SCHWESTER ANNA

FELICIA BUTTZ CLARK

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A Tale of German Home Life

BY

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SCHWESTER ANNA.

CHAPTER I.

"Gottestreu."

THE sun is just rising over the hill behind "Gottestreu," where the apple trees are now covered with rosy bloom. The chickens in the small yard near the house are greeting its warm rays with shrill cries of delight. Poor Frau Scharf, a nervous invalid lady now occupying "Zarpath," the best room in the house, is driven nearly out of her senses by these demonstrations in the poultry yard. She has just fled from her city home to escape the noise; but has found that in all parts of God's world living creatures abound, and where there are living creatures there are always sounds expressive of either joy or grief. As the rays of the sun penetrate the windows in the upper stories of the building, a fresh, clear voice calls: "Schwester Amalie! Schwester Paula! Do you not see that the beautiful sun is giving you a morning greeting? Come! It is time to be up and about."

At this call the two women rise quickly and

dress themselves. In a very short time they come down the oak staircase and busy themselves with the day's duties. The fragrant odor of coffee quiets the excited nerves of Frau Scharf, and the noise of the chickens is stilled by a liberal breakfast.

"Gottestreu"—Faithfulness of God—stands on a side hill, close by the small village of Neuenhain, in the Taunus Mountains. Built in imitation of a Swiss cottage, having broad verandas and low-hanging roofs, it adds picturesqueness to a scene which is already charming. The small village is interesting in itself. Beneath its long avenue of tall and stately poplars comfortable benches invite the weary travelers to rest. Its red-tiled houses, whose plastered walls are covered with irregular designs formed by beams of dark wood, are crowded up against each other as though the occupants feared the same foes that threatened their forefathers centuries before and forced them to seek strength in union. Its curious church, with odd gables and old gray walls, looks down upon the quiet town.

On the left of the avenue of poplars, not far from an old pump where the villagers were wont to draw water years ago, but which now stands idle and covered with moss, a narrow

path descends a steep hill. It passes along patches of bright, green grass, where a few daisies and plenty of buttercups are blooming, until it reaches the gate of "Gottestreu." Then it winds on down another little hill and joins the broad yellow road which passes around the back of the house. Three stone steps lead from the gate to the garden of "Gottestreu." All around is a mixture of beauty and usefulness. Here is a bed of azure flags, there a bunch of lettuce; here some laughing pansies, there a prosaic cluster of cabbages. Along the fence a cherry tree has been trained; its branches having been twined in and out while they were young and supple, until now they cover the rough boards. The blossoms have already shed their white petals, and tiny green cherries are forming, promises of clusters of red richness later on. Paths wind in and out among beds of flowers and vegetables, of fragrant roses and tender seedlings. Two summer houses, covered with climbing vines, look inviting and restful. Right in front of the house is a bed of gravel, kept in perfect order. Every morning early Schwester Paula does as she is doing now—rakes it until it is as smooth as a floor and carefully picks up every bit of paper or tiny leaf that has fallen on it.

A loud-ringing bell startles Schwester Paula, and she hurries through the broad doorway. Inside all is cool and pleasant. On the left is a long room, lighted by two large windows. Its floor is of hard wood, guiltless of carpet and spotlessly clean. In one corner stands a dark-brown porcelain stove, in another is an organ, above which hanging bookshelves hold some Bibles, hymn books, and a few other volumes. Near one window a table stands. It is covered with newspapers, all in the German language, some of which have found their way across the ocean from America. On one side of the room is a large sofa. A good clock marks the flight of time, and various verses of Scripture, prettily illuminated, decorate the well-papered walls. This is the dining room of "Gottestreu." And what is "Gottestreu?" It is the rest home for the Methodist deaconesses in the German Fatherland; the home to which they come when worn and weary with caring for the sick and dying, with cheering and comforting the poor and needy. It is the house where the deaconesses are received when convalescent, and where those whom they nurse are sometimes sent to breathe the pure country air.

At the head of the table sits a woman of

possibly fifty years, with hair as white as snow. A white cap, tied under the chin with a broad bow, brings out the sweetness of her face. Her blue and white cambric dress, with a little shoulder cape, is finished at the neck with a deep, white collar. Reverently she lifts her hand, and they all bow their heads. "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and bless the food thou hast given us. Amen," comes in the German from her lips, and then the women begin drinking their hot coffee and eating the fresh rolls, still warm from the oven of the village baker. There is no man at the table. The head sister, Schwester Lena, two others who assist her with the work, and a visiting deaconess, in whose sunken face one sees already the marks of death, are all that are in the house at present, for it is only the last of May.

"Well, sisters, there is plenty of work to do to-day, is there not?" says Schwester Lena.

"Yes, indeed," replies one of the other deaconesses. "For outside of its being Saturday, when there is always so much to be done to get ready for the holy Sabbath, we must clean that corner room and get it ready for Schwester Anna."

"O, my dear, not one of us has forgotten that she comes to-day. Dear girl!"

"Who is Schwester Anna?" asked another deaconess, who had not been long in the Society of Bethany.

"I forgot that thou didst not know her, Schwester Paula," replied the older woman. "Schwester Anna comes from Frankfort, where she has been a deaconess for five years. There is no one of us who has done more to help on the cause of our Saviour than she has. She has given up a beautiful home to live among the poor. She is not only lovely in person, but in heart. Thou, as a beginner, wilt do well to imitate her in every way. Let us give thanks, sisters." Then with a short prayer the early breakfast was finished, and each one went to her work.

"I am anxious to see Schwester Anna," said Paula.

"Well, she is a good woman," responded Amalie; "but it does seem sometimes as if some folks had all the good looks and got all the credit for making sacrifices, when some others never get any credit for anything." She wiped away a tear, for poor, plain Schwester Amalie did not possess the quality of being attractive, and, as she said truly, did not always get a full reward for her good deeds. Her body was frail and her labor hard.

Paula, on the other hand, was a happy-go-lucky girl, strong of body and excellent for housework, but, alas, with very little aptitude for the finer work of nursing. She was more disposed to jerk the poor, weak patient out of bed, in the exuberance of her spirits, than she was to move him quietly and gently. On this account, she was still on probation, and the puzzled head of the society had sent her out into the country to help Schwester Lena with the housework, while he meditated on the best thing to do with this very willing but too active sister.

CHAPTER II.

A Day of Work.

"I MUST make some 'nudeln' for to-morrow's dinner," said Schwester Amalie, as she passed into the pleasant kitchen with "Salem" written over the door in old German characters. It had been a pretty idea of some one when this rest-home was built, to put Bible names over the door of each room, and thus call down a blessing on those who entered.

Amalie worked the flour and eggs and water together with a skillful hand. She added some other ingredients to the mixture, rolled the paste out very thin, cut it into narrow strips, and put it away in the closet. To-morrow it would grace the dinner table, and praises would be showered upon Amalie, who was an excellent cook.

"And I must go up and dress Fraulein Krumm, and take Frau Scharf her breakfast," said Paula. "Ach, du liebe zeit!" (which phrase in German means, "O dear!" but is a great deal more expressive.)

Schwester Lena was just coming in the door and heard this long-drawn sigh.

"Schwester Paula, how canst thou speak

so?" she cried, sorrowfully. "That is our work."

"I know it, Schwester Lena, but I would rather carry water for the garden all day than dress Fraulein Krumm. But I'll do my best," and Paula went sadly up the stairs. Doubtless Fraulein Krumm wished she had been sent to water the garden instead of to dress her, for though Paula tried very hard, her large hands could not arrange the old lady's silvered hair in the smooth bands in which her soul delighted, and the stumbling feet would so frequently knock against the gouty ones. However, it was finished at last, a shawl was wrapped around the invalid, a broad hat shaded her face, and with the aid of Paula's strong arm and a stout cane she was assisted out on the veranda and comfortably settled in an armchair.

As the two women stepped out of the door they involuntarily drew a long breath. What a glorious day it was! All down the valley were small fields of grass, some light, some dark, some mown, some with grass so tall that the light breeze moved it in long waves. Here and there the peasant women in their short dresses were cutting the hay and binding it into sheaves to bear away on their heads.

Several tiny gardens were being industriously cultivated by their owners, who were principally women, for the men were off at harder labor. Away down the hill lay Soden, where the famous springs are; across the plain were three other small towns, whose red-roofed houses were shining in the sunlight. Clear across the wide valley, on the left, shone the towers of Frankfort, and far away on the right were the green mountains of the Odenwald, where the ruins of the once magnificent castle of Heidelberg keep watch as the centuries roll by. Off to the right of "Gottestreu" lay a deep chestnut wood with glints of sunshine piercing its heavy shadows. Up through the village, on the left, under the quivering shade of the graceful poplars, came the huge, yellow post wagon, whose driver, in his queer round hat and uniform of two centuries ago, was blowing his bugle horn melodiously to let Neuenhainers know that the "Emperor's post" had arrived. Up in the tall church steeple the bell struck ten clear strokes.

"How I wish I could walk!" said Fraulein Krumm. "It seems to me as if I shall die, living out my life in this way, sitting from morning till night, helpless and alone." The poor lady's lips trembled. Hers was, indeed,

a hard fate; crippled and swelled with gout in both hands and feet, she was wandering from doctor to doctor, from place to place, seeking health, but finding it not.

"It does seem hard," said Paula, "when the dear Lord has put so many beautiful things in the world, that you shouldn't have a chance to go around and see them. But you do good to others by your suffering, for it teaches them to be patient and thankful. Here I am, just as strong as can be, and I can't seem to do anyone any good, nor even to do my duty as I might. I have hurt you and bothered you this morning and you never said a word. But I must go to Frau Scharf," she added, before Fraulein Krumm could enter a word of remonstrance.

Thus the day wore on. One sister worked in the heat of the kitchen, the other hoed in the garden, scrubbed the halls, cleaned the rooms, while the presiding genius of the house was everywhere, reprimanding and overseeing all judiciously. On Saturday there was double work to be done, for these simple-hearted Christian women took the Scripture injunction concerning work on the Sabbath literally, and by Saturday night all must be finished.

The invalids were helped down stairs to eat

dinner in the airy dining room. The afternoon passed away; the sun crept around to the other side of the house, then went lower and lower until it neared the horizon. The heavily loaded hay wagons, drawn by a team of cows, toiled up the hill on their homeward journey. A barefooted girl came around the corner of the house carrying a large pail of warm, fresh milk for supper.

"Why, I do believe it is nearly time for that train to come," exclaimed Schwester Lena. "What time is it, Schwester Amalie?"

"Just seven," was the reply.

"Then I must hurry and change my dress, or I shall not be ready. Hast thou put fresh linen and a bunch of bluebells on the table? Thou knowest Schwester Anna loves bluebells. Hast thou fried the cutlets and dressed the salad? Thou must do all well to-night."

"I have done all," said the weary voice of Amalie, and she added to herself, "Ah, me! I wonder who will ever make so much fuss over me?"

When the older woman had put on her soft black cashmere gown, with its short, round cape and spotless linen; she came out on the veranda to look. At seven-twenty the train would be due at Soden, and fifteen minutes

before it arrived it could be seen across the valley. Yes, there it was. A tiny wreath of smoke was floating away on the wind, now it was possible to see a black, snaky object moving irregularly from village to village; now it had stopped at Sulzbach, and there it waits five minutes to let out a crowd of workmen and allow the up-train for Frankfort to pass; it is coming on, one can see the cars; it has reached Soden, and the white smoke rises in masses as the tired engine rests from its labors.

Schwester Lena is getting quite excited. Her cheeks have a pretty rosy color in them, and her eyes are tender and soft. Her "Liebling" is coming nearer every moment. She has now had time to reach the post office, where the *diligence* waits; but they are always so slow in Soden. At last the faint sound of the post horn is heard far down the hill. It comes nearer. The yellow wagon, drawn by its old, fat horses, toils slowly up the steep hill between the poplar trees; it is in front of the inn of the "Three Bears;" it has stopped. Yes, there is the white cap, and the black dress is plainly visible as a woman comes along the narrow path up to the front gate.

The head sister does not move from her position on the veranda. It is for the young

woman to come to greet her; it would be undignified to rush to meet her guest, but her heart rejoices as she sees the slender figure approaching swiftly. A moment more and soft arms are about the elderly woman's neck, fragrant kisses are showered upon her cheeks, and a melodious voice asks: "Art thou not glad to see me, dear Schwester Lena?"

"Indeed I am, my dear; but now thou must come in and rest, and see the other sisters."

"Who are here now?"

"Schwester Amalie, whom thou knowest, and a new sister, Paula. Thou must lend us thine aid with this young sister. Thou wilt see that she needs thee."

So they go in to the cutlets and the salad. As they eat, Schwester Paula steals frequent glances at the newcomer. She sees a face full of peace—the peace of God. It is a face showing lines of care and sorrow; a face that bears the marks of suffering. The forehead is broad, white, and rather low. The soft, light hair is parted and combed down as smoothly as possible under the white cap. But it is not possible to control and regulate the little curls that creep out and soften the outline of the sweet face. The features are regular, eyes are a soft dark blue, shaded with long lashes, and the

mouth is firm and clear-cut. When she smiles she discloses a few dimples, which are not considered a requisite when a deaconess is chosen. Her chief beauty is her hand, white, shapely, and strong. Schwester Paula stares so hard that she forgets that her mouth is wide open until she meets the full gaze of Anna's large eyes and sees the dimples appear.

The deaconess work in Frankfort forms the chief topic of conversation at supper. Then, as the shadows fall, the Bibles are brought, a chapter in the gospel of St. John is read, one of the dear old German hymns is sung by these sweet-voiced women, and then Schwester Lena says: "Schwester Anna, wilt thou pray?"

They all kneel reverently, and like music the prayer arises to God. It is perfectly simple, perfectly childlike, but their hearts are lifted freely to God, and his blessing rests upon the worshiping women.

"I never heard anything like that prayer," murmured poor Paula, to herself; "God seemed to be right there in the room."

Soon the bell on the old church rang out the curfew. Schwester Paula crept around quietly, gathering up the shoes to clean them, in order that there should be less to do on the Lord's Day, and night fell on "Gottestreu."

CHAPTER III.

Sabbath at Neuenhain.

[The Journal of Schwester Anna.]

Neuenhain, May 21.

AT last I feel at rest! During the past three months I have seen so much sorrow, so much pain, that it seemed as if my heart were filled with a weight of care; that I was bearing the sufferings of this poor world on my shoulders instead of leaving them to the dear, loving Saviour, who has "borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

Here at Neuenhain all is quiet and peace. Schwester Lena has given me one of the rooms on the top floor; "Hermon" is the name, restful in itself. The peaked roof slopes down on either side of my room, and in an alcove under it stands my narrow bed, draped in snowy white. From my window I can look far away across the plain, and see the river Main winding back and forth through the valley. This morning early I heard the church bells ring for mass, and at the same time a little bird, perched on the cherry tree in front of my window, sang me a morning greeting. I got up and stood at the window, looking out upon

the beautiful things which God has given us—at the wonderful mingling of green and blue, of brown and gray, all covered with a glory of golden sunlight. Could I do less than kneel down and thank him for allowing us to live in such a lovely world? And then my thoughts went back to my city home, to the dark streets, the overcrowded rooms, the sickness, and the sorrow, and I prayed for those who never had seen this landscape, and whose hearts never had been filled with the sunshine of God's presence.

Soon the dear voice of Schwester Lena called, "Schwester Anna, art thou ready? The coffee is on the table," and I hurried down.

Now, on Sunday morning we have a feast at "Gottestreu." Instead of our customary rolls Schwester Amalie makes delicious "butterkuchen," with a sprinkling of sugar and cinnamon on the top, and very good they are too. It is also the custom, I find, to have a short prayer service after the coffee. It was very enjoyable. We sang several of our good old hymns, and then each of us prayed. I was especially pleased with Schwester Paula's prayer. It was very simple and plain, but I am sure that she has a good heart under all her uncouthness, and that she will yet be a blessing to our work.

Schwester Amalie called after me, as I was going up to my room, "Schwester Anna, wilt thou go to church with us?" I gladly replied, "Yes."

So we went down the little path and up the steep hill to the old church. They have a curious way here of utilizing this one place of worship for both Catholics and Protestants. Just as the bell had called the pious Catholics to early mass at five o'clock, it now notified all good Lutherans that service would soon begin. We Methodists attend the Lutheran church when we have no service of our own, and we took our places with the others.

How my mind reverted to former years as I sat on the straight, wooden bench and heard the singing of the Psalms! The boy-choir was shouting heartily: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." I could not help thinking of that old church in Wittenberg, long years ago. My mother sat near me, my father was on her other side; across the aisle sat Gottfried Herrmann, my childhood's playmate. We were all singing, just as to-day, "The earth is the Lord's," "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." But the vision

soon passed. My father I shall never see again in this world; my mother sits alone in the old home; and Gottfried, my fair-haired, sunny-faced friend—where is he? It seems as if my heart would break, if it were not for the love of our Father in heaven.

"Schwester Anna," whispered Paula, "hast thou noticed the image of the virgin, decorated with colored paper flowers, up behind that iron railing?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Well, that is where the priest says mass, but thou seest that Pastor Frombach does not enter there; he conducts his service this side of it. See, there come the pastor's family now, going into that funny little box. They say he has at least five hundred thousand marks, but his daughters don't"—

"Hush! Schwester Paula," said Amalie. "Canst thou not cease thy talking even in church? Thou hast disturbed Schwester Anna greatly."

"O, no! indeed she has not," I hastened to reply, for I felt that it was a good thing to have my vain imaginings and longings interrupted.

Since my Gottfried went away to America I have tried to know as much of that country as possible, and have read a good many books

about it. An American lady in Frankfort, whom I was nursing, lent me a book called *Hyperion*, a most beautiful description of our beloved fatherland, in which Mr. Longfellow says: "Look not mournfully into the past; it comes not back again. Wisely improve the present; it is thine. Go forth to meet the dim and shadowy future without fear and with a manly heart." This I must try to do. But I fear that my mind wandered during the pastor's long discourse, and I was glad when we were home again.

On alternate Sundays one of our preachers comes to Neuenhain and holds service for our little company of Methodists in a small room. As this was the day when there is no meeting, we three sisters went out in the afternoon and walked through the chestnut grove, up into the grain fields. The cornflowers and poppies have not come yet, but it will not be long before the bright blue and scarlet blossoms will mingle their colors with the yellow grain.

"Dost thou know, Schwester Anna, that there is much suffering among the poor even here in Neuenhain?" asked Paula. "The drought has been very bad this year, and the poor peasants are cutting their grain while it is green, to provide food for their cattle."

"Yes," added Amalie; "it is even so. And thou wilt notice the little patches of garden, how dry they are, and see how the ground is cracked here in the grain fields."

I could see the fissures in the dry earth. We city people, while enjoying the beautiful clear air of this month, have not realized that it might mean poverty and ruin to some persons.

"Look now," said Paula, "and thou wilt see Frau Craper carrying down the pails of water to sprinkle her few lettuce and potato plants. The peas, too, are just up. They grow very slowly in this dry weather. I went to see her yesterday, and she said that her back ached all the time. I offered to rub it for her with some liniment, but after a short time she begged me to stop. She said I rubbed so hard that the skin would soon be rubbed off."

"What didst thou do then?" I asked, being much interested in this odd sister.

"O, I stopped, for I knew my hand was a little rough. Really, though, I meant to help her, and I thought the best way to do that was to water her garden for her."

"Well, thou wilt not get much time for that. Thou hast all thou canst do now to water our garden. It almost kills me to help thee," said Amalie.

"I can manage it. I went out last evening, after I had finished all the work, and gave the poor plants a better drink than they have had in a long while. And to-morrow morning, if I get up an hour earlier, I can do it before Schwester Lena is awake."

"Do so, if thou wishest," rejoined Schwester Amalie; "but our own work is all that I can do."

"Thou canst nurse, and I can't," responded Paula. "But, thank God, I can at least carry the heavy weights for the weak ones."

I am very glad to meet Schwester Paula. She has a noble character, I am convinced.

Just as we were nearing home, Schwester Amalie returned again to the subject of the dry weather. "I am sure we shall have sickness this summer, after all the drought. Thou wilt need all thy strength, Schwester Anna."

"Why dost thou think so?" I asked.

"It is always so. If we do not have the cholera this summer, I am a poor prophet."

"The cholera!" called Schwester Lena's voice. "Schwester Amalie, I am astonished that thou shouldst even suggest it to Schwester Anna, who is already so worn out with work. Thou art ever looking on the dark side of things. Come into the house, sisters. It is getting cool, now that the sun is down.'

The sun had gone down behind the hill, but the soft twilight lingered, and the air was fragrant with the delicate odor of apple blossoms.

"Schwester Lena may say that I am a dark prophet; but thou wilt see. Before the summer is past there will be calls for nurses for cholera patients."

"If so, I shall go," said Paula. "I am sure that my strong arms would be of use there."

"It would scarcely be any use for me to go, for I should be sure to catch the cholera," responded Amalie. But, as ill luck would have it, Schwester Lena heard the last word, and Amalie was hurried off to get the supper on the table.

This evening we sat on the veranda, singing some of our twilight hymns, and watching the light twinkle all over the valley. Across at the inn of the "Three Bears" a merry party was singing a "Volkslied," and answering voices came from the hill behind our house.

This is my first entry in my new journal. It is for you that I write it, mother. I have not forgotten your request that I should begin it, although I have waited until my vacation, in order that I might have more leisure time in which to write. You told me it would be a comfort

to you, and perhaps a help to others, to read something of the life of a Christian deaconess. You asked me also to write an account of my life, so that anyone, into whose hands these pages might fall, in after years, could obtain a connected look at my surroundings and influences in my girlhood. I fail to see that my simple story can do any good, for it is like that of so many others—just the life of an ordinary woman—but as you wish it, I will do it.

When I think of living over again those years, of committing to writing the thoughts and purposes of my life, my joys and sorrows, my heart fails me. To-morrow I will begin it. To-night, let me listen to the singing as it comes to me on the warm air. I feel that God is leading me, and has led me all these years. "The earth is the Lord's" and all "they that dwell therein."

CHAPTER IV.

Anna's Story.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago I was born at Wittenberg. Mother has told me of the many bright sayings that my family admired, but my memory does not go so far back as that. Since I can remember my career has been an extremely commonplace one. I have indistinct recollections of walking through a dark street where the houses seemed to reach almost to the sky, for I was such a tiny creature, and of playing near my mother as she sat in our summer house knitting gray stockings for my father. Dear father! how well I remember his sitting with us and watching mother with lovelit eyes as she went about her work so quietly and gently.

My father was a printer, and, as so often happens in our towns and villages, he had inherited the business from his father and father's father. The line of printers extended far back to the sixteenth century, when my ancestor, Hans Lufft, an honored patriarch of Wittenberg, printed for Dr. Martin Luther the Bible in our own tongue. We have a copy, very old and worn, and very valuable, they say, which our great ancestor owned and from which he

used to read daily, while his wife and children, in their quaint dress, listened earnestly to the book which was so new to them.

What a cause for thankfulness we have that Dr. Luther gave to our nation a Bible! And I cannot help feeling a little proud that the man who, by printing it, helped to multiply the copies of the Scriptures, was of our race. He printed more than one hundred thousand copies of the Bible, and for sixty years was an intimate friend of the great reformer. A dingy painting of Hans Lufft, made by his friend, Lucas Cranach, hung for many years in our best room. He is represented as having a pleasant, benevolent countenance; he wears a broad fur cap and has his beard curiously braided. We kept the picture until it was placed in a collection of portraits of eminent printers.

Many an evening after my mother and I had helped Gretchen, our maid, to put away the supper things, we would bring our knitting and sit down by the old porcelain stove. While we worked busily, my father would light his long black pipe and lean back in his armchair. If he said nothing, but sat meditating, I often ventured to ask: "Father, wilt thou not tell me about the old stove?"

Sometimes he answered gently: "Not to-

night, daughter." But more frequently he would lay down his pipe and tell me to draw my stool closer.

"Then I can smooth thy hair, my daughter, thy beautiful hair, so like thy mother's when she was thine age. Ach, Martha, dost thou remember those days when we played together?"

"Just as Gottfried and I do now, father?"

My father smiled, but did not answer. Then he softly smoothed my flaxen braids. I never thought my hair pretty, but father did, because it resembled mother's. And Gottfried—yes, Gottfried—called it melted gold when the sunshine touched it with its illuminating rays while we were playing in the garden; but Gottfried was only a boy and did not know much.

"And so thou wilt hear once more the story of the old stove?"

"Yes, father."

"I should think thou wouldst tire of it. Thou rememberest thy grandfather, Anna, but my grandfather thou didst not know. He was a fine old man, and, it is said, greatly resembled one great-great-grandfather, the honored Hans Lufft." Here my father never failed to press his hand to his breast, while with the other he gave a respectful military salute.

"Years and years ago Hans Lufft owned this

stove," he continued. "Dost thou not see the figures of the evangelists wrought in the dark brown tiles, and the emblems of the arts and sciences in these lighter colored blocks? They are exactly like those in the stove now standing in the old monastery. Dr. Luther bought that one for Catharina, his bride, when they went to housekeeping there."

"Tell me quickly, father," I cried, for he was deep in meditation. Any reference to the Reformation times seemed to carry him back to the days of his youth, when he, too, listened to stories as he sat near his father.

"Hans Lufft's son was very fond of a young maiden, Käthchen Krafft, who lived across the street from his father's handsome house. Käthchen was good and sweet, but her father was the village baker, and it would never do to have the son of a printer marry into such a family. So, when Hans announced that he loved Käthchen and asked his father's permission to make her his wife, there was a great deal of trouble. The mother wept, for she loved her son dearly. When Hans Lufft found that his boy was determined to marry Käthchen he said: 'Very well. Go thine own way, my son, and I will go mine; but not a groschen will I leave thee, and thou must care for thy dowerless bride.'

"'She is not dowerless, father, she is beautiful and true-hearted, and she has a pair of willing hands that are not afraid of work.'

"This touched the old man, for he admired a woman who could work, believing that women were made to take care of men.

"'I'll tell thee what I will do,' he said. 'Perhaps there is something in thy Käthchen after all, though I do not like her father, nor his profession. It's all very well for a woman to bake and brew; but a man—bah! he was made for better things. Now, if thy Käthchen, though she does not look as if she could do anything, can bake me better honey cakes than thy mother makes, I'll give thee one present and consent to thy marriage. But, mind, she must do all the work herself.'"

"How old was Käthchen, father?" I asked. Although I had heard the story fifty times, I was always intensely interested in it.

"She was just fifteen," father replied.

"Just a year older than I am, yet a youth wanted to marry her," I said, meditatively.

"She was entirely too young for any such nonsense," exclaimed the mother, from the other side of the table, and her knitting needles clicked ominously. "I cannot think what her parents were about, to allow such a thing."

"Well, girls married younger in those days, mutterchen, and if my memory serves me right thou wast only fifteen when I "—

"Hans," replied my mother, "the child must go to bed. Thou must hurry with thy story."

I was very much disappointed at this, for I was usually obliged to go to bed when my father reached any particular personal reminiscence, and I was hoping for better things to-night.

"Ach, Anna, thy mother fears that I shall put new thoughts in thy mind," he said, as his eyes twinkled merrily.

"Go on, please, dear father." He smoothed my hair again.

"Käthchen, of course, was much troubled at this request from the honored old man. She had often assisted her mother to make the honey cakes at Christmas time, but to make them herself, without help from anyone, that was hard indeed. Then, too, they must be better than those which Frau Lufft made, and her delicious kuchen were famed throughout Wittenberg. But Käthchen dearly loved young Hans, and he was sure that she would succeed, and she must. So she went to work and baked the best honey cakes ever seen in our village; perfect in shape, light as feathers,

sweet enough to melt in one's mouth, and delicately browned. Just such as thy mother makes, my dear,'' and he glanced lovingly across at mother.

" But tell about the stove, father."

" Ah, yes! When the revered Hans Lufft ate those honey cakes his heart warmed to the maiden and he said: ' My son, thou hast chosen well. Thy wife will make thy home happy. Even though thou canst not always live on honey cakes, if she can make these she can cook anything.' So they had a joyous betrothal, but to their disappointment the only present the father gave them was this porcelain stove. ' He might have given them something better than that,' complained Käthchen's mother. ' Perhaps he will, later,' said her father. But he never did.

" Now comes the strange part of the story. Young Hans did not prosper. Käthchen kept the house beautifully, but the groschen were few. In five years three babies came to make the home happier, but the little mouths must be filled. Old Hans Lufft died very suddenly when he was eighty-nine years old, and the business passed to the oldest son, Georg, who had very little love for the brother who had contracted what he called a low marriage.

Gradually Hans drifted away from his friends and became very poor.

"One day, when the oldest child was four years old, he was playing around the brown porcelain stove. With his little fingers he had dug and dug about one of the tiles which struck his fancy until it became loosened and fell out. Underneath it he saw something yellow, something pretty, and in a moment he held it in his hand. It was round and made a fine plaything, and he amused himself with it until his mother came. In an instant she saw the broken place in the stove, and exclaimed: 'Hans' (for this was a third Hans)—"As thou art the eighth, father," I interjected—'Hans, what hast thou done?'

"'I am sorry, mamma,' replied the child; 'but see what a pretty plaything I found.'

"'It's gold, child,' cried the mother, running with the joyful news to her husband."

"Were they poor any longer?" I asked.

"No, Anna. Under each tile they found five gold pieces, enough to establish them in good business. Then the stove was put together again, as it looks to-day."

"I wonder which tile it was that little Hans loosened," I said.

"Come, Anna, say good night to thy father,"

said the mother's voice. "Take thy candle and go.'

I went, but my mind was full of Käthchen and Hans. Did he look anything like Gottfried? I wondered. Was he tall and had he beautiful curls and bright blue eyes? And when he looked at Käthchen did he have the same kind look that Gottfried had when we talked together?

"Ah, me! those days are far behind me now. I love to recall them; to see in memory my father and mother in their accustomed places; to see Gottfried's winning smile. But it makes me sad too. I am a woman now, with a life to live and a work to do; a woman with a weary heart whose burden is borne by the loving Saviour who said: 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' "

CHAPTER V.

In Wittenberg.

WITTENBERG is a charming town. Of course I think so, because it is my home, but other people have the same opinion, or else so many travelers would not come to look at it. Naturally, the fact that it was here that Dr. Martin Luther and his wife and children lived and worked, and that Dr. Luther and Dr. Melanchthon rest in our old church side by side brings many persons here. How many tales my father has told me of the days when the monks lived in the old Augustinian monastery; when Dr. Luther nailed the theses on the old wooden doors of our Schlosskirche, and when he marched at the head of a long procession out to where the tall oak now stands in front of Baron Bromfeld's chateau, and burned the papal bull. He told me how Dr. Martin and his gentle companion, Dr. Philip, wearing their robes of black, walked through our long village street or sat talking together under the shade of the great trees in Dr. Melanchthon's beautiful garden.

Many descendants of the devoted men who were active in the work of the Reformation

are still living here. Down near the market place, Lucas Cranach's house still stands, and his great-great-great-grandsons keep up the drug business with which the famous artist increased his wealth.

But I must go on with my own life, or my story will weary those who read it—if such there be in after days.

As I look back upon our home it seems like a happy dream. Yet there the mother sits to-day, thinking of her only daughter and loving her just as she did years ago. We had a long garden in front of our house. A gravel path led up from the cobblestoned street, between beds of roses, lilies, and pansies. This garden was my father's delight. When he came home tired from the day's labor he would work a little among his flowers, stopping, now and then, to say a pleasant "Guten Abend!" to a passing neighbor, or to call my mother's attention to the last rays of sunlight as they touched the square towers of the parish church.

A broad door opened, from the low porch, into a square hall running through the center of the house. At the rear of the hall was a door into our vegetable garden, and other doors led into the kitchen, best room, father's library, and mother's sewing room. The hall, paved

with large brown stones, with its two windows having small, round panes at least three hundred years old, was our living room. Here stood Hans Lufft's old brown porcelain stove, with high-backed carved chairs near it for my father and mother. On a square table of carved mahogany Gretchen spread our simple meals. In one corner was my father's violin case, for he occasionally played that sweetest of all instruments with some skill. In each window were boxes of blossoming plants. Near my father's chair was my seat, a low stool, and between that and mother's chair stood a table, on which was mother's workbasket, always piled full of mending or garments for the poor, and two heavy, beautifully chased silver candlesticks. The mother made her own candles, for she never liked "store candles."

On a mild evening, when the warm air, laden with the fragrance of flowers, came in at the open doors, the soft light of the candles illuminated the faces of my father and mother, bringing out their profiles against the dark shadows beyond them, just as the cameos which I have seen bring out against the dark background the clear lines of the carved face. My mother's hair was silver. It is now snowy white. She combed it down smoothly under a soft lace

cap. Her hands were white and beautiful. It mattered not what work she did, her hands were always soft. In her cheeks was a pretty rosy color, and her eyes were gentle and bright.

From one corner of this room winding stairs led up to a low-ceiled hall, where several carved chests and wardrobes held our clothing, or in which the mother carefully packed away winter garments, to protect them from the moths. Four or five doors opened into as many sleeping rooms.

Sunday mornings my mother would call: "Anna, art thou ready for church? The bells are ringing."

When I descended the stairs I found my parents waiting.

"Come, child," said father, "and I will hold thy hand, so that all the people may see my daughter."

I was the only child, and the neighbors seemed to think that my father was greatly afflicted because he had no son to bear his name; but my father only laughed. "My Anna is worth ten sons," he said. "A boy will go out into the world and leave us, but a daughter is our comfort and our support."

So, on Sunday mornings, we would go hand in hand through the long Castle Street; past

the old Rathhaus with its curious roof; past the statues of Luther and Melanchthon; past a long row of gray houses, and then across an open square, until we reached the Castle Church. We were strong Lutherans, and my father had no sympathy with those who started any enterprise outside of the State Church. But there were a few dissenters in Wittenberg in those days.

We exchanged many greetings with friends as we passed along. My father, on account of his illustrious descent, his fine business ability, and, not least of all, his genial, kindly, and yet dignified character, was highly respected in our town. From the bright glare of sunshine in the square we went into the subdued, shadowy light of the old church. The old doorway was the same which Dr. Luther has made interesting to the whole world. The bronze doors, which now replace the original wooden ones (burned a hundred years ago) where the young monk nailed his public remonstrance against indulgence sellers, were always interesting to me. They are covered with elaborate reliefs representing the subjects of the ninety-five theses.

My imagination—which, alas! is often too vivid, especially at the wrong time—wandered during the long services in this grand old

church to the day when Wittenberg was preparing to celebrate the feast of All Saints. Think of the crowds of peasants, monks, priests, men, women, and children who pressed around the doorway to see the fearless monk as he nailed his paper to the door! Think how these strangers carried away copies of these bold theses to their homes and convents; how the news spread; how the work of the Reformation began! Yet it is even so in all things. Great deeds may be accomplished by our weak means. A sick woman is cared for, we deaconesses teach her the truths of the Gospel, she is converted, and one soul is saved. What a grand thought it is, and what a glorious work for us who are pledged to do our best!

But those Sabbath mornings, when I went hand in hand with father into the carved pew which our family had occupied for nearly three centuries, my mind was not filled with such deep thoughts as these. Our fifteen-year-old maidens are not prone to very great seriousness. I looked about for my friends. Across the aisle was Margaretta Schmidt, my dearest school friend. On our left were Gottfried's father and mother and a whole seatful of children, at whose head sat the seventeen-year-old

boy who had been my playmate from childhood, almost from infancy.

The colored light came through the quaint, old stained-glass windows. In one end of the church was the monument which marks the resting place of the Askanian dukes who ruled Wittenberg a thousand years ago. Near the pulpit is the slab marked "Dr. Martin Luther," and on the opposite side of the aisle is a similar piece of brass, bearing the name "Dr. Philip Melanchthon." Near the altar rest the Saxon electors, Frederick the Wise and John the Constant, who were so friendly to the reformers.

Our altar is very plain, with only a large crucifix, flanked by silver candlesticks, to ornament it. It scarcely seems possible that there was a time, four hundred years ago, when bright images, colored decorations, and many candles adorned the altar, and gorgeously attired priests intoned the service. Five thousand and five relics were kept here, and at the feast of All Saints, hundreds of people reverently knelt on the cold stone floor when the precious things were exhibited. And all this change has been wrought by means of those good men who lie so silently there. Undoubtedly the tales of the days of the Refor-

mation and the life which I led for twenty years amid associations which fairly teemed with interest, aroused in my young mind thoughts of the duty of man to man, and of man to the great God, which I did not at the time realize. My after life was, probably, influenced by them to a large degree.

In direct contrast to the Catholics we Lutherans stood when we prayed and sat when we sang. When the dear old, white-haired pastor, who had been with us for fifty years—had buried the dead, married the youths and maidens, and baptized their children into the bonds of the State Church—ascended the beautiful pulpit, we all rose to hear the text. Then came the long sermon, when we children allowed our thoughts to wander at will, and the elders who occupied stalls along the side of the church took delightful little naps. My father never napped, but listened with great interest to the discourse, although he might have heard it a dozen times before. Our good pastor believed that a sermon was more effective if it were thoroughly drilled into the minds of his flock. My mother, however, whose body was weary with the work which she had done about the house on Saturday, slumbered gently until she was aroused by a

sonorous "Amen." We all stood up, while our pastor read a short Lutheran prayer service, including petitions for our brave old Kaiser Wilhelm and his family; we sang a psalm and passed slowly out of the church.

As we went I chanced to pass near Gottfried, who reached out his hand to greet me.

"Good morning, my Anna. Thou art as fresh as a rose this June day. Is that a new gown that thou wearest?"

It was, but I did not think he would notice it.

"My mother and I made it last week. Dost thou think it pretty, Gottfried?"

"It is beautiful, but not so much so as the face above it. Thine eyes are bluer than the gown, and thy cheeks rosier than the buds thou wearest in thy belt."

Now, Gottfried had often said such things to me before, but they never had affected me as they did that morning. To my surprise and dismay, I felt my cheeks getting hotter and hotter, just as they felt when my father rebuked me for wrongdoing and I was ashamed. My eyes fell under the laughing glance of those other blue ones.

"Ach, Anna! wherefore blushest thou? Surely those things are true."

I could not tell him, but just then the story of Hans Lufft and Käthchen flashed through my mind. Was that the way Hans talked to Käthchen? Gottfried could not understand my silence, and, thinking he had offended me by not sufficiently admiring the dress which mother and I had so much trouble to make, he said, hastily: "Never mind, Anna, I did not mean to offend thee. Thy dress is very fine and very becoming."

"Thou hast not offended me, Gottfried." I did not add that his loving words had given me a curious warmth in my heart. I still felt very shy. As our parents had finished the conversation with their friends they called us, Gottfried shook my hand warmly—we Germans are very fond of handshakings and greetings—and said: "Auf wiedersehen, Anna. Wilt thou come down to the willow by the river this afternoon, if the mother is willing?"

"What time, Gottfried?"

"O, about three I think is best, when the sun is warm. I will bring a book and read aloud, and we can have a good time."

"I will come gladly, Gottfried. Auf wiedersehen!"

I joined my parents, but not before Margaretta, whom I loved very much, but of

whom, strange to my mind, the mother did not at all approve, had come close to me.

"Ach, liebchen, thou art talking again to thy handsome Gottfried. Thou must be careful, for his ladylove has been watching thee."

Then she hurried off.

What could she mean? This question puzzled me all the way home.

"Why art thou so silent, little daughter?" asked the mother's pleasant voice.

"I am thinking, mother."

"Thinking! That must be indeed a weighty matter for thee, sweetheart," said my father.

"Mother," I said, "what could Margaretta mean when she told me to be cautious about talking to Gottfried, because his mother was watching us?"

I saw my father and mother exchange glances.

"It is difficult to tell, darling. Perhaps Frau Herrmann thinks that thou art growing too large a maiden to play more with her son, who will soon be a man. Maybe it is not seemly for thee to stand talking with him too much."

"But, mother, he is my old playmate, and I love him dearly. Why is there more harm in my talking with him now than there was years

ago?" The tears were very near my eyes now, for a separation from Gottfried would give me great pain. My mother held my hand and pressed it closer to her.

"My child, many things are difficult to understand, but thou must consent to be guided by thy father's wishes and mine; wilt thou not?"

"Yes, mother, gladly, for I know thou wilt do all right. But, mother dear, do not say that I cannot go to sit with Gottfried when he wants me. He asked me to come down by the river this afternoon at three o'clock to read and talk. Please do not say that I cannot go."

"I do not know, Anna, it is hard to tell what is right to say. Thou art getting to be a woman. I would not have Frau Herrmann, who is a proud lady, say that we are throwing our daughter in her son's way. What sayest thou, my Hans?"

"Let the child go to-day, wife. See! her blue eyes are already clouded with tears." And my kind father drew me to him. We were now in our own garden walking up the gravel path.

"Look, mother! Our pet rose is just going to bloom. Thou must tend it very carefully

now, that no blight come upon it, and we shall have a gorgeous show of blossoms, such as the neighbors have never seen."

My mind was soon diverted; but as we went into the house, half an hour later, having made the round of the garden and looked over our beloved plants, I heard a few words exchanged between my father and mother.

"Hans, dost thou not see that there will soon be trouble about Gottfried and Anna? The Herrmanns will never allow such a thing."

"Our child's heart will be broken, mother. She is completely bound up in the lad, and so, I believe, is he in her."

"It is indeed sad," sighed the mother; "but the good Lord brings all things out right. He rules the world."

What would break my heart? Why did I feel so strange, so happy, when Gottfried spoke those kind words that morning? Why did Gottfried's mother watch us? Those were mysteries to my childish mind which occupied my thoughts until it came time to tie on my broad-brimmed white hat with its flaming blue bows and go down to meet Gottfried.

CHAPTER VI.

Down by the Elbe.

THE river Elbe flows quite irregularly around our little city. On one side of it lie broad, green meadows, which are crossed, here and there, by well-worn paths leading out into the open country. Across the meadows rise the chimneys of some smaller villages. It is said that it was in one of these suburban towns that Frau Luther, our beloved Dr. Martin's wife, found her last resting place. Of course it was impossible that she should lie near her husband in the Castle Church, for no women are buried there except the princesses of the Askanian line, who died so many, many years ago. Probably there are some others of the family buried near Catharina Luther, who keep her company in her long rest until the great resurrection day; but it is four hundred years since she died, and we know very little of those moss-covered, moldering tombs.

Along the banks of the Elbe are many beautiful willows, bending low over the narrow stream, and the river is spanned, here and there, by pretty rustic bridges. In one spot

five willows had sprouted from one root, and in the growth of centuries had become large, handsome trees. In the joint, where they separated one from the other, Gottfried had made a broad board seat which accommodated four persons comfortably. We two had sat there many bright days in the years when we played together, and our schoolmates were glad to join us.

As I neared the river and crossed the little bridge, I saw that Gottfried was already in our trysting place, and was lying very comfortably stretched out on the long bench, evidently deeply interested in the book which he was reading. He did not hear me until I commenced to mount the steps leading up into the group of trees. Then he raised his head, and, jumping up quickly, exclaimed: "Ach, Annachen! is it thou? Thou art late. I have been waiting fully half an hour."

"But, Gottfried, it cannot be more than three o'clock. Our old clock pointed to the quarter when I left the house."

"Well, thy old clock is slow. Anything that belonged to thy old ancestor, Hans Lufft, four hundred years ago must be a little behind time. Certainly the antique Hans himself would be a little out of style if he should fancy

to come back here now. My! How astonished he would be!"

I laughed heartily. Gottfried had the greatest possible respect for my honored ancestor, but he was a boy, and even German boys, who grow up in an atmosphere which is heavy with the thoughts and customs of the centuries past, are occasionally irreverent. I should not have cared that my father, who always referred to Hans Lufft with such respect, should hear Gottfried speak of him as the "antique Hans;" but I was young, and rather enjoyed the joke.

"Perhaps our old clock is behind time, I do not know; but it is certainly valuable, and thou knowest that money is more than age, in thy eyes, Gottfried. Thou art fond enough of the luxuries it can buy," I said, rather enjoying giving my companion a slight hit.

He was known among us as rather a dandy. His hair was always very smooth, except where the curls would persist in sticking up, in spite of brushing; his linen was always spotless, and his clothes were made in the latest style.

"Thou art right, my Anna, I like comfort," laughed Gottfried, flinging a pebble into the smooth mirror of water which lay below us.

"See! I have brought a whole pocketful of

pebbles for thee to throw into the water. Thou art still such a child that thou enjoyest play."

"Indeed, I am not a child. It was only this morning that my mother said I was getting to be a woman. She said I must not"— I stopped in confusion. Gottfried and I had always told each other everything, and it was strange to me to have to stop myself. And yet, it did not quite suit me to tell him that mother had said that I was getting too big to come and talk to him. Suppose he should agree with her! My heart sank at the thought.

"What did she say thou shouldst not do, Anna? Tear thy gown, or eat up the mother's jam and honey cakes? Tell me, quickly."

"I cannot tell thee, Gottfried. It was really nothing. See! there go Margaretta Schmidt and her brother across the fields."

We sat silently watching them. It was a clear June day. The air was warm and sweet, just as it always is in our spring and early summer. There can surely be no land where the spring days are more glorious than ours! The sun shines so brightly, the flowers bloom for very joy, and the birds open their tiny throats and carol so gleefully in our German fatherland.

This Sabbath afternoon crowds of Witten-

bergers were going out into the country. My father preferred to sit quietly in our pleasant garden, under the shade of the tall linden trees, with mother near him. Then they would talk together of olden days, when life was new and fresh to them. If I was home I sat by them and listened interestedly. Or, sometimes, father would take down Hans Lufft's old Bible, and read from its queerly printed pages words of holy men, written by inspiration of God's Holy Spirit.

The neighbors, however, were not wont to spend their "Festtag" in that way. Most of them started out, about two o'clock, for a long walk across the fields to the surrounding villages. There, in some quiet restaurant garden, where a roof of green leaves, formed by trimming the sycamore trees into the shape of flat umbrellas, shielded them from the sun, they sat down and ate and drank. The father, mother, and all the children down to the baby joined in the excursion, and even the bare-headed "Mädchen," whose braids were smoother than ever, and were twined all around her head, accompanied the merry party. Since I have learned better, and know how the holy Sabbath should be kept, I can see that my father understood more of the true Scripture

Sabbath; but in those days, when Gottfried and I watched the black crowds of people, big and little, as they crossed the meadows, I thought nothing of it.

Our pastor and his family were, doubtless, among them. The good old man would return for service, which was very short, at five o'clock, and then, rejoining his family, would spend the evening out where the newmown grass was so sweet and where the sound of the "Volkslieder" filled the soft air.

"Margaretta looks very fine to-day," said Gottfried, as we watched the boy and girl coming toward us. "I think she has a new gown as well as thou, Annachen."

There was a little pain in my heart. Did he think that her cheeks were rosy and her eyes bright? It was all right, even if he did, for Margaretta certainly was a pretty girl, and I loved her very much.

"Yes, she has a new dress, Gottfried, and it is much finer than mine, for it was made by Fraulein Klein, who is the best dressmaker in town."

"Hum," muttered Gottfried; "I think the one thy mother made, with thy help, is much prettier. Margaretta's has too many furbelows and she looks like a woman, instead of a

sweet little girl, as thou appearest in thine." He threw me a bright glance.

"Hush! don't call her!" he exclaimed, as I opened my mouth to do so, and leaned over the edge of the tree. "If she comes herself we cannot help it, but don't call her. She will stay all the afternoon, and spoil all our fun."

"Why, I thought thou likedst Margaretta, Gottfried. You were always good friends."

"Ach! I like Margaretta well enough, usually; but to-day I want to talk with thee, and we have not read one word yet. Alas! it is too late. Here she comes," he added under his breath.

They had caught sight of us, and even then Margaretta's new hat was appearing above the step.

"So, thou thoughtest we could not see thee, Anna. My eyes caught sight of thy blue dress, and I knew Gottfried was not far off." She gave a laughing glance at him as she spoke, which somehow sent a chill through me; it was like a young lady. Were we really growing up, as mother said? Margaretta did certainly look very fine. She had an entirely new outfit, from head to foot. Her broad leghorn hat had white ribbon trimming with bunches of

brilliant blue cornflowers among the bows. She was two years older than myself, and wore her glossy black braids in a knot at the back of her head. Her hair was fluffed out around her face in a manner which my father detested. Her gray dress was cut open a little at the neck, and peeping out of the soft lace was a heavy golden locket, attached to an elaborate chain. On her hands were rings and on her wrists showy bracelets. Even her shoes were new and of a new-fashioned shape, very narrow at the toes. I drew in my broad-toed boots with shame. She was very quick and saw me do this.

"Hast thou noticed my new shoes, Anna? They are the very latest style. In fact, my whole costume is made after the recent fashions in Berlin. Dost thou think it pretty?"

"Very pretty, Margaretta."

"And thou, Gottfried?"

"Ach, yes! It is pretty, but it seems to me that there is a good deal of it."

"That is the way with all the girls' dresses now, Gottfried," spoke up Georg, Margaretta's brother. "And they think of nothing except their clothes."

I looked down at my dress, for I wore the blue one which mother and I had taken such

pains to make. It was a plain, full skirt, fastened to a round waist, and mother had made me a sash to wear with it. In my neck and sleeves I had some narrow white lace, fifty years old, very fine and soft. It had been laundered many times by mother's careful fingers. I wore only one ring, a little ruby, which my father had given to me when I was ten years old, because I had learned to read so well that I could read his newspaper aloud to him in the evenings, when he was tired.

"Thou hast not spoken of Anna's dress," said Gottfried, pulling one of my long braids. "If girls are so fond of dress Anna must be just pining to have us say something nice about hers."

I looked at him reproachfully, but he only laughed.

"O! it is very nice," said Margaretta, taking in the whole at a glance. "But, of course, it is old style and very childish. Anna is two years younger than I, and it is naturally more suitable for her."

"It seems to me much prettier than thine, Margaretta," said Georg, smiling at me.

I had never liked Georg much; for he was a silent, moody fellow, an excellent student, far surpassing Gottfried, but considered rather uninteresting by us girls.

"Thou art a boy, Georg," said Margaretta, scornfully. "I never could understand why thou dost not wear any jewels, Anna. And thy mother, too, dresses so plainly. It is not that thou canst not afford to buy the pretty things, for everybody knows that thy father has piles of gold. Is he too stingy to buy them for thee?"

"He is not stingy at all," I cried, indignantly, the tears coming into my eyes. "He loves us dearly and gives us all we want. Mother says I am too young for showy jewelry, and she says she is too old, and she will give the money to those who haven't even dresses to clothe themselves with. I am to have a gold watch when I am eighteen."

"Well, I hope it will be pretty. My father has not promised me one, but I expect I shall have one. He gives me all I want."

"My father gives me what he thinks best for me," I said, "and I am satisfied."

"Well said," cried Gottfried. "I did not know thou hadst so much spirit, little one."

"Come, Margaretta, let us go. I suppose thou must show thy Berlin clothes to our friends of Wittenberg. I am on duty now, Gottfried, but if thou wilt come to our garden about eight this evening we shall try to have

a little sensible conversation," said Georg, rising to go.

"All right," replied Gottfried. "Hast thou translated that exercise from Greek to Latin for to-morrow? I find it hard."

"Yes, I have done it. If thou wishest some help I can aid thee to-morrow morning at six, if thou wilt come to my room."

"Very well. I'll be there."

Gottfried and Georg were students at the Wittenberg Gymnasium, and were in the same class. While Gottfried made a good record he was a little too fond of out-of-door sports to be very successful in his studies. Georg led the class. They were obliged to be up and out very early in the morning, for at seven o'clock recitations began.

"Auf wiedersehen, Gottfried; auf wiedersehen, Anna," said Margaretta, as she swept down the steps. "We would be glad to have you go with us. It is a beautiful day."

"Thank you, I do not care to go, unless Anna wishes to," said Gottfried, turning to me.

"No, indeed, Gottfried," I replied, "I do not want to go out into the dust and crowd. It is so much pleasanter here."

"Thou hast good sense," muttered Georg, as he slowly followed his sister.

We sat quietly watching the two as they went away through the winding path. Occasionally Margaretta stooped to pick up a corn blossom or a bit of yellow grain, and added them to the bunch at her waist. Then they passed out of sight and were merged into the vari-colored crowd of pedestrians.

Across the plain we could see a big windmill lazily swinging its broad arms. Over our heads a bird, thinking from the silence that human enemies had all left the spot, broke out in joyous song. The Elbe rippled gently at the foot of the great willow tree.

I had never liked Margaretta so little as that day. Mother must be right. She was not just the friend for me to have.

Her parents were reputed to be wealthy. Herr Schmidt had come to Wittenberg as a stranger. They lived in a fine house, kept several servants, drove out in their own carriage with a beautiful team of horses to draw it; but they were not greatly beloved by our citizens. Nevertheless, wealth gives power, and Herr Schmidt was first elected a member of our Town Council, and at the time when Margaretta came up into the willow tree her father was Burgomaster of Wittenberg. We children had played together and were always dear friends,

but of late something had come between us. Margaretta was growing out of my reach. For some reason, after that Sunday, we were never the same to each other. We exchanged no more confidences. Although we called on each other, accompanying our mothers, who were aquaintances, though not intimate friends, we were very decorous and behaved in a dignified manner. Our childish love, and my reverential admiration for her as my elder and superior, were gone.

Poor Margaretta! Where can she be now? We little thought that day in the old willow that our paths in life would separate as did the branches of that great swaying tree which moved in the summer's breeze so high above us.

CHAPTER VII.

Anna and Gottfried.

"NOW that they are gone let us read a little, Anna," broke in Gottfried's pleasant voice. "It will be too late if we wait longer, and we shall lose all the afternoon. It is already half past four."

"Very well, I am ready," said I. "Mother said I might stay until six o'clock, but I must surely go then."

I leaned back comfortably against the broad tree and looked at the Elbe and the ever-changing colors of the sky and grass as the sun moved lower and lower, watching the shadows cast by passing clouds, as they moved swiftly over the green fields.

That day Gottfried was reading Goethe's Letters from Italy, where he tells of his journey through the picturesque Tyrol, of Venice, of Florence, and, finally, of Rome, where he was received with much respect.

"Shouldst thou like to travel, Anna?" queried Gottfried, as he stopped to take breath.

"I should not care much about it, unless my friends went too," said I. "Shouldst thou, Gottfried?"

"Yes, I should love to go out into the wide world. Wittenberg is a pleasant little town, and I love it because my father and mother and thou art here. But I want to go where there is life, where men feel a pressure to do great things."

"My father says great things are within ourselves, Gottfried," I said, timidly, for this phase of his character was a new one to me. "He says if a man cannot do his duty in the place where God put him he will never accomplish much anywhere."

"Thy father is doubtless right, Annachen, but if all men had been like him where would the world be to-day? No new worlds would have been discovered, no new investigations undertaken. What thinkest thou of that?"

"I do not know, Gottfried. Thou knowest I am not so wise as thou. Thou art a man, or soon will be, and I am only a girl who—"

"Yes," laughed he. "'Only a girl!' But I could make the pastor open his eyes, or astonish even thy father, did I tell them that thou art as fully advanced as I am. The hours spent in this willow tree have not been for nothing. And now, to get out of saying that thou agreest with me, thou fallest back on the old idea that thou art a girl. It is too late for that, Anna.

Thou hast as good a head as mine, and better judgment."

"I suppose all young persons look at things in a different light from old ones. That bustling outside world does look enticing, but I suppose we are better off here. I wonder why it is," I added, "that everything has combined to-day to make me see that we are growing up. First, mother said so; then Margaretta seemed to me quite a young lady, and now thou talkest like a man. It will not be long before thou, too, wilt go away and leave me behind."

"Come! throw a pebble into the water, Anna, to revive thy drooping spirits. See! just under this limb there is a little fish taking a nice, quiet doze. Try to see if thou canst arouse him."

Gottfried drew from his pocket the stock of pebbles which he had brought for my amusement. To please him I threw one in near the fish, who moved instantly and went slowly away to find a safer place to slumber.

"I suppose it will not be so very long before I shall leave Wittenberg, Anna. This year is my last at the stupid old gymnasium. After next Easter, provided I can pass my examination, I shall be off for Heidelberg. Then good-bye lessons at seven in the morning and digging

and delving until eleven at night. I shall be free to do as I please."

"And good-bye to the lessons in the old willow tree," I said, softly.

"That is the only thing I shall be sorry for, Annachen. How thy father would look if I were to tell him that thou, even though thou art three years younger than I am, art even with me in thy studies! I wish he could hear thee talk Latin;" and Gottfried chuckled at the thought.

"Thou must never tell him," I cried, hastily, "for though my father loves me dearly he thinks girls have their own work to do, and does not believe in the new ideas of education for women."

Years before, when we children first began to go to school, Gottfried and I commenced studying together in the old willow. After school hours we brought our books there. He helped me over the difficult parts in the lessons, and occasionally there were places where I could assist him. As he entered the gymnasium when he was twelve years old we kept up this plan of study, and, as I was never very strong and was allowed to take light work at school, the teacher taking more pains with my needlework than with anything else, I had

plenty of time for study with Gottfried. My mother, who sympathized with me, knew of it, but had thought it no harm to keep it from father, as she knew Gottfried must soon go away, and that would be the end of it. Step by step we had gone along together, until, as he had said, I was really as well prepared to enter a higher school as he was.

"Never mind," said Gottfried, "it will not be many years before there will be gymnasiums and universities for girls as well as boys. I cannot see why there should not be."

"What time is it, Gottfried?"

"Just a quarter before six."

"Then I must start for home. Mother will not like it if I am late."

"I will go with thee, Anna. Wait a minute, till I get my hat."

He climbed the tree like a squirrel and reached out for his hat, which he had carefully placed on the extreme end of a limb, just where it was in great danger of falling into the water.

"Why didst thou put thy hat in such a dangerous place, Gottfried? It might have fallen into the water."

"Yes, it might have; but it did not. I wanted to see how near it would come to it.

Even if it had been lost my mother would not have scolded."

I agreed with him in this, for never had Frau Herrmann been known to find fault with her handsome son. No matter what scrape he was in he was sure of his mother's sympathy. She was a proud, cold woman to other people, and was said to be very severe with her younger children, but Gottfried was her idol.

Ten years before Professor Herrmann had come to Wittenberg to teach Latin in our gymnasium. He was himself a doctor of Heidelberg University, and was extremely anxious that his son should go there and win high honors. The neighbors were doubtful as to the character of the honors Gottfried would acquire—whether they would be in his studies or in regular attendance at the meetings of his society—but his mother had no doubt at all on this subject.

The Herrmanns lived in a handsome stone home, very near my father's, and our gardens joined each other, being separated only by a low hedge. Shortly after they moved to our quiet village I was playing in the sand one morning, out in our garden. Soon I heard some one call: "Little girl! little girl! may I come over and play with thee?"

"Surely," I answered; "but who art thou? I cannot see thee."

"Wait a minute, and I will come," said the voice. "I know where there is a hole in the hedge."

In a moment I heard the noise of running feet, and, looking up, saw before me a small boy about eight years old. He wore a long oilcloth apron which his thrifty mother had put on to save his good clothes, and he had a small cap stuck on the back of his head.

"Come," he said, with a touch of scorn, "I can dig a better fortress than that!"

"Who art thou?" I asked.

"My name is Gottfried, and thou art Anna. I know because thy father came to see mine last evening, and he said he lived here and had a little girl named Anna."

Thus our acquaintance began. Gottfried said, some time afterward, that I, too, wore an oilcloth apron on that eventful morning, and had on a pink sunbonnet, below which hung two yellow pigtails.

We played in the sunshine all the morning and all the afternoon, and from that day were close friends. No boy comrade could entice Gottfried from my side, and no amount of teasing could make him forsake me.

When we went toward home from the river that Sunday afternoon the people were still going off toward the country. The streets of the town were quite deserted. It was at the garden gate that we separated. I went in to help my mother prepare the supper, for Gretchen had gone home to visit her sick father that afternoon.

How distinctly I remember that evening! The long twilight gave a pleasant, soft hue to the sky as we sat in the garden eating our supper. It was so mild that mother said that father would not feel even a twinge of rheumatism if we ate in the garden, and I might set the table out there. On Sunday night, being a festival, we always used the fine old china which my mother's mother, and her mother before her, had owned. I carried it very quietly and carefully. How sad it would be if even one piece were nicked! The plates and cups had little pink roses on them, and were very thin and delicate.

I remember how we sat there a long time, eating our Sunday "kuchen" and drinking fragrant tea from our dainty cups. The twilight gradually merged into the darkness. I brought out a lamp and set it on the table in the summer house. My father asked me to

bring his violin, which he carefully tuned. Then, playing a soft accompaniment, he commenced singing in a clear tenor voice the old hymn beloved by us Germans, and sung, so they say, in many strange lands and languages:

"Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott,
Ein' gute Wehr und Waffen."

My mother joined in with a sweet soprano, and the music rose and fell harmoniously.

"It was thus," said my father, when we had finished, "that Dr. Martin Luther used to sing over in the old gray monastery. He played very sweetly on the lute, and the family were all fond of singing. It is said that Dr. Melanchthon and a number of friends used to go to the living room of the Luthers on many a Sunday night to sing the beautiful hymns which the great reformer had written."

"Did he compose the music too, father?" I asked.

"Yes; to many of his hymns he wrote also the music. Now, mother, let us have thy song."

Tuning up again, he played a rippling melody, while mother, in the clear voice which seemed to have in it the sweetness of the tinkling bells of her native land, sang a Swiss

song with a joyful "Yodel." My mother was born in Switzerland, but after the death of her parents, when she was twelve years old, was brought to Wittenberg by an aunt, who adopted her as her daughter. Notwithstanding the fact that she had lived so long in the North she never liked the flat, uninteresting country, but always longed for her own land, with its beautiful lakes and snow-capped mountains.

"Thou art merry to-night, neighbor," called Professor Herrmann from the other side of the hedge.

"Yes. We are singing the old songs," answered my father. "Canst thou not come over?"

"No, not to-night. I should like to speak with thee about the proof of my new book, if thou hast time."

"I will come now," said father, and went away to walk up and down with our neighbor.

"Let us clear up these things, Anna; run and light a candle." I went at my mother's bidding, and we piled the precious dishes on a tray, carrying them into the stone-floored kitchen. There we washed them in clean hot water, and, after carefully drying them on the sweet-smelling towels which my mother kept specially for this old china, we set them away in the closet in the best room.

I seem to have the details of that Sunday indelibly impressed upon my mind. It was one of the milestones in my life. I suppose everyone has experienced the same feeling. I passed after that day into the realm of womanhood. I was no longer a child. My mind as well as my body changed and developed. I looked at things with different eyes. My mother was right; I was growing to be a woman.

CHAPTER VIII.

Home Life.

I MUST not dwell too long on this happy period. One cannot always be sixteen, and the bright dreams of youth fade away as time goes on.

The summer flew by as on golden wings. Gottfried and I sat sometimes in the old willow tree, but not so often as we had been accustomed to do. As I grew older there was more work for me at home. My mother said that I must be a womanly woman, and that my knowledge of Latin would count for nothing if I could not darn my father's socks neatly or cook the dainty dishes of which he was so fond. So mother and Gretchen and I worked happily in the cool kitchen in the summer mornings when the birds were singing blithely out on the linden branches as they swayed back and forth before the open windows. There were days when I longed very much to get out in the air and sunshine, to take a run down by the river bank or through the green fields. Sometimes I complained a little, and the dear, loving mother would come and lay her hand on my shoulder, saying softly: "My darling,

thou art learning to be a woman. Thou must learn, too, that our life in this world is not one of ease and comfort, but of self-sacrifice and endurance. The dear Lord has placed us here to do our duty, not to satisfy ourselves. It is only by loving God and serving him, even in our homely duties, that we can attain the life eternal. The true rule of life is forgetfulness of self."

"But, mother, it is hard to be a woman. I do not want to be. I would rather be a child, and have thee always to help me and cheer me."

"Thou canst not, my daughter. Time flies, and thou must do thine own work in the world and must learn to be self-reliant. Mother cannot always be with thee." With a loving kiss she went away.

How often I have thought of her words that morning in the cool, shaded kitchen. My hands were deep in the soft dough which would be light, flaky tea cakes to eat with our cup of coffee that afternoon. "The true rule of life is forgetfulness of self." This has been and must be my motto through life; but how hard it is for us poor human beings to lay down our weak selves and lose ourselves in God and his work! This is what my mother did in those days, and

it is what she is doing now, as she sits alone in the old home and goes through her round of daily duties in the same cheerful manner, contented and happy to have her only child far away from her, knowing that it is God's will. But none of us knew what the future held for us in those old, quiet days.

After the morning's work had been done, the hardwood floors carefully wiped with a damp cloth, the thick rugs thoroughly beaten and cleaned, the beds made up neatly with the fine linen sheets which mother kept in an old cedar chest out in the hall, and the feather beds which covered us shaken until they were light and downy, we were ready for our dinner. On warm days we always ate out in the little arbor where the honeysuckle blossoms which covered it gave out a delicate perfume and the birds and insects provided our music. I used to think that our kaiser and his family could not be half so happy in their great palace as we were in our pleasant garden.

In the afternoon mother and I brought our workbaskets outdoors and mended all the garments which had been torn in the washing. The tablecloths were darned to a thread, until the tear could scarcely be seen. New patches were put on the sheets and pillowcases, for my

mother was a thrifty housewife. My father often said that he would have been a poor man if it had not been for his good "hausfrau."

"If thou layest on a patch, my daughter," said my mother, "always put it perfectly straight. It is as easy to do it well as poorly, after a few trials." She trained me in all sorts of handiwork as the winter went by, and before I scarcely knew it spring had come again and the willows were budding down by the Elbe.

Then came a busy season. Easter was near at hand, and every German housekeeper knows that before the festival time comes everything in the home must be thoroughly cleaned. We went to work heartily. The long white curtains which hung at our windows were taken down and sent out to be "done up." The meadows along the river were white with the quantities of linen and laces which the washerwomen were spreading out to bleach in the bright spring sunshine.

Our silver must be well cleaned, and mother and I set at it one afternoon, carrying all of it out to our large garden table, where we could enjoy the fresh air while working. There was the old silver tankard from which my grandfather had drank beer all his life, there was the richly chased coffeepot, brought by my mother

with her household furnishings; there were the spoons and forks, already worn so thin with the usage of three hundred years that we were obliged to lay them away, and use ordinarily the new ones which father had bought a few years before. On the Easter festival we always brought out these old ones, to which there were very interesting stories attached.

When we were right in the midst of our work that sunny day, and I was sitting with my long brown apron on, and my sleeves rolled up to my elbows, I heard footsteps coming down the gravel walk and a deep voice called, "Anna, where art thou?"

My heart gave a joyous leap. It was a long time since Gottfried and I had had much opportunity to talk. He had been busy with his studies, as this was his last year at the gymnasium, and it had seemed to me that his mother prevented his coming sometimes. He said to me when we occasionally met that he had often thought of coming, but his mother always wanted him to go out with her. I did not wonder at it as I looked up at him. He had grown and developed this past year. He was tall and manly looking; his eyes were blue and frank in their expression, and his head was crowned with short golden curls.

He smiled pleasantly at me as I sat at work vigorously rubbing the old tankard which had grown quite brown since the last time we used it.

"Thou art indeed a true housewife, Anna. I heard from Margaretta that thou wast grown quite a woman."

"When didst thou see Margaretta?" I asked, quickly, for it was a long while since I had seen him, and it made me feel a little badly to think that he had had time to talk with her.

"I saw her at our house last week. The mother is very fond of her and would have her over for coffee, and we had quite a talk. Thou knowest she has been away visiting and has come home a very fine young lady."

"So I heard. Father said she would never do for our plain, quiet Wittenberg."

"She is different from our Wittenberg girls, that is true, but she is certainly going to be a very handsome woman."

"She always was a pretty girl, I thought," said I.

"Canst thou not come for a walk, Anna? It is such a beautiful day."

"I am busy, Gottfried. And besides, perhaps thou hast not time."

"Yes, I have plenty of time. I ran away to-

day. It is so long since I saw thee that I quite longed for a good, old-fashioned talk," he said.

"Ran away! Gottfried, what dost thou mean?"

"Why, I heard my mother say that Margaretta would drink coffee with us again today, and I knew I should be wanted to wait on the young lady. So I just picked up my hat when the mother's back was turned, and ran."

I could not help smiling, and my heart grew lighter.

"There! Now that the dimples appear in thy cheeks, I know my Anna again. Thou wast such a woman that I was almost afraid of thy dignity. Run quickly and ask the little mother."

"What dost thou wish, Gottfried? It is a long time since we have seen thee, my boy," said mother's voice close by us.

"Yes, it is, Stiefmütterchen, but I could not help it. I want you to let Anna come for a walk. She has worked hard all winter and needs the sun and air. Her cheeks are not so rosy as they were."

"Very well, she may go. But not for long."

"But the silver, mother?" I began.

"I will do it, daughter. I have nothing else

to do." So, with a kiss, I ran to get my hat, and Gottfried and I went down the walk together.

"Hide behind this big tree, quick!" exclaimed he. "There comes Margaretta!"

Laughingly we waited until the young lady passed by. She was very showily dressed in the latest fashion and wore a good deal of jewelry. Since that Sunday when we talked in the willow tree I had scarcely spoken to Margaretta. She was friendly enough when we met, but her condescending manner of saying, "How dost thou do, little one?" rather roused my indignation when I remembered how we played together as children, and I preferred to have little to do with her.

"Now that she has gone, let us hurry down by the river. It will hardly be safe to sit in the tree, for she may come after us. Let us go across to Brenheim, and then we can have a nice walk as well as talk. Thou dost not look very well, Anna. Hast thou been working too hard?"

"No, Gottfried; but, of course, I have been in the house a good deal."

"Just think! we have not had a single lesson together this whole year. I fear I must leave thee behind me," said Gottfried.

"Perhaps it is as well, Gottfried. I must learn to do woman's work now, and help my mother."

The narrow path wound around through the fields. It was early yet, but the grass was green and bright, and yellow dandelions studded it here and there. Tiny beds of lettuce were fenced off in different places by low hedges, and the "salat" was heading up finely. One garden had cherry trees just coming into bloom. In another were at least fifteen women, moving along on their knees by the rows of asparagus, cutting those stalks which were sufficiently blanched to send to-morrow morning to the market in the open square by our townhall. Brenheim, with its clustered group of red-tiled houses, lay before us. We turned to the left of the village, and, crossing another field, sat down on an old, dry log under a broad-spreading chestnut tree. Occasionally the peasants, men and women, passed us, bearing on their heads great bunches of dry branches which had been trimmed from the trees to make room for new growth.

"I want to see thee very much, Anna, for soon my examinations will be over, and then I am going away, after the spring vacation."

"Art thou sure of passing?" I asked.

"Yes, quite sure. Professor Schumacher assures me that there will be no trouble, and preparations are already being made for my departure for Heidelberg."

"Wittenberg will be lonely without thee, Gottfried," I said. "I shall miss thee greatly."

"I am glad, Anna. I shall miss thee too. See! I have bought thee a little remembrance. It is all my own, for I bought it with my own money, saved from my allowance." He opened a box and showed me a neat little ring with one blue stone—a turquoise—and two milky pearls, one on each side of it.

"It is beautiful, Gottfried; so beautiful that I fear the mother will not let me keep it."

"Yes, she will, for I asked her when thou wast gone to get thy hat. I showed it to her. She said I might give it to thee in remembrance of the years we played together," replied Gottfried.

"Thou wilt not go away at once, Gottfried?"

"No, Anna; but there are so many things to do and so many things to prevent my coming to thee that I feared there might be no other opportunity. Besides, I had bought it, and I was in a hurry to see it on thy hand."

He put it on my finger and held my hand up, that he might look at it.

"Yes, they are fitted for each other, the hand and the ring. Thou wilt not forget me now, Anna, nor the days when we played together. Thou hast a reminder here on thy hand," added Gottfried.

"I shall never forget thee," I said, tearfully. I had said truly. It would be lonely in Wittenberg when he was gone.

"Anna, when I am away off there at Heidelberg I shall think of my girl comrade, and try to act so that thou wilt not be ashamed of me. But I fear it will be hard. It is not so easy for men to be good as it is for women. And I shall soon be a man." He drew himself up proudly.

"Thou lookest like a man already to me, Gottfried, and I shall be very proud of thee, I know. What dost thou intend to do—as a profession, I mean?"

"I want to be a lawyer. My father approves, and I shall enter upon the course in jurisprudence. I will try to do my best, but I fear I am too fond of fun. I wish thou couldst be near to keep me steady, Anna."

"I cannot, Gottfried. Mother said one day that I must now learn to be a woman and depend upon myself. I suppose men must do the same. But it is harder for thee than for

me, Gottfried, for thou goest among strangers, and I have the shelter of my own dear home."

We talked on in this way until the shadows deepened and the cool breeze warned us to start on our homeward journey. He told me of his aspirations, of his fears, and I cheered him as well as I could.

As I was getting ready for bed that night my mother came into the room. She kissed me, and noticing the new ring upon my finger, said: "I think thou art proud of thy gift, Anna. It was very kind of Gottfried to remember thee thus. But, my child, thou must remember that Gottfried's boyhood days are now over. Soon he will go out into the world and will make new friends, some of whom will be as dear, and perhaps dearer than those he has left behind. Keep thy little ring and think of the days when thou and thy friend played together, but build not on the future. God makes our future, and our wishes are not always his way."

"Gottfried will surely never forget me, mother."

"No, he will not forget, but his life will broaden and widen, and a man has many things to enter into his life. I would not have thee think too much of Gottfried, my daughter. His path and thine will diverge from now on.

Find thy happiness in duty." So she left me.

Would Gottfried forget his playmate? I did not believe it. He was true and brave. At any rate, one thing was certain, I should never forget him. I tucked the hand on which the turquoise ring shone up under my cheek and went quietly to sleep.

Easter passed joyously. The weather was bright and beautiful. Flowers bloomed in the fields and the trees put forth their first pale-green leaves; the cherry trees were full of white blossoms and looked like huge bouquets. When the petals commenced to fall in a fragrant white shower, and the apple trees began to show rosy blossoms, Gottfried went away.

After the walk out to Brenheim and our long talk I had not seen him, except at a distance. Early one morning, as I was trimming my rose-bushes, I heard him call, "Anna!" and, turning, saw him jumping the low hedge between the gardens. He was so tall that he did not need to creep through the hole which he had made years before.

"I am off, Anna," he exclaimed.

"Off! so soon?"

"Yes. My train leaves in an hour. I have found a moment to come to see thee."

I could not speak. My heart was too full.

"I shall not forget thee. Wilt thou remember me? And wilt thou say a little prayer for me once in a while, my Anna? I think thy prayers would be heard," he whispered.

"I will gladly do so, Gottfried, and I will never forget thee."

"Auf wiedersehen, Annachen. My mother is calling me."

I could hear her voice calling, "Gottfried! Gottfried! it is time to go;" but I could not speak.

"Wilt thou not say 'Adieu?'" he said.

It must be done.

"Adieu, Gottfried. Auf wiedersehen."

We shook hands quietly and he leaped over the hedge again. He laughed and nodded to me as he ran away.

"Gottfried!" I called. "Come back a moment." I felt so sorry, but had said so little. He would think me cold, when my young heart ached sadly.

It was too late; he was gone. I could hear the carriage wheels as they rolled swiftly away.

CHAPTER IX.

Off for Berlin.

I HAD expected that the time would pass slowly after Gottfried went away to Heidelberg, but to my surprise the months rolled by very quickly. In the vacations I saw my old playmate occasionally, but I began to feel quite shy with him, he seemed so manly and so much older than I. The second summer after he entered the university he brought home a big mastiff, of whom I was very much afraid, although he was said to be perfectly gentle. Herr Herrmann had to build a large kennel out in the garden for this new member of the family. The professor considered Hugo, who was the dog, rather superfluous, but Gottfried's mother was delighted with him. At night I could hear him growl and bark at the passers-by as he lay in front of his house.

About this time, too, Gottfried was seen walking up and down in the Herrmanns' garden smoking a long, black pipe, almost an exact counterpart of the one his father had. The next time he came home I scarcely recognized him. His face was covered with a silky, golden-brown beard.

"I think Gottfried is going to be a fine-looking young man," said my father, one day, at dinner. "But from all accounts I fear he is a wild boy."

"Dost thou hear much of him, father?" asked the mother.

"No; only what neighbor Schmidt said the other day. He has relatives in Heidelberg, and they report that Gottfried attends more diligently to the nightly meetings of his 'corps' than he does to the lectures of the professors."

"Hast thou seen him lately, Anna?" said mother, turning to me.

"Yes, mother. I met him on the street the other day, but he did not seem like the same Gottfried. He called me 'Fraülein Anna,' and said 'you' instead of 'thou.'"

"And what didst thou call him, Anna?" asked father, smiling.

"I called him nothing; but, of course, followed his example and used 'you' in speaking."

"I noticed that he walks a good deal with Margaretta Schmidt," said father. "I imagine that Frau Herrmann would be pleased with that alliance. Herr Schmidt has plenty of thalers for his daughter's dowry."

"Margaretta is often at the Herrmanns' and

is a great favorite with the mother. But I scarcely have imagined that Gottfried would be charmed by her loud ways."

"Ach! mother. Boys will be boys, and Margaretta is handsome and well dressed, and has plenty of money. Those are great inducements." Father went away, laughing, to his business.

I saw my mother look up at me quickly as I went out and mounted the winding staircase to go to my room. I was thankful to her that she did not speak to me. Mothers always seem to understand their daughters intuitively —at least good mothers, like mine. Perhaps her heart ached too when she was eighteen.

I went into my room and closed the door. Standing by the window I saw, far down the yellow road, two figures. They were Gottfried and Margaretta. He leaned toward her as he talked, and she glanced up at him coquettishly. The big mastiff walked in a stately manner on the other side of Gottfried, whose hand was on his head. They were coming up to Professor Herrmann's front gate; now they entered it and went through the pretty garden, around the side of the house to a large, open space which had been laid out as a lawn tennis court. This was a new game, just brought over from

England. Margaretta had learned to play it, and she and Gottfried were out there nearly every day during the vacation.

Margaretta looked very pretty, I could see, as I peeped out from behind my Swiss muslin curtains. She wore a dainty white gown, trimmed with soft lace and flowing crimson ribbons. At her waist and throat were clusters of fuchsias, drooping gracefully. Her broad-brimmed, lace-covered hat was caught up on one side, showing a bunch of crimson roses. She was certainly a handsome girl—almost a woman—and it was no wonder that Gottfried liked her.

I went and stood in front of my round mirror, with its carved mahogany frame. Yes, I was nothing but a plain little country girl beside Margaretta. I saw only a rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed maiden, with light hair combed down, as smoothly as the curls would allow, on each side of a low forehead. I braided my hair now, and twisted it back and forth across my head. My dress was a rose-colored print, and at the neck it was fastened with an ivory edelweiss pin which my mother had worn when she was my age. It was not surprising that Gottfried did not want me, now that he had seen something of the world. Mother had said that it would be so. But O, how hard it was to

be forgotten and not to be missed! I looked down at the little turquoise ring which I always wore. I had not forgotten my friend, even if he had forgotten me.

Just then I remembered that that day when I met Gottfried on the street he had held my hand just for a moment, looking down at the gold band. Perhaps he had not forgotten after all. I had prayed daily for him, as he had asked me to do, and I could, at least, continue to do that. So I knelt down by my bed and asked the dear Lord to bless Gottfried and make him good, to care for and protect him and lead him in the right way. Then I added a petition for myself, that our Father would make me unselfish, that I might love others rather than myself. My heart felt light again, and I looked out with interest at the game of tennis.

When I went down stairs I found mother in the vine-covered arbor, busy with her mending. She looked up with a pleasant smile as I came out with my workbasket.

"Ach! Liebling, thou lookest much fresher for thy rest. I thought that thou wast very weary at dinner."

"I am all right, mother, dear," I answered, cheerfully.

As we settled down to our sewing the mother

said: "My child, thou art now eighteen, and it seems to me time that thou shouldst go away from our quiet Wittenberg. Young birds must leave the home nest some time, although it is hard for the parent birds to have them do so," she added, with a sigh.

"I do not care to go away, mother. I am very happy here in our quiet home, and with thee and father."

"I know, dearie; but it is part of the education which we owe thee that thou shouldst see other cities and other people. It takes all kinds to make up the world. Thou must learn to know all sorts of persons if thou wilt do thy duty by others. Circumstances change the disposition very often, and in order to help our friends and neighbors we must know something of their surroundings and temptations."

"Where must I go?"

"Thou knowest thy Cousin Bertha, who has visited us here occasionally? She is a lovely girl, notwithstanding the fact that the family, through thy Aunt Katharina's influence, have become somewhat loose in their religious views."

"I know, mother. I heard father say that they are no longer Lutherans, but have joined the sect of Methodists."

"Yes, but nevertheless thy aunt is a good woman, one of the best I ever knew. There must be something good in these dissenters, even though they have forsaken the old Established Church. Thy uncle has written, inviting thee to come to Berlin for a visit—for the winter, in fact."

"What could I do there so long, mother? I should be so homesick for thee and father. Why may I not go for a short visit?" I cried, sadly, for a separation from home meant a great deal to me.

"It is our intention to have thee take lessons with Bertha in French, English, and music. She has excellent teachers in these branches, and it will be a great advantage to thee."

"It would be very nice to learn these things, but I should hate to leave thee."

"Such things must come, Anna, and thou must live thine own life. Thou hast an excellent education thus far, thanks to thy good teachers and also to Gottfried's aid, and now thou must have a little more of the accomplishments."

That evening, at supper, it was settled that I should go to Berlin the first of October—it was then the first of September—and should remain, if nothing interfered, until the next June,

taking every possible opportunity to improve my mind.

"But thou must not forget thy housewifely arts, Annachen," said the father. "Nothing is more important for a young woman. Thou must have these accomplishments, but not so much of them that thou forgettest thy other work."

"I'll try, father. I fear thou wilt miss my biscuits with thy coffee."

"I shall miss thee sorely, my daughter," said he, smoothing my hair as he used to do when I sat on the low stool at his feet long years before; "but it is right that thou shouldst go."

September was a busy month. The dressmaker came and made me several new dresses, handsomer ones than I had ever had before. I was quite surprised, but mother said: "It is fitting that thou shouldst be properly dressed. Thy father is not a poor man, and it is expected of thee. Besides, thou art now a woman."

My dresses were made long, quite down to my feet, so that I felt very dignified indeed. One of them was a chocolate-colored silk, I remember, trimmed with some fine old lace yellow with age, which the mother drew from the chest where she kept her treasures. My

father wished to see all my new gowns when they were finished, and the night before leaving home I put on this dress. It was soft silk with a faint rustle, and was made very full in the skirt, had huge leg-o'-mutton sleeves, and was cut open at the neck, filled in with soft lace. I wore a bunch of pink asters in my bosom, and father was quite delighted.

"I never thought I should have so handsome a daughter!" he exclaimed. "She looks just as thou didst at her age, Martha," turning with a courtly bow to greet my mother as she came in at the door.

"I have brought a guest with me," said mother, smiling, and, as she moved aside, I saw the tall figure of my old friend Gottfried. The great mastiff came stalking in behind him.

"Lie there, Hugo!" he said, and the big dog stretched himself out quietly in front of the open fire. The night was a little cool, and there was a glowing stick of wood in the wide tiled fireplace.

"Good evening, Herr Lufft! Good evening, Fraülein Anna!" said Gottfried, in his rich, deep voice, shaking us cordially by the hand. "It is a long time since I have seen you."

My mother pushed a comfortable chair up close to father, so that Gottfried might sit near

him, and he threw himself into it. I sat down quietly and listened. How I trembled! It seemed as if my face was on fire; but Gottfried sat at his ease. Sometimes he looked laughingly over at me as he told a college joke or some prank of his fellow-students. He and father talked a long time. He told us about his life in Heidelberg; how the students made the people crazy with their noise; how they went up and explored the old castle which stands so deserted, a mere shadow of past glory. It was very interesting, and I soon lost my timidity before this tall man with his thick, silky beard, and entered into the conversation just as I used to do.

"You know that Georg Schmidt is at Heidelberg too," said Gottfried. "He is studying medicine, and is going to make a splendid physician. He is such a good, steady fellow. I am afraid he learns more than I do," he added, with an odd grimace.

"He is the best of the family," said father, meditatively, blowing a great puff of smoke artistically in circles around his head.

"Yes, he is. But I don't believe his parents half appreciate him. Well, I must go. It is getting late. Come, Hugo! No, Fraülein Anna, you need not fear, he is perfectly gen-

tle." He had seen me move backward as the big animal came near.

"I will introduce thee, Hugo. This is Fraülein Anna Lufft, my old playmate and comrade"—(he had not forgotten entirely, then)—"who is grown so fine and womanly that she has forgotten the hours we passed in the old willow years ago." He had drawn near to me now, and spoke the last words in a low tone. The big dog rubbed his nose against me. "Thou hast a new gown, Anna," whispered Gottfried, in the same old tones of his boyhood. "Thou hast forgotten thy playmate."

I looked up at him.

"It is you who have forgotten us, Herr Herrmann," I said, quietly.

"Thinkest thou so, Anna? Then thou thinkest wrongly. I see thou wearest my little ring. I never forgot thee." He turned sharply away, said "Guten Abend" to my father and mother, made me a polite bow after the latest fashion among Heidelberg students, and, calling his dog, passed out of the door. In a moment I heard my mother returning from opening the door for him.

"Gottfried wishes to speak with thee a moment, my daughter," she said. "Do not stay long. The air is cool."

I found him waiting in the doorway for me.

"Your mother says you are going away, Fraülein Anna."

"Yes. I am going to Berlin for the winter to see the city and to study with my Cousin Bertha."

"I hope you will have a delightful time," he said, warmly. "Berlin is a beautiful city."

"I expect I shall," I replied, "and now I really must say 'Good-bye' and close the door, for it is cool to-night."

"Wait just a moment longer. It is so long since I have seen you. I have so many other things to do."

"Yes. I often see you play tennis with Margaretta."

"My mother wishes it. Anna, mother would like me to marry Margaretta. She told me so to-day."

"Will you not, then?" I asked, though my limbs shook under me. "She is a beautiful woman."

"I shall never marry Margaretta," he answered, quietly. "Anna, wilt thou give me a flower from thy dress?"

I loosened it tremblingly.

"Thou wilt wear my little ring until I come again?"

"Yes, Gottfried."

"Adieu! Auf wiedersehen!" and we had parted again.

I went into the house with a happy heart. Gottfried had not forgotten me. He had some reason for not speaking or walking with me. And he had said he would not marry Margaretta, even though his mother wished it. Whom, then, would he marry? He had not said that.

"Art thou cold, Anna?" asked my mother. "Thy cheeks look flushed with the crisp air."

"No, mother, I am quite warm."

We sat around the fire a long time that evening. We talked of days past and of days to come, and through all ran the strain of duty to God, duty to our fellow-men, and forgetfulness of self. One can never be too thankful for good home influences. They are the greatest blessings which God can give us.

The next morning I left for Berlin. Many kisses were exchanged, some tears were shed, and warm greetings were sent to the dear ones in the neighboring city.

The train moved rapidly through the flat country. Flocks of geese, cared for by a brightly dressed goose girl, flapped their wings wildly as the locomotive gave a shrill whistle.

The cattle grazed in the green fields; the sheep pastured in the rocky meadows; here and there was a lonely farmhouse or an isolated black and gray windmill. Then the train entered the city; we reached the station with its bustle and confusion; Bertha's arms were around my neck. I was in Berlin, and a new era in life had been opened before me.

CHAPTER X.

Among the Methodists.

MY uncle, Josef Lufft, had lived in Berlin a good many years. He was a silversmith by trade, and made some very beautiful pieces of silverware. In fact, the kaiser himself had condescended to purchase of him some articles for the royal household, thus enabling my uncle to put on his sign, "Silversmith to His Majesty William I," which, naturally, brought him a good deal more trade than if he had been silversmith to ordinary people only.

The family lived in a pleasant apartment over the store on the Leipzigerstrasse. We people of Wittenberg, who possessed any means, were accustomed to occupy an entire house, so that it seemed a little strange to me to be shut up in eight or nine rooms all on one floor, and to know that a family lived above us and still another above them, while below us business was going on. Then, too, the bustle and noise of the busy street were new to me. The first few nights I could scarcely sleep, but awoke frightened at the unaccustomed sounds outside my window. At one of the windows there was a small balcony, and I found it very interesting to go out

there and look down upon the restless, moving throng in the street. Men, women, and children jostled one another on the pavement. In the middle of the street omnibuses, carriages, drays, handcarts, and people were almost—as it seemed to my country eyes—inextricably mixed together. How collisions were avoided, and how persons escaped with their lives in that jumble seemed to me a miracle.

My Aunt Katharina made me feel at home from the very first. I had never seen her before, but I felt, when she kissed me on my arrival from Wittenberg, that I should find her a second mother. So she was to me, the dear, good woman, a true guide and counselor until God took her to the home toward which she had been looking with joyful expectation. It was only last year that she went away from us. I can scarcely imagine that home on the Leipzigerstrasse without the mother. My aunt was a little woman, not much over five feet in height. Her eyes were dark brown, and her hair harmonized with them in color. Her hands were not soft like my mother's, but were rather rough and bony. They were beautiful because they were such good hands, always working for others.

"Willkommen, meine Anna," she said cor-

dially, as I entered the front door of their house. "Thou seest that the children have been expecting thee." She pointed upward to the green wreath hanging over the doorway with the motto, "Herzlich Willkommen," in bright letters. "Luise and Paul made the wreath yesterday. Come, children, and greet thy cousin." They came shyly and gave me a friendly kiss.

"And is there not a baby, auntie?" I asked.

"Yes, indeed; we have always a baby here," she replied, cheerily. "The good Lord sends the great stork with his outspread wings very often to our home. Thou knowest children are 'God's blessings.' He is in this room."

She opened the door and led me into a bright, cheerful room, where a pleasant-faced nurse was holding a chubby baby about nine months old. I knelt down by him to kiss his velvety cheeks, and he put his little hand on my face. I had seen very little of babies, being an only child, but I loved them dearly.

"Now, Bertha, take Anna to thy room. Thou dost not object to sharing Bertha's room, Anna? We are a little crowded with our big family."

"Not at all, Aunt Katharina. I shall enjoy it."

Bertha and I went away together, and had a good talk before the bell rang for our dinner. My cousin was short, just like her mother, and was one of the winsomest, most attractive girls I ever saw.

From that time on I was one of the family. My uncle called me his "other big daughter." In the morning I helped my aunt and Bertha with the housework, or amused Master Baby as he sat in his carriage. The children all appeared to like me, and I grew to love them very dearly. There were eight altogether, but they never were in the way, and had nice, tidy ways of caring for each other. Bertha was the oldest, being just twenty. Wilhelm and Wilhelmina were the twins, and loved each other greatly. Fortunately, my uncle was a well-to-do man, and could afford to pay servants enough to relieve his wife and Bertha of much care. It was thus that my cousin could find time to study.

I reached Berlin on Wednesday. All our spare time that week was devoted to sight-seeing. We looked at the lovely displays of costly goods in the store windows; we wandered through miles of exquisite paintings in the galleries; we walked in the Thiergarten. By the time Saturday night came we were quite

ready for a rest. Sunday morning, when we were drinking our coffee, my uncle said: "Anna, dost thou wish that Bertha should go with thee to thine own church? She can do so. I would not interfere with thy religious duties in any way. Thou knowest we are Methodists, and I thought that possibly thy father would not care to have thee go with us."

"My father spoke of it," I answered, "and told me that he was quite willing I should go to your church. He says we can worship God under any roof if our hearts are right."

"He says truly. Thy father would have made a good Methodist; but he thinks no Church is equal to the old established one," he said, smiling. "I believe that if he would come and make us a long visit he, too, would come over to us. My wife would show him the way as she did me."

Aunt Katharina laughed.

"Thou must not try to influence the child, Josef. Hans would think it taking an unfair advantage if we urged our doctrines on her while she is in our house."

"Do not fear, mother. There is surely no harm in letting her see that we are a godfearing people, is there?"

"No, Josef. We are told to let our 'light

shine before men.' Children, run and get ready for service. It is already half past eight o'clock."

"Church begins in an hour. We shall have to hurry," said Bertha.

We arranged our room in good order, put on our best dresses, and were ready when Uncle Josef and Aunt Katharina came out with four of the other children. It was a fine morning, and the Berliners were out in full force. Most of them seemed to be bound for places of amusement rather than for church. Many of the children wore, strapped to their side, long green boxes within which was hidden their "Butterbrod" to form their luncheon by and by. The box, when emptied, would serve as an excellent receptacle for the flowers, stones, or butterflies which they might collect during their day's ramble. Some of the ladies carried fans and opera glasses.

"Is it not sad," I heard my uncle say to my aunt, "that so many of our people prefer going to the morning concert, or the performance at the theater on Sunday, to attending service at the house of God?"

"It is very sad," responded Aunt Katharina, "but we must remember that most of them do not know any better. They have never learned

the peace and comfort which comes from serving our heavenly Father."

As we neared the church I saw a number of persons with black books under their arms, who were evidently going in our direction. When we came to a large gray building my uncle stopped. "This is our church," said he. "There, on the left of the archway, is our preacher's house." We entered a door, and, after my uncle and aunt had exchanged pleasant greetings with some people who were standing inside the hallway, ascended a flight of stairs, passed through another entrance, and found ourselves in a good-sized church. It looked very new and modern to my eyes, so long accustomed to churches three centuries old, but it was very cheerful and bright.

I remained standing to pray, as is the custom in the Lutheran Church, on entering the seat, but to my confusion found that I was alone, the rest of the family having knelt down on the small benches which were provided in each seat. What astonished me most was the simplicity of the entire service. The preacher wore no gown. There was no altar, no crucifix; there were no candles. The minister ascended the high wooden pulpit directly in front of the congregation and gave out the hymn. The organist

played a beautiful tune, quite like those chorals which we Lutherans used, and we all joined in the singing. The hymn was simple and yet grand. It spoke of our need of a Saviour, of his death upon the cross for us, of our joy when his love filled our hearts.

Then the preacher prayed, not out of a book, but out of his heart; so it sounded to me. He prayed that we might be saved from our sins, that this lost world might look to Jesus, that the poor might be relieved, the wounded and bleeding hearts bound up. I had never heard anything like it in all my life. "He acts as if he were really talking to God," I thought.

Then portions of Scripture were read; we sang another of those wonderfully touching hymns, and the preacher arose and announced his text. I shall never forget that sermon. The text was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." There was no aimless wandering; every word was preached directly at the hearers. The speaker was a young man with a pleasant face and a short black beard; his voice was melodious, his language simple but good. As I sat there I thought he was talking directly to me.

"You who sit before me to-day, hear my words. Christ Jesus speaks to your heart. He says,

'Unless ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God.' You may say: 'I have never committed sin. I have done no wrong.' That may be true in one sense; but have you been converted? Have you laid yourself at the foot of the cross? Has the Holy Spirit entered your heart? Are you Christ's?" Thus he spoke earnestly, his face being illuminated with a holy light, it seemed to me. What was it to be converted? I must ask Aunt Katharina.

At the close of the sermon, and after singing another hymn, the preacher called on my uncle to pray, and then pronounced the benediction. I did not feel like talking on the homeward walk. My mind was too full. At dinner my uncle asked me how I had liked the service.

"Very much, Uncle Josef. I could understand every word of it. I love our Pastor Schwartz dearly, but I never remember a word of his sermons. This one was so simple and so direct that I forgot all about the other people, and thought he was talking to me alone."

"I am glad thou didst enjoy it," said my aunt, from the other end of the long table—I had the seat of honor on the right of my uncle —"Preacher Prinz is one of my favorites. He

is a very good man, and knows just how to reach the hearts of the people."

I had supposed that we should all go for a walk after dinner; but, instead, we settled ourselves with books.

"Hast thou seen our *Evangelist*, Anna?" asked Bertha. "It is a nice little paper."

We sat down on the sofa in the best room and looked over some numbers of the Methodist Church paper. It seemed to be written in a strange language. The expressions were new to me, so different from those to which I was accustomed. To my surprise, about four o'clock we prepared for church again. Two services on Sunday were more than I was accustomed to. My father, though a very good man, thought his duty done when he had attended church in the morning, and was content to rest the remainder of the day. Aunt Katharina stayed at home to read to the little ones. "I may do my duty here as well as at the church," she said, explaining to me why she could not go with us. "God gave me my children to love and care for, and since they are too little to go to church I must try to teach them about Jesus at home." When we left her the babies were clustered about her knee, eagerly listening to the stories which she told them.

In the evening we all sang together. Some of the hymns were old chorals, with which I had been familiar all my life, but the majority were new ones; bright and cheerful songs they were. Uncle Josef said that many of them were translated from English hymns.

"Ours is a joyful religion," he said; "we are happy, and why should we not sing joyous hymns?"

"They do not sound like hymns to me, uncle," I said, timidly.

"I can easily believe that, child, for I, too, was brought up a Lutheran. It is not a depraved Church, like the Roman Catholic, but it lacks life. The joy of religion is not felt by its members."

"My father and mother are good, Uncle Josef; they are happy and cheerful in their faith."

"Thy parents are different from many of the members of the State Church. They live what they profess, and they study their Bibles. But I will warrant that thou never heardest a sermon like that one this morning from any Lutheran pulpit."

"No, uncle."

"That is the trouble, Anna. There is no life in the Church. They are nominally Christians, but they know not the joy of pardoned sin. nor

the fellowship with Christ which the Church felt in days gone by. Martin Luther was not so. He taught the Gospel, pure and simple. He did not get up and lecture to a half-filled church upon the new theology, and express doubts as to the divinity of Christ, as do some of the State Church pastors of to-day."

"Thou hast mounted thy hobby again, my Josef," said Aunt Katharina, laughing. "Come, girls, if work begins this week you must be off for bed."

It was some days before I could get an opportunity to speak quietly with my aunt, for she was such a busy woman. There was scarcely a moment in the day when one or the other of the eight children did not want "the little mother." One day, however, when most of the boys and girls were off for a long walk with their school friends, and Bertha was practicing in the drawing-room, and baby was asleep, I managed to catch Aunt Katharina alone in her room, hard at work on a basket full of mending.

"Let me help thee, auntie," I said. "I have so little to do here that I fear I shall grow lazy."

"Well, child, if thou wishest thou mayest work a little. Here is a big darning needle and there are Heinrich's black socks with unusually

large holes in them. Marie is so busy to-day that she cannot help me at all. Art thou not a little homesick here, Anna? I noticed yesterday that thou hadst been crying. Come! tell me all about it."

"I am ashamed to say so, Aunt Katharina, when you are all so kind to me, but I have such a longing to see my father and mother I can scarcely restrain myself sometimes from going home." I put my head down on Heinrich's big black sock, and cried heartily.

"Cry on, my child," said my aunt, laying down her work and coming to put her arms about me; "it will relieve thee. I think thou art a very brave girl to keep a cheerful face before us all when thy heart is so lonely for the dear parents. Thou hast heard from the mother?"

"Yes; I have had three letters. They are cheerful and comforting; but I know father and mother are lonely without me, and I am so lonely without them. Thou wilt not mind, dear aunt?" for I was afraid she might be offended at my longing for home.

"I do not mind at all, Anna. It is quite natural thou shouldst long for the dear ones. I felt just the same when I first left home. However, thou must remember that it would

make thy mother sad if she knew that thou wast grieving. They are making great sacrifices for thee."

"I know it, Aunt Katharina. I will do the best I can and make them proud of me. My cry has done me good."

"Then dry thine eyes, child, and we will have a nice talk. It will not be long before baby will awaken, and I shall have to go."

As the work grew under our busy fingers we talked of the beautiful things to be seen and learned in this great city, and of how carefully our time should be economized.

"'For the night cometh, when no man can work,'" quoted my aunt.

"Aunt Katharina," I said, gathering up my courage, "what did the preacher mean on Sunday when he said we must be converted?"

"He meant that we must repent of our sins and believe on the Saviour, allowing him to give us a new and clean heart. We must turn from our old ways and walk in the path which leads toward heaven."

"Am I converted, Aunt Katharina?"

"Only thou canst know, Anna."

"I was baptized into the membership of our Church. I have always gone to church. When I was fourteen I was confirmed, and our

old pastor trained me in the catechism. I have always prayed to God, night and morning, and whenever any difficulty came in my way. Mother taught me to do that."

"Thy mother is an excellent Christian woman," interrupted my aunt.

"But I do not know whether I am converted or not," I continued.

"Dost thou believe that Jesus Christ is thy Saviour; that he saves thee from thy sins?"

"I certainly do."

"Art thou willing to give thyself to him, to go where he calls, to consecrate thy whole life to him and to his service?"

"I have done that already, Aunt Katharina, in my little room at home. It tells us to do that in the Bible."

"I believe that thou art truly the Lord's, Anna. Let us kneel down here and ask God to guide and lead us both."

So we knelt in that quiet room, and my good aunt prayed. Then she said, "Anna, wilt thou not pray too?" I was quite afraid, for only in my own room had I dared to pray aloud, but I tried, remembering that I was not praying for my aunt, but for God, who hears even the weakest cry.

"O Lord, I give myself to thee. Do thou

make me to know whether I am truly converted. Make me entirely thine. Do with me what thou wilt, only let it be for thy glory," I said.

"Thou art indeed a Christian, Anna," said my aunt, wiping away her tears. "May the dear Lord bless and keep thee!"

Then, as baby called from the next room, my aunt went away to her child, and I went on with my darning. My heart was peaceful and happy. I felt that I was indeed Christ's, and he was mine. Little did I dream of the sacrifices which this consecration to God's work might require of me; but even if I had seen into the future and known the trials before me, I should not have done differently. Christ had bought me and saved me. Could I do less than give myself and my poor, weak life to him?

CHAPTER XI.

In the Great City.

AS soon as possible Bertha and I began our studies. We had both taken a little French and English in the schools, but now that our minds were more mature, and as we felt an inspiration to learn, which most children lack, we advanced rapidly. Our French teacher was a lady from Paris, who spoke her native tongue with a very pure accent. She taught us three times a week. Our English teacher was an American, who was spending the winter in Berlin, and was very glad to get a little work to do. She was preparing herself to be a teacher in her own country. Every day she came to us for an hour, and we soon became able to converse a little in English. It is not a difficult language to speak, though we found the pronunciation and spelling very hard.

In our music we progressed, but not very rapidly. I was studying vocal music, and also took lessons on the piano. Bertha devoted her time entirely to the piano, and was much more advanced than I was, having had the advantage of better instruction. In vocal music I

was ahead of her, for, although her voice was sweet, it was not powerful, and my uncle did not consider it necessary to put any extra expense on lessons for her. I had sung ever since I was a child. My father called me his "little bird," and many a "Volkslied" did we sing in our pleasant arbor. He was very anxious that my voice should be well trained, and for some years our music master in Wittenberg had been teaching me. The latter was a graduate of the Leipzig Conservatory, and gave me the best advantages possible. So, on reaching Berlin, although I found the professor critical and somewhat severe, there was very little to undo, as I had been taught the proper method.

What an inspiration there was in the lessons under these professors! Everything was interesting, from the playing of our fellow-pupils and the criticisms bestowed upon them to the time when Professor Kepler gazed sternly through his spectacles at me and turned the battery of sarcasm in my direction. Dear old Professor Kepler! The girls used to discuss the serious question, when we were putting on our wraps in the cloak room, as to whether he ever did comb his hair.

"It always stands straight up on his head," said Mina Worman.

"But then, you know, we take our lesson at five in the afternoon," I suggested. "Probably in the morning he looks perfectly immaculate, just like the director, who always looks as if he came direct from his toilet room."

"No, it is not a bit better in the morning," spoke up another girl. "I take my lesson at eight o'clock, and his hair sticks up just the same."

"Girls," said Hanna Prost, "I saw Professor Kepler once when his hair was as smooth as mine."

"That is not saying much," laughed Mina, "if yours looked as it does now."

"Well, what can you expect when I have been simply crazy over those violin studies? They never would come right."

"When was it, Hanna? Go on about Professor Kepler," we cried.

"One night I was at a Philharmonic with my brother, and right opposite us was our teacher. You know he is a confirmed bachelor, so I was much surprised to see him with Frau and Fraülein Krupp. You know Frau Krupp is so old that she can scarcely see, and her daughter must be at least seventy."

"O, Hanna!" exclaimed the chorus.

"Well, she's fifty, anyway. But Professor Kepler was as attentive to her as if she were twenty; just like Heinrich Otto was to you, Bertha, the same night," she said, laughingly, turning to my cousin, who had come in, and was standing quietly listening.

Bertha grew very rosy.

"You must not blush, Fraülein Bertha. Everybody knows that Heinrich is ready to bow down and worship you if you will let him."

"You are far away from Professor Kepler's hair," I said, wishing to divert the lively girl's attention from my blushing and embarrassed cousin.

"Ach! yes. I had to look twice at him, to be positive whether it was really himself or his ghost, for his hair lay flat upon his head, and looked as smooth as a looking-glass. But I must go, or I shall be late for supper."

"So must I," added one girl after another.

Bertha and I walked slowly toward home.

"Thou heardest what Hanna said about Heinrich," she said, quietly.

"Yes, Bertha."

"I should like to tell thee, Anna, that last night he asked father if I might be his wife, and as my father and mother consent we shall

soon be betrothed." She turned an extremely red face to me.

"I am very glad, Bertha, dear. Heinrich is good and faithful, and I am sure thou wilt be happy with him."

"I love him very dearly, Anna, and have loved him a long time."

Thus it came about that on my aunt's birthday there was a happy betrothal in our home. Bertha wore a pretty, new gray gown made especially for the occasion, and young Heinrich, with a very flushed face and very new clothes, was exceedingly joyful. My aunt made a feast for us, we sang cheerful songs, and everyone was overflowing with happiness. Of course, after that, as my cousin was a "Braut," she took no more lessons at the conservatory. All her spare time was devoted to making fine linen garments, which she embroidered in beautiful patterns of vines and flowers. The oaken chest, in which my aunt had placed, from time to time, pieces of linen and cloth, or bits of silverware presented to Bertha on her birthdays, in anticipation of this happy occasion, was gradually emptied of its contents. The pile of finished garments and household articles grew higher and higher, and the time went past before we knew it.

One evening we all, that is, my uncle and aunt, Bertha and her betrothed, Heinrich, my oldest boy cousin, and I, went to one of the Philharmonic concerts. We found a table large enough to hold our party, and sat down around it to eat some light refreshments and listen to the exquisite orchestral music. After they had finished the third number of the program I heard my uncle exclaim: "There is Schwester Lena, sitting all alone over by that little round table. I will go and ask her to come here. That is, if there is room."

"Ach! yes, do so," responded Aunt Katharina. "We can easily sit a little closer."

"That we can," said Heinrich Otto, as he pressed Bertha's hand, an act which the mother did not see.

Soon my uncle returned with a woman about fifty years of age, wearing the dress of a deaconess. It was not the same as the costume of the deaconesses of the Lutheran Church, who wear no cape, and have a close-fitting bonnet, with a veil hanging from the back. This was my first view of a Methodist deaconess. Little did I dream that I, too, would some day wear a similar dress and be a member of the same band.

"Guten Abend!" we all exclaimed as the deaconess came near. I remembered then that

I had seen her in the church. She sat on our left with about thirty other women wearing the same costume. I had not paid much attention to them, being so interested in our preacher's sermons. I attended the Methodist Church regularly, going twice on Sundays and twice during the week to evening meetings. Uncle said that I was getting to be quite a Methodist.

"This is my niece, Fraülein Lufft, from Wittenberg, Schwester Lena," said Uncle Josef, as I arose to greet the older woman.

"I am very glad to meet you, Fraülein," said she. "I knew your father and mother many years ago when I was deaconess at Kaiserswerth."

"You were then formerly a Lutheran, Schwester Lena?" I asked.

"Yes. I was nine years at Kaiserswerth, and afterward worked in various cities of the kingdom under the same organization."

"And you are now a Methodist?"

"Is that so very strange?" she responded, smiling.

"My niece is a Lutheran," said Aunt Katharina, and is interested to know how you happened to change your faith." I looked at her thankfully; that was just what I wished to ask, but felt too shy.

"Listen a moment to the music! How beautiful it is! Yet there are people who think it wicked to enjoy the gifts which God has given us. Fraülein Lufft, I shall be glad to tell you about my change from the Lutheran to the Methodist faith if you will come to the Deaconess Home to see me on Friday."

"I shall come gladly," I replied.

"I thought you deaconesses were too busy to spend an evening for a concert," said my uncle.

"That is true, usually, and, too, we hesitate to spend our money for tickets when there are so many suffering for bread. To-night, however, I have a treat. Herr Lichtner, the gentleman whom one of our deaconesses nursed through a dangerous illness last year, is a member of the orchestra up there. He plays the violin. He sent to our Home a season ticket to the Philharmonics, and we take turns coming to enjoy the beautiful music. To-night the lot fell to me. The music strengthens us for our duties."

"I thought Herr Lichtner was a Lutheran?"

"So he is. But, you know, much of our work is done in the very best Lutheran families. They seem to prefer us, sometimes, to their own deaconesses."

"For the same reason that Herr Schmidt

expressed the other day. You remember that his wife was very ill a year or two ago."

"Yes. Schwester Rosalina and Schwester Susanna nursed her."

"Well, a few weeks ago she was taken again very ill, and they sent at once to our Deaconess Home for a nurse, but were not able to get any, as there is so much sickness about."

"It is a hard winter," murmured Schwester Lena.

"Herr Schmidt got two deaconesses of the State Church, but was not pleased with them. The family do not attend any church, but they know a good Christian woman when they see her. I met him the other day and asked him how his wife was getting on. 'She is improving slowly,' he said. 'I wish we could have had one of your deaconesses. They are like sunshine in the house, and cheer my poor, dear wife greatly. I tell you, Lufft,' he added earnestly, 'those women live what they profess.' I thought that was a pretty good recommendation for our Bethanien-Verein for a worldly man."

"I am thankful that it is so," said Schwester Lena, and the conversation drifted away to other subjects.

CHAPTER XII.

Important Events.

ON Friday afternoon I went to the Deaconess House. The Society owns the entire building, facing on a broad, handsome street, but occupies only the apartment on the first floor. The upper stories are rented to outsiders. The bright-faced deaconess who opened the front door for me showed me into a pleasant, well-furnished parlor. Schwester Lena soon came in, and urged me to take a cup of coffee with her and eat some delicious little cakes which their cook had made. As we sat there she told me something of her life.

As she had said that night at the Philharmonic concert, she was trained at the old home in Kaiserswerth. Then she worked for some years among the Lutherans, until she was about thirty-five years old.

"One Sunday," she said, "I was walking through these Berlin streets when I heard sweet singing, and following the sound found myself in a small room which was well filled with people. The preacher gave us an excellent discourse, but its chief value in my eyes was the stress which he laid on our personal responsi-

bility to God. He said that no Church could save us. It would make no difference at the last day, when we came before the judgment seat of Christ, whether we had been baptized into a Church or not if we were not truly converted. I was much impressed by these plain truths, and after the service went up and spoke to the preacher. After some talk, and meditation, and prayer, I decided to join the Methodists. I felt very sad at leaving my old Lutheran friends, of whom I was very fond, but I felt that I could serve God better in this denomination."

"What are you doing now, Schwester Lena?" I asked.

"I am a Bible woman. I go in and out of the streets of this great city, trying to help the helpless and bring comfort to some poor heart. I nurse a little, when necessary, but I am getting too old for that kind of work, and I usually accompany the nursing deaconesses, and while they sweep, and clean, and make comfortable the lonely, cheerless homes of the poor and sick I read to them of Jesus and his love."

"It is a beautiful work!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, although homely, quiet labor, it is beautiful in God's sight."

I left her with a resolution to examine care-

fully my own heart and see whether it was right for me to follow my inclinations and ally myself with this Methodist sect of dissenters, as they were called, or whether I ought to hold to the faith of my father and my father's father. I had been attending my uncle's church so long that I had begun to feel a deep interest in its workings. The Sunday school attracted me greatly. I loved to teach the children. It seemed to me that I felt a new rest and peace when mingling with these people of God. It was my church home on earth. I felt drawn to them in a strange way.

In order that I might know more of Methodism, I read the literature concerning its beginnings in Germany. I read of Fathers Jacoby and Nast, of their trials and discouragements, and of the almost marvelous spread of their doctrines. As I could now read English quite well, I got a book called the *History of Methodism* from my uncle's library, written by a Dr. Stevens, and read it through with great interest. I had never realized, and did not believe that my father knew, what a great denomination the Methodists constituted in the new land across the sea.

Aunt Katharina and I talked it all over, and finally decided to write and ask my father's ad-

vice, instead of waiting to talk with him on my return to Wittenberg. This I did with much fear; I had never opposed my father's wishes and should not do so now if he objected seriously, for my aunt said it was not a matter in which I ought to go against his judgment. I knew him to be strongly attached to our Established Church. Great was my surprise when I received his letter. I have it in front of me. It has always been a comfort to me to know that my father was a thorough Christian, broad in his views of humanity. It reads thus:

"WITTENBERG, April 2.

"MY DEAR DAUGHTER:

"Thy mother and I have received thy letter. It surprised us very much, but did not grieve us; for we know our daughter will try to live as her conscience dictates and God is leading her. We had a long talk about it last night as we sat by the fire, and we concluded that thou art old enough to make thine own choice. Who are we that we should place our wishes before the Lord's will?

"Any denomination which has developed the Christian graces as they are shown in thine Uncle and Aunt Lufft is worthy to receive our daughter also. Thy mother and I are too old

for changes; our hearts are bound up in the Church of our youth, but thou art free to serve God in thine own way. May the good God bless and keep thee, my child, and guide thee in all thy ways!

"Thy mother sends her dearest love. We are counting the days now until we shall see thee again. Of course thou must remain for Bertha's wedding.

"Give our heartiest greeting to our brother and sister, as well as to Bertha and her bridegroom, and all of the children.

"Thine affectionate father,

"HANS LUFFT."

Thus it came about that on Easter morning, when the preacher invited those who desired to unite with the Church on probation to come forward, I arose and took my place with three young people before the altar. After the service the members gathered about me and greeted me kindly. Schwester Lena kissed me on both cheeks and said: "Thou wilt find peace with us, child. My heart goes out to thee in love." From that time until now Schwester Lena has been my dear, loving friend.

The spring passed by. Between the lessons and preparations for Bertha's wedding the time

flew quickly. It was in the last of June that my cousin entered our church a "Braut" and came out a "Frau."

At home in Wittenberg there was an oaken chest in which my mother had placed pieces of linen and bits of silverware for my wedding, if it should come. I wondered, like any other simple-hearted German maiden, as I watched Bertha and Heinrich at their joyful bridal, whether it should be my lot in life to wear the myrtle blossom. I did not know. Our future is so overshadowed by clouds and mists that we can see but a little distance.

A few days more and I was back at Wittenberg. My arms were about my mother's neck. I sat again on the low stool at father's feet.

"Ach! It is a fine city Fraülein we have now," grumbled old Gretchen, as she moved about the room, setting the table with the festival dishes.

"No, indeed!" I said, jumping up to give her a hearty kiss. "It is the same old Anna come back to stay in the dearest home in all the world."

CHAPTER XIII.

Home Again.

HOW pleasant it was to be back again! The birds sang more sweetly than ever to greet me, and the flowers seemed to wear gayer apparel than usual in my honor.

"It is because thou art accustomed to the dull, narrow streets of the city, Anna," said the mother, when I told her of my fancy. "It is a good thing to go away from home sometimes, in order that we may enjoy more fully the plain, ordinary blessings of our everyday life."

"And learn to appreciate our fathers and mothers," I added, laughing. "Thou must be shorter than when I left, mother. I quite look down upon thee."

"It is thou who hast grown tall, my Anna. I had no idea that thou couldst change so much in seven months. Thou art taller and very much more womanly; but I think my child's heart is the same."

"Just the same, mother dear, except that it is fuller of love than when I left thee and the dear old home."

We sat down, and I told her of the new joy

which I had found in Berlin, and how this deep love for my Saviour had brightened and beautified my whole life. Mother was very much pleased.

"I have often felt a lack in our Church life," she said, thoughtfully. "It did not seem to me to be so full of the Bible life as it should be. But I have rather condemned myself for it, thinking it presuming to criticise our great State Church. I am glad that thou hast found friends among these god-fearing people. As thy father wrote thee, we are quite satisfied with thy choice. I trust, though, that thy principles will not prevent thee from going with us to our service. We should feel sad not to have thee by our side."

"Not at all, mother. I shall be glad to go with thee and father."

Every Sunday morning we went down the long street to our old church, not hand in hand, as in days gone by, but side by side. I noticed that the neighbors looked a little askance at me, for the report was already circulated that I had joined the Methodists. Unfortunately, the only representatives of that denomination in our small town had been two persons who were very unworthy to be members of this good Church, and who were

expelled some time before I joined it. This latter fact was not known among our friends; my uncle had told me of it in Berlin. It grieved my parents a little to find that my old friends greeted me so coldly, and they easily guessed the reason.

The person who spoke to me most cordially was Margaretta Schmidt, and I had reason to think that her motive was not altogether friendly. As we were walking toward home after church, the first Sunday, she rushed up to me and shook me warmly by the hand.

"How are you, Anna?" she said. "How much you have improved since you went to Berlin! Really, one would scarcely know you, now that you are dressed with some style. Your old clothes were always so dowdy. I am glad your father saw the fitness of things and gave you plenty of money. Do not stand," she added, before I had time to say a word; "I will walk along with you. What possessed you to join the Methodists? I cannot understand it. Of all mean, ill-bred people, I think they are the worst."

"You are mistaken, Margaretta," I managed to say, as she stopped to take breath.

"Ach! Doubtless you have been hoodwinked by that uncle and aunt of yours in Berlin."

"No, indeed, I did it of my own free will."

"You think so, of course. Well, it is the end of all fun for you, and you are just old enough to begin to enjoy life. They are awfully strict. I have heard that they will not allow one to dance, nor go to see any of the good plays. Is it not so?"

"I believe it is."

"Well, I predict that you will not be a Methodist long."

I smiled, but said nothing. It really was not worth while to argue with this gay girl. How could she understand if I were to tell her that the peace in my heart was worth all the balls and theaters in the world?

"By the way," said Margaretta, speaking as if the thought had suddenly come to her, "I spent two weeks in Heidelberg this winter."

"Is it so? When?"

"Early in March. I had a perfectly splendid time, and saw our old friend, Gottfried Herrmann, many times. In fact, he paid me quite marked attention." She stopped for me to respond, but I did not think of anything to say. "It is really too bad that he is such a wild fellow, but those men are always more fascinating, are they not?"

I said, "To some people."

"Yes, of course, not to you, who would never look at a man unless he was a saint. Really, I don't remember that he asked after you or even mentioned your name. Strange, isn't it, how quickly the man forgets the friendships of his boyhood?"

We had reached our gate, and I was waiting for her to close the conversation. I felt weak and tired.

"Since you will not ask me in," she added, laughing, "I suppose I must go home. It is not worth my while to invite you to my dance next week, since you have sworn off all worldly pleasure."

"No," I replied, and we said "Adieu." My heart felt a little heavy. Verily it was harder to be a Methodist than I had thought. Would they all treat me as Margaretta did? Would Gottfried think also that I was trying to be a saint and looked down with disdain upon the rest of the world? Well, it could not be helped. Duty was duty, and our chief end in life was not so much to please ourselves as to serve our heavenly Father. Margaretta's cruel words about Gottfried's neglect to inquire for me did not trouble me at all. I remembered what he had said to me the night before I left for Berlin, and how he had asked for the little pink

aster which I wore on my dress, and I was quite content. I had heard nothing about him all winter. My mother never mentioned him in her letters, and I did not like to ask for him.

As the days wore on I found that the dislike to me on account of having left the State Church increased, and I was invited nowhere. I tried not to mind it, as it left me more time for my father and mother, my housework and studies. It was a little hard, though, to be so misunderstood. One afternoon my mother came to the door of my room, where I had gone to read some French. I feared to lose the little which I had learned, and tried to give an hour a day to the languages.

"Pastor Schwartz wishes to see thee, dear," said mother. "I hope he will say nothing to hurt thy feelings."

"I think he will not, little mother. I shall be very glad to talk with him."

The old man pressed my hand kindly and motioned me to a seat near him. "I do not hear so well as I used to, my dear. You must speak distinctly."

"I am very glad to see you, Herr Pastor. It is a great honor."

We were in the best room, thrown open for this occasion, and Pastor Schwartz was seated

on the sofa in much state. My mother had put on her new black silk apron which Aunt Katharina had sent her by me from Berlin, and came in and sat down a little distance from the Herr Pastor.

"How you have grown, Anna! I suppose I must say 'you,' since you are such a woman, but it seems more natural to say 'thou.'"

"Please do so, Herr Pastor. It would give me pleasure."

"I will do so, then. How well I remember when thou wast born, and how I took thee in my arms and baptized thee! I think thou bearest the names Martha, Maria, Christina, Anna. Is it not so?" said he, turning to my mother.

"Yes, Herr Pastor."

"It seems but yesterday. The years go so fast. Now that I am old they seem to fly."

"You are still strong and well, Herr Pastor," said my mother.

"Yes, thank God, but not so strong as I used to be. My sight and hearing are failing —sure signs of old age," he replied, smiling. "But, my child, I am grieved to hear that thou hast left us and gone over to the Methodists. I can scarcely understand it. I remember so well thy confirmation. Thou

gavest the best answers of any in thy class. What led thee to this step? I have nothing against the Methodists. They are good people, and some of their preachers—as they call them —are excellent men, although it seems to me they are not needed in our fatherland. How did it happen?"

"I can scarcely tell you, Herr Pastor. I went to their church with my uncle's family—"

"I am surprised that thy father allowed it!"

"We thought it best, Herr Pastor," said my mother.

"I was much impressed by their simplicity and their direct teaching of the Holy Scriptures. Then I felt the need of a new heart, and asked and obtained it from God. After that I felt that my place was with those people who had helped me to a closer union with my Saviour."

I did not like to say too much, for fear that the dear old pastor would be hurt. He shook his head gently.

"I cannot understand it," he said, immediately. "Thou wast always a Christian. I, myself, heard thy catechism and confirmed thee. I saw thee in thy white dress, pure and modest as thou camest to take thy first communion from my hands. I cannot understand it!"

I felt confused. I could not go on and explain what it was that his preaching had lacked, which I found in the other Church. I could not find fault with this good man, who was my father's friend. So I was much relieved to see my father enter the room, and soon Gretchen brought hot coffee and fresh tea cakes. The conversation changed to other topics of the day, and it was not until the old pastor was leaving that he again referred to the subject.

"I trust, dear child, that thou wilt see the error of thy way, and return to our own Church," he said.

"Dear Herr Pastor," interrupted my father, "it has seemed to us that Anna is old enough to obey her own conscience, and we have left her quite free to follow her inclination in the matter."

"I hope they may not have led her astray," our pastor said; "may God bless you all. Amen."

CHAPTER XIV.

The Coffee Drinking.

NOT many days after this visit we were honored by a call from Frau Herrmann. It was a very unusual occurrence, as she had not been in our house for a year. There were two reasons for this: the first was that her large family kept her very much confined to the house; the second was that she never had liked us much. Being a very proud woman, she looked down upon my father because he was in business instead of professional work. To-day her errand was a peaceful one. She wanted to invite mother and myself to take a cup of coffee with her on the following Wednesday, which was the twentieth of July. There would be a few other mutual friends, she said. With many formal greetings she went away.

"I should like to know what prompted that invitation," said father at supper time. "How long is it since thou wast invited to Frau Herrmann's, Martha?"

"It must be eight years now. It was when her mother was here visiting. Thou knowest she was well acquainted with my aunt, and wanted to talk over old times with me."

"I cannot imagine what started her," replied father, slowly. "Frau Herrmann is the sort of a woman who always has a motive, either good or bad, underlying her actions."

"Perhaps it is because my young lady daughter has come home," said mother, smiling at me.

"Hum!" muttered father. "I should not be surprised if that *did* have something to do with it," and he shook his head as he left the table.

"Thy father never thought much of Frau Herrmann," said mother. "Now, I never disliked her, though she is, of course, a little peculiar."

"She is very fond of having her own way, and usually gets it, so Gottfried used to say," I responded.

"Well, we will go to the coffee drinking anyway, and thou must look thy prettiest. I fancy thou needest a new gown for the occasion."

Then we talked about clothes, usually a very fascinating subject of conversation for women, and my mother planned a new dress for me.

The twentieth of July was not pleasant in the morning; it was foggy and chilly. About twelve o'clock, however, the sun shone out warm and bright. "We shall have a pleasant

day after all," said mother. "I had begun to think that thou couldst not wear thy new muslin." At four o'clock I went into my mother's room and arranged her soft gray hair, and helped her put on the silvery silk, which harmonized so well with her beautiful hair and rosy cheeks. I told her how sweet and pretty she looked, and she laughingly called me a flatterer. "Perhaps I might compliment thee," she said, later, when I came down, dressed in the new muslin, "but I fear to make thee vain. I am old and shall not have my head turned, but thou art young."

We chatted merrily as we went across the garden and through the opening in the hedge. I was wondering if Gottfried had come home yet. It must be about time for the university to close, and this was his last year. I should like to see him very much.

Nearly all of the guests had arrived when we reached the house. Old Frau Grünewald was seated on the big green sofa in the parlor in company with two other elderly ladies. There were several of my mother's friends there, with whom she was soon in earnest conversation. It did my mother good to get away from home a little, I thought as I watched her bright, animated face. There were also several young

people whom I had known well formerly, but who now paid very little attention to me until Margaretta came in. She, for some reason known only to herself, had taken the notion to care for me, and it was really a relief to have her come and speak cordially to me. It seemed to be only the fact of my being a Methodist which made the girls treat me so coldly. After Margaretta had drawn me into the circle of young people Elizabeth Kappel, who was sitting next to me, told me so.

"We cannot feel the same toward you, Anna, now that you have left our Church. The Methodists always seem to us a very vulgar people."

"Indeed, you would not think so, Elizabeth, if you knew them. They are very pleasant people, and I saw no difference at all between their manners and those of the persons I have always known." I was very much tempted to add that I had heard very little gossip about their neighbors among them, but I recollected that it was better and wiser not to make any sharp speeches.

"Well, anyway," continued Elizabeth, "I always liked you, and I do not believe that you could be vulgar if you tried ever so hard."

I smiled at her frankness, and we were soon

having a gay time. Suddenly I noticed that Margaretta's face was very flushed, and that her eyes were fixed upon the other end of the room. I heard Frau Herrmann say, "My son, ladies," and there was a great bustle among the older people. There came a quick step behind us, and I heard the well-known voice saying: "Good afternoon, ladies. What a bevy of beauties! There are none equal to you in Heidelberg."

"As you, doubtless, know very well from experience," replied Margaretta's gay voice, though I saw that her face was rosier than ever.

As yet I had not seen him, but now, as he was shaking hands with each girl, I was obliged to rise and face him. How handsome he had grown! There was an ease and a grace in his bearing which was that of an educated, well-bred man. He came nearer and nearer, until, at last, it was my hand that he took; it was to me that he spoke.

"How are you, Fraülein Lufft? It is a long time since I have seen you."

"Yes, it is some months," I managed to say.

"Have you enjoyed the winter?"

"Very much indeed."

Was it imagination, or did he really glance

quickly at the hand where the little turquoise ring was? I could scarcely tell. He turned from me and, going to the other side of the circle, sat down between Margaretta and another very lively girl. They had great fun over there. I could hear the gay laughter. I was glad to sit alone and look at Gottfried without his seeing me. His face was changed, but it was not a bad face. There were no marks of dissipation upon it. I did not believe the stories about him. I should believe what he told me if ever he gave me his confidence again. As I was looking at him, thinking, he glanced up suddenly full in my eyes. After that I confined my attention to the girls near me, and we enjoyed ourselves very much.

After coffee, which Frau Herrmann's neat little maid served to us on small tables, and when we had eaten some delicious strawberries, we wandered, two by two, out into the garden. Elizabeth and I were still together. Not far ahead of us walked Margaretta and Gottfried. She was talking very rapidly and he was listening, evidently much amused.

"I believe that will be a match," murmured Elizabeth in my ear. "According to Margaretta's account he was very attentive to her in Heidelberg."

"I cannot see how he could have acted otherwise," I replied. "She is an old friend."

"Yes, but I think there is more than friendship. At least Frau Herrmann would like it if there were. See how she manages it so that they may be left alone together! She is a deep woman. If he does not marry Margaretta there will be trouble with his mother, and that is no small thing."

"He will probably do as his mother wishes," I said. I was obliged to say something.

"I don't know about that; Gottfried inherits a good deal of his mother's disposition, and I fancy will do exactly as he pleases."

"Margaretta is a handsome woman."

"Yes. She is lovely," replied Elizabeth, "and her father is said to have more money than ever. Margaretta dresses elegantly, and they live in fine style. I think Frau Herrmann really likes her; but, of course, she likes the money, too."

We were walking around among the flower beds. Professor Herrmann took great care of his garden, and it repaid him well, for it was beautiful. Near us was a row of rose trees in full bloom, from which the heavy pink blossoms drooped, as if they could not hold up their heads, so weighted with beauty and

fragrance. It was a fancy with the professor to train his cherry and apple trees in all sorts of odd shapes. Some clambered up trellises, some looked like umbrellas, and others were great bouquets of green leaves. Other friends joined us, but we saw nothing of Gottfried and Margaretta. As it grew toward supper time I went to find my mother, and to my astonishment saw her conversing with Gottfried. She rose when she saw me coming and said: "Ach! yes, daughter, it is late; we must be going. Shall we see you at our home, Gottfried? You will be home this summer, I suppose?"

"Yes, I shall not begin business until next fall. I shall take this summer for rest after my violent efforts to pass my examinations. If it is convenient, Frau Lufft, I will call upon you to-morrow evening."

Before mother could reply the voice of Frau Herrmann broke in, "Be careful, my son, not to make too many engagements." She whispered something to him, of which I heard "Margaretta" and "walk."

"That's all right, mother. That can be arranged. Then I shall see you to-morrow evening, Frau Lufft."

"We shall be very much pleased, Gottfried," replied my mother.

We said "good evening," and thanked Frau Herrmann for her kindness. I saw that she was very much annoyed; but I saw, too, what Elizabeth had said, that Gottfried would do just about what he pleased. We sat around the table in the summerhouse a long time that night, telling father all about the afternoon.

"Frau Herrmann told us to-day that Gottfried and Margaretta are as good as betrothed," said my mother. "It is evidently the dearest wish of his mother."

"I think Gottfried knows more about that matter than his mother does," laughed father. "I think that the young man will make his own choice."

"He pays her marked attention," replied mother.

"How can he help it, since his mother throws him constantly in her society? A man must be polite. I wonder if Frau Herrmann would be so fixed on this marriage if she knew as much as I do about Herr Schmidt's financial condition."

"He is a very rich man, is he not, father?" I asked.

"He is living beyond his means, Liebchen. I know it, though thou must not repeat it. I

myself have loaned him two thousand marks this very week."

"Is it so?" exclaimed mother. "Is it safe for thee to do so, Hans?"

"The security is all right. Do not mention it, Anna. I need not warn thy mother."

I promised never to speak of it. As I sat in the twilight I thought it all over. How confused things were in this world! Only God could straighten them out; it was impossible for us to do so. I was not troubled about Gottfried's marriage. If he wished to marry Margaretta I should be glad to see him happy. But he had said that he would never marry her. His mother would urge him to it. Ach! with what a mixture of threads our lives are woven! If we use one the pattern is of one design; if another thread is woven in the entire fabric is changed. Sometimes the threads seem to get all tangled together, and then it takes a stronger, wiser hand than ours to bring them again into proper harmony.

"What a sigh, Anna!" said my mother. "Go to bed, child, thou art tired. But do not forget to lay thy new muslin dress out carefully on the spare bed, that it may not get wrinkled."

CHAPTER XV.

In Front of the Fire.

GOTTFRIED came to see us the next night. That was the beginning of it. From that time on I had no reason to say that he forgot his old friends. We had delightful talks on the summer afternoons, when mother and I were sitting with our work. Now that I was a young lady it was not proper, according to our German etiquette, for me to wander off on long walks with this tall young man, or even to sit in the willow tree where we had once passed so many delightful hours. We had almost to renew our acquaintance, for we had seen little of each other in the past four years. I found that my childish playmate had developed in many ways. He was a very interesting and entertaining companion.

In the evenings, as September came, it was too cool for us all to sit in the summerhouse; my father and mother were growing visibly older and were very susceptible to the night air. When the nights grew more frosty we sat around our glowing wood fire in the broad hallway. My piano had been brought out there in order that father might enjoy the music as he leaned

back in his old chair and smoked his long pipe, sometimes reading the last newspaper from Berlin, but more often shutting his eyes to listen to the singing.

Gottfried came in nearly every evening about eight o'clock, after they had finished supper over at our neighbor's, and sat by father's side. Sometimes he would ask permission of mother and me and would smoke to keep father company. I sang the songs I had learned in Berlin, and surely never girl had a more attentive audience. When I had finished playing Gottfried would often come to the piano to sing some of the gay students' songs which he had learned in Heidelberg.

"Ach! but it needs the clink of the glasses to bring out the full beauty of these songs," he said, laughing. "They lack the proper spice when they are sung quietly in a room like this."

"Do you know, Gottfried, our little girl, there, is become a total abstainer since she joined the Methodists? Do you notice the little blue and silver cross hidden among the lace of her dress?" My father called me to him and drew out the pin which the members of the "Blue Cross Society" wear.

"Is that one of the characteristics of the

Methodists?" asked Gottfried. "Well, I think, on the whole, it is a good idea, although it seems to me that some people carry it to an extreme. If you had seen all that I have seen at the 'Kneipe' of our fraternities, Herr Lufft, you would agree with me that there is need of some organization to stop this excess in drinking."

"I have seen enough of it even in our quiet town, Gottfried, to make me urge moderation, if not entire abstinence."

"Did you not drink, too, at the 'Kneipe,' Gottfried?" inquired mother, looking over her spectacles at him.

"O, of course I drank some beer with the rest of the fellows, as every good German does, but I did not make a beast of myself like some of them did. Are all the Methodists total abstainers, Anna?"

"The sentiment is growing in Germany, and our society has many members; but in America none of the Methodists use either beer or wine."

"I believe it is a good thing," said Gottfried, emphatically. "If we Germans are not careful we shall be as bad as the English soon. A fellow in Heidelberg told me that he had seen women drunk on the street in London, and that once he saw two women fighting and pull-

ing each other's hair out, each one holding an innocent baby in her arms."

"That is a horrible state of things," said my mother. "I hope it will never come to that in our Fatherland."

"Well, I must retire now," said father. "I feel unusually tired. Wilt thou come with me a few minutes, mother? I should like to talk over with thee some business matters." He kissed me affectionately, said "Gute Nacht" to Gottfried, who wished him a good rest, and went slowly up the winding staircase.

I was quite troubled about my father's health in those days. He did not seem so strong as he had been, required more rest and sleep, and left more of his business cares to his younger partner, Herr Preston. I noticed that mother watched him anxiously, although, as yet, she had not mentioned it to me.

As my parents left the hall I got up and placed a fresh stick on the fire, which burst out into a bright flame of blue and gold. Then I sat down in mother's chair. The candles in the old silver candlesticks cast a mellow light on my knitting, but left my face in the shadow; the clock ticked solemnly. Gottfried laid down his cigar and looked at the fire. The little tongues of flame were running back

and forth on the stick of wood which I had brought.

We sat a long time in silence. Then Gottfried said, "Anna, you have never asked me anything about my life in Heidelberg during the four years at the university."

"I thought you would tell me of it when you wished, Gottfried."

"What a patient woman you are!"

"No, I am not patient," I responded, laughing. "You do not understand me."

"And I fear you have not entirely understood me during these years, have you?"

"Sometimes I wondered if you were the same Gottfried you were years ago."

"Just the same. But I had a reason for acting as I did. Anna, I want to tell you one thing. I did not work very hard in the university, although I passed the examinations creditably enough. I was in nearly every foolish prank that the fellows had on hand. But I want you to know one thing, and you will believe me, won't you?"

"I will believe every word you tell me," I said, looking up into the frank blue eyes beneath the broad forehead on which the candlelight was shining.

"However foolish I may have been I never

did a wicked or base thing while I was there. I must acknowledge that I was tempted more than once to do as the other fellows did, but the thought of your sweet face stopped me. I would not have you ashamed of me."

I said nothing, but my heart was glad and happy.

"I have thought many times that it was thy prayers, my 'Liebchen,' that kept me from the evil." He had left his big chair and was sitting now on my little old stool, close by my feet. The candlelight was glorifying his bright curls. "Dost thou not know, Anna, how I have loved thee? I have loved thee so many years—ever since those days when thou wast almost a baby. Through all these years my one thought has been to act so that thou wouldst love me and be proud of me. Dost thou not love me, my darling? Tell me quickly!"

My knitting had fallen from my trembling hands. Was I worthy of this great joy? He took both my hands in his big, strong ones.

"Thou wearest my little ring, Anna. Thou hast not forgotten me. Say that thou wilt be my wife when I have made a home for us both!"

I looked up at him and smiled.

"I know thou lovest me," he cried, joyously.

"I have loved thee ever since I can remem-

ber," I replied. I felt no shame in telling him. We belonged to each other.

"My darling! my darling!" he exclaimed, and in an instant his strong arms were about me and I felt his warm kisses on my face.

"Let me go!" I cried. "Thou hast not yet asked father; perhaps he may object."

"I will ask him to-morrow morning, just as early as possible. I know thy father will consent, if it is for thy happiness. Well, if I may not kiss thee again, sweetheart, I may at least sit on this low stool at thy feet and hold thy soft hand in mine. Ach! the days in Heidelberg when I have dreamed of this night, when I could tell thee that I loved thee!" He sighed with happiness.

"But why didst thou neglect me so during all this time, my Gottfried?" I asked. "Why didst thou pay so much attention to Margaretta?"

"I could not help the last, my Anna, for mother placed me in such a position that I must be polite to her. I swear to thee, sweetheart, that I never said one word to her which I could not have uttered in thy presence. I have never said a word of love to any other woman."

"I am very glad," I said, contentedly.

"The reason I have kept away from thee is this: I knew that my mother wished me to marry Margaretta. For some reason she has taken a great fancy to her. While I tried not to deceive her I knew that if I kept on coming to see thee it would only arouse decided opposition on the part of my mother, and might break up all my cherished hopes. It was wiser to wait until I had finished my university course and was independent. But O, how I have longed for thee, sweetheart! How I have grieved when I saw that thou feltest that thine old friend neglected thee!"

I scarcely heard the last, for I had just thought of Frau Herrmann. She had never liked me. I would never marry Gottfried unless his parents were willing. I could not bear to make a breach between the mother and son. "Ach! thy mother, Gottfried! I had forgotten her. She will never consent to our marriage," I said.

"No, I do not think she ever will," he replied.

"But thou wouldst surely not marry me without her consent."

"Indeed I should. Are we not made for each other? Did not God bring us together? It says in the Bible that 'a man shall leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife.'"

"But it does not mean in that way. I will never marry thee if thy mother is not willing."

"Well, perhaps she will be, darling. Do not let us spoil our first evening by talking of such unpleasant matters. Come, let us plan our future!"

I felt very uneasy, but let him have his way. He told me of his plans. A friend of his father would receive him into his office in Berlin. He would have a good position and would soon be able to marry. A lawyer's business is very profitable in our country.

"Thou shalt not be long a 'Braut,' my sweetheart. I will soon give thee another ring for thy turquoise."

"I will always wear this one, Gottfried."

Mother came down the stairs.

"Thou must speak to father first," I said, hastily. "I shall tell my mother after thou art gone."

Gottfried rose from his low seat before mother came around the curve, which brought us in her view.

"Well, Stiefmütterchen," he said, calling mother by the old name of his boyhood, "I must go."

"Good night, Gottfried. Anna, thou hast allowed the fire to get very low. I was detained

so long with father that I quite neglected thee. You must excuse me, Gottfried."

"Do not mention it, dear Frau Lufft." The wicked boy laughed at me. "Good night, both," he said, and went away.

Mother and I had such a good talk that night. I told her all about it as I sat at her feet with my head resting on her knees. She sympathized fully with me and rejoiced in my happiness. "But, my child," she said, "thou must remember that nothing is settled. I will talk with thy father in the morning. He is sleeping quietly now, and I will not disturb him."

I could not sleep much. I felt very anxious about what Frau Herrmann would say. I did not feel afraid of the Herr Professor, for he was a mild and gracious gentleman; but I knew his wife would make serious objection. Then what would be the outcome? In the midst of my thoughts ran the undercurrent of joy. Gottfried loved me. No matter what came we belonged to each other. Still I was firm in my conviction; I would never marry him if his mother was not ready to give her consent.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Separation.

IT turned out exactly as I had feared. Gottfried came to our house to see my father directly after his coffee the next morning. For a long time they talked together in father's room. Then my mother was called in. After an hour I heard her footsteps coming toward the summer house where I was sitting sewing. She kissed me gently, and said: "My darling daughter, I am so happy for thee. Gottfried is worthy of thy love and I shall find in him a son, I know. Thy father wishes to see thee in his room."

"Come with me, mother dear, please," and we went in together.

I found my handsome lover standing near my father. He came and took my hand, looking down lovingly into my eyes.

"Good morning, my Anna. Thou art as fresh as a June rose this morning." I saw that there was a shadow on his face. He led me to father. "Here she is, sir."

"Anna," said father, "I understand that thou and Gottfried love each other dearly, and he wishes to make thee his wife. It will grieve

us much to have thee leave us, but we wish only thy happiness. Art thou sure that thou lovest Gottfried enough to be his wife? Is it not a girlish fancy?"

"No, father. I have loved him all my life."

My father kissed me and smoothed back my hair in his old way. "She is our treasure, Gottfried," he said, brokenly. "Thou art asking a great deal of us. She is all we have."

"I know it, Herr Lufft," replied Gottfried, putting his arm around me and drawing me close to him.

"I have told Gottfried, my daughter, that I will consent to thy marriage on condition that there is no opposition from his parents. We cannot allow our child to enter a family where she is not cordially welcomed," father said, drawing himself up proudly.

Gottfried looked troubled. "I will speak to them at once, Herr Lufft. My father will, I know, consent gladly to it. My mother may be less easy to win, as she has had other plans for me; but I am sure that in time she will love Anna as her own daughter."

"Thou must find out about it before we settle the matter. I am sure I have expressed thine opinion, Anna. Thou wouldst not become betrothed to Gottfried if his mother opposes?"

"No, father. I told Gottfried so last night." I felt his arm tremble.

"You surely do not mean, Herr Lufft, that my mother's objection to the marriage would cause you, too, to withhold your consent?" he said, piteously.

"Yes, my boy. I should regret it greatly; but we cannot allow Anna to betroth herself to thee unless thy mother is satisfied."

"I will return this afternoon," said Gottfried, after a moment. "I am sure that mother will not oppose me. Good morning, Herr Lufft. Thank you for your kindness to me. Adieu, my Anna, I shall see thee this afternoon." He hurried away.

My father and mother looked very grave all day, and I felt a heavy weight upon my spirits. We all knew Frau Herrmann's proud and unyielding disposition. There was little hope.

About four o'clock that afternoon, as I was sitting by the window of my room, trying to read, I saw Gottfried's tall figure coming across the garden, through the hedge, and up our gravel path to the house. He walked very slowly and seemed to be thinking deeply. I knew then that our hopes would never be realized. He did not need to tell me. Mother left us alone by the hall fire, and we sat as we had

sat the night before, he on the low stool at my feet.

We remained quiet for a long time. Then I said, " Well, Gottfried."

" O, Anna, I cannot bear to talk of it! When I told my father of my great happiness he congratulated me and wished me joy. I turned to my mother. Her face was perfectly white, and her eyes blazed with anger. I had never seen her thus but once before, when one of my brothers angered her greatly. 'Mother, wilt thou not wish me joy?' I said. 'I will never wish thee joy!' she screamed. 'I will never welcome a woman who is a member of that low sect of Methodists.' O, Anna, I cannot tell thee all she said. It was terrible. I never thought that my mother could talk so. When she stopped for breath I said—for I was angry too—'I love Fraülein Lufft. She is a refined and beautiful woman. I intend to make her my wife.' 'If thou dost I will never call thee my son again. Thou shalt be to me as dead,' she said. 'Never again will I kiss thee. Ach! Gottfried,' she continued, 'I feared this when thou didst go so much to that printer's house. I tried to prevent it. Why wilt thou not do as I wish? Margaretta loves thee, I am sure. She is beautiful. Her father

has wealth. My son, do as thy mother wishes!' The tears were running down her cheeks. 'I cannot, mother,' I replied. 'I love Anna, but I do not love Margaretta.' 'Then thou art no son of mine,' she cried, angrily. 'Go thy way and we will go ours,' and she left us."

"Did thy father say anything more?" I asked.

"Yes, he turned and took my hand. 'My son,' he said, 'personally I have no objection to the young lady whom thou hast chosen, but so long as thy mother feels this way about it I cannot give my consent.' I know he sympathizes with me, but will not go against mother's wishes."

"It is all settled now," I said, calmly, after a pause in which he sat looking at me and pressing my hand against his cheek. "I cannot be thy wife unless thy mother withdraws her opposition."

"O! do not say that!" he begged. "We could be so happy. If thou sayest that what shall I do? My dreams of life have always been to work for thee, to live with thee, my comfort. I could make thee so happy. What shall I do? What shall I do?" And the young man sobbed aloud.

"Be my own true lover always, my Gott-

fried," I said, smoothing his soft hair. "Be a man. God will help us. If our lives must go on in different directions we can, at least, serve him."

"But it is so hard, so hard!"

"It is very, very hard, Gottfried," and my tears commenced to flow. "But it is not right that I should separate thee from thy mother. God's blessing would not rest upon us, and what, then, should we do?"

We talked a long time, until we both became quiet and comparatively resigned. Then Gottfried went away.

After that afternoon we never talked together again. My father thought it best that there should be no communication between us, and I saw him only at a distance. If we could not be betrothed we must separate entirely.

I cannot write of those long, weary days. There is no use in living the suffering over again. I am resigned, and my heart rests contentedly on my Saviour; but it was a bitter sacrifice for me to give up all hopes of love. Father and mother were so good and kind to me. It was almost pitiful to see how they tried to entertain me; how mother cooked dainty dishes to tempt my appetite. When the first bitterness was passed my thoughts

turned to the dear parents who were so self-sacrificing, and I grew calm and peaceful in ministering to their comfort.

One morning, early, I saw a great bustle over at Professor Herrmann's. Several traveling bags and boxes were brought out and piled in a cab, which was waiting in front of the door. I saw the professor and his wife come out with Gottfried, who wore a large traveling cloak, for the days were now quite cold. It was in November. Gottfried kissed his father and mother, and stood talking with them for a moment; then he entered the carriage, raised his hat to his parents, and was driven rapidly away.

As the carriage passed our house I saw him look earnestly at it, but he did not see me, for I was hidden behind the curtain. Where could he be going? Probably to Berlin to begin his law business with his father's friend. Ach! life is hard! Would things ever come right? I have never seen my bright-faced boy since that morning when I caught his earnest glance.

It was on Monday that he went away. The next Wednesday my father brought me a letter bearing the postmark "Bremen." The writing was Gottfried's. The letter is now worn and wrinkled, but it is my dearest treasure. This is what he said:

"BREMEN, *November* 12.

"MY OWN DARLING:

"Surely there is no harm in my writing thee a letter before I leave my Fatherland. Thou didst not know—no one knew—that I intended to go to America until the night before I left Wittenberg. Then I told my father and mother. They felt very sad, but my mother said: 'Thou wilt return from America, but thy marriage I could never endure. In America thou wilt forget all about the girl who has spoiled thy life.' My mother does not know her son, Anna.

"I thought the matter over carefully before deciding to go away. I could not live near thee and not see thee and talk with thee. It is impossible. I long for thee constantly. In the new country there is a chance for all, and if I work hard I shall surely succeed. I am not going out recklessly. The gentleman in Berlin, with whom I was to have been associated, has given me introductory letters to a friend of his, a lawyer in New York, and I hope to find an opening there.

"I thought, at first, when thou gavest me up that I did not care whether I ever did anything or not. Then I remembered what thou saidst, that I must be a man, and I would have thy respect as well as thy love. Thou hast not

forgotten, sweetheart, our last afternoon together. Thou rememberest our vows. Thou wilt be true to me, and I will be true to thee as long as we live. If God ever brings us together again how happy we shall be. If not, we will live right anyway. Thou must never doubt me. Thou wilt hear from me, doubtless, through my mother. I am writing on board the steamship *Elbe*, which I chose in memory of our happy days on the river bank.

"Auf wiedersehen, my darling. Thine faithfully, in life or death, GOTTFRIED."

I have never heard from him since. Frau Herrmann has been almost our enemy. We have not had any opportunity to ask where he is or what he is doing. I know that he lives, and that is all.

After I received his letter I did not swoon, as do the girls in novels when their lovers go away. I sat very still for a long time; then I knelt down and prayed. Peace came to my heart. I would live for God and my parents. It would have been a comfort to me to see Gottfried's face occasionally, to hear his voice, even at a distance; but since it was not to be I must be content.

I have tried to write thus calmly of our

parting. It is needless to tell of my sad hours, of my loneliness and grief. Human hearts are weak. It is all past now. My lifework is before me, and I am happy in it. But in my heart there is still a holy place, there is still a deep love for Gottfried, and I wait until that day shall come when I shall see him again. He is true and faithful; we shall meet, if not in this world, then in the world to come.

CHAPTER XVII.

A New Work.

THE next year I spent at home. It was in many ways a happy one. Our home life was delightful, and I felt that I was a comfort to my parents. But, nevertheless, I was restless, and I longed to get out into the world, to work and lead a more active life. I never said a word about this, and was much surprised when my mother said to me the fall after Gottfried left us: "My child, thou must have a change. Thou art growing thin and pale. It is all very well for us old people to live here in this quiet way, but for young persons it is too dull. Thy father agrees with me, and he wishes me to ask thee what thou wouldst like to choose for thy lifework. We shall be quite content with thy decision."

"Do mothers know even the hearts of their children?" I asked, as I knelt down and leaned against her shoulder.

"Mothers have been young themselves, dear," she answered, as she stroked my head with her soft hand. "Everyone needs an aim in life, and now that thou wilt not marry thou

must devote thyself to the thing in which thou art most interested."

"I will take care of thee and father. That is work enough for any girl, and delightful work too."

"But thou longest to be out in the busy world, Anna. I can see it, although thou art the most devoted daughter that ever parents were blessed with. Tell me what thou wishest, child. What wouldst thou do if we were not here?"

"I think, mother dear, if I felt no ties to bind me I should choose to be a deaconess. It is such a beautiful work," I said, warming to my subject, "to care for the sick and dying, to cheer and comfort the poor and helpless, and then, as opportunity offers, to tell them the sweet story of Jesus, and how he died for them. But do not tempt me, mother. God has placed my duty plainly before me, and it is my deepest joy to love and cheer thee and father."

"I do not doubt that," said the mother, lovingly. "But there are many things to be considered. We are not old people yet, and now that thy father has given his business entirely into the hands of his partner, he may live many years. I see no reason why thou shouldst not go to thy chosen work. If thou wast a

boy thine occupation would be outside of the home."

"Thou dost always forget thyself, mother."

"Why should I not, when the happiness of my daughter is at stake? We will talk of this again, Anna."

We did talk of it again—father, mother, and I—and I saw that they were quite determined that I should follow my own inclinations. I did not want to go away from home, but felt more and more drawn to the deaconess work. Besides, I felt it necessary to take my mind off of my Wittenberg experiences of the last few years. I must interest myself in the griefs and wrongs of others and forget my own sadness. I was not absolutely needed at home, and I should never be very far away.

After much meditation and prayer I wrote a letter to Schwester Lena, in Berlin, telling her of the situation and asking her advice. She answered immediately, saying that she would not have me neglect my duty to my parents in any way, but if they were willing, and I felt a call to the deaconess work, they would be happy to welcome me. "Thou must write to the inspector of our Bethanien Verein, and he will tell thee what to do," she wrote. I did so, and after various formalities were gone through

with I was allowed to enter on trial the Society of Bethany, as we are called throughout Germany and Switzerland.

I think, in those last days, that my mother began to feel that I was really going away from her. I felt very sad as the time drew near when I must leave; if it had been for any other object than work for God I should not have felt right about going. Mother arranged all my clothes, packed my trunk herself, and bade me farewell without a falter. Father, too, was very brave, but I broke down entirely. "I will be back soon, father and mother," I cried, "I must see you again soon."

"We are not going to grieve for thee, daughter," the mother said, cheerfully. "We expect great things of thee. Thou must do thy best."

At last I was off, and had taken a lingering look at the old house. I went first to Berlin, where I was received into the Church in full connection. I had been on probation more than a year, and, under ordinary circumstances, would not have been allowed to join the Bethanien Verein, but the facts had been explained to the inspector, and he made an exception in this case.

While in Berlin I met Schwester Lena again.

She was even more interested in me than before, and she had always been more than kind to me. In her little room most of my story came out, almost without my wish. I could scarcely help telling her, she was such a motherly woman. She sympathized with me, but thought that it would all come out right.

"Thou must be thankful that he is a good man, and that he is still living. There is a sort of invisible tie between persons who love each other dearly. It is felt between mother and daughters, and more often between husbands and wives. I have never told thee, my child, that I, too, loved once. I was married," she continued, as I murmured my surprise. "It was only for three months, and then he was taken from me by death. O, how sad I was! But God doeth all things well." The tears rolled down my cheeks. I felt so sorry for this gray-haired woman, whose romance was so short-lived.

"I had been a deaconess before my marriage, and I came back to the society after Johann died. It has been a great blessing to me—this work for my Saviour."

"And you have been a blessing to it, Schwester Lena."

"I trust so, child, though my efforts have

been feeble. It will not be long now before I must give up active labor. My strength is not what it was. May the Lord bless thee, my dear, and make thee a comfort to many souls!"

My Cousin Bertha I found comfortably settled in a pleasant home, and very happy with her kind husband and sweet baby. They called the little maiden "Anna," a great compliment to me. My dear Aunt Katharina was very happy, vibrating between the two homes, and living her youth over again, while helping Bertha to bring up her baby in the proper way.

As my duties were to begin at Frankfort-on-the-Main, where the "Mother-House" of our society is, I left Berlin as soon as possible, and reached my new home the same night. As the train bore me farther and farther from my beloved parents an almost overwhelming feeling of sadness came over me. My heart was often lifted to God during that ten hours' journey that he might strengthen and help me, and he did. My mind grew calm, and I was able to interest myself in what was outside of the car window. The country was different from our northern landscapes. We passed into the beautiful Thuringian Mountains, past Weimar, where rest the bodies of our great poets, Goethe and

Schiller; past Eisenach, where, looking down upon the quiet village, rise the towers of Castle Wartburg. It was in this old fortress that Martin Luther translated for us the New Testament. On, on we went, until the sun went down, and a veil of darkness shut out the rapidly passing pictures of mountains, valleys, villages, and lonely farmhouses.

About eight o'clock we reached Frankfort and entered the large, handsome station. I expected to take a carriage to the Deaconess Home, never dreaming that Schwester Ida, who was the "head sister," would send anyone to meet me. Almost as soon as the carriage door was opened I saw two sweet-faced women in the deaconess dress looking earnestly at me as I gathered up my packages.

"I am sure that is she," said the younger one, and, advancing toward me, the older woman asked, "Is it Fraülein Lufft?"

"Yes," I replied.

"We are very glad to see thee, sister," they said, each giving me hearty kisses on both cheeks. "Let us take thy packages." Before I could say a word they had taken possession of all my baggage except the trunk.

Walking through the brightly lighted station we soon secured a "droschke;" the trunk was

placed up in front by the driver, and we were rumbling along the city streets. The two deaconesses talked cheerfully, and by the time we arrived at the house I began to feel at home.

"You are very kind to take so much trouble for me," I began.

"It is no trouble at all, sister. But thou must say 'thou' to us. We are all sisters, members of one family."

We reached the house, of which I could see only a dim outline, and friendly hands drew me into the hallway. One after the other a dozen black-robed women came to welcome me. A comfortable supper was awaiting me in the dining room, and every effort was made to give me a home feeling. The head deaconess, an elderly woman with a fine face, attracted me very much. She welcomed me kindly, and soon after supper sent me to my room. Here I found everything spotlessly clean, but plain. There were three single beds draped in white.

"This is thy room, sister," said the deaconess, one of those who had come to meet me. "Thou must share it with two others, for thou art, of course, for the present, only a probationer in our society. They are pleasant women, and thou wilt not find it uncomfortable."

"What shall I call thee?" I asked.

"I am Schwester Rosanna, and the young sister whom thou sawest with me is Schwester Barbara."

"Thanks. Good night, Schwester Rosanna."

"Good night, Schwester Anna. Schlaf wohl."

My boxes were all in the room, and I began to unpack them, bringing out, one after the other, the beautiful garments which mother's dear hands had made for me. The homesick feeling of the day was all gone. I should love these good women, I knew. As I looked about the room I saw over my bed, in colored letters, a motto, and taking a candle I went up close to look at it. "Therefore will not I fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

After committing my dear parents, Gottfried, and myself into the divine keeping for that night and for all the future I went peacefully to sleep, and, being very tired, did not hear my roommates when they came to bed.

I must hurry a little in my story, although I should like to linger over those peaceful days at the Deaconess Home.

My work for the first few months was in the kitchen. There, fortunately, the mother's good training came into use. The dainties to be made for the sick people upstairs were a

delight to me. I enjoyed concocting golden custards, transparent jellies, and other delicacies to tempt their poor appetites. The other deaconesses in the kitchen had not been so lucky as I, and it was not long before all of the finer, cooking was put in my hands. It seemed a trifle strange to me, at first, that this was deaconess work; but we can do all to God's glory. It was easy to see that it was just as necessary for the sick to have good, nourishing food as it was for them to have careful nursing. So I tried to do my best. It was very pleasant, too, to surprise the tired deaconesses with some tempting dish, and they were always grateful for it.

It pays to do one's work well, no matter what it is. It is certainly true of the deaconess work. In no other sphere is there more need of thorough consecration of hands, feet, body, and, above all, heart and soul. Many of our deaconesses are discouraged by the petty details. They say, "If this is all, I can do kitchen work at home." This is not all, and even if it were our little efforts may be as helpful as the great deeds of others. I have found no time more blessed to me than those quiet months spent in the big, roomy kitchen of the Deaconess Home at Frankfort.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In the Deaconess Home.

THERE were usually about twenty sick persons in the Deaconess Home. These were of three classes : those who paid good prices and occupied alone well-furnished rooms, those who could not pay so much and were placed in rooms with two other persons, and those who were supported gratuitously and were arranged in wards. I could see no difference in the quality of the nursing, whether the patient was rich or poor.

During my pro-probationership I wore my ordinary clothes, but when I was allowed to become a probationer I bought for myself a costume like that which the other deaconesses wore, with the exception of the cap, which had a narrow border instead of a broad one such as the full deaconesses wear. I remember well how odd I felt when I first donned the cap and dress. The cap was stiffly starched and covered my hair entirely, except just in front. It felt very bungling and uncomfortable, and I was shy about going out into the street. This feeling soon wore away, and now I should not think my toilet complete without the headdress.

I was appointed one of the house nurses, and received a thorough training in all departments of the work, under the leadership of an older deaconess and the supervision and personal instruction of an experienced corps of physicians.

One day the nurse who assisted the doctor in the operating room was ill, and Schwester Ida sent for me to take her place. I was very nervous when I entered the large, well-lighted room. One end was entirely of glass, and everything was arranged to make this saddest, gloomiest of places comfortable. The doctor was waiting for me. He was a young man, not more than thirty-five, but was reputed to be one of the most skillful surgeons in the city.

"Well, sister," he said, cheerfully, "you must take Schwester Martha's place to-day. Do not be afraid. You have only to hand me the instruments as I require them. Schwester Rosanna will attend to the more serious part."

"I will do my best," I said.

"But you must get more color in your cheeks, or I shall have you to attend to as well as my patient."

It was hard, but I tried to overcome the weakness, and after it was all over was complimented by our good doctor.

"Let Schwester Anna be trained for special service in the operating room," he said afterward to Schwester Ida. "She is made of just the material we want. Her hand is steady and yet gentle."

So I was given the very last work that I could have desired. I rebelled in my heart against it. But can one *choose* her work for God? Some one must do this, and if my hand is steady and my touch gentle, as our doctor said, perhaps I might be able to relieve the sufferings of some poor, feeble woman. I would do it.

Day after day I assisted in this dreadful room, until it grew less terrifying to me. How many times I have pointed out to the trembling patient the motto painted on the wall in large letters, "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not afraid, for I am thy God;" and on the opposite wall, "Lo, I am with thee alway, even unto the end of the world."

With attending lectures on various topics connected with our profession, studying the Bible under the guidance of our inspector, who resided in Frankfort, and with active work in the sick room, the two years of my probation passed away quickly. Twice during that time I went home for a short visit. I found my father and mother a little older in appearance,

but otherwise all was the same. On my second visit my mother told me sad news.

"Anna, hast thou heard of the misfortune which has befallen Herr Schmidt and his family?"

"No, mother."

"Thou knowest that Margaretta seemed to be very fond of our Gottfried. After he left she grew gayer and gayer, and since thou wentest away she has been very wild indeed. The company she kept was very displeasing to her father and mother, but their remonstrances did no good. Last week she ran away."

"Ran away! What for?"

"For no good, I fear, and for a sad life. She went with a young man to whom her father was bitterly opposed. He is very dissipated and cannot care for her in any way, but he is an unusually handsome fellow. They say the couple were married in Berlin."

"How dreadful! Poor Margaretta! Where are they now?"

"No one knows. Herr Schmidt vows that he will never see her again. Ach, Anna! How blessed we are in our daughter!"

"Even though she goes far away from thee, mother?"

"Even so. She is doing a good work."

My letters from home are always bright and cheerful. Mother has a happy way of telling me the little things I want to know about home life. Though father's letters are more general they are just as precious. Nothing has been heard of Margaretta. Poor girl! What a mistaken life hers has been!

I was very contented at Frankfort, and when the Sunday came when I should close my probation and become a regular deaconess I felt very thankful that I had been found worthy of so great usefulness. At the annual meeting, held the week before, I had been approved.

That Sunday we three women, who had shared the same room so peacefully during the two years, put on the broad-bordered cap of a deaconess.

"It makes me feel very good," said Schwester Luisa, "that we are at last to be consecrated. See what a beautiful day it is!" She drew aside the curtain and we stood looking out upon the large garden behind our house. It was early in August, and bade fair to be a hot day. The sun was shining brightly, and the birds were singing sweetly. I do not believe that there are any songsters in the world like these sweet singers of our Fatherland.

It was our "festtag." Several of the head

deaconesses from other cities, who had come to share our joy, were already in the house. We walked to church together, Schwester Luisa and I. We had grown to be dear friends. I remember we talked of the good we hoped to do. It is now two years since Schwester Luisa went home to heaven. Her work among us was short.

In the church we sat all together in the front seats, a large group of white-capped women. Two of the hymns we sang alone. Our voices rose up tremulously at first, but we soon gained courage and sang with a will some of the hymns written especially for the Bethanien Verein. We sang so much together at home that our voices blended well. The inspector, a fine-looking, elderly man, preached a beautiful sermon; it was very inspiring and elevating. Then we sisters went forward. The inspector asked us several questions, and we promised to be diligent, faithful, obedient. He blessed us and consecrated us to the office of a deaconess in the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was a very affecting service, but no part of it impressed me more than when the black-robed deaconesses arose, came forward, and surrounded us, singing their hymn of welcome and of consecration. Their sweet voices ring in my ear now.

All that day passed joyously. We had a "fest" dinner, a very great effort on the part of the cook. In the afternoon we had a meeting, and prayed and sang together. But the evening crowned the day. Our inspector and his pleasant "frau," our pastor with his wife, several other invited guests, and all the deaconesses surrounded a long table. Our sisters who were engaged in nursing in the city came home for this joyful occasion. All faces were happy. How we enjoyed that supper—the veal and potatoes, the rice balls and salad, the pudding of golden cream with a froth of egg on the top, accompanied by preserved fruit, and finally the great "kranzkuchen"—nut cakes in the form of wreaths!

After we had eaten the inspector said, "Sing, sisters!" and we sang hymn after hymn. Our pastor led us in a devout prayer. We sat a long time around the table. Sometimes one deaconess or another would repeat a beautiful hymn or a verse of Scripture. The time came at last when we must separate; some to care for the sick in our own house, others to go far away into the city to watch at the bedside of the sick, or to cheer and comfort the dying in their last hours. Our guests wandered around the garden in the last dim glimmer of the twi-

light. The initiation was over. I was now a fully consecrated deaconess.

There is little to tell of my three years in regular work. I was more or less confined to the routine work in our house, although I occasionally went outside. I remember one incident. We had gone to bed, that is, those of us who were not night watchers, when our head sister came into the room. "I am sorry to disturb you, sisters, but it is necessary. A man has come to say that there is a very sick woman down in the Altgasse. She is alone, and very poor. No, don't get up all of you, only one is needed," she added, laughing, for we were all ready to obey the call. "Schwester Anna, thou canst go. Thou hast had little opportunity for outside work."

I dressed quickly and went down to meet the man. He was evidently a workingman, and touched his forehead respectfully when I appeared.

"I am sorry to disturb your rest, Fraülein," he said. "They told me I should find a good woman here who would come and help us in our trouble."

"What is the matter?" I inquired, as he led me through the dark streets. I was ashamed to acknowledge it, but I felt just a little afraid.

It was after midnight and the streets were quite deserted.

"It is my wife, Fraülein. She was very ill two or three weeks ago, but there are so many of us, and there was no one to work, so that she had to get up too soon. This evening she was suddenly taken so very sick that I was much frightened. I am a night watchman at the perfume factory. I left my post a moment to see how she was. She looked like death and I had to find some one to stay with her. The big bulldog is at the factory, so that cannot come to any harm."

"Did you have much trouble to find us?"

"No. A man in the house said that you sisters had been so kind to him in like trouble that I ventured to come directly to you."

"I am glad you did," I replied.

"Here we are!" he said, turning into a dark alleyway. We were in the very oldest part of the city. The stories of the black, weather-beaten houses overlapped each other, and the street was so narrow that the buildings almost touched near the top. We climbed up and up the steep stairs until my breath was almost gone.

Opening the door for me, the man said: "I cannot stop an instant. If they knew I had

left my work I should lose my place, and then we should all starve. I will be back early in the morning."

I heard the clatter of his heavy shoes as he ran down the stairs. Otherwise the house was still. The room was lighted by one poor candle. On the bed lay an unconscious woman; near her was a month-old baby boy fast asleep. Several children of different ages were lying asleep on another bed and on the floor. As I looked at them I saw traces of tears, as if they had worn themselves out with weeping, not being able to arouse the mother. I cannot tell all that I did that night. All my knowledge of medicine was needed to care for the sick woman. It was bitterly cold and there was no fire, so I was obliged to keep warm as well as I could until daylight, for there was neither stick of wood nor bit of coal in the room.

For a week I stayed with this afflicted family. I washed and entertained the children, of whom there were six, all under eight years of age. The mother improved with care and good, nourishing food, and I was able to leave her, although she still looked very frail and feeble. There were a good many opportunities in that week to tell the story of "good news

to men," and I hope the dear Father allowed the precious seed to fall on good ground.

Our work is not with the poor only. The rich people get sick and must have good nursing, and they need the Gospel as much as the poor, although it is much harder to reach them. I have found hearts that ached bitterly under their coverlets of silk, who needed the precious balm of the Gospel as much as did the poor woman in her rags.

We, of course, take no money for our labors; our wants are supplied, we are provided with clothing and a small amount of pocket money, and need nothing; but our rich friends are allowed to pay a reasonable sum for our services. This goes into the general fund and helps to support the society. We are not known as Methodists, but as the Society of Bethany, and as such are received into the homes of Lutherans and members of other denominations.

Yes, it is a good work, and I am happy in it; but there is a sad side to it. About a year ago, when I was sitting by the bedside of a very sick man in the hospital, Schwester Rosanna came to me. "Schwester Anna, Schwester Ida wishes to see thee in the parlor."

Her face was grave, and I feared bad news. "Tell me what it is!" I begged.

"I cannot. May God help thee, dear sister!"

I trembled very much when I entered the parlor. Schwester Ida held a telegram in her hand. She came to me, put her arms around me, and said, "I have sad news for thee, my child."

"O, tell me quickly!" I cried.

"Thy father—"

"Is he dead?"

'No, not dead. But very ill. Read this."

I read it. "Thy father is dangerously ill. Come at once," signed by my mother.

"I must go," I said, half dazed by the sudden news.

"Yes, thou must go. Schwester Rosanna has already packed thy bag. See! Here she comes with it." There she was in the door.

The good women put on my bonnet; they put me into a carriage, bought my ticket, and found me a seat in the train. I could not speak. My darling father! O, that I might be permitted to see him once again, to look into his dear, kind eyes and tell him how much I love him! It was permitted. My dear father lived two days after I reached home. I sat by his bedside and held his hand. He could not speak, but he looked his love.

When he had gone from us mother and I sat

a long time in silence. She leaned her head upon my shoulder. "Thou art such a comfort to me, my daughter," she said.

After everything was over, and we had laid my father's "earthly house" to rest in the old cemetery we talked it all over. I said that my duty was now to my mother. I would give up the deaconess work.

"No, my child. I do not wish it. Thou art not so very far away. I am very comfortable here, and I should prefer that thou shouldst continue in thy work."

She insisted, and so it was settled. My dear, good mother chooses to sacrifice herself, to live alone in the old home, while I labor here.

Father left us a good income, so that I am not obliged to burden the society at all for my support, thus leaving enough to keep another deaconess at work. I am glad to be of that much help.

Now, my story is almost done. For some reason, I do not know what, it seemed to be the judgment of Schwester Ida that I was tired out, and they have sent me to this quiet rest house at Neuenhain to recuperate. I do not feel so strong as before father's death, for our work is a little taxing. But I shall be all right after a few weeks in this pure, clear air.

CHAPTER XIX.

A Summer of Rest.

NEUENHAIN, August 18.

IT is now three months since I came here, and to-morrow I shall return to Frankfort. It is not often that our sisters are allowed such a long holiday; but Schwester Ida seemed to think that I needed rest, and insisted on my remaining. The life has been a lazy one compared to the one I led last winter. It has done me great good. When I came I felt languid, depressed, discouraged; now I feel young again, cheerful-hearted, and ready for work. What a magic effect sunshine and fresh air have upon the overstrained nerves!

A great favor has been granted me, that of having my darling mother with me. She has been here two weeks now, and will start on her homeward journey to-morrow, when I go. What a blessing her tranquil, peaceful presence has been to us all! The deaconesses all love her. There is not one of them who has not confided to her her hopes and purposes, her doubts and fears. To Schwester Bertha, who cannot live long, we fear, as she is gradually

wasting away with consumption, she has been a great comfort.

Fraülein Krumm and mother have chatted together by the hour as they sat on the upper balcony enjoying the beautiful view and busy with their knitting. Poor Fraülein Krumm's crippled hands are a great hindrance to her, but she manages to knit a little every day.

Even Frau Scharff, who was so shy and timid before the rest of us, has unbent to my sweet mother, and finds her companionship restful and consoling. Schwester Lena laughingly remarked, the other night, that mother must join the Bethanien Verein; she would be the most famous nurse among us. Mother replied that she would gladly do so were she twenty years younger. "I have done the best I could for you," she said, smiling, and laying her hand on me. "I have given you my one treasure, my comfort, or, rather, I have given her to the Lord."

"Amen," responded Schwester Lena, softly; "no one could do more than give her all."

Our days have passed so pleasantly. It has been very, very dry, but that has given us pleasure-seekers bright, clear weather for excursions. There has not been a drop of rain since I came. All day long we have been in the

open air, carrying our work out into summer houses, or the chestnut woods, or sitting on the cool veranda. In front of the house, on the gravel, there is a fine place to play the American game, croquet, which affords us much pleasure.

Sometimes we took long walks up the hill, down through the valley beyond, and on up another mountain, from which Königstein, a magnificent ruined castle, is visible. On another mountain stands Falkenstein, also a ruin, but not so extensive. Far off to the right rises the tower of Cronberg Castle, now the property of our young emperor's mother, the Empress Frederick. Many legends made these ruins interesting. Of course their owners were at swords' points with each other and fought bloody battles on these now silent and peaceful hillsides.

One day we walked with Schwester Bertha, who cannot go very far, up to the woods on the side of the mountain behind our house. There the dark pines moaned and sighed in the gentle breeze, and so thick were they that the sharp-pointed rays of sunlight could scarcely pierce their shade. There were benches along the edge of the forest, and we sat down to rest. After singing a few hymns we be-

came quite silent, each one busy with her own thoughts. Suddenly we heard from the depths of the woods a liquid "Cuckoo!" Then came an answering note, "Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!" We listened, breathlessly, until the sounds grew fainter and fainter and finally died away in the depths of the dark pine shadows.

The cherries have ripened and been gathered. Every day Schwester Amalie climbed the tall ladder and wrested the ruby fruit from the greedy birds who perched upon the upper limbs and scolded vigorously. At ten o'clock in the morning we had rich feasts of piles of luscious cherries, fresh bread, and glasses of warm, new milk.

The cornflowers and poppies have blossomed and faded, and the sprays of golden-rod begin to be seen in the chestnut woods.

Many deaconesses have been here for their vacation and have gone back to their work. To-morrow I, too, shall go away, and when shall I see my beloved Neuenhain again? But I must not sigh. I fear I am growing luxurious, and luxury is not for us deaconesses who have given ourselves to God's work. There will be hard enough work to do this year, I fear.

To-night, as we were all seated around the

supper table, Schwester Amalie came in late, much flushed and excited. She had been down to Soden to visit a member of our Church, and to do some errands. After saying "Guten Abend!" and asking God's blessing on her food, she exclaimed, "Schwester Lena, thou dost not know the news I heard in Soden!"

"What was it, Schwester Amalie? Thou lookest excited. Eat something first."

"Dost thou remember, Schwester Anna," continued Amalie, turning to me, "the first Sunday thou wast here, when we were walking through the parched fields, how I predicted the cholera? And Schwester Lena called me a dark prophet," she added, glancing rather triumphantly at the head of the table.

"Yes, I remember," I replied.

"Tell us quickly," cried two or three other deaconesses. "Has the cholera come? Is it near here? Where is it?"

"The cholera has come," answered Schwester Amalie, gravely.

"Ach!" exclaimed several voices.

"It broke out very suddenly in Hamburg yesterday. There were more than a hundred cases in one day. I knew it. I predicted it."

"I have not had a moment to look at the

Frankfurter Zeitung to-day," said Schwester Lena, running to pick up the newspaper from the table by the window, while we all left our supper and crowded around her. "Yes, here it is: 'Cholera in Hamburg. More than a hundred stricken. People leaving the city in crowds. Great excitement. Police regulations!' Yes, poor Hamburg! The cholera has come."

We all stood perfectly quiet in dismay. The cholera, that fearful scourge! We should be needed. Had we strength? "As thy days, so shall thy strength be!" We should have strength given us to battle with this dread disease. Our sisters in Hamburg—how were they? We had a topic of thrilling interest during the entire meal. Would the cholera spread? How could it be prevented with such close communication between our cities?

Our prayer service was unusually solemn that night. Schwester Lena knelt down on her little stool by the dining room table, and, raising her face to heaven, prayed that God might lift the dark cloud which hung over beautiful Hamburg; that our Bethanien Verein might receive new grace for this severe work, and that strength might be given us for the duties required of us.

We felt very subdued as we gathered on the upper veranda and watched the purple twilight settling down over the distant villages. Mother and I sat side by side on the wicker settee. She held my hand tightly clasped in hers. I knew her thoughts. There would be some one needed to nurse these poor sick and dying men and women. Suppose I should be called! For myself I was willing to go; it was right. I had vowed obedience, and I had given my soul and body to my heavenly Father for his service; but it would be hard—O, so hard—to leave the mother to bear the pain and anxiety of waiting in her quiet home for news.

"Well," said Amalie, "it is just what I prophesied." The dear sister seemed to take great comfort in the thought that, for once, her gloomy prediction had come true.

"I know one thing," remarked Paula, who had just come in, hot and tired from carrying many pails of water to refresh the thirsty garden, "if they need help in Hamburg I shall go."

"We may need help nearer home," replied Amalia.

We said, "Good night; sleep well," and went to our rooms as the curfew bell rang out its signal clear and sharp on the evening air.

It was very still and restful around "Gottestreu." Was it possible that only a few hundred miles away the nurses and doctors were hurrying anxiously to and fro? that the gloomy dead-wagons were bearing away the bodies of those who had loved ones to mourn them?

Mother and I had a long, quiet talk that night, during which I grew to know her better, to respect and admire still more the beauty of her character, to see that she was trying to reflect the self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice of her Master.

CHAPTER XX.

A Call for Help.

WITTENBERG, December 24.

IT is a long time since I wrote in my little book. Here I am again at home. I sit once more in front of the blazing wood fire; I look across at mother as she sits placidly knitting. Gretchen comes in to lay the cloth. All is the same as it was six years ago, the same peaceful home, but dear father's place is vacant, his chair stands empty, like a shadow of things past.

It seems as though a year had passed since I wrote those few words at "Gottestreu," when night lay so silent about us, and mother was sleeping restfully in the narrow, white bed under the slanting roof. What terrible scenes I have passed through since that night! I shudder to think of them. And yet God gave me strength to do my duty. It is only now, after all is over, and the dark page in the history of Hamburg has been turned down, that I feel weak and ill. If it had not been for those months of rest at Neuenhain I am sure that I could not have endured the strain. Think of the deaconesses who had not

had that opportunity! How bravely they bore their burdens! How cheerfully they looked death in the face!

I will go back in my story. The next morning after the news came of the cholera in Hamburg, as mother and I were finishing our packing, Schwester Amalie came into the room with a telegram for me. I opened it and read aloud: "Wait at station in Frankfort. Will meet you there. Ida."

I looked at mother, and she looked at me. "Be prepared, my child," she said, coming close to me. "Thou must go to Hamburg."

"What wilt thou do, mother?"

"I would go with thee, if I were not too old. As it is I should only be a burden. I will return home and pray daily and hourly for the poor sick ones and for thee."

"Thou art an angel, mother!" I exclaimed, my eyes filling with tears.

"No, darling, only a loving mother and a feeble follower of my Saviour." The other deaconesses, having heard of my telegram, came into the room. They, too, put the same construction on it: I must go to Hamburg. To my surprise, for she was usually the first to come, I saw nothing of Schwester Paula until it was time for the train.

Schwester Lena, with her eyes overflowing with tears, insisted upon our drinking coffee about two o'clock (our train left at three), and gave us some of her delicious jelly to eat with our "brodchen." Schwester Amalie came and sat down by us and urged us to eat, but we were both quite nervous and could only take a little refreshment, much to the disappointment of the good sisters.

"Ach! take a little more," said Schwester Lena, "just a trifle more jam, Frau Lufft."

"Thank you very much, sister. I cannot eat."

"Well, I don't wonder," rejoined the head sister, "to think of that bonny girl in that awful city! Ach! into what dangers do our duties lead us!"

"We must trust in God," said my mother.

"Yes, you dear, good woman, we must trust in God."

Then we kissed the dear sisters lovingly, and I inquired for Schwester Paula.

"Ach! dost thou not know?" answered Schwester Lena. "The good girl has begged to accompany thee. She says she is good for nothing anyway, and if she dies it will not be much loss—that is the way she talks—and if thou art ill she will take care of thee." We all wept together. The good, self-sacrificing girl!

How glad I should be to have her with me! "I have taken the liberty of allowing her to go," continued the deaconess. "I trust that the inspector will not be displeased."

"I am sure he will not, when he knows all the circumstances," I replied.

Just then Schwester Paula came out, kissed all the deaconesses good-bye, and we went down the narrow path, up the little steep hill to the level road, where the stately poplars waved their heads in the breeze.

Mother was to take the post wagon, as she could not walk so far, and so our bags were to go with her. The big yellow *diligence* soon came rumbling along; we helped mother in, and, with a flourish, the driver snapped his whip, blew a blast on his horn, and rattled off down the hill. We followed more leisurely down the gradual descent, passing apple orchards where the fruit was maturing, and vineyards where the men and women were gathering the purple grapes in huge, flat baskets and carrying them away, carefully strapped to their backs. We went through Soden, which was then crowded with tourists who were drinking the mineral waters. In the shady garden of the "Kurhaus" the people were sitting listening to the music.

I seemed to be in a dream. Was there really cholera in Hamburg? Was I going into the midst of death, down into the valley of its shadow, as it were?

Mother, Paula, and I found seats in the train and we moved off toward Frankfort. The fields looked green and smiling; the villages lay peacefully in the August sunshine.

At Frankfort we found Schwester Lena waiting. She looked very grave and sad. As we sat down in the waiting room she told us of the call from Hamburg for help.

"Schwester Sophie writes," she said, "'We need help. This morning Schwester Lucilla was taken ill; to-night she lies dead, and before midnight will be buried. It is sad to have such haste, but it must be so in order to save the others. Another sister has just been taken sick. What will be the outcome of it all God only knows! We shall do our best; but that is little in the face of all the misery which we see about us. If one or two of our deaconesses could come we should be very glad.' The inspector thinks that he can send but one, as it will not do to cripple our other stations for fear that the epidemic should spread."

"That is very wise," responded mother.

"As thou hast had a long rest, dear Schwester

Anna," Schwester Ida continued, "it seemed best to us that thou shouldst go. But thou art not compelled to do so. Think well before deciding."

"I have decided already, Schwester Ida. I shall go willingly."

"And the mother? What will she do?"

"Go home and pray." The deaconess pressed my mother's hand in silence.

Schwester Paula had stood quietly waiting during this conversation. Schwester Ida had known her before, and turning now to her asked, Where art thou going, sister? "

"I am going to Hamburg with Schwester Anna, if the inspector will allow. I want to go very much."

"Thou knowest that he lives here. Thou hadst better take a carriage at once; there is an hour before the train goes, and thou canst go to his house and ask him. It may be that he will allow thee to go, although he has said that he would send only one."

Paula hurried away.

"Now, Schwester Anna, with haste thou canst go up to the Home, if there is anything there that thou wishest to take."

"No," I replied. "I have all that I want with me."

So we three walked up and down the long station, talking together and watching the hurrying crowds as they rushed for their trains. Some were going north, some south, but none were bound for that stricken city where the cholera was raging. At last we saw Paula coming down the long hallway accompanied by the inspector.

"So you will be a brave woman, Schwester Anna," he said, as he grasped my hand warmly. "You are going into the jaws of death; but fear not. 'A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Because thou hast made the Lord, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.' Precious promise!"

"Am I to go alone, Herr Inspector?"

"No, I have yielded to the persuasions of this good Sister Paula, and she may go with you. May God bless you both!"

As the official dropped the long iron chain which closed the passage to our train we passed through and found pleasant seats in a compartment. With many a whistle, and after much ringing of bells, our train moved slowly out of the handsome station. Should I ever

come back again? Ah, well! It mattered little, except for my darling mother.

I shall never forget that ride. Mother and I sat hand in hand until we reached the junction where her train for Berlin left our train for Hamburg. We kissed each other tenderly, and said "Farewell." Neither of us wept. Fortunately our train waited a little at the junction, and the one for Berlin passed out ahead of us, so I was able to make mother comfortable and to catch her last loving look as she passed from my sight. Then my vision became blurred, and I was thankful to feel Schwester Paula's strong arm about me, and she led me back to our train.

O, that long, weary night! How it haunts me! It was really more than the hard duties which followed it, just as anticipated burdens are always so much heavier than actual ones. Paula leaned her head back against the cushions and slept restfully, but I could not. All night long I thought and thought. I looked from the open window at the passing landscape, beautified and softened by the mild light of the full moon, and lived over my past life, and tried to live through the coming weeks. Thank God! the latter was impossible for me to do. Only one short step

ahead can we see through our Father's great mercy. Our sorrows would be doubly heavy, our joys would lose half their joyousness, did we know about them beforehand.

The breaking of day brought us to Hamburg, where a sister deaconess met us. We saw hurrying crowds here, too, rushing in haste to the trains which would carry them from the plague-stricken city. Few, very few, alighted from our train. We were driven at once to the Home, where Schwester Sophie met us. I always loved this Hamburg head sister. She was so gentle, so kind, and yet, withal, so firm and strong in her duty. She kissed us kindly and we passed into the parlor. She told us the details of poor Lucilla's sudden death and hasty burial. It was all very sad. To our relief she said that the other deaconess seemed to be better, and they thought she would recover. "It is a hopeful sign," she added, "that she has lived so long. This is the worst type of Asiatic cholera, and in a very few hours a case is decided.

"May I go right to work?" I asked, laying off my outer wraps.

"No, my dear, thou mayest not. Dost thou think that we want *thee* sick, who wast sent to help us? Thou and this other dear sis-

ter (whom may God bless for coming to our aid!) must take several hours' rest after thy night ride and the excitement of leaving home."

We protested, but it was no use. She declared that there were enough nurses for that day. "But thou wilt probably be needed to-night," she continued, "so take a good rest and be ready for work then. How is thy dear mother?" she asked, as we entered the cool, inviting room.

"She is well," I replied, my throat filling with sobs as I thought of the mother's last tender look. Then, without warning, I broke into wild weeping.

Schwester Sophie took me in her arms. "Weep on, my child. It will do thee good. Thou art completely worn out by the journey. Fear not. Thou wilt see the dear mother again, but not unless thou wilt rest."

She and Schwester Paula undressed me, and then my dear companion lifted me in her strong arms and laid me on the soft bed. By that time I had somewhat recovered command of myself.

"This is a fine helper they have sent thee, Schwester Sophie," I said. "I am provoked at myself."

"Do not feel so," she said, tenderly, "thou wilt be all right soon."

I was very tired. Almost before I knew that she had moved from my side I fell into a deep slumber. When I awoke the afternoon sun was shining against the gray curtain of our window, and, looking at my watch, I saw it was already five o'clock.

Schwester Paula was up and dressed and smiled at me as I opened my eyes.

"Art thou better?" she inquired, kindly.

"O, yes! I feel perfectly well."

"Then thou hadst better dress, and we will have some supper. We shall soon be needed."

CHAPTER XXI.

The Valley of the Shadow of Death.

FOR eight long weeks we fought the cholera. Although the number of cases had been large during the first few days it steadily increased, until the sick and dying persons were brought in more rapidly than we could accommodate them. In a few days persons were forbidden to leave the city. Parcels could not be sent away for fear of carrying contagion. Except by letters, which were afterward fumigated, and telegrams, which too often bore messages of sorrow to loved ones far away, Hamburgers held no communication with the outside world. The city was shunned by everyone; it was completely isolated.

Beautiful Hamburg, called by some the loveliest city in our empire, why was it that thou wast visited by such an affliction!

The disease was, as is usually the case, confined to the poorer classes. From the river small canals penetrate the old city, or "Altstadt," and are very useful in carrying merchandise out to the harbors. These canals are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide. A tel-

egram from Cuxhafen, the seaport of Hamburg, is sent when the tide changes, and three shots are fired to notify the people. This portion of the city is called "the fleets," and is exceedingly picturesque. Every spring and fall, when the unusual tides come, the water rises very high in these canals, frequently flooding the cellars of the poor people who live near them. When the gun fires a second three shots as a warning that the water is rising rapidly, the dwellers on these low streets gather up their few belongings and flee to a safer place. Just as soon as the flood abates they return to their only home, a dripping room, whose very walls ooze out dampness.

It was in this region that the cholera was at its worst. One after another in a family would be smitten and carried away by police orders, leaving their relatives dumb with grief. After the removal of the sick ones the sanitary commission would come, fumigate every article that it was possible to purify in that way, and the clothing and even beds and bedcovers would be burnt. This meant almost ruin to some families.

Some of the cases were very distressing. Before our work became entirely confined to hospital wards I was occasionally sent to go through these "fleets" and seek out the miser-

able people who were in need. I did not have to go far. Turning from a broad, handsome avenue, where fine, airy houses and good, nourishing food were helping to protect the inhabitants, I entered the narrow streets. So narrow were some of them that a horse and cart could scarcely pass between them without grazing them. No ray of sunlight could pierce the twilight. The air was tainted with odors of stale food, tobacco smoke, and poor wine. From the upper windows of the houses clothes-lines were stretched, on which old and dingy garments were drying; possibly some of them belonged to that man who was just carried past me to be taken to the hospital. It was in this way, partly through ignorance, partly through dire poverty, that the germs were spread. Up in some of the windows a few flowers were trying to bloom, stretching up their little heads toward the streak of sky far, far above them. At the end of these narrow alleyways was usually a canal, flowing through a broader street, and its water was saturated with the germs which infested the river Elbe.

In one home, or rather in one room, I found four children sitting huddled up together. Their room was literally empty. Those articles which had not been seized for debt had been

burned by the health officers. The children looked at me wonderingly as I gave them food, and said, "Are you an angel, lady?"

"No, dear, but God sent me to you to help you."

When I had arranged what I could in the room they gathered around me and I asked the oldest one, a girl about twelve years of age, "Where are thy parents?"

"I do not know," she answered. "First, mamma was taken awfully sick. Some men came and carried her away, though we begged them not to. Then a few hours after that papa was taken just the same way, and they carried him off. Then we stayed alone all night."

"Did no one come to help thee?"

"No, I think they were all sick too. They were crying all the night in the other rooms. Yesterday morning the men came and took our things away. They were kind and said they were sorry. One man gave me a big chunk of bread. We ate that all up yesterday. We never saw anybody else till you came this morning."

"Why didst thou not call some one of the neighbors?"

"We were afraid to, for there were such dreadful noises. Hark! you can hear them now!"

A woman was shrieking piteously, and calling, "Help! help! They are taking away my husband!" These poor people could not comprehend why it was necessary to remove the sick ones.

"Canst thou stay here until to-morrow," I asked, "if I leave thee something to eat? I will come again and try to find help for thee."

"We shall stay right here," replied the brave little woman, "until you come again." Alas! before the next morning the poor child was carried away too, but the other three escaped and kind friends were found for them.

O, the misery of it all! It made us heart-sick. As I said, it was only in the first few days that we were able to do this outside work. The cases accumulated so rapidly that hospitals were improvised in every possible place. All the regular hospitals were overcrowded. Large barracks were devoted by the government to the use of the cholera patients, and we members of the Bethanien Verein were appointed to wards in that place. I write it down as a compliment to my sister deaconesses, that to our society the very worst cases were given. For, as one of the doctors said, "You are the best nurses we have. You are quiet and very faithful." How glad we were to be in the thick of

the fight and to feel that we were giving ourselves wholly to our work.

Schwester Paula and I had wards near together. Each of us had thirty-five dangerously ill patients under our care. And in spite of our unceasing efforts night and day half of those poor sick persons died during every twenty-four hours, and their places were filled almost instantly with fresh cases.

Notwithstanding the utmost precautions taken by the police and health officers, people were constantly exposed to the disease. When a person was taken ill he was very frequently placed by some one in an ordinary cab from one of the cab stands. He was taken to the barracks and left. Then the driver would drive away again, after having been sprinkled with a few drops of carbolic acid, or some other disinfectant, and take his accustomed place at the stand. His next passenger would perhaps be a healthy person, who leaned back comfortably on the cushions, wholly unaware that a cholera victim had occupied the seat fifteen minutes before.

We were busy indeed in the barracks. Every moment was full. The first evening after I took my place there I saw the doctor coming.

"Good evening, sister," he said.

I thought the voice sounded familiar, and as I glanced up from my patient I looked into the calm, steady eyes of Gottfried's old friend, Georg Schmidt.

"Why, Anna Lufft! Is it you? What are you doing here in the midst of all this terrible suffering?"

"I might ask you in return, doctor, what are you doing here?" I said, as we shook hands.

"When I heard of the plague I knew doctors would be needed, and I hastened to come."

"And the same thing has brought me here, provided the word 'nurses' be substituted for 'doctors,'" I replied, smiling a little.

Even in the midst of this distress and trouble we were able to smile, especially when such an old friend came. I was rich indeed with Paula and Georg for my companions. We had only a moment for conversation, for our time was precious. Georg had charge of our wards at night, and occasionally, in a bit of leisure, if such it could be called when one must run every minute or two to relieve the wants of some suffering fellow-creature, we talked. He seemed very sad. He told me that they had heard nothing from Margaretta for three years.

"That was a wretched scamp she married," he said, bitterly. "She threw herself away.

Your life is so much holier and happier. But, Anna, we children never had your home training. I do not wish to reflect on my parents; but I must say that if my poor sister had been brought up to fear God, instead of living for show, she would never have come to this."

At another time he told me something surprising. His father had lost all his money, and he and Frau Schmidt were living alone in a small house. "I send them all I can, but it is not much; my practice is still small. They blame me for coming here. I have a very bitter letter from my mother in my pocket now. I am glad I came, though. It was right."

My respect for Dr. Georg increased daily. No touch was more gentle than his, no words were more consoling to the sick than those he uttered. He seemed to be an excellent physician too, and the patients often rallied under his vigorous treatment. I never ventured to ask him if he had heard from Gottfried Herrmann. He never mentioned him, and I dared not ask, though sometimes the words were trembling on my lips.

One night after the plague had run nearly five weeks, and I was almost worn out by loss of sleep and anxiety, I was sitting for a moment writing a note to my dear, patient mother, who

watched and prayed in Wittenberg. I never failed to write her something every day. I could, at least, save her any superfluous anxiety. Sometimes I had only time to scribble one word: "Well," and put it hastily into an envelope. Sometimes I could write a little note. Every day she wrote to me dear, loving, cheery letters. They did me a world of good. This night of which I speak, just as I was inditing "Dear Mother," I felt a hand lightly laid on my shoulder. Looking up, I saw Schwester Paula's quiet face.

"Dear sister," she said, "I am so sorry to interrupt thee when thou art writing to thy dear mother. I will wait a minute for thee, but be quick."

I hastily wrote, "Well," inclosed the letter in its envelope, directed, stamped it, and stood up. "I am ready. What is it?"

"Thou art always the same brave soldier, ready for duty, Schwester Anna," she replied, lovingly putting her arm around me. She was so strong, and I was so tired, so tired.

"What is it?" I asked again.

"O! I almost forgot my errand in looking at thy dear, worn face. I have a new patient in my ward. He was a very, very sick man when they brought him in this afternoon, but we

have been working over him, and I really believe he is a little better. He is delirious and in his wanderings keeps talking of Wittenberg and occasionally calls, 'Anna! Anna!' in heart-breaking tones."

My heart almost stopped. Who could it be?

"I thought that as thou camest from Wittenberg," continued Paula, "perhaps thou didst know him and canst quiet him. Schwester Rosalie is there now."

"Has Dr. Schmidt seen him?" I asked, scarcely recognizing the tones of my own voice.

"No. He has not yet come in. What ails thee, child? Art thou ill? Ach! this work is too heavy for thee!"

"Water!" I cried. She brought me some boiled water which stood near, looking anxiously at me as I drank.

"Thou art ill. Thou must go home at once. I will take thy ward, and Schwester Rosalie can keep mine. No! thou shalt not go in there by that sick man," she said, getting in front of me as I started to go.

"I am really quite well, Schwester Paula. Indeed I am. I want to go. I will not go home."

"Well, let me look at thee. Thou hast a bit of color in thy cheeks now. Thou mayest

go and look at him and then thou must go home."

I went into the other ward alone. I walked between the long, narrow beds on which the invalids were moaning with pain. Some figures lay still and at rest. Their long conflict was over. At last I came to the bed at the extreme end of the long row. On it lay a man who was tossing restlessly. The deaconess sat by him. As I came she rose. "Since thou hast come, Schwester Anna, I will go. I am needed down there. Poor Number 9 is gone, and they are bringing in a fresh case." She hurried away to meet the men.

I stood looking down at the unconscious man. Yes, it was he, my Gottfried. His curls were cut very short, his beard was longer and unkempt, but it was he. I lifted my heart in a silent prayer: "I thank thee, O my God!"

The sick man turned again. He stretched out his hands. "Ach! Anna, my sweetheart, where art thou? I have wandered so long, my darling. I have never found thee. Where art thou? Where art thou?" Then he would lie quiet a moment, and then break out again. Sometimes he talked of the old willow, sometimes of our fireside. He spoke of his mother, but always returned to the old theme: "Where

art thou, my Anna?" It seemed as if his mind were living over the past years, with the idea that I had wandered away somewhere.

"I am here, Gottfried," I said, laying my hand on his hot head. He looked up at me, but there was no recognition in his eyes. Then he took up the same pitiful plaint. As I soothed and quieted him he became less restless, and finally fell asleep.

A shadow fell across the bed, and I saw Georg Schmidt leaning over the bed. Suddenly he started, and held the light which he carried close to the sick man's face.

"It is really Gottfried!" he murmured. "Schwester Rosalie, you had better—Ach! it is not Schwester Rosalie! Do you know him, Anna?" he asked, looking at me kindly.

"Yes, Georg."

"How strange that he has come back to us at such a time as this! He is improving. You need have no fears for him. To-morrow he will be much better. Did he know you?"

"No; he has wandered a good deal in his mind."

"To-morrow he will know you. Now I must send for Schwester Rosalie and give her instructions. Schwester Paula will keep your ward."

"But, doctor, I am going back there myself."

"No. You are not. I have seen Schwester Paula, and she and I agree that you must have a good rest. There is no use of protesting. You must go. I am the doctor, you know."

Dear, kind Georg! He put me in a carriage and, despite my objections, accompanied me home. Then he ordered that I should be given a quiet room, and should not be disturbed until I awoke naturally. I bade him "good night," and must have asked something by my glance, for, as he held my hand tightly, he whispered: "Have no fears. I shall be there all night. I shall watch him myself. Good night, dear sister." He passed his hand hurriedly over his eyes as he went back to his self-appointed task.

My mind was so exhausted that all I could do was to offer up a short prayer of thanksgiving to God for his great mercy. I fell into a deep, dreamless sleep and slept the whole night through. It was five long weeks since I had been in bed.

CHAPTER XXII.

Dr. Georg.

THE next morning I hastened to the barracks as soon as I could. In the entrance I met Georg, who had come to wait for me.

"He is much better," he said, brightly. "However, I think you had better not go where he can see you to-day, for he is still very weak, and the excitement might be harmful to him."

"I will not," I promised. The other nurses would do better for him than I, for they had no personal interest in the matter, and were more composed. "But you are dreadfully tired, Dr. Georg," I exclaimed. "You must go home and rest too."

"I cannot, Anna. You know I must first make the round of the other hospital. Then I really will go to bed, for I feel unusually tired."

I felt very anxious about him as he hurried off, his face was so lined and careworn. He had been constantly busy for the last five weeks. In fact, he boasted that he did not need any sleep at all. I went to my work, but every now and then I found time to go to the door of the other ward and glance in at the long line of

beds, at the very end of which my Gottfried lay. He was very quiet, Schwester Paula said, and seemed to be sleeping.

Toward night Dr. Georg came in again. He looked much worse than in the morning.

"You have not been in bed at all!" I cried.

"Indeed, I could not sleep, Anna, I found so much to do. The hospitals are crowded. I went home once, but was called almost immediately to go to a poor woman who was stricken down suddenly. It was a dreadful case. She died in two hours. There are several little children. It is sad, sad."

He sat down and covered his face with his hands. I went and brought him a stimulant, for he seemed ready to faint.

"Thank you," he said, taking a few swallows. "No, no more. I am ready now. I must go my rounds again."

So the days went by. Gottfried steadily improved, but Georg still thought it best for me not to see him. Our dear doctor, on the other hand, grew more weary every day. It was impossible to persuade him to rest. One night he did not come to the hospital. I felt very anxious about him and sent one of the messengers to the house where he had a room, but he was not there.

"Probably out with some sick person," grumbled the landlady. "One would think he never slept and had no home at all, from the way he goes on. But he's one of God's blessed saints," she added.

About ten o'clock that night there was confusion in the hall below. Then steps came up the stairs and the bearers entered my ward, where there was an empty bed. They laid the man down. The men were weeping. "It is our dear doctor," they sobbed.

He lay there until five o'clock the next morning, suffering greatly. His body was so weak that the cholera took firm grip. Just as the sun came in at the window he became quiet and the spasms ceased. He reached up his poor, weak hand to touch mine. "Anna!" he said; "my love!" and he was gone.

I kissed his cold forehead. It was something to have won the love of such a man, though I never knew it.

We laid dear, brave Georg in a spot by himself, away from the common patients. On the pure white marble cross which marks his resting place are engraved these words: "He died for his brethren. 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'"

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Decision.

WHEN Gottfried was able to be moved he was taken to a comfortable room at the home of a widow who had no fear of the disease. Though I had never said a word to Schwester Paula concerning our relation to each other she seemed to understand the whole subject. What we should have done without this dear sister in that awful epidemic I do not know. Her strength seemed almost miraculous. Her spirits were always cheerful. She nursed her patients with the utmost care, and her touch grew more gentle every day. Strange to say, after Schwester Lucilla's death on the first day of the epidemic none of the deaconesses was touched by the disease. We felt sick and tired, but no real sickness came to us. When the disease was abating, and we began to hope that a change had come, the weather was quite cold. Our labors grew lighter as the number of patients decreased, and we were able to get more rest.

I began to wonder when I should be allowed to see Gottfried. It seemed a little hard that strange hands should minister to his

wants, even though those hands belonged to as dear a friend as Schwester Paula.

One morning Schwester Sophie came to me and said: "My dear, there is a sick man under Schwester Paula's care, Herr Herrmann, who comes from thy native place. He wishes to see thee. Wilt thou go with me this morning?"

"If I am not needed here, Schwester Sophie."

"No; thy place can be supplied. Get ready, and we will go at once."

She talked kindly to me as we went along, and went with me up the stairs of Frau Lange's house and into the sick room. I saw a man sitting in the big armchair. He was fully dressed and looked much better than when I had seen him last; but O! how thin and pale—a mere shadow of the old, strong Gottfried.

Schwester Sophie shook hands with him, and then I went to him. As I took his hand he looked full in my eyes. "My Anna!" he said.

I sank down on my knees beside him. I had forgotten Schwester Sophie, I had forgotten Frau Lange; everything was as nothing when I looked into his frank, blue eyes.

When I did turn around I saw that they had all slipped away, but had left the door open a little way.

I could never tell how we talked that day, as I sat beside him, holding his hand in mine. He told me of his journey to America, of his application to a lawyer in New York, of his success in business.

"Of course it was uphill work at first, for I had to learn the language. Fortunately, I always liked English, and it was easy for me. It is a nice language, but a cold one, compared with our beautiful German, which comes direct from the heart. Then, too, these Americans never use the soft 'thee' and 'thou' which add such a touch of tenderness to our speech. But I will say nothing against the language or the people. They were very kind to me. I can live well in America."

"Thou wilt not return there, Gottfried!" I cried, alarmed. "It is so far away across that wide, wide ocean."

"I will never leave thee again, my darling, that is certain. When I go thou shalt go with me."

"I cannot, Gottfried. I am a deaconess. And there is my mother. She can never spare me."

"There are no vows preventing a deaconess from marrying, are there?" he said, smiling. "I have been questioning Schwester Paula about it, and she says that several of the sisters have married after entering the Bethanien Verein. In fact, it rather adds to their attractiveness; the cap is very becoming," he added, turning my face to the light.

"Gottfried!"

"Never mind, sweetheart, I am only joking. I must tell thee, something, Anna. When I went to America I at once sought out a Methodist church; it kept me in sympathy with thee to worship there every Sunday. I soon grew interested in the people and their earnestness. And I, too, have given my heart to God." I pressed his hand, but could not speak. Blessings were being showered upon me in great abundance. "And thou and I will work together for his glory. Thy mother will go with us to this new land willingly, I am sure."

"But my work, Gottfried. It would not be right to leave it. And thy mother's wishes were always against thy marriage. No; it will not do, Gottfried. We will work for God, but not together; thou in thy sphere, and I in mine."

"We shall work, together, my Anna. I do

not believe that God requires such sacrifice from thee. He has brought us here. We belong to each other. Thy place will be filled by some good woman who needs just the blessing and consolation which this work can give her. I never told thee what brought me home. I had a letter from my mother a few weeks ago, in which she told me that she would take back what she had said against our marriage. 'I was wrong,' she said, 'and when God took away my Karl, my baby, I saw that I had been self-willed. Come home, my boy, and marry thine Anna. I will gladly welcome her for thy sake.' "

"Schwester Anna," said Schwester Sophie's voice behind me, "we must go home. The patient will be tired out."

"Thank you, the patient feels much revived," said Gottfried. "If I may have a dose of this medicine every day, in good, strong allopathic portions, I shall soon be out of doors."

"I will bring her again to-morrow, Herr Herrmann, but only for a short time, I warn you."

"I shall be thankful to you. Auf wiedersehen, Schwester Sophie! Auf wiedersehen, my Anna, until to-morrow," he added in a low tone.

I wrote a long letter to my mother that day, telling her of Gottfried's return, and of his wishes. I also had a good talk with Schwester Sophie on the same subject. She agreed with Gottfried. "Thou hast now other ties," she said, "and thou canst do thy work as a married woman as well as in the Bethanien Verein. We shall be sorry to have thee leave us, but 'what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'"

My mother's answer brought the same advice. I had several talks with Gottfried, while kind Schwester Sophie waited in the other room, and he seemed fixed in his determination that I should be his wife. One day I spent several hours in prayer. I tried not to let my own wishes affect my prayer; for it would have been almost more than human if I had not felt great anguish at the thought of having Gottfried leave me again. However, I did want to accomplish the work for which I was sent into the world, and if that work required that I give up my dream of home and loved ones I was willing to sacrifice them, if it was God's will.

I arose from my knees, confident that God's blessings would still rest upon me if I left the active work of the Bethanien Verein and entered upon the quiet work of home.

When I told Gottfried the next morning he was very joyful. He was then able to walk about the room and was gaining strength rapidly. "Thanks to my two good nurses!" he would say, taking Schwester Paula's hand and mine. Dear Schwester Paula! How unselfishly happy she was in my joy during those days!"

"Let us pray together, Anna," said Gottfried, and we knelt down while he asked that God's benediction might rest upon us. I had no idea that my gay, almost worldly, boyish companion could converse so well with God.

As we rose to our feet he kissed me softly on the forehead. "This is our betrothal, Anna. Where is thy little turquoise ring? I have missed it from thy finger."

"I have it always here," I replied, pulling from my throat the blue ribbon on which it was hung about my neck. "It is not best for us deaconesses to wear ornaments. I could not part with my little ring, so I put it on in this way."

"Canst thou not wear it until I get thee a better one?"

"Wait until the answer comes from the inspector, Gottfried. Then I will put it on. I want no better one."

The answer from the inspector gave me permission to withdraw from the society at once, in consideration of the circumstances and of my "faithful service during the terrible visitation of cholera." So, when Gottfried was well enough, we said "Farewell" to the dear sisters with whom I had been so happy, and went home to Wittenberg. The morning before I left the Home, as we were sitting at the table after drinking coffee, the deaconesses began singing a hymn of parting One after the other the sweet voices joined in, until it seemed like a chorus of angels. They sang of our band, of our journey toward the home land, of our final reunion in the beautiful country "where we shall go out no more forever."

Schwester Sophie prayed tenderly, and then they all came and kissed me good-bye, each one giving me her blessing. It was hard for me to leave them. With all the brightness of love and joy and home before me my heart went out in deep affection toward these blessed women, who were toiling for the good of others, if by their means some soul might be saved. I prayed, too, in my heart: "O, my Father! in the midst of joy let me not forget the high calling to which thou hast called me as a child of thine."

CHAPTER XXIV.

An Easter Day.

WITTENBERG, March 26.

MY story is almost done now. To-morrow, with the new era in my life, I shall close this little book and begin a new record. The winter is behind us. I cannot give all the details of our return home. It was such a beautiful homecoming. Frau Herrmann actually took me in her arms and kissed me when Gottfried took me to her. I never saw before such a change in a person. Surely, nothing but God's grace could have transformed this proud, cold woman into the friendly, loving being that she is now.

"I was wrong, Anna," she whispered. "It is hard to say it, but it is true. Forgive me!"

"Gladly," I answered, kissing her lovingly. "If you will let me, I will be your true and faithful daughter." Thus our peace was made.

Christmas Day we all attended church and thanked God for his goodness and mercy in sending to us his well-beloved Son. The second Christmas holiday our families celebrated together. I cannot express our joy in the

thought that we were no longer at enmity; that Gottfried and I might be happy, knowing that the blessing of our parents rested upon us. If only my dear father could have been with us!

This time it has been my turn to open the oaken chest where my wedding outfit has lain for many years; to sew the fine linen garments; to prepare my housekeeping articles. The time has flown, with Gottfried to come and sit near us as we worked, or read to us from some interesting book.

One thing has been decided, Gottfried will not return to America. An opening right here in dear old Wittenberg has been found for him. And my mother said, "Thou canst take father's place in our home, my son." To my great joy we are to live on in the same peaceful home, Gottfried, and mother, and I. We can cultivate the same plants which my father loved; we can sit by the blazing wood fire in the broad hallway; we can work in the old vine-covered summer house, where we passed so many pleasant hours. America is very nice, and we should, perhaps, be richer there; but it is not the German fatherland; it is not *home*.

Gottfried comes and lays his hand on my

shoulder. "My sweetheart," he says, "stop thy writing and let us talk a little."

"In a moment, Gottfried," I reply. "I have only a few more words to write."

"Did I ever tell thee, Anna, that I saw Margaretta once in America?" he continues.

"No," I answer, surprised. "Where was it?"

"I was passing through the station at Jersey City one night, where so many trains leave for the West, when my attention was attracted to a group of emigrants, evidently waiting for a train. The man was leaning over on the arm of the seat fast asleep; the woman held in her arms a sleeping child, while another was lying up against her, crying. As I passed the woman looked up at me, and I saw who it was. It was Margaretta, thin and pale. She did not recognize me, and I thought it best not to speak to her on account of her husband. I slipped a ten-dollar bill into the child's lap as I went on with the crowd."

"How sad!" I murmur. Joy and sorrow, happiness and grief—how mingled together they are in our own lives!

To-morrow is our wedding day. My white gown lies ready up stairs; the filmy veil is near

it. On the myrtle tree, which mother has cultivated with such care, like a true housewife, in anticipation of this day, is the spray of blossoms, which, mixed with orange flowers, I shall wear to-morrow. Outside the window the cherry trees are blooming, just as they did that spring day nine long years ago, when Gottfried and I walked across the fields to Brenheim, and he gave me the little turquoise ring which I still wear, "as a remembrance." The willows down by the river are budding, the meadows are green, the birds in the linden trees are singing their spring songs; earth is putting on her new life.

So, to-morrow, on Easter Day, when the Christians all over the world are singing, "The Lord is risen, indeed," "Let us rejoice and be glad," Gottfried and I shall go out into a new life. We know not what is before us, whether it be joy or sorrow; we are happy to be together, and as one person we shall praise and glorify God to our lives' end.

THE END.