children who mocked the prophet Elisha, and were torn in pieces by bears.’

‘And will the Lord send a bear now to devour Frederick?’ asked Herzelande in consternation.

‘It would only be what he deserves, for what he has so cruelly done to the poor swallow. Elisha cursed the wicked children in the name of the Lord; and the Lord sent two bears out of the wood, and they tore the children in pieces.’

‘But you have surely not cursed Frederick? No! you cannot surely, Father Arnulph, have done that?’

I could not with a good conscience say No to the child, as I had more than once done so in my heart.

‘Oh! pray, pray, do not curse him, Father Arnulph, or else a bear will come out of “Wolf’s Hollow,”¹ and tear him to pieces, because he has so cruelly tortured the poor bird!’

I stood there before the child in her dove-like innocence, I, an old and great sinner; and the Spirit reproved me, and spoke in my heart those words—‘Bless and curse not, for I have called thee to distribute blessings, and not cursing.’ Herzelande had folded her hands; she

¹ Near the Castle of Pfirt there is a hollow which bears the same name to this day.

glanced up at me with the large tears in her eyes, and with an angelic look she asked me, 'Can the Lord Jesus not forgive Frederick also his deadly sin, even as He forgave the murderer on the cross?'

'The murderer on the cross prayed to Him, my child, and the Lord only forgives those who pray to Him and repent of their sins.'

'Oh! then we will pray that the Lord Jesus may lead Frederick to repent of his sin, and may teach him to pray for pardon, so that he may not be devoured by the bears. Only think how our grandmother would weep, and our father and mother also; and if we two pray with all our hearts we shall be heard. Now, you have promised me, Father Arnulph!'

At that moment came one of the Count's suite, with the waiting-maid, to the well; she pointed out to him the swallows' nest, which he had been commanded by the Countess Stephanie to destroy; and as the nest was tumbling down, the old swallows being much frightened flew away. Herzelande pressed her little swallow to her heart, hid her face in my garment, and whispered to me softly, 'Now we must pray for grandmother also, Father Arnulph, so that she may not, with Frederick, be torn to pieces by the bears; for she has grieved the Lord Jesus in His dear little swallows, and has committed a great sin.'

This then it was which the Holy Spirit wished to teach me. I had been zealous for the Lord, the Lord of Sabaoth, and I would willingly have called down fire from heaven to consume the adulterous generation. But to pray for the

poor erring children of men, to pray and wrestle for the immortal souls intrusted to me—that I had neglected to do; and I stood there before the cross of the Redeemer, who prayed for malefactors, and who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live. With this view of the cross, my angry heart, so greatly lacking in love, could no longer judge and condemn, and like the publican in the gospel, I could only strike upon my breast and cry, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’

It came to pass that, a few days after, Count Louis sent for me, and the summons was delivered through Father Weridon. The latter addressed me thus in honeyed words, and said: ‘The Lord bestows an office, and the Lord deprives of the same; for the foolishness of men and the wisdom of God rule the world. A wise man, however, is superior to the favour and the disapprobation of men, and he knows how to recognise the finger of God in everything.’ I now saw through it all, and knew which way the wind was blowing. I was not in the least surprised when I came into the presence of Count Louis and perceived on the table a large document with an episcopal seal. The Count stood before me with a particularly embarrassed countenance, and looked as though he did not know how to introduce the subject he had in hand. Herzelande, who was also in her father’s presence, gently pulled my garment, conducted me on tip-toe into the deep recess in the window, and pointed softly with an upraised finger and joyful countenance to the window-pane above. There the old steward of the castle had suspended a little basket, had placed a little moss and

flannel in it, and had made a bed for the young rescued swallow. 'And see, the old swallows are flying up and down, and feeding the young one, and they are teaching it how to fly, so that when the winter comes it may go home with them to the beautiful, warm country you have so often spoken to me about, Father Arnulph, where it is as delightful as in Paradise,' exclaimed Herzelande in ecstasy.

Then Count Louis, who had also stepped forward, stretched out his hand to me, as in old times, and with a voice full of emotion, said, 'I am heartily sorry, Father Arnulph.'

'May the child soon go to her heavenly home ; for she is too good for this wicked world, and the company of Korah which rebels against the Lord !' I exclaimed as if in a dream.

Thereupon the poor Count was greatly alarmed. He took the child Herzelande in his arms, and asked, 'What do you mean, Father Arnulph ?'

'Pardon me, most noble Count, I do not wish to be (and God knows it) a messenger of evil tidings to you, for you are dear to me and the child also. But it can never go well in the end with your noble house ; therefore look you to it. Up here at your castle the wind is being sown, and therefore only the whirlwind will be reaped.'

'You do our beloved mother injustice, and you do not acknowledge the pious designs of the noble lady. Only think now of the many religious institutions she has endowed from the foundation of your monastery of Veldpach to this day, when she is intending to build a monastery at the foot of our castle-rock on our property of Luppach, in

order to present it to the brethren of the strictest order of the Holy Franciscans.'

'The founding of pious institutions, the building of churches and monasteries, is all very good and praiseworthy, most noble Lord. Those only, however, can do this to whom God has given the means—that is to say, wealth and influence,—and therefore to God alone the honour is due. The sanctuaries, however, which are the most pleasing to God, and which we should all build for Him, are those in our own hearts. There, on that territory which has been intrusted to us, we should endeavour, by the grace of God, to found a temple which shall be the habitation of the Holy Ghost. In every home, be it a palace or a cottage, each member of the same ought to carry about with him a holy place where God dwells, and where everything is quiet and peaceful as within the sacred walls of the cloister. It does not appear to me, however, and I think you must yourself perceive it, most noble Count, that here, at Hohen-Pfirt, any trace of this inner and spiritual temple of God is to be found.'

The Count looked down on the ground in some confusion for a while, and repeatedly passed his fingers through Herzelande's golden curls, then suddenly he replied, 'Do you know that you and your order are accused of heresy before the chapter at Basle?'

'Impossible! Count Louis.'

'Yes, really and truly, Father Arnulph! you are accused of not believing in the Holy Mother of God, and of not rendering her due homage and worship.'

‘Did you formerly learn that of me in the instruction I imparted to you, or just now from Father Weridon?’

Thereupon Count Louis pulled Herzelande's curls so roughly that the child screamed aloud. He then drew himself up quickly like one who can assume authority, stepped to the table, and handed the episcopal document to me with the words, ‘Once again, Father Arnulph, I am sorry, really very sorry; but as matters now stand, and for the honour and peace of our noble house, you will easily perceive . . .’

I perceived only too well; I did not wish him, however, to observe it, and I inquired calmly, ‘What kind of document is that, and what has it to do with me, Count Louis?’

‘Father Weridon had better explain it to you, for naturally he understands these things better than I do. On account of the serious accusation which rests on your order, by reason of the alleged offence against the Holy Mother of God, and at the desire of my beloved mother and dear wife, who do not wish the stain of heresy to rest on our noble house, the venerable Bishop of Basle has appointed Father Weridon, of the Holy Franciscan order, to be our domestic chaplain at Hohen-Pfirt. You, however, with all respect, he has deprived of the administration of your former holy office.’

After I had unfolded the document, read it, and had discovered what it contained, I laid it down again on the table, and quietly answered, ‘That Father Weridon, at the desire of the Countess Stephanie, has been appointed

domestic chaplain at the castle in my stead, and that I have been deprived of my holy office there—against all this I have nothing to say, Count Louis. That, however, which relates to the imagined heresy of our highly esteemed Benedictine order is a wicked lie, and there is not a word about it in the Bishop's document. You know full well that the sole ground of my being deprived of my office was a box on the ear, and a swallow tortured to death, and not at all a matter of faith in the Holy Virgin and her immaculate conception, which latter is a very subtle point of theology, that you, most noble Count, and your lady, cannot understand, and on which you are not called to give an opinion.'

The poor Count stood before me as in past times when, as a little boy, I had found him out in a lie, and he looked so humbled, that Herzelande climbed up on the table, and asked me, 'Why have you made papa so sad, Father Arnulph?'

'Would to God, my child, that I had succeeded in awakening in the heart of your noble father that sorrow of which no one repents, and which works repentance unto salvation!' I replied, deeply moved.

I folded my hands and prayed, 'O Lord God, Thou who triest the hearts and reins, and before whose holy judgment throne we must all appear, behold how the curse of sin hangs like a black thunder-cloud over this house! Do Thou turn it away according to Thy great goodness and mercy. Do Thou Thyself awaken the poor misguided souls with the persuasive call of Thy grace, that they may be

delivered from Satan's grasp, and may turn to Thee and live. Amen.'

Thereupon Count Louis fell down, pale and trembling, on his knees,⁵ and wept like a child, and when Herzelande knelt down beside him I spread my hands over the head of my pupil and his child, and I called down upon them blessing and strength from on high. I prayed to the Lord that He would save both these immortal souls and keep them from the evil one, or else that He would rather take them away out of this abyss of sin into the heavenly Paradise.

I thereupon shook off the dust from my feet, tied up my bundle, took my staff in my hand, and with cheerful courage descended from the proud baronial castle into my quiet cell in the monastery, that I might there serve God without distraction, and by diligence and prayer prepare myself for my heavenly home. Amen.

But the reproach cast by the Franciscans upon our order vexed not only our prior and our whole fraternity, but myself very specially. We often conversed with one another on the subject till far on in the night, and earnestly inquired among ourselves if our order really held such erroneous opinions, and had apostatized from the holy Apostolic faith. And in all the writings and confessions of faith of the holy Martyrs, Fathers of the Church and Councils, we only found mention of a Triune God, and nowhere of four Gods in one, as it must be if the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the Virgin, were one. The Lord further commanded that baptism should be administered in the name of God the

Father, and the Son, and Holy Ghost—in no wise, however, in the name of the Holy Virgin. Yes; and I would almost believe that when the haughty spiritual despots presume to create gods for themselves, we are again fallen from the faith of Christianity into the darkness of heathenism, and instead of the gods of Olympus, worship a whole host of self-created deities, and so fall away from Christ, the crucified Saviour of the world, who alone ‘of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.’

However, while we were all sitting diligently over our books, and were especially studying that of the holy Abbot Bernard, and one of us believed he had found this thing in his writings, St. Augustine occurred to my mind, who was long seeking after the truth, and to whom an inward voice, which was the voice of God, spoke: ‘Take and read.’

And what was he to read? Something similar to what we are now reading? Human wisdom and human opinions and views? By no means. He was to read the Word of God, which alone can be the touchstone of our faith, since it alone abides for ever, even when heaven and earth have passed away. I there resolved in my retirement, invoking the grace of God, to read the sacred books of the New Testament, viz., the account of the wondrous incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, His sufferings and death, His glorious resurrection and ascension, and the foundation and extension of His church upon earth, as the Holy Ghost, in the four Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles, has recorded for our edification and rule of faith. Above all, however, in the Word of God, the Lord himself speaks to us, and He

by His Word, through the power of His Spirit, finds an entrance into our hearts; therefore the reading of this holy Word should always be preceded by earnest prayer; yes, on our knees as it were, in the sight and presence of the Almighty God; and I have endeavoured, as far as my great weakness would allow me, to read these sacred books in this spirit.

During this blessed study, light broke in upon my soul. I apprehended the great truth that 'God is love.' 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' Thou, however, Mary, thou art highly favoured; yes, I will say blessed above all others, since the Lord chose thee to be the mother of His only begotten Son; and because thou didst not despise this wonderful grace, but didst believe and obey even where thou didst not understand, and didst remain so calmly standing by the cross when 'a sword was piercing through thine own soul,' therefore shalt thou be regarded in the Church in all ages as a pure and holy example of humility, faith, and love. Yes, we call thee blessed; yes, all generations shall call thee blessed. But worship thee?—no! for to thee and us, and to all, there is only one name given, either in heaven or on earth, whereby we can be saved—Jesus Christ, thy God and Saviour, Mary, and my Saviour and the Saviour of us all, most blessed for ever! Amen.

I, Brother Arnulph, of the holy Benedictine order, conclude and seal this written testimony with the common confession of faith of the holy Apostles, Martyrs, and Fathers of the Church:—

'I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.'

THE KAISERSBERG DOCTOR AND LITTLE MAT.

‘Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.’—MATT. ix. 38.

IT was towards the close of the eighth decade of the fifteenth century, on the last Saturday of the Carnival, that the whole population of Kaisersberg was in a state of extraordinary excitement. *Johannes Geiler*,¹ the famous and universally beloved Cathedral preacher of the free imperial city of Strasburg, usually known only as ‘*the Kaisersberg Doctor*,’ had recently arrived as guest at Count William of Rappolstein’s, in company with another of the learned men of Strasburg, Sebastian Brandt, then holding an official position at Basle. Geiler was on the above-named Saturday to revisit the cherished home of his grandfather of blessed memory, where as a young child, early left an orphan, he had received his first impressions of Christianity from his pious grand-

¹ Johannes Geiler, born at Schaffhausen in 1445, came in infancy into Alsace, where his father settled as notary at Ammerswahr; in 1448 he was deprived by death of both parents, and he was brought up by his grandfather at Kaisersberg.

mother. He was, moreover, to preach on the following Sunday in the church of Kaisersberg,—a prospect which caused great rejoicing among all, high and low, relatives, friends, and neighbours, for one and all were proud of the learning and eloquence of the great orator.

Now there lived at this time in his late grandfather's house a certain Dame Magdalen, a daughter of his mother's sister, and spouse of Master Anselm, Imperial notary of Kaisersberg. The said worthy dame was over head and ears in bustle on this Saturday afternoon, in her anxiety to give a hospitable reception to her honoured cousin the Doctor of divinity, and such as was befitting his dignity and fame. The guest-chamber was ready, aired and well warmed; the lofty four-post bed with 'the red and white striped hangings, spun by his grandmother herself, was laid with fine and snowy linen; on the wall opposite hung the portraits of the grandfather and grandmother, as large as life, looking down so complacently on the resting-place prepared for the gifted and holy man, that it seemed as though they wished to bless him now from above, as they had often when here below implored a benediction on their promising grandson. In the parlour Dame Magdalen laid the great oaken dinner-table, and set the silver tankard with the grandfather's name and coat of arms at the seat of honour, while her husband filled the shining pewter pots with rich and delicious old wine, the produce of the grandfather's vineyard. Beside the kitchen-fire stood old Walpurgis, carefully watching to see whether the leavened dough she was baking had risen satisfactorily, for she was

to have carnival cakes ready, the very cakes that were such favourites with the Doctor in days of yore. For Walpurgis had been the faithful servant of the Doctor's grandmother, when young Hans set out for Freiburg as student, and it was now with no small pride she could boast of how, even then, she had predicted to her venerable mistress, of blessed memory, that the youth would certainly one day become a great man !

The weather was glorious ; the sun shone brilliantly in the deep azure of a cloudless sky, the breeze, as it blew fresh and exhilarating through the valley, had dried the muddy roads as if it were midsummer.

The oldest burghers and chiefs of the people had assembled in front of Master Anselm's house, to hand the 'drink of honour' in the golden cup to the expected visitor on his arrival. Several of the younger men rode forward to meet the carriage, to form a guard of honour around him ; and others crowded the drawbridge of the old castle, and gratified their curiosity by watching the arrival of the Imperial land-steward's invited carnival guests. The jovial fellows of the neighbourhood followed in a motley train, with gay flags, pipes and drums, paper masks and blackened faces, behind the cavalcade, as they filed into the castle gates, and entered, masked or unmasked, with a multitude of hounds, falcons, and troopers.

In the heart of this tumultuous throng, on the bridge leading to the castle, stood poor blind Fridli, led by his black dog. Scarce twenty summers had passed over his head ; he was tall, of commanding stature and stalwart

limbs, but fearfully disfigured by the deep scars and furrows which covered his whole face, and the pits that marked even his sightless eyelids. A native of the Breisgau, he had entered the service of the Baron von Mörsberg as cowherd ; there, a short time ago, he had lost his sight by small-pox. Now, his only way of gaining a pittance was wandering through the country with his black poodle, 'Forester' by name, and a lyre, the gift of the Lord of Mörsberg. Having an extremely melodious voice, he sang, to appeal to the compassion of passers-by, sometimes the plaintive, sometimes the merry ballads and national airs, then so much in vogue. In his night's resting-place he had happened to hear that great festivities were to take place at Kaisersberg, and that on the approaching Sunday the Kaisersberg Doctor was to preach in the church of his native town ; and, therefore, hoping for a rich harvest of alms, both at the church-door and at the castle-gate, he had found his way to Kaisersberg, led by his faithful guide, and helped forward by any kind neighbours he met.

Alas ! on this gala day, instead of the rich gifts on which he had so fully reckoned, poor Fridli reaped but pain and sorrow. His red face, marked and discoloured by the small-pox, brought down upon him coarse and cruel jeers, and while he drew forth his lyre's sweetest strains and sang his liveliest carols for the benefit of those wild urchins, inwardly he could have wept tears of blood, to think that as yet not a single penny had been cast into the cap which Forester held between his teeth, sitting up on his hind-paws, and looking imploringly towards—as he vainly hoped—a

generous public. When, on the cry, 'Here comes the Doctor's carriage!' the crowd had suddenly scattered, and there had been a stormy rush towards the little town, Fridli too had been anxious to join, that he might try his chance in begging an alms of that holy man, of whom it was universally said that he loved all the poor and needy. But a wicked boy had secretly cut the string by which his poodle led him. Tenderly did the poor dog fawn at his feet, trying to drag him by his trousers to show him the right way. Fridli, quite unacquainted with the locality, made a false step in descending from the stone bridge, lost his footing altogether, and fell with a piercing cry of pain on the edge of the deep moat.

Little Matthew, Dame Magdalen's first-born, who had run out among the youngsters, heard the cry, turned round, and seeing the blind man lying there, left his evil-disposed companions and hastened back to poor Fridli. But more help and counsel was needed than he could give; little Mat was not nearly strong enough to help the poor man to rise, for although he could, though with difficulty, raise himself, he could not possibly stand upon that foot, and a sharp pain shot through it. What was to be done? The road, so swarming with human beings but a little while before, had suddenly become deserted, and little Mat and poor Fridli were left alone together. It occurred to the child that the house of his godmother Ursula stood close to the gate of the little town, and he said to the groaning sufferer, 'Wait a moment; I will fetch Conrad, and he will lead you to the godmother. She will bind up your foot.'

The said Ursula, a venerable maiden of Kaisersberg, had presented at the baptismal font an infant from almost every house in the good old town, and for this reason she was known among young and old only by the name of ‘the godmother.’ She was the youngest daughter of Geiler’s grandparents, and had watched the growth and training of the Doctor in his early home, and helped to the best of her ability in the godly upbringing of the boy. Kind-hearted and devout, she bestowed half of her goods on churches, convents and mendicant friars, and twice a week she dispensed bread and oatmeal broth to the poor. With added years the good lady’s overweening love of order and cleanliness, and her precision in all things, grew so supreme that everything which might break the well-regulated daily monotonous course of things jarred against her inmost soul, and made her so thoroughly unhappy, that only her favourite little Mat could occasionally succeed in constraining her to do violence to her jog-trot ways. To-day she had decked herself out in her greatest state,—a rare event indeed,—and had that very moment fetched from her cellar, to welcome her venerated nephew, a bottle of Alsatian ‘*straw wine*,’¹ never as good anywhere as from her wine-press, when little Mat came running up in breathless haste.

‘Why, child!’ said his godmother, as she stroked his hair from his eyes, and wiped his face with her handkerchief, ‘what a strange look you have! You have surely been

¹ *Vin de paille*,—so called from the ripe grapes being left lying on straw for some time before they are pressed.

playing some wild prank, and will not rest till the chill wind seizes you, and you fall sick again in good earnest !’

‘Godmother!’ replied the boy, hardly knowing how to begin his proposal,—‘Godmother, only think! some one has cut poor Fridli’s string, by which his dog leads him, and he, poor fellow, has fallen plump into the castle-moat and hurt himself sadly!’

‘Poor creature! How can any one be so spiteful? Conrad must take him a new string, and an alms besides.’

‘Oh, that will be of no avail to him now, godmother! His foot is so badly injured that he cannot stand. I’ll tell you what: Conrad must take the old wheelbarrow and draw poor Fridli here, that you may bind up his foot and heal it.’

‘Are you in your senses, Mat? Is my house an hospital!’

‘But, godmother, soon it will be quite dark, and very, very cold (for father says it will be a bitter night), and poor blind Fridli cannot be left lying out there in the ditch all night with his bad foot! No, godmother, that cannot be; you must have him brought in!’

‘And if I do send Conrad to fetch him in, and do look after his injured foot, what then, Mat? What is to become of him afterwards?’

‘Oh, then you must have some straw laid in the barn, and let him lie there, and be kept till he is able to walk again!’

‘No, child! that I really cannot do! It is out of the question, and you must not propose it!’ said the good Ursula, quite in consternation. ‘You are not going to take me by storm, and force me to receive this blind vagrant into my home!’

‘But, but—oh yes, godmother, you will receive him, I am sure!’ said little Mat coaxingly, in his most beseeching tone. ‘You know you will be taking him for the Lord’s sake, and He will give you your reward in heaven, as mother has taught us!’ And with these words he rushed to the stable to his good friend Conrad, and was out again and in the courtyard with the servant and the wheelbarrow, before his godmother had time to recover herself, and to say no. She paced up and down before her own door in the greatest perplexity, saying to herself angrily, ‘That clever little rogue can make anything of me!’ Ursula was by no means hard-hearted; but to receive into her clean, tidy, well-ordered barn a blind beggar, very possibly covered with vermin; to touch, and even to bind up his sore and doubtless very dirty foot,—now too, just when she had put on her best Sunday dress! No, indeed! that was really more than ought to be expected of her! Nevertheless she could only hush the voice of conscience, which gently whispered suggestions of a more generous nature, by inwardly resolving to expend a whole imperial dollar on the case, and hand it over for treatment to the ‘*Béguines*’ or the ‘*Blotz-Brüder*.’¹

Meantime the wheelbarrow, containing poor Fridli, and lustily pushed forward by Conrad’s strong arm, accompanied

¹ The ‘*Beghards*,’ or ‘*Lollards*,’ were in Alsace known among the common people only by the name of ‘*Blotz Brethren*,’ *i.e.* ‘*Small-pox Brethren*,’ because they usually nursed those suffering from that loathsome disease. The ‘*Béguines*’ were women who lived together, having all things in common, and devoting themselves to the care of the sick, but without taking any vows.

by little Mat and the dog 'Forester,' had already reached the house. Close behind them followed a messenger from Dame Magdalen, sent to inquire about her little son Matthew, and to announce to Ursula that the Doctor had just arrived, and was most desirous of seeing his worthy aunt with as little delay as possible. Now then the poor godmother, divided between her anxiety and her joy, had nothing for it but to submit, willing or unwilling,—to take a desperate bite of the sour apple,—that is to say, to lead the blind patient at once into her barn, and to desire Conrad to prepare fresh straw for his couch.

And when at last he was actually laid down there, the poor blind Fridli, in the burning heat of fever, with his sightless eyes and frightfully disfigured face, the tears of pain and of grief rolling down his furrowed cheeks as he clasped his hands convulsively, and exclaimed in his own dialect, 'Oh, mother, my own little mother, would that I were once more beside thee !' then indeed were crystal drops likewise seen to trickle down Ursula's more calm and comely features ; then did she forget the disarranging of her tidy barn, the chances of vermin, and the gala dress. She bent tenderly over the poor sufferer, said a few words of sympathy and comfort, examined his swollen foot, ordered poultices of herbs prepared with wine ; and not until she had given Conrad everything that could be needed for sick-nursing, and herself thrown a warm blanket over the poor man, did she take little Mat by the hand, and, tripping as lightly as though she had suddenly grown younger by twenty years, go across to the house of the old grandfather, there to give

a right hearty welcome to her dear nephew, the Kaisersberg Doctor. On her way thither, however, the excellent god-mother's heart began somewhat to fail her, for as she drew near she felt more and more that she really did not know how she ought to accost her nephew. Should she address him as Hans, and with the familiar 'Thee' and 'Thou' of the good old days? No! that would be most unseemly towards so learned and devout a man, and the anointed of the Lord, and one too who had brought such honour to the family! Yet she did think the 'Your Honour,' or 'Master Doctor of Divinity,' would hardly go across her lips! Was this not the very Hans whom, as a child of three years old,—ah! she remembered the time still as though it were yesterday,—she had fetched from Ammerswilhr, when the parents, her brother-in-law and her sister, died off so quickly in the 'great death,' and she had solemnly promised before God to the weeping mother that she would with true and faithful love undertake the charge of the orphaned boy?

On the staircase of the old homestead she was met by the venerable domestic Walpurgis, who with joyous greeting came to assure her that, 'though the learned doctor of divinity did indeed appear as distinguished-looking and saint-like as any gracious lord bishop could be, yet he was still the very same affable Hans as in days of yore.' He had recognised her instantly, had shaken her cordially by the hand, and had even asked her whether she continued to bake as excellent cakes as in his grandmother's time, and as those she baked for his last breakfast, when he was starting as a school-

boy, sallying forth for the first time from his home into the wide world.

Fortified by this assurance, the worthy godmother was about to enter the parlour with a lighter heart, yet with a very low curtsy withal, when the stately-looking Doctor rushed up to her, seized her in his arms, and cried out with a voice full of frank glee, 'A thousand, thousand welcomes, thou dear old Ursula! Most heartily have I longed to see thee again! But now-a-days the world is turned upside down indeed, if the older folk must come and pay their respects to their younger belongings, instead of waiting for the honour to be paid all the other way. I did wish to insist on going to you the instant I arrived, to make my loving salutations as in duty bound; but Magdalen assured me I should give more pleasure by waiting quietly here.'

'Not to be thought of for a moment! The idea of such a thing as the learned Doctor taking the trouble of coming to me!' stammered out the overjoyed but astonished Ursula.

'Listen now then, once for all, dear good old soul, to what I have got to say. I am still thy ever grateful nephew Hans as of old, to whom, from his youth up, thou didst always show much love and kindness; therefore do me the favour to leave all expressions of honour, and all allusions to the Doctor's degree, to rest in silence, now that by the grace of God we meet again after many years of separation.' So saying, the Doctor led the worthy godmother to the seat of honour reserved for her, observing that it strictly belonged to her, since on that occasion she was filling the place of his blessed grandmother. He proceeded next to introduce to

her his young friend the distinguished Master of Arts, Sebastian Brandt,¹ now labouring at Basle, but the son of a burgess of the good city of Strasburg, and therefore come to pass the season of Lent at his home among his kindred. He added with a sly laugh, 'Will you be angry, dear aunt, if I say that I have promised my dear friend that for these two nights he would find a hospitable welcome under your roof?'

The poor godmother grew pale with consternation. The blind beggar in her barn, and now the stranger gentleman in her guest-chamber, and all this when she was so unprepared for it! If only she could have known beforehand!

But Dame Magdalen, who read in her face all the thoughts that were passing through her mind, whispered softly, 'She need only be quiet and give her the keys; she would during supper send Walpurgis across to prepare the accommodation for her unexpected visitor.'

And now came the turn of little Mat to be also presented by his father to the Doctor, with the remark, 'He is small of his age indeed; but if only he turn out a good boy, all else will signify little enough.' The Doctor lifted him up in the air, and gave him a hearty kiss, after which the little fellow, according to the usage and discipline of the good old time, was despatched to the nursery, there to eat his bread and milk, and be put to bed at six o'clock.

The Doctor felt his heart warmed and drawn out in the scenes, and amid the society and surroundings familiar in

¹ Sebastian Brandt was born at Strasburg in 1458.

days of yore, where nothing was altered ; and he found even the well-remembered easy-chair, with its large cushions, his grandmother's favourite seat, where she used to hear him say his prayers, and to recount to him many an old story that still lived in his memory. ' Do you remember, Ursula,' he said to his aunt, ' it was also in the carnival season ; I, a high-spirited young fellow of fifteen, would gladly have taken part in a masquerade, and in the dance that followed ; and you, although no chick then, nor addicted to gaieties, would gladly have gone with me to see the sight ; but my grandmother related to us a dream she had had . . . '

' Oh yes ! I recollect ; she said a peasant with a scythe approached her in the night—'

' That is to say, friend Death, whom the Lord our God sends to mow down whom He will. But she addressed him roughly enough, and said, " Ho now ! thou must come back to us at a more convenient time—just at present we have other things to do than to think of thee. We eat, we drink, we deck and disguise ourselves, carry on all manner of fooleries, and we have, one and all, made carnival fools of ourselves. Come thou back on Ash-Wednesday rather, for then Lent begins !" The mower however replied to her, " My time is at all times. I must mow without any intermission. Woe to him whom I cut down in the full and giddy swing of sensual pleasure ! Be ye therefore wise, and consider your latter end ; thou knowest not whether thou mayest on Ash-Wednesday be still in the land of the living !" " Children !" my grandmother then continued, " forget not this dream, and do nothing, and go nowhere, where the man

with his scythe would fill you with terror if he should unexpectedly meet you. For we old folk *must* die, but you young ones *may* die ; suddenly and rapidly, before you count upon it, death may overtake you." We both stayed at home on that occasion, Ursula ; and when, in later days, as a travelling student, I have been surrounded by temptations of all sorts, and my companions have sought to lead me astray into many a foolish prank, my grandmother's dream has recurred to my mind, and has been the means of saving me from many a folly.'

'Yes,' answered the godmother, with a deep sigh ; 'it is true : the young *may*, but we old people *must* DIE ; and when one is, like myself, far on in the sixties, ah ! then grim Death stands and frowns so fearfully at one that one's heart quails more and more !'

'Dear Ursula,' said the Doctor, 'a devout Christian was once asked where was his home ; he raised his hand, pointed to heaven, and said, "*There is my home.*" But we are a silly, silly folk ; we forget our real Fatherland, and act as though we were to dwell for ever here below.'

'Yet we all know that we must die, and, notwithstanding that, we dread death, though it is really but the entrance to our everlasting home ;' thus spoke Sebastian Brandt.

'That is only because we have all fallen away from God, and by our sins have departed far, far indeed from Him. He who wanders too far from home does not find the way back,' remarked the Doctor.

'I have, for my part, done all that could be required, and

more too, for I have spent a golden florin in purchasing from a Dominican monk, newly arrived from Rome, an absolution-ticket for all my sins, past or future.'

'Thou shouldest however have bought from the Dominican monk in addition a good supply of honest penitence ; without that no ticket of absolution is worth a farthing, poor Ursula, although it may actually have cost thee a golden florin !' exclaimed the Doctor.

A smile was seen to curl Sebastian Brandt's lips, while Master Anselm and Dame Magdalen listened as if riveted to the spot, and the godmother stared at the Doctor in utter amazement. He took her by the hand and gently asked her this home question,—'Dear excellent soul, tell me, has that ticket of absolution removed thy fear of death ?'

'No, Master Doctor ; no, nephew Hans, that it has not done ; and he who could tell me the reason why, would roll a heavy stone off my poor heart,' answered the godmother with quiet modesty, her eyes filled with tears.

'Thou hast brought me there a capital bottle of wine, dear Ursula, which will refresh and strengthen me during the season of Lent, when my stomach, which does not now always bear the sedentary and studious life quite comfortably, begins to molest me. But allow me to suppose the case,—if you had given me an empty bottle, could I have quaffed my elixir out of that ?'

'Preserve me ! Why, Hans, if I had done so I should have been mocking you !'

'And yet thou wilt act towards God the Lord as thou never wouldst towards a sinful child of man ! Thou wouldst

with thy ticket of absolution bring to Him an empty bottle for a sacrifice, though thou assuredly canst not drink the healing elixir for thy sin-sick soul from it !'

'But what then must I do, nephew Hans?'

'REPENT, dear soul ; that is to say, confess thy sins and mourn on account of them uprightly ; and daily, in right good German, that is to say with the whole heart, pray thus :—
"Lord, forgive me my sin, and mercifully receive me for Jesus Christ's sake !" And if thou doest so, God will, by His Holy Spirit, pour the costly wine of His grace, and the sweet assurance of the remission of sin, into thy stricken and trembling heart, and drive out from it all fear of death,—as it is written in the Prophet Isaiah, "*Come and buy wine and milk without money and without price*" (Isa. lv. 1), which signifies, grace for sanctification in life, and comfort for the hour of death, WITHOUT PRICE, by free gift—dost thou hear, Ursula ? The Lord stands not in need of thy golden florin ; but that which is well-pleasing to Him is a contrite heart and a soul longing for everlasting salvation. And that, thank God, even the poorest may have.'

'Why then has no one ever told me this ?' asked Ursula, heaving a deep sigh.

Again the significant smile spread over Sebastian Brandt's face, as he struck in with, 'Yes, indeed—

Truth in our days is seldom heard,
Men do pervert God's holy word,
Their glosses change or smooth away
His Gospel, who is the Truth, the Way !'¹

¹ "The Fools' Ship," by Sebastian Brandt.

‘Your hand, Master Doctor of Divinity and worthy cousin!’ exclaimed Master Anselm; ‘if you also disapprove of that shameful traffic in absolutions, and admit the worthlessness of a forgiveness of sins purchased for money, that does my heart good. Never yet have I seen any priest, nor any man in any ecclesiastical orders whatsoever, avow those opinions so honestly.’

Heartily did the Doctor shake his cousin by the hand, and with solemn earnestness he added—‘With all this we must not forget, dear Anselm, that the ransom paid to deliver us from our sins is THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, and thus we are bought with a price indeed—dearly bought! As for the absolution, the learned Master of Arts there could repeat to you a capital rhyme that hits the mark well on that point. How goes the couplet in your “Fools’ Ship,” Friend Sebastian?’

His friend’s answer ran thus:—

‘So worthless ABSOLUTION’s found,
That none will bid,—nor beg,—all round;
Yea, many would not pay their groat,
Though in their easy-chair, unask’d, ’twere got.’

The Doctor added yet further,—‘In what a melancholy state of decay the Christian Church is at present! How has the worship of God degenerated into a mere theatrical show, to which the spectators hardly condescend to give their attention? The nobility appear at high mass in the cathedral, with clattering high-heeled shoes, with sporting hounds, and with falcons prepared for the chase, which occasionally they set a-flying during public service by way

of an amusing pastime, while others during mass transact worldly business among themselves !' He went on to relate that a grotesque figure had been placed over the cathedral organ, which he, Geiler, had had to remove, which had been called the ' pipe-monkey,' behind which, in the festival days of Whitsuntide, a droll fellow had been in the habit of concealing himself, to entertain the mob by his howlings, his coarse humour, and his comical songs ; that, for the sake of making a short cut to the adjacent market, the custom had been established of carrying sucking pigs through the cathedral, so that the cries and screams often compelled the officiating priest to be silent ; that, from the feast of St. Nicholas to that of the Holy Innocents, a boy decked out in full episcopal vestments had performed the service ; that people had gone to church disguised, had formed processions and sung worldly songs at them ; that even priests had come to church masked, and carried on the most unseemly buffoonery, and that now again, to alternate with these disgraceful mummeries, they were acting in the holy edifice pieces composed for the school theatre, and thus continuing to desecrate the house of God. This reached its climax on St. Adolphus's Day, the feast of the dedication of the cathedral, when men and women awaited the break of day within its holy walls, with singing and dancing, with tricks and scandalous sports ; when the high altar was turned into a sideboard, and wine-barrels were placed in the chapel of St. Catherine ! He wound up with the words,—' Ah ! whenever I have to witness these outrageous abominations in the holy place, I seem to hear the Lord's voice of thunder

crying aloud, "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer ; but ye have made it a den of thieves." (Mark xi. 17.)¹

Whereupon Sebastian Brandt launched forth in lamentations, specially on the immoral life of the higher and lower ranks of clergy, the pride of the prelates, their boundless avarice, the ignorance of the village priests, and the sensual, dissolute life of the monasteries. He and Master Anselm agreed in calling upon the Doctor to prosecute with all his might his appeal to the Emperor, the Pope, and the Bishop, in favour of a Reformation of the Church.

Geiler, however, replied in a somewhat mournful tone,—
 ' Dear friends, every time that I have cherished some hope of seeing these shameful abuses and vices put down in the midst of us, our Holy Father the Pope, and our most gracious lord the Bishop, and all prelates and courtiers, have failed rightly to understand me, on which account I must excuse them. I urge most earnestly the necessity of REFORMATION as regards the clergy, the worship of God, and the convents : they understand the point to be the PRESERVATION of all these. And so it is that all things remain as of old !'

' But you must not suffer yourself to be frightened from your purpose on this account, dear Master Doctor, and you must faithfully fulfil your task,' said Sebastian Brandt. ' You, the Bishop's confessor, the people's favourite ; you, for whom magistrates are now causing that beautiful stone pulpit to be erected in the cathedral ; you, whose credit stands so

¹ For details, see Röhrich, *History of the Reformation in Alsace*, vol. i. pp. 51-53.

high both with Pope and Emperor,—you are fitted above all others, and are manifestly chosen of God, to be the instrument in beginning this great work of the reformation of the Church.'

'I doubt that very much, friend Sebastian; I doubt my being called to it; but, however that may be, the system must go to pieces, and things cannot, in the name of God I say they cannot, continue as they are in our poor Christendom. And because Emperor, King, and Pope decline to reform our life, without sense, without reason, and without God as it is, the Bishop of all bishops, JESUS CHRIST, will take pity on His fallen Church, and will send a reformer who will better understand the whole matter, and for whom I may be sent only to prepare the way. A voice within tells me I shall not live to see that day; but when it dawns on you, remember, I beseech you, that I have foretold it.'

'Yes, truly,' interposed Sebastian Brandt, 'you are right!—

St. Peter's bark, waves surging round her,
Threatens 'mid deep'ning gloom to founder;
Or must, if through this storm she ride,
Strain'd, helpless, maim'd, its buffetings abide!

Therefore let us faithfully do our part, dear Master Doctor,' added he, 'that we may not, in the great day of the harvest, be found like the wicked and slothful servant who had hid his talent in the earth. One must plant and sow, the other water; and it is the Lord who giveth the increase.'

With these and other similar conversations the three

men beguiled the time till a late hour, when Sebastian Brandt accompanied Ursula to her home, and entertained her so well that, captivated by his humour and his attractive manners, she forgot the blind beggar and all the trouble and disturbance which she had apprehended from her hospitality to the stranger gentleman.

Little Mat slept as soundly and awakened as bright as could be wished or expected in the happy child of pious parents, around whose bed angels held their silent vigils. As Master Anselm had in honour of the Doctor invited all the persons of dignity in Kaisersberg to share his Sunday dinner, little Matthew was to go to his godmother immediately after his breakfast, to pass the day with her, which he always greatly enjoyed. He had, moreover, promised poor Fridli yesterday evening to pay him an early visit, and to save his buttered roll for him, the regular supplement of his Sunday breakfast. His excellent father had taught him always scrupulously to keep a promise made to the poor ; and so our little friend, arrayed in his best jacket, his light-brown locks flowing from beneath his velvet cap, tripped off right merrily to his godmother Ursula. His friendly mien, bright eyes, rosy cheeks, glowing from the breath of the fresh morning breeze, all gave him a something that attracted every one that met him.

Very different was the aspect presented by poor Fridli on his straw couch. He was not at peace with God, and was murmuring against Him, for which reason he was filled with darkness in his soul. He knew not, for no one had ever told

him, that God 'does not afflict willingly the children of men,' but as a wise Father disciplines them in His love. Fridli had understood, as no one else among his neighbours understood, all the mysteries of the management of flocks and herds; he had been clever and expert in work, and very proud he was of his proficiency. When the Blotz Brother at Mörsberg explained to him that he must remain blind for life since his eyes had run out, Fridli's spirit rose within him in rebellion against this inscrutable will of God, which to him appeared no less cruel than unjust. And when, in more recent days, led by his faithful poodle, he crossed a bridge, or walked along the bank of a river, and heard the rushing sound of the water, he would gladly have thrown himself into it to make an end of his miserable existence, were it not that the image of his pious mother appeared to him, and, as at the moment of his departure from home, seemed to cry out to him, 'Fridli, be good and devout, forget not to pray, be ever mindful of God and of eternity!'

Now indeed he did feel an unspeakable longing for that faithful loving mother's heart, and for the hut in the Black Forest. But to return empty-handed—no, that he could not do; for his father was dead, he was the eldest of six children, and his poor old mother was in extreme penury. On this account poor Fridli laid by every farthing he could spare, and fed on hard, coarse, black bread, with a touch of garlic to give it a flavour. On this account too he had come to Kaisersberg, where, as we have seen, he had reckoned on large gains, and had more especially looked forward to making his lament before Doctor Geiler, and presenting to

him a petition for aid, since it was universally said among the common folk that 'the Doctor took a kindly interest in all the poor and unfortunate, and succoured them as no other man had been wont to do.'

And now poor Fridli lay there, blind and lame too, beginning to realize that he could not beg for alms at the door of the church, could not be admitted into the presence of the Doctor, and alas! worst of all, could never, never return to his dear little mother! 'Oh, if I could but die!' had been his exclamation in the bitter anguish of the past night. And when at length the welcome dawn appeared, when the bright rays of the sun began to illuminate the clear azure sky, there lay poor Fridli, despairing as to his own fate, and without any hope in God, sunk in a melancholy stupor. In vain did his faithful Forester lick his face and hands—he was pushed away with a grumbling rebuff; in vain did Conrad offer him a cup of new milk for breakfast—Fridli gloomily replied, 'he wished neither to eat nor to drink; far rather would he drown himself in the deepest water he could find!'

'No, no, it is a sin to speak thus!' said little Mat, who had just entered the barn, and had heard these words.

'We should have done better to let him lie last night out there in the castle ditch, if he is not more grateful for having been so kindly received,' grunted out Conrad in a bitter and surly tone, as he stood prepared to take away the cup of milk.

Little Mat, however, took it out of his hand, and carried it, with the buttered roll he had saved from his breakfast, to

Fridli on his straw couch, rousing up the poor sufferer in so friendly a way, and bidding the dog good-morning so heartily, that Fridli, warmed by the boy's spirit and cheerfulness as by a sunbeam, began to drink the milk and to eat the roll. As might be expected, each tasted better than the other, for since his poor mother had brought him one from Freyburg for his Christmas feast, he had never had such a dainty across his lips. With this awakening of old memories, better and softer feelings were likewise awakened in the poor blind man's heart, and the dark, bitter, evil spirit was charmed away. Fridli answered frankly all the queries put by his sympathizing little friend, and ended by opening his whole heart to him, recounting every particular regarding his good mother, the beautiful cows at his home and at Mörsberg, the dreadful small-pox, and his despair on finding he had become blind, his home-sickness, his deep distress at having come to Kaisersberg all in vain, now that he could neither collect alms at the church-door nor speak to the great and good Doctor. With the long discoursing on all these matters a heavy stone had been rolled off poor Fridli's breast ; he knew not how or why, but so it was that he no longer felt so unhappy since he had spoken out all his mind, and given vent to his lamentations.

Conrad, who had been going backwards and forwards, was so moved by the blind man's misery that he had silently fetched his own pillow, and pushed it in under Fridli's head, and had clean forgotten to begin his preparations for going to church. Little Matthew, however, who had been listening attentively, and whose shrewd eyes were sparkling like

gems, said in a consolatory tone, 'Cheer up, and be of good courage, Fridli; this very afternoon I will ask my cousin the Doctor to come and see you here in this barn, and to get you taken home to your mother!' After which assurance the little boy jumped up, called the poodle and ran into the house, where his godmother was still sitting at breakfast with her guest.

Forester, who usually could not bear little boys, and always began to bark or to growl at any one who approached his poor master, on this occasion followed little Mat's call at once, and ran in to the godmother's parlour at his heels.

He was met by screams from the affrighted Ursula. 'Oh! Mat, leave that nasty dog outside! Oh fie, Matthew! Mr. Magister,' she added, turning to the learned Master of Arts, 'pray excuse this dear little wild rogue!' And Ursula rose abruptly, threw the door wide open, and vainly endeavoured to drive out the dog, which had taken refuge behind his young friend.

'Godmother, godmother, I may go to-day with Forester, and beg for poor Fridli at the door of the church, may I not?' asked little Mat most beseechingly, as he laid his hand on the creature's cowering head, and stroked and soothed him.

His worthy godmother, still quite beside herself, so disconcerted had she been by the sudden intrusion of the dirty poodle, was excited beyond all measure at this extraordinary request, so that she stared at the child in speechless amazement, hardly knowing whether she could have heard

correctly,—whether she was awake or in a dream. The whole scene, however, was so comical, that Sebastian Brandt could not restrain a hearty laugh.

This inspired little Mat with fresh courage. He caught Ursula by the hand, drew her back to her chair, and repeated in his most coaxing tone,—‘ Yes, yes, I’m sure you will allow me! See, only look how the dog—Forester is his name—has been taught to beg!’ whereupon he made the poodle sit upright on his hind-legs, gave him his cap to hold between his teeth, and artlessly recounted the whole tale of Fridli’s misfortunes and his home-sickness, and proceeded to expound his own plan of begging in his stead at the church-door, that the poor blind man might still get his alms after all. He told it all so simply, so heartily, so touchingly, that neither Sebastian Brandt nor the godmother could refrain from tears.

‘ Yes,’ said Ursula, after a pause, ‘ this is the child’s nature ; whenever he sees any unfortunate creature he is all on fire to obtain relief for him, and would shed his heart’s blood on his behalf.’

‘ Oh, leave him in possession of this treasure, Dame Ursula ! It is more precious than all the riches of this world, for he can carry it to the realms of glory when he parts from all these !’ replied Sebastian Brandt. Then turning to little Mat, he added in a friendly but solemnized manner, ‘ To beg at the church-door, that would not be seemly for you, my dear little fellow, nor would it be proper to take the poodle with you, since both would disturb the worship of God ; but I promise you to consult with the

Doctor this very day as to the best way of rendering real assistance to poor Fridli.'

Now little Mat would certainly have given anything he possessed for leave to stand and beg at the church-door, and set up the poodle to exhibit his clever tricks there, because he fully believed that was the best means of melting the hearts of all church-goers into charity towards his poor friend. But he was trained to unquestioning obedience ; so he silently led Forester back to the barn, and took the opportunity of informing the blind man of the promises made by the kind and learned Magister, thereby pouring a healing balsam into his wounded heart.

At that moment all the bells of the town pealed their joyous invitation to the house of God. Ursula took her little favourite by the hand, and, accompanied by her honoured guest, sallied forth in a state of eager longing, not unmingled with solemn awe, to worship God, and to listen to the preaching of her beloved and venerated nephew.

We have already described the extinction of faith and Christian life in the Church in the days of Geiler, and the profane mocking of all holy things in the Minster at Strasburg. It is easy to conclude from what was carried on in the great cathedral of the provincial capital, under the very eyes of the high ecclesiastical authorities, how yet more scandalous were the doings habitually witnessed during Divine service in the churches throughout Alsace.

Nevertheless, such is the influence of a single truly devout ecclesiastic, moved by the Spirit of Christ himself, that in the church of Kaisersberg, on this occasion, the

Sunday services went on amid stillness and reverence. To the Doctor's great joy, there was not a mask to be seen ; the assembled citizens occupied their proper places in respectable attire and with seemly demeanour ; the brotherhoods, nuns, and members of the several orders came from their respective convents in fitting order and dignity ; the nobility from the surrounding castles, the imperial 'Landvogt' (Land-steward), with his guests, did not fail to make his appearance too, and although it was the principal Shrove-tide festival, a great occasion in high life, yet he appeared unmasked and in plain clothes. Whether the gracious matrons and noble damsels may have dreaded lest the bold and outspoken preacher should reprove them as he had lately done the ladies of Strasburg, addressing them openly from the pulpit, and censuring their trinkets, their gold and precious stones, their long veils, costly lace and silk garments, wherewith they were bedecked in the house of God, and all of which he classed as 'sinful trumpery, with which the demon of pride is wont to purchase immortal souls, that he may then plunge them into everlasting perdition,' we cannot certify, and have no means of ascertaining.

Geiler preached on that morning on Matt. xxv. 40 : 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.' He began by explaining the origin of the fast of Lent in the Christian Church, its being fixed as a period of forty days, because the Lord had fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness, before commencing His great work of redemption on earth. He went on to tell how the early Christians fasted, giving

to the poor two-thirds, or at least the half, of the money usually required for food, satisfying themselves with the simplest meals. He exhorted his hearers to carry out their fasts in this full sense of the word, and concluded with an urgent appeal on the duty of accepting with Christian love, for the Lord's sake, the responsibility of caring for the poor and the unfortunate,—remembering the Saviour's words: 'Ye have done it unto me,' and 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy' (Matt. v. 7).

'The Lord,' he exclaimed with earnestness, 'did not command you to build churches and convents, while at the same time you suffer the living stones, the unfortunate whom He calls His brethren, to languish in neglect. We do not read in the Bible that He will say in the last judgment, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, because ye have built churches, founded monasteries and prebendal stalls, and so forth," but, "for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." I by no means intend to say that it is wrong to build churches and monasteries. No; but we ought to do the one and not leave the other undone, for love is the first and great commandment.'

Musing and deeply impressed, the godmother walked slowly homewards with little Matthew. She felt as though her nephew the Doctor had on that day preached quite specially for her. On reaching home she bent her steps

straightway to the resting-place of the poor blind man, whose injured foot she carefully examined, talking to him the while in such a way as to soothe and comfort him. She told him he must not torment himself any longer, for she would gladly keep him until he should be able to walk quite well. His dinner was sent to him from her table, and a glass of good strengthening wine in addition, which Conrad, who would generally have viewed such proceedings with a jealous eye, seemed to-day to regard as the right and natural thing, for he too had been at church, and had devoutly listened to the Doctor's admirable discourse.

The universal opinion expressed that day in Kaisersberg was, 'No one ever preached as did the Doctor.' His solemn, fervent words, which seemed to come as a message straight from God, had found some entrance to many a heart, and had at any rate called forth the earnest resolve to 'do good and to communicate.' Such was also the tone of mind prevalent among the guests invited to dinner by Master Anselm. These, as they took their leave, gave, one by one, their promise with plighted troth, and a warm shake-hands as a sign of good faith, that they would not any longer suffer the living stones—the poor and the unfortunate—to languish in helpless misery.

With a heart relieved and cheered, the Doctor went, after vespers, to visit his dear aunt Ursula. On their way to her house, Sebastian Brandt related to him the story of poor blind Fridli, and of the loving care and kindness lavished on him by little Mat, and the child's anxiety to go and beg for him at the church-door. The Doctor was de-

lighted, and on reaching his aunt's dwelling his first question was, 'Where is the little boy, and how is poor Fridli?'

'The blind man is now suffering less from his foot, and it is settled that he is to be kept and tended in that house till he is fully restored,'—such was Ursula's reply to her nephew's inquiry. 'As to little Mat,' she added, 'he had begged for permission to go into the town to join his little companions.'

'What procession is this coming towards us, headed by a chorister boy?' asked Sebastian Brandt, who was standing in the window.

'Oh, that is our wild little original! Depend upon it he is again to hold a service with the little boys, as he has often done on Sundays before.' So said Ursula, who instantly recognised in the chorister boy her own little Mat.

Two by two, with most exemplary order and regularity, followed the boys his companions, each carrying his supper in his hand. Little Mat, a white shirt thrown by way of surplice over his clothes, bell in hand, and ringing as he went, led the way with the utmost gravity, and guided them to the barn where poor Fridli lay.

'We must go and watch their proceedings!' exclaimed the Doctor and Sebastian Brandt at the same moment. So saying they went with Ursula to the door of the barn, where they stood unobserved.

Little Matthew had gone from house to house to gather together all his playfellows, telling them, 'they must come with him to his godmother's barn, in which he was about to conduct Divine worship, and to repeat to them the sermon

preached by his cousin Doctor Geiler, and in which, moreover, lay poor blind Fridli, who had been so hurt yesterday by his fall at the castle moat. In this blind man there was now present,' he added, 'as he had heard his cousin the Doctor say, none other than the Lord Jesus himself, and therefore each of them must bring his supper-roll, and whatever money he might have earned by singing in the Carnival, to offer it up as a sacrifice to the Lord Jesus by giving it to poor Fridli.' And all those wild, high-spirited boys followed willingly the summons of the little missionary, and when the two learned gentlemen, with their lady friend, secretly approached the open door, it was a pleasant sight to see them all, led by little Mat, marching round Fridli's straw couch, at the foot of which sat Forester, with the cap between his teeth, upright on his hind-paws, while each boy as he defiled past silently dropped his Carnival cake, apples, nuts and buttered roll into the beggar's pouch, and the penny, with an occasional addition of a small silver coin, into the poodle's cap, and Conrad stood by, his hands devoutly folded, and looking as if rapt in amazement, watching the doings of the juvenile party.

As the last boy threw in his offering, they all closed in and formed a circle round little Mat, who placed the bell on the ground, clasped his hands, and prayed thus—'Dearest Lord Jesus! do restore poor Fridli's sight; do heal his foot; and do take him safely home to his dear little mother! And when we all go to Thee in heaven, then surely Thou wilt say to us, as my cousin the Doctor has promised to-day, Inasmuch as ye have done it to poor Fridli, ye have done it unto me! Amen.'

Hereupon the Doctor, deeply touched, stepped forward into the circle of silent children, who shrunk back shyly at the sight of him, laid his hand, as if to invoke a blessing, on little Mat's head, and said, apparently inspired with a prophetic spirit, '*Grow up, little boy, and thou shalt be great!*'¹

'Great!—as great as you are?' inquired our little friend, looking up with his sparkling eyes at the tall and stately figure of his illustrious relative. 'Well! then indeed people would have to give up calling me *Little Mat!*'

'Oh, blessed simplicity! truly of such is the kingdom of heaven,' said the Doctor with emotion, as he pressed the child to his heart.

Doctor Geiler then and there, in the godmother's barn, delivered a discourse to the children, which, by the grace of God, afterwards bore rich fruit in more than one of those little ones, and which was never effaced from the memory of most of them to their latest day. When he was describing to his attentive young hearers how the blessed Lord Jesus loved little children, how while on earth He called them to Himself, and embraced and blessed them, and how the experience of that day was to show them that even children could love Him in return for His redeeming love to them, and could serve Him, and offer to Him sacrifices of thanksgiving in the persons of His sick poor, and of any suffering or unhappy ones, suddenly little Simson Hiller rose up, retired behind the barn-door, and stood there weeping bitterly.

¹ These words are recorded as having actually been addressed to Matthew Zell, as a child, by Doctor Geiler.

‘What is the matter with you, poor little fellow?’ asked Sebastian Brandt, who had followed him.

‘Oh!’ replied Simson, sobbing more and more violently, ‘the Lord Jesus cannot love me, for I am such a bad boy,—I must go to hell!’

‘What hast thou done?’

Simson turned as pale as death, then flushed crimson, began to tremble violently, and at length stammered out, ‘Little Mat had better tell it; he knows all!’

Matthew would not for some time bring out what he had to say; he turned to Simson instead, and said, as if trying to console him, ‘The good Lord will certainly forgive you, if you only say the Lord’s Prayer right earnestly.’ When, however, the Doctor joined in urging him to tell all, and Simson added, ‘Do tell all; then I shall indeed be punished, but I shall have peace of mind!’ little Mat threw his arms round the Doctor’s neck, and whispered softly, ‘It was Simson who yesterday cut in two poor Fridli’s string, and so he is to blame for his fall and all his lameness.’

‘Well,’ said the Doctor, ‘that was indeed an evil action for Simson to be guilty of! But how do you say now, Simson? you had not deliberately planned it, had you? If you had known what injury it would cause the blind man, you never would have cut the string in two, would you?’

Simson however shook his head, covered his face with both hands, and said in a suppressed voice, ‘No, no! I did do it maliciously, and I did laugh when I saw him fall!’

Oh yes, punish me as severely as you choose ; I have fully deserved it !'

'Now, truly,' said the Doctor, as he turned towards Sebastian Brandt, 'such a hearty, upright, penitent confession I have never yet met in any one !' He then turned again to the little fellow, and gently and solemnly added, 'Be comforted, my child ! your sin is forgiven you for Jesus Christ's sake, because He bore your punishment instead of you on the cross !'

'Is that sure, quite sure ?' asked Simson with many tears.

'As sure as that in presence of the holy angels in heaven there is joy to-day over your sincere repentance. But now come to poor Fridli here ! You must ask his pardon too. Happily our gracious Lord God has in mercy brought good out of even this evil. How think you, Fridli ? I should say you by no means wish now you had not had that fall, and had not been brought among us here in this barn ?'

Poor Fridli, quite bewildered by all the love and kindness he had met with, and all he had just now heard, could only stammer out a few disjointed words. Simson Hiller, however, knelt beside his straw couch, and seizing both his hands, weeping bitterly, cried out, 'Oh Fridli ! forgive me ; only forgive me ! I am so grieved.'

'Fridli,' asked the Doctor, 'can you sing what you have heard in the church ?'

On the blind man answering in the affirmative, he replied, 'Well then, raise the "Herr Gott, dich loben wir !"' (the *Te Deum Laudamus*—'We praise Thee, O God !') and forth-

with Fridli, with his ringing and melodious voice, gave out that glorious old hymn. Doctor Geiler, Sebastian Brandt, and Ursula, all chimed in, and the song of praise swelled out with solemn sound, and rose to the throne of the merciful Triune God.

Hand in hand stood Simson Hiller and little Mat as the hymn was being sung, the latter turning his bright intelligent glances, so full of tender feeling, first in sympathy towards his weeping playfellow, then in love and joy up towards his Father in heaven—the former fixing the down-cast look of his dark, thoughtful, tear-bedimmed eye on the ground, as if, like Peter after his fall and his pardon, he saw in vision the manner of death by which he was to glorify God.

Sebastian Brandt contemplated the two boys with deep interest; when the last notes of the *Te Deum* died away, he turned to his friend the Doctor with the question, 'What do you think is likely to become of these two boys?'

'At any rate, the hand of the Lord is with them,' was the reply (Luke i. 66).

The little fellows had all long since departed to their homes, when the Doctor was still sitting by poor Fridli in the barn, listening to his tale, giving him advice, and promising him assistance, as far as human help could go. Fridli was indeed in a far better mood than in the morning, gladly acknowledging how kind every one was to him; yet that he must remain blind all his life, to that he could not bring his mind to submit, and his last word to the Doctor, in reply to all the advice and comfort he tried to give, was, 'But why then am I blind?'

‘Listen to me now, Fridli,’ said the Doctor; ‘to thy WHY I can give no other answer than this, “*It is the will of God.*” But suffering God’s will cheerfully, for His sake, such is the way towards the kingdom of heaven. Therefore try again, and stamp on your beggar’s penny your humble acquiescence in God’s will, and you will see that the Lord will, with the hammer of His grace, beat the worthless penny into a golden coin, wherewith you may gain everlasting bliss!’

Whether the worthy Doctor succeeded in causing the inward light to shine in Fridli’s soul we are not in a position to say. So far, however, is certain, that after the Doctor’s conversation with him, he was more peaceful, and seemed much comforted. Fridli remained at godmother Ursula’s till Easter, receiving frequent visits from, and being more and more cheered by, both little Mat and Simson Hiller.

When, on Easter-Monday, Sebastian Brandt once more passed through Kaisersberg, he took blind Fridli with him on his journey to Basle. The poor man was laden with proofs of the liberality of his Kaisersberg friends, and from Basle his kind patron sent him down the Rhine by Freyburg to the Black Forest. Perhaps we may be able to discover in our subsequent narratives how matters went with Fridli at a later period, and whether little Matthew did truly become great in the vineyard of the Lord.

As regards Dr. Geiler, he preached and laboured in Strasburg with great blessing for thirty years more. He steadfastly refused all the brilliant offers made to him of

preferment in Augsburg, Freyburg, and Basle, and remained faithful to his beloved Alsace, and it is by no means right that among its people, whom he so truly loved, he should now be so entirely forgotten. He was the favourite of the good Emperor Maximilian I., who came often to Strasburg to hear him, and never called him by any name but that of 'The Kaisersberger.' Geiler appealed urgently to the Emperor on the subject of the abolition of the rack, and if he did not succeed in all that he wished and aimed at, he did at any rate effect great good. He achieved a reformation in the way of procuring milder treatment for prisoners, causing spiritual consolation and exhortation and the administration of the holy sacrament to be granted to those under sentence of death, all which had heretofore, and from time immemorial, been cruelly denied them, and he did much to increase the number of good schools, and to raise the standard of teachers and their position. It was through his influence that Sebastian Brandt, the famous poet of the 'FOOLS' SHIP,' was, in 1500 A.D., appointed Chancellor of his native city of Strasburg, where he remained till his death, in 1521, and where he was the means of accomplishing much for the public good. In unison with his friend Geiler, Brandt succeeded in founding several institutions for the benefit of the poor, the sick and the unfortunate, at Strasburg. Geiler died in 1510, in his sixty-fourth year, deeply lamented by all, and especially by the common people, and the spirit which yet speaks even to us in his sermons bears witness that he was a faithful servant of God, and a zealous labourer in his vineyard. He was

buried under the beautiful stone pulpit in the Strasburg Cathedral, which the magistrates had caused to be erected on purpose for him, and around which, whenever he preached, so great a multitude had crowded to hear the Word.

May his memory be ever held in veneration, and prove a blessing in the midst of us!

[In two interesting and discriminating articles on Geiler, by Adolphe Schæffer, in the *Revue Chrétienne*, March and April 1862, many further particulars are furnished concerning the life, opinions and influence of this reformer before the Reformation, of whom it is truly said that, living in the dim twilight of dawn, preceding the noonday of evangelical light, he, like Moses, saw but entered not the promised land. While conscious of the mediæval taint manifest in his strong belief in witchcraft and other superstitions, his unbounded trust in holy water and the sign of the cross, his quaint and strained allegorical renderings of Holy Scripture, and his false estimate of charity and patience as meritorious before God (shown in the first paragraph of page 80, in the words actually quoted from his writings), we cannot but admire his bold testimony against the worldliness and immorality of his age, and contrast his groping after purer, clearer light, with the deepening twilight of many in our own day, who, loving the darkness rather than the light, willingly turn their backs on the doctrines of the Reformation.—*Tr.*]

THE OLD ST. STEPHEN'S TOWER AT MÜLHAUSEN.

'Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.'—Ps. li. 6.

'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations.'—
2 PET. ii. 9.

THERE thou standest still, dear old tower, grey and solemn, after the long, weary struggles of life, and thy bells chime or peal with a tone of pathos, as though they would fain tell us that thou belongest not to the new-fangled world that has sprung up around thee, and that the time has come when they may well ring thee also into thy quiet grave, and thy venerable head may be laid low and take its rest! Well, right heartily will we grant thee the needed repose, for thou hast lived an eventful life, hast seen many a generation pass away, and hast taken part in many a contest, but, thank God, likewise in full many a noble victory! And if only we understood thy silent language, thou wouldst, by way of farewell, recount to us many a memorable scene, and seek to impress on us many a useful lesson.

But to every one of us it would be a melancholy task to take leave of thee, for we love to recall that time when the young heart beat high with joy, when we returned from foreign parts to our beloved home, and once more beheld

thy stately summit from afar. Wherefore I feel this day inwardly constrained to relate what I have read in the old chronicle, about Melchior Küffer, who was tower-watchman on thy lofty height during many, many a year, and to whose heart thou wast so dear, that he would rather have died than have parted from thee.

Cousin Melchior, as people used to call him, was a most strange, eccentric character, always doing everything in a way of his own, and sometimes impracticable enough for others to get on with. As watchman of the tower, however, no man had anything to say against him, for he seemed glued to his post;—he espied with his hawk's eye every impropriety committed within the town, or even beyond its bounds; and often did he lift up his voice and utter a word of warning, through his speaking-trumpet, to one or another who was treading forbidden paths, thereby making himself not a few bitter enemies. By night he regularly blew the number of each hour as it came round; and when danger threatened the city, he blew an alarm with the said horn, and in every emergency; whether of fire, flood or war, he rang a stormy peal of bells to summon help. In short, in his character of watchman, he stood firm as a rock. And yet he was so singular, so different from all other human beings; he descended so very seldom from his dearly-beloved tower, and as age advanced upon him, more and more seldom, till at last he never came down at all. 'Down below,' he was wont to say, 'in the narrow, gloomy streets and lanes, I seem to pant for breath; all is dust or mud, noise and tumult, strife and bickering, envy and ill-will.

But up on St. Stephen's Tower I have the fresh, pure air of heaven,—there the sun shines forth bright and clear, and I live quietly and in peace.'

'We can readily believe he lives in peace, and it is no wonder, for we should like to know with whom he would quarrel, the silly old hermit, in his tower-nest, he is always alone up there, and never associates with any human being !' said old Ursula at her fruit-stall down in the square. Now 'Cousin Melchior' had once upon a starry night shouted down to the said Ursula, as she was enjoying a walk in Zwingel the town-clerk's orchard, a voice of warning, 'Thou shalt not steal.' Moreover, be it known, he, the good old Melchior Küffer, was not alone ; for he had a remarkably agreeable society in his wall-flower, rosemary, mignonne, and the lovely pinks which he knew so well how to train in flower-pots, and which rejoiced his heart by their sweet fragrance on the trellised summit of his church-tower ; and Cousin Melchior loved his tender nurslings and his venerable tower with all his heart, for they, one and all alike, spoke to him of God, the Giver of all good ; and, with the balmy breath of the scented flowers, and the deep-toned music of the tower-bells, there ascended likewise to heaven the voice of his prayers and thanksgivings. He praised the Lord with a full heart that his flowers flourished so well and were so fragrant, and that he was permitted to dwell up there on his quiet tower-top, where, in his opinion, he was far nearer to Heaven than down below among the stir and unrest of human society. He had besides yet another nursling, and this was a living soul, of whom old Ursula

down in the square knew not at all, but who was dearer to him than all the world besides ; dearer than even his beloved St. Stephen's Tower. This was little Augustine Krämer, the guild-master's young son.

Augustine's mother had obtained this boy from the Lord in answer to much prayer, as Hannah did her Samuel. Long years of wedlock had been unblest with any children, and when at last this little boy came into the world, she called him Augustine, because, during the few months previous to his birth, the Prior of the Augustinian Convent had narrated to her much of the history of St. Monica and her pious son ; praying with her for her child yet unborn, and forestalling as it were her dedication of him to the Lord, entreating that he might become as devout, as faithful a servant of Christ and His Church as St. Augustine was. And the mother's prayer was heard. Little Augustine became a loveable, warm-hearted child, and the older he grew, the more beautifully did the noble gifts with which the Lord had endowed his mind and soul develop themselves.

But this fair picture had its dark side too, as everything has in this life ; and so matters did not flow on smoothly, not without many a struggle and many a bitter tear, in the history of the gentle Dame Krämer and her little pet. The vine-dressers' guild-master, Nicholas Krämer, was an upright man, but hard withal and violent, who, at home and among the members of his guild, ruled with a rod of iron. And so, even when little Augustine had scarcely learned to walk, he was wont to chastise him sharply for the slightest misdemeanour, and often to scourge him into wounds with his rod, so that

the little fellow, being of a very tender nature, was more than once made ill ; and, what was still worse, imbibed such a dread of his father that he grew pale and trembled if he saw him coming or even heard his voice. This naturally grieved his loving mother so as nearly to break her heart ; and she winced the more under it, because, bowed down under the heavy yoke of matrimony with such a husband, she could not venture to remonstrate against the father's hard and unloving treatment of their only child. Alas ! she had hoped that the birth of his son would have softened her lord and master, and awakened better feelings in his heart ; but it seemed as if the very contrary were the case, for never had she seen him so irritable and passionate as towards the poor boy. ' My poor, poor little Augustine, why did I pray for thy birth ? Oh ! out upon that hard, inhuman sex ! ' Such was one day her bitter exclamation, as weeping she pressed her child to her bosom.

' No need of taking this matter too much to heart, my good Dame Krämer. The stern Master Krämer is now up in years, and cannot stand the noise of childish prattle,' said Cousin Melchior, who at that moment was bringing her a rich golden wall-flower for the Easter festival, and thus overheard her cry of distress.

' But my unhappy child will be ruined by this ill usage. Look here yourself and see how pale and thin he has grown, and how full he is of fear and trembling, and wanting in all life and joyousness ! '

' You must as much as possible keep him out of sight of his father. It is as I have said. Be sure you can never

contrive to accustom the old man to children's ways. In the morning he always goes to the field and to look after his men in the vineyard on the hill, and in the evening he sits under the great lime-tree, or has his glass of wine at his guild.'

'But, then, in the afternoon comes this terrible time for me and for the little one!'

'I will tell you what to do! You must send the little fellow up daily to the tower to pass these evil hours with me. I will care for him as for the apple of my eye, and you shall see how rosy his sunk, pale cheeks will soon grow, up in the fine fresh air! Augustine, wilt thou come up with me to the church-tower? Up yonder I will give thee pretty flowers and a gay, many-coloured Easter egg.'

For a little while the child looked fixedly and in amazement at the keeper of the tower, then suddenly he threw his arms round his neck and shouted in glee, 'Yes, I will!' Cousin Melchior carried him in triumph up to his tower.

The poor mother followed him with her eyes, musing and sighing. Yet in the main Melchior was right enough, for on his return home that day, the stern father never inquired about his little boy, and seemed to have forgotten all about the threatened punishment; he was actually after his own fashion good-natured and cheerful,—more so than he had been for a long time.

And from that time forward Augustine was up in the tower daily, and sometimes all day long, for whenever the father's countenance seemed lowering and stormy, or there was too much doing at home, his careful mother carried him up early. Each time she took him up, the

little fellow shouted aloud for joy, and very soon he and his old friend became as one heart and one soul. He did not know which he loved best, the tower or its keeper. Under Cousin Melchior's care he flourished so well that he grew fresh and beautiful like the flowers in the tower arbour, so that his mother's heart was overflowing with joy and thanksgiving.

But no less happy and thankful was Cousin Melchior himself. His loving, childlike spirit, so long surrounded only by inanimate objects, expanded in fellowship with the opening mind of his young charge, and the treasures hitherto concealed within were now developed. He played with Augustine, showed him the distant blue mountains, the rich fields of grain, the vineyard hill, the green meadows and the dark forests, with the villages encircling the town. He explained to him how Dame Ill, the sturdy daughter of the Sundgau, down there, receives in her bosom the clear crystal waters of the merry Doller, and carries them away with her to the lowlands,—down to the great noble Rhine; and how God has created and ordered all things so beautifully and gloriously for the good of the children of men.

On the fine autumnal evenings he called him to admire the golden sunset glow, which he was wont to call the gate of heaven: he told him to wish the sun a friendly good-night, and stirred him up to take delight in the twinkling evening star,—‘Just such a star, perhaps,’ he would remark, ‘as that which led the three devout wise men to the cradle of the infant Jesus at Bethlehem.’

And in winter? Ah! that was the little boy's jubilee

season, for in the snug room, beside the hot stove up in the tower, Cousin Melchior would take him on his knee, and tell him, in his own enchanting way, such wonderful tales, that, waking or sleeping, he could only dream of them, and his old friend was obliged to recount them again and yet again. During the narrations, Cousin Melchior was also often engaged in carving wooden figures of all sorts as toys for his little pet, till the child's ecstasy knew no bounds. When there was a fall of snow, he was dragged round the tower-top on a plank dignified with the name of sledge, or else a man of snow was made, eyes, mouth and nose were coloured with charcoal, a pipe was stuck in his mouth and a cane in his hand. Full of inquisitive glee did the little ragamuffins of the square below peer up to Cousin Melchior's masterpiece, and overjoyed were they when he allowed them to ascend the tower and gain a near and admiring view of the snow-man, after which they rushed down to go and make one like it in front of the belfry-house, beside the crier's little platform. 'Still mine is far larger, whiter and more beautiful!' shouted Augustine, as he merrily clapped his little red half-frozen hands. So Cousin Melchior, the watchman, and Master Krämer's little Augustine, led a quiet, peaceful, happy life together on St. Stephen's Tower for many a year.

But in this world everything passes away; the bright day as well as the evil day comes to an end; and so, full soon, the period arrived at which Cousin Melchior and his little favourite could no longer maintain this close and loving intimacy. The puny, weakly Augustine had, by God's

blessing, and to his mother's heart's content, grown into a strong and healthy boy ; and as the guild-master's good wife had at his birth dedicated her child to the Lord, that is to say, destined him for the service of God in the ministry, it became necessary to send him to school, that he might learn somewhat, and begin to receive some training to fit him for his high and holy calling. Once upon a time too, it suddenly flashed upon the master of guild at dinner that it was 'high time to bring the boy under discipline.' While making an exclamation to this effect, he mechanically suited the action to the word by seizing his stick, so that Augustine and his mother shrunk back terrified, and drew closer to one another, with a silent mutual understanding as to what 'bringing under discipline' might signify in the father's vocabulary.

The mother, however, being a prudent woman, held her peace, did not contradict her husband, but went to her father-confessor, the Prior of the Augustinian Convent, to whom she opened her heart, pathetically laying before him her dread of the paternal harshness and severe blows for her little Augustine, if forced to attend school and to live at home instead of up in the tower. The Prior proposed to receive the boy as a pupil among the scholars at the convent ; promising to make all right with her husband, and to obtain his consent. This he actually succeeded in effecting, only the father insisted on the condition that on Sundays and feast-days Augustine must dine at home, 'as he could not abandon all discipline, but must have him occasionally under his own eye.' These were often enough doleful festival days for the poor child.

Cousin Melchior was at the same time called to bear his cross,—and a heavy one it was for him. That which had been long impending, but had been hitherto only whispered secretly, now came to be spoken of loudly in the guilds, and even discussed in the Council, viz., that he was far too old and infirm to be capable any longer of efficiently fulfilling his duties, and that, therefore, a young and active tower-watchman would be forthwith needed, and easily to be found. In truth, old Ursula, resolved to vent her spite against her reprover of the speaking-trumpet, and also to obtain his lofty perch and good salary for her lazy son, a trouble at home, had raised this conspiracy against Melchior.

As the old proverb says, 'Misfortunes seldom come alone.' So it was in this case. To part with his little Augustine and to be forced to leave his beloved St. Stephen's Tower, on which he had, so to speak, taken root for so long, seemed too much to come all at once, and well-nigh broke the old man's heart. He did not however murmur or complain; and when at night he had sounded the hours by the blast of his horn, he stood still with clasped hands, cast an imploring look up to the starry heavens, and poured forth his grief into his Heavenly Father's ear. Or else he descended, to enter the vast empty church, and there he knelt down and thus offered up a childlike petition: 'I know full well that this must come to pass,—that I must lose Augustine by his going to school. Now, O Lord! bless the dear child abundantly! But Thou knowest also that I cannot live if they drive me from my work. Therefore take me, I pray Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake, up to heaven to be with

Thyself, and suffer me to die up yonder on my beloved tower ! Yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt !'

When, shortly afterwards, the venerable burgomaster, Wernherr Dagsperger, to whom the city owed so much, took his part so warmly, and obtained permission for him to remain at least temporarily in his office at the old tower ; and when, that same evening, Augustine with his senior school-fellow, Bernard Römer, came running up joyously, fell on his neck and cried out,—' Only think, Cousin Melchior, the Prior says you are too old to be always eating only bread and garlic, and fetching the water up to the top of the tower to water your flowers ; so now we, Bernard and I, are, every evening, after working hours, to take you a warm meal from the convent kitchen, and to bring you up a pitcher of water, and to stay with you till the vesper bell,'—then indeed Cousin Melchior with deep reverence doffed his hat and folded his hands, and looking up to heaven exclaimed, ' Lord, I thank Thee ! Thou turnest the hearts of men as rivers of water ; I am indeed unworthy of all the faithfulness and compassion which Thou hast shown to a miserable sinner such as I am !'

It was on Christmas eve ; Augustine had learned his lessons capitally, and brought his father a satisfactory testimonial to this effect, with the request that, as his reward, he might be allowed to pass the approaching holidays in the convent instead of at home. Before returning to the convent he was to take his mother's Christmas-box to Cousin Melchior, in the shape of a whole basketful of victuals and a bran-new fur cap, and to-morrow he was to be exempt

from his father's iron rod, and free to spend all these glorious festive days, even to Twelfth Night, in the midst of his schoolfellows ! Who could well be happier than little Augustine ? Beside the belfry he met Bernard Römer, also bringing a liberal Christmas-box for the old watchman from the Prior. When the two boys arrived, old Melchior was sound asleep, as was his wont at that hour. Peaceful like a happy child, he lay wrapped in his mantle on his straw couch, the dark lantern burning at his side, and the fire crackling cheerfully in the little iron stove. Quietly and cautiously did the boys set in order the contents of their rich baskets, lighting all the Christmas tapers, and then softly, carrying the lantern with them, they went to the trellised arbour, there to wait for his awakening, and to witness his glad surprise.

It might be about five o'clock ; the evening was cold and clear ; down in the square below there was a motley and noisy crowd, for the cradle of the infant Jesus was set up in the church of St. Stephen's, surrounded by many hundred candles, and the townsfolk were flocking to pay their devotions, as the custom was, at the holy manger. The wild and uproarious young fry were running round the church with little wooden rattles called '*Rarren*' or '*Rätschen*,' keeping up a horrid din, and crying the while, ' Here we are, bringing the angelic greeting ! ' Bernard and Augustine looked down on the merrymaking from their lofty tower, became infected with the glee, fell to laughing and shouting with the rest, and when their jokes and witticisms seemed to be unheard, Augustine snatched up the watchman's horn, which lay in

a corner outside, and, in a fit of thoughtless drollery he blew once, twice, thrice, till the old tower reverberated with the full-sounding blast. Had he blown an enchanted horn, not greater would have been the tumult excited. Doors and windows flew open at once, lights appeared on the streets in every direction, people rushed out of the church, looking up anxiously to St. Stephen's Tower, and the question was on all their lips, 'What is the matter? why is the alarm sounded?' The guards at the gates hastened to draw up the bridges in rattling speed, and to close the gates, and forthwith the burgomaster betook himself to the Town-hall. But before all these results had followed the fatal blast, up rose, startled from his couch in terror, Cousin Melchior himself, who, knocking over the table with all its goodly array of Christmas boxes, hurried out into the harbour, exclaiming wofully, 'Oh! Augustine, Augustine, why hast thou played me this trick? I shall lose my office certainly!' While the two boys were standing aghast and the old man looking down in despair, the watchman at the Town-hall cried through his trumpet, 'What is the matter?' to which query Cousin Melchior was obliged, fetching his horn with a deep sigh, to reply at once, 'Nothing, it was a blunder!' Upon which the watchman below responded by vociferating furious invectives, and the people in the market-place vied with him in loud abuse, throwing stones at the tower and shouting, till the parish priest came out of the church to command silence and try to still the tumult. Up yonder stood poor Augustine, motionless and speechless too, hardly knowing whether he was awake or dreaming, and whether it really

could be he who had caused all the mischief by his untimely blast.

‘And now, youngsters, run down, for there comes the officer of the Town-Council, marching along with his lantern, sent to call me to account. I dare not let him find you here; and, Bernard, beware of telling any one that it was Augustine who did it, for his father would beat him well-nigh to death,’ added Cousin Melchior with a deep sigh. ‘Augustine must tell no lie! God forbid! Let him only hold his tongue, as no one is aware of your having been up here. I too will beware of saying anything untrue, and may God preserve me from the snare! I shall only say I had fallen asleep (which is most true); I did not know when I wakened up what o’clock it was (true likewise)—and that it happened through inadvertence—that also is true, for you did not do it from malice, did you, Augustine?’

Augustine fell upon the old man’s neck sobbing, and exclaimed, ‘No, assuredly I did not! But hark ye, Cousin Melchior, although father should beat me to death, I must tell that I blew the blast, for otherwise they would drive you from the tower and dismiss you.’

‘It will be all of no use, my boy. You will only receive merciless blows, and your poor mother a fresh heartbreak. They will now have somewhat to complain of against me, which they were so long waiting for. And even though they knew you did it, they would say,—‘If the watchman had done his duty, and kept his eye on these youngsters, this would never have happened. He has forfeited his office, and got only his deserts, so there is an end of it!’

But already the sound of the city-messenger's heavy step was heard on the steep stairs. Old Melchior ordered the boys to stay at the other side of the trellised platform, while he went to the little chamber in the tower to hear the message from his stern lord the burgomaster. Meanwhile Bernard and Augustine softly crept down-stairs, and returned unobserved to the convent, greatly relieved by finding that no one had missed them.

Poor Cousin Melchior! Now indeed thy foes have triumphed, and during these merry days of Christmas holiday, merciless was thy fate! As ill-luck would have it, two stone bottles of wine formed part of the Christmas-box; one of these was broken in the fall of the table, and the town-officer, met on entering the little chamber in the tower by a strong smell of wine, and by the sight of victuals scattered on the floor, thought a sudden light had flashed upon him, and knew how to tell his tale below of roast geese, sausages, bottles of wine, etc. etc., lying on the floor of the tower-chamber, and how to expatiate on the demure Cousin Melchior, with his sanctimonious air, being neither more nor less than an arrant hypocrite, living a jolly life of good cheer, being manifestly addicted to tippling, so that a drop too much must have been the cause of his having blown his horn for nothing, and thus put all the worthy citizens into a state of panic. All which tale spread like wildfire in the guard-houses, at the gates, and in the various guilds, growing as it went, so that Burgomaster Dagsperger was assailed on all sides to make him dismiss the guilty watchman. Right sorrowfully did he say at last to the

town-clerk that it would be impossible for them to keep old Melchior in office this time. The old man himself meekly bowed his head, saying, 'In God's name then forward to meet death, if so it must needs be—if such is the will of God. I have a conscience at rest!'

A conscience at rest? Nay, old Melchior, not altogether so! A voice within whispered to him incessantly, 'It is not right of thee to have counselled Augustine to conceal the truth, and thus to have led him astray.' That same voice,—of the Good Shepherd who goes after his erring sheep so faithfully to warn and to deliver them,—also spoke to Augustine's young heart thus: 'He who conceals the truth is making a lie, and this is sin.' So it came to pass that the aged watchman of the tower and the youthful scholar of the convent each felt a mountain weighing down his spirit, and they both learned by painful experience how a little untruth may entangle us in a web of lies, and drag us deeper and deeper into its meshes, how in the end we could but sink into despair, if indeed the Lord could ever forget to be gracious and merciful.

In the ancient chronicle it stands recorded that on the first rent-day after the Epiphany, that is on St. Lucia's Day, 'Melchior Küffer, the tower-watchman, was summoned to appear before the worshipful the Council, to answer to the accusation of blowing a false alarm.' Before the sitting of the Council, Burgomaster Dagsperger, who heartily wished him well, sent privately for the poor old man, and asked him how it had come to pass that he had been guilty of so untimely a blast; and how he could account for those roast

geese, broken bottles, and such like. When he replied he had fallen asleep, been awakened with a start, not known the hour, and upset the table in his fright, the burgomaster naturally asked what had frightened him, and who had brought the Christmas boxes. Upon which poor Cousin Melchior, fancying it necessary for Augustine's sake to withhold the truth, could not hobble out of the scrape without telling a downright lie, which, far from flowing smoothly from his lips, came so awkwardly, that his patron, struck by its improbability, and puzzled by the injustice he was doing himself, could only shrug his shoulders, and remark, that if he could not say anything better in self-defence he must assuredly be dismissed. The old man withdrew downcast, and returned to his ancient tower like a criminal to his prison. But what was to him far more distressing still,—he seemed to lie under the ban of Heaven in his soul, so that he could not pray.

For Augustine, too, these days about the season of Epiphany were a time of real purgatory. Often at a later period did he relate in what anxiety and dread he lived; how the burden weighed him down, almost as if it had been blood-guiltiness; and how, nevertheless, he had not strength nor courage to confess the truth, because his spirit was as it were held captive at his will by the father of lies. The Prior, however, who knew the old watchman full well, who had not let Bernard's melancholy and Augustine's altered mien pass unobserved, and who, moreover, was aware from what quarter the unlucky Christmas-boxes came, went first to the good dame of the guild, and then up to old Melchior himself

to the top of the tower. On the very day of the Epiphany itself, while the boys were eating their Twelfth-Night cake in the refectory, and crowning the King of Beans, according to their usage from time immemorial, with his paper crown, the Prior called the two young friends, Bernard and Augustine, into his cell, where they stayed till far on in the night.

When on the following day, the Feast of St. Lucia, the Council had assembled to investigate the matter, and the old watchman's friends and foes, among the rest the guild-master, had congregated to be present at the decision, when Cousin Melchior stood there, bowed down, with his grey locks hanging disconsolate, waiting to be brought down in dishonour to the grave; then the Prior entered the hall, accompanied by Bernard and Augustine, led the latter straight up to the burgomaster, and said,—‘Here, right worshipful and gracious gentlemen of the Council, I bring unto you the true criminal. He it was who, while the watchman was asleep, recklessly blew that dire blast with his horn, and thus caused the worthy citizens a needless panic, which he now heartily repents of. He now declares himself willing to undergo any pain or penalty which may be decreed by the most honourable Council.’

Summoned and encouraged by the Prior, Bernard then proceeded to relate simply, in a few words, the whole course of events, from their being intrusted with the Christmas gifts, and their visit to the arbour at the top of the tower,—to the confusion caused by the concealment of the true story to save Augustine from his father, and the consequent suspicion resting on Cousin Melchior.

In solemn silence, and with deep attention, the Council and citizens listened to the young and eloquent scholar of the convent-school. But Augustine, who stood trembling before the burgomaster like a culprit condemned to death, seemed, while Bernard was speaking, to feel a heavy weight removed from his heart. When his companion had finished speaking, Augustine held his head higher with a sense of freedom, and fixing his large bright eye steadily on the burgomaster, he exclaimed out of the fulness of an honest heart,—‘Thank God, it is out at last! You all know now I was to blame, and Cousin Melchior innocent. And now, Mr. Burgomaster, let me say to you, I am sure he will not be dismissed,—you will never drive him from his beloved tower!’ The next moment the boy went up to his stern parent, took his hand, and said most humbly: ‘Father, forgive me! Never, never will I tell a lie; never again will I even conceal the truth; I would rather be beaten to death!’ Cousin Melchior hereupon ran forward, clasped his little favourite in his arms, and said to the guild-master: ‘It is I, it is I, sir, who have sinned and incurred your severe but just wrath; for I led astray this young soul, and caused him to hide the truth; do therefore remit the poor child’s punishment, which I alone have deserved!’

But here an unusual glistening was seen to appear in the father’s eyes; he wiped them first with one hand, then with the other, but he could not hinder the tear rolling slowly down to his beard.

At this juncture the question was put to the vote,—whether the worshipful the Council should declare the

watchman of the tower guilty of neglect of duty, and supersede him in his office. A large majority of votes was recorded in favour of a negative reply ; and on the motion of the town-clerk, a letter, sealed with the official signet of the town, was addressed to Melchior Küffer, appointing him, in consideration of his faithful services for thirty years, to the office of perpetual tower-watchman at St. Stephen's, with the promise of an assistant being granted him in case of necessity, in the shape of a lay brother of the Augustinian Convent.

'But,' interposed a certain member of the Council, who had promised poor Melchior's office to old Ursula's son; 'it is written in our law, the penalty for blowing a false alarm shall be three days' imprisonment in the tower on bread and water.'

'That sentence I am prepared to undergo, as I blew the blast!' exclaimed Augustine, with something like glee.

'Even so, my young friend,' replied the burgomaster; 'you have incurred the penalty, and the law must take its course.' Then turning to the Prior, he added: 'Take good care of and watch over these two boys as before, most worthy and reverend father, for it seems to me that the Lord has destined both to be chosen instruments for good in His Church!'

Old Melchior returned to his tower in triumph, escorted by his friends, old and young. He was humbled and still, but full of thankfulness; for the Lord had graciously fulfilled his feeble petition that he might be suffered to die up there. And the guild-master not being, as all had feared, in a

rage because Bernard had alluded to Cousin Melchior and Augustine being in dread of his blows,—but being on the contrary ashamed, and looking down with a thoughtful and solemn air, as if his spirit were exercised and he were communing with himself, and taking, for the first time, Augustine's hand between his own two hands, being altogether, from that day forward, much gentler and kinder,—all this too was manifestly the answer to the prayers of his excellent wife, for 'the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'

Augustine bravely endured his three days' imprisonment in the tower on bread and water, after which he returned, merry and spirited, to the convent-school. His pious mother's prayers were answered as regarded him. He became the first evangelical preacher in his native city, and in the chronicle—not the ancient chronicle of the town of Mülhausen, but the record on high—stand registered, without doubt, the names of many souls who will bless God to all eternity for his preaching of the blessed gospel. In the Word of God we read: 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' Among these wise teachers we shall not seek in vain for the name of our friend Augustine Krämer.¹

¹ Augustine Krämer was among the first to proclaim the pure gospel in Alsace. As early as 1522 he had gathered round him a small evangelical congregation holding fellowship as a Reformed Church.

CROOKED-BEAK.

‘Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.’—PS. xciv. 12.

‘Godliness with contentment is great gain.’—1 TIM. vi. 6.

‘Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.’—ROM. xii. 20, 21.

WE read in our ancient chronicle of Mülhausen that in the year 1508 a dreadful pestilence raged in Alsace, which in our town alone, then numbering 1500 inhabitants, laid low 400 victims. That must truly, according to the language of the day, have been ‘a great death.’

There stood at that time in the Bläuwlattengässlein, or Bläuwlatten lane, a half-dilapidated little house, inhabited by Hans Hügelin, the working miller, with his family. This Hans Hügelin had, as a young fellow, followed Count Waldner von Freundstein to the Italian war. After it he had settled in a home of his own at Lyons. Later still, having lost his young wife, he returned to Mülhausen with his mother-in-law and his two young children. In his native town he obtained employment with the miller of Bläuwlatten, and the above-named dwelling was cleared out and given him for his abode.

The little family worked industriously, and lived in great retirement. Hans, still in the prime of life, seemed by no means disposed to marry again, although often exhorted so to do by his master and his fellow-workmen. His two children, Frank and little Theresa, were the joy of his heart, and his mother-in-law, known among the townsfolk as 'Wälsche Lette,' '*French Letty*,' was so orderly and frugal in her housekeeping, that Hans thought it would on his part be tempting God were he to take to himself a wife, and thereby run the chance of bringing dispeace and trouble among his family, where hitherto all had been quiet and harmony.

It was truly a peculiar and characteristic life, that of Hans in his home circle,—one with which his fellow-citizens, especially the female portion of them, could not by any means sympathize. The very fact of his having married a foreigner, and brought home a French mother-in-law, whose name, 'Idelette,' was unpronounceable for them, and who talked French with his children, a language which not one of the neighbours understood—for those days were different from ours!—was in itself obnoxious to people to whom from time immemorial everything foreign had been against the grain. Besides, Idelette was so peculiar, so very unlike all around her, and moreover she had A BOOK—whether MS. or printed our old chronicle does not inform us,—and read daily in this book, and also taught the children to read it; and this was the most unheard-of of all her strange ways. For that the nobles in their castles, and even the burgesses, and in particular the right worshipful the Mayor,

should teach their children to read—why, that was in the order of things, natural and right! But—the ragged little ones of Hans Hügelin, the working miller! No, indeed; that was an unpardonable piece of impudence in the French ‘Letty,’ and a thing plainly not to be endured! In short, little by little, every one began to whisper about this proud foreigner who tried, forsooth, to raise herself above her equals, who had little intimacy with any of them, but received often enough suspicious visits from strangers, with whom she read in her big book, and who, it was believed, all belonged to those heretics, the ‘*Winkeler*,’ known in Alsace and in Switzerland as ‘Waldenses’ or ‘Lollards,’ in France as ‘Lyonists’ or ‘Pauvres de Lyons.’

Among the neighbours, who without cause calumniated poor Idelette and manifested hostility to her in every way, none was of so evil a spirit as the Dame Gründler, a tall, lean woman, who kept a small tavern in the house next to the Bläuwlatten miller’s, frequented by none of the best company, for drinking, carousing, dancing, and gambling. It was currently reported as to this Dame Gründler that she was up to mischief of all sorts, and was not nice as to the choice of her ways of breadwinning,—that she had to do with many a game at cards, with many an evil deed, had helped many a light girl to wed a bad husband, and sealed the fate of many a young woman when on the verge of ruin. No one, however, ventured to speak openly of all this, for every one dreaded her. Those who were better than she stood aloof and fought shy of her; while the evil-disposed treated her to fair speeches, but whispered behind her back that ‘she

was a wicked old hag, a sort of witch, who had already worked abundance of evil, and against whom it was necessary to be on one's guard, as she was in league with evil spirits.' And as from the beginning the children of darkness have ever hated and persecuted the children of light, so also this Dame Gründler could not endure Idelette, nor the gentle little Theresa, nor the merry little Frank. Gladly would she have shown her spite in deeds as well as words, had she not stood in awe of the just vengeance of Hans, for though Hans did indeed leave all his neighbours unmolested, he always expected that others should equally leave him and his in peace, and was possessed of a right sturdy fist, which inspired a certain degree of respect.

To return then to our chronicle of the year 1508. A fatal epidemic was then raging. 'God's ways are not as our ways,' and He saw fit, by means of this 'great death,' to call the excellent Hans Hügelin to his everlasting home, while the poor old grandmother was left in charge of the young orphans, helpless and desolate. This was truly a triumph for Dame Gründler and others like her, who were open-mouthed about the judgment of God which could not fail to be sent to break the pride of that French Letty. 'Now, to be sure, it would soon enough be seen whether, with her devout hanging of the head and all her boasted good works, she could manage to earn a pittance for herself and the children.'

In truth, the situation of Idelette and the little orphans was sad enough. Yet not in vain has the Lord said (Jer. xlix. 11), 'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them

alive, and let thy widows trust in me.' Not without deep meaning is the old saying, 'God is the guardian of the poor,' and 'Prayer is the wall round the widow's dwelling.' And so it proved here, to the great amazement and still greater wrath of Dame Gründler and her friends. Not only was Hans Hügelin, notwithstanding the taint of heresy, honourably buried like other Christian men—a point greatly doubted by them beforehand,—but also Father Bernard Römer, an Augustinian monk held in high esteem for his learning and piety, visited Idelette almost daily, and took the most affectionate interest in her and the children. The Bläuw-latten miller granted them the cottage rent-free, and took Frank into the mill to train him thoroughly in his work. The miller's wife employed Theresa to help her in household work and in that of the farm-yard, where she had specially to feed and clean the poultry, and as she had early learnt sewing from her grandmother, who in her youth had been very expert at her needle, she was constantly supplied with work by the good housewife of the mill, whose large family and household enabled little Theresa thus to earn many a penny. The miller's wife, growing fond both of the girl and of the grandmother, took pleasure in adding some assistance of her own when and where occasion offered, and so, with God's help, all went on smoothly and peacefully in the quiet little home. Its inhabitants suffered no need, for prayer and industry sweetened their cruse of water and seasoned their oatmeal-broth. More they neither had nor wished to have. Yet one dainty they did almost daily procure—to wit, a fresh egg for the

old grandmother, who had suffered for a long time past from cramp in the stomach and rheumatic pains in her hands and feet. How she came to possess the fresh egg we have yet to relate, and this leads us to '*Crooked-Beak*,' the heroine of our tale.

Crooked-Beak was a beautiful crested snow-white hen. As it crawled out of the egg, Theresa, who carried the new-fledged chicks into the sun in her apron, and scattered grain for their first food, at once observed that although the said tiny feathered friend, like its brothers and sisters, scraped lustily on the earth with its little feet, yet it never managed to pick up a single grain of corn. Theresa took up the small creature in her hand, and discovered to her grief that the upper and under parts of its beak crossed each other obliquely, forming something like an open pair of scissors, and that it could therefore only eat when its food was heaped up. For a long time Theresa fed her little chick after this fashion, and so, while the rest of the brood were tripping gaily about to gather the food scattered for them, Crooked-Beak sat on her shoulder, eating its corn at its ease out of her well-filled hand. Thus it became so tame that it flew up to her as soon as she entered the poultry-yard, followed her, perched on her foot, and, when she sat down to her needlework, settled to roost on her shoulder, where it usually enjoyed its mid-day slumbers. Before autumn had arrived, Crooked-Beak had grown such a beauty that Theresa was quite proud of it, and one day with great glee she said to the miller's wife, 'Only look, good mistress, at the fine large tuft on the head of this

little chicken! By this mark we may be sure it is a hen, while all the rest of the same brood are cocks!

‘But why does it not eat with the others?’ asked the mistress.

‘Because it cannot. Look here, see how its little beak crosses over in front!’

‘Ah, I see! Then it is of little avail for the poor little creature to be such a beauty, and a hen to boot, for it must be condemned to the same slaughter as the cocks. Only fatten it well first!’

‘Crooked-Beak to have her dear little neck twisted!’ piteously ejaculated Theresa. And as she pressed her feathered favourite tenderly to her bosom, her tears began to flow.

‘Well now—but what else can be done with the poor bird? It could only perish in the course of the winter, for no one would have time to spare for its special feeding.’

‘Oh! dear, kind mistress, pray do give it to me! I will feed it and share my last morsel of bread with it.’

‘Ah! but, little Theresa, you must work and learn to gain your livelihood; you must not fritter away your time with this little chick!’

‘I can assure you, mistress, I shall lose no time with it. If only I may be allowed to put its food into a saucer, it can manage to eat alone. Oh! pray, pray give it to me, good, kind mistress! I will gladly do your sewing in return all the winter. If we had but Crooked-Beak, my old grandmother, whose infirm limbs keep her a prisoner to her chair all day, would not be so lonely at home when

I am in the mill ; she would have a living creature to keep her company.'

'Well, for my part, I gladly give you the hen for your grandmother's sake. I was wishing to give you some Michaelmas present at any rate, so you may take it for that, Theresa ; although in all my life I never yet heard of such a thing as a hen being company for a human being.'

'Crooked-Beak my own, my very own !' exclaimed Theresa, as she kissed and hugged her pet with childlike joy. 'Oh ! may God reward you, mistress ! Oh ! you little know how rich and how happy you have made us, for soon Crooked-Beak will lay eggs, and then we shall always have something for grandmother to eat !'

'Have you not always something for her now ?' asked the mistress, as if alarmed. 'You are never in want, child ?'

'Oh ! no, no ; for the Lord Jesus is so gracious, and you, madam, have been very kind. But . . . grandmother did forbid my telling you of it—but . . . since father's death we have only oatmeal-broth, and grandmother is no longer able to take that ; and when it disagrees she cannot get anything else, except occasionally a mess made with any milk you may happen to give us. That does refresh her. But if Crooked-Beak soon lays eggs, I can boil one for her every day.' And the little girl jumped and clapped her hands.

'I tell you what, Theresa, come into the house with me, and I will give you grain to feed the hen, and milk for your grandmother ; and you must come daily to fetch milk enough to make a good milk-pottage, and on meat days a

little bit of meat. Now remember, Theresa, you must never let this slip, even should it escape my memory.'

So saying, the good housewife of the mill repaired to her store-chamber, laid some butter and eggs, meal, a fitch of bacon, and a bottle of wine, in a basket, and soliloquized the while somewhat in this strain : ' Yes, yes, so it is, old Kitty! Because the gracious Lord supplies thee liberally, thou, at thy well-garnished board, forgettest to sympathize with the starving. O Lord! enter not into judgment with me!'

Great indeed were the joy and thankfulness in Theresa's home, on her return with Crooked-Beak and her well-filled basket. On Frank hearing how kind the miller's wife had been, he gave his grandmother his pledge that he would stay at the mill and render faithful service to the surly miller all his life long for the sake of the generous mistress. This excitable fellow, Frank, had in fact already repeatedly given proof of his hot-headed temperament, by refusing to put up any longer with the ill-humour and whims of a very severe master, and declaring his preference for becoming a soldier, and going to the wars as his father had done. Thus poor old Idelette had no easy job in controlling the youngster, who nevertheless had at bottom a fine disposition, and was ready to go through fire and water for his sister or his grandmother.

Crooked-Beak led a merry life in her new home. Frank made her up a nest of straw beside the hearthstone. Close to it stood a little dish with water and sand, and a second with her food—the barley for which was never forgotten by the good dame at the mill. So the pet fowl enjoyed all

her meals quite at her ease, generally seated the while on Theresa's shoulder, and making a point of waiting till the old grandmother carefully collected the crumbs which formed her dessert. When winter came, she was allowed to sleep in the warm bed-chamber, under the stove; and on Christmas-Eve Theresa was greeted in the morning by the discovery of the first egg. How great was her joy as she boiled it for the old woman's supper! But when the miller's wife came with her Christmas boxes, apples, nuts, milk-rolls, and various articles of cast-off clothing, and, soon after her, Father Bernard—he, too, by no means empty-handed,—then indeed Idelette's heart overflowed with praise and thanksgiving to her God and Saviour. She folded her hands, the children knelt beside her, and she poured forth a short and hearty prayer, her unpremeditated utterance of praise, followed by the petitions of the Pater-noster—the Lord's Prayer—repeated in her broken German with such devout fervour, that tears stood in the mistress's eyes, and she involuntarily fell on her knees beside the young ones as Father Bernard pronounced the blessing, concluding with the words, 'Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy . . . for unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour.' After which he sang with the children—and this too in German, so that their kind friend from the mill could understand,—'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men.'

On returning home, the miller's wife felt as she had never felt before in her life, and said to her husband, who was in one of his most crabbed moods, and bent on wrangling:

‘Leave me in peace now, old Martin ; this evening I cannot quarrel with you, but only ask you to forgive me for having, alas ! too often done so already ; for truly it seems as though I had just been hearing the song of the blessed angels in heaven.’

‘He who departs from evil is an abomination to fools.’ Thus says the Word of God, Prov. xiii. 19. (*‘It is abomination to fools to depart from evil,’* Eng. vers.) So was it with Idelette. She had become an abomination to Dame Gründler. That it should go well with these humble folk in their mean home and their penury, that Father Bernard and the miller’s wife should take so true and loving an interest in them, all this filled her with bitter jealousy, and inflamed her spiteful hatred. And as the tongue, ‘set on fire of hell, is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison, a world of iniquity’ (James iii. 5-8), so accordingly Dame Gründler swore that she would never rest till that French Letty should be driven out of the town and the country too. How she set to work in the first instance our chronicle nowise records, but so much is certain, that the matter was brought before the parish priest and the worshipful magistrates, and that the former called Father Bernard to account for the misdemeanours carried on under the roof of the French widow in the Bläuwlaten Street. Moreover, that,—the wise, prudent and venerable burgomaster having procured information on the subject,—it was settled that strong measures must shortly be taken against the evil, and the foreigner placed in confinement, all which was recounted by the town-officer to Dame Gründler, with whom he was

wont to pass almost every evening in drinking and gambling. He added, as his own suggestion, that the best of all would be if, by hook or by crook, Dame Gründler could gain possession of the suspicious big book, for then they would have proof positive of the sorcery in their own hands, and the suit against the French heretic for witchcraft would be as good as gained.

So it came to pass that, on a bitterly cold night, when a piercing north wind was blowing—it was in the Carnival, and wild merry-makings had been carried on at Dame Gründler's,—Idelette was sitting still and peaceful with her grandchildren, reading to them from the big book by the light of their little lamp, when the tavern guests, heated with wine, and incited by the spiteful speeches of their hostess against the poor foreign widow, rushed out *en masse*, and pouring forth a torrent of abuse and imprecations, proceeded to attack the little cottage, smashing the tiny round panes of glass in the leaden-framed windows with a shower of stones. When the tumult began, the rattle of broken glass falling on the floor, and the whiz of stones flying about their heads, Theresa raised a cry of distress, and Crooked-Beak, frightened out of her nest, flew round in terror, as she might have done in a poultry-yard if a weasel had broken in. Frank seized his old rheumatic grandmother in his arms, carried her out into the kitchen, placed her at the fireside, and was rushing down-stairs prepared to defend his home and its dear inmates, when Theresa, clinging to him, besought him with many tears to remain with them. ‘Oh! stay, stay, Frank; what can you do, alone and unarmed,

against these wicked, drunken men? They will certainly take your life.'

'Let me alone, Theresa,' cried Frank, glowing with rage, 'for should they murder me ten times over, I must and will avenge the injury on these malicious knaves!'

At this moment the grandmother laid her hand on his shoulder, and gently asked, 'Frank, what did the Saviour say when the Roman soldiers were nailing him to the cross?'

Frank gave no answer; his face was glowing,—he stamped with his feet and knocked his clenched fist against his forehead.

'What did your Saviour say?' softly repeated the grandmother.

'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' whispered Theresa, still clinging to her angry brother.

Hot tears rolled down his cheeks, as he threw himself down before his grandmother; at length he hid his face in her lap, and wept like a child. She suffered his tears to take their course, and when at length all was once more still below, the wild raging throng having dispersed, and the shrill blustering voice of Dame Gründler being no more heard, then the old woman said lovingly but seriously, 'Thou must forgive them, Frank, as the Lord forgives thee; for they too know not what they do.'

Poor old Idelette was obliged, with Crooked-Beak, to sleep in the cold kitchen on the floor, while Frank and Theresa gathered up the stones and tiles thrown into the bed-chamber, and endeavoured to put things into order again as best they could. But next came the question, Who was

to pay for the broken windows? Money they had none; the doers of the mischief they knew, indeed, well enough, but before any tribunal the poor calumniated widow, with the desolate orphans, had no chance of obtaining righteous redress. When Frank, on the following morning, appealed to the miller about the matter, he could get no hearing even from him, for he too had had his head filled with spiteful gossip, so much so that he would gladly have given the poor family notice to quit his premises, had not his brave Kitty stood between him and the oppressed as their defender, and given fair notice to her growling old Martin, that 'in the field or in the mill he was, as a matter of right, lord and master, and free to rule all and dispose of everything at his pleasure; she had no business to interfere. But at home, the household concerns were her jurisdiction equally as a matter of right; therefore she would not suffer the old grandmother and her little orphans to be turned into the street.' This decision was final, for the miller's wife had a will of her own. But again the other side of the matter was, that the cash all pertained to the husband's jurisdiction; now he would not pay for the broken panes; and this too was final, for the miller was a headstrong man.

Nevertheless—and this was really too much for Dame Gründler, and satisfied her more than ever that that French Letty was a witch—that very evening saw fresh glass in the windows, and towards dusk Frank fixed a great board in front of them to prevent any danger from stones. Who in all the world had paid for the broken panes?

'I will tell you,' whispered little Theresa to her kind

friend from the mill, when she came across late in the evening. 'The Lord Jesus told Father Bernard to get them replaced for us, and he has done it. But you must not tell Dame Gründler!'

From time immemorial the vintage has been the great season of festivity with the people of Mülhausen. Three hundred years ago, as in our own days, the town appeared dead in autumn, because every creature that could stir hand or foot had gone to the vineyards. Whether this joy was the true joy of harvest—that which, while enjoying the rich gifts, rejoices most in the Giver and in His grace, and offers to Him sacrifices of praise,—we have reason to doubt, since joy in the Lord is of a quiet, moral and loving character, whereas the scenes of merrymaking at the vintage, originating in ancient Pagan customs, were noisy and full of frivolity and impropriety. Exceptions to the general rule there have, by the grace of God, always been,—those known by the epithet, '*quiet ones in the land*' ('*Stillen im Lande,*' or '*Quietists*'), and so truly we may believe that in the vintage of 1510, noted as a rich one in our old chronicle, many a heart did bring to its Lord the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and did not fail to consider the poor.

The worthy lady of the mill had been mindful of her poor friends, and had been liberal in her largesses towards that family she had taken under her protection. However sour the master of the Bläuwlatten mill might be as he looked on askance, his brave Kitty would not be deprived of her right to insist that for once Frank and Theresa should have a merry day like the rest, and go with their neighbours

to the Zuckerberg ('*Sugar-hill*'), where the miller had a large vineyard. So it actually came to pass that in the morning both started early with the miller's family and all his *employés* for the vineyard, Frank in highest glee, Theresa on the other hand oppressed and anxious, so burdened with care indeed that, if only her kind mistress would have allowed it, she would have preferred staying at home with her grandmother; for the previous night Father Bernard had called late, and had been long closeted with the old woman in secret conversation, since which it seemed as if a funeral pall had been spread over her dear face, usually so peaceful and serene. She was grave and rapt in thought, and, for the first time since Theresa was of an age to reflect about it, she had gone to rest without reading in her big book, saying that her eyes ached, and that she preferred repeating some of it, for she knew nearly the whole by heart. All this had caused Theresa many a puzzled, sorrowful thought.

While she was thus cogitating amid the vineyard merry-makings, her solitary old grandmother was, however, already comforted right well by her dear Saviour, on whom she had cast all her burden, and who had relieved her of it, and answered her cry by filling her with peace.

Dame Gründler had likewise remained at home, and she too was full of her own thoughts. But, alas! they were thoughts of evil. She was turning over in her own mind whether the lucky moment had not come for getting possession of the suspicious book, and handing it over to the authorities, through her friend the town-officer. There was actually no creature in the street, save herself and that

French Letty, for old deaf Ulrich, who was watching the mill, sat snoring on the stone bench, as she had even now ascertained by peeping through the window.

Idelette was so much crippled in the limbs by rheumatism that she could not walk, and before she could painfully raise herself with her crutches, there would be more than time for Dame Gründler, who was yet strong and brisk in her movements, to get out of the house with the book secured as her booty. No sooner thought of than done! Softly, like a cat on the sly, she glided down the lane, entered the widow's little room, and, while receiving her hospitable salutations, and inquiring in return concerning her welfare, peered with a keen, hawk's-eye glance 'into every corner. At last she responded to her neighbour's queries as to health, by saying, 'She had begun to weary, left there so long alone at home, so she had come to ask as a favour of Idelette that she would show her, for once, that big book of hers, over which she was wont to pore so diligently, and, perhaps, indeed she would be kind enough to read some of it now for her benefit. To which Letty replied that it grieved her to be obliged to refuse the request, but she had lent the book to a dear friend. Whereupon Dame Gründler waxed so wroth that she could no longer contain her rage, and she poured forth a torrent of abuse. Idelette answered her not at all, but sat still, peaceful and composed, while the vixen searched through the little room,—soon done, and little to find in it,—and protested with an oath that 'she would speedily find the book herself, and carry it to the place to which it belonged, and where Idelette too

would have her mask of piety torn off, and all would see what was concealed behind it!' However, after she had vainly ransacked every place, and even rummaged to the very bottom of the chest, still finding no book, she ran off raging and reviling, slamming the doors behind her so violently that the little frail tenement shook as if with an earthquake. Still Idelette sat there, with folded hands, looking up to heaven, and as tears of thankfulness rolled down her pale cheeks, she exclaimed, 'Ah! dear Lord, how graciously hast Thou preserved my treasure for me!'

So far all had gone on well, but unfortunately Crooked-Beak was just then sitting on her nest, in which she had a new-laid egg, and after the fashion of all poultry she began to raise a loud cackling when Dame Gründler stormed out of the house. Hearing this, and rejoiced to meet with any living creature on which she might vent her anger, the said Dame turned round, and with the words, 'Aha! you accursed animal! You shall serve my turn at the right moment! What have beggarly folk to do with eating eggs and feeding chickens!' she seized Crooked-Beak by the wings, stuffed it, egg and all, into her apron, and hurried out of the little house again. Ah! poor, poor Crooked-Beak! if only thou hadst held thy tongue! But full often is it even so with us; full many a grief and trouble have we brought upon ourselves by unnecessary talking, boasting and bragging! 'Speech is silver, silence is gold.' This was the saying of a wise man of old,¹—one that we have all often

¹ Often quoted as a saying of Talleyrand, but attributed by the French translator here to an Arabian proverb.

need to have whispered in our ears. In the school of that Master, to whom the Holy Ghost in the 141st Psalm teaches us to pray, 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips,' in that school Idelette had learned to endure and to be silent. She did therefore hold her peace, when Frank and Theresa came home, and she merely said, 'She had heard Crooked-Beak cackling loudly, and then crowing anxiously, and she believed some one had carried off the bird.' For more than one reason she deemed it wiser to keep silence altogether as to the invasion of her premises by Dame Gründler. In the first place, she did not wish to increase Theresa's dread of the wicked old Dame, for the girl stood in such awe of her that she trembled even on seeing her at a distance. In the second place, the old grandmother had a fear of her own—it was indeed only a wholesome fear of sin; she dreaded the violent rage and excitement of Frank and of the miller's wife, and as she knew that 'the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God' (James i. 20), she preferred laying her complaint and the tale of all her need before the Lord alone, and praying to Him for her oppressor. Most bitter indeed to her too was the loss of Crooked-Beak; little could she to-day relish even the delicious grapes which Theresa had brought home from the vintage, because her pet was not there to pick the skins out of the palm of her hand. Poor Theresa was inconsolable in lamenting her vanished darling; after having had a fruitless search in the mill and up and down the street, in every hole and corner, she was sobbing so bitterly as she left the court-yard that even poor deaf old Ulrich was

melted at the sight of her grief; he beckoned to Frank, who was at that moment coming down from the hay-loft, where he also had been seeking in vain, and whispered to him, 'Look ye now, Frank, I'll tell ye what—I think I have got on the right scent. This afternoon I saw the vile old witch opposite creep into her house like a fox into his hole, with a well-filled apron, as he might carry a fat stolen goose—what if she should have the hen? But we must set sily to work too, not march straight in at the main-door, for Dame Gründler is in league with the powers of darkness, and would soon contrive to inflict an injury on us. So let me act in the matter, and be you as dumb as a fish. Yes, yes,—they all think deaf old Ulrich observes nothing and knows nothing. Yet often I have heard better with my two eyes than they with their sharp ears, and I shall prove it this time too.'

Frank went home in silence, pondering, but never repeating Ulrich's surmises. At supper the poor trio sat together in mournful mood, not one of the three much disposed to eat. The egg for the grandmother was not wanting indeed, for the miller's wife had remembered that, but Frank was of opinion that in the boiling Theresa had poured more tears than water over it, and as he made the remark, so strange a twitching came over the corner of his mouth, and so significant a glance was darted from his flashing eyes, that Idelette, alarmed, laid her hand on his, and as she felt a hot tear fall on it, she herself could no longer restrain her tears.

'In this said year of grace 1510,' we further read in the

old chronicle, 'the town of Mühlhausen had so completely, by the grace of God, recovered from the effects of the troubles, persecutions, and wars it had endured forty years before, that it had attained a most flourishing state. A new town-hall was built, and beside it large cellars, granaries, and vaults, wherein were to be preserved the provisions, public documents and treasures of the town.'

Now the Knights of the German orders of chivalry were desirous of doing their part on the occasion, and they caused vaulted aisles to be erected in the church of St. Stephen's (which the Emperor Charles the Fourth had in the year 1354 presented to the Teutonic Knights), and added, by the hand of the master-builder, Hans of Constance, the crowning point to its spire. The authorities, with praiseworthy zeal, had already, on the erection of the choir, ordered several imposts to be levied for the beautifying of our parish church. Thus, for example, the best garment of every deceased individual fell to the church; the burghers were to contribute, each according to his means, some corn and wine, others geese, hens, pigeons, etc., and on the appointed days they were to bring their levies to the steward in the '*German House*,' or Town-Hall.

On one of these days the Knight-Commander of the land, Ritter George von Andlauw, being in the German House in his own apartment, heard an extraordinary noise in the court below, and stepped forward to the window to see what was the matter. Down there among many other citizens, male and female, he saw Dame Gründler, with a basket containing a hen, which she was desirous of present-

ing to the town-steward as the church-tax laid upon her. But before her stood Frank, his face glowing with rage, boldly maintaining the hen was his property, feloniously stolen by Dame Gründler on the first day of the vintage. The said Dame, for her part, was defending herself with tumult and screams, the other women screaming in concert, —deaf Ulrich and another of Frank's fellow-workmen stepping forward as witnesses, and saying to the steward, 'They well knew the hen by its crooked beak, and it assuredly belonged to the Hügelin family, and not to Dame Gründler.' She again persisted, and vociferated that it was her rightful property, for the Frenchwoman Letty had, in the absence of her grandchildren, who were at the vintage, sold it to her. Thereupon Frank grew yet more irate, and bolder too; and with the exclamation, 'You lie, you old witch!' he snatched the basket violently from the hands of the vixen.

At this juncture the noise and tumult were so great that the Knight-Commander, dreading a riot and hand-to-hand fight, rushed quickly down-stairs to restrain the wild mob. Meanwhile the lid of the basket had sprung open, Crooked-Beak, snuffing the free air of heaven, had spread her wings and flown, crowing lustily the while, straight into the arms of Theresa, who, pale, and with eyes red with crying, had that moment entered the Court hand in hand with Father Bernard. On seeing her feathered friend fly to her she welcomed it in her arms with tears of joy, and cries of 'Crooked-Beak, my own little Crooked-Beak!'

The crowd had drawn back respectfully at the sight of

the universally beloved Father Bernard, and of the Knight-Commander of the land, who also inspired reverence among the populace ; silence was suddenly restored ; and while these two were conversing in Latin, many an eye was fixed with sympathy on the weeping Theresa, and on her tall, slim brother, who had come to stand beside her as her protector, his flashing eyes downcast for the time out of deference to his two superiors, but unable to restrain his joy at the liberation of the bird and the victory gained.

The judgment of the wise King Solomon could hardly have been expected with greater suspense than that with which the assembled burghers in the court now awaited the decision of the Knight-Commander. He, after conversing for some time with Father Bernard, turned with a sharp glance towards Dame Gründler, and then with one of satisfaction towards the young pair, and looking keenly at the former, he said to her, ‘ You maintain then that this hen belongs to you in the name of God and of justice, and you wish to put it into the hands of our steward as your due, the equivalent of that which is levied on you as church-money ?’

The old Dame replied in the affirmative, with many asseverations, adding a torrent of abuse levelled against the rascal who had dared thus publicly to lay a complaint against and to vilipend her, an aged and respectable citizen. Upon which the Knight-Commander ordered her to be silent, and said sternly, ‘ Enough, you have paid your due,—the hen is accepted as your equivalent, and thereby your business is concluded : you may retire.’ And imme-

diately turning to the steward, he asked, 'What may be the estimated value of this hen?' 'At the utmost one shilling, your worship,' was the reply. The Knight drew out his purse, laid two shillings in the steward's hand, and said, 'Add these coins to the church-money. This hen I have hereby, in presence of all these witnesses, purchased of the Church, and fully paid for; it is therefore mine, and I am free to dispose of it according to my will and pleasure. And I forthwith present it to thee, my poor child,'—laying his hand gently on Theresa's bowed-down head, and addressing her in a kind and conciliatory tone—'Take it, and go home in peace.'

For an instant all stood as though petrified on hearing this unexpected dictum, but presently there arose a murmur which gradually became a loud expression of approbation,— 'That is capital!' 'Well said!' 'Well done!' 'A just judgment!' 'The old hag has found her match at last!' But Frank respectfully approached the Knight-Commander, held out his hand, and said, with ill-suppressed emotion, 'May God reward you, most noble Knight! You have judged righteously, and should you ever need two strong arms, and a loyal and faithful heart in your service, then think of Frank Hügelin, who is bound by the ties of gratitude to serve you with all his might, or to lay down his life for you.' He then drew forward Theresa, who, bashful and trembling, made a deep reverence before the Knight, and whispered, 'May God reward you in time and in eternity!' Then the young pair departed with light and rapid steps.

'That fellow pleases me, and the maiden also,' said the

Knight-Commander to Father Bernard, as he accompanied him into the German House.

The wrath of Dame Gründler now knew no bounds ; she began to complain loudly of ‘ the way in which that foreign rabble always now obtain a preference in our town, and are permitted with impunity to calumniate honourable citizens, and in which, moreover, with certain personages of high rank, a comely face and rosy cheeks are worth more than the lawful rights of a venerable and respectable citizen ! ’

Several of the bystanders sought to pacify her. Deaf Ulrich, however, the journeyman miller, and some other burghers, said plainly to her face, ‘ That instead of running on with abuse, she ought rather to acknowledge her debt of gratitude to the Knight-Commander for having paid for the hen out of his own privy purse, and abstained from making further inquiry ; for if the matter had been formally brought before a Court of Justice it would have fared ill with her, seeing that all the witnesses would have been against her, and could easily have brought overpowering evidence of her theft.’

These home-thrusts so incensed the angry dame that she exclaimed with a fearful oath, ‘ May I be a cripple from this day forward if it be not true that the French Letty sold the hen to me ! ’ Whereupon, scolding noisily, and quivering with rage, she left the German Court.

The Knight-Commander, however, when quietly ensconced with Father Bernard in his own apartment up yonder, was most anxious to know what all this had to do with the French widow in the Bläuwlatten Street. Why she was

suspected of heresy? And above all, whether the holy Father was acquainted with that book by means of which Idelette was believed to practise the black art?

‘Full well am I acquainted with it, truly,’ replied the Father; ‘since I have for some days past had it in my own hands.’

‘Well; and what sort of book may it be then?’

‘An old Bible, a copy of the French version by Peter Waldo, which has been handed down from father to son in Idelette’s family for generations, and held sacred and most precious, esteemed indeed their most costly family treasure, the most valuable heirloom of their ancestors.’

‘She is then a Waldensian!’ exclaimed the Knight, as if stunned. ‘Then indeed she must be ordered off our territory, for within the bounds of our town no such evil weeds must be suffered to take root.’

Father Bernard responded by simply asking the question, ‘Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?’ (Matt. vii. 16.)

‘How do you mean to apply that, Father?’

‘I mean, Sir Knight, you might yourself have recognised in the two young people with whom you were so highly pleased the proof as to what spirit their grandmother is of. Has not the Lord explicitly declared, “By their fruits ye shall know them?”’

‘But . . . is she really a Waldensian?’

‘That is a point on which, in good truth, I cannot certify you, forasmuch as I never questioned her on the matter. One thing however I know of a surety, Sir Knight, that

in this silent and devout sufferer I have seen a living example by which I have learned that the Gospel of Christ "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. i. 16).

For a while the Knight-Commander silently paced up and down the room with long strides, then he suddenly stood still before the Father, laid his hand on his shoulder, and said in a warning voice: 'Bernard Römer, Bernard Römer, take heed! Thou standest on slippery ground!'

'On the Word of God, Sir Knight! On that Rock on which the Lord hath builded His Church, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.'

They looked one another in the face for long, shook hands without another word, and . . . parted friends.

In the humble dwelling in the Blaüwlaten Street, on this same evening, a feast of joy and thanksgiving was celebrated by three simple souls. The grandmother was happy, not only because they once more had Crooked-Beak among them, but more especially because the Lord had so graciously preserved her Frank, and not permitted that he, led away by his violent passions, should commit any crime, or be involved in any scrape.

'And now,' exclaimed Theresa joyously, as she heartily embraced the old woman; 'now I shall prepare a rich repast, for to-night we are rich folk. We have milk, butter, and eggs, and Crooked-Beak in the midst of us again besides!'

'What is the matter in the street? Hark! what a noise and screaming!' said the grandmother.

Theresa shrunk back in alarm. Frank hastened out, but speedily returned in agitation with his master's wife, who, pale as death and with clasped hands, sank down on a chair.

'Has any misfortune happened?' asked Idelette and Theresa with one breath.

'A judgment of God,' slowly and solemnly replied the miller's wife; 'and it has given me a shock in every limb of my body. Yes; it is awful—it makes me shudder; but, sure enough, the Lord has judged her!'

'Judged whom?' eagerly inquired Idelette.

'Dame Gründler. Yes, truly; she declared, with an awful oath, as she was leaving the German Court, that she would go lame for life if it was not true that you had sold her that hen. She then turned homewards, still swearing and scolding. On the threshold of her own door a false step caused her to fall. She could not rise; and now there she lies, writhing like a worm, bemoaning herself as suffering infernal torture. Truly she is struck down by God Himself!'

'We must run to help her!' quickly exclaimed Idelette. 'The poor creature must have broken a leg or dislocated her hip-joint—a bad job enough at her age. Theresa, fly to Father Bernard, and beg him to bring the Doctor; and you, Frank, go with the mistress, and lift the poor woman and lay her on her bed.'

But the grandmother spoke to deaf ears. No creature would venture to go. Frank and the miller's wife maintained that 'Certainly the . . . may God preserve us! . . .

the . . . is staring visibly out of the old dame's eyes, and, moreover, she launches such curses at Idelette and her grandchildren that really it would not be advisable to approach her.'

Father Bernard had been anxious that very evening to restore to Idelette her beloved book, and to set her mind at rest, having only good news to carry to her; but, on reaching the Blaüwlaten Street, he was not a little surprised to find the crowd gathered round Dame Gründler's house, and to learn what had occurred. 'A judgment of God!' that seemed every one's first thought; and no one was willing to touch the subject of this awful stroke, nor to render her any assistance. Some beheld her from afar with spiteful curiosity, others with shrinking fear and horror. And yet some help must be given somehow. Is it not the command of the Lord Jesus that His disciples should overcome evil with good, and are we not assured that our gracious God chastises even the wicked among the children of men, not in wrath but in love, that they may be led to acknowledge their sins, and to flee to Christ crucified, that they may be converted and live? So then as no one would help good Father Bernard to raise the sufferer from the ground, for all fought shy of her still, and stood coldly aloof, leaving him alone with the unfortunate woman, he went straightway to Idelette's lowly home called out Frank, sent Theresa for the doctor, and entreated the miller's wife to go with him to her unhappy neighbour's house, to arrange everything needful for the nursing of the invalid. He felt bound however first to spare time for a

devout Paternoster offered up with Frank and the miller's wife, and for a little word to impress on their hearts that petition, 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us.' At last all did go as he wished, and each member of the circle performed his or her Christian duty towards the suffering woman, to the great joy of the good old grandmother, who could give no help herself, but yet did the best she could, and in truth more than they all, for she continued unremitting in silent, earnest prayer, that the Lord would teach love to her Frank and to the miller's wife, and would in mercy soften the hard and stony heart of Dame Gründler.

And now what of the old Dame herself? Assuredly this stroke was, as the neighbours said, a very judgment of God, for the Lord had taken her at her word: she had dislocated her hip-joint, and was a cripple for life. But the Lord, according to His great mercy and loving-kindness, after chastising her for a while, granted her space for repentance, and dealt with her in the riches of His grace. There was indeed a hard struggle in the case of this veteran sinner; for a long time she refused to bow under the almighty hand of God, to confess her sins, to repent, to bid farewell to all her animosities, to see either the miller's wife, or Frank, or Theresa, or her grandmother, or to suffer them to approach her bed. However there was no one else whom she could see, no one else came near her, for those of a better sort shuddered at the idea of the anathema under which, as proved by this visitation of God, she seemed to lie, while the disreputable women who at first agreed to nurse her for

the sake of large payments, tended her so carelessly, cheated her so shockingly, and carried on such wild doings in her house, that she was forced at last, in order to avoid being deprived of all her worldly goods, to follow Father Bernard's wise advice, by resigning the care of herself and all her concerns to the kind and thrifty miller's wife.

And when, thereafter, she found herself all at once surrounded with an atmosphere of love, instead of the well-merited but much-dreaded lecturing and upbraidings ; when little Theresa, who with her heavenly Father's aid had overcome the fear of the old Dame, chatted with her in such a friendly way, handled her injured limb so gently, and sought with such tender compassion in every way to alleviate her pain ; when even the monosyllabic Frank and the stern mistress of the mill became, under the persuasive influence of old Idelette, milder and more sympathizing ; when 'French Letty' herself repeatedly caused Frank to carry her across and set her down beside her sick-bed, and there, freely and of her own accord, read for her benefit large portions of the beloved old book, and spoke in her own simple way of Jesus Christ the Saviour of sinners, who 'will have all men to be saved,' who came down from heaven and died upon the cross for sinners, even such as Dame Gründler ;—then the warm breathings of faithful Christian love did gradually thaw the hard ice of this evil heart ; then the heavenly Physician entered within, and by His Holy Spirit cast out the seven evil spirits which for so long a time had grievously tormented her, and held her soul in bondage as Satan's slave.

This transformation did not indeed take place without many a conflict and relapse, for old Adam in a man has often a very tough life, and the old man in Dame Gründler repeatedly rose again, and began afresh to pursue his former courses, to wrangle, scold, grumble and so forth, so that the miller's wife more than once well-nigh lost all patience and felt, 'Why should we one and all endure so much teasing and plaguing from Dame Gründler? She was a sort of incarnate fiend from the beginning, and would be to the end. Every one ought to be just and give her her dues, and then take no further trouble about her.'

However, Idelette was of another mind. The Lord had shown mercy to her in her deep necessity, and He had taught her also to be merciful, had given her grace to reward evil with good and thereby to 'heap coals of fire' on the head of her enemy. It is always the case when we pray heartily and perseveringly for any one, seeking at the same time to show kindness and to do good, that the person becomes dear to us, and can never again be an object of indifference; and so it was with Dame Gründler. But love is,—like heat,—to be felt, not seen; however hard she strove to resist it, gradually the beneficent effects of this love did overcome her, and she was constrained to love first little Theresa, then Idelette, and at last even Frank and the miller's wife. As this love began to spring up, her desolate heart was awakened to a new life, and the Lord, to whom Idelette's silent pleadings had risen acceptably, like Abel's sacrifice, awakened and enlightened and converted her soul, and His grace led her to repent and to seek salva-

tion with wrestlings, supplications and much exercising of spirit.

Those who had seen her formerly would hardly have recognised her now, so utterly transformed was the expression of her countenance and the glance of her now friendly eye. It was indeed a lovely sight in the autumn days of the following year, when the aged grandmother and Dame Gründler sat peaceably together on the bench in the Bläuwlatten street, warming their weary, aching old limbs in the mild rays of a waning sun. It was the first time that the lame woman had risen from her bed, and Frank had carried her down that she might be revived by the sweet fresh air. Crooked-Beak was also there, and must evidently have forgiven her former foe, and that right heartily, for often of late she had visited the invalid in company with Theresa, and to-day she greatly relished the crumbs so caressingly popped into her crooked beak by that very hand which had inflicted the injury of old.

‘No! Who could have predicted this last autumn?’ involuntarily exclaimed Theresa, as she prepared to go up to the vineyard hill with the miller’s wife.

‘Ah, indeed, that is true,’ responded Dame Gründler; ‘I feel as you do, I cannot understand how it is! Whenever I look at that hen of yours, I say to myself, “Thou didst purpose in thy heart all that evil, and our Lord God has graciously brought such blessing out of it!”’

‘Therefore,’ added Idelette, ‘to Him be all the honour, glory, praise and thanksgiving!’

‘Amen,’ answered Dame Gründler and the miller’s wife, who had joined the group at that moment.

Further details regarding the end of this little history we have not found in our town-chronicle of the olden time. We must therefore bid farewell to the inhabitants of the Bläuwlaten street, however warm may have been the interest we could not but take in their welfare. Nevertheless, we shall hereafter meet again the Augustinian monk, Bernard Römer, in this said ancient chronicle, and who can tell but that we may also there fall in once more with Frank and Theresa?

In the meantime let us each and all solemnly examine ourselves, and ask whether we hold our own Book—to wit, the Book of books—as precious and as sacred as old Idelette did hers? Whether we daily read in it as she did, and whether we live and walk in the spirit that breathes in it, and obey its precepts, as did Idelette, walking by faith, and that faith working by love?

THE MINISTERS OF THE WORD.

‘In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God.’

2 COR. vi. 4.

PARSON ZELL,¹ parish priest of St. Lawrence’s chapel in the Cathedral of Strasburg, commonly called simply ‘Master Matthew,’ had, as he himself informs us, begun, in the year A.D. 1521, the memorable year of the Diet of Worms, to preach the gospel to the people of Strasburg, by a course of regular expositions of single books of the Bible. The citizens, thirsting after light and truth, streamed in such multitudes to hear his sermons, that the chapel of St. Lawrence was soon too small for the crowded congregation. Zell’s parishioners then turned to the Dean and Chapter with the request that their parson might be permitted to use the so-called ‘*Doctor’s Pulpit*,’ formerly placed by order of the magistrates for Geiler’s use in the middle of the Cathedral. Gladly would the Dean, Count Sigismund of Hohenlohe, have granted their petition, but he was out-voted by the other members of the Chapter, and the stone pulpit was forthwith closed by their orders, which occasioned no small stir among the burgesses at large. When, shortly afterwards, the Book of Deuteronomy, which Zell was just beginning to expound, was

¹ Matthias Zell, born in Kaisersberg, A.D. 1477.

printed and circulated in the German language, the excitement and discontent rose to the highest pitch. For the first time for a thousand years the Word of God was open even to the unlearned,—for the first time a book of the Bible was printed and published in Strasburg,—‘and now, forsooth, they would fain stop the mouth of our beloved preacher; they seek to withhold the word of God from us, and to cheat us out of the salvation of our souls!’ loudly grumbled the malcontent citizens. Thus on the tiptoe of expectation, both the authorities and the populace awaited the course of coming events.

It was early on the first Sunday in Advent, before morning service, when old ‘Mey-Bäbeli,’¹ Zell’s faithful cook, was seen to wend her way towards ‘Gourd Lane’ from the Parsonage, her master’s home.² Mey-Bäbeli was a native of Müllheim in the beautiful little district of Markgräfler. She had been a servant in the household of the parson’s old aunt at Freiburg, after whose death she had passed, with the inheritance of house, garden and farm, to the nephew. From Freiburg in Breisgau, where he filled a professorial chair, she had followed him to Strasburg; and she was devoted with her whole soul to her revered master. But to-day Mey-Bäbeli did not appear to be in her usual cheerful mood; her eyes were red with weeping, she hardly bestowed any salutations on the

¹ ‘Mey-Bäbeli,’ a familiar appellative, literally signifying ‘House-keeper Barbara.’—*Tr.*

² The spacious and ancient Cathedral-Parsonage, the home of Zell, stood in Friars’ Court Street (Brüderhof’s-Gasse), opposite the present Episcopal Seminary, and had an exit towards Jews’ Street. Judging by the ground it occupied, it must have been of very large size.

passers-by, and hurried along so rapidly that more than once she was forced to stand still to recover breath.

‘Yes, yes, Mey-Bäbeli, when one grows old, like you and me, one cannot be so brisk, or run on so nimbly as long ago when one was in one’s teens. Do not hurry beyond your strength,—we shall arrive all in good time,’ said Dame Butzer, the master-cooper’s portly wife, who turned into Gourd Lane at the same moment, clad in her most respectable Sunday attire, rosary in hand, and holding also the Book of Deuteronomy.

‘Ah! is it you, Dame Butzer?’ said Mey-Bäbeli, as if awakening out of a dream. ‘Unfortunately,’ added she directly, ‘I cannot linger an instant, for I must of necessity, before Divine service begins, have a little talk with Maiden Kate. . . . But—what is the matter now this morning in Gourd Lane? Only look! It is crowded with men, packed so close that you could walk over their heads!’

‘Oh! do you actually not know yet that the guild of joiners has assembled, and they are carrying over to the Cathedral the wooden pulpit which has been made in Master Schütz’s workshop? It is all that your master may preach in the Minster. Yes, yes, most gracious sirs, the Very Reverend the Dean and Chapter, you may lock up the Doctor’s stone pulpit, but you can no longer thereby lock up God’s Word from us. Master Matthew will expound it as well to us, and apply it as well home to our hearts from the slender pulpit of wood, as from your fine sculptured stone one which you have now barricaded!’

‘What do you say?’ exclaimed Mey-Bäbeli in consterna-

tion. 'What?' my master is to preach to-day in the Cathedral instead of in the Chapel of St. Lawrence, and the joiners have made a new pulpit on purpose for him, to spite the Cathedral Chapter?

'It is all true, sure enough, just as I have told you. This time *Strudel-Hans* has proved worthy of his name' (literally signifying 'Blustering' or 'Hot-headed John'), 'and in a few days' time he has contrived and manufactured a portable pulpit, which may indeed be a little shaky and hastily got up (*gestrudelt*), yet will be sure to stand firm enough to bear your master's weight, for he is small and light enough.'

'Alas, alas!' sobbed out Mey-Bäbeli, 'that will certainly bring my poor master to utter ruin at once!'

'What do you mean, Mey-Bäbeli?'

'I mean that I wish *Strudel-Hans* with his wooden pulpit were where the pepper grows!' rejoined the good woman testily, gulping down her tears with a violent effort, and holding up her handkerchief to conceal her eyes, red and swollen with weeping.

Dame Butzer had no time to inquire further regarding the sorrows of Master Matthew's faithful domestic, for while she was speaking, the procession formed before Master Schütz's workshop, and as it was being set in motion, the crowd fell back on both sides with solemn gravity. Immediately afterwards all joined it in most regular order. First and foremost marched in full dignity the virtuous and honourable Master of the Guild, Justice Schütz, with his official staff and all the insignia of his dignity; then followed all the members of the guild of joiners, each having the Book of Deutero-

mony in his hand, 'for the purpose,' as is stated in the preface to it, 'of promoting the custom of taking to church with one the book from which the subject is to be chosen, and having the opportunity there, before the preaching begins, of reading over the text about to be explained.' Next came 'Hot-headed Hans,' Master Schütz's foreman; with his Goliath-like limbs, he carried the pulpit as easily on his broad shoulders as if it were a mere washerwoman's basket; two other journeymen carried the platform on which it was to rest, while a third followed, bearing the ladder by which it was to be ascended. Then came the wives and daughters of the master joiners, among the rest the gifted daughter of Justice Schütz, Maiden Katherine, with her two chosen friends, the highly esteemed widows, known by the name of '*die Kräfftinnen*,'—'the Dames Kräfft,'—who had, from early youth, dedicated themselves, with their bosom friend Katherine Schütz, to the service of the church and to the care of the sick and poor, and had thereby won universal love and veneration. To these last Dame Butzer and Mey-Bäbeli now joined themselves, the latter specially aiming at being in closest proximity to 'Maiden Kate.'

In the great Minster square, before the Cathedral, the Patricians and Councillors were awaiting, with anxious and long-strained expectation, the proceedings of the burgesses. There were to be seen, beside Daniel Ming the reigning *Ammeister* (chief magistrate), the ex-magistrate Herrlin, Councillor Pfarrer (Sebastian Brandt's son-in-law), and several others; there too was the aged and venerable Wimpeling,

Geiler's most confidential friend, leaning on the arm of his pupil, Jacob Sturm of Sturmeck, the famous *Stättmeister* (burgomaster) of Strasburg, in that day commonly designated 'the ornament of the German nobility,' who, in the tumultuous and perilous times of the Reformation, merited in the highest degree the grateful homage of his native city. The orders, fraternities, canons, priests and monks were all standing in various groups, to outward appearance quiet enough, while yet it was easy to discern that it cost them no small effort to restrain all expression of discontent. Over against them were the several guilds with their masters, drawn up in close array, with an air of firm resolution. Old men and young, matrons and maidens, all were together expecting the beginning of the public worship of God.

At last the procession of the joiners arrived at the Minster square; the bells pealed; the sacristan opened all the doors, and in a few minutes the vast area of the building was crammed with human beings. Not a little surprised was Master Matthew to find the St. Lawrence Chapel empty, and his hearers all assembled in the Cathedral. Led by their master, Schütz, 'Hot-headed Hans,' with the apprentices, had quickly and expertly put up the wooden pulpit in the very centre of the Cathedral, in front of the locked-up stone one, which is standing there to this day with the date 1487 visible upon it. The Masters of Guilds then proceeded to fetch their beloved preacher from the Chapel and lead him respectfully up to seat him in the new pulpit. Zell ascended the steps under deep emotion, fell at once on his knees in prayer, while the organ pealed forth its

thunders, accompanied by the rich harmonies of a full choir, and the glorious song of praise of the ancient church, the *Te Deum laudamus*, was re-echoed from many a thankful heart. Had any observer closely watched the preacher during that interval, he might have seen him, his whole soul full of the impression made by the singing, involuntarily lift his eyes to that stone pulpit, then cast a long, deep, resting look on Geiler's grave, the silent tears meanwhile coursing down his cheeks. As soon as the last chords had died out, he offered up a fervent prayer, after which he read out his text, and preached with extraordinary unction.

The sermon over, the congregation dispersed with as much stillness and decorum as they had shown in assembling; Hot-headed Hans and his associates carried the wooden pulpit back to Gourd Lane, and from the Chapel of St. Catherine there emerged a train of monks with holy water, incense and lighted candles, to reconsecrate the desecrated spot.

Forgetful of all around, Maiden Katherine Schütz sat behind a pillar, deep in the study of those glorious discourses contained in the Book of Deuteronomy. She continued reading long after the church was empty. Close behind her, Mey-Bäbeli was mechanically passing the beads of her rosary through her fingers, waiting impatiently for the time when Maiden Kate should have finished her devotions, and when she might be free to consult her about her affairs. Suddenly the door of a confessional near them was opened, and out stepped the Dean, who approached Katherine Schütz, and laying his hand on her shoulder, said gently,

‘Katherine, I have somewhat to say to thee.’ Immediately the damsel closed her book, rose and followed the Count into a side aisle. Mey-Bäbeli glanced complacently at the two noble figures, and soliloquized thus half-aloud, ‘It is true, there is a dignity about her as if she were a princess born, and fit to converse with kings and emperors. Therefore she is the very person, and no other, to tell it to my poor master.’

At length Mey-Bäbeli did find herself alone with Katherine in the Minster square. She grasped her hand, and, heaving a deep sigh, said in a most beseeching tone, ‘Oh! dear Maiden Kate, for the sake of all the blessed Saints, do contrive to get Hot-headed Hans to burn that wooden pulpit of his, for unless he does, assuredly my poor master will preach himself into utter beggary upon it!’

Katherine could scarcely control a smile, but, perceiving the perplexed and excited state of her worthy friend, she answered good-naturedly, ‘This is not the place to discuss such matters: come home with me and share my noon-day meal, at which, without fear of interruption, you may tell me all that is in your heart.’ Mey-Bäbeli promised so to do, adding however in a hesitating, timid tone, ‘I must first ask you, Maiden Katherine Schütz, to lend me a florin, without which I should be unable to give Simon Scheidt payment for the errand he has run: he returned yesterday evening from Freiburg, and longer I really cannot, for decency’s sake, keep him out of his money. My good master knows nothing of it . . . but . . . ah! you know what I mean already!’ Katherine instantly gave her the money she

required, saying in her friendly way, 'Farewell for the present—to meet again soon!' They parted, and about an hour before vespers Mey-Bäbeli appeared at Maiden Kate's, and related to her as follows all that weighed upon her mind.

'Master Matthew Zell had inherited, from the lately deceased sister of his father, of blessed memory, two fine houses at Freiburg, and a splendid vineyard, all which he had, being a Strasburg parson, rented to a certain Stoffel Bosenstein, whom Mey-Bäbeli never could endure, nor could she bring herself ever to expect any good from him, seeing that he had been of old a calker. Moreover, Master Matthew had, out of his patrimonial possessions, lent out a certain amount of capital to the late young nobleman Conrad von Kranznaw, upon which his widow was in the habit of paying interest in the shape of a yearly sum of nine florins. Accordingly, every year of late, during the season of Advent, her master had sent the post-runner Simon Scheidt to Freiburg, to collect his interest from Stoffel Bosenstein and Widow von Kranznaw, on which errand the said Simon had now been despatched as usual. He had returned the night before, half-dead and with empty hands, saying that by orders and in the name of His Imperial Highness Arch-Duke Ferdinand, the honourable Council of Freiburg had made over said houses and grounds to said Stoffel Bosenstein as his actual and lawful possession, declaring Master Matthew Zell to be thereupon deprived for ever of all his rights and titles thereto. When Widow von Kranznaw had paid down the nine florins to Simon on the table, as

he was on the point of popping them into his purse, a rap was heard at the door, a town messenger entered the room and said, "That money you have just received you must not carry away with you, for I forbid it, and I hereby sequester the money in the name of the Worshipful Council." Whereupon he tore up the receipt prepared by Simon, pocketed the florins, and straightway carried them to the mint. Not indeed,' added Mey-Bäbeli with tears, as she wound up her tale, 'that they can there bring in any interest or gain to my poor master !'

'And was the post-runner not informed on what ground or pretext they could make bold to rob your good master of his goods and possessions in so shameful a manner?' inquired Katherine.

'Ah! yes indeed, and that is the very thing that well-nigh breaks my heart, and old Simon's too. They say they must act thus because my master is a Lutheran heretic and an ungodly preacher, one who stirs up the populace against the clergy and the authorities, and who for that reason would be shortly excommunicated by the Pope, and laid by the Emperor under the ban of the Empire, and therefore burnt alive!' sobbed out Mey-Bäbeli, her hands clasped in despair. 'Oh! do,—do, I entreat of you, dear Maiden Kate,'—she proceeded: 'come this evening to the parsonage, and break to my poor master the news of this Job's post. I have not the heart to do it, and you know so well how to set your words. And you will persuade him to give up this preaching, at least for a time, and to content himself with saying mass as the other parish priests do.'

And then Hot-headed Hans may burn his wooden pulpit. And then my master will not always be giving away a florin when he has only a penny to call his own !'

'And what more, Mey-Bäbeli ?'

'Ah ! Maiden Kate, how can you be so composed ? However, I may tell all to you in confidence. Trusting to the interest from Freiburg, my master has given away all he had ; so we are now reduced to penury, and you must speak to him on this matter ; I mean the way in which, when the people from town or country bring their tithes or dues, he says to them, "Keep your money, and take your butter and eggs and your sucking-pigs home again with you, or carry them to market." And if that were all ! But he gives them money from his own purse, and then there comes the call again and again : "Mey-Bäbeli, give this poor man a glass of wine and a good hunch of bread to strengthen him,' or, 'Lay an extra cover at table, that this poor woman may take some hot soup with us !'" And so it goes on from one year's end to another ; we are always dispensing freely and never receiving. The collector is angry already about it, and has called my master to account right sharply, for spoiling his parishioners and injuring the public interest. Now, I do know that it will bring him a blessing that he does not help in oppressing the poor, and sucking out their life's blood ; and if only I were young again, and able to work and exert myself as of old, I would trust to my own thrift, and replenish the exchequer sufficiently for all the household expenses we really need, from the produce of our garden in the Schweighof, and with what little we still draw

from Kaisersberg,¹ but alack-a-day! I am slow in busy life now, and am going quickly down hill, and in sober truth I know not what to do, nor what is to become of my poor master!

‘Cheer up and keep your mind at ease, Mey-Bäbeli! your master is in the service of our great Lord and Master, who has all power to keep and protect His own in all dangers and necessities; and the love and tender compassion which he has shown to the poor folk will assuredly not be left unrequited. You may reckon on me for this evening. I shall certainly be with you!’

Master Matthew was sitting in his study in deep meditation. All at once the thought had sunk heavily on his mind that he alone was not sufficient to undertake the great task of expounding God’s word to the whole people; he alone could never carry on the great work in opposition to Princes, Bishop and Chapter; and so he clasped his hands and exclaimed, strong in faith,—‘It is true, one alone cannot do much. But the cause is Thy cause, dear Lord, and my work is the labour in Thy vineyard. Now I know assuredly that Thou, good and faithful Householder and Father, wilt soon thrust forth more labourers, and that I shall have associates to be husbandmen with me in the field of Thy sowing. How can I doubt it? Thou hast already gone forth to seek such!’

Katherine entered, followed by Mey-Bäbeli with the post-

¹ Besides the garden close to the Fishers’ Gate, known at Strasburg as the Schweighof Garden, Zell still possessed some landed property in his native town of Kaisersberg.

runner. The two latter both stood, with throbbing hearts, at the half-opened door, waiting anxiously to see how their master would bear the sad tidings. Calmly, with few and simple words, Katherine related all that had occurred, telling him also how distressed and concerned Mey-Bäbeli and Simon were on the subject. As soon as her tale was ended, Master Matthew gave her his hand, with a friendly and warm expression of gratitude, and with his own peculiarly genial look and tone he said, 'Well now, dear Kate,—well, in God's name, let us go forward! If they take my house, I hope I have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. If they take my vineyard, yet the earth and all things therein belong to my Lord Jesus Christ. He, the Lord and Judge, was also robbed, stripped, and nailed to the cross; naked and helpless I came into the world, and it matters little if I depart from it bare and in very penury!'

Mey-Bäbeli rushed in, seized her master's hand, and cried out with tears, 'Oh! how can any one be so cruel and unjust towards so good a man!'

'Ay, ay,' interposed Simon Scheidt, nervously twisting his cap round and round on his head,—'it is a crying shame! Openly did I say so before them all in Freiburg. I told them that the plain German for all this was,—stealing and plundering!'

'Be of good comfort, dear children,' replied Zell, 'for however furiously my enemies may set themselves in array against me, they cannot drive me out of Christ's dominions, seeing that all power is given unto Him in heaven and on earth. Therefore weep not, Mey-Bäbeli, for whitherso-

ever they may chase us, His blessed hand will be there to hold us up and to guide us! Amen! Now, give Simon a bumper of good Kaisersberg wine, and a double pay for his errand, because he has had such a disagreeable job. Dost hear, Mey-Bäbeli?’

‘See now—there you have him again,’ whispered the faithful housekeeper to Maiden Kate,—‘double pay! If I had not borrowed the florin from you this day, I should never have known how to give him any pay at all! Oh! I beseech you, do talk reason to him on this point!’

‘Keep your pay, Mey-Bäbeli,’ said Simon Scheidt to her outside the door. ‘I know full well that the “*hereditary folk*” (*Erbvolk*)¹ draw blood from your poor master like leeches, and muster all they can against him to drive him from his office. But may God preserve him in it! and if all Lutheran heretics were as good and devout as he is, I tell you I should be one to-morrow!’

Within the study Katherine yet lingered to deliver the warm and brotherly salutations of the Dean. ‘Early this morning,’ she said, ‘he was aware of the unpleasant circumstances that had happened to you at Freiburg, and he is of opinion that you ought forthwith to present a petition to an honourable Councillor of this place, that he may stand your friend with the Council of Freiburg,² and help you to regain

¹ The name by which in those days the populace were wont to designate the highest grades of ecclesiastics.

² This petition Zell actually did present, but without success. The reply of the Council of Freiburg to that of Strasburg was, that they could do nothing further, having been forced to act as they did by order of their lord, the Archduke Ferdinand.

your rights. And as the Count is aware that works of beneficence and compassion are a heart's necessity with you, . . . you must allow him the pleasure of paying this year's interest in the place of Stoffel Bosenstein and Widow von Kranznow.' So saying, she laid gently in Zell's hand the purse which she had in the morning received from Count Sigismund von Hohenlohe, for that purpose, in the Cathedral.

Matthew Zell looked silently for a little, first at the purse, then at Kate, and then he turned his glance upwards and said with deep feeling, 'Ah! this comes from that good Lord who well knows what we need, and gives it even before we have asked it!' He then took Katherine's hand and added cheerfully, 'But you must keep the money and be my treasurer, dear Kate! Look now, the fact is, Mey-Bäbeli and I cannot any longer understand one another at all on this point, and it will be a true labour of love to authorize me to refer the good old soul to you, and to forbid her plaguing me any more with these wretched money matters.'

Katherine promised to do as was proposed. Mey-Bäbeli too was pleased with the arrangement, and Master Matthew was of opinion that 'it is a good and blessed thing when the Lord our God sends one so dear a help.'

'Let us praise God with joyous strain,
HIS WORD HAS COME TO US AGAIN!
Now Winter's chill and gloom are o'er,
Summer is nigh,—ev'n at the door,
Sweet flowerets ope their fragrant store;

He who can all things thus transform,
Will to the end the work perform !'

Master Matthew Zell had uttered prophetic words : his prayer, strong in faith, was heard, and his confidence in God was not put to shame. The good and faithful Father and Householder had gone forth to seek labourers for His vineyard, and in the spring, when the swallows returned, He sent to Strasburg two such ; one a learned, rich and distinguished prelate, the other a poor, exiled, refugee preacher.

The rich and learned prelate was named WOLFGANG CAPITO (his true original German name being *Köpffel*), an associate of Zell's in his youth, and his fellow-student at Freiburg, a Doctor of Divinity, of Laws and of Medicine. He was born in Hainault in 1478, his father being farrier and councillor in that place. He began by studying medicine, but soon turned from it to divinity, which he pursued till he obtained his Doctor's degree. At first he was parish-priest at Bruchsal, afterwards Professor in the University of Freiburg, and at a later period preacher in the Abbey Church at Basle, where he connected himself with the great Erasmus, and helped zealously in promoting the circulation of Luther's writings. In 1520, the Elector Albert of Mayence summoned him to his Court, and appointed him his Chancellor and Court-preacher. In the same year Pope Leo x. bestowed upon him, unsolicited, the Provostship of St. Thomas's at Strasburg. Capito had on more than one occasion warned Luther to beware of prosecuting his glorious work with too great violence. That sturdy hero of the faith, Martin Luther, saw, however, in these exhortations only the worldly

wisdom of the wily courtier, and considered them as proofs of indifference towards all that is most sacred, towards justice and truth itself. Deeply wounded by this severe judgment of his opinion and misunderstanding of his motives, and filled with ill-will and indignation against the cabals of the Electoral Court and the absence of all freedom of conscience which prevailed there, Capito, who possessed the Elector's fullest confidence, resigned, contrary to every expectation, all his brilliant appointments, and betook himself in 1523 to Strasburg, there to seek rest in the Abbey of St. Thomas's, and to live in retirement, devoted to the better convictions of his mind and heart. He was a man of great cultivation, dignified and refined in manners and bearing, and so pure and strict in his moral tone, that he never suffered any but male servants in his household.

MARTIN BUCER (originally *Butzer*), the poor refugee preacher, was the son of a cooper, born in Schlettstadt on Martinmas day 1491. He was educated in the Dominican Convent in his native town, and the Prior, discerning the rising spirit of the talented youth, sent him to study divinity at Heidelberg. There Bucer penetrated deep into the spirit of the Bible; he became, however, in consequence of his manifest rejoicing at Luther's first steps in the work of reformation, exposed to the hatred of all the brethren of his order; this issued in his quitting the order in 1520, and prosecuted by that famous inquisitor, that hunter of all and sundry heretics, Jacob von Hochstraten, he took refuge in the Castle of Ebernburg, the stronghold of the valiant Franz von Sickingen. The brave knight sent him on to Luther

to invite him also to accept a safe retreat in his castle. On the recommendation of various friends, Bucer was appointed Court-preacher by Frederick, Count Palatine. The luxurious life of a palace, and the restraint under which, to a certain degree, he was forced to lay his conscience, rendered his residence at Court so painful, that he expressed regret on this point strongly, in his letters to Beatus Rhenanus, Zwingle, Ulrich von Hütten and Nicholas Gerbel. In May 1522, Sickingen gave him the living of the little town of Landshut, then under his jurisdiction. There Bucer was united in marriage with Elizabeth Palass. Driven thence five months later by war, he joined the evangelical pastor Henry Motheren at Weissenburg, where he preached the gospel with blessed results, but here too he was followed by the dangers of approaching war, and of the threatened ban, so that he betook himself as a fugitive to Strasburg, simultaneously with Capito, towards the end of May 1523, arriving there, like him, in deep poverty. His learned friend Gerbel had already invited him to Strasburg two years before, and in that city his father, who had established himself there in 1508, had acquired the rights of citizenship.

When the post-runner, Simon Scheidt, who had been at Weissenburg on business for the Council, brought to the master-cooper Butzer a letter from his son, and the news that he had been laid under the ban by the Bishop of Spire, and (being thereby forced to leave Weissenburg), would arrive at his parents' home the following day with his young wife, great indeed was the perplexity and consternation of the worthy old couple. The father hastened to seek out his

son's friend and patron, Nicholas Gerbel. Gerbel went to the proper official under the Bishop to obtain leave for Bucer to take up his position at Strasburg, under his episcopal jurisdiction. This official, however, declined to receive him, and insisted strongly on stern discipline in consequence of Bucer's marriage. The old father returned home sorely troubled, and his wife straightway hurried off to Master Matthew to entreat his counsel and aid.

Matthew Zell listened with sympathy, saying a few words of comfort, and reminding her of the Lord's words, 'Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life' (Matt. xix. 29). Dame Butzer replied, 'she fully believed all that . . . but . . .' and the good Dame burst into a flood of tears.

'But . . .' interposed her friend, 'the times are evil, your husband is old, his earnings are small, and the accommodation in your house is limited enough, so you do not know how you can offer hospitality to your poor fugitives,—that is it, is it not, my good Mistress?'

After drawing a deep breath and nodding assent, she sighed out the anxious inquiry, 'And who can give him defence and protection against the episcopal ban?'

'That must be done by some honourable Member of Council,' answered Zell. 'And as for all the rest, allow me, with God's help, to provide. And now go home in peace, dear friend, for the Lord never forsakes His own! Go, in passing, to Maiden Katherine Schütz, and say that I

beg her as a favour to come to see me here directly. Tell your good man to be calm and keep his mind easy; I shall consult this very day with our friend Gerbel, and with the Dean, and afterwards let you know how you ought to act.'

Thanking him heartily, and feeling greatly relieved, Dame Butzer withdrew from the excellent pastor, leaving him, however, to pace up and down his room with long strides in great perplexity, until he was interrupted by the arrival of Maiden Kate. He met her inquiry as to what he wanted by frankly stating, 'To-day already, you are wanted again to help me as a friend in need, dear Kate!' He then related to her how the young preacher of the gospel, Martin Bucer, had been laid under the ban and driven to flight for the gospel's sake, and was coming to Strasburg with his wife, how impossible it was for his poor parents to receive them in their small dwelling, while, on the other hand, here was he living in this spacious Cathedral-parsonage! But then Mey-Bäbeli was strange and crotchety, and had always so many obstacles to propound, and misfortunes to grumble about, if he wished to be hospitable, or to receive the homeless, and offer them a place of refuge, that he shrunk from encountering her, and began to be quite bewildered.

'And so then I am to tell Mey-Bäbeli that you wish to receive Martin Bucer with his young wife into your house, and I am to prepare everything for the reception of the fugitives?' calmly rejoined Katherine.

'Ah! yes, dear Kate, God bless you, you can hardly conceive what a heavy load you have taken from my heart! The conflict is waxing hotter, and the breach in the Church

is inevitable. In these hard and troublous times, it behoves me seriously to consider what it is my duty to do as a minister of the Word and champion of Christian liberty. But when I have a little dispute with Mey-Bäbeli, and then have to care for matters myself, to see that food is provided for the hungry, and a refuge for the fugitives, all that disturbs my mind, and unfits me for my work. And therefore God the Lord has sent you as a dear help, and that you must continue to be for ever, as long as I am a sojourner in this world:—there now,—you consent,—eh! dear Kate?

Katherine straightway put her hand to the work, but she had to encounter strong opposition on the part of Mey-Bäbeli, who maintained she could not possibly clear out any room, because it was positively necessary to occupy each one; one for hemp, another for fruit, a third for drying lentiles, pease and beans and seeds, a fourth for storing clothes and shoes for her master, while in a fifth she had safely buried all the treasures inherited from the 'blessed Mistress,' the Doctor's wife of Freiburg; therein she had deposited tables and chairs, and a chest about the size of Noah's ark, filled with linen,—she had piled up a towering mountain of feather-beds, had preserved in a trunk the blessed Mistress's damask wedding-dress, jewels and other articles of state apparel, with all and sundry other valuables!

And Maiden Kate had already banished hemp, lentiles, pease and beans and seeds, to the stone floor below, and fruit to the cellar, when Mey-Bäbeli, still standing in an attitude

of defence, guarding her treasure-chamber, pathetically besought that it at least might be spared! But all was unavailing: before sunset the inexorable Kate had, with the help of 'Strudel-Hans,' got the 'blessed Mistress Doctor's' large bedstead put up in one of the newly cleared chambers, had caused all needful bedroom furniture to be carried into it, had sought out all that was required even among the feather-beds, and extricated the necessary linens from the ark-like chest,—all which Mey-Bäbeli could not brook without keen vexation, as it was in her eyes sheer plunder and sacrilege. When Master Matthew came home he found, to his great joy, not only a bed-chamber for his expected guests, but a suitable study fully fitted up for the young preacher.

The poor fugitive, Martin Bucer, who, by his steadfast faith and unwearied activity, soon became the soul of the Reformation in Strasburg and in all Upper Germany, entered, the very next day, into possession of the home prepared for him by that liberal hospitality which, gratefully and with a heart deeply moved, he accepted from Matthias Zell. Master Matthew soon felt drawn towards him in warm affection, took a brotherly interest in him, and permitted him to deliver lectures in German on books of Holy Scripture, first in the Parsonage, and, when the audience grew too numerous for that, in the Chapel of St. Lawrence. Soon afterwards a requisition was addressed by the Bishop to the Magistrates, 'that the married priest Butzer might be warned to quit the city, that he might be dealt with as one under the ban, and punished accordingly.' Bucer hereupon

handed to an honourable Councillor his written reply, in which he says, 'how greatly he rejoices in this opportunity of rendering an account of his doctrines and of his life; how ready he was to go even unto death, if it should be found that he was teaching anything not contained in Holy Scripture, anything that tended not to increase faith, to kindle love, to implant principles of peace, obedience and submission. He had never, to the best of his knowledge, caused offence by his conduct, and now, as a citizen's son and a refugee Christian, he appealed to the right worshipful the Council for protection and for the rights of citizenship. His marriage, which the Bishop brought against him as his chief crime, he was prepared to justify from God's Word; he never intended to conceal it, for that which is righteous never shuns the light. He was indeed aware that he thereby forfeited all benefices, emoluments, and rights as an ecclesiastic; therefore he demanded to be permitted in all points to acknowledge the authorities, and to yield obedience to them as a layman, as concerned bodily service and property. He required and demanded no tithes. God, who feeds the very sparrows, would supply all his temporal necessities. But he did hope that the liberty common to all men, namely, that of serving his neighbour with the learning he had been enabled to acquire, and seeking to earn his living thereby, would not be denied him by the worshipful the Council.'

The Council granted his request. Martin Bucer was received as citizen under the municipal protection, and henceforth permitted to preach in the Cathedral alternately

with Matthew Zell. 'Hot-headed Hans' was, to be sure, obliged to put up the wooden pulpit again for him, because the Cathedral Clergy obstinately refused to grant the use of the Doctor's pulpit, which, in the end of January of that same year, they had, on the application of the Council, reopened for the use of Zell.

The engaging little Dame Elizabeth, with her meditative blue eyes, had won all hearts by her quiet sweet ways. Even Mey-Bäbeli forgave for her sake what she had long borne a grudge against Maiden Kate for, to wit, the irruption into her treasure-chamber, and began to be of opinion that 'truly these two human beings lived together like the angels in Heaven, and since they had been dwelling in the Parsonage the life of all there had been quite a new life.'

The excellent Capito had sought rest and quietness above all else at Strasburg, and had hoped to find them there. He had, however, as is too often the case in this life, met with quite the reverse. Things in general were in a state of violent fermentation. Some, awakened under Zell's preaching, defended him and his doctrine; others, anxious to cling to the old faith, wished to drive away the preacher. Parties stood over against one another in hostile array, and mutual recrimination was fulminated against those who differed in opinion. The populace indeed was so excited that a general rising against the ecclesiastics was apprehended at any moment; the magistrates having hitherto succeeded in restraining the movement only by wise moderation and paternal discipline. In the higher circles, Capito heard universally, even from those who, like himself, were heartily

devoted to the cause of the Reformation, but who, unlike him, were anxious to avoid a separation from the mother Church, the expression of such sentiments as the following:—‘It was highly to be desired, for the sake of the public peace, that Zell should come to the resolution to leave Strasburg of his own free will, his sermons being manifestly the cause of the excitement, while it was impossible to remove him by order of the authorities without rousing the indignation of the people, and stirring them up to tumult on behalf of their favourite.’ Capito was, above all else, a man of peace. He determined to seek out his quondam pupil,—and himself, in the most urgent manner, to lay this matter upon his heart. With this purpose in view, he repaired one beautiful Saturday to Zell’s parsonage.

As he entered, Zell and Bucer were sitting together at supper, refreshing themselves, after the burden and heat of the day, with confidential conversation, and with a feast of fragrant strawberries which Mey-Bäbeli had just brought in from the garden, while the bright and genial Dame Elizabeth was acting butler in supplying her Martin with his cool drink of beer fresh from the cellar. Zell’s joyous and hearty welcome was a true cordial to the tender-spirited Capito; he also felt himself so attracted by Bucer’s modest and dignified bearing, and so touched by the picture of quiet, peaceful domestic life, suddenly recalling that of the only family circle he had ever known,—his own mother’s in his childhood, that his emotion nearly overcame him. The pure atmosphere he here breathed felt so genial and home-like that he would fain

have lingered and taken his ease, forgetful of the object for which he had come. Yet he was bound at once to fulfil his commission, however against the grain in his present mood. After talking for an hour with the two ministers of the word, he asked Zell to give him an interview in his study. There he seriously represented to him¹ 'how his discourses were causing increased discord among the citizens, and how far better it would be if he would remove from Strasburg, rather than give occasion for its being said of him that he had brought confusion among all classes of the community, the most worshipful the Council, the reverend ecclesiastics, and the devout body of the faithful at large.'

Zell listened amiably, then coolly and firmly replied,—
'Dear Provost, you talk of these matters as one who does not feel that they lie very near his heart, and who holds the Holy Scriptures to be a matter of professional study, and not a gift of God. To me it is the very word of God in truth, and therefore I dare not treat it with indifference, or after the manner of courtiers. As I believe, so I speak, leaving God to rule. That by the preaching of the gospel, Pope, Bishops, and all monks and priests are made to wax less and less,—all that I care little about, it concerns me not; my commission is,—**THAT CHRIST ALONE SHALL WAX GREAT IN THE HEARTS OF BELIEVERS.** My parishioners hear me gladly; I cannot grudge them that, but no man can say that I have excited them against the clergy. God wills that I should stay here for the use and advantage of the flock which is so much desiring His word, and so eagerly

¹ See Röhrich's *History of the Reformation in Alsace*, i. 153-5.

receiving it. AND STAY I SHALL, although I am prepared to expect nothing but an evil name, shame, mockery, and at last, if no rougher usage should occur, to be sent forth from this land with loss of all my possessions and patrimony. Up to this hour I have attained neither Provostships nor any other dignities ; I have never indeed sought any, and can therefore never be accused of having sought my own interests.'

To the reproach next brought against him, that he preached too much in the spirit of Luther, that is to say, too violently and pugnaciously, Zell replied,—‘ You say so. . . . I on the other hand say, you have not heard me say much of Luther in the pulpit ; but now forsooth the whole Bible is held to be Lutheran. I have never proved the truth of my doctrine from Luther’s writings : I have, however, faithfully and diligently read his works, as indeed I still do read them, and wherever I find them true, I have preached the same, not because such is the doctrine of Luther, but because it is THE TRUTH AND THE DOCTRINE OF GOD. I have been led into the understanding of the Holy Scriptures by Luther’s writings, and this insight I would not give up in exchange for all this world’s goods, even though he be a heretic a thousand times over. Therefore, once for all, show to me and to others that Luther’s doctrine is contrary to God’s word ; for, if you cannot do that, we will, God permitting, maintain the said doctrine, forbid it who may, even though God’s enemies should rage themselves to death in fury against it.’

Deeply struck by this heroism of faith, Capito stood transfixed before the friend of his youth, whom he had never believed possessed of such boldness. Ashamed of his own

lukewarmness, and of the considerations of self-interest which had hitherto withheld him from a free confession of the truth, he held out his hand to Zell in token of brotherhood, solemnly vowing before God and before him to confess the Lord Jesus before men, that He also might confess him in the great day. The very next Sunday he mounted the pulpit of his Abbey Church, to the great surprise of the people, unaccustomed to see a distinguished prelate demean himself by undertaking the despised office of a preacher. He exhorted them to concord, and stated that his chief object in preaching was to silence the calumny which accused him of being ashamed of the gospel.

SYMPHORIAN POLLIO (his real name was ALTHIESSER), known among the common people as 'MASTER ZYMPRIAN,' appointed, by the Grand Chapter, Cathedral-preacher, for the sake of opposing his influence to that of Zell, was at this very juncture enlightened with the light of the gospel, and he also stepped forward at once as a witness for the truth. The Canons deprived him of his office, and bestowed it upon CASPAR HEDIO. Hedio was then residing at Mayence, was a Doctor of Divinity, and had entered, by means of the study of the Bible, into the true spirit of Christianity; but although he had openly declared himself in favour of the Reformation, still the Chapter gave him the call, hoping that his gentle and peace-loving disposition would exercise a salutary influence. It was also fixed as a condition that he was not to 'dare to be guilty of Lutheran preaching.' To this he pledged himself; and repeatedly from the pulpit he declared that he was resolved to preach

not at all the doctrines of Luther, but only, with clearness and purity, THE WORD OF GOD.

Thus did Bucer, Capito, Althiesser and Hedio, along with Zell, work together to promote the triumph of pure Bible truth. Soon others too were associated with them, so that Master Matthew was enabled joyfully to exclaim,—Did I not prophesy that ere long God would send forth more labourers? Behold indeed! The Lord has sent forth others, so that I am no longer obliged to work alone in His vineyard!

From this time forward the Evangelical preachers were wont to style themselves, 'THE MINISTERS OF THE WORD.'

Capito gained great influence by his frank avowal of the truth, and by his solid, pregnant discourses; but he was on this account so hated by the dignified clergy, that he was obliged, like Bucer, to claim the rights of citizenship, and to have recourse to the protection of the city. He lost all his lucrative income, and a year later we find him writing, 'The gospel has made a clean sweep of all my tithes and pensions; and I trust, if the Lord will, there is little enough danger of those to whom I now minister making me too rich in worldly goods.' He was then parish priest of St. Peter's the Less. He refused to receive any stipend, and drew only three florins weekly, for the support of his assistant and sacristan. The magistrates could not induce the other preachers to allow them to bestow a richer income on them. As the Strasburg Reformers have been reproached with having separated themselves from the old Church from interested motives, with a view to earthly gain, we may quote Bucer's reply: 'Three florins

a week, wherewith to maintain self, wife and child,—such are our riches.’

Meantime, the quiet folk in the Cathedral-Parsonage were leading together a happy and harmonious life, maintaining, in stillness and simplicity, the even tenor of their way. Dame Elizabeth was ever and anon so friendly and cheerful, so expert in all feminine handiwork, so neat and orderly in her arrangements, that all around her felt her beneficent influence. She and Katherine, who was often at the Parsonage, soon learned to understand and love one another; and in the evening, when Zell and Bucer had returned home, weary after their labours, and often discouraged by the conflicts they had to sustain and the contempt they had to endure, they were strengthened, and their tone of mind and spirit was elevated, by converse with the noble Katherine, or calmed and cheered by Elizabeth’s light-hearted elasticity. On the fine summer evenings Capito, Hedio, and the Dean often joined the circle. On these occasions Elizabeth brought out her guitar, and struck up one of Luther’s choice hymns—

‘ A safe stronghold our God is still,’

or—

‘ Out of the depths I cry to Thee,’

or that glorious lyric by Speratus—

‘ Now is salvation come to us,’—

Katherine and their male friends chimed in, and wonderfully thrilling was the sound of the beautiful chorale borne along the narrow ‘Brüderhof’s-Gasse,’—opening many a heart by its softening influence to the sanctifying power of the

gospel. Yes truly,—so great was the might of these first hymns of the German Church of the Reformation, that in a short time it became the established usage for the people to assemble in numbers every evening before the Parsonage,—at first only to listen to these chorales, but afterwards to learn them by heart, and to be trained to sing them themselves. In this instruction Katherine acted schoolmistress, Elizabeth teacher of singing; and when the former had repeated the words of the hymn to all present over and over again, the latter sang it with them as often as was needed to insure its resounding, under the free and expansive vault of the evening sky, as a song of praise from one heart and one mouth, filling with deep and holy joy the faithful pastors of these sheep.¹

On a cold November day of that same year 1523, Maiden Katherine Schütz repaired to the Cathedral, in a more serious and meditative mood than she had been seen in for a long time, and bent on having an interview with Count Sigismund of Hohenlohe. He received her with fatherly affection as usual, and asked in a friendly way what had led her so earnestly to implore a secret interview, and why she looked so grave and solemn?

For a little while the maiden stood embarrassed, blushing

¹ Wolfgang Dachstein, Organist and Vicar of St. Thomas's, and Matthis Gergeter, a monk and chorister in the Cathedral, an excellent musician, were the first in Strasburg to compose German church-hymns, and to adapt psalms for singing. Capito, Althiesser, and Heinrich Vogthorn, a citizen of the place, soon afterwards composed a variety of beautiful hymns.

crimson, after which she regained her composure and replied, in her usual calm and self-possessed tone, 'I wish to know, noble Count, what is your opinion on the subject of the marriage of the clergy?'

'And how dost thou come to ask this question, Katherine?' replied Count Sigismund.

'Well, the aged and venerable Wimpheling does not approve of it. He is so much dissatisfied with the state of things in general, that he is, as you must probably be aware, leaving Strasburg and returning to his sister at Schlettstadt. He with his friend Geiler, ever aimed at having one Church, united within herself, purged from all abuses and truly reformed. And now he sees before him a Church torn asunder, divided into two hostile camps. He is surrounded by conflict and strife, hatred and discord, where he had hoped for peace, concord, and love. The noble old man's grief has gone to my heart. The marriage of the clergy is above all else repugnant to him, wounding his inmost soul, for, even if it were certain that it was originally allowed in the primitive Church, he holds that priests and members of any religious fraternity in our days are still bound by their vows.'

'The holy state of matrimony is forbidden of God to none, Katherine, but by the Fathers of the Church alone, with a good purpose doubtless, to priests and fraternities. But as matters at present stand, I can but repeat what I said in my *Little Book of the Cross*, to all the ecclesiastics of the Cathedral establishment, "It is better to transgress the commandments of men by matrimony than the Divine law by unchastity."''

‘Oh!’ replied Katherine, blushing, ‘that is not the point in question now, but—’ and she cast her eyes down to the ground, and said with a voice trembling with emotion, ‘Master Matthias Zell yesterday formally applied to my father to ask my hand.’

‘Well, . . . then I am sure your heart has already softly answered in the affirmative,’ replied the Count, with a smile.

‘Oh, may it be broken a thousand times rather than that I should act against the will of God, if indeed Master Matthew should be bound by his vow . . .’

‘No vow can bind against God’s law, Katherine; a bishop ought, as we read in St. Paul’s Epistle to Timothy (1 Tim. iii. 2-7), to be “blameless, the husband of one wife;” and thus also we see that the brothers of the Lord and the apostle Peter were married (1 Cor. ix. 5). The law of celibacy is one of those “voluntary humilities” (Col. ii. 18-23) which have proved a snare to the poor children of men, and which have grown and taken root as a cancer in the Church, and now require to be eradicated. The question now is, to maintain the word of God against the traditions of men; and for this reason the priest who is a lover of chastity should enter into the holy estate of matrimony, that the incontinent may follow his example, and that thus offences and scandals may have an end.’

‘That is what friend Martin Bucer also said to me to-day. But as he is himself married, I did not venture unconditionally to acquiesce in his opinion.’

‘And yet you might easily have recognised in the blessing that has so manifestly rested on Bucer’s happy married

life, the evidence of its being according to God's mind and will. God the Lord spake these words (Gen. ii. 18), "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help-meet for him." And in like manner I now say unto thee: It is not for the excellent Zell to stand alone in his difficult post and amid the storms of our times, and he ought to have a help-meet, who might be ever beside him, a dear helper, to assist him in labouring and enduring; otherwise he will break down beneath his burdens.'

'Then you too, most noble Count, would give your sanction and blessing?'

'With my whole heart, Katherine; and that in the name of our Holy Triune God, who created you both for one another, and who so wondrously brought you together and led you. What God joins let not man put asunder!'

Katherine's tears flowed fast, she knelt down, and with deep emotion whispered, 'Oh! then, I entreat you, give me your blessing in this matter, most venerable lord!'

The Count laid his right hand on her head, and pronounced these words in a solemn tone,—'Katherine, the Lord intrusts to you a noble but an arduous vocation. Wilt thou fulfil it with self-abnegation, in faith, love, and humility?'

'I will. And may God's strength be made perfect in my weakness!'

'Katherine, God has endowed you with gifts far above most of your sex. Will you not presume and be uplifted by reason of the grace vouchsafed to you? Will you be, not only a faithful helper to your husband in his office and his

household, but also obedient and submissive to him, as it behoves a Christian wife to be before God ?'

'I will. Oh, Lord Jesus, make me poor in spirit and devout before Thee !'

'We live in evil and ominous times, Katherine ; and as the Lord foretold to His disciples, so it is about to come to pass in our day, and has already begun, that "whosoever killeth" or persecuteth "us will think that he doeth God service." Will you act as a mother to the young and struggling Church ? Will you offer an asylum to the exiles, seek out the persecuted and the unfortunate, and comfort and strengthen them in the faith ?'

'I will give my body, my strength, my honour and my possessions, day and night, with great joy and willing earnestness, to the community of believers and to thee, my beloved Strasburg, and lay them as a footstool at thy feet !'

'But you must sacrifice yourself for, and minister to, others, and not the brethren in the faith alone, Katherine. Will you then perform to the glory of Christ, works of mercy towards those who are otherwise minded, yea, even unto foes and persecutors ?'

'I will. I am not bound to agree with every man's faith and creed. But I am bound to show love and compassion, and to render service to all. That I am taught by my Master and Exemplar, Jesus Christ.'

After this had passed between them, the Count solemnly blessed Katherine Schütz, and set her apart as Zell's faithful helper, and a deaconess devoted to minister as such in the service of the Evangelical Church. And Katherine kept

her promise, and by the grace of God she remained faithful to the end.

On the 3d of December following, in 1523, the Cathedral was once more filled to overflowing. And there, amid the thousand prayers and blessings of the throng of spectators, Master Matthew Zell led his beloved Katherine to the hymenæal altar. Bucer performed the marriage service, and after the holy bond of wedlock had with God's blessing been solemnly tied, the happy pair together partook of the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper in both kinds. The brethren united in fellowship with them according to 'the communion of saints,' attended the celebration of the marriage in a quiet and devout spirit, and after it, a festive gathering in the house of Master Schütz drew together the more immediate family circle, with a few choice friends to greet the newly-wedded couple.

Not a creature assuredly was more radiant on this occasion than old Mey-Bäbeli; for, as the Guild of Gardeners had unanimously petitioned the Council that Martin Bucer be appointed to their parish church of St. Aurelian's, as preacher with the cure of souls, she, poor soul, had been looking forward with dread to the moment when he and his bright hearty Elizabeth must leave the Cathedral Parsonage, and she and her master must be left alone, with all around them as it were lifeless and extinct. And then Mey-Bäbeli had always felt such a peculiar affection for the 'Maiden Kate.' 'For,' as she was wont to say, 'since she became my master's treasurer we have always had the Parsonage full of guests, and have never run short of money nor lacked anything needful.'

Mey-Bäbeli herself was by degrees illuminated and warmed by the light of the glorious gospel, so that she learned to believe and to discern many things unknown before; 'all which,' as she was accustomed to remark, 'might be traced to those beautiful hymns which Maiden Kate and Dame Elizabeth had taught her. Whenever she repeated or sang one of them, she was more edified by it than by the sermon, for it never put her to sleep, which unfortunately the sermon often did, for which sin of hers might God graciously grant her forgiveness!'

And now, dear reader, if thou hast recognised in Master Matthew the faithful minister of the Word, our old friend the dear 'Little Mat' of Kaisersberg, whom Johannes Geiler of blessed memory consecrated, as it were, in his god-mother's barn for his holy calling, it will doubtless give thee pleasure to hear that, if the Lord will, we may hope on a future occasion to have another peep into the old Parsonage, there to see the pious minister Zell, with his beloved Katherine, leading a Christian life and dying a blessed death!

The eventful year 1523, that season of conflict, was drawing to its close. On the 1st of December the most worshipful the Council of Strasburg had passed a memorable edict in the following terms:—'All who devote themselves to preaching shall in future preach nothing else save the Holy Gospel, unmixed with human fables, and shall proclaim the doctrine of God and all that tends to promote

love to God and man, freely and openly, to the people.' Thus was a decisive victory obtained for the Evangelical cause.

In August 1524, Capito, Hedio, and Althiesser also entered into the holy state of matrimony.

As regards the manner in which the Evangelical pastors, after having begun by preaching Apostolic doctrine to the people from God's holy word, proceeded to remodel the worship of God, also according to the original simple fashion of the early Christian Church, we have the following description in an old document yet extant, drawn up by themselves:—'Divine Worship shall be performed in the German tongue, and thus ordered:—*first*, the preacher shall exhort the congregation to confess their sins, and to entreat God for mercy; then he shall pronounce the general confession in the name of all, beseech the All-Merciful for mercy, and declare to believers the forgiveness of their sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. After a short hymn he shall offer up a prayer, and read a passage from the writings of the Apostles, accompanied by an exposition. After another hymn sung by the congregation there shall follow the sermon upon a text in the Gospels. After the sermon the congregation shall sing the metrical version of the Articles of the Apostles' Creed;¹ the minister shall then offer up a prayer for the authorities, and for all mankind; he shall pray to God for an increase of faith and of love, that the congregation of His people may be enabled to celebrate the memorial-feast of Jesus' death with profit; he shall

¹ Arranged in rhyme, and set to music by Wolfgang Dachstein.

exhort the communicants that they may enjoy the holy communion of the Lord's Supper in faith, in order that they may be strengthened thereby, that they may die unto sin, may willingly bear their cross, and grow in love to their neighbour ; thereafter he shall read the words of institution, and shall distribute the bread and the wine of the Lord, taking part in the holy feast himself also. A hymn of praise from the congregation, a short prayer of thanksgiving, and the benediction, shall close the service.'

Besides this principal service of Divine worship on the Lord's day, which in summer began at seven o'clock, in winter at eight, and besides the noon-day sermon in the Cathedral, service was performed in the various churches early in the morning and late in the evening ; an early morning service, called ' Morning Prayers,' being held daily in five churches. We may assume that at least fifty sermons weekly were delivered in the city, and all were so regularly attended that some idea may easily be formed of the earnestness and zeal with which citizens and common people sought spiritual food and the ' one thing needful !' Ah ! how lukewarm, how indifferent are we in comparison of our fathers ! Dear Lord ! ' increase our faith' and ' help our unbelief !'

THE FUGITIVES.

‘In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God.’—
2 COR. vi. 4.

‘For whosoever shall give you a cup of cold water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.’—MARK ix. 41.

IN Kenzingen, a little town subject to the dominion of Austria, situated in the South-Rhenish province of the Breisgau, a preacher, Master Jacob Other by name, a native of Spires, had for some time drawn the people towards himself in warm attachment, attracting them no less by his holy life than by the free preaching of the gospel. The Bishop of Constance had on this account repeatedly called him before his tribunal. The local magistrate then assembled all the citizens of the little place, and represented to them that this affair of Master Jacob was one that very closely concerned the Honourable Council of the town, which had never received from him anything but love and kindness. That it was a fact patent to all that the town authorities had hitherto ineffectually endeavoured to put down blasphemy and other flagrant vices; but that since Master Jacob had been preaching God’s Word among them all these evils had been held in check; for

which reason the Council had resolved that they would receive the Word of God thus held forth by Master Jacob according to the gospel; and rather than abandon this truth, they would see their town wall destroyed, so that not one stone should remain upon another. The burgesses unanimously agreed they would hold with body and soul to the doctrine of the Minister of the Word, and were ready to lay down their lives for it.

The noble knight, Wolfgang von Hirnheim, who held Kenzingen as a fief under King Ferdinand, promised the citizens to leave them their preacher if they on their side would also promise him three things, viz., not to partake of the Holy Sacrament under both kinds, and never to have either baptism administered or mass celebrated in the German tongue. As regarded other matters, he would leave them undisturbed, and in case of need, he would comply with Master Jacob's own request, and assist him to answer honourably before the tribunal where he had to appear. By this compromise the knight hoped to preserve peace among the citizens, and to avoid encountering the wrath of his liegè lord. But scarcely had he returned to the Court of Ferdinand (it was in the year 1524) when a peremptory order arrived, enjoining the preacher to leave the town without delay, because his doctrine was seen to produce only a wicked and malicious spirit of insubordination and conspiracy. The whole town was filled with mourning and consternation. When Master Jacob departed, a hundred and fifty burgesses accompanied the beloved fugitive as far as the nearest village. Meantime,

however, the town was occupied by Austrian troops, the gates were closed, and the citizens who had gone forth to escort the minister were not re-admitted. They were forced to seek refuge in Strasburg. The females of their families, whom they had left behind, were ill-treated. All Bibles and Lutheran books of which possession could be obtained were burned; and on the pile of ashes, all that was left of the consumed books, 'the town-clerk, among whose possessions a New Testament had been found, was compelled to kneel down, and then and there, in presence of his wife and children, his head was chopped off.'¹

On the right bank of the Rhine, at the ferry, not far from Kehl, sat the aged Andrew, in front of his clay-built hut, busily engaged in mending a net. It was a sultry summer day, and the earth, parched and burnt up, seemed, with every living creature on its face, to languish for the refreshing rain from heaven. Andrew had to-day had a good take of fish, and had caught so large a salmon that his net had given way. While repairing the damage he repeatedly wiped the perspiration from his face, and cast a wistful look, first to the heavy thunder-clouds which were gathering with threatening aspect on the horizon, then to the beautiful slender spire of the Cathedral of Strasburg, which rose up over against him across the Rhine, pointing to the heavens as a silent reminder of the things that are above.

'Andrew, is the lad at the ferry?' cried out our old

¹ From a narrative written by a Kenzingen fugitive. See Röhrich's *History of the Reformation*, part i. pp. 405-407.

acquaintance, the post-runner, Simon Scheidt, who had run hastily along the footpath beside the river.

‘God bless thee, Simon!’ rejoined Andrew. ‘I know not where the lad and Frank have put themselves now again. Unluckily they are for the most part wherever they ought not to be, and their heads are brimful of nothing but silly *Bundschuh* conspiracies and such follies. What a wretched point matters have reached with our young fry in these our days!’

‘But you must hail some one else instantly, Andrew! I must be ferried across without delay, to announce in the city the arrival of the fugitives from Kenzingen. And they also will require to be taken over instantly on their reaching this, for if there were any delay the Austrian troops might be at their heels.’

‘Is the news then true that Frank brought early this morning from Kehl?’

‘Alas! but too true, Andrew. And it is no wonder if our youngsters find their stock of patience run short under such inhuman tyranny, and if they do swear to the *Bundschuh* league. But hark! . . . yes, sure enough, there they are already!’

And in truth, while he was speaking, there might be seen approaching up the Rhine the long procession of fugitives, who, on beholding before them the guardian walls of the hospitable refuge city of Strasburg, where they hoped to find protection and an asylum, struck up in chorus Luther’s Hymn, so calculated to strengthen faith under trial—

‘A safe stronghold our God is still.’

Simon and old Andrew reverently took off their caps, and went forward to meet the hundred and fifty men, who, braced by the singing, though wearied and footsore, had now reached the ferry. But when the leader of the choir, an old blind man, whom Master Jacob Other was himself leading and supporting with his arm, sang out those words in the last verse—

‘And though they take our life,
Goods, honour, children, wife,’—

then, indeed, these homeless refugees, driven from their homes, wives, children, all,—broke down alike in voice and in heart. Many sobbed aloud, others sank exhausted, or cast a glance of agony and despair upward to heaven. Master Jacob and the blind old singer alone continued with firm, clear voice the melody of those consolatory words, inspired originally by the Holy Ghost himself :¹—

‘Yet is their profit small ;
These things shall vanish all.
The city of God remaineth.’

The young fishermen, Frank and Heiner, were returning from the convent of St. Arbogast, where they had succeeded in selling the large salmon at a high price, and were fully intent on surprising the old grandfather with the large sum obtained. Andrew had inherited from his only daughter, who was early widowed, and died soon afterwards, two grandchildren, whom he had educated to mature years with much of self-denial, care, and, above all, prayer.

The one, Heiner, was short and thick-set ; the other,

¹ Luther's Chorale—founded on Psalm xlvii., and translated by Thomas Carlyle.

Jacobea, a gentle, blue-eyed girl, had been given in marriage by Andrew a few years ago to Frank Hügelin, who had become a most serviceable assistant to him in his own occupation, and, as the old man often expressed it to Jacobea, 'was just in every business he had to do with;' but who nevertheless had latterly by his violent temper and hot-headedness caused him many an anxious thought. At the sight of the unfortunate fugitives from Kenzingen the two young men were deeply moved; and while Heiner made instant preparation for ferrying the post-runner with the magistrate and Master Jacob across the Rhine, Frank drew aside old Andrew, and said, pointing to the money, 'What say you, grandfather, did not the Lord send us that great salmon to-day, and surely it was not for nothing? These men, driven out of their homes, must languish and suffer in this heat,—and the money'

'Has been given us by the Lord expressly that we may have the privilege of refreshing the poor with a welcome quenching of their thirst in His name,' quickly chimed in his grandfather. 'And so,' added he, 'run, Frank, as fast as your legs can carry you, and fetch the worth of this money in beer.'

Frank was off in a twinkling, and returned in less than half an hour with pots of beer, mugs and a supply of bread from Kehl. He was escorted by several citizens of that little town, anxious to contribute their mite towards the good work of charity. The exiles bivouacked on the banks of the Rhine, and old Andrew felt his thoughts turn to the feeding of the thousands of Israel, as he saw his kind

neighbours breaking the loaves for the weary men, and the foaming tankards passing from hand to hand. The worthy Jacobea had not failed to lend a helping hand. She had washed the burning feet of many a poor fugitive with fresh water from the Rhine, while her little Hansli, just two years old, dearer to his great-grandfather than the apple of his eye, had unwittingly drawn a smile from some of these sorrowful ones by his droll ways, at the same time, however, forcing hot tears into the eyes of others, by reminding them of the cherished little one at home, whom perhaps they were doomed never more to embrace. Meantime the threatening thunder-clouds had gathered so rapidly overhead that any moment a violent storm might burst upon them, so that it was necessary to use all possible despatch, and to bring all the refugees, if so it might be, to a place of safety, to a roof over their heads, before it should begin. Frank and Heiner exerted themselves nobly at the ferry, so that the first rolling peal found all the Kenzingen fugitives before the gate of Strasburg, which was charitably thrown open to them at once.

Strasburg, the great and renowned imperial city, where the gospel was freely preached, where peace and concord dwelt, and a wise magistracy provided with paternal care for all the citizens' welfare, stood like an island-refuge, among the universal tempests and crying oppressions of those times. There all the sufferers who, despised and persecuted for conscience' sake, sought shelter and defence within her walls, were ever welcomed in the spirit of Christian love.

The news of all that had taken place at Kenzingen had

reached the city even before the arrival of the runner ; and when the justice of the peace, with Master Jacob, made his appearance before the chief magistrate, to implore an asylum for the minister and his fellow-exiles, they met with a friendly reception and a willing ear. The burgomaster indeed invited both to his own house, and immediately took the measures requisite for insuring accommodation for the other fugitives. It was, however, no easy task to provide a free and hospitable asylum for 150 men at a moment's warning. For which reason the burgomaster, Jacob Sturm von Sturmeck, began by sending the post-runner to request the prompt attendance of Dame Katherine Zell and the two Widows Kräft.

In full harmony with the sentiments of her excellent husband, Dame Katherine Zell had repeatedly declared, 'All who believe in and confess the Lord Jesus Christ as the true Son of God and the alone Saviour of all men, shall have a hospitable welcome under our roof, and share the common fare of our table, as we are partakers, in common with them, of Christ and of the heavenly inheritance.' Acting in this spirit, this noble Christian matron had fed, full oft, no less than thirty fugitives at her table during the first year of her married life ; so much so, that Mey-Bäbeli had grumbled not a little, maintaining stoutly that 'it was really too bad,—their home must henceforth be called not the Cathedral Parsonage, but the Cathedral Asylum or Inn.' All the more was she in consternation when Simon Scheidt came to summon her mistress, and related to her the sad tale of the misfortunes of the Kenzingen folk. But then, these were her own

compatriots who had met with this cruel treatment, and full many a Kenzingen woman had she known in days of yore familiarly on the market-place of Freiburg! Spurred on by this thought, she followed Dame Katherine to the open square, in which, in front of the Town House, the poor fugitives were assembled in mournful groups.

A violent thunderstorm was gathering, as we have already mentioned, and after the chief magistrate, the evangelical members of the Council, and the resident nobility, had taken a guest each, and many of them two, Bucer, Capito and Hedio, moreover, fulfilling their part of the duty, there yet remained eighty poor refugees, standing without shelter on the open square, exposed to the flashing lightning and appalled by the thunder rolling louder and yet louder. The two Dames Kräft were urging this counsel and that, running here and there trying to devise some new quarter in which they might entreat hospitality for these unfortunates; but Mistress Zell calmly said, 'Come home with me, every one of you, in God's name. With His help and with right hearty goodwill we shall find room in the Parsonage for one and all of you.' So saying, she took the blind leader of their choir by the hand, led him on and left the rest to follow: Mey-Bäbeli and the two Dames Kräft hastened forward in advance; at the door of the Parsonage they were met by Master Matthew, who held out his hand to each approaching guest in token of friendly welcome, and as the last crossed the threshold of the hospitable dwelling, peal after peal crashed immediately above them, and torrents of rain began to pour as if the very heavens were opened.

A good example is fortunately often infectious, and often supplies a lesson more edifying and practical than any sermon. Like wildfire did the news spread through the city, 'Dame Zell has taken eighty of the poor Kenzingen folk into the Parsonage!' On hearing it, many a burgher of the imperial city and his dame, who before had been moved by avarice or love of ease to quiet his conscience with the reflection, 'It is quite impossible for us to give house-room to any refugee,' had 'struck on his breast and been constrained with the publican in the Gospel to cry, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' When the thunderstorm had exhausted itself, every one of them was anxious to assist the minister and his good wife in entertaining their guests. And truly each did contribute in some way, 'Quite,' as Mey-Bäbeli remarked, 'as in an ant-hill.' The bakers sent whole baskets full of bread, the butchers hams and sausages, the brewers beer, the gardeners fruit and vegetables, and, last not least, the Dean, Count Sigismund of Hohenlohe, was there also, and certainly not empty-handed. Many a citizen's wife brought bedding and linen, while several put their hands to the work and helped the notable Dames Kräfft to prepare beds in chambers, halls and barns, and on every floor. Devout women readily offered themselves to lay the tables and to assist Mey-Bäbeli in the kitchen. Dame Katherine was herself the soul of every arrangement, and yet she found time withal to raise the crushed spirit of many a mourner by strong words of Divine consolation.

Master Matthew, after having sundry affectionate con-

versations privately with individuals of the party, addressed his assembled guests at their evening devotions on Luke vi. 22, 23, then offered up an earnest prayer, imploring the blessing and consolation of the Lord to descend on them and on the dear ones left behind. After the poor wearied fugitives had all gone to rest, and darkness and silence reigned in the vast Cathedral Parsonage, while its large-hearted mistress with her many willing helpers was yet busily engaged in setting things in order for the next day, Master Matthew himself, no less worn out than his guests,—and he was twenty years older than his thrifty spouse,—while reposing in an easy chair in his study, fell into a deep slumber, in which he had a remarkable dream. He found himself in vision once more in his paternal home in Kaisersberg,—he was again transported to his godmother's barn, and saw poor Fridli, as he lay of old, on his straw couch, yet not indeed with closed, but with bright, merry, sparkling eyes, and heard him say, 'Only think, little Mat, the Lord has opened my eyes!' The learned doctor, his cousin, was also there, and taking Fridli by the hand, told him to rise up and come with him, for he would take him to his dear little old mother at his own home, where the Lord had prepared a beautiful abode for them. And all in a moment he found the roof of the barn was no longer overhead, but above them there was a glorious brilliant evening sky; and there stood little Simson Hiller, hand in hand with the great Doctor Geiler; and Sebastian Brandt, the good, kind godmother, and poor Fridli looked down complacently on Zell from heaven, and chanted their old song of thanksgiving, 'We

praise Thee, O God!’—Whereupon Master Matthew awoke, and looked up in amazement at—the familiar face of his beloved Katherine, bending gently over him to find out whether he was asleep or not. Still however, his dream ended, he continued to hear the singing; he rubbed his eyes and inquired, ‘How is it now, dear Kate, am I still dreaming, or do I really hear the *Te Deum laudamus*?’

‘You are not dreaming, dear husband. It is the blind leader of the choir from Kenzingen, for whom I made up a bed in the parlour, because he is suffering from fever and pain in his side. I fear he may be labouring under inflammation in the lungs, and may be singing only in the excitement of fever, but it is so beautiful that it quite elevates one’s soul.’

‘That blind choir-leader with the face so marked by small-pox, whom I felt so sure I had seen before,—and then my dream!’ exclaimed Zell. ‘That must, yes, assuredly must be poor Fridli himself!’ As he said this, he rose abruptly and hastened to the parlour, where the younger Dame Kräft was watching beside the sick-bed of the blind man. At that moment she was giving him a cooling draught, and before the self-possessed Katherine could hinder him, Master Matthew was standing close to the patient, whose hand he seized, saying with a voice trembling with emotion, ‘Why, Fridli, is it you?’

‘To be sure, it is none other; and you can be none other than little Mat!’ replied the blind man, holding Zell’s hand with deep feeling between his two hands. ‘Even when you first welcomed us here, and more especially at evening

prayers, your very voice went to my heart. Then the name of Matthew Zell reminded me of so much that was good and dear to me, and in particular of my beloved little Mat, my kind friend in need at Kaisersberg. And as I lay here, hospitably received and tenderly nursed, even as I was then in the good old godmother's barn, the learned Doctor and the Master of Arts from Basle, and the maiden Ursula, and Conrad, and you, and Simson Hiller, all stood, life-like, before me, and I could not resist the impulse to sing, out of a full heart, the hymn of praise we sang together then !'

'Yes, Lord ! In Thee there is a communion of saints, both here below and up yonder !' ejaculated Master Matthew, touched and solemnized.

Had not the two female friends enjoined silence, because Fridli in his fever so much needed rest, the whole night might perchance have been passed in catechisings and recountings. One question Master Matthew was constrained to answer before the blind man could allow him to retire, to wit,—What had become of all the dear people whose images were so vividly present before his mind's eye ?

Zell mournfully replied, 'They have all gone to their everlasting and heavenly home ; they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.'

'And Simson, that pleasant, fresh young branch ?'

'He was appointed pastor of the town church at Kaisersberg, and was, by the grace of God, a faithful minister of the Word, and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ ; he preached the pure gospel diligently and faithfully to his parishioners. Accordingly, just a year ago, the Council

ordered him to appear in the Town-house immediately on his coming down from the pulpit ; there they prosecuted a short suit against him for heresy, . . . and then . . . as Herod dealt with John the Baptist, so they caused him forthwith to be secretly beheaded on the spot, and his remains to be buried in a secluded place. The Bishop of Basle did indeed, in consequence of this inhuman and outrageous deed, lay Kaisersberg under the ban, nevertheless, at the entreaty of the Ensisheim Government,¹ and because Hiller was only a heretic, the ban was speedily removed. Three days since we in this place commemorated the anniversary of his death in love, praise, and prayer. May his blood, like that of the Christian martyrs of the primitive days, prove the seed of the Church in our poor native town ! Good-night, Fridli ! They have gone before us, but in the Lord they all yet live, and are united with us for ever and ever ! Amen !'

Fridli was indeed very ill. On the following day inflammation of the lungs declared itself too clearly, the result of his over-fatigue during the flight. All the history of his life, which he was unable to relate, was supplied by Master Jacob Other as follows :—Through Sebastian Brandt's and Geiler's influence Fridli was admitted into a convent at Freiburg, in which he received his education,

¹ Ensisheim was the seat of Government in the exterior provinces of the Austrian Empire, to which the Sundgau and the Breisgau pertained. A contemporary author says of this Government :—' It was of a despicable nature, cruel and bloodthirsty ; in a short time, 600 men were executed by its orders on account of their faith.' Jacob von Mörsperg was at that time Imperial Landsvogt.

and was trained as a chorister. For the sake of his beautiful voice and musical talent he was named to the first place in the church choir at Kenzingen, which enabled him to take his 'dear little old mother' to his home, and live in peace and contentment with her. Soon, however, she was snatched from him by death, and from the time of her departure he became, as he was wont to say, blind for the second time. So long as she had been beside him he had, as it were, seen everything through her faithful and loving eyes, and so now, amid the dark shades that surrounded him, he felt doubly solitary and forsaken. Then indeed did Doctor Geiler's words recur to his mind, 'To suffer willingly for the love of God, that is the way to heaven!' But however deeply in earnest poor Fridli was, however painful were his efforts, still he could never manage to love God, because he knew not the right way. That one right way was at last shown to him in the Holy Gospel by Master Jacob Other, who was the means of leading him to Jesus Christ the Saviour, who, from love to us, came down from heaven and died on the cross, that we might be saved and inherit everlasting life. Now love kindles love in return, and as soon as Fridli was enabled really to believe that the Lord Jesus loved him, so truly and tenderly, even as his mother had done, yea, and far beyond, he also loved Him with his whole heart, and since then there had always been light and peace in his soul, and he now knew how it is that 'FAITH JUSTIFIES A MAN.'

Fridli never rose again from that sick-bed in Zell's parlour. He died on the third day of his illness. He was lovingly

nursed, was strengthened in faith, and had the support of many prayers ; he had also the privilege of partaking of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper with Master Matthew and his friends from Kenzingen. The Lord led him home gently and blessedly, without a struggle, and his last word was a cry of joy and thanksgiving,—‘ Light ! light ! Oh ! my Saviour Jesus Christ !’ At his funeral, which was attended by all the Kenzingen fugitives, and many Strasburg citizens, Master Matthew delivered an earnest exhortation to all present, urging them in these solemn and troublous times to fight manfully to the end, and to win the crown of everlasting life. ‘ If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully’ (2 Tim. xi. 5). In her letters to the citizens of Strasburg, printed on the 30th of December 1557, Mistress Zell mentions among other things that, ‘ In the year 1524, on one day a hundred and fifty burghers of the little town of Kenzingen in Breisgau were driven to flight from their home. They came to Strasburg, and on that same night I received eighty of them into our house, and during many weeks never fed at table fewer than fifty or sixty of them, many devout gentlemen and citizens of the place having contributed towards the supplies, or helped to entertain them.’ During these four weeks the ‘ elect lady’ herself became much more intimate with many of the guests. She wrote a consolatory letter to the wives of the Kenzingen exiles, which at a later period appeared in print. By the help of God, and through the exertions of good men, these refugees were by degrees provided for, and they obtained the means of supporting themselves, some at

Strasburg, some at other towns which held to the evangelical faith ; many of them, moreover, had the favour granted them of being re-united to their wives and children. On the recommendation of the ministers of the gospel at Strasburg, Master Jacob Other was first appointed incumbent of the parish of Neckar-Steinbach, then assistant to the Bernese Reformer, Berthold Haller, and in 1532 he was moved to the parish of Esslingen, where he remained till his death.

Among the rural population of Alsace, and among the highlands of the Black Forest, the flame of insurrection had for a long time been glowing beneath the ashes.¹ The intolerable burden of taxes under which the poor lay, the services of tenure and oppressions of all sorts, were the primary cause. Soon, however, was superadded the more oppressive feeling of spiritual slavery. And thus arose the 'Peasant League,' known (in consequence of the badge by which it was distinguished—a peasant's shoe buckled after the fashion of those days) as the *Bundschuh*, or 'League of the Shoe.' With giant strides this insurrection spread in Suabia, the Palatinate, Thuringia, etc. ; and at Easter 1525, the fearful Peasants' War broke out in our town and neighbourhood. The peasantry assembled in force, exercised their rights of justice by terrible vengeance on their oppressors, plundered, committed murder and burnt, in relentless

¹ The first of these peasant revolts in Alsace had originated so early as Whitsuntide 1493, in the villages round Schlettstadt. The members of the League were resolved to be free like their neighbours the Swiss, and the saying was current among them : 'If the League and the Swiss are united, what need have we to care for Pope or Emperor?'

fury, convents and castles and strongholds. Thereupon the cruel Anthony, Duke of Lorraine, entered Alsace with a large army, to suppress the revolt. A fearful deluge of blood at Zabern, and a second at Scherweiler, not far from Schlettstadt, ended the desperate struggle which had lasted two months, and cost our fair Alsace above 36,000 industrious men.

During the raging of the short but murderous war, and after the scenes of carnage at Zabern and Scherweiler, the unfortunate peasants, dreading the open plain, sought safe refuge for their wives and children, and all their goods and chattels, in the two evangelical towns, Strasburg and Mühlhausen. 'In the district of the Upper Rhine,' says the ancient chronicle, 'the noblemen in the course of the war fell upon the villages, attacked and burnt Lautersbach, Pfaffstadt, Riedisheim, and several other places, in consequence of which the country-folk brought in their possessions to Mühlhausen for protection, in such quantities that not only were the houses filled, but the streets blocked up and rendered impassable. The noble-minded town-clerk, Oswald von Gamsharst, gave these unfortunate creatures a welcome full of Christian love, on which account a complaint was laid against him before the Emperor by the Ensisheim Government.' In the evangelically disposed city of Strasburg likewise manifestations were not wanting of the peace-bringing spirit of pure gospel doctrine. Thousands of the '*poor folk*' (*armen Lüt*), as the peasants were then called, found protection and a kind reception within her walls, and the city was filled to overflowing with fugitives. Then, again,

as before about the refugees from Kenzingen, it was necessary that 'full many a devout citizen and gentleman should contribute and help to entertain them.' But such is ever the blessed fruit of the gospel; by the power of Faith, Love is made active in good works. The magistrates undertook to mediate between the contending parties, exhorting the nobles and gentry to mild and conciliatory measures, the subjects to obedience and patience. Accordingly, the burgomaster, Jacob Sturm,¹ and the Deputies of the Council, Bernard Wurmser and Eckhardt von Rothweil, succeeded, across the Rhine, at Lahr, Offenburg, Cappel and Ettenheim, in prevailing upon the masses of assembled peasants to retire peacefully to their homes, and in persuading the Margrave to grant them pardon. Not so in Alsace, where the poor, deluded rioters turned off the deputies from Strasburg with impudence and contempt, and remained deaf to all warnings and exhortations, until the sword of the inhuman Duke of Lorraine gave them the death-blow.

On Easter Day 1525, when the sun was waxing low, old Andrew, with the post-runner, Simon Scheidt, the weeping Jacobea and the little Hansli, approached the ferry, where Heiner awaited their arrival with folded arms and a singularly downcast appearance.

'May God guide thee, grandfather!' said Jacobea, as she held out her hand to bid him farewell amid many sobs. Little Hansli climbed up on the old man's lap, threw his

¹ Jacob Sturm was summoned even as far as Ulm to quiet the peasants.

arms round his neck, and coaxingly asked, 'Now, grandfather, you will bring father back to us—won't you?'

Andrew embraced the little fellow heartily, laid his hand soothingly on Jacobea's head, and said, in a serious tone, to Heiner,—'True repentance means acting better. Heiner! stay at home at thy work; let not the devil entice thee again. Protect the child and his mother till my return, or till I meet the common fate of all mankind!'

Heiner gave the required promise, and then set his grandfather and Simon across the ferry. On reaching the opposite shore, old Andrew knelt down, his head reverently uncovered, and offered prayer to his heavenly Father. After which he instantly strode forward, staff in hand, in spite of the eighty winters that weighed on his hoary head, as vigorous and rapid as his companion, towards the city of Strasburg.

For a long time past—unfortunately all in vain—the pious old man had warned his grandsons against insurrection, solemnly reminding them of the obedience due to the powers that be, which are ordained of God. In spite of all his remonstrances, Frank and Heiner had become sworn members of the 'Bundschuh' League; and when the revolt broke out, they were forced to join the fatal and accursed war. When, after laying siege to Lahr and Offenburg, the peasants had, at Jacob Sturm's solemn entreaty, retired peaceably, the Margrave promising them forgiveness,—when the wild groups had dispersed, and all those who had turned out had gone to their homes,—then Heiner too had betaken himself once more to the fisherman's hut beside the ferry on the Rhine. But the violent, excitable Frank

had imagined himself still bound by the portentous oath by which he had sworn to maintain the twelve Articles of the League, believing it would be cowardly and despicable on his part to abandon his brethren and allies, the insurgent peasants of Alsace, at this juncture, when Duke Anthony was marching upon them with so imposing a force, and to Alsace accordingly he had gone.

‘Embrace for me my good wife and my old grandfather,’ he had said to Heiner, as the latter set off for home; ‘and tell them from me they shall never see me except as a *free man*! If I fall in the rightful contest for freedom and justice, then you, Heiner, must fill a father’s place to my poor little Hansli!’

This said, he had hastened off, anxious to hide from Heiner the tears he could no longer restrain. From the shock of this message and the sight of Jacobea’s grief old Andrew was indeed bowed down beneath a load of sorrow, which he could only lay before the Lord his God with strong crying and tears. When, soon afterwards, Simon announced to him that the assembled peasantry at Dorlisheim had despatched a courier to Master Matthew Zell, with a petition to him and his brethren in the ministry to come out to them to Altorf, to preach the gospel; and that, on Easter Monday, with the consent of the worshipful the Council, Master Matthew, Martin Bucer and Capito were to go to the peasants’ camp at Altorf, there to exhort the multitudes to submission and peace, poor old Andrew could find no rest, but must needs take up his pilgrim’s staff and go to Strasburg with the post-runner, to implore the ministers to

allow him to accompany them, and to seek out his Frank among the insurgents.

How it came to pass that he, the aged fisherman Andrew, should ever have bestowed his tenderly cherished grandchild Jacobea in marriage on Frank Hügelin, was a tale recounted as follows by himself to the post-runner on the evening of that Easter Day. He, Andrew, had as a little boy of ten years old been received, as an inmate of her family, by an aged and respectable tradeswoman in Strasburg, Anna Weiler, a native of Nuremberg, who kept a warehouse for Nuremberg goods, and proposed training him to act as a hawker in that line. In her house he received instruction from a Hussite missionary,¹ Frederick Reiser; and through him he learned to know and love the gospel. Sixty-seven years ago, A.D. 1458, Anna Weiler and Missionary Reiser were arrested, imprisoned, and burned alive in the "*Heretics' Pit*," outside the town. (This "*Heretics' Pit*" was close beside the gallows.) The remembrance of the quiet peace with which his teacher met death, and of the countenance radiant with joy with which the aged Anna Weiler ascended the scaffold, had followed him as a vision of guardian angels through a long life, and helped to protect him against temptation and strengthen his faith. Their ashes had been as it were the seed of the Church; their hallowed memories had been blessed to knit closer

¹ 'The Waldenses, and at a later period the Hussite missionaries, had, unitedly and secretly, through the instrumentality of the Bible, paved the way among the lower classes for that great religious revolution which we call the Reformation.'—Röhrich's *Contributions towards Evangelical History*.

together the hidden members of the little flock, and to open many hearts to receive God's word. And, in more recent days, Andrew had, in his wanderings as a pedlar, accompanied one and another Hussite missionary in his visits to the scattered communities of believers, thus penetrating even to Switzerland and Mühlhausen, in which town he became acquainted with a precious, holy soul, one known as 'French Letty,' with whom he formed a strong mutual bond of affection and esteem. After the decease of his daughter's husband, the owner of the cottage on the Rhine, Andrew could no longer get on comfortably with his hawking, and therefore undertook his son-in-law's business, and became ferryman at the Kehl ferry, for the sake of educating his grandchildren and training them in the fear of God. He had, however, by means of the itinerating missionaries and teachers, always kept up friendly communication with 'French Letty;' and, shortly before her death, he visited her at Mühlhausen, and was constrained by her to give a solemn pledge, on the Holy Bible, that he would take a fatherly charge of her 'dear hot-headed youth,' as she was ever wont to call Frank. After Idelette had gone home, and, a little later, the worthy miller's wife had also passed away, there was no longer any resting-place for Frank in the Bläuwlaten Lane. He then came to old Andrew, and, according to his grandmother's wish, became a first-rate fisherman. She, good soul, had evidently been of opinion that a very peculiar blessing rests on that calling, by reason of the Lord having chosen His special followers from among poor fishermen. In the midst of the fishing business, the two young folk, Frank

and Jacobea, grew more and more intimate, fell in love with one another, and were desirous of being married, whereto Andrew gladly responded yea and amen. He never for a long time had occasion to repent of this, Frank having always proved a good son to him, and a faithful husband and father to his wife and child. Only this mistaken idea, this wild vagary about liberty, had now turned his head, so that he had been caught in the snares of that unfortunate 'Bundschuh' League, and kept thereby, up to this hour, in exile from his home, although, as old Andrew would fain hope, not necessarily for ever lost!

On arriving, on Easter Day, at Strasburg, the old man met with a most friendly reception from Master Matthew, and received much comfort from him; a night's quarters were also freely granted him in the Cathedral-Parsonage, with leave to accompany the ministers the following morning to the peasants' camp at Altorf. What he heard in the kitchen from Mey-Bäbeli, and from sundry fugitives—objects, like himself, of good Matthew Zell's kind hospitality—was, however, nowise calculated to soothe him or to relieve his anxiety regarding Frank. The two members of Council, Wurmser and Herrlin, who had been appointed to make overtures of peace at Hagenau (in consequence of the negotiations of Burgomaster Sturm across the Rhine having proved so successful), were told, on requesting an audience of the peasant leaders, 'that these gentlemen were at dinner; the city deputies had better sit on the wooden block and wait their leisure,'—a huge trunk of a tree having been felled in front of the house in which the insurgent chiefs took their meals. On repeated

and urgent entreaties they were at length admitted ; but they were compelled to deliver their message standing, while the leaders of the peasant force enjoyed their repast at their ease. Nothing daunted by this impertinence, the gentlemen from the city began at once to deliver a serious exhortation, saying,—‘ It was high time for the peasants to consider their wives and children, and remember to what danger they were exposing them : such an insurrection could never prosper, nor have a happy end, for it was displeasing to God : if they would trust the Strasburghers in this affair, the latter would put it within their power to be freed from their burdens, and to return home in peace, like the peasants across the Rhine.’ However, without deliberating long, the leaders returned the following impudent and defiant reply :—‘ We have been long enough treated as peasants ; now, we will see whether we cannot free ourselves from taxes, services, and all burdens ; we know better than they of Strasburg what is incumbent upon us. Return home at once, you deputies, otherwise we shall give you another answer.’¹

This rude dismissal of the city councillors caused much indignation and dismay among the better disposed of the rural population, and especially among the peasants on the Strasburg territory.² Many fled with their families and property into the town. In the Cathedral-Parsonage some newly-arrived fugitives told the tale of the evangelical

¹ Röhrich's *History of the Reformation in Alsace*, vol. i. pp. 288, 289.

² The district of Strasburg then included Wasselnheim, Herrenstein, Dorlisheim, Marlenheim, Illkirch, Schiltigheim, etc.

parson of Dorlisheim, Andrew Preunlin, who, since the revolt began, had never ceased exhorting his people to submission and peace, and who, on this Easter morn, had said, in the course of a very impressive sermon,—‘Rebellion is contrary to the gospel ; and the true faith is propagated, not by means of guns, halberts and spears, but of prayer and obedience.’ On account of these sentiments the tumultuous and angry mob sought to throw him down from the pulpit, and hang him on the great lime-tree before the church door. All this furnished a shocking spectacle during divine service ; and the sacristan, with a few of the older peasants, had the greatest difficulty in rescuing the minister from the hands of the raging foes. On hearing this narrative, the two ministers’ wives, Dames Bucer and Capito, who happened, with their husbands, to be then in the Parsonage, were alarmed in no ordinary degree. The tender Agnes¹ began to entreat her beloved Capito, and no less the amiable Elizabeth her Martin, with many tears, not to venture out to the peasants’ camp, after having thus heard what was to be expected there by any who came to treat for peace. The husbands however replied,—‘They must certainly go, for where duty calls, it is not lawful to confer with flesh and blood!’ As soon as the noble-minded Katherine had fortified her trembling friends by her strong, rejoicing, and courageous faith, and they had all united in beseeching the Lord to grant His protection and blessing, Mistress Elizabeth sang, not without deep though elevated emotion—

¹ Agnes, Capito’s wife, was a daughter of the ‘Lord of Fifteen,’ Hans Ulrich.

‘ Hope meekly waits for the right hour
God’s holy will hath set ;
That come,—He will put forth His power,
With joy,—and none shall let !
What’s best, and when, full well He knows,
In utmost need His care He shows :
With all our hearts we ’ll trust Him yet !

‘ Though He may seem to stand aloof,
Still trust ! be not afraid !
Faith *feels* Him near by many a proof,
Though hid—in clouds array’d.
His word’s more sure than vision bright,
Thy heart may whisper,—“ Nought goes right ;”
Yet trust ! He ’ll save thee e’en from fright !’

Early on the following morning, old Andrew, with the peasant-courier Jörg von Geudertheim, had set out on the journey to Altorf, and not long afterwards Zell, Bucer, and Capito rode out on the same road. When they reached the peasants’ camp beside the Abbey of Altorf, which had been stormed and plundered, the three ministers were received by the insurgents with great joy. A wide ring was formed round them ; the imprisoned Abbot of Altorf and several priests were set in the middle, and the demand was made, ‘ that now both parties should dispute concerning the contested points of doctrine, and let the peasants decide which was in the right.’ The ministers, however, refused their consent, saying, ‘ they had come there to execute the orders of those to whom they owed allegiance, and to exhort to submission and peace. Moreover, this was not a Christian assembly, but a gathering opposed to God and His word. Who had bestowed on the peasants power to force others to

give an account of their faith? Rather ought they to leave monasteries, abbots, and convents undisturbed, and themselves to obey the authorities, without which they could expect no prosperity. If only they would quietly return home, then assuredly the Government would take their case into consideration in a Christian way.' After delivering these and other similar counsels, the servants of God rode off. Mindful, however, how soon words die away, they dismounted in the village of Entzheim, and wrote a document, strongly and pointedly expressed, in which they once more sought to induce the peasants to lay to heart the sinful nature of their doings, appealing solemnly to them, reminding them of approaching judgment, and concluding with the words,— 'Body and goods we owe to the powers that be, patience to enemies, willing service to all; but to God alone, for our soul's sake, the obedience of faith, according to His holy word, in which revolt, even against an unjust government, is expressly forbidden.'

During the course of all these transactions old Andrew had been perambulating all the camp, seeking his Frank, and inquiring about him in every direction, but, alas! in vain. All that the peasant-courier, Jörg von Geudertheim, succeeded in ascertaining amounted to this:—yesterday, Easter morning, Frank had been seen among others in the church at Dorlisheim, and had immediately disappeared. Some said he had gone to Zabern, there to procure for the minister, Preunlin, a written safeguard from the chief insurgent leader. Others, on the contrary, maintained positively he had been despatched by the originators of the

attempt at murder, to go to the men of Hagenau, the most furious of all the rebels, to bring reinforcements from them in order that the plot for hanging the parson might still be carried out, and all turncoats might be cut down and destroyed. These reports fell heavily on the old man's heart, and he set off for Entzheim, there to ask the ministers for a line of recommendation to the parson of Dorlisheim, as he was desirous of going to him and awaiting beside him the course of events, watching as to what he might have to hope or to fear for his lost son. The ministers handed to him the document which they had just drawn up, and commissioned him to request the parson of Dorlisheim to insure its being read aloud in the various sections of the rebel camp ; at the same time they desired Preunlin himself, during the immediate danger, to seek refuge in the city, where Zell offered him a hearty welcome in his home.

Andrew Preunlin (commonly known as '*Prunulus*'), the faithful under-shepherd of the parish of Dorlisheim, received old Andrew with warm sympathy, and the document from his three brethren with great joy ; but to quit his post and go to Strasburg, that he would on no consideration agree to do. Had not the united peasants of the Strasburg territory begun to retreat quietly on the strength of the promise given by the three preachers of the gospel, and were not the men of Dorlisheim, in particular, in the act of returning home in peace, and should he now forsake his flock, instead of stilling the tumult as far as in him lay, being ready lovingly to receive the penitent, to encourage the desponding, to guide

the misled into the right way, and, with God's help, to bring all back to the path of duty and of obedience? No! He had willingly offered up his life as a sacrifice to the Lord, to save the poor deluded peasants from destruction, and now old Andrew faithfully stood by his side and manfully aided him in his arduous task, secretly and trustfully committing his own private grief and anxiety to his God.

The Altorf camp was greatly diminished, owing to the retreat of the insurgents belonging to the Strasburg territory, and amid furious threats fulminated against Parson Preunlin, who from the very beginning had vigorously resisted the insurrection, the remnant of the wild masses fell back on Zabern, where the insurgent leader, Erasmus Gerber, occupied the episcopal residence (the Bishop being absent), and the mountain passes with a force of 20,000 men, in consequence of having received intelligence that Duke Anthony was preparing to fall upon them with an overpowering army. At Dorlisheim the peasants had but just returned home, and were on the point of beginning, urged on by the entreaties of their minister and old Andrew, to cultivate the fallow ground, to eat their bread in peace in their cottages with their families, when suddenly, on the Saturday after Easter, the news reached them that a body of Hagenau rebels, with a few stragglers from the Altorf camp, was approaching Dorlisheim, fully resolved to do summary execution on the minister and on all turncoats, and to burn down the village. On hearing this, a panic seized the poor inhabitants; no persuasions could prevail to hinder their fleeing from the homes of which they had

just taken possession anew, and hastening with wives and children to the hills and forests, a few only of the very old folk remaining in the Parsonage with old Andrew and the sacristan. Vainly did these last, especially the venerable ferryman, urge the minister to take refuge at Strasburg or among the mountains ; he was immovable, saying,—‘ If only I can lead even one of these wandering sheep to the Good Shepherd, gladly will I risk my life for it. And who knows, Andrew, whether it may not be your Frank whom I may thus gain !’ added he, with a melancholy smile.

A death-like silence reigned that evening in the desolate village : the watch-fires of the approaching masses of armed peasantry gleamed in the distance, and the prayer-bell pealed solemnly and thrillingly, sounding like a warning voice from on high, in the pure, still night-air. On the bench in front of the Parsonage, sat hand in hand Parson Preunlin and the aged Andrew, each mutely contemplating the parting sun.

‘ Andrew,’ began the minister, ‘ there are inward revelations which do not deceive. Not long ago, the Lord revealed to me in a dream by what death I am to glorify Him. I had not thought indeed that the ‘ *poor folk*’ (*armen Liit*) would sacrifice me as a victim ; rather had I expected the stroke to come from a very different quarter ; but now, let God’s will be mine ! Remain with my poor misguided flock, Andrew, till the storm has passed. Instruct them in the word of God, and strengthen them in the faith. Think of my words ! To-morrow, at this hour, I shall have overcome, and shall be at home with the Lord !’

And so it came to pass. On the Sunday morning the

insurgents, in wild and tumultuous force, stormed their way to Dorlisheim, surrounded the village, and, finding it deserted, turned to vent their whole rage on the parson, to whom in particular they attributed the withdrawal of the Dorlisheim men from the League. He awaited their approach, in his clerical attire, surrounded by the elders of the parish, in the church, whither old Andrew had also accompanied him. There he made one last but fruitless attempt to open the eyes of these unhappy men, and to draw them back from the edge of the precipice. 'Be not deceived,' he cried aloud, 'God will not be mocked, and what a man sows, that also shall he reap. Ye have sown a bloody seed of revolt, murder, incendiarism and deadly deeds,—the awful retribution is at hand. Oh! repent and be converted before it be too late; otherwise a speedy and terrible end will overtake you!' Awe-struck on hearing these prophetic words, all too soon, alas! fulfilled, many of the better disposed were ready to strike on their breasts and to give heed to the warning designed to snatch them from ruin. The infuriated men of Hagenau, however, fell upon the minister like savage beasts, and amid horrid oaths dragged him outside the church door, bent on hanging him on the great lime-tree. On reaching the spot, while several of them were getting ready to fulfil the office of hangman, they demanded that old Andrew should first prepare the parson for his death, and offer up with him the 'execution prayer.' Andrew knelt down, and greatly agitated, uttered these words, 'Your Reverence, I see the heaven opened above you, and I implore your blessing ere

you depart hence !' The minister laid his hand gently on the silvery head of the patriarch, looked with an indescribable expression of peace and yet of sadness first at his murderers, then up towards heaven, and called out in a loud, clear voice, 'Lord Jesus ! these unhappy men know not what they do. Lay not this sin to their charge ! In mercy receive my spirit ! Amen.'

At that moment a young man rushed through the peasant crowd, and threw himself down before the minister with the exclamation, 'Stop ! with my own life I protect him ! I forswear all your reckless plots ! You are tools and slaves of the executioner, not men fighting for truth and for just rights !' Incensed at these words, the exasperated rebels raised their hatchets to avenge themselves of the bold intruder, when the man of God, bending in an attitude of defence over the youth, received on his own head the furious blows of the weapons, and sank, lifeless, on the ground. Thus, as he had foretold, he had saved his friend Andrew's long-lost Frank ! The aged grandfather, forgetful of all around, seized the wanderer in his arms, pressed him close and long to his heart, while hot tears fell down his furrowed cheeks. Frank himself, his head laid on his grandfather's shoulder, sobbed aloud like an infant. Meantime, the peasants had fastened the pastor's corpse to a bough of the fine old tree ; but, when he hung there, the faithful preacher of the everlasting gospel, his mouth for ever closed, then by degrees the surging roar of the wild mob was hushed ; not one ventured to lay hands on old Andrew or on his rescued Frank, and, pursued by

the sting of an evil conscience, the whole body of insurgents set out for Zabern, forthwith leaving Dorlisheim altogether.

‘The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much’ (James v. 16). Earnestly had old Andrew entreated God’s mercy for his Frank ; and so the Good Shepherd went after the wandering sheep, and faithfully sought till He found it. In the desolating confusion and tumult of the insurgent camp, and at the storm and plundering of the Abbey of Altorf, Frank had begun to feel ill at ease, and increasingly so as he saw deeper and deeper into the godless doings around. Memories of the years of his childhood and youth had been awakened within, and the image of his dear pious grandmother presented itself before his mind’s eye as a guardian angel to warn him. When, on Easter morning, he fully detected the murderous plot against the holy pastor Preunlin, then indeed it was as though scales fell from his eyes, and with terror he confessed that he had fallen into Satan’s snares, and had begun to tread his paths. So, hastening to Zabern, he instantly implored from the rebel commander a safe-conduct for the pastor. But Erasmus Gerber had other, and, as he reckoned, more important matters to attend to, than to trouble himself about the life of a poor village pastor ! For long he refused an audience to Frank, and at last only half heard him ; and he asked him rather to go to Strasburg as his courier, with a petition to the magistrate to send ammunition for the peasants at Zabern, and on the Martersberg, and help towards the defence against Duke Anthony of Lorraine, who was marching down on them. Disgusted and indignant, Frank left him and returned as we

have seen to Dörlisheim, resolved to shield the life of the pastor at the risk of his own.

The martyrdom of the faithful Preunlin was not in vain. By the grace of God it was the means of saving many a soul from everlasting perdition, and many a life from the fearful carnage at Zabern. Many forsook the path of revolt, and returned home penitent. Great and affecting was the sorrow of his own flock. On the day of his funeral all the people of Dorlisheim came down to their village from the hills, or crept out from their hiding-places. From a German New Testament—a keepsake given him by a Kenzingen fugitive—old Andrew, at the open grave, read from the 7th chapter of Acts the history of the death of St. Stephen, adding a few deeply impressive words and a fervent prayer; after which the whole assembly knelt and sang, amid many tears, Luther's metrical version or paraphrase of the 67th Psalm:—

‘ May God be merciful to us and bless,
May He our every sin forgive !
May the clear radiance of His face
Lighten us on, for aye to live !

‘ May God the Father and the Son,
May God the Holy Ghost upon
Our heads His choicest blessings pour !
Our Triune God whom saints adore !
Worship in godly fear,—all men,—
And let each heart respond Amen !’

Andrew remained at Dorlisheim as evangelist until the honourable Council found it possible to send a fit pastor to minister to the flock. He preached faithfully, in all

simplicity and humility, as we find it recorded in our ancient chronicle, 'concerning God's word, faith, love and other necessary things which have to do with the glory of God and the salvation of souls.' Frank too was by no means idle; he acted as runner, to keep up communication between the peasants who had returned home in peace and the magistrates, thus efficiently assisting the authorities of Strasburg to re-establish order and tranquillity at Dorlisheim. On one occasion, while out on one of these errands, he met with the agreeable surprise of finding in the Cathedral-Parsonage his beloved Jacobea and his little Hansli, whom Dame Zell had caused to be brought into the town. That was truly a wonderful reunion—a joy not to be described! When, on the 17th of May following (1525), 18,000 peasants had fallen at the Martersberg ('hill of the Martyrs') and at Zabern,—and three days later 12,000 at Scherweiler, not far from Schlettstadt, and all seemed dreary and desolate in our once fertile and smiling plains, the very villages deserted and death-like, then Frank traversed the land far and wide in the Lord's service, like a good Samaritan, leading the helpless woe-begone widows and orphans to Strasburg, where charity and self-sacrificing love and pity flourished as the beauteous fruits of the Spirit, and the results of pure gospel preaching,—where the Lord had taught His regenerated Church that 'none of us should live unto himself, but each for all the rest, and had shown them how to attain to this grace.'¹ Dame Zell also mentions in her aforementioned letter to the citizens of Strasburg,—

¹ Bucer's Instructions, published in 1523.

‘After the cause of the poor peasants had received its death-blow, I was enabled, with the assistance of Master Lux Hackfurth, the public almoner,¹ as well as of the two honourable widows, Dames Kräft, to provide accommodation, in the vacant convent of the barefooted friars, for many of the miserable, panic-stricken people who were then flocking in to Strasburg. I organized a plan by which many respectable persons, men and women, undertook to serve them, and large alms and supplies were contributed towards their support.’

In the autumn of the same year, old Andrew, with Frank and Jacobea and their little Hansli, removed to Mühlhausen, where Frank obtained from his old friend and patron, the Knight-Commander George von Andlau, the situation of steward in the ‘German Court’ (or farm connected with the ‘German House,’—the seat of Government), and there, if the Lord will, we may hope soon again to meet with him and his sister Theresa. Heiner, however, remained as ferryman in the hut beside the Rhine, and took to himself as wife an excellent and devout maiden, a native of Dorlisheim—his venerable grandfather helping him in his settlement for life, and bestowing his parental benediction upon him.

In the year 1527 the Dean of the Strasburg Cathedral, Count Sigismund von Hohenlohe, was laid under the ban by the Pope, and deprived of all his dignities and preferments, ‘because,’ as was stated, ‘he had adopted no strin-

¹ Formerly chaplain at Oberehnheim, and the first public almoner of the city of Strasburg.

gent measures to check the heretical preaching in the Cathedral ; because he held the opinion that the banished ministers were by no means to be avoided—he even cultivated daily intercourse with them, and invited them to be his guests ; because he not only tolerated the evangelical preachers in the rural parishes within his jurisdiction, but even in 1525 issued an order to all the ecclesiastics within its bounds TO PREACH THE WORD OF GOD ONLY ; because also he had resolved that the priests in the country who had married, and who administered the sacrament of baptism in the German tongue, were not to be assailed on account of these things ; and lastly, because, in his *Little Book of the Cross*, he had defended the heretical doctrines of Luther, and had spoken of them as “good.” He was laid under an interdict by the Emperor, on account of his having carried on a confidential correspondence with the French Princess, Margaret of Valois, and was accused of having favoured the levying of recruits in Alsace for the King of France. He appealed to the city of Strasburg for protection, and soon afterwards entered the military service of France. When, however, the persecution against the Huguenots in that country waxed hotter and hotter, he withdrew to Augsburg, and there continued faithful to his evangelical belief till death. He died on the 8th of August 1534, deeply lamented by his Strasburg friends. The Reformation had cause for unbounded gratitude to his memory ; and the image of this noble man, who, placed in God’s providence on so high a pinnacle, willingly gave up dignities, honour and wealth for his faith, could not be

omitted among the ranks of those who, in such solemn and troublous times, suffered so much, fought so valiantly, and sacrificed all, for the sake of re-establishing the word of God and faith in Jesus Christ the crucified Saviour as the basis of our Evangelical Church. It was in all probability by Count Sigismund that the Huguenot refugees, who sought shelter at Strasburg, were introduced to Pastor Zell, and to them too were extended the hospitality and kindly Christian welcome of the ever open Cathedral-Parsonage. Even as early as the year 1524, Francis Lambert, a Franciscan from Avignon, had come to Strasburg, and from that German frontier-city as a centre, had actively promoted the triumph of the gospel cause in France. He stood very high in public esteem, and was commonly known as 'the French Doctor.' At a later period, Farel and Calvin also sought refuge at Strasburg, where Calvin (A.D. 1538) became pastor of the French congregation of Huguenots, to whom he ministered until he was recalled to Geneva, where, to the hour of his death, he bore his beloved Church of Strasburg upon his heart.

'At the repeated urgent entreaty of the Ministers of the Word and of the citizens, the Council of Strasburg at length resolved to take the decisive step, and abrogate the Mass, which since the beginning of the measures for church-reform had been read in German. In vain did the Bishop warn and threaten, in vain did the Imperial Government send three deputies from Spire, to endeavour to deter the Council from such a step, by representing the displeasure of the Emperor and of King Ferdinand as sure to be thereby

incurred. The magistrate replied : 'As the matter was one that concerned the conscience of every man, they felt it right to lay it before the Grand Council,¹ and leave them to decide.' 'On Saturday, the 20th of February 1529, about seven o'clock, the Council and the XXI. met an hour earlier than the three hundred. In the course of that hour a letter arrived from the Imperial Government, pressing for an immediate answer, on which it was resolved,—the Council must let the letter lie, quietly carry the matter through, and leave all in God's hands. Thereafter the Council appealed to the three hundred ; and after mutual explanations and representations of the matter, it was freely put to the vote. It was then declared that 184 were of opinion that the Mass should be abrogated and dispensed with, until it could be proved to be according to God's will. Ninety-four votes were recorded in favour of standing still and letting the Mass remain to the end of the Diet. One single vote was for neither doing away with the Mass now nor at any other time. Twenty-one members of the Council were not present.'

'On that same day this decision of the Grand Council was announced by writing to the Imperial Government, with the statement appended to the despatch, "that, according to the laws of the city, the Council could now take no steps in a contrary direction ; therefore it was best to accept

¹ The city was divided into twenty guilds ; each guild had to elect fifteen '*Schöffen*' or Sheriffs. These three hundred constituted the 'Grand Council.' On important occasions the Magistrate called it together, and the decision of these three hundred '*Schöffen*' in the name of the citizens was always final.

the decision favourably, since in all other matters the city was entirely at the Emperor's disposal." On that same day, likewise, the Bishop was made acquainted by a letter, and the Canons of the four different Chapters by members of Council deputed for the purpose, with the resolution passed by the Grand Council. The following intimation was appended :—"Their revenues were to remain undiminished ; but as concerned the present ordering of Divine worship, on that point several of them should discuss matters with the magistrate. On the following Sunday (Reminiscere), the 21st of February, the above-named decree was publicly made known, and so the abolition of the Roman Catholic worship in Strasburg and its territory was solemnly carried through, and the Reformation had so far gained its immediate object."¹

¹ See Röhrich's *History of the Reformation in Alsace*, vol. i. pp. 369, 370.

SPITZI.

SOMETHING FURTHER FROM THE OLD CHRONICLE OF
MÜHLHAUSEN.

‘ God remembered Noah. ’—GEN. viii. 1.

THREE men, the old and venerable town-clerk Oswald von Gamsharst, Father Bernard Römer, and the pastor Johannes Hofer, were sitting, one fine summer evening, on a bench in front of the Augustinian Convent, deep in conversation regarding the great questions and momentous events of the time. Near them, under the great lime-tree on the market-place, sat the pastor's little daughter Idelette, then two years old, no less engrossed with the enjoyment of her supper. Beside the little one lay crouched a lean, black dog of the '*spitz*' breed, whose appearance told of days of dearth, for, as the proverb says, 'hunger stared at you from his eyes;' it looked up so lovingly at the child, wagged its tail so beseechingly, and so eagerly devoured every crumb that fell, that it would have melted a very heart of stone. Little Letty, however, who had never suffered hunger, and could not understand the dumb language of the poor beast, pushed away the nose of this intrusive beggar, and in her determined effort to snub him, dropped her piece of bread.

The dog caught it and ate it ravenously, upon which the little girl jumped up angrily and began to cry, exclaiming, 'Spitzi, you naughty Spitzi!' stamping with her little feet, and striking the creature's black, rough, matted back with her clenched fist. The dog, however, never stirred, but continued imperturbable in the enjoyment of its repast.

'Why are you crying so, little Letty, and what harm has poor Spitzi done you?' asked Hansli, who at that moment issued from the German Court, bringing a basket of strawberries for his uncle the pastor and his aunt Theresa, fresh from the forest of the Hart, where he had gathered them with his father. The child's screams had also attracted the said pastor and his spouse in hot haste.

But now a rough, screeching voice was heard calling from Finninger the wheelwright's workshop, across the road,— 'Spitzi, Spitzi, come hither, thou devilish beast, or . . .' here followed a vile oath.

'Alas and alack-a-day!' exclaimed Hans, 'that is the wicked Mike Finninger; he will certainly beat poor Spitzi to death!' The boy ran to Theresa, who had taken Letty up in her arms and was endeavouring to soothe her. Spitzi, however, cowered down terrified, dropped the bit of bread out of his mouth, and crept trembling, his tail between his legs, behind the minister, as if to implore protection and aid.

A tall stripling, some sixteen years old, now came forward under the old lime-tree, with a thick rope in his hand and an oath on his lips, and asked, in a rude, coarse manner, 'What corner the black vermin had crawled away to?' He caught the whining creature, kicked it along, and

threw the rope round its ears to take it, as he said, to the butchers for execution, because of its being mad, and having, that very morning, bitten his sister Agnes.

‘Yes,—because, here under this lime-tree, she pricked it in the ears with a large needle till the blood flowed! I saw it myself, for I was present!’ stormed out Hans, his dread of the spiteful lad overcome by his pity for the dumb victim of his persecutions.

‘That dog is not mad,’ said Pastor Hofer seriously, taking, as he spoke, a cup of water which stood on the bench, and holding it to the trembling animal. The creature eyed it eagerly, licked his hand, and then obediently emptied the cup to its last drop. ‘Now, you are yourself witness, Mike, that there is nothing he looks less like than being mad, when he has so gladly gulped down that water!’ said the pastor. ‘“The righteous man is merciful to his beast,” we are told in God’s holy word; but you and your brothers and sisters are constantly plaguing poor Spitzi after a most ungodly fashion, so that often before now I have felt boiling with indignation, and almost called on to use the well-merited rod of correction.’

Michael grew crimson with rage, and impudently retorted, ‘The dog belongs to me, and I am free to do as I choose with it.’ He straightway fell to indulging in abuse of the Lutheran heretics and their preachers, ‘who were always meddling with matters that did not concern them, and who ought, one and all, to be burnt on the scaffold,’ tightening, at the same time, the rope he had fastened round Spitzi’s neck, and preparing to drag off the poor animal, when

Oswald von Gamsharst rose from his seat and barred the way, asking him in a stern tone, as he pointed to the order of the authorities that was stuck up on the church-door, 'Michael Finninger, canst thou read?'

On meeting the glance of the severe town-clerk, whom the good honoured and the evil dreaded, the bold and worthless youth turned pale, drew back rebuked, and muttered between his teeth some reply inaudible to all. The town-clerk continued, 'In this mandate the Christian authorities have strictly prohibited, under pain of severe punishment, the abuse of preachers of the everlasting gospel by dubbing them "Lutheran heretics," as well as the uttering of blasphemous oaths and curses. Now, as you have just been guilty in both points, and have thus incurred the penalty, you must come with me to your father, who is responsible for you, and with whom I shall settle the matter.' So saying, he took the much disconcerted Michael by the hand, and led him to Finninger's house, across the road.

Meantime the rest of the party took compassion on the poor ill-used dog. Pastor Hofer loosed the string round its neck, and kindly stroked its lean back. Theresa fetched a piece of bread, with which Hans fed it; little Letty, who, with the happy inconsistency of childhood, had speedily forgotten both anger and fright, caressed it tenderly, and while she was repeating her call, 'Spitzi, poor, poor Spitzi!' Father Bernard gravely exclaimed, 'If only we could set the poor animal free from the clutches of those Finningers! After what has occurred, they will vent their fury on Spitzi, and treat it more cruelly than ever!'

At length Oswald von Gamsharst returned, saying with a look of annoyance, 'What a houseful of unruly children that is! The mother promotes idleness, pride, and sensuality; the father is sowing the seeds of self-will and defiance in his children's hearts. They are both assuredly sowing to the wind with a full hand, and soon they must reap the whirlwind. I was driven to poaching on your preserves, Master John, for I preached a sermon to them containing a sharp rebuke, such as they will never either forget or forgive! Besides which, instead of demanding payment of the fine due by Mike, I required that the poor dog should be set at liberty, for otherwise they would have tormented it to death. Take it with you to the German Farm, Hansli—there it will be out of sight of its tormentors; it is faithful, and a capital watch, and in these evil days may render good service to your father in his wanderings through the Hart and the surrounding district.'

Hans was overjoyed, and coaxed the dog most caressingly to follow him at once. Spitzi, however, always slipped through his fingers when apparently caught, lay down at Pastor John's feet, fawning on him, and attaching itself to him in the most decided manner, as if it would say, 'This is the master whom I wish to serve, and to whom I will be faithful all my life long!' 'Who could have had the heart to repel the poor beast?' as Theresa afterwards remarked. And in the quiet family circle into which it was welcomed, whose home was then in the Augustinian Convent, Spitzi did from that time right honourably earn its daily bread. When Pastor John Hofer, who, as senior chaplain of St.

Stephen's church at Obersteinbrunn, had to go there to conduct service and to preach, took up his pilgrim's staff in the fulfilment of his pastoral duties, Spitzi, to the great relief and consolation of the devoted Theresa, never failed to accompany him. In the convent and before its door, Spitzi was Letty's playmate, and took tender care of her. When Father Bernard, who lived with his adopted children John and Theresa, happened to fall asleep in his easy-chair, Spitzi kept watch before the door, and when the dog was seen to lie still there and not to bark or growl if any stranger appeared, the familiars of the minister's home were wont to say, 'Hush, hush, make no noise, for Father Bernard is now taking his noon-day nap.'

Meantime the relations with the family of the Finningers continued far from amicable : open hostilities they did not indeed venture upon towards the inhabitants of the convent, because the town-clerk and all the worshipful magistrates were ever ready to back the pastor and his family. Spitzi likewise they were forced to leave unmolested, for if the wicked Finninger boys¹ approached too near, it at once showed them its sharp, white teeth, growling angrily, often, moreover, barking violently when it saw them at a distance, so that even Pastor John, whose least beck or nod it implicitly obeyed, had difficulty in pacifying it. Nevertheless, bad neighbours these Finningers ever continued

¹ There were three sons, Michael, Matthew, and Jacob, who in later years brought untold misery on their native town; to the two insolent and voluptuous sisters the old Swiss proverb was too applicable,—'Elsie is as bad as Agnes.'

to be ; ingenious in devising spiteful bits of mischief, calumnies, and cunning tricks, all which were unavailing to break the public peace, because the inmates of the convent bore all with patience and Christian love. For in our little republic, as elsewhere, the gospel had borne blessed fruit, and many a home, besides that of the Augustinian convent, witnessed tranquil lives of piety, devoted to the Lord's service. In St. Stephen's Church, Augustine Krämer (our old friend of the St. Stephen's Tower), Otto Binder, and Jacob Augsburg, —in the Church of the Augustinians, Father Bernard and John Hofer alternately expounded God's holy word, and when, in the evening, these ecclesiastical leaders assembled under the great lime-tree, the burghers likewise gathered in the square of the Augustinians, and listened devoutly to the beautiful spiritual songs, and to the unctious prayer which, at the tolling of the curfew-bell, one of the clergy was wont to offer up before they dispersed.

'The Archduke, now King Ferdinand, was a zealous persecutor of the "Evangelicals" (or adherents of the reformed faith) in all his dominions, and had moreover counsellors like-minded with himself. For this reason, when the people of Mühlhausen gave in their adhesion to the gospel cause, the Ensisheim Government sought to plague and persecute them in every way, both from old hereditary hatred and from the change of creed.' So we read in Peter's *Chronicle of the Town of Mühlhausen*, book vi. p. 291. Accordingly, within a short time a chaplain

in the town, who had preached the gospel in Brunnstatt, and Link, minister of Illzach, Johannes Hofer's most intimate friend, were surreptitiously taken prisoners and executed summarily at Ensisheim, which excited great terror, ill-will and distress in the town. Theresa in particular trembled for her beloved John, and felt powerless to quell the gloomy foreboding within her that he too would meet a similar death. But she told her complaint and all her fears to the Lord in silent prayer, as she had learned to do of old from her pious grandmother. She did not wish to unman her husband, nor to hold him back from duty, and full well did she know that 'none of us liveth unto himself,' . . . but 'unto the Lord' (Rom. xiv. 7, 8), every one of His people living and dying for His service, that is for his brethren's good.

In those days, however, a sultry oppressive atmosphere overhung our poor tyrant-ridden town. Almost all her citizens, even Burgomaster and Council, had lost courage; for not only were they surrounded and persecuted by a powerful Austrian Government, but also the dear Confederates of Switzerland, to whom men had naturally turned in this extremity, hoping for protection and succour from them, had taken part against us, and with the solitary exception of Zurich, had refused to mediate on our behalf. The twelve cantons sent four deputies, from Uri, Unterwalden, Freiburg and Solothurn, to Mühlhausen, with the express command that, 'in case Mühlhausen consented to recant the new heresy, they were to spare neither expense nor pains to obtain justice for the town at the hands of Austria, even though they might peril their lives thereby. On the other

hand, in case the town refused to depart from the opinions of Luther and Zwingli, the ambassadors were instructed forthwith to ride home again, leaving Mühlhausen to her fate.'

This message, as already remarked, spread great consternation and anxiety both among the citizens and the authorities, and the majority were disposed to yield. But in this storm, as in former ones, the venerable town-clerk, Gamsharst, stood firm as a rock amid the surging billows : supported by the devout ministers, he succeeded, with God's help, in raising the crushed spirits and re-animating the faith and courage of our forefathers. After long and stormy debates in Council, the following answer was communicated to the Confederate ambassadors, both verbally and in writing : ' The people of Mühlhausen had abrogated nothing essentially Christian in Divine worship. They had only done away with unchristian abuses. Their hope and comfort were only in the Almighty God and His everlasting Son Jesus Christ, our alone Saviour and Mediator, whose holy word, according to both Testaments, they caused to be preached among them without any human additions. AND IN ALL THIS THEY WERE RESOLVED TO PERSEVERE. They were willing to comply with the wishes of their well-beloved allies and lords in all things possible ; this matter, however, concerned the glory of God and the salvation of their souls ; wherefore they could by no means change anything in this their Christian reply.' ¹

¹ Peter's *Chronicle of the Town of Mühlhausen*, vol. vi. pp. 296-301. Peter here remarks that ' he gives the instructions of the Confederate

When on the following day, after the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, the four ambassadors, who had been entertained in the best style and loaded with marks of honour, rode off homewards, their countenances gloomy and sinister-looking, then indeed our devout forefathers realized that 'here we walk by faith, not by sight,' and that we must 'through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God' (2 Cor. v. 7; Acts xiv. 22).

Weary and unstrung did Pastor John return home on that same evening with Father Bernard. The negotiations had been long and stormy, and only after a sharp contest had the victory, by God's grace, been nobly won. And now, the pastor was, early next morning, to go to Obersteinbrunn, and there, as his duty required, to conduct Divine worship, it being the Lord's day. 'Oh! do not go!' pleaded Theresa for the first time, and pouring out her whole soul, she added as her reason for this unwonted entreaty, the assurance that truly she trembled for his life, and well knew to what danger he exposed himself, if he dared to proclaim the gospel on Austrian territory. She reminded him that, during the negotiations in the Town-house and in St. Stephen's Church, the youngsters of the Finninger family and their comrades had been rioting about St. Augustine's Square, throwing stones at the convent, launching forth threats against the pastor, and singing in derision—

ambassadors, and the reply of the town, *verbatim*, that the gospel simplicity and steadfastness of our pious ancestors, the anxiety, persecutions and distress thereby entailed on them, and notwithstanding all these, their continued marvellous perseverance, may be the more clearly seen and traced to their origin.'

‘ Oh woe! woe! woe!
Hofer must now
To the gallows go!’

While, since the departure of the ambassadors, they had, in common with all the evil-disposed, indulged in loud and triumphant rejoicings at the oppressed state of the town.

By way of answer the pastor silently opened Idelette’s Bible; with clasped hands he uttered a short prayer, and then slowly and devoutly he read these words: ‘ He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, FEED MY SHEEP. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, FOLLOW ME’ (John xxi. 17-19).

Thereupon the man of God, folding his wife in his arms, said, deeply moved—‘ An ancient legend relates concerning the death of St. Peter, that, guided by the brethren, he escaped from Rome, because the Emperor had commanded that he should be put to death. After the brethren had left him, and the apostle was going on his way alone, a light suddenly appeared around him, and he saw the Lord pass by. “ Lord, whither goest thou?” cried Peter, and he fell

upon his knees. Then the Lord turned to His disciple, and said—"I go unto Rome, there to be crucified. FOLLOW THOU ME!" Dear Theresa, Peter also had at his home a beloved and cherished wife; and yet he turned round on the spot and followed his Lord, and in Rome he suffered martyrdom. Dost thou now wish that I should not follow the Lord—should not feed His sheep?"

'No! oh no, John! let the Lord's will be mine!' exclaimed Theresa with tears, and she laid her head on her husband's shoulder, and wept long and bitterly. After that both knelt down to pray together in silence, and Father Bernard, who had been a silent witness of this affecting scene, laid his hands on their heads and blessed them in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The following morning, in the stillness of the Sabbath dawn, Pastor John rose from his couch, pressed his wife and children to his heart, commended himself and them to the mercy and protection of God, and then, with Spitzi as his faithful companion, he started on the road to Obersteinbrunn, there to fulfil his duties, although an inner voice told him that he too would soon be girded by another man and led whither he would not.

There are in this life long, dark, dreary days, in which a black cloud hangs lowering over our heads, and an indescribable anxiety weighs down the spirit as with the burden of Alp on Alp: time creeps on heavily; everything around us seems pervaded with an element of leaden weight. Such a long and heavy day did that Sunday prove to our friend Theresa. After she had set all in order at home, had wept

out her pent-up flood of tears in the church, and had besought the Lord to grant help and comfort, she went to the German Farm, where her brother Frank, his Jacobea, and old Andrew received her warmly, and closed round her in a circle of love. They too, however, were restless, and full of uneasiness and apprehension. While Theresa sought to hush the risings of her troubled heart by converse with the aged Andrew, Frank silently crept out, first to the gate, then to the Augustinian Convent, to see whether Pastor John had not yet returned. When at length evening's shades had deepened into night, and the long-expected one had not yet arrived, the uneasiness became general,—messengers were despatched to inquire, and the most conflicting rumours were spread abroad.

The night was singularly dark ; the sky was overcast, and soon a violent storm arose. Wind and rain raged furiously against the round panes of the Augustinian Convent, in whose ancient refectory all the waiting ones had assembled for united prayer. In that circle was Oswald von Gams-harst, and his scouts were perpetually coming and going. Suddenly Hansli, who had stood without as a watch, threw open the door, with these words,—‘Spitzi has arrived, but without my uncle!’ Instantly the dog dashed into the room, dripping, foaming, howling and wailing. It rushed from one to another, pulled the men by their trousers, and then hurried back to the door, as though it meant to summon them to be up and doing, to sally forth to the rescue. Too evidently the dreaded misfortune had actually taken place ; but how and where ? On these points truly poor

Spitzi could give no intelligence. At this moment of suspense the malicious face of Michael Finninger was seen peeping round the edge of the open door, like an evil spirit, as, chuckling with diabolical glee, he cried out,—‘ They have him !’ He then vanished as swiftly as he had come, pursued by the enraged Spitzi, whom Frank with the greatest difficulty succeeded in catching.

But now came back the mounted town-messenger sent out by Herr von Gamsharst to Obersteinbrunn, bringing the following intelligence :—Pastor John had, as usual, conducted morning service, and preached, made his round of visits among the sick and from house to house, and then, accompanied by the old forester Vincent, he had gone on his way homeward : on the road he had been seized by Austrian soldiers, and taken captive to the safe stronghold, the Castle of Brunnstatt. The whole village of Obersteinbrunn was roused to the utmost pitch of excitement and consternation ; indeed, the enemy could not have hazarded taking the parson prisoner in the midst of the place itself, which would infallibly have provoked the rising of the peasantry, Pastor John being universally beloved and revered, not only on account of his present preaching and care of the spiritual interests of the flock, but also by reason of the benefits conferred by him on his parishioners during the Peasants’ War, during which all found in him help, counsel and consolation, in every case where human aid could be afforded.

‘ If he is imprisoned in the Castle of Brunnstatt we cannot set him free !’ exclaimed Oswald von Gamsharst with

a deep sigh, 'for long before we could penetrate thither to present our complaints in the right quarter, and to set agoing negotiations, they would already have executed him ! We know by experience what short work the Ensisheim Government makes of the trial of our Evangelical ministers !'

'He is not in the Castle of Brunnstatt yet,' said Vincent the forester, who had just entered, thoroughly drenched, and had sunk exhausted on a chair. 'They want to take him to Ensisheim through bypaths, to avoid the villages. Up therefore, ye men, up and hasten with a flag to the Hart as quickly as possible ! They must pass through the forest, and with God's help you may succeed in liberating the good pastor from the grasp of his executioners !' He proceeded to relate how he had escorted Pastor John, they too availing themselves of bypaths which he had formerly pointed out to him for safety's sake, but which unfortunately Michael Finninger had spied, he having that day followed the man of God afar off, and thus gained the power of leading the Austrians to form an ambuscade, from which they rushed out to seize the pastor, bind him with his face downwards on a horse, and then hasten off with their victim.¹

Spitzi, whom the soldiery were seeking also to put to death, took to flight, after vainly endeavouring to defend his master, and he, Vincent, concealed himself in the thicket,

¹ 'Johannes Hofer, senior chaplain of the town, and incumbent of the parish of Obersteinbrunn, they waylaid while engaged in fulfilling his duty as a minister appointed to proclaim God's word ; they seized him forcibly, threw a noose round him, and bound him on horseback to carry him away prisoner.'—Peter's *Chronicle*, vol. vi. p. 295.

and there overheard their decision regarding the road by which they should carry away their prisoner.

With the circumspection and quiet presence of mind for which he was so remarkable, Oswald von Gamsharst immediately took all the steps necessary for hastening to the rescue of the captive minister. To escape all notice, Frank was to drive off silently with his woodman's cart to the forest of the Hart. Herr von Gamsharst and several armed men were to ride with him in the cart ; several others, armed and forming no inconsiderable force, were to ride out after them by separate paths : they were to effect a junction at the forester's hut in the Hart, from whence the town-clerk himself was to direct the whole expedition. In the town meanwhile the walls were to be garrisoned, a strong guard was to be set to watch the house of the Finningers and other suspicious parties, and the sentries at the gates were to be strictly enjoined not to allow any one to pass in or out who was not provided with the pass-word,—‘ *God for us.*’ ‘ And so,’ exclaimed Herr von Gamsharst with enthusiasm, as he grasped Theresa's hand for a paternal farewell, ‘ and so let us go forth in God's name, with His almighty aid, and in His strength only !’

Theresa, who had sat there motionless and deadly pale like a marble statue, since the dreadful tidings had been brought, rose quickly as he uttered these words, and said, ‘ Take Spitzi with you, noble friend ! He can, more safely than any guide, lead you to his master's track ; and may the Lord guide and protect you all !’

‘ Well said ! and I too may go with you !’ cried Hansli,

as, suiting the action to the word, he leapt with the dog at a single bound, into the cart, which had already stood some time waiting before the convent gate. Oswald von Gams-harst was inclined to refuse the boy admission, but Frank urged him to take him, pleading that he was acquainted with every little path and track in the forest, and that he and Spitzi could perhaps render the most effectual service by spying out the road along which the prisoner was to be carried through the Hart. Father Bernard and Vincent the forester mounted the cart also, and amid rolling thunder, flashing lightning and pouring rain, they all started in solemn silence, yet strong and of good courage, trusting in the Lord who is mighty to help and to deliver.

When the men were off, and Theresa remained alone in the refectory, she sank down on her knees, with clasped hands, words failing her altogether, and tears refusing to flow for the assuaging of her grief. But the Lord, who well knows how to interpret the silence of His children, sent to poor Theresa an angel of consolation to strengthen her in this the Gethsemane season of her soul. Margaret Blaurer, sister to the Reformer of Constance, Ambrose Blaurer, was passing through Mühlhausen on her journey to visit her most intimate friend Bucer; had spent a few days in Von Gams-hart's hospitable home, and was enjoying the prospect of bearing to the Christians of Strasburg the tidings of the steadfastness and Christian courage of their Mühlhausen brethren. Having heard what had occurred, and watched the departure of the men, she betook her to the refectory, and there softly and quietly, like a messenger from heaven,

she advanced towards Theresa. Like the Lord and Master whom she served, Margaret Blaurer had made it the object of her life¹ to comfort the suffering, to nurse the sick, and to pray beside the dying. Her hearty, loving sympathy proved unspeakably soothing to Theresa, and when the bell of the Augustinian Convent tolled to call people to united prayer on behalf of Pastor John, even Theresa was able, leaning on Margaret's arm, to go up to the house of God. Pastor Otto Binder was already in the pulpit, and as he saw the two women enter, he was involuntarily led to begin, with tones of deep emotion, Luther's beautiful hymn founded on the 130th Psalm :—

' From depths of woe I raise to thee
The voice of lamentation ;
Lord, turn a gracious ear to me,
And hear my supplication !'

in which the whole congregation forthwith most heartily joined. The singing of the first verse was succeeded by a deep silence, broken only by poor Theresa's sobs. Otto Binder also wept, and had to make no small effort before he could command himself sufficiently to speak to the people, for to him Pastor John was inexpressibly dear. During that interval of recollectedness, Margaret Blaurer sang with her clear, silvery voice, which sounded like a note of comfort wafted straight from heaven and vibrating in every heart—

¹ During the awful ravages of the plague at Constance, Margaret Blaurer was continually among the sick, and succoured many in their dying struggles. She was accordingly regarded by the people as a guardian angel, and beloved and venerated to the utmost.

‘ What though I wait the livelong night
Until the dawn appeareth,
My heart still trusteth in His might,
It doubteth not nor feareth ;
So let the Israelite in heart,
Born of the Spirit, do his part,
And wait till God appeareth.’

When Otto Binder opened the Bible, these words met his eye—‘ And God remembered Noah’ (Gen. viii. 1). They touched his heart. ‘ The Lord remembers likewise our imprisoned Pastor John, and our poor oppressed town, which, like the solitary ark on the face of the great Flood, helpless and surrounded by powerful and threatening enemies, floats on in danger and distress,’—thus whispered an inner voice in tones of sweet consolation. In similar tones did this faithful servant of God also address the mournful and trembling company gathered on that eventful night in the church of St. Augustine. And when in conclusion all united in prayer, and intercessions for the prisoner of the Lord arose from every heart, the skies had already cleared up, the ominous thunderclouds had passed away, and the morning-star looked down clear and bright through the windows in the lofty vaulted roof of the little church.

In the forester’s hut in the depths of the wood, the men had meantime awaited in anxious suspense the end of the storm, and when at last its fury had subsided, and the streaks of dawn were beginning to redden the eastern sky, they sought earnestly to devise the most successful plans for the liberation of the pastor. The Hart, then known also by the name of the ‘ High Forest,’ extended at that time

beyond the town lands to very near the village of Modenheim ; several paths led through it to the Ensisheim road, a few through the Mühlhausen territory, others through that belonging to Austria, towards Sauerheim. No one, however, could know by which of these roads the soldiers would convey their prisoner. It was therefore resolved that the armed townsmen should lie in ambush in detachments through the thicket, while Vincent the forester, Frank and Hansli, traversed the forest in a different direction, taking Spitzi with them, in the hope that he would with the greatest security lead them to his master's track. But lo and behold, on their looking round for the dog, it was discovered, to the consternation of all, that it had disappeared, and no one knew what had become of it ! 'Well ! then let us, in the name of our God, and with good courage, do our part ! The Lord can lead you to the right path even without the dog !' said Oswald von Gamsharst with a tone and spirit well fitted to cheer them on. And so they parted, hastening each to his appointed post.

Let us now turn from them to the poor captive pastor, whom 'the Austrian troopers,' as the Chronicle has it, 'violently bound on a horse, his face downwards, and led away.' As since the Peasants' War the Mühlhausen men, and Pastor John in particular, had been uncommonly beloved among the country-folk, the troopers had received instructions to convey their prisoner through the deep recesses of the wood, avoiding the villages, lest any rising should take place among the inhabitants, and any attempt be made to set him free. At nightfall, however, they were

overtaken by the storm, and obliged to seek shelter from the wind and rain in a charcoal-burner's hut, being unable to pursue their way in the thick darkness. The soldiers gathered round the fire which the mistress of the hovel had kindled on her hearth. They left the horse on which the prisoner was bound outside, fastened to a tree; and being rough and inhuman, as men were in those days wont to be in their treatment of prisoners, they abandoned him to the fury of the elements. Then indeed the unhappy victim learned to know the force of these words, 'Another man shall gird thee, and shall carry thee whither thou wouldest not.' He was truly a devout man, resigned to the will of God in all things; he loved his Saviour with his whole heart uprightly; but he felt at the same time that he had a human, a sinful heart within, that trembled at the thought of death as the penalty of sin. Then, from the very depth, in his moment of extremity, did he cry to his Lord, the Conqueror of death, entreating Him for increased faith, for consolation, and for grace to overcome the fear of death, and that he might be enabled, amid the pains of martyrdom that awaited him, to praise the Lord even to his latest breath. And as he lay thus bound, the thunders rolled and crashed overhead, the lightnings enveloped him in a glare of light, and torrents of rain poured upon him. Then, awe-struck, he felt an instinctive shrinking at the voice of the Lord, as if a foreboding of the terrors of judgment seized him, and in his inward conflict with fear and faint-heartedness he could only ejaculate with a sigh, 'Lord, have mercy upon me!' But the intercessory prayers, then rising in the Augustinian

church on his behalf from the hearts of Theresa and the brethren, were not in vain. The rain ceased, wind and thunder were hushed, and in the tempest-darkened heart of the man of God the day-star arose. All grew still,—light sprung up in his soul, he breathed more freely, and felt relieved, as if an angel had taken from him the deadly load of anguish. Presently he heard a stirring among the bushes. It was Spitzi ! The faithful Spitzi leapt out of the thicket, and, as the old Chronicle relates, ‘immediately began to lick and caress its master’s face, hanging down towards it as it stood below.’ How much good did these love-tokens of the faithful animal do to the suffering pastor ! ‘Spitzi, my good Spitzi !’ said he tenderly, the tears that moistened his eyes at this glad surprise bringing him relief, and the canine friend quickly responding by ardent endeavours, after his own fashion, to inspire him with hope and comfort, never wearying of springing up to him, and repeatedly licking either his face or his fast-bound hands. The charcoal-burner’s wife, who in the glimmering dawn had stepped to the threshold, saw the black creature hovering round the captive pastor, and instantly retreating within the hut, and crossing herself, she came to the soldiers and exclaimed in terror, ‘May God have mercy on us ! the Evil One, in the shape of a black monster, is performing his pranks about that parson prisoner of yours !’

‘It must be that black beast that always follows him like his shadow !’ said one of the troopers. ‘Gladly would I yesterday have earned the reward which Finninger’s youngster Mike promised me if I could strike the accursed animal

its death-blow. But I never could contrive to get at it, and assuredly it must be possessed of the devil, a very fiend incarnate, for it bit me in the calf of the leg, and tore my trousers besides !'

'Let us see now if we cannot massacre it and earn the reward !' said another. When, however, they issued forth from the hovel, Spitzi had slipped away, darted like lightning into the thicket and vanished, leaving not a trace behind. 'It must have been the Evil One himself !' said the charcoal-burner's wife, again crossing herself, as the soldiers moved off with their captive. The fact of this black dog having shown itself once more was truly most unwelcome news to those men, for they feared, not without good grounds, that tidings of the road by which they had struck off had reached the town, and that the Mühlhausen folk might have sent armed men into the Hart to set their pastor free. They consequently resolved to exercise the greatest caution : they bound the victim yet more tightly, and placed in the centre of the troop the horse on which he lay strapped. The leader gave the word of command to the soldiers surrounding him, that, in case of a surprise and of their being unable to hold their ground, they should give him his death-blow at once ; 'for,' added he, 'even if we cannot bring him alive to Ensisheim, they will be satisfied if they know we have stopped his mouth for ever from preaching.' As Pastor John heard these words, he committed his soul in faith to his God and Saviour.

Resplendent and victorious over night with all her dark horrors did the sun now rise in the clear azure sky. The

storm had purified the air, and the morning burst forth with wondrous beauty. The little birds on the bright green trees were busily shaking and trimming their plumage after the rain, singing their morning hymn, or chirping a friendly greeting to one another; the crystal drops were glistening on the leaves, the forest flowers and the tender mosses, like diamonds in the sunbeams, and a balmy fragrance was wafted up to heaven from the monarchs of the forest, refreshed after the tempest,—sweet as the savour of praise and thanksgiving ascending from a devout heart after it has been exercised in silent prayer.

For some time the long convoy moved forward in the best possible order. In some places, however, the rains had flooded the paths and made them impassable. The soldiers were obliged to strike into bypaths with their prisoner, and suddenly found themselves in a free, open space, overshadowed by lofty beeches, and unknown to them before. As they were ignorant to which side they ought to turn, they halted to confer, the matter of chief importance for them being to remain on Austrian territory, and never to set foot on ground subject to the jurisdiction of the town. When they looked around they observed a small boy diligently engaged in gathering strawberries among the bushes. ‘Hey! youngster,’ the soldiers cried to him, ‘which is the road to Sauersheim?’

‘I have always heard,’ replied he, ‘that the best way thither lies through Modenheim.’

‘But we do not wish to pass through Modenheim. Can you not tell us where the Mühlhausen territory begins?’

‘At the boundary-stones’ (*Bannsteinen*).

‘And where may these be?’

‘There,—there,—over there. You must seek them out for yourselves; you are all taller than I am!’

That the soldiers had already entered the town-lands, a good quarter of a mile from the ‘Bannsteinen,’ sly long-headed Hansli knew full well. And when the long cortège was broken up, the soldiers having drawn off to the side to which he had pointed, and the horse on which the prisoner was bound being no longer surrounded by the murderous band, he sprang forward like lightning to the pastor, and whispered, ‘Be of good cheer, uncle; they are coming to set you free! See, there is Spitzi already!’ and as the faithful dog rushed foaming out of the thicket, and with one bound darted forward and was up on horseback, prepared to defend his master, Hansli ran in among the bushes, and cried with all his might,—‘*Here, here, and God for us!*’ ‘*God for us!*’ resounded on all sides so loud and so earnestly that the forest echoed with the cry. The armed men advanced, and the fight began. But now Spitzi too joined bravely in the combat; for as, on perceiving the armed troop from Mühlhausen, one of the Austrian soldiers hastened towards the captive, to execute his leader’s behest by putting him to death with a single stroke of the javelin, Spitzi sprang at him furiously, and bit him in the hand so severely that his weapon dropped on the ground. And so God was for our forefathers; they gained the victory, drove the Austrians to retreat, and led off Pastor John in triumph to the forester’s hut, where Oswald von Gamsharst and

Father Bernard received him with hearty love, and with warm gratitude to God.

‘And now,’ exclaimed Frank, as soon as he had folded his liberated brother in his arms with overflowing joy, ‘now all honour to Spitzi for ever ! But for him we should hardly have succeeded in finding thee ! At daybreak, when we fancied he had run away, he suddenly came back to fetch us ; he ran on ahead, returning to us again to point out the way, until he led us to the open space, where by God’s gracious help we found thee, and set thee free. Let no one ever say again that dogs have no heart or understanding ; Spitzi at any rate is cleverer and more faithful than many a proud human being !’

‘And I, father, I too helped and was of use, for I was the first who saw my uncle, and cried “God for us,”’ added Hansli, as he climbed up on the pastor’s knee and threw his arms round his neck. His father, however, bade him be still, reminding him of the proverb, ‘*Self-praise stinks.*’ Pastor John could not say much in reply ; he was exhausted, his limbs were stiff and swollen owing to the hard knots of the rope ; and the blood had been driven to the head to such a degree that he could only with difficulty stand erect. He was immediately lifted into the cart, in which a couch of straw was prepared in all haste ; Spitzi took up his position at his feet, while Hansli sat beside his head, and refreshed him with fragrant and delicious strawberries, gathered in the forest glades before the sun was up. Von Gamsharst, also, and Father Bernard, mounted once more into the cart, which Frank had decorated with oaken boughs. The men-

at-arms likewise adorned their hats with green branches, and waved verdant trophies high in the air, as the joyous procession approached the town. But when the watchman on St. Stephen's Tower descried the wreath-encircled cart, and the hats and boughs carried aloft, he blew his horn, hoisted a flag, and shouted the glad news to the citizens below through his speaking-trumpet at the highest pitch of his voice. The tidings ran like wild-fire through the place, every man hastened to the walls, and when at last the procession arrived, and the gates were thrown open, then our pious ancestors, gathered on the ramparts, united in the hymn of faith of the early Church of the Reformation—

‘ A safe stronghold our God is He,’

and those returning replied from without with gladsome confidence—

‘ A trusty shield and weapon ;’

the bells of all the churches accompanying the soul-elevating anthem of praise with their festive peal. The cortège went first to the Church of St. Stephen. Pastor John led the van, supported by Oswald von Gamsharst and Frank. He was received with a joyous and cordial welcome by the burgomaster and his brother magistrates, and forthwith sank, deeply affected, on his knees before the altar. Otto Binder addressed the assembled multitude with much feeling from the words,—‘ And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud’ (Gen. ix. 14). ‘ Over our city,’ he remarked, ‘ the Lord has brought clouds, but in mercy and forbearance He has suffered them to pass away.’ The audience

were inspired with the same strong emotion that animated the orator, and it seemed to one and all as though at that solemn moment they beheld the seven-hued bow of grace extending its glorious arch. The Lord had graciously helped, had confirmed faith, revived hope, raised the courage of His saints, and by His goodness His own work in our Church was thenceforward carried on steadfastly.

When Pastor John returned home, and threw himself into the arms of his beloved Theresa, Margaret Blaurer stood beside them like a guardian angel. She had wept with those that wept, and could now rejoice with those that rejoiced, thanking God out of a full heart, along with the wedded pair, now so happily re-united.

Pastor John's first visit was to the home of the Finningers. The old wheelwright, Hans, received him with much embarrassment, dreading the reproaches he expected to receive, and the announcement of a well-merited penalty. The man of God, however, held out his hand in a friendly manner, and said,—‘Your son Michael thought to do me an injury, neighbour, but God has brought good out of evil ; therefore let us live in peace with one another, and forgive and forget injuries mutually, as we wish that the Lord may forgive us our trespasses.’ After which he solemnly and lovingly spoke to the heart of the father, exhorting him earnestly to consider the matter of the salvation of his children's souls. Hans Finninger seemed touched and even impressed ; he willingly gave the pastor his hand in token of reconciliation. Hostilities ceased ; but alas ! as soon as the old wheelwright died, his wife and five

children all went post-haste down the broad road leading to destruction, so that their names are indelibly marked by a bloody track in the page of our city's history.

And Spitzi, the hero of the day, whose praises were on the lips of all ;—we must not forget to record something also concerning him. Did not Theresa, as soon as he leapt down from the cart, catch him in her arms, and press him to her heart as tenderly as she had done her dear little Crooked-Beak of old ! And does not the old autumn hymn say—

‘ God in His tender kindness sends
Dumb teachers to instruct His friends.’

What lesson may we then learn from our good friend Spitzi ? I believe we may learn a precious lesson of LOVE and HUMILITY. Are we as faithful to our Lord and Master in heaven as Spitzi was to his earthly master ? And after having saved him, on his return home, he lay down quietly in his corner, fell asleep in peace, and the next day never thought he had done anything extraordinary. Are we like him in this ? or have we not all reason to confess with our pious bard, Paul Gerhard,—

‘ I rest upon the ground
Of Jesus and His blood.
For 'tis through Him that I have found
The True Eternal Good.
Nought have I of mine own,
Nought in the life I lead,
What Christ hath given me,—that alone
Is worth all love indeed ’ ?

GOING HOME.

‘ All live unto Him. ’—LUKE xx. 38.

WHEN the unfortunate battle of Mühlberg (April 24th, 1547) had broken up the confederation of Protestant potentates and cities known as the ‘ *Schmalkaldische Bund*,’ or League of Schmalkald, when the Elector of Saxony was taken prisoner, and the Landgrave of Hesse had also fallen into the hands of the Emperor, who now made no secret of his design of putting a violent end, with one blow, to all divisions in the Church, and stamping out the evangelical religion in the whole German Empire,—then, while these tidings of terror and woe were being spread through the land, anxiety and sorrow prevailed also in the city of Strasburg.

At the very first outbreak of the war, the magistrates, acting in concert with the preachers of the word, had ordained that every fourth Tuesday should be observed as ‘the great day of prayer,’ to be sanctified like the Lord’s Day, with solemn confession and exercises of Divine worship. Since the unhappy close of the war, this addi-

tional ordinance was promulgated ; ‘ that every morning, when the eight o’clock service (*Achterpredigt*) is ended, a special bell is to be rung, the which whosoever hears shall, wherever he may be, forthwith fall upon his knees and pray.’¹

It was in the year 1548, on Sunday the 6th of January, that in the Cathedral-Parsonage of Strasburg, so familiar to us all, after the eight o’clock morning preaching, all the inmates of the house, assembled in the parlour, knelt down at the sound of this bell, and prayed together in silence. In this devout circle we once more meet with our old friends Master Matthew Zell and his Katherine. They have both grown old and grey, especially the excellent Master Matthew, who, feeble, worn out, and weary of life, sank this day on his knees with a sigh, saying, ‘ Ah ! I too have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ ! ’ His beloved helpmeet too is no longer the youthful energetic ‘ *Käthel* ’ (Kate) of former days. Grave and anxious, her eye rests first on the bent form and trembling head of her venerable husband, then on the pale face of her son, the child of her old age, who, owing to his weakness, mental and bodily, was indeed a child of sorrow to her. Among the others who formed the interesting group, comprising also Zell’s assistant, Johannes Angelius, and many Huguenots, we shall find one with whom in particular we must soon become intimate, Marcelline the Waldensian.

Marcelline, known in the Parsonage by the convenient abbreviation, ‘ *Lina*, ’ was a native of the village of Mérindol

¹ Röhrich, *History of the Reformation in Alsace*, vol. ii. pp. 182-3.

in Provence. In the days of Peter Waldo, Waldensians, from the valleys of Piedmont, had settled on the banks of the Durance, had there cultivated land that was lying fallow, and had, by dint of perseverance and industry, founded twenty-two flourishing villages with a population of 18,000. Among the chief of these colonies were Mérindol and Cabrières. When these Waldensians of Provence heard that the pure gospel, which their ancestors had preserved faithfully from the primitive, apostolic Church downwards, in the midst of persecutions, was now once more proclaimed in Germany, they sent deputies to the churches in these lands. They were received at Berne by Berchtold Haller, at Basle by Ecolampadius, and at Strasburg by Zell, Bucer and Capito, with the same brotherly love, and returned with joy to their native villages, strengthened in the faith, instructed by the Reformers, and well provided with religious publications. But even these devout and peaceable peasants were among those concerning whom the decree had gone forth from the King of France, that they should be persecuted and slain on account of their faith. Their villages were surrounded and burnt down,—old men, women and children were cast alive into the flames,—the men were massacred, or bound and sent off to the galleys. Thousands who escaped this bloodshed by flight died of hunger or cold, or were driven to seek refuge in the evangelical States of Germany. So it came to pass that Marcelline, with her father Etienne le Marroul, who had been at the head of the little community of Mérindol, came to Strasburg. Etienne (Stephen) died a few days after their arrival, and Marcelline

was, like so many others, welcomed and comforted with tender love in the Cathedral-Parsonage.

In receiving her, Zell and his wife had entertained, not indeed an angel unawares, but a pure and noble soul, and one refined in the furnace of affliction, who brought a rich blessing with her. She was so skilled in all feminine handiwork, so industrious and thrifty, that in a short time she became Dame Katherine's right-hand woman, and in the manifold and stirring activities of the large household, her assistance seemed indispensable. Before she grew familiar with the German language, she was wont silently to glide about the house, soft and still, with her sad pale face like a disembodied spirit ; and her large eyes, with such a weight of tears in their deep fountains, made such an impression on Dame Zell, that, not being able to converse with her, she specially commended her to the tender care of the French pastor, Jean Garnier.¹ In her intercourse with this faithful servant of his Lord, Marcelline found truly comfort and peace for her wounded spirit. The sorrows of separation from father, mother, brothers and sisters, all of whom she had seen fall murdered or dying around her, and the home-sickness which made her pine for the mild air and bright skies of her southern fatherland, gradually became transformed into holy longings for her everlasting home. The fearful picture, ever present before her mind's eye, of burning villages, and beloved ones cruelly slaughtered,—the groans and lamentations of the dying, which, in sleeping or

¹ Jean Garnier was pastor of the church founded by Calvin for the French refugees of Strasburg.

in waking, seemed to be ever sounding in her ears, ceased to have that dire hold on a soul shaken by griefs and horrors. The Lord gave her His own peace, and enabled her with calm resignation and strong faith to fix her eye on that eternal abode of the saints, into which her beloved ones had passed out of their great tribulation. And as her treasure was above, and her heart too, so her conversation was in heaven, and with fervent love and rare self-denial she served her Lord in the service rendered to the homeless exiles with whom Strasburg was then crowded. For the aged Zell in particular, Marcelline's quiet gentle disposition and manner were quite a blessing. When the veteran minister of the word was filled, as he too often was, with anxiety and fear from the danger which threatened his beloved Church, then Marcelline, grasping his hand with tender kindness, would say in her broken German, 'Dear father, eternity is far longer than this poor life on earth, and King and Emperor cannot burn the faith, cannot kill the soul in heaven.'

On that Sunday, when every one saw with dread and with a heavy heart the approach of the day on which, in Strasburg as elsewhere, the Emperor, by his law of '*Interim*,'¹ was to re-establish the worship of the Roman Catholic Church, and to drive away the evangelical preachers, the heart of this aged believer, Matthew Zell, did seem well-

¹ The '*Interim*:' such was the title of that imperial edict by which the Emperor strove to put an end to religious disputes in the Empire, and to bring in again the Catholic worship in all his lands. The cause of the gospel was then, by reason of this law, placed in greater peril than ever.

nigh broken, in prospect of all the misery he anticipated ; and when Dame Katherine saw him rise from the attitude of prayer, tremblingly and with difficulty, with his head bowed down, and supported by Marcelline, the thought took possession of her, ' Soon he will leave you and go home to his Lord,' and as a two-edged sword it pierced her inmost soul. ' Father,' she said to him, as she held his cold shivering hands, ' you are not well ; you must this once, in this bitter weather, suffer Rabus or Angelius to preach for you in the Cathedral !'

' No, no, dear Kate !' replied Zell ; ' allow me to preach still, so long as the Lord leaves me any voice to speak with ; not much longer shall I be able to address my beloved flock, for " friend Death " has knocked at my door. But cheer up, dear Kate ! Though I should not be able to speak to you,' added he with his usual pleasant manner, ' yet you will ever know how much I love you all.'

When he went to his study to rest in his easy-chair, and to collect his thoughts before delivering his sermon, Marcelline entered softly after him, bringing her cordial in the shape of strong soup, and said timidly, ' May I venture to ask something, dear father ?'

' Assuredly, my child !'

' Here, in this city of yours, people discuss and dispute so much on the subject of the Lord's Supper : what am I to believe regarding it ?'

Hereupon Zell took her hand with lively emotion, and spoke with all the animation of youth : ' Dear Lina, the Lord's Supper is a sacrament of the Lord, wherein, with the

visible sign, He bestows on us His invisible grace ; and the little word, "*this is,*" points us indeed to the bread and wine, but to the believing heart and mind it also points to the body and blood of our Lord, which He communicates to us by faith, so that we are in Him and He is in us, and that we live through Him by His holy, blessed, everlasting life in us. Amen.¹ Stand fast, therefore, dear child, on this truth, and do not let yourself be led astray by all the disputes, or by the words which the devil himself has brought from hell, but simply believe thou the simple words of Christ which He Himself spoke.'

Marcelline pondered these words in her heart, deeply moved, and with rich blessing and solemn prostration of soul did she, on that Sunday morning, receive the holy communion from Zell's hands. He advanced to the table of the Lord with the words, 'with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you' (Luke xxii. 15). In the sermon he had alluded to his own approaching death, and taken leave of his beloved flock with the words of St. Paul, invoking the Divine blessing as he did (Acts xx. 32), 'And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.' 'Remember that' (ver. 31) 'by the space of thirty years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.'

The congregation left the house of God deeply impressed and moved, and the melancholy feeling that they had beheld their dear pastor for the last time added to this. Zell,

¹ Zell's Catechism.

however, after the service was over, appeared revived, and attended the afternoon preaching in the Cathedral, and that evening he insisted on going to visit his old friend Nicholas Gerbel. As the weather was cold and stormy, he willingly yielded to his careful Katherine's entreaty, and allowed Marcelline to accompany him.

'The Lord sends you to comfort me!' exclaimed Gerbel as he entered. 'One after another, our fellow-soldiers are being called away, since Father Luther has gone home. Three days ago our dear faithful Glaser died suddenly of apoplexy. Take this letter and read the account I have just received.'

For a little while Zell stood as if stunned, and large tears slowly rolled down his venerable face; then he took the letter, and having read it, he said, with an effort of Christian manliness to control his feelings, 'Ah! why should we lament and be sad, dear Gerbel? Has not the Lord graciously taken away our beloved Glaser¹ from this evil world before the miseries of this Interim have overtaken us, and tenderly fetched him home without long sickness, like Elijah carried up in a chariot of fire? Would to God that the same favour might be vouchsafed to me also, that I too might, without struggle, be suffered to lay down this weary body, as one puts off a worn-out garment before lying down to sleep!'

Two full hours Zell passed with Gerbel, and these two old friends, constant in their faith and in the mutual love which had stood many a test, comforted and strengthened one

¹ Caspar Glaser, Superintendent at Zweibrücken.

another by looking to the blessed hereafter. When Zell, leaning on Marcelline's arm, returned to the Cathedral-Parsonage, he was repeatedly obliged to stand still to get breath, and he said to her, 'Now, dear Lina, I am weary indeed, weary even unto death. Look now,—perhaps the Lord may lay me too very soon thus gently to sleep, to awake up blessedly in His everlasting kingdom!'

During that night and the two following days Zell grew weaker and weaker; he suffered no pain; only his breathing grew shorter and shorter, so that ere long he was unable to move from his easy-chair. During Tuesday night Dame Katherine and Marcelline watched beside him. His 'dear helper' had read by his desire the 5th chapter of the 2d Epistle to the Corinthians, whereupon Zell earnestly entreated his Kate to consecrate what remained of her energies to the service of the poor and persecuted, and of the Evangelical Church, now threatened with so many dangers on all sides. He also begged her to say to his deacons and assistants that they were now 'called upon to leave the Baptists and all those of different creeds from their own in peace, only to PREACH CHRIST, and to gather, not to scatter, His sheep.' He then rose, feeling the approach of the angel of death, knelt down and prayed aloud, his strength raised with the last flickering spark of life: 'O Lord! suffer me once more to commend unto Thee Thine own people. They have loved me. Love them, Thou good Lord, and let them not be rudely driven asunder, lest the building which I have founded upon Thyself be ruined! Be Thou ever their Chief Shepherd!' Here his voice failed, his clasped hands fell apart, and his

head sank down on his breast. Tenderly his own Kate and her friend Marcelline lifted the dying man from the floor, and replaced him in his easy-chair; he opened his eyes, looked again with unspeakable affection at Katherine, and then softly, without struggle, according to his prayer, he fell asleep in the Lord, on the 6th of January 1548, at 2 A.M., aged seventy years, three months and eighteen days. He had been thirty years pastor at Strasburg, and had preached the gospel in the Cathedral for six-and-twenty.

And they had indeed loved him. At the news of his death the mourning was so deep and universal that it seemed as though in every house there lay one dead; and thousands streamed to his home to bid a last farewell to the precious remains. Dame Katherine Zell at that sad time felt herself so strengthened and elevated by her husband's blessed departure, that she was enabled to stand tearless, and almost with a joyous countenance, beside the coffin, which circumstance was misunderstood by many, and by that noble-minded woman's enemies was so spitefully misrepresented, that it was even declared that at his funeral, standing on the bier, she delivered an address to the people. 'Rather would I see our mother weep much, for tearless grief gnaws the heart,' said Marcelline, who mourned with child-like tenderness the loss of her fatherly benefactor.

It was '*swearing-day*,'¹ when the earthly tenement of this faithful minister of the word was laid to rest in its kindred dust. Never had Strasburg witnessed such obsequies:

¹ On this day the assembled citizens tendered the oath of allegiance to the newly elected magistrates.

5000 men followed in solemn cortège the simple coffin, and the tears glistening in every eye were the only, as they were the most beautiful, tribute of honour to him who slept in Jesus. He was buried in the last row in the churchyard of St. Urban's (*Kurbau*); no tomb-stone marked his grave, but in the hearts of his parishioners he had laid for himself the foundation of a perennial monument for time and eternity. Bucer gave the funeral discourse, in which he addressed a consolatory exhortation to the poor Huguenots who had hitherto found an asylum and a loving welcome in Zell's home. His death was lamented in all Protestant churches; in one poetic lament on his removal, it was asserted that 'God was punishing the people, therefore He was taking away such men as Zell.' Again, 'Master Matthew has been an upright Christian, a messenger of peace, and a valiant champion for the gospel; by his holy walk a light shining among the people and a pattern for his flock.'¹ He had fought a good fight; he had finished his course, he had kept the faith. For him also doubtless there is laid up a crown of righteousness (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8).

After Zell's decease the position of his widow was in every way more circumscribed; and she, who had been such a cheerful giver, and so blessed in her giving, had now to learn, as regarded her care for the poor and helpless, to walk by faith and not by sight. It was a trying time. The city, exhausted by the expenses of the war, and chastised by the Emperor's imposition of a heavy pecuniary fine, was no longer able as before to provide for the

¹ *Evangelical Records*, vol. iii. pp. 153, 154.

numerous refugees ; and the rich lords and citizens, who had formerly so liberally aided Dame Zell in her beneficence, were likewise constrained considerably to restrict their generous contributions. Yet the Parsonage was overflowing still with fugitive Huguenots, for whom now another refuge and some means of earning a maintenance must needs be provided, which was by no means an easy matter, nor to be accomplished in a day. Then truly great was the need and distress, heavy the burden of care, so that more than once Dame Zell was sorely tempted to despond. But the Lord helped her through,—not indeed quickly, nor by a deliverance on a great scale, such as Katherine had been wont to see, but little by little, slowly and gradually ; and not one of her French guests was she obliged to turn out without an asylum, not one to send hungry to bed under her roof. ‘Dear mother,’ Marcelline was often heard to say, in a comforting strain, ‘you must be broken of the habit of always having much to give away ; but our Lord can help also with a little, as with the five loaves for the thousands.’ And by her thrifty ways and ingenious plans, ever prompt to devise sources whence help could be obtained, by her industrious expert hands, ready to turn every little to such great account, Dame Zell was often reminded of the Lord’s miraculous providing of food, and thus strengthened in her faith.

Yet heavier trials still awaited the good Dame, when there was a prospect of being forced to leave her beloved Parsonage, in which she had lived so many happy years and exerted so blessed an influence, and to occupy

a small dwelling beside the Moor Inn, at the Jews' Gate. After long hesitation and fruitless negotiation, the magistrate was at length compelled to consent, even at Strasburg, to bring in the 'Interim,' to restore the Cathedral to the Roman Catholic worship, and to hand over the Cathedral-Parsonage to a priest of Rome ; the latter, however, only in the course of two years. All this change was painful in the extreme to Katherine, a zealous Protestant. Before, however, leaving the beloved abode, it was granted to her yet once more to exercise towards Bucer, on his arrival at Strasburg, the wonted hospitality of the Cathedral-Parsonage.

Capito had entered into rest with his Lord in the year 1541. He was snatched away by a malignant epidemic. In his charge he was followed by Fagius—Paul Büchlin of Rheinzabern,—a young, pious and learned man, who laboured and preached in the same spirit which had animated Capito. When, early in the year 1549, the Interim was about to be enforced, the ministers of the word declared themselves loudly against it, and could by no means be induced either to adopt a compliant course regarding it, or even to maintain silence. Then that party in the Council which had for a long time borne a grudge against Bucer and Fagius, on account of the more strict church discipline which these last sought to introduce, became for a time triumphant, and Jacob Sturm von Sturmeck was forced, assuredly with a heavy heart, to announce to them that, 'by the express demand of the Emperor and the Bishop, the worshipful the Council had resolved to give to both ministers, Bucer and Fagius, notice to leave, dis-

missing them with friendly words and for their own benefit, allowing them alimnt and providing a pension for them, until such time as God of His grace may grant that affairs go better, and that it may be possible to recall them.' Whereupon Bucer replied with great suavity, ' He had well and long foreseen that so it would be, and that exile awaited him. He had always preached that which he believed to be for profit to his people, and in accordance with God's word. If he had transgressed the bounds of moderation, it had occurred only through human frailty. Nowhere would he more gladly have continued to sojourn than at Strasburg. He perceived, however, that men would not now any longer tolerate his preaching. He would therefore withdraw, ready, if so be that God should at any future time so order matters, to return to minister to this church again.' Fagius answered in a similar strain. Both accepted the invitation of Archbishop Cranmer, who had for some time past longed to have them in England, where, under the government of the youthful King Edward VI., the Reformation was flourishing so vigorously. The wrench of tearing himself from his beloved church, which he had founded with so much of prayer, conflict and labour, was peculiarly trying to the now elderly Bucer; and most welcome to him, as also to Fagius, was the proposal of Dame Zell, that they should, before starting on their long journey, pass once more a little time in the Cathedral-Parsonage. Who could describe the feelings with which Bucer must have trod again the home-like rooms of that old house in which, as a young refugee minister, he had been

so affectionately welcomed by Zell, and where, beside his Elizabeth, he had passed the sweetest days of his stormy and toilsome life! The loving, single-hearted Elizabeth had long since gone home; and a few years before this period Bucer had contracted a second marriage with Capito's widow,—whose first husband had been Œcolampadius,—Wibrandis Rosenblatt, to whose orphan children he was as faithful and loving a father as to his own.

Mother Zell now found herself again in her accustomed element; for since the Huguenots had by God's help been all provided for, she had felt quite desolate and solitary in the spacious Parsonage. Now she had once more 'much people in the inn,' as she was wont to say, and, moreover, a thousand memories of the dear old times; and instead of being obliged, as in days of yore, to do battle with Mey-Bäbeli's foolish fancies, she now had Marcelline beside her, to assist and to render such true-hearted and devoted service, that repeatedly Bucer and Fagius expressed to her how they felt that in that dear maiden she possessed a real treasure, a genuine pearl, a support for her old age. Truly these quiet days of friendly communion spent by Bucer and Fagius in the Parsonage were the last bright spot in Katherine's life.

Nevertheless, there was even in this dear home, inasmuch as it was the habitation, not of angels, but of poor human beings, many a harsh note of discord. Louis Rabus, who had studied under Zell's guidance, had lived many years in his house, and been treated by Dame Zell with special love and kindness, so that Marcelline in fact ventured to opine

he had been pampered, never could from the first tolerate the French woman. If we must needs tell the truth, we must confess that in the depths of her secret soul Marcelline thoroughly reciprocated this feeling, although she did violence to herself to restrain every expression of repugnance. 'He has no heart for our mother, and he loves only himself,' said she one day to Wibrandis, who had questioned her as to the cause of this misunderstanding. But when Rabus was named by the magistrate as Zell's successor, he then exhibited such self-importance in his bearing towards his quondam nursing-mother, that he could not but wound her feelings thereby, and give rise to all manner of painful rubs, so that Dame Zell and Marcelline felt it a true relief when Rabus left the house to take possession of the Parsonage allotted to him by the Council. He took leave of his motherly friend without any expression of thankfulness, and so lofty was his bearing that she was wounded to her heart's core, for tenderly had she loved him of old. Bucer, who had always recognised Katherine's merits and done full justice to her Christian benevolence, but who had also, in common with others, sarcastically termed her 'Doctor Katherine,' and reproached her because 'she ruled her husband, and was responsible for his having abstained from taking any part in the unfortunate Sacramentarian controversies, and having left to him and Capito the whole difficult task of dealing alone with Luther and his Saxon Reformers,' treated her indeed, since Zell's death, and since he had accepted her hospitality, with unfeigned esteem and hearty gratitude. Yet there was also a something in his demeanour which Dame

Zell could not well define to herself, but which gave her a feeling of oppression and constraint in her intercourse with him. On this occasion once more did Marcelline warn her in her tender way—‘Dear mother, you have been ill prepared to brook this when surrounded by the homage of many devout men; now you have to be still and learn humility from God himself.’¹

At the beginning of April, Bucer and Fagius left their beloved Strasburg, after living for about four weeks with Dame Zell, and setting in order their domestic affairs. Wibrandis had gone with her children and Fagius’s family to Basle, her former home, from whence she was afterwards to follow the two exiles. In England the preachers from Strasburg were welcomed in a most friendly manner by Cranmer as well as by the King, and loaded with marks of honour. Both were, however, incapable of forgetting their own oppressed church and well-beloved city of Strasburg, and the flock of Christ in their fatherland ever continued to be to them a subject of tender solicitude, and doubtless of earnest intercession. Bucer was appointed Professor in the University of Cambridge, with a handsome salary.

A few hours after their departure, Marcelline brought to Dame Zell a letter which she had found on the table in the room Bucer had inhabited. It was a warm expression of thanks from the two ministers to their dear ‘*church-mother*,’

¹ Dame Zell had corresponded with Luther, had entertained the Swiss Reformers Ecolampadius and Zwinglius in her home, had travelled with her husband to visit the brothers Blaurer at Constance, and, at a later period, Luther at Wittemberg, and had everywhere been received with love, and treated with distinguished attention.

as they called Dame Katherine Zell, enclosing two golden coins, which they prayed her, well knowing her limited means, to accept as a trifling mark of their gratitude. In those days two golden pieces were a large sum of money ! Katherine, who had hitherto always been wont rather to give than to receive, and had it in her power to give liberally, felt herself now extraordinarily wounded and humbled, and this feeling, on the first impulse of the moment, she expressed openly, and indeed rather keenly, to Marcelline. This wise and faithful friend, well acquainted with the character of her 'nursing-mother,' and sure that she would shortly think better of the matter, said little in reply, but after ordering all household affairs, went to the French church to hear Jean Garnier's farewell discourse, for he too had found it impossible to approve of the law of the Interim, and had therefore, like Bucer and Fagius, been obliged to leave Strasburg.

When, after the sermon, Marcelline reached the Cathedral Square, she perceived Rabus under the portico, and heard his loud wrangling voice. Her first impulse was instantly to turn round for the sake of avoiding him, for after what had passed she dreaded meeting him : but she saw a tall female figure in shabby garments, but full of queenly dignity, standing there, holding a small boy by the hand, before the excited preacher, and at this sight she involuntarily drew near.

'I tell you, you cannot do better than leave Strasburg again straightway,' cried Rabus keenly to the female stranger. 'We have enough of foreign rabble thrown upon us in these hard times ; and your devilish sect has wrought so much mischief in our church, that I shall as a matter of conscience,

call you before the "*Baptist-lords*"¹ (*Täufer-herren*). Go therefore, while it is yet time, or something worse may befall you !'

'Are you really filling the place of the devout Master Matthew ?' asked the woman.

'Yes, certainly ; but what is that to you ?'

'Elijah left his mantle,—that is to say, the spirit for which he prayed,—to Elisha ; but Master Matthew's successor has inherited his office only, and not his spirit,' replied the woman. So saying, she proudly turned her back on Rabus, who seemed disposed to follow her in a rage, but his eye meeting Marcelline's penetrating glance, and observing at the same instant how sympathizingly she took the stranger by the hand, he turned quickly round and entered the Cathedral.

In reply to Marcelline's friendly and well-meant queries, the woman related her history as follows :—Sabina was a native of Liège, a relative of the Anabaptist John Storder, who had been converted to the new faith under Calvin at Strasburg, and had died there of the plague, and whose widow, Idelette von Buren, had been married to Calvin. Sabina's husband had been at the head of the Anabaptists in Liège, and during a time of persecution there he was taken prisoner and beheaded. Sabina had passed the winter among co-religionists in a country village, but anxious not to be a burden to them any longer, and induced by a letter from Idelette, to whom she had applied, and who

¹ These 'Baptist-lords' were appointed by the Council to watch over the Anabaptists, and set a check on their unruly proceedings.

wrote that she had better go to Geneva, where it would be easy to find a situation for her as lady's-maid or housekeeper in some great household, she had in the early spring started on foot with the scanty pittance which she had earned by needlework in her village home, and carrying her little Tony on her back. Soon, however, her small savings were exhausted, and after begging her way for the last few days, she had at length, stripped of almost everything and well-nigh dead from weariness, reached Strasburg, where she hoped to receive some help from Zell, of whom she had heard much from Idelette, and to be supplied with means for her further journey to Geneva by him. In Strasburg she learned the news of Zell's death, and turned to his successor, whom she met in the portico of the Cathedral. How he responded to her application we have already seen. 'Now may God help me!' added the unhappy Sabina, clasping her emaciated hands in despair, 'for I can seek no other help.'

But Marcelline spoke words of tender comfort, and invited her to accompany her to the Cathedral-Parsonage, where she could rest and recruit herself for a few days, and where Dame Zell would assuredly find means to provide the money for her journey to Geneva. 'And our mother *has* money too!' exclaimed Marcelline joyfully, as the thought of Bucer's and Fagius's two golden coins suddenly crossed her mind.

It was indeed a hard and troublous time, of which we, in these our easy-going days of Sybarite luxury, can scarcely form an adequate idea. The blood of the persecuted was shed in torrents, and thousands wandered, exiled and

homeless, exposed to hunger and cold, and a prey to the utmost misery. While Marcelline was in the church, and was listening in the Cathedral Square to the tale of poor Sabina, a minister driven from Zabern, on account of the Interim, had presented himself at the Cathedral-Parsonage before Dame Zell, having arrived there with his wife and five young children, imploring her for hospitality and for the means of continuing their journey to Switzerland, where, in the cantons attached to the evangelical faith, he hoped to find a situation as preacher or as schoolmaster. Now indeed, there was once more, as in days of yore, 'much folk in the inn,' and moreover many starving and destitute. Dame Zell's purse and resources were exhausted. With a deep sigh she gave Marcelline one of the gold pieces which she had so nearly resolved to send back to the donors, that she might get it changed at the money-changer's, and then expend it on procuring provisions for the unexpected guests. But when Dame Zell had thus once more so much to cause her anxiety and to claim her ingenuity in devising resources for feeding, clothing, and comforting the unfortunate, when again the numerous little ones, as soon as the cravings of hunger were stilled, made the old Parsonage re-echo with their uproarious glee, then indeed the dear kind-hearted soul felt herself cheered and refreshed, and full of youthful vigour. Her heart rose in joyful thanksgiving to the gracious Lord, who, as it now appeared, did not yet wish to lay her down to rest, to allow her to retire from active service. Her guests too felt their inmost souls revived, and the days they passed in the quiet, peaceful house seemed a

time of holiday festival and of sweet repose for body and soul.

Marcelline came home with a heavily laden basket. She had brought some confectionary for the children, who surrounded her, full of eager curiosity to pry into her treasures. 'You must not chide me, dear mother,' pleaded Marcelline, as she distributed the spiced cakes among the shouting little ones. 'We are rich, rich folk! See here—Herr Sturm von Sturmeck sends this for your poor fugitives!' With these words, and with triumphant haste, she popped two golden coins into Dame Zell's hand. She had received them from the noble Stettmeister, who had met her at the money-changer's.

Dame Zell, who retained her strong mind and firm will, was not to be moved from her resolve. She calmly replied, 'Well now, dear Lina, with the gold piece which has been changed we can clothe our poor friends, and feed them for full ten days; as to the three other pieces, one remains here for the poor of Strasburg, the second shall be expended for the supplies needed for Sabina and the poor minister's family, the third I shall return to Bucer and Fagius.' Accordingly, after the fugitives had departed from the hospitable Parsonage, their hearts overflowing with thankfulness, Katherine Zell penned the following epistle addressed to the two ministers in England:—

'You caused me the utmost grief by that money which you secretly left for me in the letter. To get rid, in part at least, of my blushing shame, I wished to place your two pieces of gold in this letter to restore them to you, as

Joseph did to his brethren. Just then, however, a preacher, exiled on account of the Interim, came to me with five children, and also the wife of a poor Baptist, who had been beheaded before his wife's eyes. She remained ten days with me. I laid out one piece of gold in provisions to maintain all these, not however as on my account, but on yours. The other coin I return to you herewith, that you may make use of it yourselves, and not again indulge in such liberality, for indeed you will have many necessities, and so will your kindred, if they are to join you in England. I commend you to God to preserve you and to shield you from all harm, and from all His and your enemies for ever and ever!

KATHERINE ZELL.'

A few weeks later Marcelline received a letter from Sabina from Basle. Little Tony had been seized there with severe illness, and his mother had been obliged to spend in the care of her sick child all the money given her by Dame Zell. Tony was now convalescent, and Sabina, assisted by the kind gifts of the charitable, was trying to earn by needlework a sufficiency to proceed on the journey to Geneva, in which place, however, according to the last tidings from Idelette, no suitable situation had as yet been found for her. She was meantime living in a very poor way, and feeling oppressed and crushed, all the more that she was conscious of being looked at with a somewhat evil eye by her landlady and her benefactors, as a Baptist. The letter ended with a thousand prayers for every blessing, and hearty thanks for that loving welcome in the Parsonage,

which Sabina could never forget, and the memory of which she must ever treasure in her grateful heart as a foretaste of heaven. Little Tony also sent his warmest salutations to Mother Zell and his beloved Marcelline, and was daily asking whether he could not soon go back to them.

About this time an efficient helper was sought for, for the superannuated wife of Lucas Hackfurth, the guardian of the poor, who had the charge of the poor's-house in the edifice which had formerly been the Monastery of St. Mark, and to which new claimants for charitable aid were then flocking daily. The Stettmeister, and also 'Master Lux' (as Lucas Hackfurth was generally called), had bethought them of Marcelline, and applied respecting her to Dame Zell. Katherine, however, replied that it was impossible for her to dispense with Marcelline, both on account of her desire to carry on, as far as lay in her power, her works of charity, and also by reason of her sick son, the care of whom was an ever-increasing burden. On a full understanding with Marcelline, however, she recommended Sabina to fill the post; and after Calvin had been written to on the subject, Sabina was called back to Strasburg in the capacity of assistant matron in St. Mark's Institution, where she fulfilled her duties to the entire satisfaction of Dame Hackfurth, and of the aged guardian, with strict fidelity and tender love. She and Marcelline and Dame Katherine grew more and more into one heart and one soul, and little Tony was, to his great joy, suffered to live with Mother Zell till he was old enough to be received into the foundation known as the Wilhelmerstift.

But Louis Rabus, who had inherited 'the mantle of Elijah,' as he deemed it, with a vengeance, in the shape of a keen and bitter spirit, flamed up on hearing that the beggarly Anabaptist, who had so grievously wounded his pride, was filling a situation in one of the public institutions of Strasburg.

In concert with the young minister of St. Nicholas' Church, Dr. Marbach, a man of as ambitious and intolerant a spirit as his own, he began to take measures most violently against all sectaries, the 'Schwenkfeldians, the Hoffmannians, and above all others the Baptists,' and to appeal to the magistrates to drive them, one and all, out of the town. He specially urged that Sabina ought to be removed from the poor's-house, and a native of Strasburg, of the orthodox faith, appointed in her stead. Dame Zell, indignant at this want of all regard for his former benefactress, and deeply grieved at the persecuting spirit which even in these early days was beginning to manifest itself so strongly in the Evangelical Church, took up once more that pen which she had been wont to use so freely and so well, and wrote a letter, afterwards printed, to the young and proud zealots, 'who,' as she said, 'had begun prematurely to minister at the altar,' in which, among other things, she uses the following expressions :—

'These poor Baptists, against whom" you seek, with such bitter virulence, to irritate the authorities, do yet confess Christ in common with ourselves! Rather take blame to yourselves that we by our doctrine, and by our walk and conversation, are the cause of their withdrawing from us.

He who doeth evil, against him the powers that be are ordained for vengeance (Rom. xiii. 3, 4), but they have no business to force men's belief, as you would have them do. Faith belongs to the heart and conscience, not to the outward man. Read all the ancient doctors, and those who have revived the teaching of the gospel among ourselves, our dear Luther and Brenzen, and read also that which was written (after the death at the stake at Geneva of poor Servetus) by that devout man Martin Bellius, that you may see how men ought to deal with those erring ones whom you call heretics. If the magistrates were to follow your counsels, they would soon set up such a tyrannical government that the city and the villages would be deserted. Strasburg yet stands as an example to the whole land of Germany,¹ of charity, of sympathy, of hospitality towards those in distress; and, thank God! she has not yet grown weary in well-doing. There is yet to be found within the asylum of her walls many a poor Christian whom you would gladly drive forth. So would not old Matthew Zell. He gathered together the sheep of the flock, never scattered them. Never did he consent to such doings: on the contrary, on one occasion, when the learned men were in like manner seeking to instigate the authorities to these courses, he went publicly, with a sad heart indeed, and with deep solemnity, into the pulpit, and declared in the preachers' convent, "I take God, and heaven and earth to witness this day that I am resolved to be guiltless of the cross and exile of these poor folk." ¹

¹ *Evangelical Records*, vol. iii. pp. 165, 166.

Fortunately for poor Sabina, the burgomaster, Jacob Sturm, was her well-wisher and protector; and in consequence of the excellent testimony borne to her faithful services and pious life by 'Master Lux,' the *Täuferherren* to whom Master Louis Rabus had preferred his complaint, decided 'that Sabina might with advantage be retained in office.' Rabus, however, was hereby greatly exasperated, especially on the subject of Katherine's letter; and as he bore a grudge of old standing against her, because, when he was preparing to publish the biography of her husband, Dame Zell had refused to supply him with the requisite information and manuscripts, his wounded pride now knew no bounds. With all the violence of his nature, he followed the excellent lady with coarse invective and wicked, malicious slanders, and relentlessly vexed and wounded the heart of her who had bestowed on him so much of warm, motherly love.

'Our Lord had likewise a Judas among His disciples, and yet He commanded us, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. v. 44, 45), said Marcelline, in a soothing tone, endeavouring to comfort her injured friend, who was well-nigh heart-broken by this ungrateful treatment.

Two years after Zell's death, at Candlemas, the 2d of February 1550, after long delays and fruitless negotiations, the Interim was at last to become law at Strasburg.¹ Great

¹ By the Interim the three Abbey Churches (the Cathedral, Greater

was the popular excitement about the worship thus violently enforced. Equally great the terror of the Roman Catholic clergy, whom the Council could with difficulty protect against the exasperated citizens, so that, as the Bishop wrote to the magistrate, 'they were, in this heretical city, by no means sure of their lives.' Marcelline could not understand these bold, defiant Germans. Would that her own co-religionists in France had only had three churches taken from them, while six others were left them for the free exercise of their own worship, no one slaying, persecuting or casting them out! Oh, if in her fatherland the poor Huguenots had met with the same toleration, how would they have thanked God and loved and honoured their King! When Marcelline thought of the fearful massacres of her brethren, of the cruel conflagrations of her beloved Waldensian villages in Provence, she could nowise conceive the deep lamentation of Dame Zell over the Interim.

It had, however, as even Mother Zell herself was forced to confess, effected some good. The citizens, who in these latter days had been so lukewarm in their faith, so remiss in their attendance at church, smote their breasts now in deep penitence: earnestness in religion, true spiritual life, were revived, the sermons were well attended, and the

and Lesser St. Peter's) were handed over to the Roman Catholic worship. The six other parish churches (St. Martin's, St. Thomas's, St. Nicholas's, St. Aurelian's, St. Andrew's, and St. Stephen's) the Council had managed to retain for evangelical worship. According to the conditions of the religious contract of Passau, the three Abbey-churches were restored to the Evangelicals.

house of God everywhere even overcrowded, so that the magistrate found himself compelled to allow a service to be held in the 'Church of the Convent of Preaching Friars' (in later days known as the New Church), which had previously stood empty. The aged Hedio was placed in it as preacher, and there the citizens listened to the word of the gospel from his lips with special love and reverence. The Bishop, who, after the removal of Bucer and Fagius, wished greatly to win the affections of the Strasburgers, had offered the situation of Cathedral preacher to the gentle, peace-loving Hedio, with the one condition only, that he must preach in the surplice and must never preach against the Interim. But Hedio replied,—'He had indeed at Basle and at Mayence often preached in his surplice, and formerly in Strasburg also; he held the thing to be in itself quite innocent. But he would certainly not give offence to any of his parishioners, nor give occasion, by the use of the surplice, to any to suspect him of having departed from the evangelical faith.' On the Bishop persisting in his requirement, Hedio had refused the preferment as Cathedral preacher.

But now the dreaded day arrived, which Dame Zell had so long foreseen, on which she must vacate her beloved old Parsonage to make way for a Roman Catholic priest, and must take possession of that small dwelling already mentioned, close to the Jews' gate. Above all else in this exodus, Katherine Zell saw in it the total and final separation from those beautiful and blessed days of yore, the thoughts of which still awoke a longing, a sort of home-

sickness in her mind, which external circumstances only tended to increase.¹ For it was now evening, and one here and another there was being called to his everlasting home. In November 1549, shortly after his arrival in England, Fagius, whose constitution could not adapt itself to the British climate, and who was consumed by home-sickness, fell asleep in the Lord. Bucer too, he who was set in such high places, on hearing how the evil genius of discord and the domineering spirit of the proud young ministers were devastating his beloved church in Strasburg, and how with one consent all the men of the better sort there were earnestly wishing him back, was on the point of resigning all his dignities in England, and returning to his old and never-forgotten home, when he also, on the 28th of December 1551, was suddenly called to enter the eternal mansions. His death, universally lamented in Strasburg, fell as a peculiarly heavy blow on Dame Zell and her old friend Hedio, as they had hoped everything for the future of the church from Bucer's return. Hedio, sensible of his growing infirmities, now withdrew more and more from the arena of so much conflict, and in his latter days there was no one he so delighted in having near him as his beloved Dame Zell. She herself relates, 'Dear Doctor Hedio, when dying, would have me about him by way of

¹ In a contemporary MS. of the days of the Interim, we find the following words written by Dame Zell's own hand :—'O Lord Jesus, what hast Thou given us of holy doctrine, holy men and holy books ! Have mercy also on our posterity ! O Lord Christ, make me more devout in Thee, that my heart may never fall away from such doctrine !'

his only minister, and many a time did he entreat me never to leave him.'

She did indeed faithfully abide with him during his last struggle. The aged minister of the word fell asleep gently and blessedly, while she was in the act of praying beside him, on the 17th October 1552. He was the last of those heroes of the faith who had fought so faithfully and valiantly for the gospel in Strasburg.

One year later, on the 30th of October 1553, the noble Stettmeister, Jacob Sturm von Sturmeck, also died, in the sixty-third year of his age, after being the guardian angel, the herald of peace and the greatest ornament of his native city. At his death, it seemed to Katherine Zell as though the last prop of the good cause were broken and gone, as though in future she must, alone and a stranger in her old home, await her last hour in God's good time.

The Lord had granted to Dame Zell in her youth the privilege of witnessing the triumph of light over darkness, and of taking an active share in Christian work in the new-born church. When she was old, and when such manifold dangers from within and without were threatening the cause of the gospel, she had yet to learn that, as Balthasar Hubmör so beautifully said in 1524, 'Divine truth is immortal, and although she may suffer herself to be imprisoned, scourged, crowned, crucified and then laid in her grave, yet will she, nevertheless, rise again victorious on the third day, and reign in triumph to all eternity.' Katherine Zell grew more and more silent, and if she often felt very solitary, and thought with melancholy tenderness

of the beloved ones in glory, at these moments Marcelline would, as a faithful friend, take her by the hand and say with her soothing gentleness, 'Not so melancholy, dearest mother! Those who are with the Lord are not lost. Has He not Himself said, "All live unto Him"?'

The date of the decease of our beloved Dame Zell is not recorded by her friends. We only know that in 1562 she sent a message to her friend Louis Lavater, at Zurich, to the effect that 'through long illness she was half dead, and for months she had been unable to use her pen;' probably soon after this she may have entered into the rest of her Lord and Saviour. We, however, before whom these scenes from real life in olden times have been passing in review, who have learnt to know the battles our ancestors had to fight for the blessed gospel of the grace of God, may well feel that it is now as though, from the everlasting mansions of bliss and peace, they were crying to our evangelical churches with a voice of warning,—

'Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown' (Rev. iii. 11).

God grant that it may be even so!

MASTER NICHOLAS.

‘And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.’—MARK i. 17.

‘Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.’—MARK x. 15.

IN the year 1642 God had richly blessed our dear Alsace with a plentiful supply of all the fruits of the earth, and more especially with that of the vine. In the little town of Rappoltsweiler (now Ribeauvillé) at the foot of the beautiful Vosges, all the inhabitants were most diligently employed in cleaning out their cellars, and preparing casks, wine-presses and all that they needed to have in readiness for the approaching vintage. Old wine-vats were being bound with new hoops, and well burnt out, to cleanse them inside and make them as good as new, while occasionally, as with Nicholas the master-cooper, a new one was ordered, therein to bestow that rich gift of God, the ‘wine which maketh glad the heart of man’ (Psalm civ. 15). On a sultry afternoon, late in September of the said year, work was being carried on right lustily in the master-cooper’s workshop. With busy hands and cheerful zest the apprentices were hammering on the new hoops, to gird the old barrels, while Master Nicholas, with his leather apron and his snow-

white sleeves, stood on the scaffolding of the huge monster tun, destined for the cellar of the lordly abbot of Gemar. It was the masterpiece of his oldest apprentice, achieved by him unaided, to win his mastership, and the aged Nicholas, while he struck a proof-blow of his hammer on its shining hoop, lifted up his voice in friendly tones: 'Right well hast thou done this, Frank, and with God's help hast become a capital master-cooper! I can now, at Easter-tide, give over my trade to thee with a good conscience, and pass the remainder of my days in repose. Now it only remains for thee to look about for a virtuous and honourable spouse, who may keep thy house as faithfully and piously as my Martha has done mine. See well to it! If thou findest such an one, or hast already found her, take her with God's blessing; my good wishes thou hast beforehand. God's holy word says (Prov. xviii. 22), 'Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.'

During this appeal to him, Frank stood immovable, stiff as a post, his arms hanging straight down; and when his master's speech was ended, he respectfully bowed his head, and then, without uttering a syllable, returned to his work.

At that moment, Jobely Spener,¹ a charming boy of some seven years old, came running merrily into the workshop,—

¹ For further information about Philip Jacob Spener, the English reader may be referred to Charles Knight's *English Cyclopædia*, or Chambers's *Encyclopædia*. The German biography,—'Philipp Jakob Spener und seine Zeit—eine kirchliche Darstellung. Von Wilhelm Hossbach, D.D., etc., herausgegeben von Gustav Schweder, Berlin,' contains an interesting history of the great religious revival at and near

‘Father sends you his best salutations, Master Nicholas,’ said he, ‘and says you must this evening send the apprentices to his cellar, to draw off and bottle the wine of which he spoke to you ; and . . . I have got leave to spend the whole evening with you, if you will have me to stay for supper.’

‘Little rogue!’ said Dame Martha, who had just then brought the apprentices their evening meal ; ‘I trow thou hast got scent of the plum-tart that I baked to-day.’

‘Plum-tart!’ exclaimed Jobely, as he sprang nimbly into the good, motherly dame’s open arms.

Master Nicholas took his little favourite by the hand and said to his men :—‘Eat your supper quietly, and afterwards hie off to Councillor Spener’s cellar ; but first clear out my workshop right tidily, for to-day you cannot finish the barrels. Moreover, a fierce thunder-storm is hanging over us, and it goes against me to be thumping away with our earthly hammers, while the Lord our God is speaking to us by His thunders from heaven.’

‘How now, master,’ rejoined one of the younger apprentices, ‘let us nevertheless finish the barrels this day. Our good Lord will not be thereby hindered in His thundering, although we may thump ever so loudly ; and we can go to Councillor Spener’s cellar early to-morrow !’

‘To-morrow will be Sunday, Joseph,’ replied the master in a serious tone, knitting his brow as he added, ‘“Six days

Frankfurt-on-the-Maine, known by his name and connected with his instrumentality. Born, January 13, 1635, at Rappoltsweiler, in Upper Alsace, where his father was a councillor of the reigning Count Rappolstein, he went to Frankfurt in 1666, thence to Dresden in 1686, and thence to Berlin in 1691, where he died in 1705.

shalt thou labour and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work," for " the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day " (Deut. v. 12-15). Why, Joseph, thou hast now been nearly two months with me, and hast never set foot in the church, and although thou art not of our creed . . .'

' But, master, but hold,' interrupted Joseph, with a significant wink, ' I am even as you are : I believe nothing !'

At these words Master Nicholas, with a stormy frown, struck so violent a blow of his hammer, that the whole workshop re-echoed, and Dame Martha and Jobely started in terror. Boiling over with rage, he exclaimed, ' What nonsense does the fellow prate ! what does he take us for ?'

' Yes, master, truly,' interposed Frank ; ' often has this been the galling point with me likewise ; when I go over there to the convent at Gemar, every rascal has it ready on the tip of his tongue to say, " He is like you Protestants, he believes nothing !" And often I have longed to beg of you, as you are so well versed in the Scriptures, that you would once for all stop the mouths of the Catholics on this absurd idea, and show them you know as much as they and believe more.'

But suddenly Master Nicholas had grown quite still. He now said gently, with a humbled tone and mien, ' Hast thou already once more suffered the evil spirit of rage to overcome thee, old Nicholas ?' He then, turning to Frank, added, still in a subdued tone : ' I'll tell you what, we will even allow this to be said to us !'

" How so, master ?' asked Frank, petrified.

‘Jobely,’ continued the master, ‘how does that passage run in the holy book, which thou wast learning to repeat only yesterday? What did our Saviour say concerning salt?’

The little boy reflected for an instant, and then said slowly, ‘Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men’ (Matt. v. 13).

‘See then here, Frank,’ continued the master,—‘we Evangelicals who possess this precious word of God, we are to be the salt of the earth. But if we do not keep its sayings,—if we live even as the heathen, without the fear of God, without faith, without honesty, chastity and obedience, then the salt has become worthless, and we are only fit to be cast out and trodden under foot of men, that is, despised. Wherefore, once again let us receive the word as addressed to ourselves, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. v. 16). Believe me, Frank, this is the best way of stopping their mouths!’

‘Master,’ merrily burst in Jobely, ‘here comes Father Felix, and the ass, and Brother Kilian! Now, I’ll tell you what, I may ride on the ass to Baldwin’s stable,—I may!’ And he shot off, like an arrow, from the workshop to meet the approaching party.

Father Felix had been sent several years before, by the Chapter of Murbach, to reform the monastery at Gemar, which under the rule of its aged and wrong-headed abbot had fallen into a sad state of disorder. With a firm hand

he had seized the reins of government, and soon he succeeded in restoring order in its embarrassed finances. Not so smoothly, however, did matters proceed in the restoration of spiritual discipline, for he met with manifold and tough resistance among the brethren of the order. Two opposite factions were soon formed. At the head of one stood Father Ruffinus, who had, before the advent of Felix, ruled the whole monastery, and who bore by no means a good name. The opposite party, consisting of the well-disposed among the brethren, was devoted, heart and soul, to Father Felix. The Father had, like Brother Martin Luther at Erfurt of old, 'taken the matter of the salvation of souls seriously to heart,' and would, like him, gladly have 'made every man pious.' He diligently exhorted the brethren to live 'in all holiness, peace and good discipline.' And although he had never read the writings of Luther, nay, even held him to be the greatest of heretics, yet he fulfilled in his life and work in the Convent of Gemar those fine words of Luther's which he wrote in 1516, as the Vicar-General of the Augustinian order, to one of its younger brethren: 'If then thou hast a firm and living faith, as thou art bound to have, then bear patiently with erring brethren; look upon their sins as thine own, and upon thy good deeds as theirs. . . . If thou art a lily and a rose in the garden of Christ, know thou that thy path must needs lie amongst thorns, and only see well to it that thou do not thyself, through impatience, high-mindedness or secret pride, become a thorn!'

'He takes things as seriously about gaining heaven as Father Felix,' became a proverb among the peasants of

both creeds. And in truth Father Felix, like Luther at one period when he had not yet found his Saviour, became by his very earnestness sour and austere. For he too thought himself called to win heaven by his own righteousness. He too martyred himself with castigations, confessions, vigils, fasts, prayers, masses and other labours, till his strength was consumed, his constitution gave way, and hectic fever rapidly brought him to the verge of the grave. When, mounted on his ass, he arrived at Master Nicholas's workshop, he appeared so wasted and so pale that Jobely Spener asked him whether he had had a severe illness.

Master Nicholas, who with his goodwife had also hastened to meet the Father, no less shocked with his appearance, exclaimed, as he respectfully held out his hand to salute him, 'Ah, most reverend Father, I call this wanton cruelty, to undertake so long a ride with your sick body, when these black thunder-clouds are threatening! You might have been caught in the storm and have suffered severely enough!'

'I had to receive the confession of a sick person half a league hence, and so I thought I could easily manage to trot on my little ass as far as to Rappoltsweiler. The hot sun has gilded our ripening grapes, the vintage may begin in a few days, and much remains for you to do, Master Nicholas, to enable us safely to preserve God's good gifts; wherefore I have now come to give you sundry commissions.'

'These could have been as well delivered through Brother Kilian or one of my apprentices, Father, without your over-exerting yourself!'

'When a word passes by many tongues then it seldom

arrives all right ; something is added or taken away. Therefore, Master Nicholas, I hold it to be better to speak or to hear myself rather than by proxy.'

'May the blessing of God rest on you, Dame Martha,' was his salutation to the mistress. You,' added he, 'always look as mild and serene as the evening star ! And thou, my Jobely, I have not forgotten thee, but unluckily,' continued the Father, with a look of regret, after having vainly fumbled through all his pockets, 'I have left the little box, which I meant to bring to thee, lying on my table at home.'

'A little box for me ! and what may there be in it ?'

'Something beautiful, Jobely ! Fish—red, blue, golden and silver, and therewith a wondrous rod, by means of which the angler may catch them. Nay, they spring up to it of their own accord and remain hanging as if glued to it !'

'O what a pity you forgot it !' said the child, a shade of sorrow dimming the glance of his bright eyes.

'Never fear, my little fellow, you shall not be the loser, for the first time Brother Kilian comes to Rappoltsweiler he shall bring the fish !'

Thus soon consoled, Jobely turned merrily to Brother Kilian, who lifted him and placed him on the donkey, while Father Felix followed his hospitable friends into their parlour.

When one enters a parlour, one can almost always tell with certainty what is the spirit of the mistress of it, whose child she is, whether pious or worldly-minded, thoughtful or

vain, tidy or disorderly, industrious or lazy. Accordingly, Dame Martha's serious and devout spirit manifested itself in her whole housekeeping and more especially in her parlour. There, everything was so clean, so neat and tastefully arranged, that it did one's heart good to see it. Such was the impression now made on her guests, who sat around the shining, mirror-like, round oaken table, with a sense of repose and of enjoyment. Father Felix took his rest in the Master's deep leather easy-chair, in thorough comfort. Beside him the Master sat drinking his glass of wine, while Jobely and Brother Kilian regaled themselves, on the bench round the stove, with that delicious plum-tart in which the mistress gloried. Dame Martha glided softly about, providing for all and watching lest any comfort should be lacking.

Opposite the patriarchal easy-chair hung, on the oak-panelled wall, the picture of Dr. Martin Luther, a copper-plate engraving after Lucas Cranach. Somehow this picture appeared to produce a painful impression on Father Felix; he fixed his eye on it with a sombre gaze, and a dark cloud overspread his pallid, sharply-chiselled features. At last he thus gave utterance to the feelings working in his mind:—

‘My end is drawing near apace, Master Nicholas, and this is probably the last time we may thus sit together in a friendly way. To a dying man, and to one who has so true an affection for you, you will surely grant a last request—eh, my good friend?’

‘With all my heart, reverend Father, if it lie within my limited power.’

‘Put far from you that picture and the pernicious heresies of that schismatical renegade monk, and return to the bosom of the one Mother Church, within whose pale alone eternal bliss can be gained, the Church which that reckless villain, for the sake of pandering to his wanton and carnal lust, so grievously tore asunder!’

Hereupon the Master, angrily knitting his bushy eyebrows, prepared to thump, as was his wont, violently on the table, when Jobely quickly caught and held back the upraised hand, and said, with an imploring smile, ‘Nay, not so, dear Master; you must not again thump so violently as you did before in the workshop with your hammer, for you will frighten Dame Martha and Father Felix too.’

A little interval of silence followed this appeal. Master Nicholas fixed his eyes on the ground with a grave look not unmingled with shame, then, laying his hand on Jobely’s curly head, he said feelingly, ‘Yes, truly,—“of such is the kingdom of heaven”’ (Matt. xix. 14).

‘Never before,’ continued Father Felix, without noticing the burst of temper, ‘have I touched this chord, heavily though the matter pressed on my heart. But now, in this our last meeting on earth, you must not take it amiss if once again I urgently entreat you to abjure the false heresies, the poisonous doctrines of this apostate, who, in his Satanic arrogance, arrayed himself against God and all the saints!’

‘You call our great Luther an apostate, a rebel instigated by evil and fleshly lusts!’ exclaimed the Master with a voice subdued, yet quivering with inward and suppressed emotion.

‘But do you know, Reverend Father, what his purposes really were, what he really accomplished?’

‘Do I know, Master Nicholas! Show me the faithful servant of Mother Church who does not know! What honest Christian can fail to shed tears of blood over the union of Christendom rent asunder by him—over the Mother of us all, wounded and lacerated! Ah! that monk was the devil’s tool on earth. He put to death faith and obedience, and preached presumption and wanton unbridled lawlessness!’

‘You are a learned gentleman, Father Felix, and I am only a homely artisan. Nevertheless, even the least among Christians ought to be able to give a reason of the faith that is in him. Will you therefore allow me to state to you in a few words the work of Luther, concerning which you seem to be under so extraordinary a delusion?’ With these words Master Nicholas doffed his leather cap and cast an upward glance of deep veneration towards Martin Luther’s picture.

‘Speak on, dear Master, speak freely and say all that is in your heart: gladly will I listen. Only you must grant me leave to reply to your statements, to oppose your principles.’

‘As to my principles, Reverend Father, I could never stand against you on that ground. Rather would I have the word of God, “a shield and weapon true,” to argue for me. Jobely, bring us the holy Bible to this table here.—So, youngster. Now then, open it at the holy Gospels, and

seek out the second chapter of Mark, the 22d verse. Read slowly and distinctly.'

Jobely read thus :—' And no man putteth new wine into old bottles, else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred ; but new wine must be put into new bottles.'

Father Felix involuntarily smiled.

' Yes, Reverend Father,' continued Nicholas, ' you are undoubtedly thinking, " Each to his own trade, and the Master cannot get away from his own handicraft." At any rate, although it may well happen that my application may not hold good, there is assuredly no hitch in the parable itself, for it proceeds from the lips of everlasting wisdom. It cannot be in vain that we have it three times in the holy Gospels—to wit, Matt. ix. 17, Mark ii. 22, and Luke v. 36, etc.'

' With all possible respect to your parable, Master Nicholas, I cannot see what it has to do with Martin Luther.'

' That I can easily show you, Reverend Father, if you will but grant me a minute's patient hearing. Is it not true that when our Lord God first gave to Moses at Sinai His holy word written, He did not cause it to be written in the Egyptian tongue, or any other spoken in those days, but in Hebrew, in the language of His people Israel, whose were the law and the promises? But when, 1500 years later, the blessed Apostles, inspired by the Holy Ghost, wrote the books of the New Testament—the glad tidings of the Saviour's coming and of the forgiveness of sins,—why did they make use of the Greek, instead of the Hebrew

tongue, although, with the exception of Luke, they were all Jews?’

‘Without a doubt for this reason,’ replied Father Felix, ‘that the gospel was to be proclaimed not alone to the Jews, but to all nations of the world ; thus, as the Greek language was at that time dominant, almost universal . . .’

‘The new wine of the gospel was not to be put into the old vessels of the Hebrew tongue, lest the old bottles should burst and the fine wine be spilled,—that is to say lost, instead of turning to the salvation of so many thousands, to whom Hebrew was a dead letter, but to whom this new wine in the new bottles, to wit the Greek language, was to be the savour of life unto life’ (2 Cor. ii. 16).

Father Felix, struck dumb, suddenly divining the drift of his friend’s remarks, fixed his large eyes on him with a deep gaze ; but he went on—

‘Moreover, as I am informed, Father,—for my own reading except in this holy book is little enough,—after the Greek, the Latin tongue prevailed in the ancient Roman empire through which the Gospel spread. And then another devout man was raised up to make a new vessel for the word of God, by translating it into Latin.’

‘Most true, my good friend ! It was that man of God, St. Jerome, who in the fourth century made that translation in his cell at Bethlehem.’

‘Yes ; but, from what I have been told, it seems as though sundry hoops in this new cask had been unsound in their fastenings, and much of the fine spirit of this new wine had thus escaped. About that same period, there came . . .

but you know far better about all this than I do,—something like a raging water-flood, from the East and from the West, wild, numerous hordes overflowing the Western Empire, and turning everything topsy-turvy, burning cities and villages, slaying the inhabitants, and at last settling themselves in the Roman lands, in which they founded the various kingdoms which still exist. They were called, if I mistake not—let me remember . . .’

‘The Goths. These Gothic barbarians nearly all spoke German, and the violent convulsions, the destruction and revolutionizing of the Western Empire, is usually known as the irruption of the barbarians—the migration of the barbaric hordes.’

‘Well! what I was about to say was, that by this very irruption or migration, as you, Father, call it, the ancient languages became extinct and the modern sprang into existence. Men began in Spain to talk Spanish, in France French, in Germany German. At that time the wine of the gospel ought to have been again poured into new vessels. But alas! this was not done, and although the common people no longer understood the Latin tongue, yet it was retained in the public worship of God. Nevertheless it stands clearly written in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, xiv. 11, on the subject of the proper use of divers tongues, “Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.” That is to say, I cannot understand him. To the blessed apostles it was given at first to preach to every man in his own

tongue wherein they were born (Acts ii. 4-12). During nearly a thousand years was this monstrous evil of the Latin tongue tolerated, and it happened even as the Lord had foretold—"the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred." So the great lords of the Church,—take it not amiss, Father Felix, if I thus speak out freely,—could all too easily give the poor ignorant people an X for a U. And this they did accordingly, to the best of their power, and they jumbled up one kind of Christianity with another, and bound it all together, although not a syllable of all that was new in this sort of teaching can be found in God's word.'

Father Felix cast his eyes to the ground, with a serious and thoughtful look.

Master Nicholas, however, waxing keener and keener, thus continued,—'Then indeed matters looked gloomy enough throughout Christendom. "Behold trouble and darkness, dimness . . . and they were driven to darkness" (Isa. viii. 22). The light was put "under a bushel" (Matt. v. 15), and soon it might have been extinguished, if the Lord had not had compassion on His Church and on the people of Germany, and raised up a worthy master-cooper for His vineyard in Doctor Martin Luther. He constructed a well-built two-measure cask, wherein the ever new wine of the gospel was contained in the good German tongue, and now once more all can, by the grace of God, "with joy draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isa. xii. 3). "And this is," says Luther's friend Matthesius, "one of the greatest of miracles, which our God brought to pass by Dr. Martin

Luther before the end of the world,—the giving to us Germans our beautiful German Bible, to explain to us, in good, intelligible German words, what is His Divine nature from everlasting and His gracious will." See then, Reverend Father, this is what Martin Luther planned and purposed, and moreover what he accomplished by the power of God and His merciful help! Amen.'

'And this German Bible of which you are so proud,—how has it not been desecrated, and, by the multitude at least, misunderstood!'

'Misunderstood, Reverend Father! By your leave, let me remind you of what you said when I expressed a doubt whether it would not have been better for you to spare yourself as an invalid, and, instead of making such an effort, rather to send me your commands through a messenger. You answered me by quoting the true proverb, "If a word passes from one to another by many tongues, it seldom reaches all right, but something is added to or taken from it." You added, "I therefore deem it better to tell or to hear a matter myself rather than by proxy." And what you so shrewdly remarked about the words of poor erring man, how much more does it hold true regarding the word of the living God! The Lord of heaven and earth has HIMSELF spoken to His children of mankind; and shall not His children themselves give ear, that is to say, be suffered themselves to read what their Heavenly Father has to say to them? No, Father, the misunderstandings have arisen because men would put the new wine into old vessels, and thus they wasted the fine, pure, strong liquor, passing

God's holy word down to us by so many tongues, and meddling and making so much about it, that at last no one could tell what the Lord God actually did say !'

'It is singular, however,' rejoined Father Felix with a sarcastic smile, 'that in your new church the misunderstandings should have arisen precisely through the reading of the Bible ; and that the Lutherans, the Reformed and the Calvinists, all will understand and interpret it each in his own way. Have you not heard how in these last times, in North Germany, the fatherland of your much praised Bible-man, the Lutherans and the Reformed have been mutually hating and persecuting each other, and what scandals have been going on concerning the doctrine of the Sacrament ?'

'An enemy hath done this, Father ! The enemy who here, as elsewhere, ever builds his chapel close beside the living church of those born again of the word, of water and of the Spirit (James i. 18 ; John iii. 5). Meanwhile, since all evangelical Confessions are one on the main point,—all are founded on the firm rock of God's word,—all acknowledge Jesus Christ as the only Mediator and Saviour, and adore Him as the true God ; all believe they can obtain the forgiveness of sins through Him alone,—that is, by His bloodshedding,—and salvation, everlasting blessedness, through His mercy ; therefore I hold that the sad dispute regarding the doctrine of the Lord's Supper is assuredly one of those tares sown by the devil, which the Lord at the time of the harvest will (Matt. xiii. 30), by the hands of His reapers, gather, bind and burn. Let no one conclude that

the reading of Holy Scripture is to blame for such evils and misunderstandings.'

'Granted. Truly, my friend, it is not God's word but Satan's work that has torn the Church asunder. It is Luther, that bold, impudent monk, puffed up with conceit, who became the devil's tool, who by his heresies led men's minds astray, and lighted the torch of discord and hatred in Christendom : and all this for the sake of the unbridled indulgence of his wicked passions.'

Master Nicholas was on the point of starting up ; but restrained himself instantly, and after a moment's pause asked, as though making a sudden digression, 'Tell me now, Reverend Father, how did it come to pass that you, in spite of your feeble health, undertook the laborious task of reforming the monastery at Gemar !'

'As it was a task imposed on me by the order to which I belong, in the name of the Church, I could not yield to any personal consideration, but was constrained, however difficult it might seem to be, to submit myself unreservedly to a higher will.'

'But what would you say, if the hostile members of the fraternity, with a view to blackening your character, were to raise everywhere a cry to the effect that you had only left the Cathedral Chapter of Murbach for the sake of spending your life at Gemar in luxury, revelling and all manner of licentiousness ?'

For a while Father Felix gazed fixedly at the Master with his large piercing eyes ; then he answered with a melancholy smile, 'This poor wasted body, sacrificed in the

service of the convent, may well serve as the best refutation of such calumnies, which will, moreover, be set at rest for ever before many days have passed over, by my early grave.'

'Yes—and we, all of us who have known you and loved and honoured you both in the church and in private, we all could, with a good conscience, bear witness to your pure and holy walk, and your life consecrated to the Lord. But you know so much better than I do how true it is that "the dead they shall not live, and the deceased they shall not rise" (Isa. xxvi. 14, German version); and so we too, who love you so heartily, and assuredly would rise up to avenge with indignation, but solemnly and emphatically, every malicious slander,—we shall soon have passed away, for our life "is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Psal. xc. 10). Soon Friend Death will have shut our mouths, and then the slanderers may vilify at their pleasure.'

'Why beat about the bush, my good friend, since I know full well Father Ruffinus and his evil tongue, and I ought to endure his calumnies more composedly than I fear I have done?'

'You see then, by your own example, that even the purest walk and conversation cannot guarantee a man against evil-speaking—one more of those points of resemblance between you and the great Luther, of whom I must frankly confess that you, Reverend Father, have more than once reminded me!'

'Against such an idea I must solemnly protest!' exclaimed the Father, shocked, if not incensed.

‘A little while hence, when,—up yonder, where “the Lamb (Rev. vii. 17) shall feed” His own, “and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,”—you meet that champion of the faith, Martin Luther, give him, as a brother, the right hand of fellowship, and before the throne of God sing in unison with him that chorus of praise of all the redeemed (Rev. v. 12), “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,”—then you will think of old Master Nicholas, and assuredly you will confess that you and Luther are kindred spirits !’

‘But what in all the world can I have in common with that apostate monk ?’ asked Father Felix, an involuntary tear nevertheless standing in his eye.

‘Nearly everything, Reverend Father !—only, as I said before, with you everything is, as it appears to me, on a smaller scale.’

‘But indeed, my good friend, that is, I repeat, utterly impossible !’

‘Look here, Father ! you and Doctor Luther have both set about seeking your soul’s salvation in good earnest, and have honestly inquired, “What must I do to be saved ?” (Acts xvi. 30). You have, both of you, been brought up amid men’s sayings and traditions which have hid Christ from your eyes ; for the Saviour is to you still what He was to Luther more than a hundred years ago, in his convent at Erfurt, “a terrible Judge, before whom you tremble ;” and you doubtless feel as he then did, and which he has himself described : “the more pains I took to pacify my conscience by fasting, watching and praying, the less did I experience

of rest and peace, for the true light was withdrawn from my eyes." But the Lord graciously gave him that TRUE LIGHT, by causing him, in the said convent, to find among the old and dusty volumes that precious book the Holy Bible, in, if I mistake not, a Latin translation. From that time Luther made himself so familiar with the Sacred Scriptures, that he found no pleasure in any other study, and sometimes a single text lay imbedded in his mind a whole day and gave him comfort. And as each human soul should be a temple of God, and at the same time a little church, that is to say, a living stone of the grand invisible church of Christ, which will be manifested in her glory only when He returns to this earth,—so the Lord, by His word, first reformed His inner sanctuary, Luther's own soul, freeing it from human traditions and errors, and leading him to acknowledge, *first*, that "our own righteousness cannot stand before God;" and *secondly*, "that we must be saved only by faith in Jesus Christ, that is, by the forgiveness of sins through His blood, and by His righteousness;" and *thirdly*, "that the proper and true treasure of the church is the holy gospel of the glory and grace of God—that is, THE BIBLE." When all this first dawned clearly upon him, he himself relates, "I then felt at once as if born again, as though I had found a door into Paradise thrown wide open. That a 'man lives by faith,' that 'man can be justified before God only by faith' (Hab. ii. 4; Rom. i. 17—Eng. Ver., 'The just shall live by faith'), the knowledge of this seemed to open up holy scripture and heaven itself to my soul." Dear and honoured Father, your honest strivings and strugglings for your soul's salvation

form your first point of likeness to Luther. Do then, you also, "search the Scriptures" (John v. 39), and then faith will open heaven to you also, and you will, like Luther, "find rest unto your soul" (Matt. xi. 30).

'You can hardly contrive, however, to find any other resemblance between Luther and me,' rejoined the ecclesiastic, with a forced smile, and a painful effort to conceal deep inward agitation.'

'Yet, . . . yet, Reverend Father, the other points follow of themselves; only, as I remarked, on a smaller scale in your case. For, you perceive, to you was committed the little reformation in the convent at Gemar, to Luther the greater in the church in Germany. As you had to restore discipline and pure morals in the monastery, to bring all once more into subjection to the rules of your order,—so our Lord God intrusted to Luther the task of setting up anew the candlestick of the Divine Word, which had been long hidden in the fallen Church, and bringing all things once more to the pure doctrine and the rules established on the highest authority, as held and practised in the days of the apostles,—those doctrines and rules established by that High Priest of whom the Scripture says that He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. vii. 26), even "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." (Heb. xiii. 8). You have with true self-denial yielded your own will to a higher will, and offered up your life as a sacrifice, undertaking the wearisome and arduous work in a spirit of obedience. So also Father Luther, as he writes: "God constrains me to

go forward ; I have yielded myself up and sacrificed myself in the name of the Lord ; His will be done !” And again, when called to appear before the Diet of Worms, and required to recant his doctrines, he exclaimed, “ Lord God, this is not my affair, but Thine. For my own interest I have nothing to seek, and I have nothing to do with these great lords of this world here. But the cause is Thine, a just and holy one. Come, Lord, I am ready ! I will not let myself be separated everlastingly from Thee and Thy word, even should my body on that account be torn to pieces. My soul is Thine, and shall ever remain with Thee to all eternity. Amen !” But as you, Father, in your smaller circle, so Luther in his greater sphere, met among opponents with not open hostility alone, but calumny and bitter condemnation, and malicious misrepresentations, which pictured him as having led an unchaste life, and been the slave of vile, carnal lusts, these evil webs of falsehood spreading like poisonous rankling weeds, ensnaring many even after his day has passed, and he rests in his grave ! And this might easily happen in your case also, Reverend Father !

‘ There lacks but this to complete the likeness, that you must make me, like Luther, marry a runaway nun !’

‘ Catherine von Bora was an honourable and virtuous maiden, who, after the abolition of her convent, according to an order pronounced by Divine as well as human right, was united to Doctor Martin Luther as his rightful and beloved married wife, with whom, before God and men, he lived in holy and blessed wedlock. Your Church had, with her law of celibacy, thrown a wicked rope round his

neck. This was one of those traditions and ordinances of men, against which Dr. Luther felt bound to protest, not only by word but deed. For it is written in the 1st Epistle to Timothy, chap. iv., in the 1st and 3d verses, "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, . . . forbidding to marry."

'As you insist, whether I will or not, on comparing me with Luther, you must also give me leave to contrast myself with him! How could I ever have reformed the monastery at Gemar, if I had divided where I should have united, and demolished where I should have built up, or if I had cast oil on the flaming fire? And that was what Luther did in the Church!'

'That he did not do, Father, for when in the first outburst of their zeal the Evangelical party stormed the images in the Churches, and began such scandals in various ways, he restrained them, and with his mighty voice he cried out,— "The Word, by which heaven and earth were created, *that* must do the work, and not we poor sinners!" See then, Father, not in presumptuous self-confidence, as you imagine (for that would, as is but right and natural, soon have failed him), but by firm faith in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, did Luther accomplish his great work. He was endued with strength from on high, and thus he stood firm before the Emperor and the Diet. He departed not one hair's-breadth from the word of the living God, but boldly declared: "Here I stand; I cannot otherwise; God help me! Amen!" And the Lord has helped wondrously. It was not the poor despised monk, under the ban of Pope

and Emperor, who reformed the Church, but the word of God alone which gained the victory over human traditions and superstitions. It is written (Acts xvi. 31), "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." (Eph. i. 7), "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." He then who had believed, and by faith had drawn out of the fulness of His grace, he had THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, and had no need to purchase it with money or with good works. Again, it is written (Matt. xxiii. 9), "Call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father, which is in heaven." There was an end then of the Pope's supremacy, ditto as to his so-called holiness and infallibility, for it is also written (Psalm xiv. 3, and Rom. iii. 10), "There is none righteous, no, not one." But, moreover, it is written (1 Tim. ii. 5), "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Thus then fell away for ever all saints, such as guardian angels, intercessors, mediators and such-like. Once more it is written (Exod. xx. 4 and Deut. v. 8), "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness. . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them;" and (Deut. vi. 13, and Matt. iv. 10, Luke iv. 8), "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve Him. Him only shalt thou serve." Then the images of the saints descended, without being stormed by any iconoclasts, from all their altars. And concerning Mary the mother of our Lord, it is written (Luke i. 47), "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." How did the quiet and modest ser-

vant of the Lord, by that one little word "*my Saviour,*" put far from her for ever all the idolatry carried on in her name! And in like manner, by the "rushing mighty wind" (Acts ii. 2), the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, which blows from God's word so loud a blast, all the other wares of their trade, purgatory, masses, pilgrimages, penances and castigations, relics and so forth, were shivered and scattered as spray before the wind!

At this point the conversation was interrupted by a violent peal of thunder. The storm had at length burst over them, and wildly did it rage. Thunderbolt followed thunderbolt, and torrents of rain poured as if the heavens were coming down.

Brother Kilian, who had fallen, during the controversy, into a gentle slumber, rose from his bench beside the stove, and crossed himself in terror and awe. Jobely, who had been playing at hoop in the workshop, returned to the parlour in hot haste, to take refuge under the motherly wings of his dear '*Dame Master-Cooperess.*' But Father Felix, visibly excited and moved by the dialogue, and affected also by the sultry, thunder-laden air, became so unwell that Dame Martha was quite uneasy. She gently opened her cabinet and offered to the sick man a few refreshing drops.

'Let alone your drugs, Martha!' said the Master, 'I know a better arcanum for our dear guest: we will pray for him!' Hereupon all present folded their hands, Master Nicholas uncovered his head, and he, after a short silent supplication, repeated solemnly the following words from the 29th Psalm:—

'The God of glory thundereth ;
The Lord is upon many waters.
The voice of the Lord is powerful ;
The voice of the Lord is full of majesty.
The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars ;
Yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. . . .
The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire. . . .
The Lord sitteth upon the flood ;
Yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.
The Lord will give strength unto His people ;
The Lord will bless His people with peace

'And now,' he proceeded, 'let us yet further refresh our dear and honoured invalid with a spiritual song !' Then, accompanied by Dame Martha's and Jobely's silvery voices, the Master sang with his powerful bass the glorious hymn of the church of old, composed by Martin Luther—

'Out of the depths I cry to Thee.'

By degrees Brother Kilian chimed in also, and in the last verse even Father Felix struck in with soft, almost whispered tones :

'Out of the depths I cry to Thee,
Lord God, O hear my prayer !
Incline a gracious ear to me,
And bid me not despair :
If Thou rememberest each misdeed,
If each should have its rightful meed,
Lord, who shall stand before Thee ?

'Tis through Thy love alone we gain
The pardon of our sin ;
The strictest life is but in vain,—
Our works can nothing win :
That none should boast himself of aught,
But own in fear Thy grace hath wrought
What in Him seemeth righteous.

Master Nicholas.

Wherefore my hope is in the Lord,
 My works I count but dust,
 I build not there, but on His word,
 And in His goodness trust.
 Up to His care myself I yield,
 He is my tower, my rock, my shield,
 And for His help I tarry.

And though it linger till the night,
 And round again to morn,
 My heart shall ne'er mistrust Thy might,
 Nor count itself forlorn.
 Do thus, O ye of Israel's seed,
 Ye of the Spirit born indeed,
 Wait for your God's appearing!

Though great our sins and sore our wounds,
 And deep and dark our fall,
 His helping mercy hath no bounds,
 His love surpasseth all.
 Our trusty loving Shepherd He,
 Who shall at last set Israel free,
 From all their sin and sorrow.¹

The storm was now over, and Father Felix prepared for his return home. The careful and considerate housewife, the motherly Martha, opened her chest and drew forth the Master's fur coat, which she had laid by, well wrapped in white linen with plenty of pepper and lavender, to preserve it from the moths. 'Permit me, Reverend Father,' she said in a friendly and respectful tone, 'to send with you this warm coat. The storm has cooled the air; the evening will grow chilly. You have a long ride before you, and might so easily suffer from any exposure!'

¹ LUTHER, 1524.—The above translation is extracted from Catherine Winkworth's admirable volume, *Lyra Germanica*, in which, with its text, Psalm cxxx. 1, 3, it is given for the Fifth Sunday in Lent.

‘Oh! Father Felix, Dame Martha and Master Nicholas!’ shouted Jobely, ‘out here in the fresh air it is quite a festival evening! Oh! come quickly to see the beautiful bow of grace (*Gnadenbogen*) in the sky!’

Father Felix looked at him with astonishment.

‘He means the rainbow,’ interposed the Master’s wife with some embarrassment.

‘No! bow of grace!’ emphatically reiterated little Jobely. ‘Have you not yourself explained to me, mistress, how we ought not to say “*rainbow*” but rather “*bow of grace*,” because our gracious God, when He set the bow in the clouds to comfort Noah after the deluge, assuredly thought not of the floods of rain, but of the grace which He was going to manifest to all men in our dear Saviour?’ So saying, the little fellow dragged the Father and Dame Martha out to the front of the door near the workshop.

And truly it was a festival evening out there! Between the black thunder-clouds and the setting sun, over the broad plain, not far above the distant range of the Black Forest hills, was stretched the seven-hued bow of grace, shining as though it were one of the golden gates of heaven. Flowers and foliage, bowed down under the heavy drops during the storm, were lifting up their heads as if in thanksgiving. The little birds were joyously singing their evening carol; men and beasts were breathing more freely, and all Nature lay in solemn, Sabbath-like stillness, under the mild shining of the radiant arch, the unchangeable sign of that REDEMPTION, for which ‘the whole creation groaneth and travaileth,’ ‘the earnest expectation of the

creature waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God' (Rom. viii. 19-23).

For a little while all stood in silence, the balmy breath of evening wafting the fragrance of the fields towards them, while that of their secret prayers arose towards heaven. Then Master Nicholas once more laid his hand on Jobely Spener's head as if in the act of blessing him, and said: 'Look here now, Reverend Father, this little one, on whom God's Holy Spirit visibly rests, has hit the right nail on the head, and expressed in a few words what I have been trying in vain to explain clearly in a long conversation. THE CROSS UPON EARTH AND THE BOW OF GRACE IN HEAVEN,—these two at once picture forth the whole contents of the Holy Bible. That is to say, by sin we have all fallen away from God and into everlasting perdition; but "God so loved the world" (John iii. 16) that in Jesus Christ He came down from His high heaven to us poor sinners, that we, being saved through His bloody atoning death,—that is, through the cross,—and saved by free grace, might be reconciled with His everlasting righteousness. All this God's word teaches and testifies. All that your Church has added to this, or taken from it, is mere vain deceit and human invention, and can afford to the soul no comfort in life, no strength for sanctification and no peace in death.'

Father Felix replied in a low and mournful tone: 'Soon, perhaps in a few days, a cross will stand upon my grave. Oh that I may then through grace be enabled to enter into the eternal home by yonder beautiful gate of heaven!'

'It is written over the cross (Isa. liii. 5), "He was

wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with His stripes we are healed." And by this bow of the everlasting covenant of grace, the mouth of the Lord speaks to us (Isa. liv. 10), "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee !" By this we will hold fast, Father ; on this we will live and die ; then shall our falling asleep be peaceful, and our awakening up yonder right blessed !'

Brother Kilian had now come round to the door of the workshop with the ass ; Dame Martha had, a good while before, carefully spread her husband's fur coat over the saddle ; all was ready ; but still Father Felix lingered. At length he began in a somewhat hesitating tone : 'Will you allow me to take your Bible with me, and lend it to me for a few days, Master Nicholas ?'

The Master stood there, quite astounded, and turned his leather cap round and round on his head, as he was wont to do when he heard anything that struck him as very unexpected. With joy would he have given the good old Father all his heirlooms—all his precious things, be they what they may,—but his Bible ! his holy and dearly-loved Bible ! And be it remarked, a Bible was in those days far rarer and more costly than now, perhaps on that account more valued than, alas ! by many it now is.

But Jobely, who heard Father Felix present his petition, sprang forward with the Bible in his hand, and gave

it to the Master, saying, 'Pray do lend your Bible to the Reverend Father, dear Master, and in the meantime I will lend you mine. You know which I mean, the fine large one, so beautifully bound, with gilt leaves and silver clasp, my christening present from my godmother, the gracious lady Countess of Rappolstein. Mother will give it to me for you, for she knows you will take care of it!'

'Has not that child put me to shame again?' murmured Master Nicholas, as he put the Bible under his old friend's arm, adding, with a half-suppressed sigh, 'There—take it, Reverend Father, and may the Lord grant you His blessing with it!'

It was the first Sunday in Advent. Master Nicholas was resting in his easy-chair beside the stove, newly awakened from his noon-day nap. Dame Martha was sitting at the window; before her stood Jobely Spener, intent on learning by heart, for a surprise to his mother on the Christmas festival, Luther's beautiful Christmas hymn, 'From heaven high, to earth I come.' But the little fellow, usually so apt a scholar, was to-day putting the mistress's patience to a severe test, repeating everything incorrectly and out of place, and forgetting altogether what his kind teacher had reiterated more than twenty times with unrivalled forbearance. Incessantly did his little head turn, either towards the clock, or towards the freshly-baked pastry which the mistress had promised him for supper, and in which he specially delighted.

At last the Master began to grow impatient with the too-

enduring patience of his wife. He gave a loud rap on the table, and called out with a warning voice : “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things ; but one thing is needful,” that is, to teach children obedience. Thou art a veritable Mother Eli for that little fellow, and leading him astray according to his heart’s desire !—Here, Jobely, come to me ! Till you have said the first four verses properly you shall have no pastry,—no supper at all, as sure as my name is Master Nicholas ! Now then ; to boldly dare is half to win !

“ From heaven high, to earth I come,
To bring you news, glad tidings all.”

Eh ! Jobely, how does it go on ?

“ In manger laid, in stable-home,
The child you’ll find who’s Lord of all,
Who made all worlds, upholds them all,”

continued Jobely, still quite distracted and fixing his large eyes on the Master with a sly, roguish expression. His stern teacher was on the point of being angry in good earnest ; but, quick as lightning, the little urchin jumped up into his lap, put his arms round his neck and said gravely and coaxingly : ‘ Only think, Master Nicholas, I dreamt last night of Father Felix !’

‘ Really ! well—it is long enough since he has let us hear of him. The apprentices who come from Gemar bring news of his being very ill, but still he ought to have sent me back my Bible.’

‘ Yes ; and he ought to have sent me my little fishes.

But he has not forgotten them ; that I am sure of now. Only think,—in my dream we were all standing in front of the workshop, and in the skies there was a bow of grace, far, far finer than that one last autumn,—and Father Felix was not standing among us down on the grass-plot, but up in the clouds, just under the beautiful arch ; and he gave me the little rod of which he spoke, and said, “There, Jobely, take now the wonderful rod, and the Lord Jesus will in His own good time Himself give you the fishes.”’

A knock was heard at the door. Brother Kilian entered, and at once laid Master Nicholas’s Bible on the table ; after which he placed in the little boy’s hand a small box, on which was inscribed in ornamental characters, ‘I will make thee a fisher of men’ (Matt. iv. 19).

‘Brother Kilian, what about Father Felix?’ exclaimed all the three with one mouth.

‘To-morrow at ten o’clock he will be laid in his grave,’ replied the monk, with suppressed voice and tearful eyes.

All were silent—petrified. Dame Martha stepped forward to the window to wipe away her tears. Jobely gazed up into Brother Kilian’s face, awe-struck ; when he saw the monk shed tears too, his own began to flow down his rosy cheeks, all unconsciously.

‘I trust his soul has found mercy in Christ!’ ejaculated the Master, after a long pause.

‘Our Reverend Father sent you his best salutations and most hearty thanks for the book you lent him, which he last night made me promise I would restore to you, as soon as possible after his death.’

‘Did he suffer much towards his end?’ asked the tender-hearted Martha.

‘Not so far as I know, Dame Martha. He gradually became weaker and more silent. He, who was wont to insist on doing everything himself, and always liked to be the first and the last in everything, he latterly never left his cell. Moreover, he was not able to speak, and was forbidden by the doctor to try. But he always looked peaceful and cheerful, so that the sight of his heavenly patience made one’s heart well-nigh break! I found him almost constantly poring over that big book. This morning when I went in to look after him, there was his little night-lamp still burning, and he was sitting, not undressed, his head sunk down on his folded hands, over his book. For long I did not venture to disturb him, believing him to be engaged in prayer. But when I did softly step close up to him, I soon perceived that death had overtaken him,—that our beloved Father Felix had passed away from among us! Ah! how gladly would I have gone with him, if that were not a presumptuous wish! From henceforward it will be no easy nor pleasant thing to dwell in our convent, when Father Ruffinus resumes the reins of government.’ And once more the large tear-drops escaped from the good monk’s closed eyes, and fell slowly into the cup of wine which Dame Martha had brought to revive him.

‘“They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him”’ (Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6), said Master Nicholas, as, with deep emotion, he held out his hand to Brother Kilian.

‘My best thanks to you, Master! May God reward you, Mistress! I dare not linger longer with you, for I have various commissions to execute connected with to-morrow’s funeral, and I must be at Gemar again before night!’

Scarcely had the monk disappeared when the Master uncovered his venerable head, folded his hands over the precious volume now at length restored,—with an added interest and value most sacred to their warm and honest hearts,—and his lips moved gently in secret prayer.

Jobely however, who, according to children’s happy nature, had already risen above his sorrow, shook out his shining little fish into the Mistress’s lap. When she raised her finger and pointed gravely to her husband engaged in prayer, thus enjoining silence, he only looked up at her with his bright eyes radiant with joy, each time that a fish was hanging safely by the little rod.

When the Master ceased praying, his wife said to him,—‘Father, the child’s dream must have come from heaven. The wonder-working rod signifies the word of God, and the promise which Father Felix, with his dying hand, wrote on the box for his little favourite, is found in it. Jobely, thou must become a minister of the word; it is the will of God!’

‘What is the meaning of “a fisher of men”?’ inquired the child, holding out his box to show the words to Master Nicholas.

‘It means to go like the blessed apostles to all places, even unto the ends of the earth, with strong faith and joyous confidence, proclaiming the gospel, that all men may be

drawn to the dear Saviour, and may hang upon Him and cleave to Him, as these little fishes to the magnet.'

'And did the Lord Jesus send to tell me this last night by Father Felix?'

'Possibly indeed,' replied Master Nicholas; 'and . . .'

'Most assuredly!' interposed his wife.

Thereupon Jobely folded his hands and prayed with the simplicity of a little child:—'Now then, dear Saviour, I promise Thee I will certainly become a pastor. Only do Thou make me right godly, that I may with the wonder-working rod of Thy word be able to fish many, many souls for Thee!'

'Amen, Jobely, amen! The Lord give His blessing that it may be even so!' exclaimed the Master. So saying, he turned towards Martin Luther's picture and added solemnly, 'Thou didst speak the truth, venerable Father: "Thy word they shall let stand."'

The holy WORD OF GOD has still preserved its Divine power, and now once more an anxious and distressed soul has found salvation and peace in it! Now, at last, good Father Felix, thou true and upright soul, now thou hast gone over and safely reached the other side before us! Thou hast found grace, not by thine own self-woven crown of thorns, but by the precious blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Now, up yonder, in thy bright glory, thou art saying, even as I here below in my weakness:—

'The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.' Amen!
(1 Pet. i. 24, 25, and Psalm ciii. 17.)

THE FOREST-HOUSE.

‘Unto them were committed the oracles of God.’—ROM. iii. 2.

AT the distance of about a league from the Schauenberg, a hill in the Vosges to which pilgrims resort, and at the foot of which lies the small town of Ruffach, stands the Forest-House, where, somewhere about the eighties of last century, lived the Anabaptist Biedermann, with his two grandchildren Hans and Vreneli. Whether this little farm still exists I know not, but a pleasanter abode than the Forest-House then was could not be found anywhere. Surrounded by lofty and fragrant pine-forests encircling its open space of fine, green meadows,—the pasture of Biedermann’s stately herd of cows,—it met the eye with so bright and tempting a mien as to call to mind the words, ‘It is good for us to be here.’ But far more than the charm of its beautiful and salubrious situation, did every new-comer feel the beneficial influence exercised by its inhabitants. According to pristine patriarchal custom, old Biedermann was priest in his own house, and not that alone, but among all his brethren and co-religionists scattered over the surrounding hills. Regu-

larly every Sunday they assembled in the Forest-House, where he held Divine service, expounding Holy Scripture to them in his simple way. And in the storms of the Revolution, when the churches were closed, their bells silent, and the people taught to substitute heathenish '*décadis*' for the Lord's day, then the Forest-House on the mountain-top solemnized, week after week, its peaceful, holy Sabbath, proving to many a scene of consolation and of blessing. During the Reign of Terror, Biedermann deprived the guillotine of many an innocent victim,—welcomed in the forest many a noble or ecclesiastic, whom he afterwards concealed and conveyed in safety across the frontier. In all these difficult matters his chief help was his old friend Simeon P., the Jew, who was ever ready to go hand in hand with him.

The said Simeon dwelt in his own house, at Sulzmatt. Even as a lad of fourteen, he had begun to ply his trade as a pedlar. As an old man, therefore, throughout the whole region around, he was well known as Simele the Jew. There was scarcely a house in the valley or on the mountains in which he was not the familiar newsmonger. When, with his pack on his shoulders and his measuring-staff in his hand, he was seen tramping through any town or village, then doors and windows flew open at once, for every one must buy something of him, or give a commission or transact some business in the way of exchange. It was universally admitted that his were the most beautiful ribbons, the best stuffs and handkerchiefs, and moreover that he really was an honest Jew, never yet known to have deceived or over-reached any one, which was saying a great

deal. Simeon had one mark by which all the people recognised him from a long way off, to wit, a hectic cough, which he seemed to have brought into the world with him, for he had always coughed, and as he passed along a street, one woman often cried to another, 'Do you want anything? Simele the Jew is coming; I have heard his cough.'

When, during the Revolution, the so-called "*Jews' Cravalles*" broke out, and in our villages the houses of all the poor Israelites were unroofed, their doors and windows stove in, and finally their homesteads consigned to the flames, then old Simeon fled with his goods and chattels to the Forest-House, where he was hospitably received, and mutual friendship between him and his host soon grew apace. From that time forward, as evening drew on, poor 'Simele,' panting and weary, wended his solitary way homewards after his long wanderings, and on coming within sight of the tall pines round the Forest-House, within hearing of the melodious bells of the cattle, he seemed to feel almost as though a bracing home-breeze from Zion were wafting refreshment towards him, and his prayer might be that of the 126th Psalm, 'When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream' (*N.B.*—In the German version it stands thus: 'When the Lord *shall* redeem the captives of Zion') . . . 'Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south!' Or the words of the 137th would rush upon his mind: 'By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.' Often, when his little Leah, his heart's delight, ran to meet him with a glass of new milk, and he

clasped her in his arms, his dull eye would suddenly grow bright and his mournful look vanish, as he raised a calm and thankful glance towards heaven.

But before proceeding further, we must make acquaintance with the said Leah, or 'the little Jewess' (*Jüdle*), as she was always called in Sulzmatt. She was Simeon's granddaughter,—the only one of all his children whom the Lord had spared to him. After death had deprived him also of Deborah his beloved wife, and Leah remained his sole treasure, she became more and more his idol, his all-in-all, his very life. Nevertheless she still continued a poor neglected orphan, for as Simeon was absent all day long, and often several days at a time, he had boarded Leah with a Jewish family, but paid for her eating only, being anxious that she should live at home and learn, in the course of time, to keep house as well as his notable Deborah had done. Schools there were none in those days in our villages to which Israelitish children could be admitted, and the education of this poor child was utterly neglected; growing up like wild hemp, she was fed sparingly enough by those who were enriching themselves by her, but cared nothing for her. As Leah inherited her grandfather's sensitive, dreamy and unpractical nature, and was apt to do everything by contraries in household matters, her home looked dirty and untidy, and she herself was usually unwashed, her hair uncombed and her dress in tatters. One solitary bright point existed in Leah's sad life,—it was the joy of her grandfather's return. For hours she would sit waiting for him at the wayside, and only when she heard

his distant cough did she start up, as if from an electric shock, to run forward quickly and joyously towards him.

And so it happened that one day, having gone up the hill from her town home to meet him, she was thus sitting on the root of an old tree beside the path, near the Forest-House, so deep in her reveries as neither to see nor hear anything around her. It was the hay-making and the air on the mountain was filled with fragrance. Vreneli and the female farm-servants were pleasantly busied with raking the cut grass into heaps, while Hans came up, driving a heavily laden hay cart. Biedermann was sitting on a bench before the house, quietly enjoying the sight of so much stir and merriment, when, as he cast his eyes round the whole scene, they rested on the silent, grave and solitary Leah, sitting by the wayside. 'Poor child!' he exclaimed, 'or rather poor nation, by whose poverty we have become rich! Why do we always forget, again and again, that salvation is of the Jews, that we are indeed your debtors?' He spoke these words with deep feeling, as if soliloquizing, then rose, and, going forward, took the little girl gently by the hand and said in a friendly tone: 'Come with me, Leah, to join Vreneli in the meadows and share our supper.'

Now, poor dirty little Leah was an unsightly object indeed; but she had singularly fine, large, black eyes, which seemed as though a world of something well worth searching into lay deep hidden there. With these said large eyes, so full of expression, she gazed shyly in astonishment at the kind-hearted Anabaptist, as she answered abruptly,—'I dare not eat!' It cost Biedermann no little trouble to persuade her, in his most winning way, to accompany him to the meadows.

When there, Vreneli rather owed him a grudge for thrusting upon her this strange, uncouth, monosyllabic little Jewess, so resolved not to accept anything from her, and so proud and exclusive as to draw from Hans the remark, 'That filthy Jewish child, with her matted hair and her tatters, demeans herself as haughtily as if she were one of the vile brood of royal princesses!' And truly he was not far wrong.

Simeon had once, in former times, learned the leading outlines of Old Testament history from a brother of his Deborah's, a Rabbi of the Grand-Duchy of Posen, who came to visit her. He had also committed to memory several Psalms in the German version, for, like most of his brethren, he was ignorant of the Hebrew tongue, and could not therefore understand the Psalms and Prophets as read in the synagogue every Sabbath and repeated by him, as best he could, by way of a prayer. That Polish Rabbi, happening to spend the season of Purim with his sister and her husband, had, moreover, related to them the history of Queen Esther, explaining how she and Mordecai the Jew had established the custom of keeping the feast of Purim, as a memorial of that marvellous deliverance of the people of Israel, and had ordained that in every city and in all lands, from generation to generation, old and young should observe it for ever. In the long winter evenings and on the Sabbath-days, Simeon now delighted to recount to his little Leah the history of Israel in the days of old, when the Lord had made His people great and blessed them above all nations on the face of the earth. He would expatiate on the glory of Jerusalem, the wondrous magnificence of its ancient temple ;

and, last not least, on what was Leah's favourite subject, which she had called for hundreds of times, the story of Queen Esther, her wise guardian Mordecai and her deliverance of her own people. Never did Leah weary of hearing her grandfather describe how King Ahasuerus caused Mordecai, arrayed in royal robes and with a golden crown on his head, to be set on his own horse and led round the great city of Susa by Haman the mortal enemy of the Jews, and how the king raised Mordecai to be the first subject in the land. All these historic threads were soon woven in Leah's little head into a gay and motley tissue, rich material for many a fantastic dream. Not for any bribe that could have been offered her would she have tasted food in the house of a Christian, because she had an idea fixed in her mind that her refusal would be rewarded as meritorious obedience, similar to that of the youthful Daniel at the court of Babylon. And when she was sitting at home or at the wayside so quiet and motionless, she was generally in imagination not Leah the despised child, whom the wicked village schoolmaster called the 'little Jewish vagabond,' but none other than Esther the Queen,—and her grandfather by no means Simeon the pedlar but Mordecai the Jew, about to be led in triumph, not by Haman but by that same schoolmaster, through the golden streets of Jerusalem. When, however, she was suddenly, as on this occasion in front of the Forest-House, recalled from the magic world of vivid fancy to that of sober reality, and found herself not Queen Esther with the purple apparel, lace veil and pearl ornaments seen in her dreams, but the poor outcast Jewish

child in her filthy tattered frock, then in truth she looked as Hans said, thoroughly as some hated princess might have done in all her pride. Of all this the good old grandfather had no conception ; and who can say how far these visions of pride might have led poor Leah, if she had been forced much longer to drag on her weary, idle life, if, in short, the good Lord had not taken compassion on this poor orphan child of Israel !

On that very evening when the thought of our debt towards Israel had fastened itself on the mind and heart of the excellent Biedermann, he at once broke the ice, and when Simeon came up the path, weary and exhausted, he called him in a friendly way and offered him refreshment in the shape of bread and cheese with milk, taking the opportunity to remonstrate, kindly but urgently, on the evil of which he was guilty in letting Leah grow up in idleness and without education. To his well-meant question, what would in the course of time become of the poor child ? old Simeon replied that ‘she was a dear, good child, and in a few years, when she had grown older and more reasonable, all would come right of itself.’ Biedermann rejoined earnestly and beseechingly,—‘No, no, Simele ! These things do not all come right while we are asleep, as you imagine. As the twig is bent, so the tree grows. Idleness is the beginning of destruction, and the habits learned in youth are practised in old age !’ Hereupon he broached to the old man his proposal, that, while he was going his rounds, hawking his goods, Leah should be received in the Forest-House for the whole day, and should there be instructed by

Vreneli in all the duties of a housewife, besides learning to read, knit and sew. Simeon could hardly believe his ears, for never had any one before, even among his own people, spoken to him with as hearty good-will. He felt assuredly that Biedermann was right,—that Leah was growing visibly wilder, and that it would never do to leave her much longer to herself. Still, he could not make up his mind to intrust his child to Christians, for he would rather have seen her in her grave than departing from the faith of her forefathers.

Nevertheless when, as has been already mentioned, the persecutions against the Jews broke out in our villages, and Biedermann offered Simeon a place of refuge in the Forest-House, where he cleared out a little dwelling for him, and prepared for him a '*ménage*,' such as Leah could look after under Vreneli's superintendence, then, in the natural course of things, it did come to pass that the child came to Vreneli for instruction. At first indeed the teaching went heavily, for Leah was already wild and coy like a young roe, and Vreneli had no taste for the occupation of taming her or breaking her in. Biedermann, however, neither yielded nor flagged : day after day did he pray with his granddaughter that God would give her a heart to care for this neglected child of Israel's outcast race. And it was given her. Gradually she began to be quite fond of Leah, and soon Leah's heart too was opened, as is the closed rosebud to the warm rays of the sun. Almost as soon as she began to be drawn at all towards her friend and instructress, she attached herself to her with passionate love. And if she was clumsy in handiwork and slow in acquiring habits of

cleanliness and order, on the other hand she learned reading so quickly, and committed to memory so much and so easily from the German Psalter which Biedermann had presented to her, that very soon on the latter point she outshone her teacher. On the Friday evenings, when Simeon regularly returned to the Forest-House at sunset, she would run joyously to meet him with his glass of milk, and straightway, in the small, neat room in which his bed stood, and where she had lighted his Sabbath lamp in the seven-branched candlestick, she would repeat to him the psalm she had been learning through the week. This she did with so much devout feeling and with such a melodious and expressive voice, that Simeon, penetrated by the impression it made on him, would rock his head backwards and forwards after the fashion of his own people, and would often with cheerful confidence repeat the words:—‘Truly God is good to Israel’ (Psalm lxxiii. 1).

It was certainly only after they went to dwell in the Forest-House that the old man and his grandchild really became devout and believing Jews. When Simeon, on one occasion, with many polite attempts at circumlocution and apology, told the Anabaptist that, deeply as he felt the gratitude he owed, for all the kindness which had made a home for him and his child and loaded them with benefits, he yet could not but fear that Leah, in her daily intercourse with Vreneli, to whom she was heart and soul devoted, might insensibly be led to waver in her adherence to her ancestral faith, might in fact be on the highway to perversion,—Biedermann, looking fixedly at him with his calm smile,

replied good-humouredly : ' If you only knew it, Simele, we Christians up here in the Forest-House are more truly believing Jews than you are yourselves, more familiar with those glorious promises which the Lord has given to His chosen people !'

' Gladly would I believe it ; it would do my heart good, Biedermann, for you are a pious man and learned to boot, —but . . .'

' Learned ! no, Simele, that I am certainly not ; but through the grace of my God I am acquainted with His holy word, which is " a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path " (Psalm cxix. 105), as He himself so beautifully tells us.'

' Is that really in His word, Biedermann ?'

' Really, Simele. That and a great deal besides, about the power and value of Holy Scripture, which was also given to be the consolation of your people in exile and their guide to the heavenly Canaan. Often does it grieve me to think that you are carrying this treasure, hidden as it were from your own eyes, through the wilderness, without knowing what it is worth, or understanding its meaning. Now, do but listen to what I am about to propose to you. We are now far on in the autumn, and it would be imprudent of you to go to establish yourselves at Sulzmatt, for the demon of rebellion is abroad and raging in the land. If you were to build up your house to-day, to-morrow they would pull it down. Therefore stay and pass the winter with us in the Forest-House, and in the long evenings I will read aloud to you and the children in the books of the Old Testament, and, with God's help, will explain it to you as well as in my

weakness I am able to do, which will be for the edification of us all, for the strengthening of our faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who is my God and Saviour.'

Simeon could not but acquiesce, and full of contentment and rejoicing was he as the plan was carried out; for in the depth of winter, while Jack Frost ruled with his rod of iron in the outer world, the home scene in the Forest-House was a picture of all that was bright and harmonious. All the members of the pleasant group were at their ease with one another as they gathered by the light of the lamp around the busy table,—Vreneli plying her spinning-wheel with its merry hiss, Leah her needle that she might improve in sewing, Hans plaiting straw for bee-hives, and Simeon warming his stiff, weary limbs at the bench beside the stove, while devoutly listening to Biedermann, who was reading regularly through the historical books of the Old Testament, expounding as he went, and never beginning without having first prayed with his household, which was doubtless the secret of the blessing granted to these winter evenings for the hearts of all.

During that winter many another fugitive took refuge in the Forest-House, and was, after being provided with a false beard, convoyed by Biedermann and his Hans to Breifach, or, in the character of a Jewish pedlar, by Simeon, across the frontier. This united effort in leading the persecuted to a place of safety, and saving the unfortunate, was a bond which linked these two men,—the Anabaptist and the old Jew,—more and more closely together, strengthening their mutual love and confidence.

For Leah also, with her growing acquaintance with the sacred story of her nation, a new life, a new world sprang into existence. Wonderful and glorious truly did it all appear to her,—even more beautiful than the history of Queen Esther : Abraham and Sarah in the land of promise, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel, and her name-sake Leah, and above all Joseph revealing himself to his guilty brethren in Egypt,—all these appeared life-like before her mind's eye. Then came Moses, whom the princess saved from the waters of the Nile, and educated in Pharaoh's palace, to whom the Lord spoke in the burning bush at Horeb, who, with Aaron his brother, stood boldly before the king and called for the ten plagues to descend upon Egypt. Last not least, the wondrous tale of the passage of Israel through the Red Sea in which Pharaoh and his host were drowned. When Biedermann read the song of praise of the children of Israel : 'I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. . . . The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation' (Exod. xv. 1, 2), then Leah sprang up as if inspired, fell on Vreneli's neck and exclaimed with triumphant joyousness,—'It was my people for whom He wrought all these glorious wonders !'

So it came to pass that truly it was in the Christian's home that Simeon and Leah first learned to know the Lord God of their fathers, and to comprehend the foundations of their own faith. We read in Isaiah (xxxii. 15), 'Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field.' These words seemed to be fulfilled in Leah's experience. Those who had seen her before

would hardly have recognised in the pretty and pleasing maiden, neat in her attire and well-ordered in all she did, the formerly shy, awkward and dirty little Jewess.

The snow was falling in thick flakes, and had covered house, meadows and forest paths to a great depth. Balthasar, the aged farm-servant, had been vainly striving to make a clear path from the Forest-House to the stable and barn-yard. Scarcely had he proceeded from one door to the other when he had to begin his work again at the other end, as the drifts were gathering more and more. Biedermann, Hans and Simeon had gone, each on a different path, to convoy refugee nobles and a priest across the mountains towards the Rhine, so that Vreneli and Leah had remained alone together in the Forest-House, under the guardianship of old Balthasar. Leah was standing musing at the window ; after gazing anxiously at the thick, blinding snow, she cried out in a sort of despair : ‘ Oh, Vreneli, only look at the deep snow on all the paths,—see how it reaches up to the branches of the tall pines, so that they seem buried in it ! Our friends will have to wade and force a path through deep snow, they will lose their way, and surely they will never get safely home !’

Vreneli, who was making use of the leisure afternoon at home to decorate the little fir-tree with apples, dried fruit, gilded nuts and small wax tapers, in preparation for the approaching Christmas, replied calmly, ‘ Ah, Leah ! even in the deepest snow God can cause them to find the right path !’

‘ But if He should be angry, Vreneli, He would let them

freeze out there ! Oh, do let me go out with Balthasar to meet them !'

'That would be of no avail, for we do not know on which side they may return. Only be calm and composed,—they are on God's highway, gone out on a service of love, and assuredly He will preserve them and bring them back graciously to us here.'

Leah was silent ; gazed again earnestly and anxiously out at the window, then, covering her face with both hands, she said gently, 'Vreneli, I am so afraid of God. What must I do that I may be able to love Him ?'

'That I really cannot tell you,' answered the transparent Vreneli, in all honesty ; 'but we will ask grandfather, and he will surely be able to tell you.'

'Do you love God ?'

'Oh yes ! but not so much as I ought and might.'

'Well—but why is it said in the "*Thilim*," which I have learned (Psalm xxix. 4), "The voice of the Lord is powerful ;" "The Lord most High is terrible" (Psalm xlvi. 2 ;) "Fear before Him, all the earth" (Psalm xcvi. 9). How can one then love Him, if He is so much to be feared—so terrible that whosoever sees Him must die ?'

Vreneli paused and considered for a moment, then answered joyously : 'But, you know, we can only see and love Him in Christ—the infant Christ of Christmas.'

'Who is the infant Christ ?—But oh ! look how the storm is raging !—The snow is whirling high up in the air ! Vreneli, Vreneli, surely our people never can get home in safety !'

‘We will pray the 121st Psalm for them. Take your Psalter and read it.’ Then Leah, with her fine expressive voice, read : ‘I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved : He that keepeth thee will not slumber.’

Here Leah paused, drew a long breath, and then asked in her childlike way : ‘Will he certainly not, Vreneli ? Certainly ?’

‘Most certainly, Leah ; for, only read on !’ He says : “He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” Assuredly He will know how to protect and preserve our dear ones.’

It was beginning to grow dark, and Balthasar, who had also been watching the storm with uneasiness, now told Vreneli he was going with a lantern, accompanied by a servant from the neighbouring farm, to meet the three men, and would take Sultan the watch-dog with him to scent their track from afar. He believed they must have begun the ascent of the Schauenberg on their way home from Ruffach. Leah wanted to insist on going too ; but Vreneli and Balthasar would by no means yield that point. The two girls therefore remained alone together in the Forest-House ; Leah in a state of excitement, trembling with fear ; Vreneli, as usual, calm and collected. She lighted the lamp, stirred the fire in the stove and prepared the supper. When all was ready, she was about to seat herself at her spinning-wheel, when Leah drew her to the bench beside the stove, and kneeling before her, laid her head

in her bosom, and said in a tender, coaxing manner, 'Oh! do now, as we are alone, tell me who the infant Christ is. I *must* know it, even though my grandfather would not have it so!'

'He is the Saviour, God's only begotten Son, who came to this world in the form of man.'

'And how did He come?'

'Oh! wait a moment, for it is all so beautifully told in the Gospel of St. Luke that I must read it to you.' And so saying, Vreneli put out her hand to take down the New Testament, which lay beside the Old upon the shelf. But Leah cried out in agitation, as if deprecating such a thing with horror, 'No, no, Vreneli; in that holy book I dare not read, nor even hear any of it read aloud, for I was forced to promise that to my grandfather. But if you could tell me the story yourself instead, perhaps my anxiety might pass away or be kept quiet, or they might come home meantime.'

Then Vreneli began, and in her own simple words told the tale of Mary, a devout maiden of Israel, living in the town of Nazareth, and being the betrothed bride of a carpenter named Joseph; of the angel Gabriel appearing to her, and announcing that the Holy Ghost would overshadow her, and that she should bear a son, who should be 'Immanuel,' that is, 'God with us,' and whom she was to call 'Jesus,' that is, 'Saviour;'
of Mary being troubled at first at the angel's respectful salutation, and thinking, 'What manner of salutation is this?' then afterwards bowing her head meekly, and saying to the angel, 'Behold the

handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to thy word.'

'And this devout, highly-favoured virgin was a Jewess, a daughter of my people !' exclaimed Leah, her eyes flashing.

'Yes indeed, for she and Joseph too were of the seed of David,' replied Vreneli, reassuring her by continuing to tell of Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem, the home of their ancestors, to be inscribed on the roll there, according to the Roman Emperor's decree ; of both being poor, so that they could find a resting-place only in the stable, where Mary brought forth her Divine Son, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger. She proceeded to tell how, in that memorable night, the heaven opened above Bethlehem's plains, and an angel appeared to the shepherds in the fields, to announce the birth of the long-promised Messiah ; and then the multitude of the heavenly host praised God in that song, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men !'

'Oh, Vreneli !' exclaimed Leah, who had eagerly drunk in the words as they fell from her lips, 'what a wondrous and lovely story that is ! I must tell it to grandfather, who never will believe at all that the Messiah is already come. . . . But hark ! Sultan is whining and scratching at the door, and I hear Hans's voice. Oh, actually, our people are coming home !' And with these words both girls jumped up and hastened to the door, Vreneli carrying the lamp.

There, however, Leah's joyous cry was soon silent. Wrapped in Biedermann's woollen mantle, laid on pine branches carefully fastened together, and tenderly borne

by Balthasar and Hans, lay poor old Simeon, whether dead or fainting they could not at first tell. Stiff with cold and exhaustion, he had sunk in deep snow, when Sultan went forth to search its dangerous drifts, and Balthasar with his companion arrived at the very moment when their help was needed. Simeon had thus been drawn out and carried to the Forest-House, and now it remained to rub him well with snow, and to lay him in his well-warmed bed, where, after a long waiting, his consciousness returned. He lay seriously ill for many weeks, suffering from a violent cough, and, when able to rise, he still had a strange hoarseness of which he was never again quit.

Nevertheless, in spite of her old grandfather's illness, the Christmas festivities were such to poor Leah as to mark that blessed day as the brightest ever yet known in her joyless life. On Christmas Day, when, in the evening, old and young from the surrounding farms assembled at the Forest-House, and Biedermann conducted their worship in his simple way (the little Jewess being present for the first time), and they all sang Arndt's beautiful Christmas hymn—

‘ He’s come, the Holy Christ!
God’s well-beloved Son!
’Mid hosts around the Highest
The joyful tidings run.
Ye sons of men, rejoice!
Add all your praise to theirs;
Praise,—not alone with voice,
But heart’s deep love and prayers!’

then it seemed as though the Spirit from on high were poured out on Leah. She could hardly herself give an

account of how it came to pass, but so it was, that when the Christmas tree was lighted up, and Biedermann stepped forward in front of it and pronounced the words, 'Praise to the Lord Jesus Christ,' then she also bowed reverently, like all the rest of the company, and out of a full heart uttered the response, 'for ever and ever. Amen.'

After this the little gifts were freely dispensed, and the children indulged in glee and merriment over their golden nuts, and regaled themselves with apples and sweetmeats. And Leah too had not been forgotten. But the most beautiful and really costly present was reserved for old Simeon. It was neither more nor less than a German Bible, bound in black morocco, with gilt leaves, which the good blind philanthropist, Pfeffel of Colmar, had given to the old Anabaptist for his Jewish friend. Pfeffel held Biedermann in very high esteem. For many years he had been supplied with butter from the Forest-House, and regularly every summer he and his pupils paid a visit there. And as Pfeffel was also interested in active efforts to save the victims of persecution, he directed more than one such fugitive to betake themselves to the Forest-House, and thus was frequently brought into contact with Simele the Jew. With our good Pfeffel Christianity was a living, heart reality. He loved the Lord Jesus; therefore Israel in general, and old Simeon in particular, were dear to him, and by means of this Bible he was desirous of giving Simele a proof of his hearty good-will. On the fly-leaf he had caused his secretary to write, 'Search the Scriptures, . . . they are they which testify of me' (John v. 39). On the other side

was inscribed Simeon's name and the date, in letters and figures of gold. That so distinguished, so learned and pious a gentleman as Pfeffel should have presented any gift so handsome and valuable to a poor Jewish pedlar, that was indeed the greatest joy and honour that Simeon had met with in his whole life, and he was moved to tears by it as he received it on his sick-bed. Only the books of the New Testament were to him a source of some anxiety ; for it was a whole Bible. He felt constrained to renew his warning to Leah against ever reading it. As, however, the reading aloud in the family circle was interrupted in consequence of his illness, he listened with pleasure to the long passages in the Prophets or the Psalms which his little granddaughter read to him privately, and never failed to remark what a great honour good Herr Pfeffel had conferred on him, and what true joy he had given him.

One day when Leah had read the words in the prophet Isaiah (vii. 14),—‘Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign ; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel,’ she suddenly jumped up and cried out in joyful amazement : ‘Grandfather ! that must be the Infant Christ, the holy Babe of Bethlehem, that was born and laid in the manger, when the shepherds on the field heard the angels’ song of praise.’ She then, with a full heart and ardent enthusiasm, as if inspired, recited to him the story of the Saviour’s birth, as related to her by Vreneli, and as Biedermann had read and explained it on Christmas evening from the Gospel of St Luke. Simeon grew pale, said not a word, but from that moment

he seemed transformed ; no longer open and hearty, he became stiff, reserved, and suspicious towards his kind friends and hosts, who at first regarded his gloomy and altered mien merely as a result of his physical state. When, however, Leah too, who for some time past had been merry and bright, bounding about the house in glee like a pet squirrel, grew all at once melancholy, and took to creeping about with bent head and downcast eyes, and when Vreneli, on finding her at last weeping in the corner, and asking with tender sympathy what was the matter, was answered by Leah throwing herself, sobbing, on her neck and whispering,—‘ I dare not tell you about it, but it does crush my heart,’ then Biedermann began to notice the state of things with anxiety. All at once he went to his chest, took out of it a leather girdle, and went to Simeon’s sick-room.

Now, by this leather girdle there hung a tale. On that night when the old pedlar was carried back to the Forest-House stiff and insensible, when those around were forced to undress him for the sake of rubbing him all over with snow, Biedermann found a leather girdle, which he always wore under his shirt next to his skin, and perceiving as he unfastened it that all the worldly goods of his poor Jewish friend were secured there, he took it and locked it up in his chest. It was heavy, and had actually worn the poor waist into a sore ; and when Biedermann opened it he found to his surprise that it contained a considerable sum. This discovery gave him pain ; for as Simeon had always appeared so poverty-stricken and niggardly, so unable to do anything for the education of his little girl, he was driven to conclude that

avarice must have been at the bottom of it, so that he said to himself with a sigh, 'Poor old Simele! vile mammon has got possession of thee!' He was fully resolved to take the opportunity, when restoring the girdle, to give him seriously a word of his mind on the subject; only he wished to wait till the invalid was convalescent, and as mutual regard and hearty confidence had prevailed, as we have seen, in the little circle, he never deemed it necessary to say to Simeon that he had taken charge of the precious girdle, believing that to be an understood thing between them. When, however, Simeon became so morose and estranged, and even the innocent little Leah so disturbed and sad, Biedermann naturally attributed it to anxiety concerning the fate of the girdle, and hastened to give it up. As he entered the sick man's room, he was sitting at the window, basking in the rays of the bright sun, which for the first time after a long winter was shining, warm and clear, in an azure sky.

Biedermann laid the girdle on Simeon's lap, and said, somewhat abruptly, 'There, Simele, I bring you back your mammon, about which you have been having such misgivings. You may rest in peace; not one farthing is wanting!'

As one wakening out of a dream, Simeon gazed with utter indifference at the girdle, and then said with his hoarse voice, often interrupted with coughing, 'My money is well kept, in safe hands with you, Biedermann! Only keep it till Easter, I beg of you, for after the feast I must go with Leah to *Jerusalem!*'

'To Jerusalem! Are you mad, Simele?'

‘No, no, Biedermann! From my youth up my warmest desire has been to die in Jerusalem, and to be buried with my fathers in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Look here! This money I have laid by, for many a year, little by little, by sparing it from my victuals. Now, it is high time,—I must not longer delay, else it will be too late! Also, I will take with me the bones of my Deborah, for I promised that to my good wife upon her deathbed, and immediately after the feast of the Passover Leah and I must be on our way!’

Biedermann could hardly believe his ears. He was disposed to think the sick man might be talking in the delirium of fever, and he grasped his hand to feel his pulse. Soon, however, he was obliged to come to the conclusion that Simeon had firmly resolved to carry his plan into execution; that it was one which, with his innate and peculiar perseverance, he had been long thinking over and working out in his own mind. He had determined to hawk his wares as far as Marseilles, and there to take ship for the land of promise, intending to wander on after landing as a pilgrim, with Leah and with Deborah’s bones, to Jerusalem. In vain did his kind host try to represent to him the unreasonableness of his proposal, urging that he was far too weak and sickly to stand such a journey;—that, as he was quite ignorant of the French language, he would be in danger, long before he could reach Marseilles, of falling into the hands of the furious Jacobins, by whom he might, if suspected of being a spy, be hurried off at once to the guillotine. He laid it on his conscience to consider how miserable and desolate he would then leave his poor little

Leah, deserted in a foreign land. But to each remonstrance Simeon had a ready answer:—‘The southern climate would certainly prove beneficial to him; as to the Jacobins, he had no fear of them, and was indeed more sly himself than they; he had already helped many a person across the frontier, and assuredly he was likely to be able to get safely across himself, and then he could not doubt that God would keep him from all evil and bring him to Jerusalem,’ and so forth.

‘Well now, Simele, I shall suppose a case: Taking it for granted that you were to reach Jerusalem alive and well (which, nevertheless, I think most doubtful), what would you set about under the Turkish Government in Palestine, where the Jews are yet more miserable and oppressed than they are here in our land?’

‘Set about! Why, I would weep with my exiled brethren, because we are strangers in the land of our fathers! To weep and pray on the holy mount where once our glorious temple stood, and where now the Turk has built a place for his false worship, that would be what I would set about! And when I had wept out my full, Biedermann, then I would die and be buried with Deborah’s bones in the Valley of Jehoshaphat!’

‘And Leah?’

‘It is for the very sake of Leah that I must be off, Biedermann. Rather would I see the child poor and wretched among our own people, than . . .’

‘Become a Christian in the Forest-House! Confess it now, Simele: it is this fear, and this alone, that drives you forth from among us to seek the distant land of promise.’

‘Well, yes! - You have guessed it. You are right enough. The child is too happy here in the Forest-House. She cannot resist! It has come to pass as I at first feared. You are an honourable man, Biedermann, a devout man, and surely you will agree with me that one ought not to quit the religion of one’s forefathers, and that every man ought to continue in that in which he was born.’

‘Hem! . . . then, if I were replying to any Christian who might have propounded such a view, I might say, we ought all to be heathens, idolaters, or even cannibals. But to you, a Jew, I would put the inquiry, was not Abraham called to go out from his fatherland, from his father’s house and all his friends, just because he was to forsake the faith of his fathers and to become the founder of a new religion?’

‘Yes indeed, but then there is a vast difference between a blind heathen and a son of Israel!’

‘Granted, Simele. But do you know what is the difference between a Jew and a Christian?’

For the first time Simeon was at a loss for an answer.

‘I shall try,’ continued his friend, after an embarrassing pause, ‘to make it clear to you as best I can. Did not the Tabernacle in the wilderness, of which the Lord our God himself showed Moses the pattern in the Mount at Sinai, and afterwards the Temple of Jehovah, which Solomon built on Mount Moriah, both consist of three separate divisions?’

‘Yes, yes, certainly. My brother-in-law the Rabbi explained all that to me. There was in them both the outer court, the holy place, and the holy of holies.’

‘And the people were only permitted to worship in the

outer court, the priests in the holy place, and the high priest alone was ever to enter the most holy place, and that only on the great day of atonement, when he was to confess sin with prayer and to make expiation with blood.'

'What a pious and learned man you are—why, you actually know all that far better than I do!'

'Now,—observe, Simele! We Christians must, if we would reach everlasting bliss, worship and offer thanksgiving with you in the outer court. That is to say, we must take your holy books, the writings of the Old Testament, as the foundation of our faith. In one word, we must believe what every devout Jew believes, and therefore we stand with you as brethren in the court, and so far you and we are thoroughly alike. But the Christian may go beyond, for to him the holy place is open, and the holy of holies within the veil also, wherein stands the mercy-seat, and thus heaven itself is opened. This is the difference!'

Simeon looked down, silent and perplexed; so Biedermann continued, 'The sanctuary of old was evidently a type of the Christian Church, into which one cannot enter save through the outer court; for salvation is of the Jews, it comes to us from them, from your people, to whom God committed His revelation, and through whom, according to His promise to Abraham, 'all families of the earth shall be blessed' (Gen. xii. 3). And as the paschal lamb,—and likewise the daily burnt-offering and the other sacrifices on the altar in the court,—typified Christ's bloody offering and atoning death, so did the shewbread on the golden table in the holy place foreshadow as a sign our salvation by Christ's

body broken and His blood shed for us, our life in Him. And the seven-branched candlestick represents to us light and wisdom which Christ has brought to us from heaven. The holy oil is the Holy Spirit, who kindles the light in our souls, and keeps it shining, who creates the new life in us. The incense on the altar of incense is prayer, which ascends to heaven from a humble and thankful heart, a sweet savour, acceptable unto the Lord.'

A violent fit of coughing, and at the same moment the entrance of Vreneli bearing her glass of new milk, interrupted the conversation, so that Simeon was prevented from replying. When the paroxysm was over, however, with his first free breath he eagerly informed Leah that she was now to tell Vreneli that 'in future they would no longer be a burden on their friends, as they were about to set off after Easter for *Jerusalem*.'

Leah burst into tears, and sobbed out in an under-tone, clinging tenderly to her friend: 'Oh, Vreneli! to part from you and from the Forest-House, where I have been so happy—it is more bitter than death to me!'

'Calm yourselves, dear children, and seek for a contented spirit!' said Biedermann that evening to the two girls. 'For I do not know—I may be mistaken—but I greatly fear poor old Simele will in the spring set out on a very different journey from that which he is contemplating; or rather I mean that I hope he may go not to the earthly but the heavenly Jerusalem.'

Biedermann, well versed in the healing powers of various herbs, and understanding a good deal of medicine, ac-

customed moreover to receive many patients from among the surrounding poor, had become convinced that the pulmonary consumption from which Simeon had suffered since his youth had now reached an advanced stage, that his days must be numbered, and that he never could leave the Forest-House except in his coffin. He therefore never thwarted nor contradicted him, as he watched his eager and feverish impatience in preparing for his approaching journey to Jerusalem. He ordered him, nevertheless, to sleep in the stable among the cows, and to take warm new milk as his chief nourishment.

But when spring came the aged invalid appeared to revive. Once more he strapped up his pack as of old, and began again to ply in the immediate neighbourhood his trade as a pedlar. Moreover, he discovered in Ruffach a Jewish family, with whom he could keep the passover, Leah of course also joining the party, and afterwards he and she would start for Marseilles. Everything was ordered and settled, and the day fixed on which they were to bid farewell to the Forest-House for ever. Still Biedermann pronounced his verdict, 'This improvement is only the brightened light of a flickering flame just before it is extinguished!' He shook his head sadly, and could not conceal his deep anxiety as to the fate of poor little Leah. If Simeon were, as he foresaw must certainly happen, to fall ill and die on the road, what could become of her in these bloody and stormy days, without a word of French?

In this emergency the pious Anabaptist betook him for help and comfort to his worthy friend Pfeffel. But he too

could only preach to deaf ears. Simeon remained stubborn and immovable, stoutly persisting that 'on such or such a day he would leave the Forest-House, go to Ruffach to keep the passover, and then set out with Leah for Jerusalem.' So nothing now remained for his Christian friends but to pray for him and commit the whole matter to God.

The season of Lent was now drawing to a close. In the houses of the Israelites all was washed and scrubbed, '*Matza-cakes*' (unleavened bread) were baked, and everything was in readiness for eating the supper of the passover. In so-called Christendom, however, and not the least in our own dear Alsace, things at that time looked sad and dreary enough. The churches were, as we have already mentioned, closed; the church-bells silent. No public worship was held anywhere, and in the new Calendar Easter was not named. Thus there were full many who did not commemorate the death or resurrection of our Saviour, who heard not the sound of Easter rejoicing. Around the Forest-House, on the contrary, the mild breezes of spring, quickening the germs of vegetation into a sort of resurrection-verdure, seemed to speak of the Lord's salutation, 'Peace be unto you!' and grave and mournful as all things seemed, yet here, amid all these changes, there was a suppressed tone of festive joy. It was Palm Sunday. Leah was sitting with a heavy heart before the house, her hand clasped in Vreneli's, gazing with tearful eyes at the setting sun. It was the last evening they were to pass there. Their little property and Simeon's pack of goods, all stood ready for departure in the barn. That morning her grandfather had gone to Sulzmatt

to fetch Deborah's bones and the ass, already purchased, which he was to take as beast of burden with them as far as Marseilles.

'Oh, Vreneli! why can I not rejoice at the thoughts of Jerusalem? Why do I so dread leaving you, and shrink from going forth into the wide world alone with my sick old grandfather?' said Leah, as she laid her head, weeping bitterly, on Vreneli's shoulder.

'Poor Leah! I too tremble for you. Only,—be comforted! Surely the Lord will send His angel before you?'

'Is that the "*Metatron*," as my grandfather calls him, who led the children of Israel in the pillar of cloud and fire through the wilderness and the Red Sea?'

'Yes, Leah. It is the very same,—our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be all praise for ever and ever!'

'He will not go before *us*, Vreneli!' answered Leah sorrowfully.

'Why not, Leah?'

'Because they crucified Him, when He was in this world, after He was born as the infant Christ. Grandfather did indeed forbid me, but nevertheless I did,—I could not help it,—read that story in your holy book which Herr Pfeffel gave him. And now I know why my people are exiled and under the ban of Heaven. I have read how He wept over Jerusalem, and how they cried, "His blood be on us and on our children!" Oh, Vreneli! He cannot care about me! I am only a poor little Jewess, the daughter of His enemies?'

'But those were also Jewish children whom He took up

in His arms, to draw them one by one close to His heart when He blessed them. And His disciples, Martha and Mary and Lazarus, were all Jews,' replied Vreneli in a consolatory tone. 'Only believe it, Leah,' added she, 'I can assure you those Jews who believe in Him are peculiarly dear to Him. I have always heard my grandfather say so.'

Leah looked steadfastly at her friend with an air of deep melancholy as she whispered: 'They never spat when they heard His name pronounced, or when they passed a cross, as I have done! Oh! I have hated Him and all of you; if I could but have done it, I would have torn down every cross at the wayside, and set fire to every Christian church!'

'But now you do not hate us any longer?'

Instead of answering this question, Leah impressed a tender kiss on Vreneli's cheek.

'And are you grieved now to think of having blasphemed the name of our Saviour, and spat at His cross?'

'Grieved! Yes,—with my whole heart I mourn at the remembrance of it! But do you think that He can ever forgive me?'

'He has already forgiven you. Of such as you He did once say, "They know not what they do." It was because He loved you that He died for you upon the cross, that you might be with Him in Paradise.'

'Oh! if I knew He loved me, how I should love Him!' exclaimed Leah enthusiastically. Then hurriedly rising, she went briskly forward, as her custom was, to meet her grandfather. She had been gone about an hour when she saw, from a distance, the ass with the box containing

Deborah's bones, suddenly turning round and going at a slow pace down the road back towards Sulzmatt. 'Where can my grandfather have been left?' she anxiously inquired. With winged steps she rushed down the steep hill, and, lying on the roadside, she found poor old Simeon weltering in his blood. Just as he had ascended the difficult acclivity at the expense of his little remaining strength, he was suddenly attacked by hæmorrhage and fell unconscious to the ground, upon which the ass, rejoicing in its freedom, hastened back towards its old home. Most fortunately Biedermann and Hans happened to come up on that same road, when the terrified Leah was vainly endeavouring to raise the old man and restore him to consciousness. She greeted them as guardian angels, and soon they raised Simeon and once more carried him back to the Forest-House, where, after he was placed among the cows under the tender care of Biedermann and Vreneli, he soon opened his eyes and looked around with astonishment. With deep and solemn emotion Biedermann then took his hand and said, 'Poor old Simele! thou didst wish to run away from the Lord, and He has cast thee down and held thee fast, as He once did Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus! Simele, Simele! thou too wilt find it hard to kick against the pricks! Therefore I entreat thee now to cry out like Saul: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And as Saul then arose up as Paul, so thou too, Simeon, finding mercy with the Lord, shalt be able before thy death to say: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation! I have found my Saviour!"'

But, as we are told by Jeremiah (xvii. 9), 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked : who can know it?' Who indeed? Assuredly we ourselves least of all. The only fitting answer is (ver. 10), 'I, the Lord, search the heart.' And so it proved in Simeon's case. With the yearning after the promised land which lingers in every Israelitish heart, as it were a dim shadowy memory of the lost Paradise, he had sought thoroughly, and as he believed honestly, to persuade himself that he wished to go to Jerusalem to die there and to be buried in the valley of Jehoshaphat, while, in truth, at the bottom of all his schemes lay a secret hope of recovery and of being able to enjoy life a good while longer, suggested by the circumstance of his brother-in-law, the Rabbi, having, many years before, told him that the climate of the promised land was peculiarly beneficial for pulmonary patients, and advised him to try to go thither. Now, as he lay there prostrate, unable to rally or to gather up the last sparks of strength, feeling himself touched by the icy hand of death (*Freund Hein*), and hearing as it were the summons sounding in his ear : 'Now, Simele, it is thy turn. Thine hour has come !'—now indeed a deadly anguish seized his very soul. At first he was stunned, and the petrified gaze of his large sad eyes betrayed this as he lay speechless. But soon he burst forth in loud lamentations, called for Biedermann, and conjured him, on his conscience, to tell him if there was now no hope left of recovery. When his friend gravely shook his head, the old invalid wept bitterly and clasped his hands in agony, exclaiming, 'Oh, Death ! thou dread enemy !'

After a long and painful pause, Biedermann resumed the conversation by apparently giving it a turn. 'I was in Colmar yesterday,' said he, 'and good Herr Pfeffel sends you hearty greeting; he made particular inquiry about you, and when I told him how very ill you were, he desired his secretary, young Herr R., to write out for me the hymn which he, our dear good friend, had composed for his own death-bed, wishing it to be sung at his funeral. Some verses of it I must sing to you with the children. Perhaps it may be blessed to bring the peace of God into your tried spirit, and calm the struggles of your mind in view of death.

Without waiting for Simeon's answer, he called the two girls from the cows' stable, and, repeating two lines at a time, he struck up with them, softly and sweetly, the well-known tune commonly linked with the words, 'Leave God to order all thy ways' (*Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten*), and thus gave forth Pfeffel's hymn as follows:—

'Hosanna! The glad hour is come!
 Jesus, my Saviour, calls me home!
 Welcome, thou silent, peaceful grave,
 Refuge from every stormy wave!
 Jesus! Thy death has sweeten'd mine,
 Since I—Lord God my Life!—am Thine!

Lord, I would spring to Thy dear side,
 As mountain roe—as joyous bride!
 Not Death's dark gate can me detain,
 Free'd by the Paschal Lamb once slain.
 Jesus! Thy death has sweeten'd mine,
 Since I—Lord God my Life!—am Thine.

Oh Thou whose blood was shed for me,
 Cleansing from guilt—from sin! To Thee

In love I cling, in worship bow.
Redeemer, Kinsman, Judge art Thou.
Jesus ! Thy death has sweeten'd mine,
Since I—Lord God my Life !—am Thine !

I know whom I've believed ! Thy rod,
Thy staff, Thy voice I know, my God !
That voice which this vile dust shall hear,
And, glorious raised, with Thee appear.
My dying look in faith meets Thine !
With Christ my Life, ev'n Death is mine !'

During the singing, the melody of which was so lovely and soul-elevating as to be in unison with the sentiments of Christian triumph which it expressed, the invalid had become manifestly soothed and peaceful, and as it died away he fell into a sweet sleep. Leah, who was standing beside his bed, looked at him in silence, and large tears rolled down her cheeks. 'Pray for your grandfather,' softly whispered Biedermann, 'and ask that God would grant thee yet to be permitted to read to him from the Gospels the story of our Saviour's passion.' Leah nodded assent ; and when her old friend and his young granddaughter had gone to their work, she remained long on her knees beside the sick-bed, imploring with clasped hands the blessing which God had taught her so fervently to desire.

During Passion Week Biedermann had a daily service, and, as the weather was warm and bright, he assembled his fellow-worshippers in the open air, close to the little window beside which Simeon's bed was placed. Under the pretext of wishing to admit the precious sunshine, Vreneli, morning after morning, opened this window, so that Simeon

could distinctly hear the whole service. The striking hymns sung—

‘ Ah, wounded Head! must Thou
Endure such shame and scorn!’

or—

‘ Oh world! see here thy Life!’

or—

‘ Go thou, my soul, to Golgotha!’

and other similar ones, seemed daily to exercise a wholesome, calming influence on the mind of the patient. He also listened with devout attention to the reading, from the four Evangelists in succession, of the history of our Lord's sufferings and death, to which Biedermann added the 22d Psalm and the 53d of Isaiah, with a few simple and forcible words of comment. When in the evening Leah asked him: ‘ Grandfather, shall I read to you from good Herr Pfeffel's holy book another Psalm, and then the story of the crucifixion?’ he did not refuse; on the contrary, he seemed daily to like it better, and to listen with more appearance of being really edified and moved. To him, as to Leah, the life and death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ had at first all the freshness of something entirely new, and the gospel of the grace of God came as a thing unheard of before. And when the young girl, deeply impressed by the realizing of that love and compassion which went forward willingly even unto the death for us, was silent for a while, held in her breath with solemn recollectedness, and then exclaimed joyously, ‘ How glorious it is to belong to that nation through which salvation came

into the world !' then the old grandfather shared her ardour, and like her wept tears of gratitude and love.

But who can trace or describe the work of grace in Simeon's soul, or tell how, step by step, when God there said, 'Let there be light,' light was ; how he had first learned to know the word of God in the Old Testament, and now, with death in view, was learning to know the Saviour Jesus Christ who conquered death. To know Him, in the true sense of the word, is to love Him ; as in the same way truly to seek Him is to find Him. Simeon now, to adopt Biedermann's significant language, advanced from the outer court into the sanctuary itself, there to find the Great High Priest who had, even for him too, rent the veil of separation from the holy of holies, and through His precious blood procured the forgiveness of sins and the seal and earnest of everlasting redemption.

Leah had entered with such intense feeling into all the passion and death of our Lord, that it really seemed as if she had fought through it all and triumphed with Him. On 'the Great Sabbath,' the day after Good Friday, she was still and silent, as must have been the holy women of old. On Easter morning, it was touching to observe how her heart-felt, childlike joy seemed to illuminate her countenance and transform her whole being ; how she saluted all in the house with the jubilant greeting, 'To-day the Lord is risen !' Biedermann was much moved, and declared he had never seen such soul-absorbing, living faith. 'Much about the same state as little Leah's must,' he thought, 'have been that of Mary Magdalene, when

the risen Saviour stood before her and called her by name.'

In Simeon's soul too there was peace. He had not indeed many words, but he was calm, and yet more calm, and became perfectly resigned to the will of God. He lived several weeks yet; long enough to become acquainted with all the books of the New Testament, and to experience the full trust and comfort with which they refreshed him. To him the word of the apostle was richly fulfilled: 'Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day' (2 Cor. iv. 16). His death was gentle and peaceful. 'Leah, my child,' said he, as he felt the angel of death fluttering its wings above him, 'what were the Saviour's words to the thief on the cross?' When Leah replied in the words of Luke xxiii. 43, 'Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' his dying lips feebly uttered the words, 'To-day . . . with thee, O Lord!' He smiled a blessed, heavenly smile, folded his hands, closed his eyes, and his spirit passed away and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

They dug his grave under an old oak close to the Forest-House. Hans honoured it by placing over it a simple wooden cross, which Leah, so long as she lived up yonder, strewed every summer with wild flowers of the forest.

Concerning Leah we shall at present say only one word more. She devoted her whole life to the service of her Lord; she bore Israel on her heart before Him, and prayed for her people's salvation even to her dying breath. She died with the firm conviction that the Lord had heard her

prayer, and would in his own good time yet lead her beloved Israel into the holy sanctuary.

‘Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel : I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel’ (Isa. xli. 14).

‘For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain’ (Isa. lxvi. 22). Amen.

THE FUR COAT.

- ‘ Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.’—ROM. xii. 2.
‘ Blessed are the merciful.’—MATT. v. 7.
‘ Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.’
—PHIL. iv. 5.
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Written at Brumath, on the Sunday after St. Nicholas's Day, the 9th of December 1525, by me, Georgius Wickenhauer, Minister of the Word, and formerly Pastor in the village of Honau.

It was on the holy festival of St. Andrew's Day that I returned from the magistrate's office with a heavy heart, the magistrate having informed me in stern and cutting words that our gracious lord, the Bishop, had decided in the Court of Ultimate Appeal that within three days I must vacate the church and parsonage, and make way for a Roman Catholic priest, leaving Honau and my beloved flock for ever.

Yes! this was indeed a severe sentence. Without stood my poor parishioners, anxiously expecting me. They at once surrounded me, asking eagerly: ‘Is it true, your Reverence? Must you forsake us and depart from Honau?’ I nodded assent in silence and pressed their hands, for to speak was impossible, since my tears well-nigh choked me; then I hastened home. Christina, with our little son in her

arms, came towards me pale and trembling. I clasped the dear, faithful, loving soul to my heart, and without a word said she understood all.

‘We must go, Jerg?’

‘Yes, in three days.’

‘And whither?’

‘That I know not; but be of good cheer, the Lord will provide!’

‘Oh!’ she exclaimed with bitter grief, ‘to go forth poor and homeless into the wide world, with the tender infant, in this fierce wintry weather . . . Jerg, that is hard!’ And so saying, she slipped out of my embrace and wept passionately. I offered up a silent prayer, after which I wept with her, shedding a flood of tears.

Yes, truly, on that eventful day I did stand in need of strength from on High, for I was called to comfort and to brace up for exertion, not my poor Christina alone, but all those men of my flock who crowded into the parsonage, there to pour forth their lamentations. These dear people could not understand nor imagine how it could come to pass that the word of God, so precious to them, should be withdrawn, and I, their pastor, obliged to forsake them,—for a warm mutual attachment had long existed between us. However, neither lamentations nor complaints could be of any avail, and after I, well-nigh in despair, had cried out in the words of St. Paul (Acts xxi. 13, 14), ‘What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart?’ we all knelt together, clasped each other’s hands, and then were enabled in all humility to say, ‘The will of the Lord be done!’

The justice of the peace and the elders of the church remained with us, for the sake of solving the great problem, whither should we go, and how in this severe frost should we be able to proceed. For we were in extreme penury, and had not, in the whole wide world, any place of refuge to which we could turn. Most gladly would the justice have entertained us hospitably in his house through the winter, but that was strictly prohibited by the Bishop and the magistrate. 'Within three days I must leave Honau with my wife and child ;' such was the express command. While we were in consultation, turning over this expedient and that without having hit on anything practicable, a messenger arrived from Lampertheim. My beloved brother in the ministry, Hans Seitz, who had been placed by the Dean as preacher of the gospel at Lampertheim, at the same time at which I was instituted in my parish at Honau, wrote to me in substance as follows. He had also been, by order of the Bishop, deprived of his charge and banished from Lampertheim ; he was about to conduct his wife with their child to her father's home at Brumath, who was wealthy and thoroughly evangelical in his views. As, however, my Christina was an orphan and cast out by her own relatives on account of her faith, he invited me to go with her and the infant to Brumath, where Christina would be sure to find an asylum for the winter under his father-in-law's roof. Then, after having provided for the women and little ones, we two men could go to Strasburg to present the petitions of our parishioners (who were earnestly urging their claims to have a gospel ministry restored among them),

and to entreat the honourable Council, with all due deference, to place us both in other spheres in the Lord's vineyard. This was a ray of light in the darkness, and the old saying, 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity,' the words of God Himself, 'My strength is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor. xii. 9), were fulfilled in the experience of us, His poorest and weakest children.

My extremity was, however, to be yet greater, and aggravated indeed in a quarter from which it could have been least expected—to wit, by Christina herself. To explain how this came to pass, I must make a little digression. Christina's father, who had been a sturdy forester, had, on a *battue*, once slain a grizzly bear, to recompense him for which valiant exploit, the magistrate of Wasselnheim, a young man of noble family, Squire (*Junker*) Fabian von Eschenau, had caused a splendid fur coat to be made for him of the bear's skin. This coat was treasured up as a family heir-loom, and looked upon as almost equivalent to a patent of nobility. It was, moreover, the only inheritance left to my Christina after the death of her parents, the only fortune which she brought to me on our marriage. She was as proud of it as Nebuchadnezzar of old of his great Babylon. I must confess the fur coat had a rich and imposing appearance, well worthy of a prelate; it might have graced some lordly abbot, mitred bishop, or illustrious nobleman. But for me, the least among the servants of our gracious Lord (who, for our sakes, came into this world as a poor man), it was indeed very much too grand. My dear parishioners might easily have been scandalized and offended

at the sight of it, had I displayed it on my person, notwithstanding all which Christina had not failed to urge me during the whole winter, to appear in it at least on Sundays and gala-days.

During the first summer of our married life, Christina had much 'ado to keep this precious treasure from the moths. In the course of the winter, however, immediately following, she almost forgot its existence,—so engrossed was she with our little new-born Sigismund. Assuredly she quite ceased to plague me about wearing it. During the said winter, at a time of most piercing cold, my old friend, the venerable pastor of Sank-Pilt (St. Hippolyte's) came to visit us. He had preached the word of God in Sank-Pilt, and re-established Divine service in a primitive form, as in the apostolic age. Duke Anthony of Lorraine, incensed at this, had threatened the heretical town with extermination by fire and sword. To ward off so dire a calamity and to justify his doctrine, Pastor Schuch journeyed to Nanzig (Nancy); but foreseeing that bonds and tribulation awaited him there, he came from Strasburg, on his way thither, to see me once again, and to strengthen me in the faith. The beloved man of God looked so sickly and exhausted, so poorly clad too, and the winter was so extremely severe, that our hearts misgave us. Christina had just been confined; I therefore, as she was laid up, gave to my dear friend, on parting from him, the precious fur coat to protect him from frost and snow, enjoining him to send it back to me from Nancy. Hardly, however, had he reached that city when he was cast into prison, tortured

several times, and on the 20th June thereafter, 1525, he went, with courage and even holy joy, to the stake, repeating loudly the words of the 51st Psalm: 'Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions,' until his voice was stifled by smoke and flames, and the angels carried his soul to heaven.¹ The fur coat had, of course, disappeared without leaving a trace behind. Never, as I supposed, could I hear anything of it again.

For me, personally, this was indeed no loss, but rather a great gain; for when news came of our dear brother Schuch having been twice put to the rack, with intent to force him to deny his faith, and having, by God's grace, stood fast by the gospel and boldly confessed the Lord Jesus, then it was a sweet consolation to feel that he might have wrapped his poor suffering body, sore with the wounds of martyrdom, in the soft, warm fur coat, and that, in the cold damp dungeon, he might have been thinking of my love for him. With Christina, however, it was otherwise. She was still, in blissful ignorance, cherishing the belief that her idol lay untouched in the wooden box, at which she had so often looked with such a glance of satisfaction as did the rich man in the gospel at his well-filled barns. Alas! this ill-fated fur coat did bring great trouble upon me! In

¹ WOLFGANG SCHUCH.—This faithful martyr for Christ was pastor in the small town of St. Hippolyte, then belonging to Lorraine, in which *Leo Judä*, the friend and colleague of Zwinglius, had before that time preached the gospel. Further particulars about the martyr Schuch may be found in the *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français*, tome ii. p. 632.

bestowing it upon that man of God, brother Schuch, I did well. In lacking courage to tell Christina about it, from dread of her reproaches and her tears, herein I manifested unpardonable weakness, and for this I now had to pay the penalty,—we are about to see how severe!

For when the time had come for packing up, and we had to gather our alls, we had little enough to collect, being obliged to leave the beds and most of the household furniture and utensils behind us in the parsonage as church property. When it came to pass that Christina, having vainly sought for the fur coat, had to be informed what had become of it, then she broke out into such a lamentation that even the remembrance of it still overpowers me. In truth, she behaved so unreasonably on the occasion that not a word of love could find entrance into her embittered mind. She reproached me with being a thoughtless spendthrift, an old father raven, bearing within my bosom no heart to feel for my only child, willing to rob the poor little one of the costly fur coat, which, on the journey now before us, would have sufficed so capitally to protect us all three from cold and storms. No argument, no diversion from the subject could be of any avail; for, after the true fashion of women, she returned to the point, and firmly and stiffly reiterated her first assertion ‘that the fur coat would have saved us from all necessity, and now, without it, we must needs freeze and perish.’ And thus my poor Christina, by her murmurings and upbraidings, turned my last three days in my beloved Honau into a sort of hell. Oh! how much good might a single friendly word or loving look have done

to my bleeding heart! But the woman whom God had given to be an help-meet for me, had at this time, when I was called to bear my so heavy cross, nothing for me but tears and reproaches. Often I was constrained to reflect that if mother Eve had as evil a tongue, and was as easily moved to complaints and tears, I could conceive indeed how Adam was tempted to take a bite of the forbidden apple; for, . . . may God forgive me this!—I was well-nigh led to regret having lent the fur coat to my beloved, now sainted friend Schuch, and to feel I would give all I had to get it back, and thereby to restore our domestic peace, now destroyed! But I know I was wrong in this.

The Monday after St. Andrew's Day, the 3d of December, was the sad day of our departure. Before day-break the cart belonging to the local magistrate, with two sturdy oxen yoked to it, stood at the parsonage-door. It was snowing fast. To protect us as far as possible from the inclement weather, our driver, worthy Martin, had stretched an old sail-cloth over the cart as a sort of canopy, under which he had prepared a straw couch for Christina and little Sigismund. And now I was to bid farewell to the church in which during two years, by the grace of God, I had, though in much weakness yet faithfully, preached the everlasting gospel. I was to part from my dear flock, who, with loud crying and tears, were surrounding our cart. Each person was bringing us a parting gift for our journey—warm articles of clothing, victuals, a jug of beer, or a bottle of milk for the infant. Yes, indeed, '*parting is pain*' ('*Scheiden thut weh*,'—the first words of a familiar German song), and my grief would have

been sufficient even without the sting which Christina, on account of the lost fur coat, was pressing into my heart. She suffered herself, mute as a fish and pale as a marble statue, to be lifted by the magistrate into the cart. When I had placed her on the straw litter, wrapped a woollen coverlet (which the magistrate's kind-hearted wife had given me) round her feet and laid little Sigismund on her lap, she threw back the warm covering, took the child in her arms, and began to weep and sob spasmodically.

But now Martin jogged his oxen to start. 'May God guide you, Master Jerg!' sounded forth from every lip. 'May He bless you all!' replied I, deeply moved. And so we drove on in a heavy fall of snow, into a dark and uncertain future. But 'He who keepeth' us 'shall neither slumber nor sleep!'

At the ferry on the Rhine, we had to wait long before we could be carried safely to the other side,—first the cart in which we were, afterwards the oxen. The wind blew icy cold; the snow was falling in thick flakes. The baby was crying and could not be hushed. I was myself shivering in my thin, worn-out coat, when Christina again struck up,—to the old tune—the dire old story of the fur coat. Upon this I took her in my arms, drew the coverlet, which she had so ungraciously cast aside, tightly round us all three, and said out of a full heart, 'Christina, hatred kills and love warms and revives. Look here! the Lord has sent us this warm coverlet instead of the fur coat. As to my having given it to that man of God, Schuch, for that you must forgive me, since I did it unto the Lord. Therefore be, I entreat you,

good and kind again ; help me to bear my misfortunes in a patient and loving spirit, and do not increase them by your sinful wrath and grumbling !’ But anger and the demon of pride had formed a very thick crust over this formerly tender heart. With a sort of defiance she slipped out of my embrace, and began once more to cry and sob as if she and her little one were trying which could do it loudest and longest. Then at last my stock of patience was exhausted, and in an evil temper I leapt out of the cart, resolved rather to wade through deep snow beside Martin than to stay beside my self-willed, grumbling wife.

‘Master Jerg ! I believe your better-half is in a fit of the sulks !’ exclaimed Martin, half as an interrogation to me, half as a response to the deep sigh with which I took my place beside him. ‘Excuse my impudence, Reverend Pastor,’ continued he ; ‘you expounded the word of God most admirably to us, but how to deal with womankind . . . that you nowise understand !’

‘How so, Martin ?’

‘Bah !’ he replied ; ‘when women pout and grow unruly and cross, then one ought never to meet them with fair words and gentleness, but to have at them at once, like a thunder-storm by which the Lord God on high purifies the air. I have always managed my Barbara so ; when she pouts or howls I scold her right lustily, and then she creeps to the foot of the cross.’

But Martin spoke in vain. At Honau I too had tried scolding ; had preached most earnestly ; had made every experiment in the way of severity and solemnity ; but, alas !

I had failed to purify the air, and too often when I had said 'Peace, peace,' I had afterwards found there was no peace.

In the forest of Brumath we halted to give fodder to the oxen and make our broth. Martin lighted a great fire. The snow had ceased; the thick wood protected us from the cold wind, and when we had warmed ourselves at the fire, dried our wet clothes, and enjoyed our warm broth with thanksgiving, I began to feel somewhat comfortable. The infant too fell into a quiet sleep, after being refreshed by a good drink of milk and by getting well warmed. Christina's brow alone yet remained dark and cloudy, like the wintry sky overhead. 'Ah!' ejaculated I inwardly with a sigh, 'why do we so embitter life to one another?' A voice seemed to answer from above, 'Because we are all sinners, and we must learn to bear one another's burdens, if we are to follow that Saviour who bore our burden of sin on the cross!'

We were advancing but slowly, for in the newly-fallen snow the oxen had to break open a path for themselves,—a slow and laborious affair. As twilight gathered round us, it grew more and more weird and dismal, all the more that from time to time we heard the wolf's horrid howl. Christina lay with her baby on the litter,—whether awake or asleep I knew not, for since I had sued for peace, not one word more had she uttered. But soon it became so dark that Martin was obliged to halt, being unable to find out our way. He unyoked the oxen, and with the firewood he had collected at noon in the forest, he soon again lighted a fire. 'Now, your Reverence,' said he, 'as it is impossible for us to go

forward, we must wait till the day breaks. You remain with the cart ; I shall go to gather as much wood as I can find, that we may keep up our fire all through the night, to scare the wolves and to keep ourselves from being frozen.'

While I was sitting thus alone by the lurid glare of the fire, not one sound of love to be heard from the cart, but the baying and roar of wild beasts on all sides, a sensation of awe and dread crept over me. I prayed to the Lord, and cried aloud as I had never done in my life. But in God's holy word it is written : ' Call upon Me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me ' (Psalm l. 15). Suddenly, in the dark forest, I saw a glimmering light, and a loving, cheering, human voice called out : ' Ha ! hallo ! Jerg, are you there ? ' Joyfully did I jump up, and immediately I found myself in Hans Seitz's arms. He had come from Brumath with two horses, several men and a torch, to meet us, and by God's gracious guidance had actually found us out at once. That was a joyful meeting indeed ! For the moment at least all misery was forgotten. Even Christina sprang from her litter in the cart, as though inspired with a new life, fell on my neck, and exclaimed, with a flood of tears : ' Oh Jerg ! that was a dreadful time ! I expected to die—to be torn in pieces by the wolves with you and baby ! ' I pressed the poor, dear, trembling, little woman close to my beating heart, and said with deep emotion, ' Lord, I thank Thee ! ' The horses were now harnessed to the cart, into which I forthwith mounted with Christina and Seitz. The Brumath men went before us with the torch. Martin, who, on our calling him, had

soon returned, drove the weary oxen behind the cart, and now we went forward briskly, and soon arrived, exhausted and stiff with cold, but with warm and thankful hearts, at Brumath.

But my joy was to be of short duration. Dame Seitz and her father received us indeed with hearty sympathy, but at the same time with manifest embarrassment, and when I looked at the sour face of the mistress of the house, and glanced round at the chilly lumber-room, with a wretched straw couch in it, allotted to us as our abode, I perceived at once how the wind was blowing. Truly I could not now wonder at nor blame my poor Christina for her renewed complainings about the costly lost fur coat, and about all our hard fate. Piteous indeed were her lamentations, and a thoroughly sleepless night I had with her, to say nothing of our restlessness, being aggravated by uninvited guests in the shape of mice and rats.

Now Brumath being the home of Christina's aunt, Dame Cordula Hecker, a rich, childless widow, she came the next morning to see us, saluted me in the coldest, stiffest manner, but loaded Christina with demonstrations of love and sympathy, and pressed her to go with the infant to her house. I could not refuse my consent to this, for I clearly saw the impossibility of keeping the poor little one in that room, 'not fit for a dog,' as Dame Cordula remarked. Christina had, moreover, never asked my permission, but merely told me in a dry way, that she was to stay at her aunt's until I had found a suitable home. When she had accordingly departed with the infant, Seitz said to me, 'You should not

have yielded on that point, seeing that old Cordula is a sly and bigoted Papist ; she and my stepmother are birds of a feather, and both have attempted in concert all they possibly could to induce my poor Margaret to apostatize ; but, thank God ! she has stood firm to the gospel. Now they will try the same game with your Christina.'

'Alas ! alas !' exclaimed I, and thereupon I proceeded to recount the story of the unfortunate dispute about the fur coat, not omitting to tell how Christina, overpowered by distress, had fallen on my neck in the forest, and had nevertheless treated me ever since with cutting coldness.

The word of God warns us to 'let all bitterness be put away from us' (Eph. iv. 31). I shall accordingly hasten to pass over that dreary week at Brumath. Love, which 'beareth all things, believeth all things' (1 Cor. xiii. 7), might otherwise easily suffer shipwreck for ever amid the storms of my troubled heart. I shall only add that Aunt Cordula did, as my friend Seitz had foreseen, strike while the iron was hot, that is to say, avail herself of Christina's exasperation against me to work upon her mind, in concert with her own confessor, Father Boniface,—depicting to her in flaming colours the torments of hell which must be the lot of one guilty of a prohibited marriage with a perjured, renegade priest, so that she sent to tell me, the day before yesterday, by the above-named Father, that 'she had determined to return to the bosom of the Holy Mother Church, within whose pale alone salvation is to be found ; and that she could therefore no longer live with me in our sinful wedlock,

on which Heaven's curse weighed heavily.' She added that 'I need not trouble myself further about her, since Aunt Cordula was prepared to adopt her and little Sigismund (whom the Father took care to dub her "bastard child") as her own children.'

Fully had I anticipated this; yet now when the blow came, it did seem to annihilate me. I was resolved to avoid all needless exchange of words with the father-confessor, and rather to speak with my wife herself; I therefore hurried to her aunt's house. Dame Cordula received me politely, but intimated that it was impossible for her to take me in to see Christina, as she wished not to see me again, which indeed was the best thing for us both. Christina was suffering, she said, from fever, and much exhausted; the infant too, having caught cold on the journey, had been ill, but had become convalescent ever since his mother had come to the resolution of giving up our sinful connexion, and thus saving her own soul and her child's from everlasting perdition.' To dispute with Aunt Cordula would have been quite a work of supererogation. I said little in reply, only insisting on my right of seeing my wife and child. But all was in vain. Cordula was inexorable in her refusal, and I was obliged to depart without having gained my point. After my visit, Seitz also called, and he succeeded in forcing his way into Christina's room, where she lay in bed, with her baby in her arms. She reiterated, with a flood of tears, all that Father Boniface had said, adding that 'I must indeed leave her alone, for she neither would nor could see me again.' Brother Seitz, however, could not manage to

have any private conversation, as Aunt Cordula sat beside the bed the whole time.

‘And now, Jerg,’ said Seitz, when he returned to me and grasped my icy hand with kind sympathy, ‘act as a man, “cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved” (Psalm lv. 22). Pray for your poor deluded Christina; the Lord can turn her heart again into the right way. I do not know whether I may be mistaken, but I think possibly we might both be more free and more entirely consecrated to the Lord’s service if without wife or child; and I could almost take up the words of St. Paul, “So then he that marrieth (English version, “giveth *her* in marriage”) doeth well; but he that marrieth not (English version, “giveth *her* not in marriage”) doeth better”’ (1 Cor. vii. 38).

Alas! I know not whether I have done better—I only know that my heart bleeds and my life’s happiness is destroyed! I read over and over again the seven penitential Psalms (vi., xxxii., xxxviii., li., cii., cxxx., and cxliii.) so beautifully rendered by Luther into our noble German tongue: they do indeed afford me the best consolation, and I feel ashamed of calling myself a minister of the word and being so ignorant of the holy language of the original text. If I reach Strasburg I shall endeavour, as far as possible, to make up lost ground, by entreating Zell and Bucer to assist me in studying both Greek and Hebrew. Praying and working form the best antidote for my grief.’

Yesterday Martin arrived from Honau, and brought me the petition from the parishioners praying for an evangeli-

cal minister, which petition I was to present, at Strasburg, to the worshipful the Council.¹ Martin had learned all that had passed, and his hearty sympathy did me the greatest good. Gracious Lord, how rich in love I was formerly at my beloved Honau,—how happy in my quiet parsonage, at my homely fireside! And now—how poor, how solitary and forsaken! Do Thou, dear Lord, abide with me! Give me submission to Thy will! Grant me Thy peace in my great tribulation! If I did sin in entering into the holy state of matrimony, Thou wilt yet surely forgive me, for I did believe I was acting according to Thy word and commandments. I cannot tear Christina and the baby from my heart, for I do love them; but Thou dost also love them, and so I lay them both on Thy faithful and tender heart, blessed Saviour, and commend them to Thy hands, almighty and pierced for us!

This day, Sunday, was a day of rest for body and soul. I have spent it in writing these pages, which I shall commit to the care of Brother Seitz for the benefit of my son Sigismund, if he is spared to grow up, that he may know how and why he was deprived of his father. They are also written for thee, Christina, in case of my never seeing thee again on earth. I bid thee farewell without ill-will. May God bless you both! To-morrow Seitz and I are to take up our pilgrim's staff and go forth whithersoever the Lord may lead us! He is giving me grace to enable me no more to

¹ This touching and earnest petition is to be found preserved among Bucer's letters, and is also contained in Röhrich's *Evangelical Records*, vol. ii. pp. 18, 19.

look back, but rather forwards. UPWARDS, to that place where the crown shines, where we shall rest after our hot fight and hard struggle, and where He will Himself wipe away all tears from our eyes. May God grant this !

Written at Strasburg, in the Convent of St. Mark, on the First Sunday after Epiphany, in the year of grace 1526.

How wondrous are God's ways ! How much has happened in the four weeks since I wrote the history of the fur coat, and of all the hardships and sorrows through which I passed.

Now, I must finish this history to the praise of God, and for the instruction and edification of my son Sigismund, that he may know how the Lord can bless and comfort even in tribulation,—how He is the Lord our God who, from everlasting the same, made Himself known of old by that beautiful name, 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy and truth' (Exod. xxxiv. 6).

It was a fine winter morning, the air was pure, the sky clear, when I took my departure from Brumath, and hastened beside my friend, with a light step but a heavy heart, to cross the expanse of hard frozen snow that lay before me. We had, both of us, like Jacob when he crossed over Jordan, only the staff in the hand as our worldly all, and while Seitz occupied himself with our future prospects, and wondered how and where we should

find any post assigned us again in the Lord's vineyard, my trembling heart was full of the past, ever presenting itself so vividly before me. I was called to bid adieu to all my happiness in this life. It seemed as though with Christina and my little one the better half of my being had been torn from me with one dire wrench ; I felt so weary, so unstrung that I would willingly have died and gone home to my Lord.

Seitz, to whom I communicated my state of mind, remarked, 'That is not the genuine Christian home-sickness!' He laid me open to my own view, showing me how I was longing to go straightway to heaven, for the sake only of shirking the battle of life appointed for me. And he was right, my true and faithful friend. I had so firmly resolved to fix my gaze upwards, and yet here I was, like Lot's wife, looking back ! Oh how like a wavering reed, blown about by each breath of wind, are we even in our best resolves !

When, in passing through the forest, we had reached the spot where Seitz had found us before, where I had beheld the bright light, and for the last time pressed my poor wife to my heart, I begged my friend to suffer me to rest there a while ; I sank down on the mossy stone on which I had sat eight days before, where I had prayed so fervently and met with such a gracious answer. I wished to pray there again ; but, overpowered by grief, I could not resist burying my face in both hands and bursting into a flood of tears. Seitz wisely let me weep my full, and with the wood which Martin had gathered, and much of which was still lying

strewn near the ashes of our fire, he kindled a bright flame, which soon blazed and cracked merrily in the pure air.

I might have been sitting there about half-an-hour,—my burdened heart somewhat the easier for the relief of tears,—the fire already beginning to go down for want of fuel, when friend Seitz began to warn me that we ought to start. At the same moment it seemed to me that I heard the feeble cry of an infant, and immediately afterwards my ear distinctly caught hurried steps crackling on the crisp snow. Presently I descried a female figure darting towards us swift as an arrow. Before I could collect my senses she sank breathless at my feet with the exclamation, ‘Jerg, O Jerg! forgive me!’ Yes—it was indeed no dream, it was my own Christina, lost but found, whom, with little Sigismund clasped in her arms, I beheld lying at my feet! I raised her and folded her in my arms, never, if the Lord will, to part with her again so long as life lasts!

It was a blessed, but an overpowering time—such as no words can ever describe—such as I can never, never forget. Christina clung closely and tenderly to me like ivy to a tree, exclaiming again and again, ‘Oh! you will take me with you—you will forgive me in spite of all—will you not?’

When the agitation we all felt had calmed down, she related how yesterday, while Dame Cordula was at church, Dame Seitz came to her, spoke home to her heart, described my grief, and told her of my having left Brumath, intending never to return. ‘Then,’ added my poor wife, ‘when Margaret left me, it was as though scales fell from my eyes, and inwardly as though hot coals were burning in

my heart. That conscience which I had sought to stifle now spoke loudly and solemnly, setting all my sins in array before me, reminding me how I had plagued thee, my husband, on account of the fur coat, and made thee, in all our misery, yet more miserable still, and showing me how in departing from God's word I had been on the point of being guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, which can never be forgiven in this life or in that which is to come, for I had apostatized not from conviction but from anger about the fur coat, and from dread of Aunt Cordula and Father Boniface. And now conscience left me no rest : I must be up and go to thee, my poor Jerg, whom I had tormented so unpardonably, notwithstanding my having promised at God's altar that I would live to be a blessing and comfort to thee ! But Aunt Cordula must have noticed something about me, for never, that whole afternoon, did she let me be out of her sight, and I had not the courage to tell her that I had become sensible how wrong I had been, and wished to return to my duty. Yesterday evening, when Cordula went to bed, I wanted to slip out of the house, but found the house-door locked. It occurred to me moreover that Margaret's mother, were she to see me, might easily hinder our reunion. And so I lay awake all night, confessing my sins to the Lord, as you always used to exhort me to do, and praying to Him for His gracious pardon, and for deliverance and strength. My room was on the ground-floor, with a window opening upon the lawn. Before day began to dawn, I wrapped the child up in the warm coverlet given us by the magistrate's kind wife, and stepped

over the window-sill and garden-fence. It was not dark ; the mass of snow around gave a white, clear light. On the road I met the precentor of the choir going to the church to ring the bell for matins. I opened my heart to the good old man. He took me to his home, gave me a bowl of warm broth, and a drink of milk for the baby ; and then his son led me round behind the village into the forest, and would have accompanied me to Vendenheim, where I hoped to meet you, if we had not first perceived the smoke from your fire, and then found you here. And now,' added she, with every endearing epithet to appeal to my love and pity, and clasping her hands in a meek, imploring attitude, 'now you will take me back, and forgive me if you can ! Alas ! all the articles we brought from Honau I was obliged to leave at Aunt Cordula's, and she is hardly likely to be ever persuaded to give them up. Oh ! Jerg, I am a great sinner, and I have made you so poor and so unhappy !'

'Poor !—oh no, Christina ! Never in my life was I so rich as at this moment, when by the mercy of God I again hold in my arms both my wife and child !'

'*Bene, bene*, Dame Wickenhauer,' said Brother Seitz, striking in suddenly at this moment, 'now I do believe you are converted ! When pride is broken down then true repentance begins—that godly sorrow comes which worketh repentance not to be repented of.'

With Christina and the tender infant our journey of course proceeded far more slowly, and our cares and difficulties were greater than when Seitz and I were alone together. As we had no money to pay our way at the inn,

we did not wish to arrive at Strasburg at nightfall, and we therefore passed the night in an old acquaintance's barn at Vendenheim. Yes, truly, we were poor and helpless, yet I did feel so happy, so full of joyous confidence. What rejoiced me most was the equanimity with which Christina bore the hardships of the way. Instead of murmuring and complaining as I had been wont to hear her do of old, she continued good-tempered, kind and quiet, and when I pitied her, she answered gently, 'Oh! I deserved nothing better, and I am so thankful that I am permitted now to stay beside you once more.' Seitz assuredly must be right; now she is a converted woman, and whatever may have happened about it, the fur coat will have been a blessing to us for ever!

On our arrival at Strasburg we knew not to whom to turn, nor in what quarter the Lord might open for us a warm heart or a hospitable door. We determined therefore to go to Master Matthew Zell, to pour out to him our tale of sorrow, and to ask him for counsel and help. On reaching the Cathedral-Parsonage, Christina remained standing outside, shy and lacking the courage to go in. She said nothing, but I saw with what difficulty she restrained her tears, and heard her whisper to herself, with a deep sigh, 'Ah! it is a hard thing to beg!'

We were met on the threshold by a handsome young woman, with brilliant eyes full of a deep look of thought, such as I never saw equalled. It was Katherine Zell. She held out her hand with a friendly greeting, and we introduced ourselves to her by name. She immediately

exclaimed in a lively manner, 'You are heartily welcome ; I have heard of you. You have been driven forth from your homes for Christ's sake, and have therefore a sacred right to dwell under our roof and sit at our table ! Only,' added she with a smile, 'you must be contented with little, for the inn is too full !'

Her dear husband now joined us, whose reception of us as fugitives was truly fatherly. While I was replying to his sympathizing queries, Seitz told Dame Zell about Christina. I know not what he said, but with the exclamation, 'Oh, poor soul!' she flew down the steps, and soon returned bearing little Sigismund in her arms, and leading the weeping Christina by the hand. Oh good and well-beloved Zells ! May the Lord reward you in time and eternity for that hearty, loving welcome ! How much good it did to us poor homeless ones ! You were never forsaken, and yet so cordially did you gather in to you the unfortunate and the forsaken ! I could write volumes concerning all that I saw and learned in that blessed Cathedral-Parsonage, more especially regarding the spirit of true Christian love with which hospitality was exercised there. At dinner on that first day we sat down not fewer than thirty, almost all the party being fugitives, those driven away on account of their faith. My first impression was that Zell must be very wealthy to be able to receive and entertain all these people. But I soon found that it is LIVING FAITH, fruitful in good works, active in love, which knows well how to accomplish much with small means. I shall treasure up this lesson, and may

God grant me grace to exercise compassion even in my poverty !

As no prospect appeared of our soon being appointed to any posts, and yet Brother Zell in his parsonage had really a crowded inn, Seitz was in the meantime placed as deacon with Doctor Hedio, and an abode was assigned us in what was formerly the convent of St. Mark. Master Luke Hackfurth inhabited it with his excellent wife, both being engaged in arranging the large building as a general poor's-house. Man requires but little to be happy. We ate the poor man's meals at the home of these good Hackfurths, inhabited the great empty library, into which Dame Zell had caused a bed, a table and two chairs, to be put for us ; but on the table lay the dear Gospel and the writings of Luther which always more and more opened up to me a clear understanding of God's word. While I was deeply absorbed in the study of these, and under Bucer's guidance was also improving myself in Hebrew, my dear new-born Christina, now so thoroughly reconciled with me, sat at my side sewing industriously, while under the magistrate's wife's warm coverlet, tucked into a laundry basket, slept our little Sigismund as luxuriously as a prince in his splendid cradle. Oh ! these were lovely days of repose which we passed within that old convent's massive, silent walls, for we enjoyed peace in our hearts, and the firm assurance by faith, that the Lord who feeds the young ravens that cry, who clothes the lilies of the field, would likewise provide as a Father for our future. Christina had in the very early days of our Strasburg life, as she her-

self expressed it, 'confessed her sins' to Dame Zell, recounting to her the whole story of the fur coat. She had depicted herself certainly in the blackest hue, and over me, on the other hand, she had cast so bright a halo that every one treated me with a degree of respect of which I was very far from being worthy.

But we now most unexpectedly were honoured with a distinguished visit, that namely of the former patron of Christina's father, that squire of most noble pedigree (*Junker*), Fabian von Eschenau, the same who had caused the bear-skin to be made into the fur coat, and who was still magistrate at Wasselnheim. He had visited Master Matthew and his honoured spouse, and had heard from them of our being driven from our home. He now came to ask me whether I had sufficient courage to go to Rumolzweiler¹ as evangelist, to preach the word of God to the peasants there. Whereto I naturally responded with a glad assent. He did not, however, conceal from me, that I should there find no easy task, for although the majority of the inhabitants urgently implored that an evangelical preacher might be sent to them, the Roman Catholic party was strongly supported by the gentry, who were resolved not to pay the stipend of an evangelist, 'because he would not perform the mass, whereas the tithes were by law set apart for the maintaining of the mass and for the altars of the saints.' Now I was, he said, to go to Wasselnheim before Christmas, and there Junker Fabian was to be of great assistance to me in dealing with

¹ Now Romansweiler.

the patron of Rumolzweiler, Eucharius von Bock, with whom I must make a contract, according to which he was to insure me half of the stipend, because the Dean of the Cathedral had established the principle that 'the revenues of the Church were destined for the benefit, not of the lifeless altar or the stone building, but of the souls of the parishioners, for the purpose of providing for their spiritual necessities, to whatsoever religious belief they might be attached,'¹—and because Von Bock perceived that he could not possibly longer deprive the evangelical inhabitants of Rumolzweiler of the word of God.

Half of the stipend! It is small enough at any rate without the tithes and rates. 'That would indeed be a miserable pittance for us, who are so poverty-stricken already, and deprived of all our goods and chattels!' exclaimed I with a deep sigh, as I gazed sadly first at Christina, then at the baby. But my wife took my hand, pressed it to her lips with a look of reverence, as well as affection, and then gently answered: 'Go where God calls thee, and may He be with thee, dear Jerg! This very morning we read in the Gospel, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of" (Matt. vi. 8). He will know what to give us at Rumolzweiler also!' Oh! how did these words comfort and strengthen my heart! If only Junker Fabian had not been there, I must have embraced the dear soul instantly.

And the Squire himself was not unmoved. For a while he was silent, and then he passed his hand over his eyes, and

¹ Röhrich's *Evangelical Records*, vol. ii. pp. 23, 24.

said, in a warm and friendly manner : ‘ A good wife is more precious than gold and jewels ! Is there not something of this sort in the Proverbs of King Solomon, Master Jerg ? But,’—he added with a smile—‘ *your* costly treasure, your father’s fur coat, you have, of course, carefully preserved, and treated it with all honour, as it deserves ?’

Christina blushed crimson,—and I, if I am not mistaken, turned pale with fear. The squire looked at us inquiringly, and said, with, as it seemed to me, a slight cloud of displeasure visible on his brow : ‘ I should be vexed if I thought it had been sold and had passed into the hands of strangers.’

Hereupon I summoned courage at once, and related, though not without embarrassment, the whole tale of how I had given the fur coat to the martyr Schuch, and had since his death failed to learn what had become of it.

Once more Junker Fabian passed his hand across his eyes, then he laid it on my shoulder and said, still in a most kindly tone : ‘ You are a man after God’s own heart, Master Jerg, and I shall do all in my power to secure your being called to Rumolzweiler. Great indeed is the need there of one who can act as a herald of peace, soften the embittered spirits and unite them in the bonds of love !’

When he had gone, Christina burst into tears and said : ‘ Ah ! how gladly would I have told Junker Fabian all about my being to blame for our extreme necessity, since I left all our goods at Aunt Cordula’s, but somehow it stuck in my throat and I could not get it out. But you should have told him, Jerg, how grievously I sinned in that matter of the fur coat, and how much heart-sorrow I caused you !’

‘Yes, truly,—then I should have told him also how I had fondled and spoiled you, and acted a very Eli towards you, as if the sweet smile and bright glance of your eyes were more to me than the salvation of your immortal soul,’ I replied, and hereupon—the Squire being no longer present—I caught her in my arms to my heart’s desire. We had, after this, a long talk regarding the *pros* and *cons* of the position at Rumolzweiler. The strong, bold character of Christina’s faith put me to shame, and I was reminded of the Lord’s words, ‘The last shall be first.’ How had this dear soul, in so short a time, outstripped me in the flight heavenward! Joyously did we at last resolve in the Lord to go to Rumolzweiler, although fully foreseeing that there cares about daily bread, the lack of many comforts, and even hatred and renewed persecutions, awaited us.

A few days later a colleague of Master Matthew gave a great dinner, to which the Burgomaster, the Dean, all and sundry evangelical ministers, and even Seitz and myself, were invited. I wished not to go. What could I do in that learned and brilliant assemblage, with my ignorant homeliness, and my needy, threadbare apparel? Master Matthew, however, and Bucer too, stood to it that go I must, and even appear in my poverty-stricken clothing, for that it was desirable, nay, even necessary, that the true position and the trying necessities of the evangelists should be made patent to all.

Still Christina could not make up her mind to consent to her lord and master going in such a plight into this distinguished society. ‘The coat is almost transparent, and,

with all my industry, it is beyond my power to darn it respectably any longer,' she said piteously—and on this point she held a serious consultation with Dame Hackfurth. I twitted her about this, saying she had need to take care—the old man in her was contemplating slyly and stealthily to climb back to resume his throne! However, she answered, 'It was not pride, but a feeling of honour that made her wish me to be properly clad; seemly and respectable a minister of the word ought always to be, both as being right and lawful here below, and above all for God's sake.'

Upon the whole I was content to yield, and let her do as she liked. She had made me, with her notable sewing, a fine shirt with the linen brought to us, with other webs of stuff, by the good Dames Kräft, and this shirt she had also carefully washed and ironed. But when I was to dress for the banquet, my poor coat seemed more miserable than ever beside the new, snow-white shirt. Dame Hackfurth devised the plan of fetching me her husband's Sunday coat. But it so happens that Master Lux is short and spare, and I am tall and stout, wherefore in the borrowed coat, my long arms, projecting beyond the short sleeves, had so droll an effect that we all three fell to laughing heartily, and I was glad to take back my old and faithful servant the threadbare coat!

At that moment a knock was heard at the door. It was the post-runner, Simon, to tell us he had come from Wasselnheim, and was charged by Junker Fabian von Eschenau to give us many friendly salutations from him, and to deliver to us this little box. Christina and Dame Hackfurth pro-

ceeded forthwith to open it, and how great was our surprise! —we found within . . . neither more nor less than THE FUR COAT!

Agreeably surprised! nay rather in a sort of consternation of astonishment, Christina and I stood speechless and transfixed. Dame Hackfurth, however, as she unfolded the fur coat, cried out, ‘Ah! this has come at the right moment, and put an end to all our dilemma! It will do splendidly!’

‘Yes, yes,’ added Simon, ‘a fine piece of warm fur, Master Jerg! It will render you good service in this severe winter!’

Christina fell on my neck weeping like a child, and whispered beseechingly, ‘You have indeed forgiven me, Jerg, have you not?’ She then took the coat out of Dame Hackfurth’s hands, threw it over me, and exclaimed, smiling through her tears with childlike joy, ‘It becomes you so well, you must put it on, Jerg, for doubtless the Squire has sent it on purpose . . . but . . . what is that?’ she asked with a shudder, pointing with her finger to large stains of blood which shone like rubies on the lustrous silver-grey lining of the bear’s skin.

‘This is Brother Schuch’s farewell greeting!’ I answered with deep emotion, and an involuntary shudder ran through me.

Just then Seitz came to take me to the dinner. The news of our delightful surprise had reached him, and he had come to share our joy. ‘You must put it on, Jerg,’ said he. ‘It will be such a joy to Master Matthew to present you in this fur coat to all his brethren!’ I took it from my shoulders, stretched it on the bed, and said gravely, ‘Look

here at these spots of blood, Seitz, and then tell me if I can put it on?' He too seemed struck and solemnized, and for a good while we stood in silence, hand clasped in hand, gazing at these dumb witnesses, seals of our dear brother's precious faith, by which 'he being dead yet speaketh' (Heb. xi. 4). 'That is a glorious testimony which Schuch has bequeathed to us,' said Seitz at length solemnly, 'and the Lord calls to us, "FOLLOW HIM!"' Having so said, he offered up prayer aloud. A thoughtful spirit, indeed a deep solemnity, seemed spread over us all.

But now we were obliged to hasten to the dinner. No one thought more of my threadbare coat: I least of all.

On our way Seitz related to me how we were indebted to the exertions of our dear kind friend, Dame Katherine Zell, for the recovery of the fur coat. As the French Doctor Lambert of Avignon was in the habit of sending 'Biblemen' or colporteurs into France, to disseminate the Holy Scriptures and the Reformers' writings in his native land, Dame Zell had caused investigations to be made in Nancy, through one of these men. The jailer, to whom an application was made, informed them that 'after Schuch's execution he had put away the fur coat, because the deceased prisoner had repeatedly constrained him to promise to send it back after his death to the pastor at Honau, which hitherto it had not been in his power to do, since he himself, the jailer, having been deeply impressed after witnessing Schuch's patience at the rack, meekness towards his persecutors and joy in death, had thereby fallen under suspicion of heresy, and he had not dared to have dealings

with an evangelical minister, from dread of losing his situation.' He declared himself ready to deliver up the fur coat, if an indemnification was given to him, and strict silence on the subject maintained at Nancy. Fabian von Eschenau, to whom Dame Zell had mentioned the matter, gave the needful money. When, on the very evening of the clerical banquet, the coat so unexpectedly appeared, Dame Katherine instantly despatched it by a post-runner to St. Mark's, without noticing the stains of blood, as she had never lifted it out of the box.

We had made ourselves late, and the whole company was assembled when we arrived. The entertainment was truly princely. I was specially struck with the splendid display of silver plate on the side-board, and thought I never had seen anything so costly, even in the Episcopal Palace at Zabern. Seitz and I both felt ourselves out of our element in the magnificent assembly, and endeavoured to retire into the background. But Master Matthew stepped forward to receive us in a most friendly manner, and at once asked me why I had not put on the fur coat. When I told him my reason, he silently pressed my hand, and I saw a large tear glistening in his eye. Altogether he was, during all that evening, unusually silent and serious, taking no part in the lively discussions on the vexed question of the doctrine of the sacrament, into which Bucer, Capito, Hedio and the others all plunged deeply. Yet I should have been most thankful to hear his views in particular on the subject.

At table I was forced to sit beside Master Matthew, who

asked the master of the house as a favour that it might be so, and in consequence I was placed in circumstances of the greatest embarrassment. The result of all my dressing and undressing and dressing again, was that the right sleeve of my unhappy old coat was worn quite out, so that at the elbow Christina's new shirt peeped through. Now Master Matthew had of course a place of honour, and thus the whole table could, each time I moved in the least, see the hole in my sleeve. I sat as if on red-hot coals; in my embarrassment I grew more and more shy and awkward. The learned and distinguished guests, however, appeared never to perceive this, and treated me with great affability, more especially that gracious dignitary the Dean, who sat at the head and repeatedly addressed me. When dessert was served, the master of the house took a magnificent silver cup from the side-board, filled it with Rhenish wine and said: 'The Emperor Maximilian presented this cup to Doctor Geiler of blessed memory, after whose death it passed to his nephew, Doctor Wickgram, who, on leaving Strasburg and withdrawing to Ensisheim, left the precious cup to myself as a keepsake and memorial of his gratitude for faithful service and marks of friendship.' With these words he passed the cup round the circle, every one sipped a drop, admired it and praised the costly wine. Only Master Matthew did not admire it, and would, moreover, not taste the wine.

Meantime Zell's serious mood seemed involuntarily to have been caught by all the rest of the party, and when the splendid cup stood in the centre of the table, like a Roman

Emperor in his glory, a sudden awful silence reigned, till Master Matthew broke it by saying :—

‘ Dear and honoured brethren in Christ, you all know the beautiful legend of St. George, who once rode in the depth of a hard winter over the drawbridge of his castle, and seeing a naked beggar lying before the gate, took off his mantle, with his sword cut it right through the middle, and gave one half to the poor man to cover his nakedness. You remember how during that night the Lord appeared unto him in person, and said graciously, ‘ I thank thee, George, THOU HAST DONE IT UNTO ME !’ Now St. George was a rich knight, who assuredly possessed more than one cloak. Moreover he gave away only one half of the cut mantle, reserving the other for himself. But there sits beside me here another beloved George,—so humble and modest that he is ashamed because of his torn sleeve, over which the angels in heaven are certainly rejoicing,—who gave his only and valuable fur coat to our blessed martyr Schuch, before his imprisonment, keeping for his own use only that shabby, worn-out coat in which, four weeks ago, for the gospel’s sake, he was with his wife and child driven out from Honau.’

And here Master Matthew, to my great horror, related the whole story of the fur coat, softening down indeed greatly all that told against my poor Christina, but yet fully and accurately. I felt so oppressed with shame that all seemed black before my eyes, and I felt as it were a millstone grinding in my head, when, lo and behold ! to make matters worse, I saw all these distinguished gentlemen in

succession coming up to me, and was obliged to shake hands with one and all.

But the best was yet to come. After all was quiet again, our dear friend Zell spoke most beautifully,—with more power to the heart than I had thought any poor child of Adam could possess,—of the infinite love and compassion of the Saviour, adding, ‘If at this moment He were to appear in the midst of us, in His crown of thorns, with the marks of the nails in His blessed hands, and His pierced side, and were to ask us, “WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR ME?” oh! dear brethren, should we not blush with shame, and cast our eyes down to the ground by reason of all the splendour surrounding us here,—now, in these hard times, when so many faithful confessors of Christ are struggling with want and tribulation, pining in prison, or being persecuted and slain? “There is too much of the accursed stuff,” said the blessed Geiler, in one of his discourses, when inveighing against luxury, which he designated as “hellish grandeur.” Beloved brother, even here, in this thy house, there is too much of needless silver! Give it to the Lord; feed the hungry therewith; clothe the naked and house the homeless. Thus you will lay up treasure in heaven!’

Again a deep silence reigned round the sumptuous and glittering board. Then the master of the feast rose, held out his hand to Zell, and said, with manifest emotion, ‘Brother, thou hast opened mine eyes! I thank thee, and I will do even as thou hast said.’

Thereupon Capito and Bucer offered up prayer, and we all sang,—

‘May God be merciful to us and bless;’

after which we broke up in a recollected and solemnized frame of mind.

On the following day I was obliged to go to Wasselnheim, to settle with Squire Eucharius von Bock concerning the post of evangelist at Rumolzweiler. The cold was severe ; my coat was torn ; so I was obliged, although inwardly I felt the thing go against me, to put on the fur coat. Christina and Dame Hackfurth had removed the bloody stains by some acid. At first I was annoyed at this, which appeared to me a sort of sacrilege. Soon, however, I came to a better mind regarding it, perceiving that the same feeling which now animated me, had gradually in the Church led first to the veneration and afterwards to the adoration of relics.

The fur coat did warm my poor limbs through and through. Under its shelter it was wonderfully easy to travel over ice and snow ; and while feeling so comfortable myself, I thought with love and tenderness of the beloved friend now wearing the crown promised to 'him that overcometh.'

At Wasselnheim I concluded, in presence of good Junker Fabian and the local magistrate, an agreement with Eucharius von Bock, by which he pledged himself to secure to me half of the annual revenues belonging to the incumbency of the church of Rumolzweiler, and I promised to enter upon its duties at the close of this present month of January. May God grant me grace to fulfil them with His holy aid, faithfully and to the best of my ability in every way ! Amen. I shall find a difficult task before me

at Rumolzweiler ; and little indeed is to be expected in the way of good-will from the landed gentry in particular, as the feudal lord gave me plainly to understand at Wasselnheim. At the same time, I also equally plainly perceived that the thirst for the word of God is great among the dear parishioners, and it was manifestly shown when Eucharius von Bock introduced me to the elders of the church at Rumolzweiler. And so, the Lord my God being with me, I shall take heart and go forward boldly to my work. The bare walls of the parsonage did indeed alarm me, as we had not any furniture wherewith to fill it. But while retracing my steps to Strasburg, I turned the matter over in my mind, and asked myself whether it would not be better to leave Christina and the infant in St. Mark's, till winter should be over, and to go alone to my new home, rather than expose them to enduring all the hardships that must await us there. But oh, how had our gracious God already loaded us with blessings beyond what we could ask or think, putting to shame my unbelieving fears !

I had been constrained to promise that I would be at Strasburg again on Christmas Eve, and had therefore made all possible haste to be able to keep my word. When I arrived at St. Mark's, Christina came forward to meet me, radiant with joy as though transfigured, and Dame Hackfurth seemed also gladsome and elated. I was about to begin at once to report progress, but my tale was all unheeded. They could not listen to anything—could only hurriedly drag me into the old convent library. There I found all brightly illuminated, and the whole room full of

Christmas boxes (*eine ganze Bescheerung*);—beds, household furniture, garments, linen, victuals, every necessary of life, even including our own goods and chattels which we had carried with us from Honau; all arranged in beautiful order. I gazed with amazement at this splendid array of things, and at the first moment almost thought I was in a dream. But Christina laughed and cried in the same breath, and in her gladness fell first on my neck, then on Dame Hackfurth's, then lifted baby Sigismund high up in the air. He was full of glee at the sight of the multitude of little lighted tapers, and was stamping with his little feet, clapping his hands and hurrahing with all his might.

But who had prepared this glad surprise for us? To whom was our warm gratitude due for this most seasonable and unexpected help? The Lord had blessed those words which Master Matthew Zell had said at the banquet. The master of the feast had given his 'needless silver' to the Lord, and a part of the proceeds he had expended on relieving our great necessities. From whom our dearly-beloved Katherine Zell had received the money to redeem our own goods and chattels from Aunt Cordula (who doubtless set a sufficiently high price upon them), that was a point which we never could ascertain. But the Lord, who had counted our tears and watched our joy, He will assuredly not leave our known or unknown benefactors unrequited, for blessed, thrice 'blessed, are the merciful.'

Thus then we are ready, with heart-felt gratitude towards God and man, to take up our abode at Rumolzweiler, where Christina longs to be a minister's wife, a mother of

the flock after God's own heart, after the example of the beloved Katherine Zell. God grant that it may be even so ! 'And now, Jerg, only look !' exclaimed she ; 'look at this store of meal ! How much bread I shall be able to bake with this when we go to our new home, to feed many a hungry fellow-creature and make meal-broth for many a poor sick person ! But you, dear husband, you must wear the fur coat. It will keep you so delightfully warm, and will remind me that I must WATCH AND PRAY ! And you too, Jerg, must help me in this. You must never again spoil me, but rather be strict if I should fall again into any of my old evil tricks ; for . . .'

'To will is present with thee, but how to perform that which is good thou knowest not. Is it not true, dearest soul ? Is it not even so with me too ? Therefore let us both trust in and keep close to Him who "forgiveth all our iniquities, who healeth all our diseases," whose strength is made perfect in weakness,—to Him who is and was and is to come, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever ! Amen.'

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