

RACHEL BUSK

THE VALLEYS OF TIROL:
THEIR TRADITIONS AND
CUSTOMS AND HOW TO
VISIT THEM

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The Valleys of Tirol: Their traditions and customs and how to visit them

PREFACE

There are none who know Tirol but are forward to express regret that so picturesque and so primitive a country should be as yet, comparatively with other tracks of travel, so little opened up to the dilettante explorer.

It is quite true, on the other hand, that just in proportion as a country becomes better known, it loses, little by little, its merit of being primitive and even picturesque. Intercourse with the world beyond the mountains naturally sweeps away the idiosyncracies of the mountaineers; and though the trail of progress which the civilized tourist leaves behind him cannot absolutely obliterate the actual configuration of the country, yet its original characteristics must inevitably be modified by the changes which his visits almost insensibly occasion. The new traditions which he brings with him of vast manufacturing enterprise and rapid commercial success cannot but replace in

the minds of the people the old traditions of the fire-side and the *Filò*, with their dreams of treasure-granting dwarfs and the *Bergsegen* dependent on prayer. The uniform erections of a monster Hotel Company, 'convenient to the Railway Station,' supersede the frescoed or timbered hostelry perched on high to receive the wayfarer at his weariest. The giant mill-chimneys, which sooner or later spring up from seed unwittingly scattered by the way-side, not only mar the landscape with their intrinsic deformity, but actually strip the mountains of their natural covering, and convert wooded slopes into grey and barren wastes;¹ just as the shriek of the whistle overpowers the Jödel-call, and the barrel-organ supersedes the zither and the guitar.

Such considerations naturally make one shrink from the responsibility of taking a part (how insignificant soever) in directing the migration of tourists into such a country as Tirol. I have heard a Tirolese, while at the same time mourning that the attractions of his country were so often passed over, express this feeling very strongly, and allege it as a reason why he did not give the result of his local observations to the press; and I listened to his apprehensions with sympathy. But then these changes *must* be. The attempt to delay them is idle; nor would individual abstention from participating in the necessary movement of events have any sensible effect in stemming the even course of

¹ This is what the introduction of manufactories is doing in Italy at this moment. The director of a large establishment in Tuscany, which devours, to its own share, the growth of a whole hill-side every year, smiled at my simplicity when I expressed regret at hearing that no provision was made for replacing the timber as it is consumed.

inevitable development. Circumstances oblige us continually to co-operate in bringing about results which we might personally deprecate.

‘In whatsoe’er we perpetrate
We do but row; we’re steered by fate.’

And after all, why should we deprecate the result? We all admire the simple mind and chubby face of childhood; yet who (except the sentimental father in the French ballad, ‘*Reste toujours petit!*’) would wish to see his son in petticoats and leading-strings all his days. The morning mists which lend their precious charm of mystery to the sunrise landscape must be dispelled as day advances, or day would be of little use to man.

The day cannot be all morning; man’s life cannot be all infancy; and we have no right so much as to wish – even though wishes avail nothing – that the minds of others should be involved in absurd illusions to which we should scorn to be thought a prey ourselves.

Nature has richly endowed Tirol with beauty and healthfulness; and they must be dull indeed who, coming in search of these qualities, do not find them enhanced a hundredfold by the clothing of poetry with which the people have superindued them. Who, in penetrating its mountain solitudes, would not thank the guide who peoples them for him with mysterious beings of transcendent power; who interprets for him,

in the nondescript echoes of evening, the utterances of a world unknown; and in the voices of the storm and of the breeze the expression of an avenging power or the whisperings of an almighty tenderness.

But then – if this is found to be something more than poetry, if the allegory which delights our fancy turns out to be a grotesque blunder in the system of the peasant who narrates it, – it cannot be fair to wish that he should continue subject to fallacious fancies, in order that we may be entertained by their recital.

It is one thing for a man who has settled the grounds of his belief (or his unbelief) to his best satisfaction in any rational way, to say, ‘I take this beautiful allegory into my repertory; it elevates my moral perceptions and illustrates my higher reaches of thought;’ but it is quite another thing if one reasons thus with himself, ‘My belief is so and so, *because* a certain supernatural visitation proves it;’ when actually the said supernatural visitation never took place at all, and was nothing but an allegory, or still less, a mere freak of fancy in its beginning.

Perhaps if the vote could be taken, and if desires availed anything, the general consensus of thinking people would go in favour of the desire that there had been no myths, no legends. But the vote would involve the consequence that we should have antecedently to be possessed of a complete innate knowledge of the forces of being, corresponding to the correct criteria, which we flatter ourselves do indwell us of the principles of beauty and of harmony. If there are any who are sanguine enough to believe

that science will one of these days give us a certain knowledge of how everything came about, it is beyond dispute that for long ages past mankind has been profoundly puzzled about the question, and it cannot be an uninteresting study to trace its gropings round and round it.

Perfect precision of ideas again would involve perfect exactness of expression. No one can fail to regret the inadequacies and vagaries of language which so often disguise instead of expressing thought, and lead to the most terrible disputes just where men seek to be most definite. If we could dedicate one articulate expression to every possible idea, we should no longer be continually called to litigate on the meanings of creeds and documents, and even verbal statements.

But when we had attained all this, we should have surrendered all the occupation of conjecture and all the charms of mystery; we should have parted with all poetry and all *jeux d'esprit*. If knowledge was so positive and language so precise that misunderstanding had no existence, then neither could we indulge in metaphor nor *égayer la matière* with any play on words. In fact, there would be nothing left to say at all!

Perhaps the price could not be too high; but in the meantime we have to deal with circumstances as they are. We cannot suppress mythology, or make it non-existent by ignoring it. It exists, and we may as well see what we can make of it, either as a study or a recreation. Conjectures and fancies surround us like thistles and roses; and as brains won't stand the wear of being

ceaselessly carded with the thistles of conjecture, we may take refuge in the alternative of amusing ourselves on a holiday tour with plucking the roses which old world fancy has planted – and planted nowhere more prolifically than in Tirol.

In speaking of Tirol as comparatively little opened up, I have not overlooked the publications of pioneers who have gone before. The pages of Inglis, though both interesting and appreciative, are unhappily almost forgotten, and they only treat quite incidentally of the people's traditions. But as it is the most salient points of any matter which must always arrest attention first, it has been chiefly the mountains of Tirol to which attention has hitherto been drawn. Besides the universally useful 'Murray' and others, very efficient guidance to them has of late years been afforded in the pages of 'Ball's Central Alps,' in some of the contributions to 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers,' in the various works of Messrs. Gilbert and Churchill; and now Miss A. B. Edwards has shown what even ladies may do among its Untrodden Peaks. The aspects of its scenery and character, for which it is my object on the other hand to claim attention, lie hidden among its Valleys, Trodden and Untrodden. And down in its Valleys it is that its traditions dwell.²

If the names of the Valleys of Tirol do not at present awaken in our mind stirring memories such as cling to other European

² Except the Legends of the Marmolata, which I have given in 'Household Stories from the Land of Hofer; or, Popular Myths of Tirol,' I hardly remember to have met any concerning its prominent heights.

routes whither our steps are invited, ours is the fault, in that we have overlooked their history. The past has scattered liberally among them characteristic landmarks dating from every age, and far beyond the reach of dates. Every stage even of the geological formation of the country – which may almost boast of being in its courage and its probity, as it does boast of being in the shape in which it is fashioned, the heart of Europe – is sung of in popular *Sage* as the result of some poetically conceived agency; humdrum physical forces transformed by the wand of imagination into personal beings; now bountiful, now retributive; now loving; now terrible; but nearly always rational and just.

To the use of those who care to find such gleams of poetry thrown athwart Nature's work the following pages are dedicated. The traditions they record do not claim to have been all gathered at first hand from the stocks on which they were grown or grafted. A life, or several lives, would hardly have sufficed for the work. In Germany, unlike Italy, myths have called into being a whole race of collectors, and Tirol has an abundant share of them among her offspring. Not only have able and diligent sons devoted themselves professionally to the preservation of her traditions, but every valley nurtures appreciative minds to whom it is a delight to store them in silence, and who willingly discuss such lore with the traveller who has a taste for it.

That a foreigner should attempt to add another to these very full, if not exhaustive collections, would seem an impertinent labour of supererogation. My work, therefore, has been to collate

and arrange those traditions which have been given me, or which I have found ready heaped up; to select from the exuberant mass those which, for one reason or another, appeared to possess the most considerable interest; and to localise them in such a way as to facilitate their study both by myself and others along the wayside; not neglecting, however, any opportunity that has come in my way of conversing about them with the people themselves, and so meeting them again, living, as it were, in their respective homes. This task, as far as I know, has not been performed by any native writer.³

The names of the collectors I have followed are, to all who know the country, the best possible guarantee of the authenticity of what they advance; and I subjoin here a list of the chief works I have either studied myself or referred to, through the medium of kind helpers in Tirol, so as not to weary the reader as well as myself with references in every chapter: —

Von Alpenburg: Mythen und Sagen Tirols.

Brandis: Ehrenkränzel Tirols.

H. J. von Collin: Kaiser Max auf der Martinswand: ein Gedicht.

Das Drama des Mittelalters in Tirol. A. Pickler.

Hormayr: Taschenbuch für die Vaterländische Geschichte.

Meyer: Sagenkränzlein aus Tirol.

Nork: Die Mythologie der Volkssagen und

³ I published much of the matter of the following pages in the first instance in the *Monthly Packet*, and I have to thank the Editor for my present use of them.

Volksmärchen.

Die Oswaldlegende und ihre Beziehung auf Deutscher Mythologie.

Oswald v. Wolkenstein: Gedichte. Reprint, with introduction by Weber.

Perini: I Castelli del Tirol.

Der Pilger durch Tirol; geschichtliche und topographische Beschreibung der Wallfahrtsorte u. Gnadenbilder in Tirol u. Vorarlberg.

A. Pickler: Frühlieder aus Tirol.

Scherer: Geographie und Geschichte von Tirol.

Simrock: Legenden.

Schneller: Märchen und Sagen aus Wälsch-Tirol.

Stafler: Das Deutsche Tirol und Vorarlberg.

Die Sage von Kaiser Max auf der Martinswand.

J. Thaler: Geschichte Tirols von der Urzeit.

Der Untersberg bei Salzburg, dessen geheimnissvolle Sagen der Vorzeit, nebst Beschreibung dieses Wunderberges.

Vonbun: Sagen Vorarlbergs.

Weber: Das Land Tirol. Drei Bänder.

Zingerle: König Laurin, oder der Rosengarten in Tirol. Die Sagen von Margaretha der Maultasche. Sagen, Märchen u. Gebräuche aus Tirol. Der berühmte Landwirth Andreas Hofer.

I hope my little maps will convey a sufficient notion of the divisions of Tirol, the position of its valleys and of the routes through them tracked in the following pages. I have been desirous

to crowd them as little as possible, and to indicate as far as may be, by the size and direction of the words, the direction and the relative importance of the valleys.

Of its four divisions the present volume is concerned with the first (Vorarlberg), the fourth (Wälsch-Tirol), and with the greater part of the valleys of the second (Nord or Deutsch-Tirol.) In the remoter recesses of them all some strange and peculiar dialects linger, which perhaps hold a mine in store for the philologist. Yet, though the belief was expressed more than thirty years ago⁴ that they might serve as a key to the Etruscan language, I believe no one has since been at the pains to pursue this most interesting research. In the hope of inducing some one to enter this field of enquiry, I will subjoin a list of some few expressions which do not carry on their face a striking resemblance to either of the main languages of the country, leaving to the better-informed to make out whence they come. The two main languages (and these will suffice the ordinary traveller for all practical purposes), are German in Vorarlberg and North Tirol, Italian in Wälsch-Tirol, mixed with occasional patches of German; and in South-Tirol with a considerable preponderance of these patches. A tendency to bring about the absorption of the Italian-speaking valleys into Italy has been much stimulated in modern times, and in the various troubled epochs of the last five-and-twenty years

⁴ See Steub 'Über die Urbewohner Rätians und ihren Zusammenhang mit den Etruskern. München, 1843,' quoted in Dennis' *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*, I. Preface, p. xlv.

Garibaldian attacks have been made upon the frontier line. The population was found stedfast in its loyalty to Austria, however, and all these attempts were repulsed by the native sharp-shooters, with little assistance from the regular troops. An active club and newspaper propagandism is still going on, promoted by those who would obliterate Austria from the map of Europe. For them, there exists only German-Tirol and the Trentino. And the Trentino is now frequently spoken of as a province bordering on, instead of as in reality, a division of, Tirol.

Although German is generally spoken throughout Vorarlberg, there is a mixture of Italian expressions in the language of the people, which does not occur at all in North-Tirol: as *fazanedle*, for a handkerchief (Ital. *fazzoletto*.)

gaude, gladness (Ital. *gaudio*.)

guttera, a bottle (Ital. *gutto* a cruet.)

gespusa, a bride (Ital. *sposa*).

gouter, a counterpane (Ital. *coltre*).

schapel, the hat (peculiar to local costume), (Ital. *cappello*, a hat).

The *k* in many German words is here written with *ch*; and no doubt such names as the Walgau, Walserthal, &c., commemorate periods of Venetian rule.

Now for some of the more 'outlandish' words: —

baschga' (the final *n*, *en*, *rn*, &c. of the German form of the infinitive is usually clipped by the Vorarlbergers, even in German words, just as the Italians constantly clip the final

letters of their infinitive, as *anda'* and *andar'* for *andare*, to walk, &c.) to overcome.

batta', to serve.

pütze' or *buetza'*, to sew or to piece.

häss, clothing.

res, speech.

tobel, a ravine.

feel, a girl; *spudel*, an active girl; *schmel*, a smiling girl.

hattel, a goat; *mütl*, a kid.

Atti,⁵ father, and *datti*, 'daddy.'

frei, pleasant.

zoana, a wattled basket.

schlutta and *schoope*, a smock-frock.

täibe, anger.

kîba', to strive.

rêra', to weep.⁶

musper, merry.

tribiliera', to constrain.

waedle, swift.

raetig werden, to deliberate.

Tripstrüll, = Utopia.

wech, spruce, also vain.

laegla, a little vessel.

hengest, a friendly gathering of men.⁷

⁵ See it in use below, p. 28, and comp. *Etruscan Res.* p. 302, note.

⁶ Somewhat like *pleurer*. A good many words are like French, as *gutschle*, a settle (couche); *schesa*, a gig; and *gespusa*, mentioned above, is like *épouse*; and *au*, for water, is common over N. Tirol, as well as Vorarlberg, e. g. *infra*, pp. 24, 111. &c.

⁷ Comp. *Etrus. Res.* 339–41.

koga, cursed, also corrupted.

fegga, a wing.

krom, a gift.

blaetz, a patch.

grind, a brute's head, a jolterhead.

bratza, a paw, an ugly hand.

briegga', to pucker up the face ready for crying.

deihja, a shepherd's or cattle-herd's hut.⁸

also *dieja*, which is generally reserved for a hut formed by taking advantage of a natural hole, leaving only a roof to be supplied.

garreg, prominent. (I *think* that *gareggiate* in Italian is sometimes used in a similar sense.)

Other words in Vorarlberg dialect are very like English, as: —

Witsch, a witch.

Pfülle, a pillow.

rôt, wrath.

gompa', to jump.

güllä, a gulley.

also *datti* and *schmel*, mentioned already.

Aftermötig (after-Monday) is a local name for Tuesday.

In Wälsch-Tirol, they have *carega*, a chair.

bagherle, a little carriage, a car.

troz, a mountain path.

⁸ Several places have received their name from having grown round such a hut; some of these occur outside Vorarlberg, as for instance Kùhthei near St. Sigismund (*infra*, p. 331) in the Lisenthal, and Niederthei in the Ætzthal.

Malga,⁹ equivalent to Alp, a mountain pasture.

zufolo,¹⁰ a pipe.

And *Turlulù* (*infra*, p. 432) is nearly identical in form and sound with a word expounded in *Etrus. Researches*, p. 299.

Of ‘*Salvan*’ and ‘*Gannes*,’ I have already spoken.¹¹

But all this is, I am aware, but a mere turning over of the surface; my only wish is that some one of stronger capacity will dig deeper. Of many dialects, too, I have had no opportunity of knowing anything at all. Here are, however, a few suggestive or strange words from North and South Tirol: —

Pill, which occurs in various localities¹² of both those provinces to designate a place built on a little hill or knoll, is identical with an Etruscan word to which Mr. Isaac Taylor gives a similar significance.¹³ I do not overlook Weber’s observation that ‘Pill is obviously a corruption of *Büchel* (the German for a knoll), through *Bühel* and *Bühl*,’ but, which proceeds from which is often a knotty point in questions of derivation, and Weber did not know of the Etruscan ‘pil.’

Ziller and *celer* I have already alluded to,¹⁴ though of course it

⁹ Comp. *ma* = earth, land, *Etrus. Res.* pp. 121, 285.

¹⁰ Comp. *subulo*, *Etrus. Res.* 324. Dennis i. 339.

¹¹ *Infra*, p. 411.

¹² See e.g., *infra*, p. 202.

¹³ *Etrus. Res.* p. 330.

¹⁴ P. 79.

may be said that the Tirolean river had its name from an already romanised Etruscan word, and does not necessarily involve direct contact with the Etruscan vocabulary.

Grau-wutzl is a name in the Zillerthal for the Devil.

Disel, for disease of any kind.

Gigl, a sheep.

Kiess, a heifer.

Triel, a lip.

Bueg, a leg.

knospen stands in South-Tirol for wooden shoes, and *fokazie* for cakes used at Eastertide. (*Focaccia* is used for 'cake' in many parts of Italy, and 'dar pan per focaccia' is equivalent to 'tit for tat' all over the Peninsula.)

It remains only to excuse myself for the spelling of the word Tirol. I have no wish to incur the charge of 'pedantry' which has heretofore been laid on me for so writing it. It seems to me that, in the absence of any glaring mis-derivation, it is most natural to adopt a country's own nomenclature; and in Tirol, or by Tirolean writers, I have never seen the name spelt with a y. I have not been able to get nearer its derivation than that the Castle above Meran, which gave it to the whole principality, was called by the Romans, when they rebuilt it, Teriolis. Why they called it so, or what it was called before, I have not been able to learn. The English use of the definite article in naming Tirol is more difficult to account for than the adoption of the y, in which we seem to have been misled by the Germans. We do not

say '*the* France' or '*the* Italy;' even to accommodate ourselves to the genius of the languages of those countries, therefore, that we should have gone out of our way to say '*the* Tyrol' when the genius of that country's language does *not* require us so to call it, can have arisen only from a piece of carelessness which there is no need to repeat.

CHAPTER I.

VORARLBERG

... Everywhere

Fable and Truth have shed, in rivalry,

Each her peculiar influence. Fable came,

And laughed and sang, arraying Truth in flowers,

Like a young child her grandam. Fable came,

Earth, sea, and sky reflecting, as she flew,

A thousand, thousand colours not their own. —

Rogers.

‘Traditions, myths, legends! what is the use of recording and propagating the follies and superstitions of a bygone period, which it is the boast of our modern enlightenment to have cast to the winds?’

Such is the hasty exclamation which allusion to these fantastic matters very frequently elicits. With many they find no favour because they seem to yield no profit; nay, rather to set up a hindrance in the way of progress and culture.

Yet, on the other hand, in spite of their seeming foolishness, they have worked themselves into favour with very various classes of readers and students. There is an audacity in their imagery which no mere sensation-writer could attempt without falling Phaeton-like from his height; and they plunge us so hardily into a world of their own, so preposterous and so unlike

ours, while all the time describing it in a language we can understand without effort, that no one who seeks occasional relief from modern monotony but must experience refreshment in the weird excursions their jaunty will-o'the-wisp dance leads him. But more than this; their sportive fancy has not only charmed the dilettante; they have revealed that they hold inherent in them mysteries which have extorted the study of deep and able thinkers, one of whom¹⁵ insisted, now some years ago, that 'by this time the study of popular tales has become a recognized branch of the studies of mankind;' while important and erudite treatises from his own pen and that of others¹⁶ have elevated it further from a study to a science.

All who love poetry and art, as well as all who are interested in the study of languages or races, all who have any care concerning the stirrings of the human mind in its search after the supernatural and the infinite, must confess to standing largely in debt, in the absence of more positive records of the earliest phases of thought, to these various mythologies.

Karl Blind, in a recent paper on 'German Mythology,'¹⁷ draws attention to some interesting considerations why the Germanic traditions, which we chiefly meet with in Tirol, should have a fascination for us in this country, in the points of contact they present with our language and customs. Not content with

¹⁵ Professor Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*.

¹⁶ Rev. G. W. Cox, Prof. De Gubernatis, Dr. Dasent, &c.

¹⁷ In the *Contemporary Review* for March 1874.

reckoning that ‘in the words of the Rev. Isaac Taylor we have obtruded on our notice the names of the deities who were worshipped by the Germanic races’ on every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of our lives, as we all know, he would even find the origin of ‘Saturday’ in the name of a god “Sætere” hidden, (a malicious deity whose name is but an *alias* for Loki,) of whom, it is recorded, that once at a great banquet he so insulted all the heavenly rulers that they chained him, Prometheus-like, to a rock, and made a serpent trickle down its venom upon his face. His faithful wife Sigyn held a cup over him to prevent the venom reaching his face, but whenever she turned away to empty the cup his convulsive pains were such that the earth shook and trembled... Few people now-a-days, when pronouncing the simple word “Saturday,” think or know of this weird and pathetic myth.¹⁸... When we go to Athens we easily think of the Greek goddess Athene, when we go to Rome we are reminded of Romulus its mythic founder. But when we go to Dewerstone in Devonshire, to Dewsbury in Yorkshire, to Tewesley in Surrey, to Great Tew in Oxfordshire, to Tewen in Herefordshire – have a great many of us even an inkling that these are places once sacred to Tiu, the Saxon Mars? When we got to Wednesbury, to Wanborough, to Woodnesborough, to Wembury, to Wanstrow, to Wanslike, to Woden Hill, we visit localities where the Great Spirit Wodan was

¹⁸ Mr. Cox had pointed it out before him, however, and more fully, *Mythology of the Aryan Nations*, ii. 200.

once worshipped. So also we meet with the name of the God of Thunder in Thudersfield, Thundersleigh, Thursleigh, Thurscross, Thursby, and Thurso. The German Venus Freia is traceable in Fridaythorpe and Frathorpe, in Fraisthorpe and Freasley. Her son was Baldur, also called Phol or Pol, the sweet god of peace and light; his name comes out at Balderby, Balderton, Polbrook, Polstead and Polsden. Sætere is probably hidden in Satterleigh and Satterthwaite; Ostara or Eostre, the Easter goddess of Spring, appears in two Essex parishes, Good Easter and High Easter, in Easterford, Easterlake and Eastermear. Again Hel, the gloomy mistress of the underworld, has given her name to Hellifield, Hellathyrne, Helwith, Healeys and Helagh – all places in Yorkshire, where people seem to have had a particular fancy for that dark and grimy deity. Then we have Asgardby and Aysgarth, places reminding us of Asgard, the celestial garden or castle of the Æsir – the Germanic Olympus. And these instances might be multiplied by the hundred, so full is England to this day of the vestiges of Germanic mythology. Far more important is the fact that in this country, just as in Germany, we find current folk-lore; and quaint customs and superstitious beliefs affecting the daily life, which are remnants of the ancient creed. A rime apparently so bereft of sense as

Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home!
Thy house is on fire!
Thy children at home!

can be proved to refer to a belief of our forefathers in the coming downfall of the universe by a great conflagration. The ladybird has its name from having been sacred to our Lady Freia. The words addressed to the insect were once an incantation – an appeal to the goddess for the protection of the soul of the unborn, over whom in her heavenly abode she was supposed to keep watch and ward, and whom she is asked to shield from the fire that consumes the world... If we ever wean men from the crude notions that haunt them, and yet promote the enjoyment of fancies which serve as embellishing garlands for the rude realities of life, we cannot do better than promote a fuller scientific knowledge of that circle of ideas in which those moved who moulded our very speech. We feel delight in the conceptions of the Greek Olympus. Painters and poets still go back to that old fountain of fancy. Why should we not seek for similar delight in studying the figures of the Germanic Pantheon, and the rich folk-lore connected with them? Why should that powerful Bible of the Norse religion, which contains such a wealth of striking ideas and descriptions in language the most picturesque, not be as much perused as the Iliad, the Odyssey, or the Æneid? Is it too much to say that many even of those who know of the Koran, of the precepts of Kou-fu-tsi and of Buddha, of the Zendavesta and the Vedas, have but the dimmest notion of that grand Germanic Scripture?..

‘Can it be said that there is a lack of poetical conception in the figure of Wodan or Odin, the hoary ruler of the winds and

the clouds, who, clad in a flowing mantle, careers through the sky on a milk-white horse, from whose nostrils fire issues, and who is followed at night by a retinue of heroic warriors whom he leads into the golden shield-adorned Walhalla? Is there a want of artistic delineation in Freia – an Aphrodite and Venus combined, who changes darkness into light wherever she appears – the goddess with the streaming golden locks and siren voice, who hovers in her sun-white robe between heaven and earth, making flowers sprout along her path and planting irresistible longings in the hearts of men? Do we not see in bold and well-marked outline the figure of the red-bearded, steel-handed Thor, who rolls along the sky in his goat-drawn car, and who smites the mountain giants with his magic hammer? Are these mere spectres without distinct contour?.. are they not, even in their uncouth passions, the representatives of a primitive race, in which the pulse throbs with youthful freshness? Or need I allude to that fantastic theory of minor deities, of fairies and wood-women, and elfin and pixies and cobolds, that have been evolved out of all the forces of Nature by the Teutonic mind, and before whose bustling crowd even Hellenic imagination pales?

‘Then what a dramatic power has the Germanic mythology! The gods of classic antiquity have been compared to so many statues ranged along a stately edifice ... in the Germanic view all is active struggle, dramatic contest, with a deep dark background of inevitable fate that controls alike gods and men.’

Such are the Beings whom we meet wandering all over Tirol;

transformed often into new personalities, invested with new attributes and supplemented with many a mysterious companion, the offspring of an imagination informed by another order of thought, but all of them more living, and more readily to be met with, than in any part of wonder-loving Germany itself.

Apart from their mythological value, how large is the debt we owe to legends and traditions in building up our very civilization. Their influence on art is apparent, from the earliest sculptured stones unearthed in India or Etruria to the latest breathing of symbolism in the very reproductions of our own day. In poetry, no less a master than Dante lamented that their influence was waning at the very period ascribed a few years ago as the date of their taking rise. Extolling the simpler pursuits and pleasures of his people at a more primitive date than his own, 'One by the crib kept watch,' he says, 'studious to still the infant plaint with words which erst the parents' minds diverted; another, the flaxen maze upon the distaff twirling, recounted to her household, tales of Troy, Fiesole, and Rome.'¹⁹ Their work is patent in his own undying pages, and in those of all true poets before and since.

Besides all this, have they not preserved to us, as in a registering mirror, the manners and habits of thought of the ages preceding ours? Have they not served to record as well as to mould the noblest aspirations of those who have gone before?

¹⁹ L'una vegghiava a studio della culla, E consolando usava l'idioma, Che pria li padri e le madri trastulla: L'altra traendo alla rocca la chioma Favoleggiava con la sua famiglia De' Troiani, e di Fiesole, e di Roma. Dante. Paradiso, xv. 120 5.

‘What are they,’ asks an elegant Italian writer of the present day,²⁰ treating, however, only of the traditions of the earliest epoch of Christianity, ‘but narratives woven beside the chimney, under the tent, during the halt of the caravan, embodying as in a lively picture the popular customs of the apostolic ages, the interior life of the rising (*nascente*) Christian society? In them we have a delightful opportunity of seeing stereotyped the great transformation and the rich source of ideas and sentiments which the new belief opened up, to illuminate the common people in their huts no less than the patricians in their palaces. Those even who do not please to believe the facts they expose are afforded a genuine view of the habits of life, the manner of speaking and behaving – all that expresses and paints the erudition of those men and of those times. Thus, it may be affirmed, they comment beautifully on the Gospels, and in the midst of fables is grafted a great abundance of truth.

‘If we would investigate the cause of their multiplication, and of the favour with which they were received from the earliest times, we shall find it to consist chiefly in the need and love of the marvellous which governed the new society, notwithstanding the severity of its dogmas. Neophytes snatched from the superstitions of paganism would not have been able all at once to suppress every inclination for poetical fables. They needed another food according to their fancy. And indeed were they not great marvels (though of another order from those to

²⁰ Tullio Dandolo.

which they were accustomed) which were narrated to them? The aggregate mass was, however, increased by the way in which they lived and the scarcity of communication; every uncertain rumour was thus readily dressed up in the form of a wonderful fact.

‘Again, dogmatic and historical teaching continued long to be oral; so that when an apostle, or the apostle of an apostle, arrived in any city and chained the interest of the faithful with a narration of the acts of Jesus he had himself witnessed or received from the personal narrative of witnesses, his words ran along from mouth to mouth, and each repeater added something, suggested by his faith or by his heart. In this way his teaching constituted itself into a legend, which in the end was no longer the narrative of one, but the expression of the faith of all.

‘Thus whoever looks at legends only as isolated productions of a period most worthy of study, without attending to the influence they exercised on later epochs, must even so hold them in account as literary monuments of great moment.’

Nor is this the case only with the earliest legends. The popular mind in all ages has evinced a necessity for filling up all blanks in the histories of its heroes. The probable, and even the merely possible, is idealized; what *might have been* is reckoned *to have* happened; the logical deductions as to what a favourite saint or cobbold *ought to have* done, according to certain fixed principles of action previously ascribed to his nature, are taken to be the very acts he did perform; and thus, even those traditions which are the most transparently human in their origin, have served to

show reflected in action the virtues and perfections which it is the boast of religion to inculcate.

A Flemish writer on Spanish traditions similarly remarks, 'Peoples who are cut off from the rest of the world by such boundaries as seas, mountains, or wastes, by reason of the difficulty of communication thus occasioned, are driven to concentrate their attention to local events; and in their many idle hours they work up their myths and tales into poems, which stand them in stead of books, and, in fact, constitute a literature.'²¹

Europe possesses in Tirol one little country at least in whose mountain fastnesses a store of these treasures not only lies enshrined, but where we may yet see it in request. Primitive and unsophisticated tillers of the soil, accustomed to watch as a yearly miracle the welling up of its fruits, and to depend for their hopes of subsistence on the sun and rain in the hand of their Creator, its children have not yet acquired the independence of thought and the habit of referring all events to natural causes, which is generated by those industries of production to which the human agent appears to be all in all. Among them we have the opportunity of seeing these expositions of the supernatural, at home as it were in their contemporary life, supplying a representation of what has gone before, only to be compared to the revelations of deep-cut strata to the geologist, and the unearthing of buried cities to the student of history. It is further satisfactory to find that, in spite of our repugnance

²¹ Depping, *Romancero*, *Preface*.

to superstition, this unreasoning realization of the supernatural has in no way deteriorated the people. Their public virtues, seen in their indomitable devotion to their country, have been conspicuous in all ages, no less than their heroic labours in grappling with the obstacles of soil and climate; while all who have visited them concur in bearing testimony to their possession of sterling homely qualities, frugality, morality, hospitality; and, for that which is of most importance to the tourist, all who have been among them will bear witness to the justice of the remark in the latest Guide-book, that, except just in the more cultivated centres of Innsbruck, Brixen, and Botzen, you need take no thought among the Tiroleans concerning the calls on your purse.

My first acquaintance with Tirol was made at Feldkirch, where I had to pay somewhat dearly for my love of the legendary and the primitive. Our plan for the autumn was to join a party of friends from Italy at Innsbruck, spend some months of long-promised enjoyment in exploring Tirol, and return together to winter in Rome. The arrangements of the journey had been left to me; and as I delight in getting beyond railways and travelling in a conveyance whose pace and hours are more under one's own control, I traced our road through France to Bâle, and then by way of Zurich and Rorschach and Oberriet to Feldkirch (which I knew to be a post-station) as a base of operations, for leisurely threading our mountain way through Bludenz and Landeck and the intervening valleys to Innsbruck.

How our plan was thwarted²² I will relate presently. I still recommend this line of route to others less encumbered with luggage, as leading through out-of-the-way and unfrequented places. The projected railway between Feldkirch and Innsbruck is now completed as far as Bludenz; and Feldkirch is reached direct by the new junction with the Rorschach-Chur railway at Buchsstation.²³

Feldkirch affords excursions, accessible for all, to the Margarethenkapf and the St. Veitskapf, from either of which a glorious view is to be enjoyed. The latter commands the stern gorges through which the Ill makes its final struggles before losing its identity in the Rhine – struggles which are often terrific and devastating, for every few years it carries down a whole torrent of pebbles for many days together. The former overlooks the more smiling tracts we traversed in our forced march, locally called the Ardetzen, hemmed in by noble mountain peaks. Then its fortifications, intended at one time to make it a strong border town against Switzerland, have left some few picturesque remains, and in particular the so-called Katzenturm, named from certain clumsy weapons styled ‘cat’s head guns,’ which once defended it, and which were ultimately melted down to make a chime of peaceful bells. And then it has two or three

²² The usual fate of relying on Road-books. Ours, I forget whether Amthor’s or Trautwein’s, said there was regular communication between Oberriet and Feldkirch, and nothing could be further from the fact, as will be seen a few pages later.

²³ If Pfäfers is visited by rail (see p. 23), it is convenient to take it before Feldkirch.

churches to which peculiar legends attach. Not the least curious of these is that of St. Fidelis, a local saint, whose cultus sprang up as late as the year 1622, when he was laid in wait for and assassinated by certain fanatical reprobates, whose consciences his earnest preaching had disturbed. He was declared a martyr, and canonized at Rome in 1746. The sword with which he was put to death, the bier on which his body was carried back into the town, and other things belonging to him, are venerated as relics. About eight miles outside the town another saint is venerated with a precisely similar history, but dating from the year 844. This is St. Eusebius, one of a band of Scotch missionaries, who founded a monastery there called Victorsberg, the oldest foundation in all Vorarlberg. St. Eusebius, returning from a pilgrimage one day, lay down to sleep in this neighbourhood, being overtaken by the darkness of night. Heathen peasants, who had resisted his attempts at converting them, going out early in the morning to mow, found him lying on the ground, and one of them cut off his head with his scythe. To their astonishment the decapitated body rose to its feet, and, taking up the head in its hands, walked straight to the door of the monastery, where the brethren took it in and laid it to rest in the churchyard. A little further (reached most conveniently by a by-path off the road near Altenstadt, mentioned below,) is Rankweil. In the church on Our Lady's Mount (Frauenberg) is a little chapel on the north side, where a reddish stone is preserved (*Der rothe Stein in der Fridolinskapelle*), of which the following story is told. St. Fridolin

was a Scotch missionary in the seventh century, and among other religious houses had founded one at Mösigen. Two noblemen of this neighbourhood (brothers) held him in great respect, and before dying, one of them, Ursus by name, endowed the convent with all his worldly goods. Sandolf, the other, who did not carry his admiration of the saint to so great a length as to renounce his brother's rich inheritance, disputed the possession, and it was decided that Fridolin must give it up unless he could produce the testimony of the donor. Fridolin went in faith to Glarus, where Ursus had been buried two years before. At his call the dead man rose to his feet, and pushing the grave-stone aside, walked, hand-in-hand, with his friend back to Rankweil, where he not only substantiated Fridolin's statements, but so effectually frightened his brother that he immediately added to the gift all his own possessions also. But the story says that when the judgment requiring him to produce the testimony of the dead was first given, Fridolin went to pray in the chapel of Rankweil, and there a shining being appeared to him, and told him to go to Glarus and call Ursus; and as he spoke Fridolin's knees sank into the 'red stone,' making the marks now seen.²⁴

The reason given why this hill is called Our Lady's Mound is, that on it once stood a fortress called Schönberg. Schönberg having been burnt down, its owner, the knight of Hörnlingen, set about rebuilding it; but whatever work his workmen did in the

²⁴ See further quaint details and historical particulars in Vonbun, *Sagen Vorarlbergs*, p. 103–5.

day-time, was destroyed by invisible hands during the night. A pious old workman, too, used to hear a mysterious voice saying that instead of a fortress they should build a sanctuary in honour of the mother of God. The knight yielded to the commands of the voice, and the church was built out of the ruins of his castle. In this church, too, is preserved a singular antique cross, studded with coloured glass gems, which the people venerate because it was brought down to them by the mountain stream. It is obviously of very ancient workmanship, and an inscription records that it was *repaired* in 1347.

Winding round the mountain path which from Rankweil runs behind Feldkirch to Satteins, the convent of Valduna is reached; and the origin of this sanctuary is ascribed to a legend, of which counterparts crop up in various places, of a hermit who passed half a life within a hollow tree,²⁵ and acquired the lasting veneration of the neighbouring people.

Another mountain sanctuary which received its veneration from the memory of a tree-hermit, is S. Gerold, situated on a little elevation below the Hoch Gerach, about seven miles on the east side of Feldkirch. It dates from the tenth century. Count Otho, Lord of Sax in the Rhinethal, was out hunting, when the bear to which he was giving chase sought refuge at the foot of an old oak tree, whither his dogs durst not follow it. Living as a hermit within this oak tree Count Otho found his long lost father, S. Gerold, who years before had forsaken his throne and found

²⁵ Vonbun, pp. 113–4.

there a life of contemplation in the wild.²⁶ The tomb of the saint and his two sons is to be seen in the church, and some curious frescoes with the story of his adventures.

Another way to be recommended for entering Vorarlberg is by crossing Lake Constance from Rorschach to Lindau, a very pleasant trajet of about two hours in the tolerably well-appointed, but not very swift lake-steamers. Lindau itself is a charming old place, formed out of three islands on the edge of the lake; but as it is outside the border of Tirol, I will only note in favour of the honesty of its inhabitants, that I saw a tree laden with remarkably fine ripe pears overhanging a wall in the principal street, and no street-boy raised a hand to them.

The first town in Tirol by this route is Bregenz, which reckons as the capital of Vorarlberg. It may be reached by boat in less than half an hour. It is well situated at the foot of the Gebhartsberg, which affords a most delightful, and in Tirol widely celebrated, view over Lake Constance and the Appenzel mountains and the rapid Rhine between; and here, at either the Post Hotel or the Black Eagle, there is no lack of carriages for reaching Feldkirch. Bregenz deserves to be remembered as the birth-place of one of the best modern painters of the Munich-Roman school, Flatz, who I believe, spends much of his time there.

Among the objects of interest in Bregenz are the Capuchin Convent, situated on a wooded peak of the Gebhardsberg, founded in 1636; on another peak, S. Gebhard auf dem

²⁶ Historical particulars in Vonbun, pp. 110–1.

Pfannenberge, called after a bishop of Constance, who preached the Christian faith in the neighbourhood, and was martyred. Bregenz has an ancient history and high lineage. Its lords, who were powerful throughout the Middle Ages, were of sufficiently high estate at the time of Charlemagne that he should take Hildegard, the daughter of one of them, to be his wife, and there is a highly poetical popular tale about her. Taland (a favourite name in Vorarlberg) was a suitor who had, with jealous eye, seen her given to the powerful Emperor, and in the bitterness of his rejected affection, so calumniated her to Charlemagne, that he repudiated her and married Desiderata, the Lombard princess.²⁷ Hildegard accepted her trial with angelic resignation, and devoted her life to tending pilgrims at Rome. Meantime Taland, stricken with blindness, came to Rome in penitential pilgrimage, where he fell under the charitable care of Hildegard. Hildegard's saintly handling restored his sight – not only that of his bodily eyes, but also his moral perception of truth and falsehood. In reparation for the evil he had done, he now led her back to Charlemagne, confessed all, and she was once more restored to favour and honour. Bregenz has also another analogous and equally beautiful legend. One of its later counts, Ulrich V., was supposed by his people to have died in war in Hungary, about the year 916. Wendelgard, his wife, devoted her widowhood to the cloistral life, but took the veil under the condition that she should every year hold a popular festival and

²⁷ Vonbun, pp. 86–7.

distribution of alms in memory of her husband. On the fourth anniversary, as she was distributing her bounty, a pilgrim came forward who allowed himself the liberty of kissing the hand which bestowed the dole. Wendelgard's indignation was changed into delight when she recognized that the audaciously gallant pilgrim was no other than her own lord, who, having succeeded in delivering himself from captivity, had elected to make himself thus known to her. Salomo, Bishop of Constance, dispensed her from her vow, and Ulrich passed the remainder of his life at Bregenz by her side. Another celebrated worthy of Bregenz, whose name must not be passed over, is 'Ehreguota' or 'Ehre Guta,' a name still dear to every peasant of Vorarlberg, and which has perpetuated itself in the appellation of Hergotha, a favourite Christian name there to the present day. She was a poor beggar-woman really named Guta, whose sagacity and courage delivered her country people from an attack of the Appenzell folk, to which they had nearly succumbed in the year 1408; it was the 'honour' paid her by her patriotic friends that added the byname of 'Ehre,' and made them erect a monument to her. One of the variants of the story makes her, instead of a beggar-woman, the beautiful young bride of Count Wilhelm of Montfort-Bregenz; some have further sought to identify her with the goddess Epona.

Pursuing the journey southwards towards Feldkirch, every step is full of natural beauty and legendary interest. At first leaving Bregenz you have to part company with Lake Constance, and leave in the right hand distance the ruins of Castle Fussach.

On the left is Riedenberg, which, if not great architecturally, is interesting as a highly useful institution, under the fostering care of the present Empress of Austria, for the education of girls belonging to families of a superior class with restricted means. From Fussach the road runs parallel to the Rhine; there is a shorter road by Dornbirn, but less interesting, which joins it again at Götzis, near Hohenembs. The two roads separate before Fussach at Wolfurth, where there is an interesting chapel, the bourne of a pilgrimage worth making if only for the view over the lake. The country between S. John Höchst and Lustenau is much frequented in autumn for the sake of the shooting afforded by the wild birds which haunt its secluded recesses on the banks of the Rhine at that season. At Lustenau there is a ferry over the Rhine.

The favourite saints of this part of the country are Merboth, Diedo, and Ilga – two brothers and a sister of a noble family, hermit-apostles and martyrs of the eleventh century. Ilga established her hermit-cell in the Schwarzenberg, just over Dornbirn, where not only all dainty food, but even water, was wanting. The people of Dornbirn also wanted water; and though she had not asked the boon for herself, she asked it for her people, and obtained from the hard rock, a miraculous spring of sparkling water which even the winter cold could not freeze. Ilga used to fetch this water for her own use, and carry it up the mountain paths *in her apron*. One day she spilt some of it on the rock near her cell on her arrival, and see! as it touched the rock,

the rock responded to the appeal, and from out there flowed a corresponding stream, which has never ceased to flow to this day.

The most important and interesting spot between Bregenz and Feldkirch, is Embs or Hohenembs, with its grand situation, its picturesque buildings and its two ruined castles, which though distinguished as Alt and Neu Hohenembs, do not display at first sight any very great disparity of age; both repay a visit, but the view from Alt Hohenembs is the finer. The virtues and bravery of the lords of Hohenembs have been duly chronicled. James Von Embs served by the side of the chevalier Bayard in the battle of Ravenna, and having at the first onset received his death wound, raised himself up again to pour out his last breath in crying to his men, 'The King of France has been our fair ally, let us serve him bravely this day!' His grandson, who was curiously enough christened James Hannibal, was the first Count of Embs, and his descendants often figure in records of the wars of the Austrian Empire, particularly in those connected with the famous Schmalkaldischer Krieg, and are now merged in the family of Count Harrach.

The 'Swiss embroidery' industry here crosses the Rhine, and, in the female gatherings which it occasions, as in the 'Filo' of the south, many local chronicles and legends are, or at least have been, perpetuated.

In the parish church, I have been told by a traveller, that the cardinal's hat of S. Charles Borromeo is preserved, though why it should be so I cannot tell; and I think I have myself had it shown

me both at Milan and, if I mistake not, also at the church in Rome whence he had his 'title.'

The ascent to Neu Hohenembs has sufficient difficulty and danger for the unpractised pedestrian to give it special interest, which the roaring of the waterfall tends to excite. A little way beyond it the water was formerly turned to the purpose of an Italian *pescheria* (or fish-preserve for the use of the castle), which is not now very well preserved. Further up still are the ruins of Alt Hohenembs. There are also prettily situated sulphur baths a little way out of the town, much frequented from June to September by the country people. It is curious that the Jews, who have never hitherto settled in large numbers in any part of Tirol, have here a synagogue; and I am told that it serves for nearly a hundred families scattered over the surrounding country, though there are not a dozen even at Innsbruck.

All I have met with of interest between this and Feldkirch, I have mentioned under the head of excursions from Feldkirch.

Stretching along the bank of the Rhine to the south of Feldkirch, is the little principality of Lichtenstein or Liechtenstein, a territory of some three square miles and a half in extent, which yet gives its possessor – lately by marriage made a member of English society – certain seignorial rights. The chief industry of the people is the Swiss embroidery. Vaduz, its chief town, is situated in its centre, and above it, in the midst of a thick wood, is the somewhat imposing and well kept up castle of Lichtenstein. Further south, overhanging the Rhine,

is Schloss Gutenberg, and beyond, a remarkable warm sulphur spring, which runs only in summer, at a temperature of 98° to 100° Fahrenheit; it is crowded by Swiss and Tiroleans from June to September, though unknown to the rest of the world.²⁸ It was discovered in the year 1240 by a chamois-hunter, and was soon after taken in charge by a colony of Benedictine monks, established close by at Pfäfers, who continued to entertain those who visited it until it was taken possession of by the Communal Council of Chur, and the monastery turned into a poor-house. The country round it is exceedingly wild and romantic, and there is a celebrated ravine called the Tamina-Schlund, of so-called immeasurable depth, where at certain hours of a sunny day a wonderful play of light is to be observed. Pfäfers is just outside the boundary of Tirol; the actual boundary line is formed by the Rhætian Alps, which are traversed by a pass called Luziensteig, after St. Lucius, 'first Christian king of Britain,' who, tradition says, preached the gospel to Lichtenstein.²⁹ The road from Feldkirch to Innsbruck first runs along the Illthal, which between Feldkirch and Bludenz is also called the Wallgau, and merges at Bludenz into the Walserthal on the left or north side. On the right or south side are the Montafonthal, Klosterthal, and Silberthal.

²⁸ It may also be reached by railway as it is but three or four miles from Ragatz, two stations beyond Buchs (p. 13).

²⁹ It has been suggested by an eminent comparative mythologist that it is natural *Lucius* should be said to have brought 'the Light of the Gospel' to men of *Licht-enstein*.

Soon after leaving Feldkirch the mountains narrow upon the road, which crosses the Ill at Felsenau, forming what is called the gorge of the Ill, near Frastanz. Round this terrible pass linger memories of one of the direst struggles for independence the Tiroleans ever waged. In 1499 the Swiss hosts were shown the inlet, through the mountains that so well protect Tirol, by a treacherous peasant whom their gold had bought.³⁰ A little shepherd lad seeing them advance, in his burning desire to save his country, blew such a call to arms upon his horn that he never desisted till he had blown all the breath out of his little body. The subsequent battle was fierce and determined; and when it slackened from loss of men, the women rushed in and fought with the bravest. So earnestly was the cause of those who fell felt to be the cause of all, that even to the present time the souls of those who were slain that day are remembered in the prayers said as the procession nears the spot when blessing the fields on Rogation-Wednesday. On the heights above Valduna are the striking ruins of a convent of Poor Clares, one of those abandoned at the fiat of Joseph II. It was founded on occasion of a hermit declaring he had often seen a beautiful angel sitting and singing enchantingly on the peak. Below is a tiny lake, which lends an additional charm to the tranquil beauty of the spot. The patron saint of the Walserthal is St. Joder or Theodul (local renderings of Theodoric), and his legend is most fantastic. St.

³⁰ The traitor was loaded with heavy armour and thrown over the Ill precipice. See Vonbun's parallel with the tradition of the Tarpeian rock, p. 99 n. 2.

Joder went to Rome to see the Pope; the Pope, in commendation of his zeal, gave him a fine bell for his church. Homewards went St. Joder with his bell, but when he came to the mountains it was more than he could manage, to drag the bell after him. What did he then do? He bethought him that he had, by his prayers and exorcisms, conjured the devil out of the valley where he had preached the faith, so why should not prayer and exorcism conjure him to carry the bell for the service of his faithful flock? If St. Joder's faith did not remove mountains it removed the obstacles they presented, and many a bit of rude carving in mountain chapels throughout the Walsertal shows a youthful saint, in rich episcopal vestments, leading by a chain, like a showman his bear, the arch enemy of souls, crouched and sweating under the weight of the bell whose holy tones are to sound his own ban.³¹

Bludenz retains some picturesque remnants of its old buildings. It belonged to the Counts of Sonnenberg, and hence it is said that it is often called by that name; but it is perhaps more probable that the height above Bludenz was called Sonnenberg, in contrast with Schattenberg, above Feldkirch, and that its lords derived their name from it. The story of the fidelity of Bludenz to Friedrich *mit der leeren Tasche*, I have narrated in another place.³²

³¹ Notably at Raggal, Sonntag, Damüls, Luterns, and also in Lichtenstein. – Vonbun, pp. 107–8.

³² *Infra*, Chapter viii., p. 238.

The valley of Montafon has for its arms the cross keys of St. Peter, in memory of a traditionary but anachronistic journey of Pope John XXIII. to the Council of Constance, in 1414.³³ In memory of the same journey a joy-peal is rung on every Wednesday throughout the year.

A little way south of Bludenz, down the Montafon valley, is a chapel on a little height called S. Anton, covering the spot where tradition says was once a mighty city called Prazalanz, destroyed by an avalanche. Near here is a tiny stream, of which the peasants tell the following story: – They say up the mountain lives a beautiful maiden, set to guard a treasure, and she can only be released when some one will thrice kiss a loathsome toad,³⁴ which has its place on the cover of the treasury, and the maiden feels assured no one will ever make the venture. She weeps evermore, and they call this streamlet the ‘Trächnabächle’ – the Tear-rill.

The valley of Montafon is further celebrated for its production of kirschwasser.

Opposite Dalaas is a striking peak, attaining an elevation of some 5,000 feet, called the Christberg. On the opposite side to Dalaas is a chapel of St. Agatha; in the days of the silver mining of Tirol, in the fifteenth century, silver was found in this neighbourhood. On one occasion a landslip imprisoned a number of miners in their workings. In terror at their threatened death,

³³ Vonbun, pp. 92–3.

³⁴ Some analogous cases quoted in *Sagas from the Far East*, pp. 365, 383–5.

they vowed that if help reached them in time, they would build a chapel on the spot to commemorate their deliverance. Help did reach them, and they kept their vow. The chapel is built into the living rock where this occurred, and a grey mark on the rock is pointed out as a supernatural token which cannot be effaced, to remind the people of the deliverance that took place there. It is reached from Dalaas by a terribly steep and rugged path, running over the Christberg, near the summit of which may be found, by those whom its hardships do not deter, another chapel, or wayside shrine, consisting of an image of the Blessed Virgin under a canopy, with an alcoved seat beneath it for the votary to rest in, called 'Das Bruederhüsle,' and this is the reason of its name: – The wife of a Count Tanberg gave birth to a dead child; in the fulness of their faith, the parents mourned that to the soul of their little one Christian baptism had been denied, more than the loss of their offspring. In pursuance of a custom then in vogue in parts of Tirol, if not elsewhere, the Count sent the body of the infant to be laid on the altar of St. Joseph, in the parish church, in the hope that at the intercession of the fosterfather of the Saviour it might revive for a sufficient interval to receive the sacrament of admission into the Christian family. The servant, however, instead of carrying his burden to the church at Schruns (in Montafonthal), finding himself weary by the time he had climbed up the Christberg, dug a grave, and buried it instead. The next year there was another infant, also born dead; this time the Count determined to carry it himself to the church, and by

the time he had toiled to the same spot he too was weary, and sat down to rest. As he sat he heard a little voice crying from under the ground, '*ätti, nüim mi' ô met!*'³⁵ The Count turned up the soil, and found the body of his last year's infant. Full of joy he carried both brothers to the altar of St. Joseph, at Schruns; here, continues the legend, his prayer went up before the divine throne; both infants gave signs of life before devout witnesses; baptism could be validly administered, and they, laid to rest in holy ground.³⁶

After Dalaas the road assumes a character of real grandeur, both as an engineering work and as a study of nature. The size of the telegraph poles alone (something like fourteen inches in diameter) gives an idea of the sort of storms the road is built to resist; so do the veritable fortifications, erected here and there, to protect it from avalanches.

The summit (6,218 ft.) of the Arlberg, whence the province has its name – and which in turn is named from Schloss Arlen, the ruins of which are to be observed from the road – is marked by a gigantic crucifix, overhanging the road. An inscription cut in the rock records that it was opened for traffic (after three hard years of labour) on St. James's day, 1787; but a considerable stretch of the road now used was made along a safer and more sheltered pass in 1822–4, when a remarkable viaduct called the Franzensbrücke was built. Two posts, striped with the local

³⁵ Father! take me also with you.

³⁶ Vonbun, pp. 115–7.

colours, near the crucifix above-named, mark the boundary of Vorarlberg and Oberinnthal. As we pass them we should take leave of Vorarlberg; but it may be convenient to mention in this place some few of the more salient of the many points of interest on the onward road to Innsbruck.

The opening of the Stanzerthal, indeed, on which the road is carried, seems to belong of right to Vorarlberg, for its first post-halt of S. Christof came into existence through the agency of a poor foundling boy of that province, who was so moved by the sufferings of travellers at his date (1386), that he devoted his life to their service, and by begging collected money to found the nucleus of the hospice and brotherhood of S. Christof, which lasted till the time of Joseph II. The pass at its highest part is free from snow only from the beginning of July to September, and in the depth of winter it accumulates to a height of twenty feet. The church contains considerable remains of the date of its founder, *Heinrich das Findelkind*; of this date, or not much later, must be the gigantic statue of S. Christopher, patron of wayfarers.

The Stanzerthal, without being less grand, presents a much more smiling prospect than that traversed during the later part of the journey through Vorarlberg. The waters of the Rosanna and the Trisanna flow by the way; the mountains stretch away in the distance, in every hue of brilliant colouring; the whole landscape is studded with villages clustering round their church steeples, while Indian-corn-fields, fruit-gardens in which the barberry holds no insignificant place, and vast patches of a deep-tinted

wild flora, fill up the picture.

At Schloss Wiesburg is the opening into the Patznaunthal, the chief village of which is Ischgl, where the custom I have heard of in other parts of Tirol, and also in Brittany, prevails, of preserving the skulls of the dead in an open vault in the churchyard, with their names painted on them. Nearly opposite it, off the left side of the road lies Grüns or Grins, so called because it affords a bright green patch amid the grey of the rocks. It was a more important place in mediæval times, for the road then ran beside it; the bridge with its pointed arches dates from the year 1639. Margareta Maultasch, with whose place in Tirolese history we must make acquaintance further on, had a house here which still contains some curious mural paintings.

Landeck³⁷ is an important thriving little town, with the Inn flowing through its midst. It has two fine remains of ancient castles: Schloss Landeck, now used partly as a hospice; and Schloss Schrofenstein, of difficult access, haunted by a knight, who gave too ready ear to the calumnies of a rejected suitor of his wife, and must wander round its precincts wringing his fettered hands and crying 'Woe!' On the slope of the hill crowned by Schloss Landeck stands the parish church. Its first foundation dates from the fifteenth century, when a Landecker named Henry and his wife Eva, having lost their two children in a forest,

³⁷ The story of its curious success against the Bavarians in 1703, p. 287–8. From Landeck there is a fine road (the description of which belongs to Snitt-Tirol), over the Finstermünz and Stelvio, to the baths of Bormio or Worms.

on vowing a church in honour of the Blessed Virgin, met a bear and a wolf each carrying one of the children tenderly on its back. It has a double-bulbed tower of much later date, and it was restored with considerable care a few years back; but many important parts remain in their original condition, including some early sculpture. In the churchyard are two important monuments, one dating from the fifteenth century, of Oswald Y. Schrofenstein; the other, a little gothic chapel, consecrated on August 22, 1870, in memory of the Landeck contingent of the Tirolean sharpshooters, who assisted in defending the borders of Wälsch-Tirol in 1866.³⁸ About two or three miles from Landeck there is a celebrated waterfall, at a spot called Letz.

Imst was formerly celebrated for its breed of canary-birds, which its townsmen used to carry all over Europe. The church contains a votive tablet, put up by some of them on occasion of being saved from shipwreck in the Mediterranean. It has a good old inn, once a knightly palace. From Imst the Pitzthal branches southwards; but concerning it I have not space to enlarge, as the more interesting excursion to Füssen, on the Bavarian frontier, must not be passed over. The pleasantest way of making this excursion is to engage a carriage for the whole distance at Imst, but a diligence or 'Eilwagen,' running daily between Innsbruck and Füssen, may be met at Nassereit, some three miles along

³⁸ The chief encounter occurred at a place called Le Tezze, near Primolano, on the Venetian border, where the Tiroleans repulsed the Italians, in numbers tenfold greater than their own, and no further attempt was made. The anniversary is regularly observed by visiting the graves on August 14; mentioned below at Le Tezze.

the Gunglthal. At Nassereit I will pause a moment to mention a circumstance, bearing on the question of the formation of legends, which seemed to take considerable hold on the people, and was narrated to me with a manifest impression of belief in the supernatural. There was a pilgrimage from a place called Biberwier to a shrine of the Virgin, at Dormiz, on August 10, 1869. It was to gain the indulgence of the Vatican Council, and the priest of Biberwier in exhorting his people to treat it entirely as a matter of penance, and not as a party of pleasure, had made use of a figure of speech bidding them not to trust themselves to the bark of worldly pleasure, for, he assured them, it had many holes in it, and would swamp them instead of bearing them on to the joys of heaven. Four of the men, however, persisted in disregarding his warning, and in combining a trip to the Fernsee, one of two romantically situated mountain lakes overlooked by the ancient castle of Sigmundsburg, on a promontory running into it and with its Wirthshaus 'auf dem Fern' forming a favourite though difficult pleasure-excursion. The weather was treacherous; the boat was swamped in the squall which ensued, and all four men were drowned. From Nassereit also is generally made the ascent of the Tschirgants, the peak which has constantly formed a remarkable feature in the landscape all the way from Arlberg.

The road to Füssen passes by Sigmundsburg, Fernsee and Biberwier mentioned in the preceding narrative also the beautiful Blendsee and Mittersee (accessible only to the pedestrian) or

rather the by-paths leading to them. Leermoos is the next place passed, – a straggling, inconsiderable hamlet, but affording a pleasing incident in the landscape, when, after passing it, the steep road winds back upon it and reveals it again far far below you. It is, however, quite possible to put up for a night with the accommodation afforded by the Post inn, and by this means one of the most justly celebrated natural beauties may be enjoyed, in the sunset effects produced by the lighting up of the Zugspitzwand.

Next is Lähn, whose situation disposes one to believe the tradition that it has its name from the avalanches (*Lawinen*, locally contracted into Lähne) by which the valley is frequently visited, and chiefly from a terrible one, in the fifteenth century, which destroyed the village, till then called Mitterwald. A carrier who had been wont to pass that way, struck with compassion at the desolation of the place, aided in providing the surviving inhabitants to rebuild their chapel, and tradition fables of him that they were aided by an angel. The road opens out once more as we approach Heiterwang; there is also a post-road hence to Ammergau; here, a small party may put up at the Rossl, for the sake of visiting the Plansee, the second largest lake of Tirol, on the right (east) of the road; on the left is the opening of the Lechthal, a difficult excursion even to the most practised pedestrian. For those who study convenience the Plansee may be better visited from Reutte.

After Heiterwang the rocks close in again on the road as

we pass through the Ehrenberger Klause, celebrated again and again through the pages of Tirolese history, from the very earliest times, for heroic defences; its castle is an important and beautiful ruin; and so the road proceeds to Reutte, Füssen, and the much visited Lustschloss of Schwangau; but as these are in Bavaria I must not occupy my Tirolese pages with them, but mention only the Mangtritt, the boundary pass, where a cross stands out boldly against the sky, in memory of S. Magnus, the apostle of these valleys. The devil, furious at the success of the saint with his conversion of the heathen inhabitants, sent a tribe of wild and evil men, says one version of the legend, a formidable dragon according to another, to exterminate him; he was thus driven to the narrow glen where the fine post-road now runs between the rocks beside the roaring Lech. Nothing daunted, the saint sprang across to the opposite rock whither his adversaries, who had no guardian angels' wings to 'bear them up', durst not pursue him; it is a curious fact for the comparative mythologist that the same pass bears also the name of Jusulte (Saltus Julii) and the tradition that Julius Cæsar performed a similar feat here on horseback. Near it is a poor little inn, called 'the White House,' where local vintages may be tasted.

Reutte has two inns; the *Post* and *Krone*, and from it more excursions may be made than I have space to chronicle. That to Breitenwang is an easy one; a house here is pointed out as having been built on the spot where stood a poor hut which gave shelter in his last moments to Lothair II. 'the Saxon' overtaken

by death on his return journey from the war in Italy, 1137; what remained of the old materials having been conscientiously worked into the building, down to the most insignificant spar; a tablet records the event. The church, a Benedictine foundation of the twelfth century, was rebuilt in the seventeenth, and contains many specimens of what Tirolese artists can do in sculpture, wood-carving, and painting. A quaint chapel in the churchyard has a representation in stucco of the 'Dance of Death.'

The country between this and the Plansee is called the Achenthal, fortunately distinguished by local mispronunciation as the Archenthal from the better known (though not deservingly so) Achenthal, which we shall visit later. The Ache or Arche affords several water-falls, the most important of them, the Stuibfall, is nearly a hundred feet in height, and on a bright evening a beautiful 'iris' may be seen enthroned in its foam.

At the easternmost extremity of the Plansee, to be reached either by pleasure boat or mountain path, near the little border custom-house, the Kaiser-brunnen flows into the lake, so called because its cool waters once afforded a refreshing drink to Ludwig of Brandenburg, when out hunting: a crucifix marks the spot. There is also a chapel erected at the end of the 17th century, in consequence of some local vow, containing a picture of the 'Vierzehn Nothhelfer;' and as the so-called 'Fourteen Helpers in Need' are a favourite devotion all over North-Tirol I may as well mention their legend here at our first time of meeting them. The story is that on the feast of the Invention

of the Cross, 1445, a shepherd-boy named Hermann, serving the Cistercian monks of Langheim (some thirty miles south of Mayence) was keeping sheep on a farm belonging to them in Frankenthal not far from Würzburg, when he heard a child's voice crying to him out of the long grass; he turned round and saw a beautiful infant with two tapers burning before it, who disappeared as he approached. On the vigil of S. Peter in the following year Hermann saw the same vision repeated, only this time the beautiful infant was surrounded by a court of fourteen other children, who told him they were the 'Vierzehn Nothelfer,' and that he was to build a chapel to them. The monks refused to believe Hermann's story, but the popular mind connected it with a devotion which was already widespread, and by the year 1448 the mysteriously ordered chapel was raised, and speedily became a place of pilgrimage. This chapel has been constantly maintained and enlarged and has now grown into a considerable church; and the devotion to the 'Fourteen Helpers in Need' spread over the surrounding country with the usual rapid spread of a popular devotion.³⁹ The chief remaining points of interest in the

³⁹ Following are the names of the fourteen, but I have never met any one who could explain the selection. 1. S. Acatius, bishop in Asia Minor, saved from death in the persecutions under Decius, 250, by a miracle he performed in the judgment hall where he was tried, and in memory of which he carries a tree, or a branch of one, in pictures of him. 2. S. Ægidius (Giles, in German, Gilgen), Hermit, of Nîmes, nourished in his cell by the milk of a hind, which, being hunted, led to the discovery of his sanctity, an episode constantly recurring in the legendary world. Another poetical legend concerning him is that a monk, having come to him to express a doubt as to the virginity of Our Lady, S. Giles, for all answer traced her name in the sand with

further journey to Innsbruck, taking it up where we diverged

his staff, and forthwith full-bloom lilies sprang up out of it. 3. S. Barbara. A maiden whom her heathen father shut up in a tower, that nothing might distract her attention from the life of study to which he devoted her; among the learned men who came to enjoy her elevated conversation came a Christian teacher, and converted her; in token of her belief in the doctrine of the Trinity she had three windows made in her tower, and by the token her father discovered her conversion, delivered her to judgment, and she suffered an incredible repetition of martyrdoms. She is generally painted with her three-windowed tower in her hand. 4. S. Blase, Bishop of Sebaste and Martyr, A.D. 288. He had studied medicine, and when concealed in the woods during time of persecution, the wild beasts used to bring the wounded of their number to his feet to be healed. Men hunting for Christians to drag to justice, found him surrounded by lions, tigers, and bears; even in prison he continued to exercise his healing powers, and from restoring to life a boy who had been suffocated by swallowing a fishbone, he is invoked as patron against sore throat. He too suffered numerous martyrdoms. 5. S. Christopher. 6. S. Cyriacus, Martyr, 309, concerning whom many legends are told of his having delivered two princesses from incurable maladies. 7. S. Dionysius, the Areopagite, converted by S. Paul, and consecrated by him Bishop of Athens, afterwards called to Rome by S. Peter, and made Bishop of Paris. 8. S. Erasmus, a bishop in Syria, after enduring many tortures there, he was thrown into prison, and delivered by an angel, who sent him to preach Christianity in Italy, he died at Gaeta 303. At Naples and other places he is honoured as S. Elmo. 9. S. Eustachius, originally called Placidus, a Roman officer, converted while hunting by meeting a stag which carried a refulgent cross between its horns; his subsequent reverses, his loss of wife and children, the wonderful meeting with them again, and the agency of animals throughout, make his one of the most romantic of legends. 10. S. George. 11. S. Catherine of Alexandria. 12. S. Margaret. 13. S. Pantaleone, another student of medicine; when, after many tortures, he was finally beheaded, the legend tells us that, in token of the purity of his life, milk flowed from his veins instead of blood, A.D. 380. 14. S. Vitus, a Sicilian, instructed by a slave, who was his nurse, in the Christian faith in his early years; his father's endeavours to root out his belief were unavailing, and he suffered A.D. 303, at not more than twelve years of age. The only link I can discover in this chain of saints is that they are all but one or two, whose alleged end I do not know, as S. Christopher, credited with having suffered a plurality of terrible martyrdoms. To each is of course

from it at Nassereit, are mentioned later in my excursions for Innsbruck.

Before closing my chapter on Vorarlberg I must put on record, as a warning to those who may choose to thread its pleasant valleys, a laughable incident which cut short my first attempt to penetrate into Tirol by its means. Our line of route I have already named.⁴⁰ Our start was in the most genial of August weather; our party not only harmonious, but humorously inclined; all our stages were full of interest and pleasure, and their memory glances at me reproachfully as I pass them over in rigid obedience to the duty of adhering to my programme. But no, I *must* devote a word of gratitude to the friendly Swiss people, and their kindly hospitable manners on all occasions. The pretty bathing establishments on the lakes, where the little girls go in on their way to school, and swim about as elegantly as if the water were their natural element; the wonderful roofs of Aarau; its late-flowering pomegranates; and the clear delicious water, tumbling along its narrow bed down the centre of all the streets, where we stop to taste of the crystal brook, using the hollow of our hands, pilgrim fashion, and the kind people more than once come out of their houses to offer us glasses and chairs!

I *must* bestow, too, another line of record on the charming village of Rorschach, the little colony of Catholics in the midst of a Protestant canton. Its delicious situation on the Boden-see; our

ascribed the patronage over some special one of the various phases of human suffering.

⁴⁰ P. 12.

row over the lake by moonlight, where we are nearly run down by one of the steamers perpetually crossing it in all directions, while our old boatman pours out and loses himself in the mazes of his legendary lore; the strange effect of interlacing moonbeams, interspersed by golden rays from the sanct lamps with Turner-like effect, seen through the open grated door of the church; the grotesque draped skeletons supporting the roof of one of the chapels, Caryatid fashion and the rustic procession on the early morning of the Assumption.

So far all had gone passing well; my first misgiving arose when I saw the factotum of the Oberriet station eye our luggage, the provision of four English winterers in Rome, and a look of embarrassed astonishment dilate his stolid German countenance. It was evident that when he engaged himself as ticket-clerk, porter, 'and *everything*,' he never contemplated such a pile of boxes being ever deposited at his station. We left him wrapt in his earnest gaze, and walked on to see what help we could get in the village. It was a collection of a half-dozen cottages, picturesque in their utter uncivilization, clustered round an inn of some pretensions. The host had apparently heard of the depth of English purses, and was delighted to make his *premières armes* in testing their capacity. Of course there was 'no arguing with the master of' the only horses to whose assistance we had to look for carrying us beyond the mountains, which now somehow struck us as much more plainly marked on the map than we had noticed before. His price had to be ours, and his statement of

the distance, about double the reality, had to be accepted also. His stud was soon displayed before us. Three rather tired greys were brought in from the field, and made fast (or rather loose) with ropes to a waggon, on which our formidable *Gepäck* was piled, and took their start with funeral solemnity. An hour later a parcel of boys had succeeded in capturing a wild colt destined to assist his venerable parent in transporting ourselves in a 'shay,' of the Gilpin type, and to which we managed to hang on with some difficulty, the wild-looking driver good-naturedly volunteering to run by the side.

Off we started with the inevitable thunder of German whip-cracking and German imprecations on the cattle, sufficient for the first twenty paces to astonish the colt into propriety. No sooner had we reached the village boundary, however, than he seemed to guess for the first time that he had been entrapped into bondage. With refreshing juvenile buoyancy he instantly determined to show us his indomitable spirit. Resisting all efforts of his companion in harness to proceed, he suddenly made such desperate assault and battery with his hind legs, that one or two of the ropes were quickly snapped, the Jehu sent sprawling in the ditch on one side, and the travelling bags on the other; so that, but for the staid demeanour of the old mare, we should probably in two minutes more have been 'nowhere.' Hans was on his feet again in an instant, like the balanced mannikins of a bull-fight, and to knot the ropes and make a fresh start required only a minute more; but another and another exhibition of the colt's

pranks decided us to trust to our own powers of locomotion.

A bare-footed, short-petticoated wench, who astonished us by proving that her rough hands could earn her livelihood at delicate 'Swiss' embroidery, and still more by details of the small remuneration that contented her, volunteered to pilot us through the woods where we had quite lost our way; and finding our luggage van waiting on the banks of the Rhine for the return of the ferry, we crossed with it and walked by its side for the rest of the distance.

Our road lay right across the Ardetzen, a basin of pasture enclosed by a magnificent circuit of mountains, – behind us the distant eminences of Appenzell, before us the great Rhætian Alps, and at their base a number of smiling villages each with its green spire scarcely detaching from the verdant slopes behind. The undertaking, pleasant and bright at first, grew weary and anxious as the sun descended, and the mountains of Appenzell began to throw their long shadow over the lowland we were traversing, and yet the end was not reached. At last the strains of an organ burst upon our ears, lights from latticed windows diapered our path, and a train of worshippers poured past us to join in the melodies of the Church, sufficiently large to argue that our stopping-place was attained. We cast about to find the *Gasthof zur Post* to which we were bound, but all in vain, there was no rest for us.

Here indeed, Feldkirch *fuit*, but here it was no more. In the year 909, the Counts of Montfort built themselves a castle on

the neighbouring height of Schattenburg, (so called because the higher eminences around shade it from the sun till late in the morning,) and lured away the people from this pristine Feldkirch to settle themselves round the foot of their fortress. Some of the original inhabitants still clung to the old place, and its old Church of St. Peter, that very church whose earlier foundations, some say, were laid by monks from Britain, S. Columban and St. Gall, who, when the people were oppressed by their Frankish masters, came and lived among them, and by their preaching and their prayers rekindled the light of religion, working out at the same time their political relief; the former subsequently made his way, shedding blessings as he went, on to Italy, where he died at the age of ninety, in 615; the latter founded, and ended his days at the age of ninety-five, in the famous monastery which has given his name to the neighbouring Swiss Canton.

The descendants of this remnant have kept up the original settlement to this day with the name of Altenstadt, while the first built street of the present thriving town of Feldkirch still retains its appellation of the Neustadt.

It seemed a long stretch ere we again came upon an inhabited spot, but this time there was no mistake. All around were the signs of a prosperous centre, the causeways correctly laid out, new buildings rising on every side, and – I am fain to add – the church dark and closed; in place of the train of worshippers of unsophisticated Altenstadt, one solitary figure in mourning weeds was kneeling in the moonlight at a desk such as we often

see placed under a cross against the outer wall of churches in Germany.

Before five next morning I was awakened by the pealing organ and hearty voices of the Feldkirch peasants at Mass in the church just opposite my window. I dressed hastily, and descended to take my place among them. It was a village festival and Mass succeeded Mass at each of the gaily decorated altars, and before them assembled groups in quaint costumes from far and near.⁴¹ As each half hour struck, a bell sounded, and a relic was brought round to the high altar rails, all the women in the church going up first, and then all the men, to venerate it.

Our first care of the day was to engage our carriage for Innsbruck. We were at the Post hotel, and had the best chance there; for besides its own conveyances, there were those of the post-office, which generally in Germany afford great convenience. Not one was there, however, that would undertake our luggage over the mountain roads. The post-master and his men all declared that at every winding of the passes there would be too great risk of overturning the vehicle. It was in vain we argued that the same amount had often accompanied us over higher mountains in Italy; it was clear they were not prepared for it. There was a service for heavy goods by which it could be sent; there was no other way, and they did not advise that.

⁴¹ Among these not the least remarkable were some specimens of the unbrimmed beaver hat, somewhat resembling the Grenadier's bear-skin, only shorter, which is worn by the women in various parts of Tirol and Styria.

They could not ensure any due care being taken of it, or that it should reach within three or four weeks. Four or five hours spent in weighing, measuring, arranging, and arguing, advanced our cause not a whit; there was no plan to be adopted but to return by Oberriet to Rorschach, cross lake Constance to Lindau, and make our way round by Augsburg, Munich, and Rosenheim!

It was with great reluctance we relinquished the cherished project. Our now hated luggage deposited in a waggon, as the day before, we mounted our rather more presentable, and certainly better horsed vehicle, in no cheerful mood, for, besides the disappointment, there was the mortification which always attaches to a failed project and retraced steps.

‘The *Herrschaften* are not in such bright spirits as the sun to-day!’ exclaimed our driver, when, finally tired of cracking his whip and shouting to his horses, he found we still sat silent and crest-fallen. He wore the jauntiest costume to be found in Europe, after that of his Hungarian confrère, a short postilion jacket, bound and trimmed with yellow lace, a horn slung across his breast by a bright yellow cord, and a hat shining like looking-glass cocked on one side of his head, while his face expressed everything that is pleasant and jovial.

‘How can one be anything but out of spirits when one is crossed by such a stupid set as the people of your town? Why, there is no part of Europe in which they will even believe it possible!’

‘Well, you see they *don't* understand much, about here,’ he

replied, with an air of superiority, for he was a travelled postilion, as he took care to let us know. 'In Italy they manage better; they tie the luggage on behind, or underneath, where it is safe enough. Here they have only one idea – to stick it on the top, and in that way a carriage may be easily upset at a sharp turn. You cannot drive any new idea into these fellows; it is like an echo between their own mountains, whatever is once there, goes on and on and on.' I showed him the map, and traced before him the difference in the length of the route we should have taken and that we had now to pursue. I don't think he had ever understood a map before, for he seemed vastly pleased at the compliment paid to his intelligence. 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'if we could always go as the crow flies, how quickly we should get to our journey's end; or if we had the Stase-Sattel, as they used to have – wasn't *that* fine!'

'The Stase-Sattel,' I replied, 'what is that?'

'What! don't you know about the Stase-Sattel – at that place, Bludenz, there,' and he pointed to it on the map, 'where you were telling me you wanted to have gone, there used to live an old woman named Stase, and folk said she was a witch. She had a wonderful saddle, on to which she used to set herself when she wanted anything, and it used to fly with her ever so high, and quicker than a bird. One day the reapers were in a field cooking their mess, and they had forgotten to bring any salt – and *hupf!* quick! before the pot had begun to boil she had flown off on her saddle to the salt-mines at Hall, beyond Innsbruck, and back with salt enough to pickle an ox. Another time there was a farmer who

had been kind to her, whose crops were failing for the drought. She no sooner heard of his distress than up she flew in her saddle and swept all the clouds together with her broom till there was enough to make a good rainfall. Another time, a boy who had been sent with a message by his master to the next village had wasted all the day in playing and drinking with her; towards dusk he bethought himself that the gates would be shut and the dogs let loose, so that it was a chance if he reached the house alive. But she told him not to mind, and taking him up on her saddle, she carried him up through the air and set him down at home before the sun was an inch lower.’

‘And what became of her?’ I inquired.

‘Became of her! why, she went the way of all such folk. They go on for a time, but God’s hand overtakes them at the last. One day she was on one of her wild errands, and it was a *Fest-tag* to boot. Her course took her exactly over a church spire, and just as she passed, the *Wandlung* bell⁴² tolled. The sacred sound tormented her so that she lost her seat and fell headlong to the ground. When they came out of church they found her lying a shapeless mass upon the stone step of the churchyard cross. Her enchanted saddle was long kept in the Castle of Landeck – maybe it is there yet; and even now when we want to tell one to go quickly on an errand, we say, “Fly on the saddle of Dame Stase.”’

⁴² The bell called in other countries the *Elevation bell*, is in Germany called the *Wandlung*, or *change-of-the-elements* bell. The idiom was worth preserving here, as it depicts more perfectly the solemnity of the moment indicated.

‘You have had many such folk about here,’ I observed seriously, with the view of drawing him out.

‘Well, yes, they tell many such tales,’ he answered; ‘and if they’re not true, they at least serve to keep alive the faith that God is over us all, and that the evil one has no more power than just what He allows. There’s another story they tell, just showing that,’ he continued. ‘Many years ago there was a peasant (and he lived near Bludenz too) who had a great desire to have a fine large farm-house. He worked hard, and put his savings by prudently; but it wouldn’t do, he never could get enough. One day, in an evil hour, he let his great desire get the better of him, and he called the devil in *dreiteufelsnamen*⁴³ to his assistance. It was not, you see, a deliberate wickedness – it was all in a moment, like. But the devil came, and didn’t give him time to reflect. “I know what you want,” he said; “you shall have your house and your barns and your hen-house, and all complete, this very night, without costing you a penny; but when you have enjoyed it long enough, your old worn-out carcass shall belong to me.” The good peasant hesitated; and the devil, finding it necessary to add another bait, ran on: “And what is more, I’ll go so far as to say that if every stone is not complete by the first cock-crow, I’ll strike out even this condition, and you shall have it *out and out*.” The peasant was dazzled with the prospect, and could not bring himself all at once to refuse the accomplishment of his darling hope. The devil shook him by the hand as a way of clenching the bargain,

⁴³ The threefold invocation, supposed to be supremely efficacious.

and disappeared.

‘The peasant went home more alarmed than rejoiced, and full of fear above all that his wife should inquire the meaning of all the hammering and blustering and running hither and thither which was to be heard going on in the homestead, for she was a pious God-fearing woman.

‘He remained dumb to all her inquiries, hour after hour through the night; but at last, towards morning, his courage failed him, and he told her all. She, like a good wife, gave back no word of reproach, but cast about to find a remedy. First she considered that he had done the thing thoughtlessly and rashly, and then she ascertained that at last he had given no actual consent. Finally, deciding matters were not as bad as might be, she got up, and bid him leave the issue to her.

‘First she knelt down and commended herself and her undertaking to God and His holy saints; then in the small hours, when the devil’s work was nearly finished, she took her lamp and spread out the wick so that it should give its greatest glare, and poured fresh oil upon it, and went out with a basket of grain to feed the hens. The cock, seeing the bright light and the good wife with her basket of food, never doubted but that it was morning, and springing up, he flapped his wings, and crowed with all his might. At that very moment the devil himself was coming by with the last roof-stone.⁴⁴ At the sound of the premature cock-crow he

⁴⁴ In Tirol the roofs are frequently made of narrow overlapping planks, weighed down by large stones. Hence the origin of the German proverb, ‘If a stone fall from

was so much astonished that he didn't know which way to turn, and sank into the ground bearing the stone still in his hand.

'The house belonged to the peasant by every right, but no stone could ever be made to stay on the vacant space. This inconvenience was the penance he had to endure for the desperate game he had played, and he took it cheerfully, and when the rain came in he used to kiss his good wife in gratitude for the more terrible chastisement from which she had saved him.'

The jaunty postilion whipped the horses on as he thus brought his story to a close, or rather cracked his whip in the air till the mountains resounded with it, for he had slackened speed while telling his tale, and the day was wearing on.

'We must take care and not be late for the train,' he observed. 'The *Herrschaften* have had enough of the inn of Oberriet, and don't want to have to spend a night *there*, and we have no *Vorarlberger-geist* to speed us now-a-days.'

'Who was he?' I inquired eagerly.

'I suppose you know that all this country round about here is called the Vorarlberg, and in olden time there was a spirit that used to wander about helping travellers all along its roads. When they were benighted, it used to go before them with a light; when they were in difficulties, it used to procure them aid; if one lost his way, it used to direct him aright; till one

the roof, ten to one but it lights on a poor widow;' – equivalent to our 'Trouble never comes alone.'

day a poor priest came by who had been to administer a distant parishioner. His way had lain now over bog, now over torrent-beds. In the roughness of the way the priest's horse had cast a shoe. A long stretch of road lay yet before him, but no forge was near. Suddenly the *Vorarlberger-geist* came out of a cleft in the rock, silently set to work and shod the horse, and passed on its way as usual with a sigh.

“*Vergeltsgott!*”⁴⁵ cried the priest after it.

“God be praised!” exclaimed the spirit. “Now am I at last set free. These hundred years have I served mankind thus, and till now no man has performed this act of gratitude, the condition of my release.” And since this time it has never been seen again.’

We had now once more reached the banks of the Rhine. The driver of the luggage van held the ferry in expectation of us, and with its team it was already stowed on board. Our horses were next embarked, and then ourselves, as we sat, perched on the carriage. A couple of rough donkeys, a patriarchal goat, and half-a-dozen wild-looking half-clothed peasants, made up a freight which seemed to tax the powers of the crazy barge to the utmost; and as the three brawny ferrymen pulled it dexterously along the guide rope, the waters of the here broad and rapid river rose some inches through the chinks. All went well, however, and in another half-hour we were again astonishing the factotum of the Oberriet station with a vision of the ‘Gepäck’ which had puzzled him so immensely the day before.

⁴⁵ ‘May God reward it.’

CHAPTER II.

NORTH-TIROL – UNTERINNTHAL (RIGHT-INN BANK). KUFSTEIN TO ROTTENBURG

*... Peasant of the Alps,
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, thy nights of sleep, thy toil
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age, and then a quiet grave
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph,
This do I see!..'*

Byron (Manfred).

When, after our forced *détour*, we next penetrated into Tirol, it was by the way of Kufstein. Ruffled as we had been in the meantime by Bavarian '*Rohheit*,' we were glad to find ourselves again in the hands of the gentle Tirolese.

Kufstein, however, is not gentle in appearance. Its vast fortress seems to shed a stifling gloom over the whole place; it looks so hard and selfish and tyrannical, that you long to get away from its influence. Noble hearts from honest Hungary have pined away

within its cold strong grasp; and many a time, as my sketch-book has been turned over by Magyar friends, the page which depicted its outline – for it wears a grand and gallant form, such as the pencil cannot resist – has raised a deep sigh over the ‘*trauriges Andenken*’ it served to call up.⁴⁶

When Margaretha Maultasch ceded the country she found herself unable to govern, to Austria at the earnest request of her people, in 1363, it was stipulated that Kufstein, Kitzbühel, and Rattenberg, which had been added to it by her marriage with Louis of Bradenburg, should revert to Bavaria. These three dependencies were recovered by the Emperor Maximilian in 1504, the two latter accepting his allegiance gladly, the former holding out stoutly against him. The story of the reduction of this stronghold is almost a stain on his otherwise prudent and prosperous reign.

Pienzenau, its commander, who was in the Bavarian interest, had particularly excited his ire by setting his men to sweep away with brooms the traces of the small damage which had been effected by his cannon, placed at too great a distance to do more than graze the massive walls. Philip von Recenau, Regent of Innsbruck, meantime cast two enormous field-pieces, which received the names of *Weckauf* and *Purlepaus*. These entirely turned the tide of affairs. Chronicles of the time do not mention their calibre, but declare that their missiles not only pierced the

⁴⁶ The frontispiece to this volume (very much improved by the artist who has drawn it on the wood).

‘fourteen feet-thick wall’ through and through, but entered a foot and a half into the living rock. Pienzenau’s heart misgave him when he saw the work of these destructive engines, and hastened to send in his submission to the Emperor; but it was too late. ‘So he is in a hurry to throw away his brooms at last, is he?’ cried Maximilian. ‘But he should have done it before. He has allowed the wall of this noble castle to be so disgracefully shattered, that he can make no amends but by giving up his own carcass to the same fate.’

No entreaty could move the Emperor from carrying out this chastisement, and some five-and-twenty of the principal men who had held out against him were condemned to be beheaded on the spot. When eleven had fallen before the headsman’s sword, Erich, Duke of Brunswick, sickening at the scene of blood, pleaded so earnestly with the Emperor, that he obtained the pardon of the rest. The eleven were buried by the pious country-people in a common grave; and who will may yet tread the ground where their remains rest in a little chapel built over their grave at Ainliff (dialectic for eleven), on the other side of the river Inn.

Its situation near the frontier has made it the scene of other sieges, of which none is more endeared to Tiroleans than that of 1809, when the patriot Speckbacher distinguished himself by many a dauntless deed.

If Kufstein has long had a truce to these stirring memories, many a fantastic story has floated out of it concerning the prisoners harboured there, even of late years. The Hungarian

patriot brigand, Rocsla Sandor (Andrew Roshla), who won by his unscrupulous daring quite a legendary place in popular story, was long confined here. He was finally tried and condemned (but I think not executed) at Szeghedin, in July 1870; 454 other persons were included in the same trial, of whom 234 under homicidal charges; 100 homicides were laid to his charge alone, but there is no doubt that his services to the popular cause, at the same time that they condoned some of his excesses, in the popular judgment may have disposed the authorities to exaggerate the charges against him. The whole story is fantastic, and even in Kufstein, where he was almost an alien, there was admiration and sympathy underlying the shudder with which the people spoke of him. A much more interesting and no less romantic narrative, was told me of a Hungarian political prisoner, who formed the solitary instance of an escape from the stony walls of the fortress. His lady-love – and she was a lady by birth – with the heroic instincts of a Hungarian maiden, having with infinite difficulty made out where he was confined, followed him hither in peasant disguise, and with invincible perseverance succeeded, first in engaging herself as servant to the governor and then in conveying every day to her lover, in his soup, a hank of hemp. With this he twisted a rope and got safely away; and this occurred not more than six or seven years ago.

St. Louis's day fell while we were at Kufstein – the name-day of the King of Bavaria; and being the border town, the polite Tiroleans make a complimentary fête of it. There was a grand

musical Mass, which the officers from the Bavarian frontier attended, and a modest banquet was offered them after it. The peasants put on their holiday attire – passable enough as far as the men are concerned, but consisting mainly on the women's behalf in an ugly black cloth square-waisted dress, and a black felt broad-brimmed hat, with large gold tassels lying on the brim. After Mass the Bavarian national hymn was sung to the familiar strains of our own.

All seemed gay and glad without. I returned to the primitive rambling inn; everyone was gone to take his or her part in the Kufstein idea of a holiday. There were three entrances, and three staircases; I took a wrong one, and in trying to retrace my steps passed a room through the half-open door of which I heard a sound of moaning, which arrested me. I could not find it in my heart to pass on. I pushed the door gently aside, and discovered a grey-haired old man lying comfortlessly on the bed in a state of torpor. I laid him back in a posture in which he could breathe more freely, opened his collar and gave him air, and with the aid of one or two simple means soon brought him back to consciousness. The room was barely furnished; his luggage was a small bundle tied in a handkerchief, his clothes betokened that he belonged to the respectable of the lower class. I was too desirous to converse with a genuine Tirolean peasant to refuse his invitation to sit down by his side. I had soon learnt his tale, which he seemed not a little pleased to find had an interest for a foreigner.

His lot had been marked by severe trials. In early youth he had been called to lose his parents; in later life, the dear wife who had for a season clothed his home again with brightness and hope. In old age he had had a heavier trial still. His only child, the son whom he had reared in the hope that he would have been the staff of his declining years, whom he had brought up in innocence in childhood, and shielded from knowledge of evil in early youth, had gone from him, and he knew not where to find him. The boy had always had a fancy for a roving adventurous life, but it had been his hope to have kept him always near him, free from the contamination of great cities.

I asked if it was not the custom in these parts for young men to go abroad and seek employment where it was more highly paid, and come back and settle on their earnings. But he shook his head proudly. It was so in Switzerland, it was so in some few valleys of Tirol, and the poor Engadeiners supplied all the cities of Europe with confectioners; but his son had no need to tramp the world in search of fortune. But what had made him most anxious was, that the night before his son left some wild young men had passed through the village. They were bold and uproarious, and his fear was that his boy might have been tempted to join them. He did not know exactly what their game was, but he had an idea they were gathering recruits to join the lawless Garibaldian bands in their attempts upon the Roman frontier. With their designs he was confident his son had no sympathy. If he had stopped to consider them, he would have shrunk from them with horror; and

it was his dread that his spirited love of danger and excitement had carried him into a vortex from which he might by-and-by be longing to extricate himself in vain. It was to pray that the lad might be guided aright that he made this pilgrimage up the Thierberg – no easy journey for one of his years. He had come across hill and valley from a village of which I forget the name, but situated near Sterzing.

‘But Sterzing itself is a place of pilgrimage,’ I said, glad to turn to account my scanty knowledge of the sacred places of the country. ‘Why did you come all this way?’

‘Indeed is Sterzing,’ he replied, ‘a place of benedictions. It is the spot where Sterzing, our first hermit, lived, and left his name to our town. But *this* is the spot for those who need penance. There, in that place,’ and as I followed the direction of his hand I saw through the low lattice window the lofty elevation of the Thierberg like a phantom tower, enveloped in mist, standing out against the clear sky beyond, and wondered how his palsied limbs had carried him up the steep. ‘In that place, in olden time, lived a true penitent. Once it was a lordly castle, and he to whom it belonged was a rich and honoured knight; but on one occasion he forgot his knightly honour, and with false vows led astray an unthinking maiden of the village. Soon, however, the conviction of his sin came back to him clear as the sun’s light, and without an hour’s hesitation he put it from him. To the girl he made the best amends he could by first leading her to repentance, then procuring her admission to a neighbouring convent. But for him,

from that day the lordly castle became as a hermit's cell, the sound of mirth and revelry and of friendly voices was hushed for ever. The memory of his own name even he would have wiped out, and would have men call him only, as they do to the present day, '*der Büsser*' – the Penitent. And so many has his example brought to this shrine in a spirit of compunction, that the Church has endowed it with the indulgence of the Portiuncula.'

What a picture of Tirolese faith it was! Instead of setting in motion the detective police, or the telegraph-wire, or the second column of the 'Times,' this old man had come many miles in the opposite direction from that his child was supposed to have taken, to bring his burden and lay it before a shrine he believed to have been made dear to heaven by tears of penance in another age, and there commend his petition to God that He might bring it to pass, accepting the suffering as a merited chastisement in a spirit of sincere penitence!

He was feeling better, and I rose to go. He pressed my hand in acknowledgment of my sympathy, and I assured him of it. It was not a case for more substantial charity; I had gathered from his recital that he had no lack of worldly means. I only strove at parting to kindle a ray of hope. I said after all it might not be so bad as he imagined; his boy had been well brought up, and might perhaps be trusted to keep out of the way of evil. It was thoughtless of him not to seek his father's blessing and consent to his choice of an adventurous career, but it might be he had feared his opposition, and that he had no unworthy reason for

concealing his plans. There was at least as much reason to hope as to despond, and he must look forward to his coming back, true to the instincts of his mountain home, wiser than he had set out.

His pale blue eye glistened, and he gasped like one who had seen a vision. 'Ay! just so! Just so it appeared to me when I was on the Thierberg this morning! And now, in case my weak old heart did not see it clearly enough, God, in His mercy, has sent you to expound the thing more plainly to me. Now I know that I am heard.'

Poor old man! I shuddered lest the hope so strongly entertained should prove delusive in the end. I may never know the result; but I felt that at all events as he was one who took all things at God's hands, nothing could, in one sense, come amiss; and for the present, at least, I saw that he went down to his house comforted.

I strolled along the street, and, possessed with the type of the Tirolean peasant, as I received it from this old man, I conceived a feeling of deeper curiosity for all whom I met by the way. I thought of them as of men for whom an unseen world is a reality; who estimate prayer and sacraments and the intercession of saints above steam-power and electricity. At home one meets with one such now and then, but to be transported into a whole country of them was like waking up from a long sleep to find oneself in the age of St. Francis and St. Dominic.

Whatever faults the Tirolese may have to answer for, they will not arise from religion being put out of sight. No village but has

its hillside path marked with 'the Way of the Cross,' no bridge but carries the statue of S. John Nepomucene, the martyr of the Confessional; no fountain but bears the image of the local saint, a model of virtue to the place; no lone path unmarked by its way-side chapel, or its crucifix shielded from the weather by a rustic roof; no house but has its outer walls covered with memories of holy things; no room without its sacred prints and its holywater stoup. The churches are full of little rude pictures, recording scenes in which all the pleasanter events of life are gratefully ascribed to answers to prayer, while many who cannot afford this more elaborate tribute hang up a tablet with the words *Hat geholfen* ('He has helped me'), or more simply still, '*aus Dankbarkeit.*' Longfellow has written something very true and pretty, which I do not remember well enough to quote; but most will call to mind the verses about leaving landmarks, which a weary brother seeing, may take heart again; and it is incalculable how these good people may stir up one another to hope and endurance by such testimonies of their trust in a Providence. Sometimes, again, the little tablets record that such an one has undertaken a journey. '*N. N. reiset nach N., pray for him,*' and we, who have come so far so easily, smile at the short distance which is thought worthy of this importance. The *Gott segne meine Reise*— 'May God bless my journey' — seems to come as naturally to them, however, as 'grace before meat' with us. But most of all, their care is displayed in regard to the dear departed. The spot where an accident deprived one of his life is sacred to all.

‘The honourable peasant N. N. was run over here by a heavy waggon;’ – ‘Here was N. N. carried away by the waters of the stream;’ with the unfailing adjunct, ‘may he rest in peace, let us pray for him;’ or sometimes, as if there were no need to address the recommendation to his own neighbours, ‘Stranger! pray for him.’

The straggling village on the opposite bank of the Inn is called Zell, though appearing part of Kufstein. It affords the best points for viewing the gloomy old fortress, and itself possesses one or two chapels of some interest. At Kiefersfelden, at a short distance on the Bavarian border, is the so-called Ottokapelle, a Gothic chapel marking the spot where Prince Otho quitted his native soil when called to take possession of the throne of Greece.

Kundl, about an hour from Kufstein, the third station, by rail,⁴⁷ though wretchedly provided with accommodation, is the place to stop at to visit the curious and isolated church of *S. Leonhard auf der Wiese* (in the meadow), and it is well worthy of a visit. In the year 1004 a life-sized stone image of St. Leonard was brought by the stream to this spot; ‘floating,’ the wonder-loving people said, but it may well be believed that some rapid swollen torrent had carried the image away in its wild course from some chapel on a higher level. The people not knowing whence it came, reckoned its advent a miracle, and set it up in the highway, that all who passed might know of it. It was not long before a no

⁴⁷ Of the Brixenthal and the Gebiet der grossen Ache we shall have to speak in a later chapter, in our excursion ‘from Wörgl to Vienna.’

less illustrious wayfarer than the Emperor Henry II. came that way, and seeing the uncovered image set up on high, stopped to inquire its history. When he had heard it, he vowed that if his arms were prosperous in Italy he would on his return build the saint an honourable church. Success indeed attended him in the campaign, and he was crowned Emperor at Pavia, but St. Leonard and his vow were alike forgotten. The year 1012 brought him again into Italy through Tirol, and passing the spot where he had registered his vow before, his horse, foaming and stamping, refused to pass the image or carry him further. The circumstance reminded him of his promise, and he at once set to work to carry it out worthily. The church was completed within a few years, but an unhappy accident signalized its completion. A young man who had undertaken to place the ornament on the summit was seized with vertigo in the moment of completing his exploit, and losing his balance was dashed lifeless on to the ground below.⁴⁸ His remains were gathered up tenderly by the neighbours, and his skull laid as an offering at the foot of the crucifix on the high altar, where it yet remains. An inscription to the following effect is preserved in the church: ‘A.D. 1019 Præsens ecclesia Sti. Leonhardi a sancto Henrico Imperatore exstructa, et anno 1020 a summo Pontifice Benedicto VIII. consecrata est,’ though there would not seem to be any other record of the Pope having

⁴⁸ The comparative mythologist can perhaps tell us why this story crops up everywhere. I have had occasion to report it from Spain in *Patrañas*. Curious instances in Stöber *Sagen des Elsasses*.

made the journey. S. Kunigunda, consort of Henry II., bore a great affection to the spot, and often visited it.

The image of St. Leonard now in the church bears the date of 1481, and there is no record of the time when it was substituted for the original.⁴⁹ The interior has suffered a great deal during the whitewash period; but some of the original carvings are remarkable, particularly the grotesque creatures displayed on the main columns. On one a doubled-bodied lion is trampling on two dragons; on another a youth stands holding the prophetic roll of the book of revelation, and a hideous symbolical figure, with something of the form of a bear, cowers before him, showing a certain resemblance to the sculptures in the chapel-porch of Castle Tirol. Round the high altar are ten pilasters, each setting forth the figure of a saint, and all various. A great deal of the old work was destroyed, however, when it was rebuilt, about the year 1500.

Between St. Leonhard and Ratfield runs the Auflängerbründl – so called from the Angerberg, celebrated as itself a very charming excursion from Kundl – a watercourse directed by the side of the road through the charity of the townspeople of Rattenberg and Ratfeld, in the year 1424, with the view that no wayfarer might faint by the way for want of a drink of pure and refreshing water.

Rattenberg is a little town of some importance on account of the copper works in the neighbourhood, but not much frequented

⁴⁹ S. Leonard is reckoned the patron of herds. See *Pilger durch Tirol*, p. 247.

by visitors, though it has three passable inns. It is curious that the castle of Rottenburg near Rothholz, though so like in name, has a different derivation, the latter arising from the red earth of the neighbourhood, and the former from an old word *Rat*, meaning 'richness,' and in old documents it is found spelt *Rat in berc* (riches in the mountain). This was the favoured locality of the holy Nothburga's earthly career.

St. Nothburga is eminently characteristic of her country. She was the poorest of village maidens, and yet attained the highest and most lasting veneration of her people by the simple force of virtue. She was born in 1280. The child of pious parents, she drank in their good instructions with an instinctive aptitude. Their lessons of pure and Christian manners seemed as it were to crystallize and model themselves in her conduct; she grew up a living picture of holy counsels. She was scarcely seventeen when the lord of Castle Rottenburg, hearing of her perfect life, desired to have her in his household. Her parents, knowing she could have no better protectors, when they were no more, than their honoured knight Henry of Rottenburg and his good wife Gutta, gladly accepted the proposal.⁵⁰ In her new sphere Nothburga showed how well grounded was her virtue. It readily adapted itself to her altered position, and she became as faithful and devoted to her employers as she had been loving and obedient to her parents. In time she was advanced to the highest position of trust in the castle, and the greatest delight of her heart was

⁵⁰ Anna Maria Taigi, lately beatified in Rome, was also a maid-servant.

fulfilled when she was nominated to superintend the distribution of alms to the poor. Her prudence enabled her to distinguish between real and feigned need, and while she delighted in ministering to the one, she was firm in resisting the appeals of the other. Her general uprightness won for her the respect of all with whom she had to do, and she was the general favourite of all classes.

Such bright days could not last; the enemy of God's saints looked on with envy, and desired to 'sift' her 'as wheat.' The knight's son, Henry VI., in progress of time brought home his bride, Ottilia by name; and according to local custom, the older Knight Henry ceded his authority to the young castellan, living himself in comparative retirement. Ottilia was young and thoughtless, and haughty to boot, and it was not without a feeling of bitter resentment that she saw both her husband and his parents looked to Nothburga to supply her deficiencies in the management of the household. She resolved to get rid of the faithful servant, and her fury against her was only increased in proportion as she realized that the perfect uprightness of her conduct rendered it impossible to discover any pretext for dismissing her.

For Nothburga it was a life of daily silent martyrdom. There were a thousand mortifications in her mistress's power to inflict, and she lost no opportunity of annoying her, but never once succeeded in ruffling the gentleness of her spirit. 'My life has been too easy hitherto,' she would say in the stillness of her own

heart; 'now I am honoured at last by admission to the way of the Cross.' There was no brightness, no praise, no subsequent hope of distinction, to be derived from her patience; they were stabs in the dark, seen by no human eye, which made her bleed day by day. Yet she would not complain, much less seek to change her service. She said it would have been ungrateful to her first benefactors and employers to leave them, so long as she could spend herself for them, and ungrateful to God to shirk the trial He had lovingly sent her.

A crucial test of her fidelity, however, was at hand. The day came when Knight Henry and Gutta his wife were called to their long rest, and with them the chief protection of Nothburga departed. She was now almost at Ottilia's mercy. One of the first consequences of this change was that she was deprived of her favourite office of relieving the poor; and not only their customary alms were stopped, but their dole of food also; and as a final provocation, she was required to feed the pigs with the broken meat which she had been accustomed to husband for the necessitous.

The good girl's heart bled to see the needy whom she had been wont to relieve turned hungry away. The only means that occurred to her of remedying the evil in some measure, was to deny herself her own food and distribute it among them. Restricting her own diet to bread and water, she saved a little basketful, which she would take down every evening when work was done to the foot of the Leuchtenburg, where the poorest of

the castle dependents lived; and the blessing which multiplied the loaves in the wilderness made her scanty savings suffice to feed all who had come to beg of her.

That Nothburga contrived to feed the poor of a whole district, in spite of her orders to the contrary, of course became in time a ground of complaint for Ottilia. She had now a plausible reason for stirring up the Knight Henry against her. He had always defended her, out of regard for his parents' memory; but coming one evening past the Leuchtenburg, at Ottilia's instigation, he met Nothburga with her little burden, and asked her what she carried.

Here the adversary of the saints had prepared for her a great trial, says the legend. She, in her innocence, told fairly and honestly the import of her errand; but to the Knight's eyes, who had meantime untied her apron, the contents appeared, the legend says, to be wood shavings; and further, putting the wine-flask to his lips, it seemed to him to contain soap-suds. To her charitable intention he had made no objection, but at this, which appeared to him a studied affront, he was furious. He would listen to no explanation, but, returning at once to the castle, he gave Ottilia free and full leave to deal with the offending handmaiden as she pleased. Ottilia readily put the permission into effect by directing the castle guard to forbid her, on her return, ever again to pass the threshold of the castle.

This blow told with terrible effect on the poor girl. During her service at the castle both her parents had died; she had now no home to resort to. Putting her trust in God, however, she

retraced her steps alone through the darkness, and found shelter in a cottage of one of her clients. Her path was watched by the angels, who marked the track with fair seeds; and even to this day the hill-side which her feet so often pressed on her holy errand is said to be marked with a peculiar growth of flowers.

The next day she applied to a peasant of Eben to engage her as a field labourer. The peasant was exceedingly doubtful of her capacity for the work after the comparatively delicate nature of her previous mode of life. Her hardy perseverance and determination, aided by the grace of God, on which she implicitly relied, overcame all obstacles, and old Valentine soon found that her presence brought a blessing on all his substance. She had been with him about a year, when one day, being Saturday, he was very anxious to gather in the remainder of his harvest before an apprehended storm, and desired Nothburga, with the other reapers, to continue their labours after the hour of eve, when the holy rest was reckoned to have commenced. Nothburga, usually so obedient to his wishes, had the courage to refuse to infringe the commandment of religion; and to manifest that the will of God was on her side, showed him her sickle resting from labour, suspended in the air. Valentine, convinced by the prodigy, yielded to her representations, and her piety was more and more honoured by all the neighbours.

Soon after this, Ottilia, in the midst of her health and strength, was stricken with a dangerous illness. In presence of the fear of death she remembered her harsh treatment of Nothburga, and

sent for her to make amends for the past. As the good girl reached her bed-side she was just under the influence of a frightful attack of fevered remorse. Her long golden hair waved in untended masses over the pillow, like the flames of purgatory; her eyes glared like wheels of fire. Unconscious of what was passing round her, and filled only with her distempered fancies, she cried piteously: 'Drive away those horrid beasts! don't let them come near me! And why do you let those pale-faced creatures pursue me with their hollow glances? If I did deny them food, I cannot help it now! Oh! keep those horrid swine off me! If I did give them the portion of the poor, it is no reason you should let them defile me and trample on me!'

Nothburga was melted with compassion, and her glance of sympathy seemed to chase away the horrid vision. Come to herself, and calm again, Otillia recognized her and begged her pardon, which we may well believe she readily accorded; and shortly after, having reconciled herself to God with true compunction, she fell asleep in peace.⁵¹

⁵¹ I have throughout the story reconciled, as well as I could, the various versions of every episode in which local tradition indulges. One favourite account of Otillia's end, however, is so different from the one I have selected above, that I cannot forbear giving it also. It represents Otillia rushing in despair from her bed and wallowing in the enclosure of the pigs, whence, with all Henry's care, she could not be withdrawn alive. All the strength of his retainers was powerless to restrain the beasts' fury, and she was devoured, without leaving a trace behind; only that now and then, on stormy nights, when the pigs are grunting over their evening meal, some memory of their strange repast seems to possess them, and the wail of Otillia is heard resounding hopelessly through the valley.

Henry proposed to Nothburga to come and resume her old post in the castle, and moreover to add to it that of superintending the nurture of his only boy. Nothburga gladly accepted his offer, but, in her strict integrity, insisted on accepting no remission from the three years' service under which she had bound herself to Valentine. This concluded, she was received back with open arms at Castle Rottenburg, whither she took with her one of Valentine's daughters to instruct in household duties, that she might be meet to succeed her when her time should come.

Days of peace on earth are not for the saints. Her fight was fought out. The privations she had undergone in sparing her food for the poor, and her subsequent exposure in the field, brought on an illness, under which she shortly after sank. In conformity with her express desire, her body was laid on a bier, to which two young oxen were yoked, and left to follow their own course. The willing beasts tramped straight away over hill and dale and water-course till they came to the village of Eben, then consisting of but a couple of huts of the poor tillers of the soil, and Valentine's homestead; now, a thriving village, its two inns crowded every holiday with peasants, who make their excursions coincide with a visit of devotion to the peasant maiden's shrine. A small field-chapel of St. Ruprecht was then the only place of devotion, but here next morning the body of the holy maiden was found carefully laid at the foot of the altar, and here it was reverently buried, and for centuries it has

been honoured by all the country round.⁵² In 1434 the Emperor Maximilian, and Christopher, Prince-Bishop of Brixen, built a church over the spot, of which the ancient chapel served as the quire. In 1718 Gaspar Ignatius, Count of Künigl, the then Prince-Bishop, had the remains exhumed, and carried them with pomp to the neighbouring town of Schwatz, where they were left while the church was restored, and an open sarcophagus prepared for them to remain exposed for the veneration of the faithful, which was completed in 1738. In 1838 a centenary festival was observed with great rejoicing, and on March 27, 1862, the cycle of Nothburga's honour was completed in her solemn canonization at Rome.

The lords of Rottenburg had had possession of this territory, and had been the most powerful family of Tirol, ever since the eighth century; one branch extending its sway over the valleys surrounding the Inn, and another branch commanding the country bordering the Etsch; Leuchtenburg and Fleims being the chief fortress-seats of these latter. Their vast power greatly harassed the rulers of Tirol. In every conflict between the native or Austrian princes and the Dukes of Bavaria their influence would always turn the scale, and they often seem to have exercised it simply to show their power. Their family pride grew so high, that it became a proverb among the people. It was

⁵² Grimm has collected (*Deutsche Sagen*, Nos. 349 and 350) other versions of the tradition of oxen deciding the sites of shrines which, like the story of the steeple, meets us everywhere. A similar one concerning a camel is given in Stöber's *Legends of Alsace*.

observed that just during the period of the holy Nothburga's sojourn in the castle the halo of her humble spirit seemed to exercise a charm over their ruling passion. That was no sooner brought to a close than it once more burst forth, and with intenser energy, and by the end of a century more so blinded them that they ventured on an attempt to seize the supreme power over the land. Friedrich *mit der leeren Tasche* was not a prince to lose his rights without a worthy struggle; and then ensued one which was a noteworthy instance of the protection which royalty often afforded to the poor against the oppressions of a selfish aristocracy in the Middle Ages. Friedrich was the idol of the people: in his youth his hardy temperament had made him the companion not only of the mountain huntsman, but even of the mountain hewer of wood. Called to rule over the country, he always stood out manfully for the liberties of the peasant and the burghers of the little struggling communities of Tirol. The lords and knights who found their power thereby restricted were glad to follow the standard of Henry VI., Count of Rottenburg, in his rebellions. Forgetting all patriotism in his struggle for power, Henry called to his aid the Duke of Bavaria, who readily answered his appeal, reckoning that as soon as, by aiding Henry, he had driven Friedrich out, he would shortly after be able to secure the prize for himself.

The Bavarian troops, ever rough and lawless, now began laying waste the country in ruthless fashion. A Bavarian bishop, moved to compassion by the sufferings of the poor people, though

not of his own flock, pleaded so earnestly with the Duke, that he made peace with Friedrich, who was able to inflict due chastisement on Henry, for, powerful as he was, he was no match for him as a leader. He fell prisoner into Friedrich's hands, who magnanimously gave him his liberty; but, according to the laws of the time, his lands and fiefs were forfeit. Though the spirit of the high-minded noble was unbroken, the darling aim of his race which had devolved upon him for execution was defeated; his occupation gone, and his hopes quenched, he wandered about, the last of his race, not caring even to establish himself in any of the fiefs which he held under the Duke of Bavaria, and which consequently yet remained to him.

The history of Henry VI. of Rottenburg has a peculiarly gloomy and fantastic character. Ambitious to a fault, it was one cause of his ill success that he exercised himself in the nobler pursuits of life rather than in the career of arms. Letters of his which are still preserved show that he owed the ascendancy he exercised over his neighbours quite as much to his strength of character and grasp of mind as to his title and riches. No complaint is brought against him in chronicles of the time of niggardliness towards the Church, or of want of uprightness or patience as a judge; he is spoken of as if he had learned to make himself respected as well as feared. But he lived apart in a lofty sphere of his own, seldom mixing in social intercourse, while his refined tastes prevented his becoming an adept in the art of war. Friedrich, on the other hand, who was a hero in the field

by his bravery, was also the favourite of the people through his frank and ready-spoken sympathy. Henry had perhaps, on the whole, the finer – certainly the more cultivated – character, but Friedrich was more the man of the time; and it was this doom of succumbing to one to whom he felt himself superior which pressed most heavily on the last of the Rottenburgers. What became of him was never known; consequently many wild stories became current to account for his end: that he never laid his proud head low at the call of death, but yet wanders on round the precincts where he once ruled; that his untamable ambition made him a prey to the Power of Evil, who carried him off, body and soul, to the reward of the proud; that, shunning all sympathy and refusing all assistance, he died, untended and unknown, in a spot far from the habitations of men. It would appear most probable, however, that his death, like his life, was a contrast with the habits of his age: it is thought that, unable to bear his humiliation, he fell by his own hand within a twelvemonth of his defeat.

The deliverance from this powerful vassal, and the falling in of his domains, tended greatly to strengthen and consolidate Friederich's rule over Tirol, and ultimately to render the government of the country more stable, and more beneficial to the people.

Not long after Henry VI.'s disappearance a mysterious fire broke out in the old castle on two separate occasions, laying the greater part of it in ruins. But on each occasion it was noticed that the devouring element, at the height of its fury, spared the little

room which was honoured as that in which the holy Nothburga had dwelt.

A gentler story about this neighbourhood is of a boy tending sheep upon the neighbouring height, who found among some ruins a beautiful bird's-nest. What was his surprise, on examining his treasure, to find it full of broken shells which the fledglings had cast off and left behind them, but shells of a most singular kind. Still greater was his astonishment when, on showing them at home, his parents told him they were no shells, but pieces of precious ore. The affair caused the peasants to search in the neighbourhood, and led to the discovery of one of those veins of metal the working of which brought so great prosperity to Tirol in the fifteenth century, and which are not yet extinct. Their discovery was always by accident, and often by occasion of some curious incident, while the fact that such finds were to be hit upon acted as a strong stimulant to the imagination of a romantic and wonder-loving people, giving belief to all sorts of fables to tell how the treasure was originally deposited, and how subsequently it was preserved and guarded.

CHAPTER III.

NORTH TIROL – UNTERINNTHAL (RIGHT INN-BANK). THE ZILLERTHAL

I may venture to say that among the nations of Europe, and I have more or less seen them all, I do not know any one in which there is so large a measure of real piety as among the Tyroleans... I do not recollect to have once heard in the country an expression savouring of scepticism.’ – Inglis.

The Zillertal claims to bear the palm over all the Valleys of Tirol for natural beauty – a claim against which the other valleys may, I think, find something to say.

There is an organised service of carriages (the road is only good for an *einspanner*— one-horse vehicle) into the Zillertal, at both Brixlegg and Jenbach, taking between four and five hours to reach Zell, an hour and a-half more to Mayrhofen. Its greatest ornaments are the castles of Kropfsberg, Lichtwer, and Matzen; the Reiterkogel and the Gerlos mountains, forming the present boundary against Salzburg; and the Ziller, with its rapid current which gave it its name (from *celer*),⁵³ its tributary streams might

⁵³ It is perhaps to be reckoned among the tokens of Etruscan residence among the

very well have received the same appellation, for their *celerity* is often so impetuous that great damage is done to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

Before starting for the Zillerthal I may mention two castles which may also be seen from Jenbach, though like it they belong in strictness to the chapter on the Left Inn-bank. One is Thurnegg by name, which was restored as a hunting-seat by Archduke Ferdinand; and at the instance of his second wife, the pious Anna Katharina of Mantua, he added a chapel, in order that his hunting-parties might always have the opportunity of hearing Mass before setting out for their sport.

Another is Tratzberg, which derived its name from its defiant character. It is situated within an easy walk of Jenbach. Permission to visit it is readily given, for it counts as a show-place. It may be taken on the way to S. Georgenberg and Viecht, but it occupies too much time, and quite merits the separate excursion by its collections and its views. Frederick sold it in 1470 to Christian Tänzel, a rich mining proprietor of the neighbourhood, who purchased with it the right to bear the title of Knight of Tratzberg. No expense was spared in its decoration, and its paintings and marbles made it the wonder of the country round. In 1573 it passed into the hands of the Fuggers, and at the present day belongs to Count Enzenberg, who makes it an occasional residence. A story is told of it which is in striking

Rhætian Alps, for Mr. Isaac Taylor finds that the word belongs to their language. (*Etruscan Researches*, pp. 333, 380.)

contrast to that mentioned of Thurnegg. One of the knights of the castle in ancient time had a reputation for caring more for the pleasures of the chase than for the observances of religion. Though he could get up at an early hour enough at the call of his *Jäger's* horn, the chapel bell vainly wooed him to Mass.

In vain morning by morning his guardian angel directed the sacred sound upon his ear; the knight only rolled himself up more warmly in the coverlet, and said, 'No need to stir yet, the dogs are not brought round till five o'clock.'

'Ding – dong – dang! Come – to – Mass! Ding – dong – dang!' sang the bells.

'No, I can't,' yawned the knight, and covered his ear with the bed-clothes.

The bell was silent, and the knight knew that the pious people who had to work hard all day for their living, and yet spared half an hour to ask God's blessing on their labours, were gone into the chapel.

He fancied he saw the venerable old chaplain bowing before the altar, and smiting his breast; he saw the faithful rise from their knees while the glad tidings of the Gospel were announced, and they proclaimed their faith in them in the Creed; he heard them fall on their knees again while the sacred elements were offered on the altar and the solemn words of the consecration pronounced; he saw little Johann, the farrier's son, bow his head reverently on the steps, and then sound the threefold bell which told of the most solemn moment of the sacred mysteries; and the

chapel bell took up the note, and announced the joyful news to those whom illness or necessity forced to remain away.

Then hark! what was that? The rocks under the foundation of the castle rattled together, and all the stones of its massive walls chattered like the teeth of an old woman stricken with fear. The three hundred and sixty-five windows of the edifice rattled in their casements, but above them all sounded the piercing sound of the knight's cry of anguish. The affrighted people rushed into the knight's chamber; and what was their horror when, still sunk in the soft couch where he was wont to take his ease, there he lay dead, while his throat displayed the print of three black and burning claws. The lesson they drew was that the knight, having received from his guardian angel the impulse to repair his sloth by at least *then* rising to pay the homage which the bell enjoined, had rejected even this last good counsel, thereby filling up the measure of his faults. For years after marks were shown upon the wall as having been sprinkled by his blood!

The first little town that reckons in the Zillerthal is Strass, a very unpretending place, and then Schlitters.

At Schlitters they have a story of a butcher who, going to Strass to buy an ox, had scarcely crossed the Zill and got a little way from home, than he saw lying by the way-side a heap of the finest wheat. Not liking to appropriate property which might have a legitimate owner, he contented himself with putting a few grains in his pocket, and a few into his sack, as a specimen. As he went by the way his pockets and his sack began to get heavier and

heavier, till it seemed as if the weight would burst them through. Astonished at the circumstance he put in his hand, and found them all full of shining gold. As soon as he had recovered his composure, he set off at the top of his speed, and, heeding neither hill or dale, regained the spot where he had first seen the wheat. But it was no more to be seen. If he had had faith to commend himself to God on his first surprise, say the peasants, and made the holy sign of redemption, the whole treasure would have been his.

There is another tradition at Schlitters of a more peculiar character. It is confidently affirmed that the village once boasted two churches, though but a very small one would supply the needs of the inhabitants. Hormayr has sifted the matter to the bottom, and explains it in this way. There lived in the neighbourhood two knights, one belonging to the Rottenburger, and the other to the Freundsberger family. Now the latter had a position of greater importance, but the former possessed a full share of family haughtiness, and would not yield precedence to any one. In order not to be placed on a footing of inferiority, or even of equality, with his rival, he built a second church, which he might attend without being brought into contact with him. No expense was spared, and the church was solidly built enough; but no blessing seemed to come on the edifice so built, no pains could ever keep it in repair, and at last, after crumbling into ruin, every stone of it disappeared.

Kropfsberg is a fine ruin, belonging to Count Enzenberg, seen

a little above Strass, on a commanding height between the high road and the Inn. It is endeared to the memory of the Tiroleans by having been the spot where, on St. Michael's Day, 1416, their favourite Friedrich *mit der leeren Tasche* was reconciled with his brother Ernst *der Eiserne*, who, after the Council of Constance had pronounced its ban on Frederick, had thought to possess himself of his dominions.

The largest town of the Zillerthal is Fügen, a short distance below Schlitters, and the people are so proud of it, that they have a saying ever in their mouths, 'There is but one Vienna and one Fügen in the world!' It doubtless owes its comparative liveliness and prosperity to its château being kept up and often inhabited by its owners (the Countess of Dönhof and her family). This is also a great ornament to the place, having been originally built in the fifteenth century by the lords of Fieger, though unhappily the period of its rebuilding (1733) was not one very propitious to its style. The sculpture in the church by the native artist, Nissl, is much more meritorious. The church of Ried, a little further along the valley, is adorned with several very creditable pictures by native artists. It is the native place of one of the bravest of the defenders of throne and country, so celebrated in local annals of the early part of the century, Sebastian Riedl. He was only thirty-nine at his death in 1821. Once, on an occasion of his fulfilling a mission to General Blucher, he received from him a present of a hussar's jacket, which he wore at the battle of Katzbach, and it is still shown with pride by his compatriots.

The Zillerthal was the only part of Tirol where Lutheranism ever obtained any hold over the people. The population was very thin and scattered, consequently they were out of the way of the regular means of instruction in their own faith; and it often happened, when their dwellings and lands were devastated by inundations, that they were driven to seek a livelihood by carrying gloves, bags, and other articles made of chamois leather, also of the horns of goats and cattle, into the neighbouring states of Germany. Hence they often came back imbued with the new doctrines, and bringing books with them, which may have spread them further. This went on, though without attracting much attention, till the year 1830, when they demanded permission to erect a church of their own. The *Stände* of Tirol were unanimous, however, to resist any infringement of the unity of belief which had so long been preserved in the country. The Emperor confirmed their decision, and gave the schismatics the option of being reconciled with the Church, or of following their opinions in other localities of the empire where Lutheran communities already existed. A considerable number chose the latter alternative, and peace was restored to the Zillerthal. Every facility was given them by the government for making the move advantageously, and the inhabitants, who had been long provoked by the scorn and ridicule with which the exiles had treated their time-honoured observances, held a rejoicing at the deliverance.

At the farther end of the valley is Zell, which though smaller in population than Fügen, has come to be considered its chief town.

Its principal inn, for there are several —*zum Post*— if I recollect right, claims to be not merely a *Gasthaus*, but a *Gasthof*. The *Brauhaus*, however, with less pretension, is a charming resort of the old-fashioned style, under the paternal management of Franz Eigner, whose daughters sing their local melodies with great zest and taste. The church, dedicated to St. Vitus, is modern, having been built in 1771–82; but its slender green steeple is not inelegant. It contains some meritorious frescoes by Zeiler. The town contains some most picturesque buildings, as the Presbytery, grandiloquently styled the *Dechanthof*, one or two educational establishments, several well-to-do private houses, and the town-hall, once a flourishing brewery, which failed — I can hardly guess how, for the chief industry of the place is supplying the neighbourhood with beer.

A mile beyond Zell is Hainzenberg, where the process of gold-washing on a small scale may be studied, said to be carried on by the owner, the Bishop of Brizen, on a sort of ultra-co-operative principle, as a means of support to the people of the place, without profit to himself. There is also a rather fine waterfall in the neighbourhood, and an inn where luncheon may be had. The most interesting circumstance, perhaps, in connexion with Zell is the *Kirchweih-fest*, which is very celebrated in all the country round. I was not fortunate enough to be in the neighbourhood at the right time of year to witness it. On the other side of the Hainzenberg, where the mountain climber can take his start for the Gerlozalp, is a little sanctuary called *Mariä-rastkapelle*, and

behind it runs a sparkling brook. Of the chapel the following singular account is given: – In olden time there stood near the stream a patriarchal oak sacred to Hulda;⁵⁴ after the introduction of Christianity the tree was hewn down, and as they felled it they heard Hulda cry out from within. The people wanted to build up a chapel on the spot in honour of the Blessed Virgin, and began to collect the materials. No sooner had the labourers left their work, however, than there appeared an army of ravens, who, setting themselves vigorously to the task, carried every stone and every balk of wood to a neighbouring spot. This happened day after day, till at last the people took it as a sign that the soil profaned by the worship of Hulda was not pleasing to heaven, and so they raised their chapel on the place pointed out by the ravens, where it now stands.

After Mayrhof, the next village (with three inns), in the neighbourhood of which garnets are found and mills for working them abound, the Zillerthal spreads out into numerous branches of great picturesqueness, but adapted only to the hardy pedestrian, as the Floitenthal, the Sondergrundthal, the Hundskehlthal (Dog's-throat valley), the Stillupethal, with its Teufelsteg, a bridge spanning a giddy ravine, and its dashing series of waterfalls. The whole closed in by the Zemmer range and its glaciers, the boundary against South-Tirol, said to contain

⁵⁴ 'Hulda was supposed to delight in the neighbourhood of lakes and streams; her glittering mansion was under the blue waters, and at the hour of mid-day she might be seen in the form of a beautiful woman bathing and then disappearing.' – Wolf, *Deutsche Götterlehre*. See also Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, pp. 164–8.

some of the finest scenery and best hunting-grounds in the country. It has been also called the 'el Dorado' of the botanist and the mineralogist. The most important of these by-valleys is the Duxerthal, by non-Tiroleans generally written Tuxerthal, a very high-lying tract of country, and consequently one of the coldest and wildest districts of Tirol. Nevertheless, its enclosed and secluded retreat retains a saying perhaps many thousand years old, that once it was a bright and fertile spot yielding the richest pastures, and that then the population grew so wanton in their abundance that they wasted their substance. Then there came upon them from above an icy blast, before which their children and their young cattle sank down and died; and the herbage was, as it were, bound up, and the earth was hardened, so that it only brought forth scarce and stunted herbs, and the mountain which bounded their pleasant valley itself turned to ice, and is called to this day *die gefrorene Wand*, the frozen wall. The scattered population of this remote valley numbered so few souls, that they depended on neighbouring villages for their ecclesiastical care, and during winter when shut in by the snow within their natural fastnesses, were cut off from all spiritual ministration, so that the bodies of those who died were preserved in a large chest, of which the remains are yet shown, until the spring made their removal to Mattrey possible. In the middle of the seventeenth century they numbered 645 souls, and have now increased to about 1,400; about the year 1686 they built a church of their own, which is now served by two or three priests. For the

first couple of miles the valley sides are so steep, that the only level ground between them is the bed of an oft-times torrential stream, but yet they are covered almost to the very top with a certain kind of verdure; further on it widens out into the district of Hinterdix, which is a comparatively pleasant cheerful spot, with some of the small cattle (which are reared here as better adapted to the gradients on which they have to find their food,) browsing about, and sundry goats and sheep, quite at home on the steepes. But scarce a tree or shrub is to be seen – just a few firs, and here and there a solitary mountain pine; and in the coldest season the greatest suffering is experienced from want of wood to burn. The only resource is grubbing up the roots remaining from that earlier happier time, which but for this proof might have been deemed fabulous.

The hardships which the inhabitants of this valley cheerfully undergo ought to serve as a lesson of diligence indeed. The whole grass-bearing soil is divided among them. The more prosperous have a cow or more of their own, by the produce of which they live; others take in cows from Innsbruck and Hall to graze. The butter they make becomes an article of merchandise, the transport of which over the mountain paths provides a hard and precarious livelihood for a yet poorer class; the pay is about a halfpenny per lb. per day, and to make the wage eke out a man will carry a hundred and a woman fifty to seventy pounds through all weathers and over dangerous paths, sleeping by night on the hard ground, the chance of a bundle of hay in winter being a

luxury; and one of their snow-covered peaks is with a certain irony named the Federbett. They make some six or seven cwt. of cheese in the year, but this is kept entirely for home consumption.

The care of these cattle involves a labour which only the strongest constitution could stand – a continual climbing of mountains in the cold, often in the dark, during great part of the year allowing scarcely four or five hours for sleep. Nor is this their only industry. They contrive also to grow barley and flax; this never ripens, yet they make from it a kind of yarn, which finds a ready sale in Innsbruck; they weave from it too a coarse linen, which helps to clothe them, together with the home-spun wool of their sheep. Also, by an incredible exercise of patience, they manage to heap up and support a sufficient quantity of earth round the rough and stony soil of their valley to set potatoes, carrots, and other roots. Notwithstanding all these hardships, they are generally a healthy race, remarkable for their endurance, frugality, and love of home. Neither does their hard life make them neglect the improvement of the mind; nowhere are schools more regularly attended, although the little children have many of them an hour or two's walk through the snow. The church is equally frequented; so that if the great cold be sent, as the legend teaches, as a chastisement,⁵⁵ the people seem to have had grace given them to turn it to good account.

The Zemgrund, Zamsgrund, and the Schwarzensteingrund,

⁵⁵ One version of the legend says, the Frozen Wall was formed out of the quantities of butter the people had wasted.

are other pedestrian excursions much recommended from Mayrhof, but all equally require the aid of local guides, and have less to repay toil than those already described.

Travellers who merely pass through Tirol by rail may catch a sight of the mountains which hem in the Duxerthal, just after passing the station of Steinach, on their left hand, when facing the south.

CHAPTER IV. NORTH TIROL – UNTERINNTHAL (RIGHT INN-BANK). (ZILLERTHAL CUSTOMS. – THE WILDSCHÖNAU.)

*Deep secret springs lie buried in man's heart,
Which Nature's varied aspect works at will;
Whether bright hues or shadows she impart,
Or fragrant odours from her breath distil,
Or the clear air with sounds melodious fill;
She speaks a language with instruction fraught,
And Art from Nature steals her mimic skill,
Whose birds, whose rills, whose sighing winds first
taught
That sound can charm the soul, and rouse each noble
thought.
Lady Charlotte Bury.*

We had parted from the Zillerthal, and had once more taken our places in the railway carriage at Jenbach for a short stage to reach Kundl,⁵⁶ as a base of operations for visiting the

⁵⁶ This excursion was made on occasion of a different journey from that mentioned in Chapter i. Of course, if taken on the way from Kufstein to Innsbruck, you would take the Wildschönau *before* the Zillerthal.

Wildschönau, as well as the country on the other side of the Inn. The entry was effected with the haste usual at small stations, where the advent of a traveller, much more of a party of tourists, is an exceptional event. The adjustment of our bags and rugs was greatly facilitated by the assistance of the only occupant of the compartment into which we were thrust; and when we had settled down and expressed our thanks for his urbanity, I observed that he eyed us with an amused but not unpleasant scrutiny. At last his curiosity overcame his reticence. 'I have frequent occasion to travel this way to Munich and Vienna,' he said, 'and I do not remember ever to have fallen in with any strangers starting from Jenbach.'

The conversation so opened soon revealed that our new friend, though spending most of his time in the Bavarian and Austrian capitals, nevertheless retained all a mountaineer's fondness for the Tirolese land, which had given him birth some seventy years before. He was greatly interested in our exploration of the Zillerthal, but much annoyed that we were leaving instead of entering it; had it been the other way, he said, he would have afforded us an acquaintance with local customs such as, he was sure, no other part of Europe could outvie. I assured him I had been disappointed at not coming across them during our brief visit, but fully hoped on some future occasion to have better success. He warmly recommended me not to omit the attempt, and for my encouragement cited a local adage testifying to the attractions of the valley —

Wer da kommt in's Zillerthal
Der kommt gewiss zum Zweitenmal.⁵⁷

He was interesting us much in his vividly-coloured sketches of peasant life, when the train came to a stand; the guard shouted 'Kundl,' and we were forced to part. He gave us an address in Munich, however, where we were afterwards fortunate enough to find him; and he then gave me some precious particulars, which I was not slow to garner.

He seemed to know the people well, having lived much among them in his younger days, and claimed for them – perhaps with some little partiality – the character of being industrious, temperate, moral, and straightforward, even above the other dwellers in Tirol; and no less, of being physically the finest race. Their pure bracing mountain air, the severe struggle which nature wages with them in their cultivation of the fruits of the soil, and the hardy athletic pursuits with which they vary their round of agricultural labour, tend to maintain and ever invigorate this original stock of healthfulness. Their athletic games are indeed an institution to which they owe much, and which they keep up with a devotion only second to that with which they cultivate their religious observances. Every national and social festival is celebrated with these games. The favourite is the *scheibenschiessen*, or shooting at a mark, for accuracy in which

⁵⁷ Whoever comes into the Zillerthal is sure to visit it a second time.

they are celebrated in common with the inhabitants of all other districts of the country, but are beaten by none; their *stutze* (short-barrelled rifle) they regard more in the light of a friend and companion than a weapon, and dignify it with the household name of the bread-winner. Wrestling is another favourite sport, to be the champion wrestler of the hamlet is a distinction which no inhabitant of the Zillerthal would barter for gold. The best ‘*Haggler*,’ ‘*Mairraffer*,’ and ‘*Roblar*’ – three denominations of wrestlers – are regarded somewhat in the light of a superior order of persons, and command universal respect. In wilder times, it is true, this ran into abuse; and some who had attained excellence in an art so dangerous when misapplied betook themselves to a life of violence and freebooting; but this has entirely passed away now, and anything like a highway robbery is unheard of. The most chivalrous rules guard the decorum of the game, which every bystander feels it a point of honour to maintain; the use even of the *stossring*, a stout metal ring for the little finger, by which a telling and sometimes disfiguring blow may be given by a dexterous hand, is discouraged. It is still worn, however, and prized more than as a mere ornament – as a challenge of the wearer’s power to wield it if he choose, or if provoked to show his prowess. Running in races – which, I know not why, they call *springen*– obtains favour at some seasons of the year. At bowls and skittles, too, they are famous hands; and in their passion for the games have originated a number of fantastic stories of how the fairies and wild men of the woods indulge

in them too. Many a herdsman, on his long and solitary watch upon the distant heights, gives to the noises of nature which he has heard, but could not account for, an origin which lives in the imagination of those to whom he recounts it on his return home; and his fancies are recorded as actual events. But that the spirits play at skittles, and with gold and silver balls, is further confirmed by peasants who have lost their way in mists and snow-storms, and whose troubled dreams have made pleasant stories. One of these, travelling with his pedlar's pack, sought refuge from the night air in the ruined castle of Starkenberg, the proud stronghold of a feudal family, second only in importance to the Rottenburgers, and equally brought low by Friedrich *mit der leeren Tasche*. The pedlar was a bold wrestler, and felt no fear of the airy haunters of ruined castles. He made a pillow of his pack, and laid him down to sleep as cosily as if at home, in the long dank grass; nevertheless, when the clock of the distant village church – to whose striking he had been listening hour by hour with joy, as an earnest that by the morning light he would know how to follow its guiding to the inhabited locality it denoted – sang out the hour of midnight, twelve figures in ancient armour stalked into the hall, and set themselves to play at bowls, for which they were served with skulls. The pedlar was a famous player, and nothing daunted, took up a skull, and set himself to play against them, and beat them all; then there was a shout of joy, such as mortal ears had never heard, and the twelve spirits declared they were released. Scarcely had they

disappeared, when ten more spirits, whom the pedlar concluded like the last to be retainers of the mighty Starkenberger of old, entered by different doors, which they carefully locked behind them, and then bringing our hero the keys, begged him to open the doors each with the right one. The pedlar was a shrewd fellow, and though doors, keys, and spirits were each alike of their kind, his observation had been so accurate that he opened each with the right key without hesitation, whereupon the ten spirits declared themselves released too. Then came in the Evil One, furious with the pedlar, who was setting free all his captives, and swore he would have him in their stead. But the pedlar demanded fair play, and offered to stake his freedom on a game with his Arch-Impiety. The pedlar won, and the demon withdrew in ignominy; but the released spirits came round their deliverer, and loaded him with as much gold and valuable spoil as he could carry.

This story seemed to me to belong to a class not unfrequently met with, but yet differing from the ordinary run of legends on this subject, inasmuch as the spirits, who were generally believed to be bound to earth in penance, were released by no act of Christian virtue, and without any appeal to faith; and I could not help asking my old friend if he did not think this very active clever pedlar might have been one of those who according to his own version had indulged in freebooting tendencies, and that having with a true Zillerthaler's tendencies pined to return to his native valley, he had invented the tale to account for his accession of fortune, and the nature of his possessions. I think my friend

was a little piqued at my unmasking his hero, but he allowed it was not an improbable solution for the origin of some similar tales.

Prizes, he went on to tell me, are often set up for excellence in these games, which are cherished as marks of honour, without any reference to their intrinsic value. And so jealously is every distinction guarded, that a youth may not wear a feather or the sprig of rosemary, bestowed by a beloved hand, in his jaunty hat, unless he is capable of proving his right to it by his pluck and muscular development.

Dancing is another favourite recreation, and is pursued with a zest which makes it a healthful and useful exercise too. The *Schnodahüpfel* and the *Hosennagler* are as dear to the Zillerthaler as the *Bolera* to the Andalusian or the *Jota* to the Aragonese; like the Spanish *Seguidillas*, too, the Zillerthalers accompany their dance with sprightly songs, which are often directed to inciting each other not to flag.

Another amusement, in which they have a certain similarity with Spaniards, is cow-fighting. But it is not a mere sport, and cruelty is as much avoided as possible, for the beasts are made to fight only with each other, and only their natural weapons – each other's horns – are brought against them. The victorious cow is not only the glory and darling of her owner, who loads her with garlands and caresses; but the fight serves to ascertain the hardy capacity of the animals as leaders of the herd, an office which is no sinecure, when they have to make their way to and from steep

pastures difficult of access.⁵⁸ Ram and goat fights are also held in the same way, and with the same object.

The chief occasions for exercising these pastimes are the village festivals, the *Kirchtag*, or anniversary of the Church consecration, the Carnival season, weddings and baptisms, and the opening of the season for the *Scheibenschiessen*; also the days of pilgrimages to various popular shrines; and the *Primizen* and *Sekundizen*— the first Mass of their pastors, and its fiftieth anniversary – general festivals all over Tirol.

A season of great enjoyment is the Carnival, which with them begins at the Epiphany. Their great delight then is to go out in the dusk of evening, when work is over, disguised in various fantastic dresses, and making their way round from house to house, set the inmates guessing who they can be. As they are very clever in arranging all the accessories of their assumed character, changing their voice and mien, each visit is the occasion of the most laughable mistakes. In the towns, the Carnival procession is generally got up with no little taste and artistic skill. The arch-buffoon goes on ahead, a loud and merry jingle of bells announcing his advent at every movement of the horse he bestrides, collects the people out of every house. Then follow, also mounted, a train of maskers, Turks, soldiers, gipsies, pirates; and if there happen to be among them anyone

⁵⁸ In the Vintschgau (see *infra*) the leading cow has the title of *Proglerin*, from the dialectic word *progen*, to carry one's head high. She wears also the most resounding bell.

representing a judge or authority of any sort, he is always placed at the head of the tribe. In the evening, their perambulations over, they assemble in the inn, where the acknowledged wag of the locality reads a humorous diatribe, which touches on all the follies and events, that can be anyhow made to wear a ridiculous aspect, of the past year.

Christmas – here called *Christnacht* as well as *Weihnacht*– is observed (as all over the country, but especially here) by dispensing the *Kloubabrod*, a kind of dough cake, stuffed with sliced pears, almonds, nuts, and preserved fruits. The making of this is a particular item in the education of a Zillerthaler maiden, who has a special interest in it, inasmuch as the one she prepares for the household must have the first cut in it made by her betrothed, who at the same time gives her some little token of his affection in return. Speaking of Christmas customs reminded my informant of an olden custom in Brixen, that the Bishop should make presents of fish to his retainers. This fish was brought from the Garda-see, and the Graf of Tirol and the Prince-bishop of Trent were wont to let it pass toll-free through their dominions. A curious letter is extant, written by Bishop Rötzel, ‘*an sambstag nach Stæ. Barbaræ, 1444*,’ courteously enforcing this privilege.

The *Sternsingen* is a favourite way of keeping the Epiphany in many parts of the country. Three youths, one of them with his face blackened, and all dressed to represent the three kings, go about singing from homestead to homestead; and in some places there is a Herod ready to greet them from the window with riming

answers to their verses, of which the following is a specimen: it is the address of the first king —

König Kaspar bin ich gennant
Komm daher aus Morgenland
Komm daher in grosser Eil
Vierzehn Tag, fünftausend Meil.
Melchores tritt du herein.⁵⁹

Melchior, thus appealed to, stands forward and sings his lay; and then Balthazar; and then the three join in a chorus, in which certain hints are given that as they come from so far some refreshment would be acceptable; upon which the friendly peasant-wife calls them in, and regales them with cakes she has prepared ready for the purpose, and sends them on their mountain-way rejoicing. Possibly some such custom may have given rise to the institution of our ‘Twelfth-cake.’ In the Ætzthal they go about with the greeting, ‘Gelobt sei Jesus Christus zur Gömacht.’⁶⁰ Another Tirolean custom connected with Epiphany was the blessing of the stalls of the cattle on the eve, in memory of the stable in which the Wise Men found the Holy Family.

Their wedding fêtes seem to be among the most curious of all their customs. My friend gave me a detailed account

⁵⁹ ‘Kaspar my name: from the East I came: I came thence with great speed: five thousand miles in fourteen days: Melchior, step in.’ Zingerle gives a version of the whole set of rimes.

⁶⁰ See *Sitten Bräuche u. Meinungen des Tiroler Volks*, p. 81.

of one, between two families of the better class of peasants, which he had attended some years back; and he believed they were little changed since. It is regarded as an occasion of great importance; and as soon as the banns had been asked in church, the bridegroom went round with a chosen friend styled a *Hochzeitsbitter*, to invite friends and relations to the marriage. The night before the wedding (for which throughout Tirol a Thursday is chosen, except in the Iselthal, where a preference for Monday prevails), there was a great dance at the house of the bride, who from the moment the banns have been asked is popularly called the *Kanzel-Braut*. 'Rather, I should say,' he pursued, 'it was in the barn; for though a large cottage, there was no room that would contain the numbers of merry couples who flocked in, and even the barn was so crowded, that the dancers could but make their way with difficulty, and were continually tumbling over one another; but it was a merry night, for all were in their local costume, and the pine-wood torches shed a strange and festive glare over them. The next morning all were assembled betimes. It was a bitterly cold day, but the snow-storm was eagerly hailed, as it is reckoned a token that the newly-wedded pair will be rich; we met first at the bride's house for what they called the *Morgensuppe*, a rough sort of hearty breakfast of roast meat, white bread, and sausages; and while the elder guests were discussing it, many were hard at work again dancing, and the young girls of the village were dressing up the bride – one of the adornments *de rigueur* being a knot of streamers of

scarlet leather trimmed with gold lace, and blue arm-bands and hat-ribbons; these streamers are thought by the simple people to be a cure for goitres, and are frequently bound round them with that idea. At ten o'clock the first church bell rang, when all the guests hastily assembled round the table, and drank the health of the happy pair in a bowl from which they had first drank. Then they ranged themselves into a procession, and marched towards the church, the musicians leading the way. The nearest friends of the bridal pair were styled "train-bearers," and formed a sort of guard of honour round the bride, walking bare-headed, their hats, tastily wreathed with flowers, in their hands. The priest of the village walked by the bride on one side, her parents on the other. She wore a wreath of rosemary – a plant greatly prized here, as among the people of Spain and Italy, and considered typical of the Blessed Virgin's purity – in her hair; her holiday dress was confined by a girdle, and she held her rosary in her hand. The bridegroom was almost as showily dressed, and wore a crown of silver wire; beside him walked another priest, and behind them came the host of the village inn, a worthy who holds a kind of patriarchal position in our villages. He is always one of the most important men of the place, generally owns the largest holding of land, and drives one or two little trades besides attending to the welfare of his guests. But more than this, he is for the most part a man of upright character and pleasant disposition, and is often called to act as adviser and umpire in rural complications.

‘The procession was closed by the friends and neighbours,

walking two and two, husband and wife together; and the church bells rang merrily through the valley as it passed along.

‘The ceremonial in the church was accompanied with the best music the locality could afford, the best singers from the neighbouring choirs lending their voices. To add to the solemnity of the occasion, lighted tapers were held by the bridal party at the Elevation; and it was amusing to observe how the young people shunned a candle that did not burn brightly, as that is held to be an omen of not getting married within the year. At the close of the function, the priest handed round to them the *Johannissegen*, a cup of spiced wine mixed with water, which he had previously blessed, probably so called in memory of the miracle at the wedding-feast recorded in the Gospel of that Apostle.

‘The band then struck up its most jocund air, and full of mirth the gladsome party wended their way to the inn. After a light repast and a short dance, and a blithesome *Trutzlied*, they passed on, according to custom, to the next, and so on to all the inns within a radius of a few miles. This absorbed about three or four hours; and then came the real wedding banquet, which was a very solid and long affair – in fact, I think fresh dishes were being brought in one after another for three or four hours more. Even in this there was a memory of the Gospel narrative, for in token of their joy they keep for the occasion a fatted calf, the whole of which is served up joint by joint, not omitting the head; this was preceded by soup, and followed by a second course of sweet dumplings, with fruit and the inevitable pickled cabbage, which

on this day is dignified with the title of *Ehrenkraut*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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