GUSTAV FREYTAG

THE LOST MANUSCRIPT: A NOVEL

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Freytag G.

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Содержание

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PART I

"A noble human life does not end on earth with death. It continues in the minds and the deeds of friends, as well as in the thoughts and the activity of the nation."

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

Gustav Freytag has expressed the central idea of his novel *The Lost Manuscript* in the motto which he has written for the American edition:

"A noble human life does not end on earth with death. It continues in the minds and the deeds of friends, as well as in the thoughts and the activity of the nation."

This idea of the continuity and preservation of soul-life permeates the whole work. It meets us at every hand. We observe the professor in his study, ever eager to fathom the thoughts of the great thinkers of the past and imbuing his students with their lofty spirit. We sympathize with the heroine of this novel, the strong, pious Saxon maiden, in her religious and intellectual development; we behold her soul enlarging under the influence of unusual and trying situations; we watch her mentally growing amid the new ideas crowding in upon her. We enjoy the droll characterizations of the half-educated, of Mrs. Rollmaus and the servants, in whose minds the mysteries of soul-life appear in the shape of superstitious notions. And we see, again, the consequences of wrong-doing, of errors, and of mistakes continuing like a heavy curse, depressing the mind and hindering its freedom. And this last provokes a wholesome reaction and is finally conquered by unshirking courage in honest spiritual combat.

Illustrations of psychical laws showing the connections and continuity of the threads in the warp and woof of human soul-life, are found indeed in all the works of Gustav Freytag. The great novelist anticipated the results that have of late been established by the experiments of modern psychology. He says in his Autobiographical Reminiscences:

"What a man's own life accomplishes in the formation of his character, and the extent to which it fully develops his native capacities, we observe and estimate even in the best cases only with imperfect knowledge. But still more difficult is it to determine and comprehend what the living have acquired in the way of advancement and hindrance from their parents and ancestors; for the threads are not always visible that bind the existence of the present to the souls of generations past; and even where they are discernible, their power and influence are scarcely to be calculated. Only we notice that the force with which they operate is not equally strong in every life, and that sometimes it is too powerful and terrible.

"It is well that from us men usually remains concealed, what is inheritance from the remote past, and what the independent acquisition of our own existence; since our life would become full of anxiety and misery, if we, as continuations of the men of the past, had perpetually to reckon with the blessings and curses which former times leave hanging over the problems of our own existence. But it is indeed a joyous labor, at times, by a retrospective glance into the past, to bring into fullest consciousness the fact that many of our successes and achievements have only been made possible through the possessions that have come to us from the lives of our parents, and through that also which the previous ancestral life of our family has accomplished and produced for us."

Is not this a revival of the old idea of the transmigration of souls? To be sure, the soul is not a material thing made of an invisible and airy substance, fluttering about after death and entering into another body. There are no material migrations of soul taking place, however tenuous the substance of the soul might be imagined to be. The memories of the present, our recollection of our past existence, depend on the fact that the living matter which is constantly replacing itself in us by other living matter, like the water in a wave rolling on the surface of the sea, always assumes the same form. It is the form that is constantly reproducing. In this sense, man (that is his soul) is the *product* of education. The soul of the future man stands in the same relation to our soul as the future edition of a book, revised and enlarged, stands to its present edition.[1] One man impresses his modes of thought, his habits, his methods of action, his ideals upon his fellow men, and thus implants his very soul into

[1] Compare the library scene in the chapter "A Day of Visits," Vol. 1, p. 265, of this novel.

their lives. In this sense a transmigration of souls is taking place constantly, and he who opens his eyes will see it. No one has given plainer examples of this truth in the pleasant shape of novelistic narration, than Gustav Freytag.

The Lost Manuscript is in more than one respect a representative work, incorporating the spirit of the times. It is interesting from its descriptions of University circles, of country life, and of the vanity fair at the smaller princely courts of Germany. Yet these interesting descriptions gain in value, because we are taught by the author to comprehend the secret laws that rule the growth of, and determine the hidden interconnections between, the souls of men.

The plot of *The Lost Manuscript*. Gustav Freytag briefly characterizes as follows:

"In the upright soul of a German scholar, through the wish to discover something of great worth for knowledge, are cast juggling shadows, which, like as moonlight distorts the forms in the landscape, disturb the order of his life, and are at last overcome only through painful experiences."

Concerning the invention of the plot as well as of the characters of *The Lost Manuscript*, the following account from Gustav Freytag's Reminiscences will be of interest:

"In this story I depicted circles of life that were familiar to me since student days: the agricultural life of the country and the University life of the city. The reader will, I trust, discover in the characterizations of the work, that I have drawn cheerfully and unrestrainedly from this life at large. In the figures of the academical world he would seek in vain for special models, since Mr. and Mrs. Struvelius, Raschke, and others are types to whom in every German University single personalities will correspond. In the character of Professor Werner my friend Haupt has been recognized. But one can find in it only so much of the manner and method of Haupt, as a poet dares to take up of the being of a real man without interfering with the freedom of artistic creation, and without offending him through lack of delicacy. Haupt himself perceived with pleasure a certain remote resemblance, and of this connection with the romance he gave expression in his own way; having on several occasions, when sending me the prospectus of his Berlin lectures on the Latin historiographer Ammianus, good-humoredly signed himself 'Magister Knips,' which latter personage plays a sorrowful part in the story, and is only prevented from hanging himself by the thought of his professional researches in the Latin author mentioned.

"Some years before the appearance of my 'Debit and Credit' Haupt had unexpectedly requested me to write a novel. This accorded at that time with secret designs of mine, and I promised him. To *The Lost Manuscript* he contributed, however, in quite another manner. For as we were once sitting alone with one another at Leipsic, before he was called to Berlin, he disclosed to me in the greatest confidence, that somewhere in a small Westphalian town in the loft of an old house, lay the remains of a convent library. It was very possible that among them there was hidden a manuscript of the lost Decades of Livy. The master of this treasure, however, was, as Haupt had learned, a surly and quite inaccessible gentleman. Thereupon I put forward the proposition to travel together to the mysterious house, move the old fellow's heart, hoodwink him, and, in case of extreme necessity, drink him under the table, to secure the precious treasure. As Haupt had some confidence in my powers of seduction when joined with a good glass, he declared himself agreeable therewith, and we reveled in and developed to the fullest extent the pleasure we had in prospect of enlarging the tomes of the Roman historian for a grateful posterity. Nothing came of the affair; but the remembrance of the intended trip greatly helped me in developing the action of the novel.

"In Leipsic I had lived a short time on the street nearest the Rosenthal with a hatmaker, who manufactured straw hats. Near to him, as it chanced, was another well-known firm, which administered to the same need of the male sex by felt-hats. This accident suggested the invention of the families Hummel and Hahn, although here also neither the characters nor the hostilities of the two families are copied from real life. Only the incident is made use of, that my landlord took particular pleasure in decorating his garden by ever new inventions: the White Muse, the Chinese lanterns, and the summer-house by the road, I have taken from his little garden. Moreover, two characters of his

household, – the very ones which, by reason of their mythical character, have given offence, are exact copies of reality; namely, the dogs Fighthahn and Spitehahn. These my landlord had bought at an auction somewhere to act as warders of his property; they excited through their currish behavior the indignation of the whole street, until they were poisoned by an exasperated neighbor. Fighthahn died. Spitehahn survived and, after that time, was quite as bristly and misanthropical as he is portrayed in the novel, so that finally in consequence of the perpetration of numberless misdeeds his owner was obliged to banish him forever to rural life."

The novel, as is the case with every work of prominence and influence, did not escape criticism, even among the friends of the author. In his Autobiographical Reminiscences, Gustav Freytag refers to the fact. He says:

"The Lost Manuscript met with disapproval from many intimate critics of mine. The sombre coloring of the last volume gave offence. It was much objected that the religious struggles and the spiritual development of the heroine Ilse were not placed in the foreground, and again that Felix Werner was not more severely punished for the neglect of his duty towards his wife. But the insanity of the Sovereign was especially objectionable, and it was claimed that in our time such a figure was no longer possible. My friends were wrong in this criticism. The Sovereign and his son the Hereditary Prince were also taken as types. The former represents the perverted development of an earlier generation which had sprung up from the ruin of Napoleonic times; the latter the restriction and narrowness of life in the petty principalities that then made up the German nation."

The American public will perhaps feel the strength of the criticism to which Gustav Freytag in the passage quoted refers, more strongly than the European friends of the Author. We at least have felt it, and believe that almost all the citizens of the New World will feel it. Nevertheless, considering all in all, we confess that Gustav Freytag was fully justified in preserving these traces of the national soul-life of Germany. For they form an important link in the development of German thought, and have cast dark shadows as well as rays of sunlight over the aspirations of scientific progress; now disturbing it by the vanity and egotism of these petty sovereigns, now promoting it by an enthusiastic protection of the ideal treasures of the nation.

The Lost Manuscript teaches us an object-lesson respecting the unity of human soul-life. Under the masterly treatment of Gustav Freytag's ingenious pen, we become aware of the invisible threads that interconnect our thoughts and the actions prompted by our thoughts. We observe the after-effects of our ideas and our deeds. Ideas live and develop not alone in single individuals, but from generation to generation. They escape death and partake of that life which knows no death: they are immortal.

Gustav Freytag, it is true, did not write his novel with the intention of teaching psychology or preaching ethics. But the impartial description of life does teach ethics, and every poet is a psychologist in the sense that he portrays human souls. In a letter to the publisher, Gustav Freytag says:

"… The essential thing with the poet was not the teachings that may be drawn from the book, but the joyful creating of characters and events which become possible and intelligible through the persons depicted. The details he worked into artistic unity under the impulsion of a poetical idea.

"But I may now also express to you how great my pleasure is at the agreement that exists between the ethical contents of the story (*The Lost Manuscript*) and the world-conception (*Weltanchauung*) which you labor to disseminate…" (Translated from the German.)

The laws that govern the warp and woof of soul-life in its evolution hold good everywhere, also among us. We also have inherited curses and blessings from the past; our present is surrounded with dangers, and our future is full of bright hopes, the fulfilment of which mainly depends upon our own efforts in realizing our ideals.

CONTENTS:

CHAPTER I.
A DISCOVERY

It is late evening in the forest-park of our town. Softly the foliage murmurs in the warm summer air and the chirping of the crickets in the distant meadows is heard far in among the trees.

Through the tree-tops a pale light falls down upon the forest-path and upon the dark undergrowth of bush and shrubbery. The moon sprinkles the pathway with shimmering spots, and kindles strange lights in the mass of leaves and branches. Here, the blue streaks of light pour down from the tree-trunks like streams of burning spirits; there, in the hollow, the broad fern-branches gleam from out the darkness in colors of emerald gold, and over the pathway the withered boughs tower like huge whitened antlers. But between and beneath, impenetrable, Stygian gloom. Round-faced moon in heaven, thine attempts to light this wood of ours are feeble, sickly, and capricious. Pray keep thy scanty light upon the highway leading to the city; throw thy faded beams not so crookedly before us, for at the left the ground slopes precipitately into morass and water.

Fie, thou traitor! Plump in the swamp and the wayfarer's shoe behind! But that might have been expected. Deceit and treachery are thy favorite pastimes, thou wayward freak of heaven. People wonder now that men of primitive times made a God of thee. The Grecian girl once called thee Selene, and wreathed thy cup with purple poppies, by thy magic to lure back the faithless lover to her door. But that is now all over. We have science and phosphorus, and thou hast degenerated into a wretched old Juggler. A Juggler! And people show thee too much consideration, to treat thee as a thing of life even. What art thou, anyhow? A ball of burnt out slag, blistered, airless, colorless, waterless. A ball? Why our scientists know that thou art not even round-caught in a lie again! We people on the earth have pulled thee out of shape. In truth thou art pointed, thou hast a wretched and unsymmetrical figure. Thou'rt a sort of big turnip that dances about us in perennial slavery-nothing more.

The wood opens. Between the wayfarer and the city extends a broad stretch of lawn, and in the centre a large pond. Welcome, thou dale of verdure! Well-kept paths of gravel lead over the forest meadow; here and there a clump of waving undergrowth is seen, and beneath it a garden-bench. Here the well-to-do citizen sits of an afternoon, and resting his hands upon the bamboo-cane that he carries, looks proudly over upon the towers of his loved city.

Is the meadow, too, transformed to-day? A swelling expanse of water seems to lie before the wayfarer; it seethes and bubbles and plays about his feet, in endless masses of mist, as far as the eye can reach. What army of hobgoblins do lave their garments here! They flutter from trees, they course through the air, faint in outline, now dissolving, now intermingling. Higher the dim, dark figures soar. They float above the wayfarer's head. The gloomy mass of forest disappears. The very vault of heaven itself is lost in the misty darkness, and every visible outline sinks in the chaos of paling light and floating shapelessness. The solid earth still stays beneath the feet of our traveler, and yet he moves on, separated from all actual earthly forms, amid glimmering bodiless shadows. Here and there, the floating illusions again gather. Slowly the phantoms of air sweep through the veil that encompasses our wayfarer. Now the bent figure of a woman in prayer presses forward, broken with sorrow; now a troop in long, waving robes appears, as of Roman Senators, with emperor, halo-encircled, at their head. But halo and head dissolve, and the huge shadow glides, headless and ghostly, by.

Mist of a watery meadow, who hath so bewitched thee? Who else but that aged trickster of heaven, the moon, the mischief-maker moon.

Retreat, illusory shadows! The low-ground is passed. Lighted windows shine before the wayfarer. Two stately houses loom up at the city's outskirts. Here dwell two men-taxpayers, active workers. They wrap themselves, at night, in warm blankets, and not in thy watery tapestries, Moon, woven of misty drops that trickle from beard and hair. They have their whims and their virtues, and estimate thy value, O Moon, exactly in proportion to the gas saved by thy light.

A lamp, placed close to the window, shines from one of the upper rooms in the house on the left hand. Here lives Professor Felix Werner, a learned philologist, still a young man, who has already gained a reputation. He sits at his study table and examines old, faded manuscripts-an attractive looking man of medium size, with dark, curly hair falling over a massive bead; there is nothing paltry about him. Clear, honest eyes shine from under the dark eyebrows; the nose is slightly arched; the muscles of the mouth are strongly developed, as might be expected of the popular teacher of young students. Just now a soft smile spreads over it, and his cheeks redden either from his work or from inward emotion.

The Professor suddenly left his work and paced restlessly up and down the room. He then approached a window which looked out on the neighboring house, placed two large books on the window sill, laid a small one upon them, and thus produced a figure which resembled a Greek π, and which, from the light shining behind became visible to the eye in the house opposite. After he had arranged this signal, he hastened back to the table and again bent over his book.

The servant entered gently to remove the supper, which had been placed on a side table. Finding the food untouched, he looked with displeasure at the Professor, and for a long while remained standing behind the vacant chair. At length, assuming a military attitude, he said, "Professor, you have forgotten your supper."

"Clear the table, Gabriel," said the Professor.

Gabriel showed no disposition to move. "Professor, you should at least eat a bit of cold meat. Nothing can come of nothing," he added, kindly.

"It is not right that you should come in and disturb me."

Gabriel took the plate and carried it to his master. "Pray, Professor, take at least a few mouthfuls."

"Give it to me then," said he, and began to eat.

Gabriel made use of the time during which his master unavoidably paused in his intellectual occupation, to offer a respectful admonition. "My late Captain thought much of a good supper."

"But now you have changed into the civil service," answered the Professor, laughing.

"It is not right," continued Gabriel, pertinaciously, "that I should eat the roast that I bring for you."

"I hope you are now satisfied," answered the Professor, pushing the plate back to him.

Gabriel shrugged his shoulders. "You have at least done your best. The Doctor was not at home."

"So it appears. See to it that the front-door remains open."

Gabriel turned about and went away with the plate.

The scholar was again alone. The golden light of the lamp fell on his countenance and on the books which lay around him; the white pages rustled under his hand; and his features worked with strong excitement.

There was a knock at the door; the expected visitor entered.

"Good evening, Fritz," said the Professor to his visitor; "sit in my chair, and look here."

The guest, a man of slender form, with delicate features, and wearing spectacles, seated himself at the bidding of his friend, and seized a little book which lay in the middle of a number of open volumes of every age and size. With the eye of a connoisseur he examined the first cover-discolored parchment, upon which were written old church hymns with the accompanying music. He cast a searching glance on the inside of the binding, and inspected the strips of parchment by which the poorly-preserved back of the book was joined to the cover. He then examined the first page of the contents, on which, in faded characters, was written, "The Life of the Holy Hildegard." "The handwriting is that of a writer of the fifteenth century," he exclaimed, and looked inquiringly at his friend.

"It is not on that account that I show you the old book. Look further. The Life is followed by prayers, a number of recipes and household regulations, written in various hands, even before the

time of Luther. I had bought this manuscript for you, thinking you might perhaps find material for your legends and popular superstitions. But on looking through it, I met with the following passage on one of the last pages, and I cannot yet part with the volume. It seems that the book has been used in a monastery by many generations of monks to note down memoranda, for on this page there is a catalogue of all the church treasures of the Monastery of Rossau. It was a poverty-stricken cloister; the inventory is either small or incomplete. It was made by an ignorant monk, and, as the writing testifies, about the year 1500. See, here are entered church-utensils and a few ecclesiastical vestments; and further on some theological manuscripts of the monastery, of no importance to us, but amongst them the following title: '*Das alt ungehür puoch von ussfahrt des swigers.*'"

The Doctor examined the words with curiosity. "That sounds like the title of a tale of chivalry. And what do the words themselves mean! 'The old, immense book of the exit or departure of the *swiger*.' Does *swiger* here mean son-in-law or a tacit man?"

"Let us try to solve the riddle," continued the Professor, with sparkling eyes, pointing with his finger to the same page. "A later hand has added in Latin, 'This book is Latin, almost illegible; it begins with the words *lacrimas et signa*, and ends with the words-here concludes the history-*actorum*-thirtieth book.' Now guess."

The Doctor looked at the excited features of his friend. "Do not keep me in suspense. The first words sound very promising, but they are not a title; some pages in the beginning may be deficient."

"Just so," answered the Professor, with satisfaction. "We may assume that one or two pages are missing. In the fifth chapter of the Annals of Tacitus there are the words *lacrimas et signa*."

The Doctor sprang up, and a flush of joy overspread his face.

"Sit down," continued the Professor, forcing his friend back into the chair. "The old title of the Annals of Tacitus, when translated, appears literally 'Tacitus, beginning with the death of the divine Augustus.' Well, an ignorant monk deciphered perhaps the first Latin words of the title, '*Taciti ab excessu*,' and endeavored to translate it into German; he was pleased to know that *tacitus* meant *schweigsam* (silent), but had never heard of the Roman historian, and rendered it in these words, literally, as 'From the exit of the tacit man.'"

"Excellent!" exclaimed the Doctor. "And the monk, delighted with the successful translation, wrote the title on the manuscript? Glorious! the manuscript was a Tacitus."

"Hear further," proceeded the Professor. "In the third and fourth century A. D., both the great works of Tacitus, the 'Annals' and 'History,' were united in a collection under the title, 'Thirty Books of History.' For this we have other ancient testimony. Look here!"

The Professor found well-known passages, and placed them before his friend. "And, again, at the end of the manuscript record there were these words: 'Here ends the Thirtieth Book of the History.' There remains, therefore, no doubt that this manuscript was a Tacitus. And looking at the thing as a whole, the following appears to have been the case. There was, at the time of the Reformation, a manuscript of Tacitus in the Monastery of Rossau, the beginning of which was missing. It was old and injured by time, and almost illegible to the eyes of the monks."

"There must have been something peculiar attaching to the book," interrupted the Doctor, "for the monk designates it by the expression, '*Ungeheuer*,' which conveys the meaning of strange, monstrous."

"It is true," agreed the Professor. "We may assume that some monastic tradition which has attached to the book, or an old prohibition to read it, or, more probably, the unusual aspect of its cover, or its size, has given rise to this expression. The manuscript contains both the historical works of Tacitus, the books of which were numbered consecutively. And we," he added, in his excitement throwing the book which he held in his hand on the table, "we no longer possess this manuscript. Neither of the historical works of the great Roman have been preserved in its entirety; for the sum of all the gaps would fully equal one-half of what has come down to us."

The Professor's friend paced the room hurriedly. "This is one of the discoveries that quicken the blood in one's veins. Gone and lost forever! It is exasperating to think how nearly such a precious treasure of antiquity was preserved to us. It has escaped fire, devastation, and the perils of cruel war; it was still in existence when the dawn of a new civilization burst upon us, happily concealed and unheeded, in the German monastery, not many miles from the great high road along which the humanists wandered, with visions of Roman glory in their minds, seeking after every relic of the Roman times. Universities flourished in the immediate vicinity; and how easily could one of the friars of Rossau have informed the students of their treasure. It seems incomprehensible that not one of the many scholars of the country should have obtained information concerning the book, and pointed out to the monks the value of such a memorial. But, instead of this, it is possible that some contemporary of Erasmus and Melanchthon, some poor monk, sold the manuscript to a book-binder, and strips of it may still adhere to some old book-cover. But, even in this case, the discovery is important. Evidently this little book has occasioned you much painful pleasure."

The Professor clasped the hand of his friend, and each looked into the honest countenance of the other. "Let us assume," concluded the Doctor, sorrowfully, "that the old hereditary enemy of preserved treasures, fire, had consumed the manuscript-is it not childish that we should feel the loss as if it had occurred today?"

"Who tells us that the manuscript is irretrievably lost?" rejoined the Professor, with suppressed emotion. "Once more consult the book; it can tell us also of the fate of the manuscript."

The Doctor rushed to the table, and seized the little book of the Holy Hildegard.

"Here, after the catalogue," said the Professor, showing him the last page of the book, "there is still more."

The Doctor fixed his eyes on the page. Latin characters without meaning or break were written in seven successive lines; under them was a name-F. Tobias Bachhuber.

"Compare these letters with the Latin annotation under the title of the mysterious manuscript. It is undoubtedly the same hand, firm characters of the seventeenth century; compare the 's,' 'r,' and 'f.'"

"It is the same hand!" exclaimed the Doctor with satisfaction.

"These unmeaning letters are a cipher, such as was used in the seventeenth century. In that case it is easily solved; each letter is exchanged with the one that follows. On this bit of paper I have put together the Latin words. The translation is, 'On the approach of the ferocious Swedes, in order to withdraw the treasures of our monastery from the search of these roaring devils, I have deposited them all in a dry, hollow place in the Manor of Bielstein.' The day Quasimodogeniti 37-that is on the 19th April, 1637. What do you say now, Fritz? It appears from this that in the time of the Thirty Years' War the manuscript had not been burned, for Frater Tobias Bachhuber-blest be his memory! – had at that time vouchsafed to look upon it with some consideration, and as in the record he had favored it with an especial remark, he probably did not leave it behind in his flight. The mysterious manuscript was thus in the Monastery of Rossau till 1637, and the friar, in the April of that year, concealed it and other goods from the Swedes in a hollow and dry spot in Manor Bielstein."

"Now the matter becomes serious!" cried the Doctor.

"Yes, it is serious, my friend; it is not impossible that the manuscript may still lie concealed somewhere."

"And Manor Bielstein?"

"Lies near the little town of Rossau. The monastery was in needy circumstances, and under ecclesiastical protection till the Thirty Years' War. In 1637 the town and monastery were desolated by the Swedes; the last monks disappeared and the monastery was never again re-established. That is all I have been able to learn up to this time; for anything further I request your help."

"The next question will be whether the manor-house outlasted the war," answered the Doctor, "and what has become of it now. It will be more difficult to ascertain where Brother Tobias Bachhuber ended his days, and most difficult of all to discover through what hands his little book has reached us."

"I obtained the book from a second-hand dealer here; it was a new acquisition, and not yet entered in his catalogue. To-morrow I will obtain all further information that the book-seller may be able to give. It will, perhaps, be worth while to investigate further," he continued, more coolly, endeavoring to restrain his intense excitement by a little rational reflection. "More than two centuries have elapsed since that cipher was written by the friar; during that period destructive agencies were not less active than before. Just think of the war and devastation of the years when the cloister was destroyed. And so we are no better off than if the manuscript had been lost several centuries previously."

"And yet the probability that the manuscript is preserved to the present day increases with every century," interposed the Doctor; "for the number of men who would value such a discovery has increased so much since that war, that destruction from rude ignorance has become almost inconceivable."

"We must not trust too much to the knowledge of the present day," said the Professor; "but if it were so," he continued, his eyes flashing, "if the imperial history of the first century, as written by Tacitus, were restored by a propitious fate, it would be a gift so great that the thought of the possibility of it might well, like Roman wine, intoxicate an honest man."

"Invaluable," assented the Doctor, "for our knowledge of the language, and for a hundred particulars of Roman history."

"And for the early history of Germany!" exclaimed the Professor.

Both traversed the room with rapid steps, shook hands, and looked at each other joyfully.

"And if a fortunate accident should put us on the track of this manuscript," began Fritz, "if through you it should be restored to the light of day, you, my friend, you are best fitted to edit it. The thought that you would experience such a pleasure, and that a work of such renown would fall to your lot, makes me happier than I can say."

"If we can find the manuscript," answered the Professor, "we must edit it together."

"Together?" exclaimed Fritz, with surprise.

"Yes, together," said the Professor, with decision; "it would make your ability widely known."

Fritz drew back. "How can you think that I would be so presumptuous?"

"Do not contradict me," exclaimed the Professor, "you are perfectly qualified for it."

"That I am not," answered Fritz, firmly; "and I am too proud to undertake anything for which I should have to thank your kindness more than my own powers."

"That is undue modesty," again exclaimed the Professor.

"I shall never do it," answered Fritz. "I could not for one moment think of adorning myself before the public with borrowed plumage."

"I know better than you," said the Professor, indignantly, "what you are able to do, and what is to your advantage."

"At all events, I would never agree that you should have the lion's share of the labor and secretly be deprived of the reward. Not my modesty, but my self-respect forbids this. And this feeling you ought to respect," concluded Fritz, with great energy.

"Now," returned the Professor, restraining his excited feelings, "we are behaving like the man who bought a house and field with the money procured by the sale of a calf which was not yet born. Be calm, Fritz; neither I nor you shall edit the manuscript."

"And we shall never know how the Roman Emperor treated the ill fated Thusnelda and Thumelicus!" said Fritz, sympathizingly to his friend.

"But it is not the absence of such particulars," said the Professor, "that makes the loss of the manuscript so greatly felt, for the main facts may be obtained from other sources. The most important point will always be, that Tacitus was the first, and in many respects is the only, historian who has portrayed the most striking and gloomy phases of human nature. His works that are extant are two historical tragedies, scenes in the Julian and Flavian imperial houses-fearful pictures of the enormous

change which, in the course of a century, took place in the greatest city of antiquity, in the character of its emperors and the souls of their subjects-the history of tyrannical rule, which exterminated a noble race, destroyed a high and rich civilization, and degraded, with few exceptions, even the rulers themselves. We have, even up to the present day, scarcely another work whose author looks so searchingly into the souls of a whole succession of princes, and which describes so acutely and accurately the ruin which was wrought in different natures by the fiendish and distempered minds of rulers."

"It always makes me angry," said the Doctor, "when I hear him reproached as having for the most part written only imperial and court history. Who can expect grapes from a cypress, and satisfactory enjoyment in the grand public life of a man who, during a great portion of his manhood, daily saw before his eyes the dagger and poison-cup of a mad despot?"

"Yes," agreed the Professor, "Tacitus belonged to the aristocracy-a body unfit to rule, and unwilling to obey. In the consciousness of their privileged position they were the indispensable servants, while still the enemies and the rivals, of their sovereigns. In them the virtues and the vices of a mighty epoch grew to monstrous manifestations. Who but one of their own circle should write the history of Roman imperialism? The blackest crimes were concealed behind the stone walls of palaces; rumor, the low murmur of the antechamber, the lurking look of concealed hatred, were often the only sources the historian could command."

"All that remains for us to do is discreetly to accept the judgment of the man who has handed down to us information concerning this strange condition of things. Moreover, whoever studies the fragments of Tacitus that have been preserved, impartially and intelligently, will honor and admire his profound insight into the inmost depths of Roman character. It is an experienced statesman, of a powerful and truthful mind, relating the secret history of his time so clearly that we understand the men and all their doings as if we ourselves had the opportunity of reading their hearts. He who can do this for later centuries is not only a great historian but a great man. And for such I always felt a deep, heartfelt reverence, and I consider it the duty of a true critic to clear such a character from the attacks of petty minds."

"Hardly one of his contemporaries," said the Doctor, "has felt the poverty of his epoch's civilization as deeply as himself."

"Yes," rejoined the Professor, "he was a genuine man, so far as was possible in his time; and that is, after all, the main point. For what we must demand, is not the amount of knowledge for which we have to thank a great man, but his own personality, which, through what he has produced for us, becomes a portion of ourselves. Thus the spirit of Aristotle is something different to us than the substance of his teaching. For us Sophocles signifies much more than seven tragedies. His manner of thinking and feeling, his perception of the beautiful and the good, ought to become part of our life. Only in this way does the study of the past healthily influence our actions and our aspirations. In this sense the sad and sorrowful soul of Tacitus is far more to me than his delineation of the Emperor's madness. And you see, Fritz, it is on this account that your Sanskrit and Hindu languages are not satisfactory to me-the men are wanting in them."

"It is, at least, difficult for us to recognize them," answered his friend. "But one who, like you, explains Homer's epics to students, should not undervalue the charm that lies in sounding the mysterious depths of human activity, when a youthful nation conceals from our view the work of the individual man, and when the people itself comes before us in poetry, traditions, and law, assuming the shape of a living individuality."

"He who only engages in such researches," answered the Professor, eagerly, "soon becomes fantastic and visionary. The study of such ancient times acts like opium, and he who lingers all his life in such studies will hardly escape vagaries."

Fritz rose. "That is our old quarrel. I know you do not wish to speak harshly to me, but I feel that you intend this for me."

"And am I wrong?" continued the Professor. "I undoubtedly have a respect for every intellectual work, but I desire for my friend that which will be most beneficial to him. Your investigations into Hindu and German mythology entice you from one problem to another; youthful energies should not linger in the endless domain of indistinct contemplations and unreal shadows. Come to a decision for other reasons also. It does not behoove you to be merely a private student; such a life is too easy for you; you need the outward pressure of definite duties. You have many of the qualities requisite for a professor. Do not remain in your parents' house; you must become a university lecturer."

A heightened color spread slowly over the face of his friend. "Enough," he exclaimed, vexed; "if I have thought too little of my future, you should not reproach me for it. It has perhaps been too great a pleasure to me to be your companion and the confidant of your successful labors. I also, from my intercourse with you, have enjoyed that pleasure which an intellectual man bestows upon all who participate in his creations. Good night."

The Professor approached him, and seizing both his hands, exclaimed, "Stay! Are you angry with me?"

"No," answered Fritz, "but I am going;" and he closed the door gently.

The Professor paced up and down excitedly, reproaching himself for his vehemence. At length he violently threw the books which had served as a signal back on the shelf, and again seated himself at his desk.

Gabriel lighted the Doctor down the stairs, opened the door, and shook his head when he heard his "Good night" curtly answered. He extinguished the light and listened at his master's door. When he heard the Professor's steps, he determined to refresh himself by the mild evening air, and descended into the little garden. There he met Mr. Hummel, who was walking under the Professor's windows. Mr. Hummel was a broad-shouldered gentleman, with a large head and a determined face, portly and well-preserved, of the honest old Saxon type. He smoked a long pipe, with a huge mouth-piece, which was divided into a number of capacious compartments.

"A fine evening, Gabriel," began Mr. Hummel, "a good season; what a harvest we shall have!" He nudged the servant. "Has anything happened up there? The window is open," he concluded significantly, and disapprovingly shook his head.

"He has closed the window again," answered Gabriel, evasively. "The bats and the moths become troublesome, and when he argues with the Doctor they both grow so loud that people in the street stop and listen."

"Circumspection is always wise," said Mr. Hummel; "but what was the matter? The Doctor is the son of the man over yonder, and you know my opinion of them, Gabriel-I do not trust them. I do not wish to injure any one, but I have my views concerning them."

"What it was about," answered Gabriel, "I did not hear; but I can tell you this much, there was much talk about the ancient Romans. Look you, Mr. Hummel, if the old Romans were among us now, much would be different. They were dare-devils; they knew how to forage; they knew how to carry on war; they conquered everywhere."

"You speak like an incendiary," said Mr. Hummel, with displeasure.

"Yes, that is the way they did," answered Gabriel, complacently. "They were a selfish people, and knew how to look out for their own interests. But what is most wonderful is the number of books these Romans wrote for all that, large and small-many also in folio. When I dust the library there is no end to the Romans of all sizes, and some are books thicker than the Bible, only they are all difficult to read; but one who knows the language may learn much."

"The Romans are an extinct people," replied Mr. Hummel. "When they disappeared, the Germans came. The Romans could never exist with us. The only thing that can help us is the Hanseatic league. That is the thing to look to. Powerful at sea, Gabriel," he exclaimed, taking hold of his coat by a button, "the cities must form alliances, invest money, build ships, and hoist flags; our trade and credit are established, and men are not wanting."

"And would you venture on the mighty ocean in that vessel?" asked Gabriel, pointing to a little rowboat which lay in the rear of the garden tilted over on two planks. "Shall I go to sea with the Professor?"

"That is not the question," answered Mr. Hummel; "let the young people go first-they are useless. Many could do better than stay at home with their parents. Why should not the doctor up there serve his country in the capacity of a sailor?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Hummel?" cried Gabriel, startled; "the young gentleman is nearsighted."

"That's nothing," muttered Mr. Hummel, "for they have telescopes at sea, and for aught I care he may become a captain. I am not the man to wish evil to my neighbor."

"He is a man of learning," replied Gabriel, "and this class is also necessary. I can assure you, Mr. Hummel, I have meditated much upon the character of the learned. I know my Professor thoroughly, and something of the Doctor, and I must say there is something in it-there is much in it. Sometimes I am not so sure of it. When the tailor brings the Professor home a new coat he does not remark what everybody else sees, whether the coat fits him or wrinkles. If he takes it into his head to buy a load of wood which has very likely been stolen, from a peasant, he pays more in my absence than any one else would. And when he grows angry and excited about matters that you and I would discuss very calmly, I must say I have my doubts. But when I see how he acts at other times-how kind and merciful he is, even to the flies that buzz about his nose, taking them out of his coffee-cup with a spoon and setting them on the window-sill-how he wishes well to all the world and begrudges himself everything-how he sits reading and writing till late at night-when I see all this, I must say his life affects me powerfully. And I tell you I will not allow any one to underrate our men of learning. They are different from us; they do not understand what we do, nor do we understand what they do."

"Yet we also have our culture," replied Mr. Hummel. "Gabriel, you have spoken like an honorable man, but I will confide this to you-that a man may have great knowledge, and yet be a very hard-hearted individual, who loans his money on usurious interest and deprives his friends of the honor due them. Therefore I think the main point is to have order and boundaries, and to leave something to one's descendants. Regularity here," he pointed to his breast, "and a boundary there," pointing to his fence, "that one may be sure as to what belongs to one's self and what to another, and a secure property for one's children on which they may settle themselves. That is what I understand as the life of man."

The householder locked the gate of the fence and the door of the house. Gabriel also sought his bed, but the lamp in the Professor's study burned late into the night, and its rays intermingled on the windowsill with the pale moonshine. At length the Scholar's light was extinguished, and the room left empty; outside, small clouds coursed over the disk of the moon, and flickering lights reigned paramount in the room, over the writing-table, over the works of the old Romans, and over the little book of the defunct Brother Tobias.

CHAPTER II.
THE HOSTILE NEIGHBORS

We are led to believe that in future times there will be nothing but love and happiness; and men will go about with palm branches in their hands to chase away the last of those birds of night, hatred and malice. In such a chase we would probably find the last nest of these monsters hanging between the walls of two neighboring houses. For they have nestled between neighbor and neighbor ever since the rain trickled from the roof of one house into the court of the other; ever since the rays of the sun were kept away from one house by the wall of the other; ever since children thrust their hands through the hedge to steal berries; ever since the master of the house has been inclined to consider himself better than his fellow-men. There are in our days few houses in the country between which so much ill-will and hostile criticism exist as between the two houses near the great city park.

Many will remember the time when the houses of the town did not extend to the wooded valley. Then there were only a few small houses along the lanes; behind lay a waste place where Mrs. Knips, the washwoman, dried the shirts, and her two naughty boys threw the wooden clothes'-pins at each other. There Mr. Hummel had bought a dry spot, quite at the end of the street, and had built his pretty house of two stories, with stone steps and iron railing, and behind, a simple workshop for his trade; for he was a hatter, and carried on the business very extensively. When he went out of his house and surveyed the reliefs on the roof and the plaster arabesques under the windows, he congratulated himself on being surrounded by light and air and free nature, and felt that he was the foremost pillar of civilization in the primeval forest.

Then he experienced what often happens to disturb the peace of pioneers of the wilderness-his example was imitated. On a dark morning in March, a wagon, loaded with old planks, came to the drying-ground which was opposite his house. A fence was soon built, and laborers with shovels and wheelbarrows began to dig up the ground. This was a hard blow for Mr. Hummel. But his suffering became greater when, walking angrily across the street and inquiring the name of the man who was causing such injury to the light and reputation of his house, he learned that his future neighbor was to be a manufacturer by the name of Hahn. That it should of all men in the world be he, was the greatest vexation fate could inflict upon him. Mr. Hahn was respectable; there was nothing to be said against his family; but he was Mr. Hummel's natural opponent, for the business of the new settler was also in hats, although straw hats. The manufacture of this light trash was never considered as dignified, manly work; it was not a guild handicraft; it never had the right to make apprentices journeymen; it was formerly carried on only by Italian peasants; it had only lately, like other bad customs, spread through the world as a novelty; it is, in fact, not a business-the plait-straw is bought and sewed together by young girls who are engaged by the week. And there is an old enmity between the felt hat and straw hat. The felt hat is an historical power consecrated through thousands of years-it only tolerates the cap as an ordinary contrivance for work-days. Now the straw hat raises its pretensions against prescribed right, and insolently lays claim to half of the year. And since then approbation fluctuates between these two appurtenances of the human race. When the unstable minds of mortals wavered toward straw, the most beautiful felts, velveteen, silk, and pasteboard were left unnoticed and eaten by moths. On the other hand, when the inclinations of men turned to felt, every human being-women, children, and nurses-wore men's small hats; then the condition of straw was lamentable-no heart beat for it, and the mouse nestled in its most beautiful plaits.

This was a strong ground for indignation to Mr. Hummel, but worse was to come. He saw the daily progress of the hostile house; he watched the scaffolding, the rising walls, the ornaments of the cornice, and the rows of windows-it was two windows higher than his house. The ground floor rose, then a second floor, and at last a third. All the work-rooms of the straw hat manufacturer were attached to the dwelling. The house of Mr. Hummel had sunk into insignificance. He then went to his

lawyer and demanded redress for the obstruction of his light and the view from his residence; the man of law naturally shrugged his shoulders. The privilege of building houses was one of the fundamental rights of man; it was the common German custom to live in houses, and it was obviously hopeless to propose that Hahn should only erect on his piece of ground a canvas tent. Thus there was absolutely nothing to do but to submit patiently, and Mr. Hummel might have known that himself.

Years had passed away. At the same hour the light of the sun gilds both houses; there they stand stately and inhabited, both occupied by men who daily pass each other. At the same hour the letter-carrier enters both houses, the pigeons fly from one roof to the other, and the sparrows hop around on the gutters of both, in the most cordial relations. About one house there is sometimes a faint smell of sulphur, and about the other, of singed hair; but the same summer wind wafts from the wood, through the doors of both dwellings, the scent of the pine-trees and the perfumes of the lime-flowers. And yet the intense aversion of the inhabitants has not diminished. The house of Hahn objects to singed hair, and the family of Hummel cough indignantly in their garden whenever they suspect sulphur in the oxygen of the air.

It is true that decorous behavior to the neighborhood was not quite ignored; and though the felt was inclined to be quarrelsome, the straw was more pliant, and showed itself tractable in many cases. Both men were acquainted with a family in which they occasionally met, nay, both had once been godfathers to the same child, and care had been taken that one should not give a smaller christening gift than the other. This unavoidable acquaintance necessitated formal greetings whenever they could not avoid meeting each other. But there it ended. Between the shopmen who cleaned the straw hats with sulphur, and the workmen, who presided over the hare-skins, there existed an intense hatred. And the people who dwelt in the nearest houses in the street knew this, and did their best to maintain the existing relation. But, in fact, the character of both would scarcely harmonize. Their dialect was different, their education had been different, the favorite dishes and the domestic arrangements that were approved by one displeased the other. Hummel was of North German lineage; Hahn had come hither from a small town in the neighborhood.

When Mr. Hummel spoke of his neighbor Hahn, he called him a man of straw and a fantastical fellow. Mr. Hahn was a thoughtful man, quiet and industrious in his business, but in his hours of recreation he devoted himself to some peculiar fancies. These were undoubtedly intended to make a favorable impression on the people who passed by the two houses on their way to the meadow and the woods. In his little garden he had collected most of the contrivances of modern landscape-gardening. Between the three elder-bushes there rose up a rock built of tufa, with a small, steep path to the top. The expedition to the summit could be ventured upon without an Alpenstock by strong mountain climbers only, and even they would be in danger of falling on their noses on the jagged tufa. The following year, near the railing, poles were erected at short intervals, round which climbed creepers, and between each pole hung a colored glass lamp. When the row of lamps was lighted up on festive evenings they threw a magic splendor on the straw hats which were placed under the elder bushes, and which challenged the judgment of the passers-by. The following year the glass lamps were superseded by Chinese lanterns. Again, the next year, the garden bore a classical aspect, for a white statue of a muse, surrounded by ivy and blooming wall-flowers, shone forth far into the wood.

In the face of such novelties Mr. Hummel remained firm to his preference for water. In the rear of his house a small stream flowed toward the town. Every year his boat was painted the same green, and in his leisure hours he loved to go alone in his boat and to row from the houses to the park. He took his rod in his hand and devoted himself to the pleasure of catching gudgeons, minnows, and other small fish.

Doubtless, the Hummel family were more aristocratic, – that is, more determined, more out of the common, and more difficult to deal with. Of all the housewives of the street, Mrs. Hummel displayed the greatest pretensions by her silk dresses and gold-watch and chain. She was a little lady with blonde curls, still very pretty; she had a seat at the theatre, was accomplished and kind-

hearted, and very irascible. She looked as if she did not concern herself about anything, but she knew everything that happened in the street. Her husband was the only one who, at times, was beyond her control. Yet, although Mr. Hummel was tyrannical to all the world, he sometimes showed his wife great consideration. When she was too much for him in the house, he quietly went into the garden, and if she followed him there, he ensconced himself in the factory behind a bulwark of felt.

But also Mrs. Hummel was subject to a higher power, and this power was exercised by her little daughter, Laura. This was the only surviving one of several children, and all the tenderness and affection of the mother were lavished upon her. And she was a splendid little girl; the whole town knew her ever since she wore her first red shoes; she was often detained when in the arms of her nurse; and had many presents given her. She grew up a merry, plump little maiden, with two large blue eyes and round cheeks, with dark, curly hair, and an arch countenance. When the little, rosy daughter of Mr. Hummel walked along the streets, her hands in the pockets of her apron, she was the delight of the whole neighborhood. Sprightly and decided, she knew how to behave toward all, and was never backward in offering her little mouth to be kissed. She would give the woodcutter at the door her buttered roll, and join him in drinking the thin coffee out of his cup; she accompanied the letter-carrier all along the street, and her greatest pleasure was to run with him up the steps, to ring and deliver his letters; she even once slipped out of the room late in the evening, and placed herself by the watchman, on a corner-stone, and held his great horn in impatient expectation of the striking of the hour at which it was to be sounded. Mrs. Hummel lived in unceasing anxiety lest her daughter should be stolen; for, more than once she had disappeared for many hours; she had gone with children, who were strangers, to their homes, and had played with them-she was the patroness of many of the little urchins in the street, knew how to make them respect her, gave them pennies, and received as tokens of esteem dolls and little chimney-sweeps, constructed of dried plums and little wooden sticks. She was a kind-hearted child that rather laughed than wept, and her merry face contributed more toward making the house of Mr. Hummel a pleasant abode, than the ivy arbor of the mistress of the house, or the massive bust of Mr. Hummel himself, which looked down imperiously on Laura's doll-house.

"The child is becoming unbearable," exclaimed Mrs. Hummel, angrily dragging in the troubled Laura by the hand. "She runs about the streets all day long. Just now when I came from market she was sitting near the bridge, on the chair of the fruit-woman, selling onions for her. Everyone was gathering around her, and I had to fetch my child out of the crowd."

"The little monkey will do well," answered Mr. Hummel, laughing; "why will you not let her enjoy her childhood?"

"She must give up this low company. She lacks all sense of refinement; she hardly knows her alphabet, and she has no taste for reading. It is time, too, that she should begin her French letters. Little Betty, the councillor's daughter, is not older, and she knows how to call her mother *chère mère*, in such a pretty manner."

"The French are a polite people," answered Mr. Hummel. "If you are so anxious to train your daughter for the market, the Turkish language would be better than the French. The Turk pays money if you dispose of your child to him; the others wish to have something into the bargain."

"Do not speak so inconsiderately, Henry!" exclaimed the wife.

"Be off with you and your cursed French letters, else I promise you I will teach the child all the French phrases I know; they are not many, but they are strong. *Baisez-moi, Madame Hummel!*" Saying this, he left the room with an air of defiance.

The result, however, of this consultation was that Laura went to school. It was very difficult for her to listen and be silent, and for a longtime her progress was not satisfactory. But at last her little soul was fired with ambition; she climbed the lower steps of learning with Miss Johanne, and then she was promoted to the renowned Institute of Miss Jeannette, where the daughters of families of pretension received education in higher branches. There she learned the tributaries of the Amazon, and much Egyptian history; she could touch the cover of the electrophorus, speak of the weather in

French, and read English so ingeniously that even true-born Britons were obliged to acknowledge that a new language had been discovered; lastly, she was accomplished in all the elegancies of German composition. She wrote small treatises on the difference between walking and sleeping, on the feelings of the famed Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, on the terrors of a shipwreck, and of the desert island on which she had been saved. Finally, she gained some knowledge of the composition of strophes and sonnets. It soon became clear that Laura's strong point was German, not French; her style was the delight of the Institute; nay, she began to write poems in honor of her teachers and favorite companions, in which she very happily imitated the difficult rhymes of the great Schiller's "Song of the Bell." She was now eighteen, a pretty, rosy, young lady, still plump and merry, still the ruling power of the house, and still loved by all the people on the street.

The mother, proud of the accomplishments of her daughter, after her confirmation, prepared an upper room for her, looking out upon the trees of the park; and Laura fitted up her little home like a fairy castle, with ivy-vines, a little flower-table, and a beautiful ink-stand of china on which shepherds and shepherdesses were sitting side by side. There she passed her pleasantest hours with her pen and paper, writing her diary in secret.

She also partook of the aversion of her parents for the neighboring family. Even as a little child she had passed poutingly before the door of that house; never had her foot crossed its threshold, and when good Mrs. Hahn once asked her to shake hands, it was long before she could make up her mind to take her hand out of her apron pocket. Of the inhabitants of the neighboring house the one most annoying to her was young Fritz Hahn. She seldom associated with him, but unfortunately she was always in some embarrassment which enabled Fritz Hahn to act the part of her protector. Before she went to school, the eldest son of Mrs. Knips, already quite a big fellow, who painted fine pictures and birthday cards, and sold them to people in the neighborhood, wished to compel her to give the money she held in her hand for a devil's head which he had painted, and which no one in the street would have; he treated her so roughly and so ill, that contrary to her wont, she became frightened and gave him her pennies, and weeping, held the horrible picture in her hand. Fritz Hahn happened to come that way, inquired what had taken place, and when she complained to him of Knips's violent conduct, he grew so indignant that she became frightened about him. He set upon the lad, who was his school-fellow and in a class above him, and began to thrash him on the spot, while the younger Knips looked on laughing, with his hands in his pocket. Fritz pushed the naughty boy against the wall and compelled him to give up the money and take back his devil. But this meeting did not help to make her like Fritz any the better. She could not bear him, because already as an undergraduate he wore spectacles, and always looked so serious. And when she came from school, and he went with his portfolio to the lecture, she always endeavored to avoid him.

On another occasion they happened to meet. She was among the first girls in the Institute; the oldest Knips was already Magister, and the younger apprentice in her father's business, and Fritz Hahn had just become a doctor. She had rowed herself between the trees in the park till the boat struck a snag and her oar fell into the water. As she was bending down to recover it, she also lost her hat and parasol. Laura, in her embarrassment, looked to the shore for help. Again it so happened that Fritz Hahn was passing, lost in thought. He heard the faint cry which had escaped her, jumped into the muddy water, fished up the hat and parasol, and drew the boat to the shore. Here he offered Laura his hand and helped her on to dry ground. Laura undoubtedly owed him thanks, and he had also treated her with respect and called her Miss. But then he looked very ridiculous, he bowed so awkwardly, and he stared at her so fixedly through his glasses. And when she afterwards learned that he had caught a terrible cold from his jump into the swamp, she became indignant, both at herself and at him, because she had screamed when there was no danger, and he had rushed to her aid with such useless chivalry. She could have helped herself, and now the Hahns would think she owed them no end of thanks.

On this point she might have been at ease, for Fritz had quietly changed his clothes and dried them in his room.

But indeed it was quite natural that the two hostile children should avoid each other, for Fritz was of quite a different nature. He also was an only child, and had been brought up tenderly by a kind-hearted father and a too anxious mother. He was, from his earliest childhood, quiet and self-possessed, unassuming and studious. In his home he had created for himself a little world of his own where he indulged in out-of-the-way studies. Whilst around him was the merry hum of life, he pored over Sanskrit characters, and investigated the relations between the wild spirits that hovered over the Teutoburger battle, and the gods of the Veda, who floated over palm-woods and bamboos in the hot valley of the Ganges. He also was the pride and joy of his family; his mother never failed to bring him his cup of coffee every morning; then she seated herself opposite him with her bunch of keys, and looked silently at him while he ate his breakfast, scolded him gently for working so late the previous night, and told him that she could not sleep quietly till she heard him push back his chair and place his boots before the door to be cleaned. After breakfast, Fritz went to his father to bid him good morning, and he knew that it gave his father pleasure when he walked with him for a few minutes in the garden, observing the growth of his favorite flowers, and when, above all, he approved of his garden projects. This was the only point on which Mr. Hahn was sometimes at variance with his son; and, as he could not refute his son's arguments, nor restrain his own strong aesthetic inclinations, he adopted methods which are often resorted to by greater politicians-he secretly prepared his projects, and surprised his son with the execution of them.

Amidst this tranquil life, intercourse with the Professor was the greatest pleasure of the day to our young scholar; it elevated him and made him happy. He had, while yet a student, heard the first course of lectures given by Felix Werner at the University. A friendship had gradually arisen, such as is perhaps only possible among highly-cultivated, sound men of learning. Fritz became the devoted confidant of the inexhaustible activity of his friend. Every investigation of the Professor, with its results, was imparted to him, even to the most minute details, and the pleasure of every new discovery was shared by the neighbors. Thus the best portion of their life was passed together. Fritz, indeed, as the younger, was more a receiver than giver; but it was just this that made the relation so firm and deep. This intercourse was not without occasional differences, as is natural with scholars; for both were hasty in judgment; both were very exacting in the requirements which they made on themselves and others, and both were easily excited. But such differences were soon settled, and only served to increase the loving consideration with which they treated each other.

Through this friendship the bitter relations between the two houses were somewhat mitigated. Even Mr. Hummel could not help showing some respect for the Doctor, as his highly-honored tenant paid such striking marks of distinction to the son of the enemy. For Mr. Hummel's respect for his tenant was unbounded. He heard that the Professor was quite celebrated in his specialty, and he was inclined to value earthly fame when, as in this case, there was profit in it. Besides, the Professor was a most excellent tenant. He never protested against any rule which Mr. Hummel, as chief magistrate of the house, prescribed. He had once asked the advice of Mr. Hummel concerning the investment of some capital. He possessed neither dog nor cat, gave no parties, and did not sing with his window open, nor play bravura pieces on the piano. But the main point was, that he showed to Mrs. Hummel and Laura, whenever he met them, the most chivalrous politeness, which well became the learned gentleman. Mrs. Hummel was enchanted with her tenant; and Mr. Hummel always deemed it expedient not to mention his intention of raising the rent to his family, because he foresaw a general remonstrance from the ladies.

Now the hobgoblin who ran to and fro between both houses, throwing stones in the way, and making sport of men, had tried also to excite these two noble souls against each other. But his attempt was a miserable failure; these worthy men were not disposed to dance to his discordant pipes.

Early the following morning, Gabriel took a letter from his master to the Doctor. As he passed the hostile threshold, Dorchen, the servant of the Hahn family, hastily came toward him with a letter from her young master to the Professor. The messengers exchanged letters, and the two friends read them at the same moment.

The Professor wrote: -

"My dear friend-Do not be angry with me because I have again been vehement; the cause of it was as absurd as possible. I must honestly tell you that what put me out was your having so unconditionally refused to edit with me a Latin text. For the possibility of finding the lost manuscript, which we in our pleasant dreams assumed for some minutes, was the more enticing to me, because it opened the prospect of an employment in common to us both. And if I wish to draw you within the narrow circle of my studies, you may take for granted that it is not only from personal feeling, but far more from the wish of my heart to avail myself of your ability for the branch of learning to which I confine myself."

Fritz, on the other hand, wrote: -

"My very dear friend-I feel most painfully that my irritability yesterday spoilt for us both a charming evening. But do not think that I mean to dispute your right to reproach me for the prolixity and want of system in my labors. It was just because what you said touched a cord, the secret dissonance of which I have myself sometimes felt, that I for a moment lost my equanimity. You are certainly right in much that you said, only I beg you to believe that my refusal to undertake a great work in conjunction with you was neither selfishness nor want of friendship. I am convinced that I ought not to abandon the work I have undertaken, even though too extensive for my powers; least of all exchange it for a new circle of interests, in which my deficient knowledge would be a burden to you."

After the reception of these letters both were somewhat more at ease. But certain expressions in them made some further explanation necessary to both, so they set to work and wrote again to each other, shortly and pithily, as became thoughtful men. The Professor answered: "I thank you from my heart, my dear Fritz, for your letter; but I must repeat that you always estimate your own worth too low, and this is all that I can reproach you with."

Fritz replied: "How deeply touched I feel by your friendship at this moment! This only will I say, that among the many things I have to learn from you, there is nothing I need more than your modesty; and when you speak of your knowledge so comprehensive and fertile in results, as being limited, be not angry if I strive after the same modesty with regard to my work."

After sending the letter, the Professor, still disquieted, went to his lecture, and was conscious that his mind wandered during his discourse. Fritz hastened to the library, and diligently collected all the referenced which he could find respecting the Manor of Bielstein. At midday, on their return home, each of them read the second letter of his friend: then the Professor frequently looked at the clock, and when it struck three he hastily put on his hat and went with great strides across the street to the hostile house. As he laid hold of the door-knob of the Doctor's room, he felt a counter pressure from within. Pushing the door open, he found Fritz standing before him, also with his hat on, intending to visit him. Without saying a word the two friends embraced each other.

"I bring you good tidings from the book-seller," began the Professor.

"And I of the old Manor," exclaimed Fritz.

"Listen," said the Professor. "The book-seller bought the monk's book of a retail-dealer who travels about the country collecting curiosities and old books. The man was brought into my presence; he had himself bought the little book in the town of Rossau, at an auction of the effects of a cloth-maker, together with an old cupboard and some carved stools. It is at least possible that the remarks in cipher at the end, which evade unpracticed eyes, may never, after the death of the friar, have excited observation nor caused investigation. Perhaps there may still be preserved in some church-record at Rossau an account of the life and death of the monk Tobias Bachhuber."

"Possibly," assented Fritz, much pleased. "A congregation of his persuasion still exists. But Manor Bielstein lies at a distance of half an hour from the town of Rossau, on a woody height-see, here is the map. It formerly belonged to the ruling sovereign, but in the last century it passed into private hands; the buildings, however, remain. It is represented on this map as an old chateau, at present the residence of a Mr. Bauer. My father also knows about the house; he has seen it from the high road on his journeys, and describes it as a long stretch of buildings, with balconies and a high roof."

"The threads interweave themselves into a satisfactory web," said the Professor, complacently.

"Stop a moment," cried the Doctor, eagerly. "The traditions of this province have been collected by one of our friends. The man is trustworthy. Let us see whether he has recorded any reminiscences of the neighborhood of Rossau." He hastily opened and looked into a book, and then gazed speechless at his friend.

The Professor seized the volume and read this short notice: "It is said that in the olden times the monks in the neighborhood of Bielstein walled up a great treasure in the manor-house."

Again did a vision of the old, mysterious manuscript arise before the eyes of the friends so distinctly that it might be seized.

"It is certainly not impossible that the manuscript may yet lie concealed," remarked the Professor, at last, with assumed composure. "Instances of similar discoveries are not lacking. It is not long since that a ceiling of a room in the old house of the proprietor of my home was broken through; it was a double ceiling, and the empty space contained a number of records and papers concerning the ownership, and some old jewels. The treasure had been concealed in the time of the great war, and no one for a century had heeded the lowly ceiling of the little room."

"Naturally," exclaimed Fritz, rubbing his hands. "And within the facing of old chimneys empty spaces are sometimes found. A brother of my mother's found, on rebuilding his house, in such a place a pot full of coins." He drew out his purse. "Here is one of them, a beautiful Swedish dollar; my uncle gave it to me at my confirmation as a luck-penny, and I have carried it in my purse ever since. I have often struggled against the temptation to spend it."

The Professor closely examined the head of Gustavus Adolphus, as if he had been a neighbor of the concealed Tacitus, and would convey information concerning the lost book in its inscription. "It is true," he said, reflectively, "if the house is on a height, even the cellars may be dry."

"Undoubtedly," answered the Doctor. "Often, too, the thick walls were built double, and the intervening space filled with rubbish. In such a case it would be easy, through a small opening, to make a hollow space in the inside of the wall."

"But now," began the Professor, rising, "the question arises, what are we to do? For the knowledge of such a thing, whether it be of great or little importance, imposes upon the investigator the duty of doing all that is possible to promote the discovery. And this duty we must fulfill promptly and completely."

"If you impart this record to the public, you will allow the prospect of discovering the manuscript to pass out of your own hands."

"In this business, every personal consideration must be dismissed," said the Professor, decisively.

"And if you now make known the cloister-record you have found," continued the Doctor, "who can answer for it, that the nimble activity of some antiquary, or some foreigner, may not prevent all further investigations? In such a case the treasure, even if found, would be lost, not only to you, but also to our country and to science."

"That, at least, must not be," cried the Professor.

"And besides, even if you apply to the government of the province, it is very doubtful whether they will render you any assistance," replied the Doctor, triumphantly.

"I do not think of committing the matter to strangers and officials," answered the Professor. "We have a person in the neighborhood whose good fortune and acuteness in tracing out rarities is

wonderful. I have a mind to tell Magister Knips of the manuscript; he may lay aside his proof-sheets for a few days, travel for us to Rossau, and there examine the ground."

The Doctor jumped up. "That will never do. Knips is not the man to trust with such a secret."

"I have always found him trustworthy," replied the Professor. "He is wonderfully skillful and well-informed."

"To me it would appear a desecration of this fine discovery, to employ such a man," answered Fritz, "and I would never consent to it."

"In that case," cried the Professor, "I have made up my mind. The vacation is at hand; I will go myself to the old house. And as you, my friend, intended to travel for a few days, you must accompany me; we shall go together. Here is my hand on it."

"With all my heart," cried the Doctor, clasping his friend's hand. "We will penetrate into the manor-house, and summon the spirits which hover over the treasure."

"We will first come to an understanding with the owner of the house. Then we shall see what is to be done. Meanwhile let us keep the affair secret."

"That is right," assented Fritz; and the friends descended, well satisfied, into the garden of Mr. Hahn, and, pausing for a few moments beneath the White Muse, they consulted with regard to the opening of the campaign.

The imagination of the Scholar was fast pent up by his methodical train of thought; but in the depths of his soul there was a rich and abundant stream from the secret source of all beauty and energy. Now a hole had been torn in the dam, and the flood poured itself joyfully over the seed. Ever did the wish for the mysterious manuscript return to him. He saw before him the opening in the wall, and the first glimmer of light falling on the grey books in the hollow; he saw the treasure in his hands as he drew it out, and would not part with it till he had deciphered the illegible pages. Blessed spirit of Brother Tobias Bachhuber, if thou shouldst spend any of thy holiday-time in heaven in coming back to our poor earth, and if then at night thou glidest through the rooms of the old manor, guarding thy treasure and scaring inquisitive meddlers, pray, nod kindly to the man who now approaches to bring thy secret to the light of day, for truly he seeks not honor nor gain for himself, but he conjures you, in the name of all that is good, to assist a well-meaning man.

CHAPTER III.
A FOOL'S ERRAND

Whoever on a certain sunny harvest-morning in August had looked down from the heights in the direction of Rossau, would have observed an object moving along the road between the meadows that extended to the gates of the city. On closer observation two travelers might be perceived, one taller than the other, both wearing light summer clothes, the freshness of which had been sullied by the stormy rain of the last few days. They had both leather traveling-bags, which hung by straps from their shoulders; the taller one wore a broad-brimmed felt hat, the shorter one a straw hat.

The travelers were evidently strangers, for they stopped at times to observe and enjoy the view of the valley and hills, which is seldom the custom with people born in the country. The district had not yet been discovered by pleasure-seekers; there were no smooth paths in the woods for the thin boots of towns-folk; even the carriage road was not a work of art, the water lay in the tracks made by the wheels; the sheep-bells and the axe of the wood-cutter only were heard by the dwellers of the neighborhood, who were working in the fields or passing on their way to their work. And yet the country was not without charm; the woody hills were marked in bold outlines, a stone-quarry might be seen between the fields in the plain, or the head of a rock jutted out from amongst the trees. From the hills on the horizon a small brook wound its course to the distant river, bordered by strips of meadow, behind which the arable land ran up to the woody heights. The lovely landscape looked bright in the morning sunshine.

In the low country in front of the travelers rose to view, surrounded by hills, the village of Rossau, a little country-town with two massive church towers and dark-tiled roofs, which projected above the walls of the place like the backs of a herd of cattle that had crowded together for protection against a pack of wolves.

The strangers looked from their high position with warm interest on the chimneys and towers behind the old discolored and patched walls that lay before them. In that place had once been preserved a treasure, which, if found again, would interest the whole civilized world and excite hundreds to intellectual labor. The landscape looked exactly like other German landscapes, and the village was exactly like other German villages; and yet there was an attraction about the place that inspired a joyful hope in the travelers. Was it the globe-like ornament that crowned the stout old tower? or was it the arch of the gate which just veiled from the travelers in alluring darkness the entrance to the town? or the stillness of the empty valley, in which the place lay without suburbs and outhouses, as the towns are portrayed on old maps? or the herds of cattle that went out of the gate into the open space, and bounded merrily on the pasture ground? or was it perhaps the keen morning air which blew about the temples of the wanderers? Both felt that something remarkable and promising hovered over the valley in which, as searchers of the past, they were entering.

"Imagine the landscape as it once appeared to the eye," began the Professor; "the forest, in olden times, encircled the town more closely; the hills seemed higher, the valley deeper; the monastery then lay, with the dwellings of its dependants, as in a deep basin. There, to the south, where the country sharply rises, the monks had their vineyards. Gradually the houses of the town drew about the monastery. Take from those towers beyond us the caps that were placed upon them a century ago, give them back their old pinnacles, place here and there a turret on the walls, and you have an ideal, wondrously beautiful picture of mediaeval days."

"And upon the same road that leads us thither, a learned monk once strode with his precious manuscripts towards the quiet valley; there to teach his companions, or to shield himself, perhaps, from powerful enemies," the Doctor said, with enthusiasm.

The travelers passed by the pasture ground; the herdsmen looked with indifference at the strangers; but the cows placed themselves by the edge of the ditch and stared, while the young ones

of the herd bellowed at them inquiringly. They went through the dark arch of the gate and looked curiously along the streets. It was a poor little town, the main street alone was paved, and that badly. Not far from the gate the sloping beam of a well projected high in the air, and from it hung along pole with a bucket attached. Few people were to be seen, those who were not working in the houses were occupied in the field; for the straws which stuck in the stone crevices of the arch of the gate showed that harvest wagons were carrying the fruits of the fields to the farm-yards of the citizens. Near many of the houses there were open wooden doors, through which one could look into the yard and barns, and over the dung heap on which small fowls were pecking. The last century had altered the place but little, and the low houses still stood with their gables to the front. Instead of the coats of arms, there projected into the street the signs of artisans, carved in tin or wood, and painted-such as a large wooden boot; a griffin, holding enormous shears in its hand; or a rampant lion, that extended a bretzel; or, as the most beautiful masterpiece of all, a regular hexagon of colored glass panes.

"Much has been retained of mediæval times here," said the Professor.

The friends came to the market-place, an irregular space, the little houses of which were adorned with bright paint. There on an insignificant building prominently stood a red dragon with a curled tail, carved out of a board, and supported in the air on an iron pole. Upon it was painted, in ill-formed letters; "The Dragon Inn."

"See," said Fritz, pointing to the dragon, "the fancy of the artist has carved him with a pike's head and thick teeth. The dragon is the oldest treasure-preserver of our legends. It is remarkable how firmly the recollection of this legendary animal everywhere clings to the people. Probably this sign-board originates from some tradition of the place."

They ascended the white stone steps into the house, utterly unconscious that they had long been watched by sharp eyes. A citizen, who was taking his morning draught, exclaimed to the stout host, "Who can these be? They do not look like commercial travelers; perhaps one of them is the new parson from Kirchdorf."

"Parsons don't look like that," said the inn-keeper, decidedly, who knew men better; "they are strangers on foot, no carriage and no luggage."

The strangers entered, placed themselves at a red-painted table, and ordered breakfast. "A beautiful country, mine host," began the Professor; "magnificent trees in your forests."

"Yes," answered the host.

"A wealthy neighborhood, apparently," continued the Professor.

"People complain that they do not earn enough," replied the host.

"How many clergy have you in the place?"

"Two," said the host, more politely. "But the old pastor is dead; meanwhile, there is a candidate here."

"Is the other pastor at home?"

"I do not know," said the landlord.

"Have you a court of justice here?"

"We have a Justice of the Peace; he is now here-court is in session to-day."

"Was there not in former times a monastery in the city?" said the Doctor, taking up the examination.

The citizen and the landlord looked at each other. "That is long since," replied the master of the inn.

"Does not the Manor of Bielstein lie in the neighborhood?" inquired Fritz.

Again the citizen and the landlord looked significantly at each other.

"It lies somewhere here in the neighborhood," answered the landlord, with reserve.

"How long does it take to go to the manor?" asked the Professor, irritated by the short answers of the man.

"Do you wish to go there?" inquired the landlord. "Do you know the owner?"

"No," answered the Professor.

"Have you any business with him?"

"That is our affair," answered the Professor, curtly.

"The road leads through the wood, and takes half an hour-you cannot miss it;" and the landlord abruptly closed the conversation and left the room. The citizen followed him.

"We have not learnt much," said the Doctor, laughing. "I hope the pastor and magistrate will be more communicative."

"We will go direct to the place," said the Professor, with decision.

Meanwhile the landlord and the citizen consulted together. "Whatever the strangers may be," repeated the citizen, "they are not ecclesiastics, and they did not seem to care for the magistrate. Did you remark how they inquired about the monastery and the Manor?" The landlord nodded. "I will tell you my suspicion," continued the citizen, eagerly; "they have not come here for nothing; they are after something."

"What can that be?" asked the landlord, pondering.

"They are disguised Jesuits; that's what they look like to me."

"Well, if they intend to seek a quarrel with the people at the Manor, they will find their match."

"I am on my way now to the Inspector on business; I will give him a hint."

"Do not meddle with what does not concern you," said the landlord, warningly. But the citizen only held the boots he carried, tighter under his arm, and drove round the corner.

Our two friends left, disgusted with the lack of courtesy they encountered at the Dragon. They inquired the way to the manor of an old woman at the opposite gate of the city. Behind the town the path rose from the gravel bed of the brook to the woody height. They entered a clearing of underbrush, from which, here and there, rose up high oaks. The rain of the last evening still hung in drops on the leaves-the deep green of summer glistened in the sun's rays-the song of birds and the tapping of the woodpecker above broke the stillness.

"This puts one in different frame of mind," exclaimed the Doctor, cheerfully.

"It requires very little to call forth new melodies in a well-strung heart, if fate has not played on it with too rough a hand. The bark of a few trees covered with hoary moss, a handful of blossoms on the turf, and a few notes from the throats of birds, are sufficient," replied the philosophic Professor. "Hark! that is no greeting of nature to the wanderer," added he, listening attentively, as the sound of distant voices chanting a choral, fell softly on his ear. The sound appeared to come from above the trees.

"Let us go higher up," exclaimed the Doctor, "to the mysterious place where old church-hymns murmur through the oaks."

They ascended the hill some hundred steps, and found themselves on an open terrace, one side of which was surrounded by trees. In the clearing stood a small wooden church surrounded by a graveyard; some distance beyond on a massive extent of rock rose a great old building, the roof of which was broken by many pointed gables.

"How all harmonizes!" exclaimed the Professor, looking curiously over the little church up to the Manor-house.

A funeral chant was heard more clearly from the church. "Let us go in," said the Doctor, pointing to the open door.

"To my mind it is more seemly to remain without," answered the Professor; "it is repulsive to me to intrude either on the pleasures or sorrows of strangers. The hymn is finished; now comes the pastor's little discourse."

Fritz meanwhile had climbed the low stone wall and was examining the church. "Look at the massive buttresses. It is the remains of an old building; they have repaired it with pinewood; the tower and roof are black with age; it would be worth our while to see the inside."

The Professor held in his hand the long shoot of a bramble bush which hung over the wall, looking with admiration at its white blossoms, and at the green and brown berries which grew in thick clusters. The sound of a man's voice fell indistinctly on his ear, and he bent his head involuntarily to catch the words.

"Let us hear," he said at last, and entered the churchyard with his friend. They took off their hats and quietly opened the church door. It was a very small hall; the bricks of the old choir had been whitewashed; the chancel, a gallery, and a few benches were of brown firwood. Before the altar lay open a child's coffin, the form within was covered with flowers. Beside it stood several country people in simple attire; on the steps of the altar was an aged clergyman with white hair and a kind face; and at the head of the coffin the wife of a laborer, mother of the little one, sobbing. Beside her stood a fine, womanly form in city dress; she had taken off her hat, and with folded hands was looking down on the child that lay among the flowers. Thus she stood, motionless; the sun fell obliquely on the waving hair and regular features of the young face. But more captivating than the tall figure and beautiful head was the expression of deep devotion that pervaded the whole countenance. The Professor involuntarily seized hold of his friend's arm to detain him. The clergyman made his concluding prayer; the stately maiden bowed her head lower, then bent down once more to the little one, and wound her arm round the mother, who leaned weeping on her comforter. Thus she stood, speaking gently to the mother, while tears rolled down from her eyes. How spirit-like sounded the murmurs of that rich voice in the ear of her friend! Then the men lifted the coffin from the ground and followed the clergyman, who led the way to the churchyard. Behind the coffin went the mother, her head still on the shoulder of her supporter. The maiden passed by the strangers, gazing before her with an inspired look, whispering in her companion's ear words from the Bible: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Let little children come unto me." Her gentle accents were heard even by the friends. The mother hung broken-hearted on the arm of the girl, and, as if borne along by the gentle tones, tottered to the grave. Reverently did the friends follow the procession. The coffin was lowered into the grave, the clergyman pronounced the blessing, and each one present threw three handfuls of earth on the departed one. Then the country people separated, leaving a free passage for the mother and her companion. The latter gave her hand to the clergyman, and then conducted the mother slowly across the churchyard to the road which led to the Manor.

The friends followed at some distance, without looking at each other. The Professor passed his hand over his eyes. "Such incidents are always very touching," he said, sorrowfully.

"As she stood at the altar," exclaimed the Doctor, "she seemed like a prophetess of the olden time, with an oaken crown on her head. She drew the poor, woman on by her gentle accents. The words were from our good, old Bible; and now I understand the significant meaning in ancient times of the word 'whisper,' to which a magic power was ascribed. She took possession of the mourner body and soul, and her voice sank deep into my heart also. What was she, maid or married woman?"

"She is a maiden," answered the Professor, impressively. "She dwells at the Manor, and we shall meet her there. Let her go on, and we will wait at the foot of the rock."

They sat some time on a projecting stone. The Professor never seemed weary of contemplating a tuft of moss; he brushed it with his hand, laying it now on one side, now on the other. At last he arose quickly. "Whatever may come of it, let us go on."

They ascended the hill some hundred steps. The landscape before them suddenly changed. On one side lay the manor-precincts with a walled gateway and a courtyard, in which stood large farm-buildings; before them, a wide plain of arable land sloped down from the height into a rich valley. The lonely woodland landscape had disappeared; around the wanderers was the active stir of daily life; the wind waved through the seas of corn; harvest wagons were passing up the roads through the fields; the whip cracked and the sheaves were swung by strong arms over the rails of the wagons.

"Hello! what are you looking for here?" demanded a deep bass voice behind the strangers, in an imperative tone. The friends turned quickly. Before the farmyard-gate stood a powerful, broad-

shouldered man, with close-cut hair, and an expression of deep energy in his sunbrown face; behind him stood farm-employees and laborers, stretching their heads out with curiosity through the gate, and a large dog ran barking toward the strangers. "Back, Nero," called out his master, and whistled to the dog, at the same time scanning the strangers with a cold, searching look.

"Have I the honor of addressing the proprietor of this estate, a Mr. Bauer?" inquired the Professor.

"I am that person, and who are you?" asked the Proprietor in return.

The Professor gave their names, and that of the place from which they came. The host approached and examined them both from head to foot.

"There are no Jesuits there, I suppose," he said; "but if you come here to find some hidden treasure, your journey is useless; you will find nothing."

The friends looked at each other; they were near the house, but far from the goal.

"You make us feel," answered the Professor, "that we have approached your dwelling without an introduction. Although you have already made a guess as to the object of our journey, yet I beg of you to permit us to make an explanation before fewer witnesses."

The dignified demeanor of the Professor did not fail to have an effect. "If you really have business with me, it would be better certainly to settle it in the house. Follow me, gentlemen." He lifted his cap a little, pointed with his hand to the gate, and went ahead. "Nero, you brute, can't you be quiet?"

The Professor and the Doctor followed, while the farm hands and laborers and the growling dog closed in behind. Thus the strangers were conducted in a not very cordial manner to the house. In spite of their unpleasant position, they looked with curiosity at the great farmyard, the work going on in the barns, and a flock of large geese which, disturbed by the party, waddled cackling across the road. Then their eyes fell upon the dwelling itself, the broad stone steps with benches on both sides, the vaulted door, and the white washed escutcheon on the keystone. They entered a roomy hall, the Proprietor hung up his cap, laid hold with strong hand of the latch of the sitting-room door, and again made a movement of the hand, which was intended to be polite and to invite the strangers to enter. "Now, that we are alone," he began, "how can I serve you? You have already been announced to me as two treasure-seekers. If you are that, I must begin by plainly telling you that I will not encourage such follies. Apart from that, I am glad to see you."

"But we are not treasure-seekers," rejoined the Professor; "and as we have kept the object of our journey a secret everywhere, we do not understand how you could hear so erroneous a report concerning the occasion of our coming."

"The shoemaker of my steward brought him the intelligence together with a pair of mended boots; he saw you at the tavern in the town, and grew suspicious because of your questions."

"He has exercised more ingenuity than was called for by our harmless questions," answered the Professor. "And yet he was not altogether wrong."

"Then there is something in it," interrupted the Proprietor, gloomily; "in that case I must beg you, gentlemen, not to trouble yourselves or me further. I have no time for such nonsense."

"First of all, have the goodness to hear us before so curtly withdrawing your hospitality," replied the Professor, calmly. "We have come with no other aim than to impart to you something concerning the importance of which you may yourself decide. And not only we, but others, might reproach you if you refused our request without taking it into consideration. The matter concerns you more than us."

"Of course," said the host, "we are acquainted with this style of speech."

"Not quite," continued the Professor; "there is a difference according to who uses it, and to what purpose."

"Well, then, in the devil's name, speak, but be clear," exclaimed the Proprietor, impatiently.

"Not till you have shown yourself ready," continued the Professor, "to pay the attention the importance of the subject deserves. A short explanation will be necessary, and you have not even invited us to sit down."

"Be seated," replied the Proprietor, and offered chairs.

The Professor began: "A short time ago, among other written records of the monks of Rossau, I accidentally found some observations in a manuscript which may be of the greatest importance to the branch of learning to which I devote myself."

"And what is your branch of learning?" interrupted the host, unmoved.

"I am a philologist."

"That means one who studies ancient languages?" asked the Proprietor.

"It is so," continued the Professor. "It is stated by a monk, in the volume I have mentioned, that about the year 1500 there existed in the monastery a valuable manuscript, containing a history by the Roman, Tacitus. The work of the renowned historian is only very imperfectly preserved to us in some other well-known manuscripts. A second notice from the same book, in April, 1637, mentions that during the troublous wartimes the last monks of the monastery had concealed from the Swedes their church treasures and manuscripts in a hollow, dry place in the Manor-house of Bielstein. These are the words I have found; I have nothing further to impart to you. We have no doubt of the genuineness of both notices. I have brought with me an abstract of the passages concerning it, and I am ready to submit the original to your inspection, or that of any competent judge whom you may choose. I will only add now that both I and my friend know well how unsatisfactory is the communication we make to you, and how uncertain is the prospect that after two centuries any of the buried possessions of the monastery should be forthcoming. And yet we have made use of a vacation to impart to you this discovery, even at the probable risk of a fruitless search. But we felt ourselves bound in duty to make this journey, not especially on your account-although this manuscript, if found; would be of great value to you-but principally in the interest of science, for in that point of view such a discovery would be invaluable."

The Proprietor had listened attentively, but he left untouched the paper that the Professor had laid on the table before him. Then he began: "I see that you do not mean to deceive me, and that you tell me the whole truth with the best intentions. I understand your explanation. Your Latin I cannot read; but that is not necessary, for, with regard to this matter, I believe you. But," he continued, laughing, "there is one thing which the learned gentlemen living so far away do not know, and that is, that this house has the misfortune to be considered throughout the whole country as a place in which the old monks have concealed treasures."

"That was not, of course, unknown to us," rejoined the Doctor, "and it would not diminish the significance of these written records."

"Then you were greatly in error. It is surely clear that such a report, which has been believed in a country through many generations, has meanwhile stirred up persons who are superstitious and greedy of gain, to discover these supposed treasures. How can you imagine that you are the first to conceive the thought of making a search? This is an old, strong-built house, but it would be stronger still if it did not show traces from cellar to roof that in former times holes have been made and the damage left unrepaired. Only a few years ago I had, at much cost and trouble, to place new beams into the roof, because roof and ceiling were sinking, and it appeared, on examination, that unscrupulous men had sawed off a piece of the rafter, in order to grope into a corner of the roof. And I tell you frankly, that if I have met with anything disagreeable from the old house, in which for twenty years I have experienced both happiness and misfortune, it has been from this troublesome report. Even now an investigation is being carried on in the town respecting a treasure-seeker, who has deceived credulous people in giving out that he could conjure up treasures from this hill. His accomplices are still being tracked. You may ascribe it to your questions in the town, that the people there, who are

much excited because of the deception, have taken you to be assistants of the impostor. My rude greeting was also owing to this. I must therefore ask your pardon for it."

"Then you will not agree," asked the Professor, dissatisfied, "to make use of our communication for further researches?"

"No," replied the Proprietor, "I will not make such a fool of myself. If your book mentions nothing more than what you have told me, this account is of little use. If the monks have concealed anything here, it is a hundred to one that they have taken it away again in quieter times. And even if, contrary to all probability, the concealed objects should remain in their place-as since then some hundred years have passed-other hungry people would long ago have disinterred them. These are, pardon me, nursery stories, only fit for spinning-rooms. I have a great aversion to all these notions that necessitate pulling down walls. The husbandman should dig in his fields and not in his house; his treasures lie beneath God's sun."

The cold demeanor of the man made the Professor's blood boil. He with difficulty controlled his rising anger, and, approaching the window, looked out at a bevy of sparrows that were twittering vehemently at one another. At last, turning round, he began: -

"The owner of a house has the right of refusal. If you persist we shall certainly leave you with a feeling of regret that you do not know how to appreciate the possible importance of our communication. I have been unable to avoid this meeting, although I was aware how uncertain are the impressions formed in a first interview with strangers. Our communication would perhaps have received more attention if it had come to you through the medium of your government, accompanied by a requisition to commence an active search."

"Do you regret that you have not taken that course?" asked the Proprietor, laughing.

"To speak frankly, no. I have no confidence in official protocols in such matters."

"Nor have I," answered the Proprietor, drily. "Ours is a small province, the seat of Government is at a distance, and we are surrounded by foreign dominions. I have nothing to do with the court; years pass without my going there; the government does not bother us, and in my district I control the police. If my government were to attribute importance to your wishes, they would probably call for a report from me, and that would cost me a sheet of paper and an hour's writing. Perhaps, if you made enough ado, they might also send a commission to my house. These would announce themselves to me about dinner-time, and I should take them to the cellars after dinner; they would for form's sake, knock a little upon the walls, and I meanwhile would have a few bottles of wine opened. At last a paper would be quickly written, and the affair would be settled. I am thankful that you have not adopted this method. Moreover, I would defend my household rights, even against my sovereign."

"It is vain, it appears to me, to speak to you of the value of the manuscript," interposed the Professor, severely.

"It would be of no avail," said the Proprietor. "It is questionable whether such a curiosity, even if found on my property, would be of essential value to myself. As to the value to your branch of learning, I only know it from what you say; but neither for myself nor for you will I stir a finger, because I do not believe that such a treasure is concealed on my estate, and I do not choose to sacrifice myself for an improbability. This is my answer, Professor."

The Professor again stepped silently to the window. Fritz, who, although indignant, had restrained himself, felt that it was time to put an end to the conversation, and rose to take his departure. "So you have given us your final decision?"

"I regret that I can give you no other answer," replied the Proprietor, compassionately, looking at the two strangers. "I really am sorry that you have come so far out of your way. If you desire to see my farm, every door shall be opened to you. The walls of my house I open to no one. I am, moreover, ready to keep your communication a secret, and the more so, as this would also be to my own interest."

"Your refusal to allow any search to be made on your property renders any further secrecy unnecessary," answered the Doctor. "All that remains to my friend now is to publish his discovery

in some scientific periodical. He will then have done his duty, and perhaps others may be more successful with you than we have been."

The Proprietor started up. "Confound you, sir; what the devil do you mean? Will you tell your story to your colleagues? Probably these will think very much as you do."

"Undoubtedly hundreds will view the matter exactly as we do, and will also condemn your refusal," exclaimed the Doctor.

"Sir, how you judge me is a matter of indifference to me; I am perfectly willing to have you paint me as black as your love of truth will allow," exclaimed the Proprietor, indignantly. "But I see that all will be of no avail. Hang the monks and their treasure! Now I may every Sunday and every hour of your vacation expect a visit like this one-strange people with spectacles and umbrellas, who will claim the right to creep under the wooden trestles of my dairy, and to climb on the ceiling of the nursery. The devil take this Tacitus!"

The Professor took his hat. "We beg to take leave of you," and went toward the door.

"Stop, my good gentlemen," cried the host, discomposed; "not so quickly. I would rather deal with you two than have an incessant pilgrimage of your colleagues. Wait a moment, and I will make this proposition to you. You, yourselves, shall go through my house, from garret to cellar; it is a severe tax upon me and my household, but I will make the sacrifice. If you find a place that you think suspicious, we will talk it over. On the other hand, promise me that you will be silent with respect to the object of your visit here before my people. My laborers are already sufficiently aroused without this; if you encourage this unfortunate rumor, I cannot answer for it that the idea will not occur to my own people to break through the foundation-wall at a corner of the house. My house is open to you the whole day as long as you are my guests. But then, when you speak or write concerning the matter, I demand that you shall add that you have done all in your power to search through my house, but have found nothing. Will you enter into this compact with me?"

The Doctor looked doubtfully at the Professor to see whether the pride of his friend would stoop to such a condition. Contrary to his expectation, the countenance of the Scholar was radiant with joy, and he answered:

"You have mistaken us on one point. We do not desire to take away the concealed manuscript from your possession, but we have only come to persuade you to make the experiment. It seems very likely to us, that we, in a strange house, not knowing the rooms, and unused to this kind of research, shall find nothing. If, however, we do not shun the ludicrous position in which you would place us, and accept your offer, we do it only in the hope that, during our stay here, we shall succeed in awakening in you a greater interest in the possible discovery."

The Proprietor shook his head, and shrugged his shoulders. "The only interest I take in the matter is that it should be forgotten as soon as possible. You may do what you consider your duty. My business prevents me from accompanying you. I shall consign you to the care of my daughter."

He opened the door of the adjoining room and called, "Ilse!"

"Here, father," answered a rich-toned voice.

The Proprietor went into the next room. "Come here, Ilse, I have a special commission for you to-day. There are two strange gentlemen from one of the Universities here. They are looking for a book which is supposed to have been concealed in our house ages ago. Conduct them through the house and open all the rooms to them."

"But, father-" interposed the daughter.

"It matters not," continued the Proprietor, "it must be." He approached closer to her and spoke in a low tone: "They are two scholars and are crackbrained" – he pointed to his head. "What they imagine is madness, and I only give in to them in order to have peace in the future. Be cautious, Ilse; I do not know the people. I must go to the farm, but will tell the Inspector to remain near the house. They appear to me two honest fools, but the devil may trust."

"I have no fear, father," answered the daughter; "the house is full of people; we shall be able to manage."

"Take care that none of the servants are about, whilst the strangers are sounding the walls and measuring. For the rest, they do not look to me as if they would find much, even though all the walls were built up with books. But you must not allow them to break through or injure the walls."

"I understand, father," said the daughter. "Do they remain to dinner?"

"Yes, your duty will continue till evening. The housekeeper can superintend the dairy for you."

The friends heard fragments of the conversation through the door; after the first words of instruction they went quickly to the window, and talked aloud about the great accumulation of straw on the top of the barn, which, according to the Doctor, was a stork's nest, while the Professor maintained that storks did not build their nests so high. But intermingled with this talk the Professor said in a low tone: "It is very uncomfortable for us to continue in this humiliating position. But we can only convince the proprietor by our perseverance."

"Perhaps we may yet discover something," said the Doctor. "I have some experience in masonry. As a boy I found opportunity while our house was building, to obtain a fair degree of knowledge in statics and climbing rafters. It is well that the tyrant leaves us alone. Do you entertain the daughter, I will meanwhile sound the walls."

Whoever has followed an uncertain scent knows full well how difficult on a near approach are things that at a distance appeared easy. While at first the deceitful Goddess of Hope paints all favorable chances in bright colors, the very work of searching raises all possible doubts. The alluring picture fades, despondency and weariness cast their shadows across it; and what in the beginning was a happy venture becomes at last a mere effort of perseverance.

CHAPTER IV.
THE OLD HOUSE

The Proprietor re-entered with his whip in his hand and behind him the stately maiden of the churchyard. "This is my daughter Ilse; she will represent me."

The friends bowed. It was the same beautiful countenance; but instead of exalted emotion, there now rested on her features a business-like dignity. She greeted the gentlemen calmly, and invited them to breakfast in the next room. She expressed herself simply, but again the friends listened with admiration to the deep tones of her melodious voice.

"Before you begin your search you must sit down at my table; it is our custom," said the host, in better humor-on him also the presence of the daughter had a softening influence, "We meet again at noon." So saying, he departed.

The friends followed into the next room-a large dining-apartment. There were chairs along the wall; in the middle a long table, at the upper end of which three covers were laid. The young girl seated herself between the gentlemen and offered them a cold repast. "When I saw you in the churchyard, I thought that you would visit my father; the table has been set for you for some time." The friends ate a little, and thanked her still more.

"I regret that our coming should make such a demand on your time," said the Professor, gravely.

"My task is easy," answered the young girl. "I fear that yours will give you more trouble. There are many sitting-rooms in the house as well as bedrooms and attics."

"I have already told your father," answered the Professor, laughing, "that it is not our intention to examine the building like masons. Pray look upon us as curious people who only wish to see this remarkable house, in so far as it would otherwise be opened to guests."

"The house may be considered remarkable by strangers," said Ilse; "we like it because it is warm and roomy; and when my father had been some years in possession of the estate, and had the means to do so, he had the house comfortably arranged to please my deceased mother. We require plenty of room, as I have six younger brothers and sisters, and it is a large estate. The overseers of the farm eat with us; then there are the tutor and Mamselle, and in the servants' hall there are also twenty people."

The Doctor regarded his neighbor with a look of disappointment. What had become of the Sibyl? She spoke sensibly and very much like a citizen; with her something might be accomplished.

"A$ we are searching for hollow spaces," he began slyly, "we would rather trust to your guidance, if you would tell us whether there are any places in the wall, or on the ground, or anywhere here in the house, that you know of, which could be discovered by knocking?"

"O, there are plenty of such places!" answered Ilse. "If one knocks upon the wall at the back of the small cupboard in my room, it is evident there is an empty space behind; then there is the flagstone under the stairs, and many flags in the kitchen, and still more in other parts of the house, regarding which every one has his conjectures."

The Doctor had taken out his memorandum-book and noted the suspicious places.

The inspection of the house began. It was a fine old building; the walls of the lower story were so thick that the Doctor with extended arms could not span the depths of the window-niches. He eagerly undertook the sounding, and began measuring the walls. The cellars were partly hewn in the rock. In some places the rough stone still projected, and one could perceive where the wall rested on the rock. There were vast vaults, the small windows in the top of which were protected by strong iron bars, – in ancient times a secure refuge against the shot and assault of the enemy. All was dry and hollow, for the house was built, as the Doctor had already before so acutely suggested in speaking of old buildings, with outer and inner walls, and filled between with rubbish and broken stones. Naturally, therefore, the walls in many places sounded as hollow as a gourd. The Doctor knocked, and diligently took note. The knuckles of his hand became white and swelled, and the number of good places discouraged him.

From the cellar they went to the ground-floor. In the kitchen, kettles and pots were steaming, and the women who were working looked with curiosity at the demeanor of the strangers, for the Doctor kept stamping with his heel on the stone floor, and with his hands sounded the blackened side-wall of the hearth. Behind were store-rooms and the visitors' rooms. In one of these they found a woman in mourning, occupied in arranging the beds. It was the mother from the churchyard. She approached the strangers, and thanked them for having helped to pay the last honors to her child. The friends spoke kindly to her; she wiped her eyes with her apron and returned to her work.

"I begged her to remain at home to-day," said Ilse, "but she would not. It would, she thought, be good for her to have something to do, and we would need her help as you were coming to us."

It pleased our scholars to see that by the female members of the house, at least, they were considered as guests entitled to remain.

They went over the other side of the ground-floor, and once more examined the unpretentious room in which they had been first received. Behind it lay the private room of the proprietor, a small unadorned chamber, in which were a closet with shooting and riding gear, and a shelf for title-deeds and books; over the bed hung a sword and pistols, and on the writing-table there was a small model of a machine, and samples of corn and seeds in small bags; against the wall stood, in military array, gigantic water-boots, Russian leather boots, and top-boots for riding; and in the further corner half-boots of calf skin. In the next room they heard a man's voice, and the answers of children in regular succession.

"That is the school-room," said Ilse, smiling. As the door opened, both solo and chorus stopped. The teacher, a student with an intelligent face, rose to return the greeting of the newcomers. The children stared with astonishment at the unexpected interruption. Three boys and three girls sat at two tables, a vigorous, fair-haired race. "These are Clara, Luise, Rickchen, Hans, Ernest, and Franz."

Clara, a girl of fourteen, almost grown up, and a youthful picture of her sister, rose with a courtesy. Hans, a sturdy boy, twelve years old, made an ineffectual attempt at a bow. The others remained standing straight, staring fixedly at the strangers, and then, as if having sufficiently performed a tiresome duty, dropped down into their places. Only little Franz, a rosy-cheeked, curly-headed urchin, seven years old, remained sitting grimly over his troublesome task, and made use of the interruption quickly to find in his book something for his next answer. Ilse stroked his hair, and asked the tutor, "How is he doing to-day?"

"He has studied his lesson."

"It is too hard," cried Franz, bitterly.

The Professor begged the tutor not to disturb himself, and the journey recommenced through the bedroom of the boys, and of the tutor, and again through the store-rooms, the ironing and wardrobe rooms. The Doctor had long since put his memorandum-book in his pocket.

They returned to the main hall, where Ilse pointed out the stone slab on the step. Once more the Doctor knelt down, tried it, and said despondingly, "Hollow again." Ilse ascended the staircase.

"Up here the girls and I live."

"Here, then, our curiosity comes to an end," replied the Professor, considerately; "you see even my friend abandons the search."

"But there is a fine view above; this, at least, you must see," said their guide. She opened a door. "This is my room." The friends stood on the threshold. "Come in," said Ilse, unembarrassed. "From this window you see the road by which you came to us."

With hesitation the men approached. This also was an unpretentious room; there was not even a sofa in it. The walls were painted blue; at the window was a work-table and some flowers; in a corner was the bed concealed by white curtains.

The friends walked immediately to the window, and looking out saw the little churchyard and the tops of the oaks, the small town in the valley, and the rows of trees behind, which ran in curved lines up the height where the view terminated. The Professor fixed his eyes on the old wooden church.

How much in a few hours had his tone of mind altered! Glad expectation was followed by the seeming frustration of their hopes, and yet this disappointment was succeeded by a pleasing repose.

"That is our road into the outer world," indicated Ilse; "we often look in that direction when father has been on a journey and we are expecting him, or when we hope for some good news by the postman. And when frequently our brother Franz tells how he will go into the world when a man, away from his father and family, he thinks that the roads there will always look like our footpath bordered with its willow-trees."

"Is Franz the pet?" asked the Professor.

"He is my baby-brother; we lost our good mother while he was still a mere infant. The poor child never knew his mother; and once when he dreamt of her, the other children maintained that he had changed her into me, for she wore my dress and my straw hat. This is the cupboard in the wall," she said, sorrowfully, pointing to a wooden door. The friends followed in silence, without looking at the cupboard. She stopped before the adjoining room, and opened the door: "This was my mother's room, it is unaltered, just as she left it; our father generally spends some time here on Sundays."

"We cannot allow you to lead us any further," said the Professor. "I cannot tell you how painful I feel our position in regard to you to be. Forgive us this indelicate intrusion upon your privacy."

"If you do not wish to see the house further," answered Ilse, with a look of gratitude, "I will gladly take you into our garden, and through the farmyard. Father will not be pleased if I withhold anything from you."

A back door led from the hall into the garden; the flower-beds were edged with box, and filled with summer flowers-the old indigenous plants of gardens. Vines climbed up the house, as far as the windows of the upper story, and the green grapes everywhere peeped through the bright foliage. A hedge of quickset separated the flower-beds from the kitchen-garden, where, besides vegetables, there were hops climbing up high poles. Further on, a large orchard, with a fine lawn, sloped down into the valley. There was nothing remarkable to be seen here; the flower-beds were in straight lines; the fruit trees stood in rows; the venerable box and hedge were stiffly trimmed, and without gaps. The friends looked back constantly over beds and flowers to the house, and admired the brown walls showing through the soft foliage of the vine, as well as the stonework of the windows and gables.

"In the time of our forefathers it was a sovereigns' residence," explained Ilse, "and they used to come here every year to hunt. But now nothing but the dark wood back there belongs to him. In it is a shooting-box, where the head-forester resides. Our Sovereign seldom comes into the district. It is a long time since we have seen our dear prince, and we live like poor orphans."

"Is he considered a good ruler?" asked the Professor.

"We do not know much about him; but we believe that he is good. Many years ago, when I was yet a child, he once breakfasted at our house, because there was no convenient place in Rossau. Then I was surprised that he wore no red mantle; and he patted me on the head, and gave me the good advice to grow, which I have honestly followed. It is said that he will come again this year to hunt. If he stops with us again, the old house must put on its best attire, and there will be hot cheeks in the kitchen."

While they were walking peaceably among the fruit trees, a clear-toned bell sounded from the farmyard. "That is the call to dinner," said Ilse. "I will take you to your room; the maid will show you to the dining-room."

The friends found their valises in the visitors' room, and were shortly after summoned by a gentle knock at the door, and conducted into the dining-room. There the proprietor was awaiting them, together with half-a-dozen sun-burnt officials of the farm, the Mamselle, the tutor, and the children. When they entered, the Proprietor spoke to his daughter in a window-niche; the daughter probably gave a favorable report of them, for he came toward them with unclouded countenance, and said in his abrupt way, "I hope you will put up with our fare." He then introduced the strangers to those present, calling them by their names, and adding, "two gentlemen from the University." Every one stood behind his chair, placed according to his station and age. The Proprietor took the head

of the table, next him Ilse; on the other side the Professor and Doctor; then on both sides the farm officials, after them, the Mamselle and the girls, the tutor and the boys. Little Franz approached his seat at the lower end of the table, folded his hands and monotonously pronounced a short grace. Then all the chairs were drawn forward at the same moment, and two maids in peasant costume brought in the dishes. It was a simple meal; a bottle of wine was placed between the strangers; the host, his family, and the dependants drank a dark, golden beer.

Silently and zealously each one fell to; only at the upper end of the table was there any conversation. The friends expressed to the Proprietor the pleasure that the house and its surroundings afforded them; and the host laughed ironically when the Doctor praised the thick walls of the structure. Then the talk rambled on to the surrounding country, and the dialect and character of the peasantry.

"It has struck me again to-day," said the Professor, "with what suspicion the peasants regard us city folks. They regard our language, manners, and habits as those of another race; and when I see what the agricultural laborer has in common with the so-called educated classes, I feel painfully that it is much too little."

"And whose fault is it," retorted the host, "but that of the educated classes? Do not take it amiss, if I tell you, as a simple man, that this high cultivation pleases me as little as the ignorance and stubbornness which surprises you in our country people. You yourselves, for example, make a long journey, in order to find an old forgotten manuscript which was written by an educated man in a nation that has passed away. But I ask what have millions of men, who speak the same language as you, are of the same race, and live near you, what have they gained by all the learning that you have acquired for yourselves and small numbers of wealthy people of leisure? When you speak to my laborers, they do not understand you. If you wished to speak to them of your learning, my farm hands would stand before you like savages. Is that a sound state of affairs? I tell you, so long as this lasts, we are not a well-conditioned people."

"If your words are meant as a reproach to my vocation," answered the Professor, "you are unjust; for we are now actively employed in making the discoveries of the learned accessible to the people. That much more should be done in this direction, I do not deny. But at all periods serious scientific investigations, even when only intelligible to a very small circle, have exercised an invisible influence on the souls and lives of the people in general. These scientific investigations develop the language, give certain tendencies to thought, gradually evolve customs, ethics, and laws, according to the needs of every age. Not only practical inventions and increasing wealth are facilitated by them; but also, what surely will not seem less important to you, the ideas of man about his own life, the manner in which he performs his duty toward others, the feeling with which he regards truth and falsehood, – for all this each one of us is indebted to the erudition of the nation, no matter how little interest he may take in the various investigations. And let me use an old simile. Science is like a great fire that must be incessantly maintained in a nation, because flint and steel are unknown to them. I am one of those whose duty it is constantly to throw fresh logs into the burning mass. It is the task of others to carry the holy flame throughout the land, to the villages and cottages. Every one whose object it is to diffuse that light, has his rights, and no one should think meanly of another."

"There is some truth in that," said the host thoughtfully.

"If the great fire does not burn," continued the Professor, "the single flames could not be spread. And, believe me, what most strengthens and elevates an honorable man of learning in the most difficult investigations, is the fact, confirmed by long experience, that his labors will in the end conduce to the benefit of mankind. They do not always help to invent new machines, nor discover new plants for cultivation, but they are nevertheless effective for all, when they teach what is true and untrue, beautiful and ugly, good and bad. In this sense they make millions freer, and therefore better."

"I see at least by your words," said the host, "that you hold your vocation in high esteem; and I like that, for it is the characteristic of an honest man."

This conversation produced a pleasant frame of mind in both men. The Inspector rose, and in a moment all the chairs of the farm dignitaries were pushed back, and the children and most of the party left the room. Only the host, Ilse, and the guests sat together for a few moments longer in pleasant conversation. Then they went into the next room, where coffee was prepared. Ilse poured it out, while the Proprietor from his seat scrutinized the unexpected guests.

The Professor set the empty cup down and began: "Our task here is ended, and we have to thank you for a hospitable reception. But I do not like to part without once more reminding you-"

"Why should you go?" interrupted the Proprietor. "You have had a long journey to-day; you will not find either in the town or in the neighboring villages any respectable lodging, and, in the pressure of the harvest, perhaps not even a conveyance. Pray be contented to pass the night here; we have, besides, to resume our conversation of this morning," he added, good-humoredly, "and I am anxious to come to a good understanding before we part. Will you accompany me for a while into the field, where my presence is required? When I ride to the distant part of the farm, Ilse will take my place. In the evening we will have a little sensible talk together."

The friends readily agreed to this proposal. The three men walked through the field engaged in genial conversation. The Professor was interested to see the large ears of a new variety of barley, which grew very densely, and the Proprietor spoke thoughtfully of this new species of corn. They stopped where the laborers were busy. Then the overseer handed his report to the Proprietor, after which they crossed the stubble to the sheaves. The Proprietor glanced quickly over the gathered shocks, the industrious people, and the patient horses in the harvest wagons; the friends observed with interest the intercourse between the master of the property and his subordinates and laborers; the short orders and pertinent answers; the zeal and cheerful aspect of the working-people when they announced the number of the sheaves, all well-behaved, industrious, and acting in unison. They returned with a feeling of respect for the man who ruled his little domain so firmly. On their way back they stopped to look at the foals that were gamboling about in a meadow behind the barns, and when the Doctor praised, above all, two galloping browns, it appeared that he had admired the best horses, and the Proprietor smiled upon him benignantly. At the entrance to the farmyard a groom brought a riding-horse, a powerful black, with strong limbs and broad chest: the Doctor stroked the horse's neck, and the Proprietor examined the straps. "I am a heavy rider," he said, "and need a strong animal." He swung himself heavily into the saddle, and, taking off his cap, said, "We meet again in the evening." And stately did horse and rider look, as they trotted along the road through the field.

"The young lady awaits you," said the groom; "I am to escort you to her."

"Have we made any progress or not?" asked the Doctor, laughing, and taking hold of his friend's arm.

"A struggle has begun," answered the friend seriously, "and who can say what will be the result?"

Ilse was sitting in an arbor of honeysuckle in the garden, surrounded by the children. It was a pleasant sight to see the young fair-haired family together. The girls sat by their sister; the boys ran around the arbor playing, with their afternoon luncheon in their hands. Seven fresh, well-formed faces, as like each other as blossoms on the same tree, yet each developing itself at a different period of life, from Franz, whose round child's head resembled a blooming bud, to the beautiful, full-blown face and figure that sat in the centre, brightly lighted up by the glancing rays of the sun. Again were the hearts of the friends thrilled by the appearance of the girl and the sound of her voice, as she tenderly scolded little Franz because he had knocked the bread and butter out of his brother's hands. Again did the children stare suspiciously at the strangers, but the Doctor ignored the ceremonial of first acquaintance by taking Franz by the legs and placing him on his shoulders, seating himself with his rider in the arbor. The little lad sat for a few moments on his elevation quite surprised, and the children laughed aloud at his round eyes looking so frightened at the stranger's head between his little legs. But the laughter of the others gave him courage, and he began to pummel lustily with his feet, and to brandish his bread triumphantly round the locks of the stranger. Thus the acquaintance was

made; a few minutes later, the Doctor went with the children through the garden, allowing himself to be chased, and trying to catch the shouting crew between the flower-beds.

"If you like, we will go where you can obtain the best view of our house," said Ilse, to the Professor.

Surrounded by the children they walked along the road that led to the church. A winding footpath ran down to the bottom, where a strip of meadow bordered the bubbling brook. From this deep dell they ascended some hundred steps. Before them rose from the copse a huge rock; they passed round it and stood by a stone grotto. The rock formed the portal and walls of a cave which penetrated about ten paces into the hill. The ground was level, covered with white sand; bramble-bushes and wild roses hung down over the entrance; in the midst of them grew a large bush of willow-rose; it hung with its thick blossoms like a plume of red feathers over the rocky arch of the grotto. The trace of an old wall on the side showed that the cave had once been a refuge either for the oppressed or the lawless; at the entrance lay a stone, the upper surface of which had been smoothed for a seat; in the obscure light of the background stood a stone bench.

"There is our house," said Ilse, pointing over the valley to the height where the gables rose behind the fruit trees of the garden. "It is so near that a loud call would be heard here."

The friends looked from the twilight of the cave into the bright light of day, on the stone house and the trees which stood below it.

"All is quiet in the wood," continued Ilse; "even the voice of the birds has ceased; they have left their nests for the harvest fields, where they congregate in flocks."

"I hear a gentle murmur, like the gurgling of water," said the Professor.

"A stream runs over the stones below," explained Ilse. "Now it is scanty, but in the spring much water collects from the hills. Then the sound of the rushing water becomes loud, and the brook courses wildly over the stones; it covers the meadows below, fills the whole valley, and rises up to the copse-wood. But in warm weather this is a pleasant resting-place for us all. When my father bought the estate the cave was overgrown, the entrance choked up with stones and earth, and it was the abode of owls. He had it opened and cleared."

The Professor examined the cave with curiosity, and struck the red rock with his cane. Ilse standing apart watched him with troubled look. "Now he is beginning his search," she thought.

"It is all old stone," she exclaimed.

The Doctor had been clambering outside the cave with the children. He now freed himself from Hans, who had just confided to him that among the thick alder bushes there was the empty nest of a mountain titmouse.

"This must be a wonderful place for the legends of the country," he exclaimed, with delight; "there cannot be a more charming home for the spirits of the valley."

"People talk absurd stuff about it," rejoined Ilse, with a tone of disapprobation. "They say that little dwarfs dwell here, and that their footsteps can be perceived in the sand, yet the sand was first brought here by my father. Nevertheless, the people are frightened, and when evening comes the women and children of the laborers do not like to pass it. But they conceal this from us, as my father cannot bear superstition."

"The dwarfs are evidently not in favor with you," answered the Doctor.

"As there are none, we ought not to believe in them," replied Ilse, eagerly. "Men ought to believe what the Bible teaches; not in wild beings that, as they say in the village, fly through the wood in the night. Lately an old woman was ill in a neighboring village, no one would bring her any food, and they disgracefully rejoiced in her sickness because they thought the poor woman could change herself into a black cat and injure the cattle. When we first heard of it, the woman was in danger of dying of starvation. This idle talk is therefore wicked."

The Doctor had meanwhile noted down the dwarfs in his note-book; but he looked dissatisfied at Ilse, who, speaking from the dusk in the rear of the cave, resembled a legendary figure.

"She does not object to sly Jacob, who deceived his blind father by putting kid skins on his arms; but our fairy-lore is distasteful to her."

He put his note-book up again and went with Hans after the titmouse.

The Professor had, with amusement, observed the secret vexation of his friend; but Ilse turned to him, saying:

"I am surprised that your friend takes note of such stories; it is not right, such things should be forgotten."

"You know that he himself does not believe in them," answered the Professor, in mitigation. "What he searches for are only the traditions of the people. For these legends originated in a time when our whole nation believed in these spirits, as they do now the teachings of the Bible. He collects these reminiscences in order to ascertain what was the faith and poetry of our ancestors."

The maiden was silent. Then after a time she said:

"This also, then, is connected with your labors."

"It is," replied the Professor.

"It is good to listen to you," continued Ilse, "for your mode of speech is different from ours. Formerly when it was said of any one, he speaks like a book, I thought it was a reproach; but there is no doubt that this is the correct expression, and it gives one pleasure to listen."

Thus saying, with her large open eyes she looked from the interior of the grotto at the Scholar, who stood in the entrance leaning against the stone, brightly lighted up by the rays of the sun.

"There are, however, many books that talk badly," answered the Professor, smiling; "and nothing tires one so much as lengthy book-wisdom from living mouths."

"Yes, yes," acquiesced Ilse. "We have an acquaintance, a learned woman, Mrs. Rollmaus. When she visits us on Sundays, she places herself on the sofa, and begins a discourse with my father. He cannot escape her, turn which way he will, she knows how to pin him down by talking about the English and Circassians, comets and poets. But the children discovered she had a cyclopedia for conversation, from which she gathers it all; and when anything happens in the country, or the newspapers make a noise about anything, she reads in the cyclopedia what bears upon it. We have procured the same book, and when her visit is impending, we think over what subject is then uppermost. Then the children look out and read this beforehand, Saturday evenings; and our father also listens and himself looks at the book, and the next day the children are delighted that father vanquishes the lady by means of her own book; for our book is a newer edition, and has new events in it of which she knows little."

"So Sunday is the time when we can win honors here," said the Professor.

"In winter we meet often during the week," continued Ilse. "But there is not much intercourse in the neighborhood; and if we sometimes chance to have a visitor who leaves some pleasant thoughts behind, we are grateful and preserve them faithfully."

"Yet the best thoughts are those which come to men through their own exertions," said the Professor, kindly. "The little that I have seen on the estate here tells me how beautifully life can thrive, even when far removed from the noisy bustle of the world."

"That was a kindly speech," exclaimed Ilse. "But we are not lonely here; and we do interest ourselves about our countrymen, and about the great world. When the neighboring proprietors come to visit, not a word is said about the farm, and amusing subjects are talked of. Then there is our dear Pastor, who tells us about things in foreign parts, and reads the newspapers that are taken by my father with us. And when there are applications in them for contributions to serve a good object, the children are liberal, and each gives his mite from his savings, but our father gives abundantly. And Hans, as the eldest, collects, and has the right to pack up the money, and in the accompanying letter he sets down the initial of the name of each that has contributed. Then afterwards there comes a printed receipt, when each looks for his own initial. Often a wrong one has been printed, and this vexes the children."

From the distance they heard the cries and laughter of the children, who were returning with the Doctor from their excursion. The girl rose, the Professor approached her, and said with much feeling:

"Whenever my thoughts revert to this day, it will be with a feeling of heartfelt gratitude for the manner in which you have so honestly spoken of your happy life to a stranger."

Ilse looked at him with innocent confidence.

"You are not a stranger to me; for I saw you at the child's grave."

The joyous troop surrounded them both, and they proceeded further into the valley.

It was evening when they returned to the house where the proprietor was already awaiting them. After supper the elders passed another hour together. The strangers gave an account of their tour, and told the last news from the world; and then there was conversation on politics, and Ilse rejoiced that her father and the strangers agreed so well on the subject. When the cuckoo on the house dock proclaimed that it was ten, they separated with a friendly good-night.

The housemaid lighted the strangers to their bedroom. Ilse sat on a chair with her hands folded on her lap, looking silently before her. After a short time the proprietor came from his room and took the bedroom candle from the table.

"What! Still up, Ilse? How do the strangers please you?"

"Very much, father," said the maiden, gently.

"They are not such simpletons as they look," said the host, pacing to and fro. "What he said of the great fire was right," he repeated, "and that about our little governments was also right. The younger would have made a good schoolmaster; and as for the tall one, by heaven it is a shame that he has not worn jack-boots these four years; he would be a clever inspector. Good-night, Ilse."

"Good-night, father." The daughter rose and followed her father to the door. "Do the strangers remain here to-morrow, father?"

"Hum," said the host, meditating. "They will remain for dinner at all events; I will show them over the farm. See that you have something nice for dinner."

"Father, the Professor has never in his life eaten roast pig," said the daughter.

"Ilse, what are you thinking of? My pig for the sake of Tacitus!" exclaimed the Proprietor. "No, I cannot stand that; be content with your poultry. Stop! Just hand me the volume of the encyclopedia lettered T, I want to read up about that fellow."

"Here, father; I know where it is."

"See! See!" said the father, "just like Mrs. Rollmaus. Good-night."

The Doctor looked through the window into the dark court. Sleep and peace lay over the wide space; from a distance sounded the tread of the watchman who went his rounds through the homestead, and then the suppressed howl of the farm dog.

"Here we are," he said, at last, "two genuine adventurers in the enemy's fortress. Whether we shall carry anything away from it, is very doubtful," he continued, looking significantly at his friend, with a smile.

"It is doubtful," said the Professor, measuring the room with long strides.

"What is the matter with you, Felix?" asked Fritz, anxiously, after a pause; "you are very absentminded, which is not usually your way."

The Professor stood still.

"I have nothing to tell you. I have strong but confused feelings, which I am trying to control. I fear I have this day received an impression against which a sensible man should guard himself. Ask me nothing further, Fritz," he continued, pressing his hand vehemently. "I do not feel unhappy."

Fritz, deeply troubled, placed himself on his bed, and looked for a boot-jack.

"How does our host please you?" he asked, in a low tone, and, in order to appear unconcerned, tapping with his foot on the floor.

"A worthy man," answered the Professor, again stopping, "but his manner is different from what we are accustomed to."

"He is of old Saxon origin," the Doctor proceeded, "broad shoulders, giant height, open countenance, solidity in every movement. The children also are of the same type," he continued; "the daughter is somewhat of a Thusnelda."

"The similitude does not apply," rejoined the Professor, roughly, continuing his walk.

Fritz drew off the second boot in a slightly discordant mood.

"How does the eldest boy please you? He has the bright hair of his sister."

"No comparison," said the Professor, again laconically.

Fritz placed both boots before the bed, and himself upon it, and said with decision:

"I am ready to respect your humor, even when I cannot quite understand it; but I beg you to take into consideration that we have forced ourselves on the hospitality of these people, and that we ought not to take advantage of it beyond to morrow morning."

"Fritz," cried the Professor, with deep feeling, "you are my dear, true friend; have patience with me to-day!" So saying, he turned round, and breaking off the conversation, approached the window.

Fritz was almost beside himself with anxiety. This noble man, so confident in all he wrote, so full of deliberation, and so firm in decision, even with regard to the obscurest passages-and now some emotion was working in him which shook his whole being. How could this man be so disturbed? He could look back with majestic clearness on a past of many thousand years, and now he was standing at a window looking at a cow-stable, and something like a sigh sounded through the room. And what was to come of it? These thoughts occupied incessantly the Doctor's mind.

Long did the Professor pace up and down the room; Fritz feigned to sleep, but kept peeping from under the bedclothes at his excited friend. At last the Professor extinguished the light and threw himself on his bed. Soon his deep breathing showed that beneficent nature had softened the pulses of that beating heart. But the Doctor's anxiety held its ground more pertinaciously. From time to time he raised his head from his pillow, searched for his spectacles on the nearest chair, without which he could not see the Professor, and spied through them at the other bed, again took off his spectacles, and lay down on the pillow with a gentle sigh. This act of friendship he repeated many times, till at last he fell into a deep sleep, shortly before the sparrows sang their morning song in the vine-arbor beneath.

CHAPTER V.
AMONG HERDS AND SHEAVES

The friends on awakening heard the clock in the courtyard striking, the wagons rolling before the window, and the bells of the herds tinkling. For a moment they looked bewildered at the walls of the strange room, and through the window out on the sunny garden. While the Doctor wrote his memoranda and packed up his bundle, the Professor walked out. The daily work had long begun; the men with their teams were gone to the field; the Inspector hastened busily about the open barns; encircled by the dogs, the bleating sheep thronged before the stable.

The landscape shone in the light of a cloudless sky. The mist hovered over the earth, subduing the clear light of the morning sun, blending it with a delicate grey. The houses and trees still cast long shadows, the coolness of the dewy night still lingered in shady places, and the soft, light breeze fanned the cheeks of the Scholar, now with the warmth of the early daylight, now with the refreshing breath of night.

He walked about the buildings and the farmyard in order to acquaint himself with the place, of which henceforth he was to have mingled recollections in his soul. The persons who dwelt here had with some hesitation disclosed their life to him, and much in their simple pastoral existence appeared to him pleasing and attractive. The influences that here produced activity and energy could everywhere be seen. The tasks for each one and the duties for each day grew in the soil of the farm and the surrounding country. Their views of life and of the world were all in accordance with their surroundings. He felt keenly how worthily and happily men could live whose life was so firmly interwoven with nature and the primitive necessities of man. But for himself his life was regulated by other influences, was actuated by the thousand impressions of ancient and modern times, and not unfrequently by the forms and circumstances of the distant past. For a man's doings in life are more to him than the passing labor of the day, and all that he has done continues to work within him as a living principle. The naturalist, whose desire for rare plants impels him to the towering mountain-top, whence return is impossible; the soldier, whose recollection of the excitement of old battles impels him into new combats-these are both led by the power of thoughts which their past lives have made a part of their being. Man, it is true, is not the slave of what he has done, if he has not stooped to a lower level; his will is free, he chooses as he likes, and casts off what he does not care to preserve; but the forms and ideas that have entered into his soul work on and guide him unceasingly; he has often to guard himself against their mastery, but in a thousand cases he joyfully follows their gentle guidance. All that was and all that is continues far beyond his mere earthly existence in every new being into which it penetrates. It may influence millions, for ages-ennobling, elevating, or degrading individuals and nations. Thus the spirits of the past, the forces of nature, even our own actions and thoughts become an inalienable, component part of the soul, influencing our lives. The learned man smiled as he thus thought how the strange, old reminiscences of thousands of years had brought him among these country people, and how differently the different activity and occupation of the man who ruled here, had shaped his mind and judgment.

Amid these thoughts the lowing of the cattle sounded softly from the stalls. Looking up, he saw a number of maids carrying full milk-pails to the dairy. Behind them went Ilse, in a simple morning dress; her fair hair shone in the sun like spun gold, and her step was brisk and vigorous like the early morn. The Professor felt shy about approaching her; his eyes followed her thoughtfully; she also was one of the forms that henceforth was to live within him, the ideal of his dreams-perhaps of his wishes. For how long? and how powerfully? He did not realize that his Roman emperors were to aid in answering this question within the next hour.

The proprietor came across the farm-yard and, greeting the Professor, invited him to take a short walk into the fields. As the two walked together-both able men, and yet so different in face and

figure, in mind and manners-many would have noted the contrast with deep interest, and Ilse not last among them. But no one that did not have the eyes of a treasure-seeker or exorcist could perceive how different were the invisible retinues of tiny spirits that flitted round the temples and shoulders of each, – comparable to swarms of countless birds or bees. The spirits that attended the farmer were in homely working garb, blue blouses and fluttering bandanas, among them a few forms in the misty robes of Faith, Hope, and Charity. On the other hand, round the Professor swarmed an invisible throng of foreign phantoms with togas, and antique helmets, in purple robes and Greek chlamys, athletes also-some with bundles of rods and winged hats. The little retinue of the Proprietor flew incessantly over the fields and back again; the swarm round the Professor remained steadily by him. At last the proprietor stopped at one particular field; he looked at it with great delight, and mentioned that he had here succeeded by deep ploughing in growing green lupines, then newly introduced into cultivation. The Professor seemed surprised; among his spirit-retinue there arose a confused stir; one of the small antique spirits flew to the nearest clod of earth and fastened thereto a delicate web which it had spun from the head of the Professor. Whereupon the Professor told his companion how deep ploughing for green lupines had been the custom of the Romans, and how rejoiced he was that now after more than a thousand years this old discovery had been brought to light again in our farming. They then spoke of the change in agriculture, and the Professor mentioned how striking it was that three hundred years after the beginning of our era, the corn exchanges at the harbors of the Black Sea and Asia Minor were so similar to those of Hamburg and London in modern days, while at present other agricultural produce was principally cultivated in the East. Finally, he told him of a grain tariff that was imposed by a Roman emperor, and that unfortunately the price of wheat and barley, the two products on which then depended other prices and duties, were effaced from the stone tablet that had been preserved. And he explained why this loss was so much to be lamented. Then the heart of the host began to expand, and he assured the Professor that the fact need not be lamented, for the lost value might be fixed from the price of the remaining products bearing straw and husk, because the prices of all agricultural produce taken as a whole bore a firm and ancient ratio among each other. He gave this relation of their productive value in figures, and the Professor discovered with joyful astonishment that they agreed with the tariff of his old Emperor Diocletian.

While the men were carrying on this desultory conversation, a mischievous wide-awake spirit, probably the Emperor Diocletian himself, flew from the Professor, made his way through the peasant spirits of the proprietor, placed himself in his purple robe on the head of the master, stamped with his little feet on his skull; and impressed the farmer with the belief that the Professor was a sensible and worthy man, who might give him further information on the value and price of agricultural produce. It also pleased the Proprietor much that he could give the learned gentleman instruction in his own department.

When, at the end of an hour, the two strollers returned to the house, the Proprietor stopped at the door and said with some solemnity to the Professor, "When I brought you here yesterday, I little knew whom I had with me. It grieves me that I greeted so inhospitably a man like you. Your acquaintance has become a pleasure to me; it is rare to meet with a person with whom one can speak about everything as one can with you. As you are traveling for recreation, pray be pleased to pass some time with us simple folk-the longer the better. It is indeed not a season when a country host can make the house agreeable to his guests, so you must be content. If you wish to work, and require books, you may have them brought here; and pray observe whether the Romans had winter barley which was lighter than ours. Do me the honor of accepting my invitation." So saying, he cordially extended his hand to his guest. The Professor's countenance beamed with delight; he eagerly clasped the hand of his friendly host. "If you are willing to keep me and my friend a few days longer, I accept your invitation with all my heart. I must tell you that the insight into a new circle of human interests is most valuable to me, but still more so the kindness with which you have treated us."

"Settled!" exclaimed the Proprietor, cheerfully; "now we will call your friend."

The Doctor opened his door. When the Proprietor warmly repeated the invitation to him, he looked for a moment earnestly at his friend, and when the latter gave him a friendly nod, he also accepted for the few days which were still free before the promised visit to his relatives. Thus it happened that the Emperor Diocletian, fifteen hundred years after he had unvoluntarily left the world, exercised his tyrannical power over the Professor and Proprietor. Whether there were other ancient powers actively working in secret, is not ascertained.

Ilse listened silently to her father's information that the gentlemen would be his guests some time longer, but her look fell so bright and warm on the strangers that they rejoiced in being welcomed by her also.

From this hour they were introduced into the household as old acquaintances, and both, though they had never lived in the country, felt it indispensable, and as if they had returned to a home in which years before they had once bustled about. It was a busy life there, and yet, even when work was most pressing and earnest, there was a cheerful repose about it. Without much ado they all worked in unison. The daylight was the supreme patron, who, at its rise, called to work, and when extinguished, gave rest to weary limbs; the laborers looked up to the sky to measure their hours of work, and the sun and the clouds influenced their frame of mind, sometimes inducing comfort and sometimes anxiety. Slowly and gently, as nature draws the blossoms out of the earth and matures the fruits, did the feelings of these men grow into blossoms and fruits. In peaceful relations the workers passed their lives. Small impressions, such as a few kind words or a friendly look, sufficed to entwine a firm bond round these various natures-a bond woven with invisible threads; but which attained a strength sufficient to last through a whole life.

The friends also felt the influence of the peace, daily activity, and small events of the country. Only when they looked toward the old house and thought of the hope which had led them hither, did something of the disquiet come over them which children feel when expecting a Christmas-box; and the quiet work of their fancy threw a brilliant light over all that belonged to the house, even down to the barking Nero, who, as early as the second day, expressed by the vehement wagging of his tail, his wish to be taken into their fellowship at table.

The Doctor did not fail to remark how strongly his friend was attracted by this quiet life, and with what tact he adapted himself to the inhabitants of the house. The Proprietor, before he rode to the distant part of the farm, brought him some agricultural books, and spoke to him of the different varieties of grain, and the Professor answered him modestly, as became a young gentleman in top-boots, and immersed himself forthwith in these new interests. Also between Ilse and the Professor there was an evident understanding, the cause of which occasioned the Doctor some disquiet. When the Professor spoke to her, it was with deep respect, both in voice and look, and Ilse always turned by preference to him, and was quietly but incessantly endeavoring to give him pleasure. When at table he picked up her handkerchief, he handed it to her with a respectful bow as to a princess. When she handed him his cup he looked as happy as if he had discovered the secret meaning of some difficult passage in an author. Then in the evening, when he sat with the father in the garden and Ilse came behind them from the house, his countenance brightened up, though he had not yet seen her. When she distributed to the children their supper, and was obliged to scold little Franz for being naughty, the Professor suddenly looked as dismal as if he himself were a boy whom the displeasure of his sister was to improve. These observations set the Doctor a-thinking.

Furthermore, when, shortly after study-time Hans proposed to the Doctor to play a friendly game of blind-man's-buff, Fritz assumed, as a matter of course, that the Professor would in the meantime converse with the father in the arbor, and he never dreamed of asking anything so extravagant of his learned friend as to join in the game. How astonished then was he when Ilse, having folded the handkerchief, approached the Professor, requested him to be blinded first, and he, the Professor, looked quite happy at the idea, offered his head gently-like a lamb to the sacrifice-to be covered, and allowed himself to be led by Ilse into the midst of the circle of little rompers. Noisily did

the swarm circle round the Professor; the impudent children pulled him by the flaps of his coat, even Ilse contrived to lay hold of a button and draw him gently by it. This put him in a state of excitement; he felt about with his hands, and minded no attacks of the assaulting children, only seeking to seize the fair offender; and when he did not succeed, he kept poking about with his sticks and groping like the blind singer Demodokus to catch a Phæacian. Now, at last, he hit exactly upon Ilse, but she passed the end of the stick to her sister, and Clara whistled on it, but he exclaimed, "Fräulein Ilse!" She was delighted that he had guessed wrong, and he looked much puzzled.

Other games followed, in all of which the Professor showed such dexterity that the children were quite enchanted, though Franz called out indignantly that he did not strike Ilse hard enough when he had the knotted handkerchief. Ilse, however, took the handkerchief, and, much to the Scholar's astonishment and delight, struck him heartily over the shoulders.

The Doctor joined in the sports, and looked with pleasure at the movements of the wild maidens in the games; and when Ilse stood by a tree and laid hold of a branch with her hand in order to support herself, her glowing face wreathed by the leaves of the nut-tree, she looked so lovely and happy that the Doctor was also enchanted.

In such a bacchanalian mood it was not to be wondered at that the Professor at last called upon Hans to run a race twice around the square. Amidst the shouts of the children Hans lost the race, because he had as he sturdily maintained the inner side of the square, but the others scouted at any such excuse. As the runners dashed up to the arbor. Ilse handed to the Professor his great coat, which she had meanwhile fetched from the coat-rack in the hall. "It is late, you must not take cold while with us." It was not at all late, but he put on the coat at once, buttoned it up from top to bottom, and, with a look of satisfaction, shook his opponent Hans by the shoulder. Afterwards they all sat down again in the arbor, in order to cool themselves. Here, at the vociferous demands of the little ones, a thaler was passed round while a song was sung, and the more observant part of the family loudly declared that the thaler had twice fallen to the ground between Ilse and the Professor, because they had not passed it firmly enough into each other's hands. By this game the love of song was awakened among the young people, and great and small sang together as loud as they could, such songs as had become familiar to them-"On the Cool Banks of the Saal," "Song of the Cloak," and the catch of "The Bells of Capernaum," After that Ilse and Clara, at the request of the Doctor, sang a folk-song, very simple and unadorned, and perhaps on that account the melancholy style touched the heart, so that after the song all were quiet, and the strangers appeared much moved till the Proprietor called upon the guests to contribute their share. The Professor, recovering from his emotion, began immediately to sing, in a rich-toned bass, "In a deep, damp cellar I sat," so that the boys in their enthusiasm drank up the remains of their glasses of milk and clinked them on the table. Again the company broke out into a chorus; they began the dear old song, "What is the German Fatherland," so far as they knew the verses, and in conclusion they attempted "Lützow's Wild Charge." The Doctor, as an experienced chorus-singer, carried the melody beautifully through the most difficult passages, and the refrain sounded wonderfully in the calm evening air; the tones passed along the vine arbor and wall, and over the top of the fruit trees up to the thicket of the nearest hill, and came back from thence as an echo.

After this masterpiece the children's party broke up, and they were unwillingly taken by Ilse to the house, but the men continued in conversation a little longer; they had laughed and sung together, and became confidential. The Proprietor spoke of his early days, how he had tried his luck here and there, and at last had established himself firmly in this place. The struggle of daily life had been weary and toilsome; he gladly called it to mind at this hour, and spoke of it with the good sense of an energetic man.

Thus passed the second day on the estate-beneath sun and stars, amongst the sheaves and the herds.

The following morning the Professor was awaked by the loud noise of the feathered farmyard denizens; the cock flew upon a stone beneath the window of the visitor's room, and sounded his

morning clarion imperiously; the hens and young chickens stood in a circle round him, and endeavored to practice the same art; in between the sparrows chirruped loud, then the doves flew up and cooed their song, at last there came an army of ducks who began quacking a second chorus. The Professor found it necessary to rise, and the Doctor called out querulously from his bed: "That comes from yesterday's singing; now we hear the effect it had on all the associated farmyard musicians." But in this he was in error, the little flock of the farmyard sang only from official zeal to announce that a stormy day might be expected.

When the Professor went into the open air, the morning light still glowed like fire in the heavens, and the first rays of light shimmered over the fields in broken and trembling waves. The ground was dry, no dewdrops hung on leaf or turf. The air also was sultry, and the heads of the flowers drooped languidly on their stalks. Had a second sun appeared in the night? But the clear piping of the yellow thrush sounded from the top of an old cherry tree incessantly. The old gardener, Jacob, looked at the tree, shaking his head: "I thought that the rogue had gone away, he has made too much havoc among the cherries, and now he is giving us information before he leaves; something is brewing to-day."

Ilse, as she came from the dairy, said: "The cows are unquiet, they low and push against one another."

The sun rose red out of heavy vapor-the laborers in the field felt a weariness in their limbs, and continually stopped in their work to dry their faces. The shepherd was to-day discontented with his flock; the wethers were bent upon gamboling instead of eating, they bucked one another, and the young ones frisked and danced about as if they were set on wires. Disorder and willfulness could not be restrained. The dog circled round the excited animals incessantly; but his tail hung between his legs, and when he tugged at a sheep, the animal long felt the ungentle bite.

The sun rose higher in the cloudless heavens-the day became hotter-a light vapor rose from the earth which made the distance indistinct; the sparrows flew restlessly about the tops of the trees, the swallows skimmed along the ground and circled round the men. The friends went to their room; here also they felt the exhausting sultriness; the Doctor, who was sketching a plan of the house, laid down his pencil. The Professor was reading about agriculture and the rearing of cattle, but he often looked up from his book to the sky, opened the window and closed it again. The dinner was quieter than usual, the host looked serious, and his staff hardly allowed themselves time to empty their plates.

"We shall have trouble to-day," said the master of the house to his daughter, on rising. "I will ride to the outskirts; if I am not back before the storm, look after the house and farm."

Again men and horses went to the field, but to-day they went unwillingly. The heat became unbearable, the afternoon sun fell scorchingly on their heads; rock and walls glowed with heat; a white cloud curtained the heavens, which visibly thickened and massed itself together. The ploughboys eagerly took the horses to the stables, the laborers hastened to unload the sheaves, and drove the wagons at a quicker pace in order to shelter one more load under a roof before the storm arose.

The friends stood before the farm-gate and looked at the heavy clouds which were gathering upon the horizon. The yellow light of the sun struggled for a short time against the dark shadows; finally the last glare of light disappeared, and the earth lay darkened and mournful. Ilse approached them: "The time is come; about four o'clock the storm will rise. It seldom comes over the level land from the east, but when it does it is always severe with us, for people say it is because it cannot break over the hilltops which you see from the garden; then it hangs long over our fields, and they say the thunder here is more violent than elsewhere."

The first burst of the wind howled over the house. "I must go through the farmyard to see that all is right," exclaimed Ilse, as she wrapped a handkerchief quickly round her head and hurried on, accompanied by the men, through the storm to the farm-building in which the fire-engine stood; she looked to see whether the door was open and whether there was water in the barrels; then she hastened forward to the stables while the straw whirled round her; she warned the servants once more with a cheerful call, rapidly spoke a few words to the officials and returned to the house. She looked

into the kitchen and opened the door of the children's room to see whether all of her brothers and sisters were with the tutor. Lastly, she let in the dog, who was barking piteously at the gate of the farmyard, and then returned to the friends, who, from the window of the sitting-room, were watching the fury of the elements. "The house is secured, as far as it is possible for human beings; but we place our trust in a stronger Protector," said Ilse.

The storm slowly approached, one dark mass rolling on after another, and under them, like a monstrous curtain, a pale veil of mist rose higher and higher; the thunder rolled at shorter intervals, and grew more wildly ominous; the storm howled round the house; thick clouds of dust chased angrily about the walls; leaves and blades of straw flew about in wild dance.

"The lion is roaring," said Ilse, folding her hands. She bent her head for some moments, then looked silently out of the window. "Father is at the outlying farm under shelter," she began again, anticipating a question of the Professor.

It was, indeed, a violent storm that raged about the old house. Those who listened for the first time in this place, on the open height, alongside the ridge of hills, from which the rolling, tumultuous crash of the thunder resounded, felt that they had never experienced such power in nature before. While the thunder roared, the room suddenly became dark as night, and ever and anon the dismal twilight was pierced by the flash of fiery serpents that swept over the farm.

There was noise in the children's room; the crying of the little ones could be heard. Ilse went to the door and opened it. "Come to me," she called out. The children ran in terrified, and pressed round their sister; the youngest clung to her dress. Ilse took the little child and placed it under the charge of the Professor, who was standing by her side. "Be quiet, and say your prayer softly," she said; "this is no time for weeping and complaining."

Suddenly came a light so blinding that it caused them to close their eyes-and a sharp concussion, ending in a discordant crash. When the Professor opened his eyes, by the light of another flash he saw Ilse standing by his side, her head turned toward him with a radiant look. He exclaimed, anxiously: "That has struck."

"Not in the farmyard," replied the maiden, unmoved.

Again a clap, and again a flash, and a clap, wilder, shorter, sharper. "It is just above us," said Ilse, calmly, pressing the head of her little brother to her as if to protect him.

The Professor could not turn his eyes from the group in the middle of the room. The noble figure of the woman before him, erect, motionless, surrounded by the frightened brothers and sisters, the countenance raised, and a proud smile playing about the mouth. And she, in a moment of uncontrollable feeling, had confided to his care one of the lives that were so dear to her; he stood in the hour of danger near her as one of hers. He firmly held the child, which clasped him in terror. They were short moments, these; but between flash and thunder-clap the spark that glowed in him had blazed out into a bright flame. She who stood near him in the lightning, suffused with the blinding light, she it was who had become necessary to his life.

Still longer did the thunder roar; the heavy rain beat against the window; it clattered and dashed round the house; the windows trembled under the raging outburst of the storm.

"It is over," said Ilse, gently. The children separated and ran to the window. "Up-stairs, Hans!" cried the sister, and hastened with her brother out of the room to see whether the water had made its way in anywhere. The Professor looked thoughtfully toward the door through which she had disappeared; but the Doctor, who meanwhile had been seated quietly on a chair, with his hands on his knees, shaking his head, began: "These freaks of nature are against us. Since lightning conductors have come into discredit, one has not the poor comfort of thinking that the old manuscript has even their protection against the attacks of the weather. This is a bad habitation for our poor old manuscript, and it is verily a Christian duty to rescue the book as quickly as possible from such a dangerous thunder-trap. Shall we be able in the future, with any tranquillity of mind, to look upon a cloud in the heavens? It will remind us of the disasters that may befall this place."

"The house has held out hitherto," answered the Professor, laughing. "Let us leave the manuscript meanwhile to the good Power in whom the people here so firmly trust. The sun's rays are already breaking through the mist."

Half an hour later it was all over; the dark clouds still hovered above the hills, and from the distance resounded the harmless thunder. Life began to stir again in the empty farmyard. First, the ducks came forth with joyous haste from their hiding-place, cleaned their feathers, examined the puddles of water, and quacked along the ruts made by the wheels; then came the cock with his hens, cautiously treading, and picking the soaked seeds; the doves flew on to the projections of the window, wished each other good fortune with friendly nods and spread their feathers in the fresh sunlight. Nero bounded boldly out of the house, trotted through the farmyard, and barked in the air by way of challenge to frighten away the hostile clouds. The maids and laborers again stepped actively about the place, breathing the refreshing balsam of the moist air. The Inspector came and reported that the lightning had struck twice on the neighboring hill. The Proprietor, thoroughly wet through, rode rapidly in, anxious to see whether his house and farm-buildings were undamaged. He sprang gaily from his horse, and exclaimed: "The rain penetrated everything out there. But, God be praised, it has passed over. We have not had such a storm here for years." The people listened also for awhile as the head ploughman related that he had seen a pillar of water, which hung like a great sack from heaven to earth, and that it had hailed violently on the other side of the border. Then they entered the stable with great equanimity, and enjoyed the hour of rest that the bad weather had brought them. While the Proprietor was talking to his staff, the Doctor prepared to descend, with the boys and the tutor, into the valley, there to see the overflowing brook.

But the Professor and Ilse remained in the orchard, and the former was astonished at the number of snails that now came out everywhere, trailing slowly over the path; and he took one after the other and placed them carefully out of the way, but the senseless creatures always returned again to the firm gravel, expecting that the foot-passengers were to get out of their way. They both examined the fruit trees to see how they had borne the storm. They were much broken, and their branches bent down. Much unripe fruit lay scattered on the grass. The Professor cautiously shook the branches, bending under the weight of the rain, in order to free them from their burden; he fetched some poles to support an old apple tree which was in danger of breaking under the weight, and both laughed heartily when, in the course of his work, the water from the leaves ran in small streams down his hair and coat.

Ilse clasped her hands together, lamenting over the fall of so much fruit; but there was still much on the trees, and they might yet hope for a rich harvest. The Professor sympathized with her and advised her to dry the fallen fruit, and Ilse laughed again at this because most of it was unripe. The Professor confided to her that he as a boy had helped his dear mother when she used to arrange the fruit on the drying-board; for his parents had owned a large garden in the town in which his father was an official. Ilse listened with eager interest when he related further how he had lost his father as a boy, and how lovingly and wisely his mother had cared for him, how confidential his relations with her had been, and that her loss had been the greatest sorrow of his life. Then they walked up and down along the gravel walk, and in both of them an echo of the sorrow of past days intermingled with the cheerful mood of the present; just as in nature the movement of a violent storm leaves after it a gentle trembling, and the pure light of day sparkles on bower and blade like countless glittering precious stones.

Ilse opened a gate which led from the lower part of the orchard into the open country, and standing still, said, hesitatingly: "I propose a walk into the village to see how our Pastor has stood the storm; would you like to make the acquaintance of our dear friend?"

"I shall be delighted to do so," answered the Professor.

They walked along a damp footpath that wound its way through the length of the valley by the side of the churchyard. Near it lay a little village of closely-packed houses, in which dwelt most of the laborers of the estate. The first building below the church was the Pastor's house, with a wooden roof

and small windows, differing little from the dwellings of the country people. Ilse opened the door, and an old maid-servant hastened toward her with a familiar greeting.

"Ah, Miss," she exclaimed, "we had bad weather to-day. I thought the day of judgment had surely come. Master stood constantly at the chamber window looking up to the manor and raising his hands in prayer for you. He is at present in the garden."

The guests passed out through the rear door into a small space between the gables and barns of the neighboring farmyards. A few low fruit trees stood along the edges of the flower-beds. The old gentleman, in a dark dressing-gown, stood by an espalier, working industriously.

"My dear child," he cried, looking up, and a smile of pleasure lighted up the kind face under his white hair, "I knew that you would come to-day."

He bowed to the stranger, and, after a few words of greeting, turned again to Ilse.

"Only think what a misfortune-the storm has broken our peach tree, the espalier is torn up and the branches are shattered; the damage is irreparable."

He bent over the disabled tree, which he had just bound up with a bandage of tree-gum and matting.

"It is the only peach tree here," he said, lamentingly, to the Professor; "they have none on the whole estate, nor any in the town. But I must not worry you with my little troubles," he continued, more cheerfully; "I pray you come with me into the house."

Ilse entered the side door of an extension, near the house proper. "How is Flavia?" she inquired of the maid, who stood at the threshold, anticipating the visit.

"Doing very well," answered Susannah, "and the little one also."

"It is the dun cow and her young calf," explained the Pastor to the Professor, as Ilse returned into the narrow courtyard with the maid. "I do not like people to call animals by Christian names, so I have recourse to our Latin vocabulary."

Ilse returned. "It is time that the calf should be taken away; it is a wasteful feeder."

"That is what I said too," interposed Susannah, "but his Reverence the Pastor will not consent."

"You are right, my dear child," answered the Pastor; "following the demands of worldly wisdom it would be best to deliver the little calf to the butcher. But the calf sees the thing in quite another light; and it is a merry little creature."

"But when one asks it why, one receives no answer," said Ilse, "and therefore, it must be pleased with what we choose. Your Reverence must allow me to settle this with Susannah, behind your back; meanwhile you shall have milk from our house."

The Pastor conducted them into his room; it was very small, whitewashed, and scantily furnished. There was an old writing-table, a black painted book-shelf with a small number of old books, a sofa and some chairs covered with colored chintz. "This has been my Tusculum for forty years," said the Pastor, with satisfaction, to the Professor, who looked with surprise at the scanty furniture. "It would have been larger if the addition had been made; there were fine plans arranged, and my worthy neighbor took much pains about it, but since my wife was carried out there" – he looked toward the churchyard on the height-"I will not hear of it any more."

The Professor looked out of the window. Forty years in this narrow building, in the little valley between the churchyard, the huts, and the wood! He felt oppressed in spirit. "The community appears to be poor; there is but little space for cultivation between the hills. But how is it pray, in winter?"

"Well, even then I am still able to get about," answered the clergyman; "I visit my old friends then, and am only troubled sometimes by the snow. Once we were quite snowed up, and had to be dug out." He laughed pleasantly at the recollection. "It is never lonely when one has lived many years in a place. One has known the grandfathers, trained the fathers, taught the children, and here and there a grandchild even, and one sees how men rise from the earth and sink down into it again like the leaves that fall from a tree. One observes that all is vanity and a short preparation for eternity. Dear child," he said to Ilse, who now entered, "pray be seated with us; I have not seen your dear face

for three days, and I would not go up because I heard you had visitors. I have something here for you," taking a paper out of his desk; "it is poetry."

"You see the song of the Muses does not fail us," he continued, speaking to the Professor. "It is, to be sure, humble, and bucolic in style. But believe me, as one who knows his village, there are few new things under the sun; there is everything here in a small way that there is on a large scale in the rest of the world; the blacksmith is a zealous politician, and the justice would gladly be a Dionysius of Syracuse. We have also the rich man of Scripture, and truly many a Lazarus-to which number the poet whose verses I here hold belongs; and our plasterer is a musician in winter-he does not play badly on the zither. But they are all too ambitious and not in harmony. Sometimes it is difficult to preserve good fellowship among them."

"Our poet wishes to have his green wall again, as I interpret it," said Ilse, looking up from the paper.

"For seven years he has been lying in his room half palsied with severe and incurable ills," explained the Pastor to his guest; "and he looks through a little hole of a window into the world at the clay-wall opposite and the men who can be seen passing; the wall belongs to a neighbor, and my dear child trained a wild vine over it. But this year our neighbor-our rich man-has built upon it and torn away the foliage. This vexes the invalid, and it is difficult to help him, for now is not the time to plant a fresh one."

"But something must be thought of," interposed Ilse. "I will speak to him about it; excuse me, I will not be long."

She left the room. "If you wish," said the Pastor, addressing the guest mysteriously, "I will show you this wall; for I have thought much about the matter, but cannot devise anything." The Professor silently acquiesced. They walked along the village lane, and at the corner the Pastor took the arm of his companion. "Here lies the invalid," he began, in a low tone. "His weakness makes him rather deaf, but still we must tread gently, that he may not observe it, for that disturbs him."

The Professor saw a small sash-window open and Ilse standing before it, her back turned to them. While the Pastor was showing him the plastered wall and the height that was necessary for the trailing plant, he listened to the conversation at the window. Ilse spoke loudly and was answered from the bed by a shrill voice. He discovered with astonishment that they were not speaking of the vines.

"And the gentleman is of a good disposition?" asked the voice.

"He is a learned and good man," answered Ilse.

"And how long does he remain with you?"

"I know not," was Ilse's hesitating reply.

"He should remain altogether with you, for you like him," said the invalid.

"Ah, that we dare not hope, dear Benz. But this conversation will not help to find you a good prospect," continued Ilse. "I will speak to your neighbor; but nothing will grow between to-day and to-morrow. I have thought that the gardener might nail a shelf under the window, and we shall place some plants from my room upon it."

"That will obstruct the view," answered the voice, discontentedly. "I could no longer see the swallows as they fly past, and little of the heads of the people who go by."

"That is true," replied Ilse; "but we will put the board so low that only the flowers shall peep through the window."

"What kind of flowers are they?" asked Benz.

"A myrtle," said Ilse.

"That does not blossom," answered Benz, surlily.

"But there are two roses blowing and a plant of heliotrope."

"I do not know what that is," interposed the invalid.

"It smells very sweet," said Ilse.

"Then let it come," assented Benz. "But I must also have some sweet basil."

"We will see whether it can be had," answered Ilse; "and the gardener shall also train some ivy round the window."

"That will be too dark for me," retorted the dissatisfied Benz.

"Never mind," said Ilse, decidedly; "we will try, and if it does not suit you, it can be altered."

To this the invalid agreed.

"But the gardener must not make me wait," he exclaimed; "I should like to have it to-morrow."

"Very well," said Ilse; "early in the morning."

"And you will show my verses to no one, not even to the strange gentleman; they are only for you."

"Nobody shall see them," said Ilse. "Call your daughter Anna, dear Benz."

As she prepared to depart, the Pastor gently drew his guest back.

"When the invalid has had such a conversation," he explained, "he is contented for the whole of the next day, and to-morrow he will again compose some verses. Sometimes-between you and me-he writes a good deal of nonsense, but it is well meant, and for him it is the best pastime. The people in the village avoid passing under his window as much as possible. This is the hardest work in my office; for the people are obstinate in the superstition that illness and suffering originate from evil spirits, that they are inflicted from hatred, or as punishment for past wrong; and though I preach to them incessantly that all is only a trial for the other world, this teaching is too high for them, only the infirm believe it; but those who are hale and hearty stubbornly struggle against the truth and salvation."

The learned man turned his eyes up to the little window from which the invalid looked upon the plastered wall, and then again on the clerical gentleman who for forty years had preached the Holy Gospel in the valley. His heart was heavy and his eyes passed from the twilight of the deep vale to the hill-top, which still shone in the glad light of the evening sun. Then she returned to him, she who had descended to watch over the helpless and the poor; and when he ascended the height with her, it appeared to him as if they both emerged from gloomy earthly trouble into a lighter air; but the youthful figure and the beautiful, calm countenance near him, shining in the lingering evening light so wondrously, seemed to resemble one of those messengers whom Jehovah sent to the tent of his faithful servant. He rejoiced when she laughed at the joyous bounding of the dog, who came barking toward them.

Thus passed another day, lighted up by the sun, and overshadowed by the clouds, amidst small events of daily life and quiet existence. When recorded by the pen it seems insignificant, but when a man lives it, it sends his blood coursing energetically through his veins.

CHAPTER VI.
A LEARNED LADY FROM THE COUNTRY

It was Sunday, and the estate wore its festive garment. The barns in the farmyard were closed, the farm servants and maids walked about in their best attire, not like busy laborers, but with the comfortable leisure which is the poetry of a toilsome life to the German peasant. The bells from the church tower called to service; Ilse, with her hymn-book in her hand, went with her sister slowly down the hill, the maids and men followed in small groups. The Proprietor passed the day in his study, in order to make up the accounts of the past week; but first he knocked at the door of his friends' room, and paid them a short morning visit.

"We shall have guests to-day, the Crown Inspector Rollmaus and his wife; he is an excellent farmer; but his wife is irredeemably bent upon culture, – a paragon of learning. You must take care, she will press you hard."

As the clock struck twelve, a carriage drawn by two well-fed brown horses stopped at the door; the children hastened to the window.

"The Crown Inspector's wife is coming!" exclaimed the youngest, excitedly.

A stout man in a dark green coat got out of the carriage, followed by a little lady in black silk, with a sunshade and a large bandbox. The Proprietor and Ilse met them at the door of the house, the host laughingly called out a welcome, and conducted the gentleman to the sitting-room. The guest had black hair and a round face, which by exposure to the sun and air had acquired a permanent tint of reddish brown.

He had piercing eyes, red nose and red lips. Learning the names of the two strangers he made a slight obeisance, but looked displeased at their appearing in pretentious black coats; and as he had a vague but strong aversion to useless authors, needy scholars, and non-producers of all sorts who visited the country to write books, or because they had no permanent residence of their own, he assumed toward both these gentlemen a sulky and suspicious demeanor. After a while the lady made her appearance. She had in the mean time, with Ilse's help put on her best cap, which had been taken out of the bandbox; a work of art, upon which were set two dark red roses. She entered the room, rustling, curtsying, and laughing, polished from head to foot. She passed rapidly from one to another, kissed the girls, declared to the boys that they had grown much during the last week, and at last stopped, full of expectation, before the two strangers. The host presented them, and did not fail to add: "Two gentlemen from the University."

The little lady pricked up her ears, and her gray eyes sparkled.

"From the University!" she exclaimed; "what a surprise. These gentlemen are rare guests in our country. There is indeed little inducement to learned gentlemen to come among us, for materialism reigns supreme here, and the circulating library at Rossau is certainly not in good hands; actually they never get anything new. May I be allowed to ask what are the studies of the gentlemen, whether science generally or some particular specialty?"

"My friend's studies are more of a general character. I have a specialty, and in addition to it, I teach the classics," replied the Professor; "this gentleman is also engaged in Indian research."

"Pray be seated on the sofa?" interposed Ilse. Mrs. Rollmaus followed her reluctantly.

"Indian!" she exclaimed, seating herself and arranging her dress. "That is a strange language. They wear tufts of feathers and their dress is scanty, and their trousers, if I may be pardoned the reference, hang down as is the case with so many pigeons, which also have long feathers to their legs. One sees pictures of them sometimes; in my Karl's picture-book of last Christmas there are a great many pictures of these wild men. They have barbarous customs, dear Ilse."

"But why has not Karl come with you?" inquired Ilse, in an effort to rescue the gentlemen from the discourse.

"It was because we shall have to return in the dark. Our carriage has only two seats, and there would have been no room to pack in a third with Rollmaus, so Karl would have had to sit by the coachman, and the poor child would be so sleepy at night that I should have been afraid of his falling off. And then there are his lessons for to-morrow-for only think, I have persuaded Rollmaus to take a tutor for our children, as your dear father has done."

When the lady intimated the prospect of a return home after dark, the Doctor looked compassionately at his friend; but the Professor was listening so attentively to the conversation that he did not observe this expression of commiseration. Ilse continued to ask questions and Mrs. Rollmaus always answered, although sometimes she cast a longing look at the Doctor, whose connection with the Indians in Karl's picture book appeared to her very instructive. Meanwhile, the two country gentlemen had become engaged in conversation with regard to the merits of a horse in the neighborhood, which had been recommended for general purposes, so that the Doctor at last turned to the children and began to chat with Clara and Louise.

After half an hour of quiet preparation, the maidservant appeared at the door of the dining room. The Proprietor gallantly offered his arm to Mrs. Rollmaus and escorted her to the table. The Professor conducted Ilse, and the Doctor attempted to take her sister Clara, but she blushed and resisted till he gave his other arm to Louise and Rickchen, whereupon Franz laid hold of his coat-tails and on the way whispered to him: "We have turkey today." But Mr. Rollmaus, who regarded attendance upon ladies a wearisome custom brought up the rear alone, greeting, as he passed, the farm officials, who were standing in the dining-room, with the query:

"Is all the corn in yet?"

To which the Inspector replied with emphasis that it was.

Again all took their places according to rank and dignity. Mrs. Rollmaus had the place of honor, and between her and Ilse sat the Professor.

It was not a quiet meal for the latter. Ilse was more silent than usual, but his new neighbor plied him with learned questions. She obliged him to tell her the regulations of the University, and in what manner the students were instructed. And the Professor informed her fully, and did so good-humoredly. But he did not long succeed in protecting either himself or others against the feeling of annoyance which the conversation of Mrs. Rollmaus always occasioned.

"So you are a philosopher?" she said. "That is indeed interesting. I also have attempted philosophy; but the style is so incomprehensible. Pray, what is the purpose of philosophy?"

"It endeavors," was the patient answer of the Professor to this perplexing question, "to instruct men in the life of their mind and spirit, and thus to strengthen and improve them."

"The life of the spirit!" exclaimed Mrs. Rollmaus, excitedly; "but do you too believe that spirits can appear to men after death?"

"Why, do you know any instance where that has happened?" asked the Professor. "It would be interesting to all to hear the exact details. Has anything of the kind occurred hereabouts?"

"So far as ghosts and spirits are concerned, No," replied Mrs. Rollmaus, looking doubtfully at the Proprietor; "but of second sight, and what is called sympathy a great deal. Only think, we once had a servant; she was not obliged to live out, but her parents wished to send her away from home for a time; for there was in the village a poor lad who was a great fiddler and who strolled round her house morning and evening, and when the girl could come, they sat together behind a bush-he playing on the fiddle and she listening. And she could not part from him. She was a nice girl, and adapted herself to everything in our house, only she was always melancholy. The fiddler was impressed as a hussar, for which he was fitted because he was very courageous. After a year the cook came to me and said: 'Mrs. Rollmaus, I cannot stand it any longer, Hetty walks in her sleep. She gets out of bed and sings the song about a soldier whom a captain caused to be shot, because he was ordered to do so, and then she groans so that it would move a stone, and in the morning she knows nothing about her singing, but always continues to weep.' And this was the truth. I called her, and asked her

seriously; 'What is the matter with you? I cannot bear this mysterious conduct, you are a riddle to me.' Whereupon she lamented much, and begged me not to think ill of her, as she was an honorable girl; but she had seen an apparition. And then she told me the whole story. Her Gottlob had appeared at the door of her room in the night, quite haggard and sorrowful, and had said: 'Hetty, it is all over with me; to-morrow it is my turn.' I tried to persuade the girl out of it, but her fears infected me. I wrote to an officer whose acquaintance my husband had made at the hunt, and asked whether it was nonsense, or whether it was due to the so-called second-sight. And he wrote back to me very much astonished. It was a true case of second-sight, for on the same day the fiddler had fallen from his horse and broken his leg, and then lay in the hospital at the point of death. Now, I pray you, was not that a real natural phenomenon?"

"And what became of the poor people?" asked the Professor.

"O, as for them," answered Mrs. Rollmaus, "it all came right; for a comrade of the invalid, who had a sick mother, was from our village. I wrote to him requesting him to send me a letter every third day to report how the invalid was getting on, and added that I would repay him by sending his mother bacon and flour. He wrote regularly; and the affair lasted many weeks. At last the fiddler was cured and came back; and both were white as a sheet when they met, and embraced each other before my eyes without hesitation; whereupon I spoke to the parents of the girl, which was of little avail. Then I spoke to my husband, to whom our village inn belongs, and who was then looking out for a good tenant. And that brought the history to a close, or, as the saying goes, to the *commencement du pain*. For Mr. Rollmaus is not a lover of fiddles and thinks them instruments of frivolity. But the people behave in an orderly way. I was the sponsor of their first child and Rollmaus of the second. But there have been no more apparitions."

"That was indeed good and kind of you," exclaimed the Professor, warmly.

"We are all human," said Mrs. Rollmaus, apologetically.

"And I hope, all good," replied the Professor. "Believe me, madame, though there are many and various views in philosophy and in every branch of learning, and much contention respecting many points, and though one is easily led and tempted to consider another ignorant; yet with respect to honesty, uprightness, and benevolence, there has seldom been any difference of opinion, and all delight in and esteem those in whom they find these qualities. And it is these qualities, Mrs. Rollmaus, I now find and honor in you."

This he said to the learned lady with much warmth and earnestness. On his other side he heard the gentle rustling of a dress, and when he turned to Ilse he met a look so full of humble gratitude that he could hardly preserve his composure.

Mrs. Rollmaus, however, sat smiling and contented with the philosophical system of her neighbor. Again the Professor turned to her, and spoke of the difficulty of doing good to the helpless in the right way. Mrs. Rollmaus acknowledged that uneducated people had a way of their own, "But one can easily get on with them, if they only know that one means well by them."

The Professor afterward occasioned a slight misunderstanding, when in answer he respectfully observed: "You are right, for in this field patient love is requisite to produce fruitful results."

"Yes," acquiesced Mrs. Rollmaus, puzzled, "to be sure, these results which you mention are not wanting among us, and they marry for the most part just at the right time; but the patient love which you so truly speak of as requisite is not always forthcoming among our country people, for in marriage they frequently consider money more than love."

If, however, the notes in the concert at the upper table were not quite in accord, yet the turkey and custard-pudding-a masterpiece of Ilse's kitchen-vanished without any adverse concussion of learned wisdom. All rose well pleased with one another, only the children, whose innocent mischief is most enduring, found with displeasure that Mrs. Rollmaus would not on this occasion enter into any contest in which the encyclopedia could rule as umpire. While the men drank their coffee in the next room, Mrs. Rollmaus again sat on the sofa, and Ilse had a difficult task to satisfy her

curiosity in answering all the questions with which she was overwhelmed concerning the two strangers. Meanwhile the children besieged the sofa, lying in wait for an opportunity to undertake a small campaign against the unsuspecting Mrs. Rollmaus.

"So they are making researches, and in our neighborhood. It cannot be about the Indians. I did not know that any had ever come to these parts. It must be a mistake; and they must mean gypsies, who do make their appearance here. Only think, dear Ilse, a man and two women, each with a child, have come within the last fortnight. The women tell fortunes. What they have prophesied to the housemaids is truly remarkable; and in the morning two hens disappeared. Can it be that their researches are concerning these gypsies? But that I cannot believe, as they are mere tinkers and good-for-nothing people. No, they are not making investigations concerning them."

"But who are the gypsies?" asked Clara.

"Dear child, they are vagabonds who formerly were a nation, and now spread themselves everywhere. They had a king, and manuscripts, and hounds, although they were great rogues. Originally they were Egyptians, but possibly also Indians."

"How could they be Indians?" exclaimed Hans, disrespectfully; "the Indians live in America. We have got an encyclopedia too, and we will find it out immediately."

"Yes, yes," cried the children, and ran with their brother to the book-shelf. Each of them brought a volume with new binding, and placed it among the coffee cups before Mrs. Rollmaus, who looked by no means pleased at seeing the secret source of her intelligence laid bare before all eyes.

"And ours is newer than yours," cried little Franz, waving his hand. In vain did Ilse endeavor by signs of disapprobation to suppress this outbreak of family pride. Hans held the volume firmly in his hands seeking the word *Gypsy*, and the overthrow of Mrs. Rollmaus, to all human calculations, could no longer be averted. But suddenly Hans jumped up, and holding the book aloft exclaimed: "The Professor is put down here!"

"Our Professor in the encyclopedia?" cried the children.

Family feuds and gypsies were all forgotten. Ilse took the book from her brother's hand, Mrs. Rollmaus stood up in order to read the remarkable passage over Ilse's shoulder, all the children's heads gathered round the book, so that they looked like a cluster of buds on a fruit tree, and all peeped curiously at the lines which were so glorious for their guest and themselves.

In the article there were the usual short remarks that are generally made of living scholars, which contained the place and day of the Professor's birth, and the titles-mostly in Latin-of his works. All these titles were, in spite of the unintelligible language, read aloud, with the dates and size of the volumes. Ilse looked into the book for a long time, and then handed it to the astonished Mrs. Rollmaus, then the children passed it from one to the other. The event made a greater impression here, on both young and old, than it ever could in literary circles. Happiest of all was Mrs. Rollmaus: she had sat next to a man who not only could refer to books, but was referred to himself. Her admiration of him was unbounded; she found, for the first time in her life, that she could hold agreeable intercourse with a man of this stamp.

"What a distinguished scholar!" she exclaimed. "What were the titles of his works, dear Ilse?"

Ilse did not know; her eyes and thoughts were fixed on the short notice of his life.

This discovery had the good result of causing Mrs. Rollmaus to lay down her weapons entirely this day, and be content not to display any knowledge, for she saw that on this occasion a competition with the family was impossible, and she condescended to an unpretending conversation about household events. But the children arranged themselves at a respectful distance from the Professor, and examined him curiously once more from top to toe; and Hans imparted the news in a low voice to the Doctor, and was much surprised that the latter thought nothing of it.

After coffee, the Proprietor proposed to his guests to ascend the nearest hill, in order to examine the damage which had been done by the lightning. Ilse loaded a maid with provisions for supper and some flasks of wine, and the party started. They went down from the rock into the valley, over the

strip of meadow and the brook, then up the hill, through underbrush, amid the shadow of the lofty pines. The rain had washed away the steep path, and irregular water-channels furrowed the gravel; nevertheless, the women stepped valiantly over the wet places. But if it had been possible to fail to perceive from the dress and bearing of the Professor that he walked in the confidence of manhood, one might have imagined that he was a delicately clad lady, and Mrs. Rollmaus a gentleman in disguise, for she hovered round him reverently, and would not leave his side. She directed his attention to the stones, and, with the end of her umbrella pointed out the dry places to him, and stopped at times, expressing her fear that he would find this jaunt too fatiguing. The Professor submitted, though much surprised, to the homage of the little lady, sometimes looking inquiringly at Ilse, over whose face flitted a roguish smile. On the height the path became easier, and some trees of lighter foliage varied the dark green of the pines. The summit itself was clear; the heather, on which the fading blossoms of the year still hung, spread itself thickly among the stones. On all sides lay the view of the landscape, with its heights and valleys, the deep glen, and brook with its green border, the fields and the valley of Rossau. In the direction of the setting sun there rose, one behind another, long waves of undulating ground, tinted with the purple hue of twilight, passing off into the delicate gray of the mountains on the horizon. It was a delightful prospect, under a clear sky in the midst of pure mountain air, and the party sought out the softest and greenest spots of the heather, whereon to rest.

After a short stay, they proceeded, led by Hans, to the spot where the tree had been struck by lightning. A belt of high fir trees was the place of the devastation. A strong, vigorous pine had been struck and prostrated; in desolate confusion the branches and gigantic splinters of the white wood lay around the broken trunk, which, blackened and cloven, without its top, still rose out of its ruins as high as a house. Through the mass of branches on the ground, it could be seen that the earth also had been torn up even under the roots of the neighboring trees. The older members of the party looked earnestly on the spot where one moment had turned vigorous life into frightful deformity; but the children pressed on into the thicket shouting, seized upon the scaly cones of the past year, and cut branches from the tree-top, each endeavoring to carry off the largest clusters of the scaly fruit.

"It is only one of a hundred," said the Proprietor, gloomily; "but it is painful to contemplate such devastation, contrary to the usual order of the world, and to think of the destruction that impended over our heads."

"Does this recollection cause you only discomfort?" asked the Professor; "is it not also exalting?"

"The horns of the ram are hanging on the branches," said Ilse, in a low tone, to her father; "he was the sacrifice by which we were saved."

"I think," added the Professor, "that even a person thus struck by lightning might, if time were left him for a last thought, say to himself that this was quite in harmony with the order of our world. We soon forget, amid the comforts of daily life, what we should always vividly bear in mind, that we only live, like all other creatures, subject to certain conditions. Countless forces and strange powers unceasingly work according to fixed laws of their own, maintaining, supporting, or injuring our life. The cold which checks the course of our blood, the breaking waves in which the human body sinks, the injurious vapors from the earth which poison our breath, are no accidental phenomena; the laws by which they act upon us are as primitive and holy as our need of food and drink, of sleep and light; and when a man reflects upon his position among the powers of earth, his life will be found to mean nothing else than an active struggle against them and an endeavor to understand them. Whoever may provide the bread that nourishes us, and whoever may hew the wood that warms us-every useful activity has no other purpose than, by subduing and wisely utilizing these forces, to strengthen and to protect us. In this work we also observe that there is a secret union between every movement of nature and our own minds, and that all living things, however adverse in individual existence, together form one vast and continuous unity. The presentiment and thought of this unity have, at all times, been the most sublime feeling of which man is capable. From this proceeds another impulse, an

overwhelming desire and an irresistible longing to divine the deeper relations of these forces. And it is this that gives us faith. The method of procedure may vary in different individuals, but the goal is the same. Some, possessed of deep feeling, see only eternal wisdom in everything that to them seems incomprehensible; and in child-like faith they apply to it the most reverent and affectionate name. Others earnestly endeavor to observe the various laws and forces of nature and reverently to comprehend their relations to each other. These latter are the men of science. The men of faith and the men of science essentially do the same thing. Their attitude is very modest; for both recognize that all individual life, both subjective and objective, is very insignificant as compared with the great All. And the man who, when thus overtaken by death, could confidently believe he is going to his Father in Heaven, and the man who in a similar moment could bring himself to intently observe the manner in which the nervous elements that constitute his life cease their activity-both are assured of, and both would experience, an end of bliss and true contentment."

Thus spoke the Professor as they stood before the shattered pine-tree. The Crown-Inspector looked at the speaker in astonishment, suspecting him to be one of that new class of apostles who at that time made their appearance in various parts, and traveled around the country preaching to the people. Mrs. Rollmaus stood reverently with folded hands, occasionally nodding her assent. Presently she nudged the Proprietor, whispering:

"That belongs to the philosophy of which we were speaking."

The Proprietor did not answer, but listened with bowed head. Ilse never turned her eyes from the speaker; his observations sounded strange, and excited a secret uneasiness in her, she knew not why. But she could say nothing against them, for the spring of genial life that issued from this noble soul entranced her. The choice of words, the new thoughts, the noble expression of his countenance, captivated her irresistibly.

The party returned to their resting place on the height; the sun sank behind the hills, and the soft evening glow gilded first the tips of the heather, and then rose above their heads to the tops of the trees; purple shadows covered the ground, the trunks of the trees, and the distant prospect. But small light clouds of gold and purple floated in the heaven above, till there also the glowing colors faded into rosy twilight; the mist rose from the depths below, and the colors of the earth and the heavens died away into a uniform gray.

Long did the party gaze on the changing lights of the evening. At last the Proprietor called for the contents of the basket; the children were busy unpacking and passing the cold meats to the assembled circle. The Proprietor poured out the wine and pledged his guests, and rejoiced in the fine evening. At a sign from his father, Hans ran into the thicket and fetched some pine torches.

"There is no danger to-day," said the Proprietor to Mr. Rollmaus whilst lighting the torches.

The children pressed forward to be torch-bearers, but only Hans was trusted with this honorable office; the gentlemen carried the others.

Slowly did the procession wind down the hill-path; the torches threw a glaring light on copse and stones, and on the faces of the men, which in the curves of the road were lighted up with a glow like the rising moon, and again disappeared in the darkness. Mrs. Rollmaus had endeavored several times to draw the other illustrious stranger into conversation; she now at last succeeded, when in a bad part of the road. She began:

"What your friend said was very good, for it was very instructive. He is right; one ought to struggle against the powers and seek the connecting link. But I assure you it is difficult for a woman. For Rollmaus, who is the first power of nature for me, has a hatred of principles; he is always for doing everything according to his own ideas, and, as an independent man, he has a right to do so; but he is not very much in favor of science, and even as regards a piano for the children I have trouble with him. But I seek after principles and powers, and what is called the connecting link; and I read what I can, for one likes to know what is going on in the world, and to raise oneself above ordinary people. But often one does not understand a thing even when read twice; and when it is at last understood it

may have become obsolete and no longer worth anything, and so I have often been tempted to give up all research whatsoever."

"You should not do that," exclaimed the Doctor; "there is always a secret satisfaction in knowing a thing."

"If I lived in town," continued the lady, "I would devote myself entirely to learning; but in the country one is too much isolated, and there is the housekeeping, and one's husband, who is sometimes hard to please. You have no idea what a good farmer he is. Rollmaus, hold your torch aside, all the smoke blows in the Doctor's face."

Rollmaus turned his torch away and grumbled. His wife drew close to him, seized his arm and whispered to him: "Before we go away you must invite the gentlemen to visit us; it is the right thing to do."

"He is a mendicant priest," answered the husband, peevishly.

"For God's sake, Rollmaus, don't do anything foolish; above all, do not blaspheme," she continued, pressing his arm; "he is mentioned in the encyclopedia."

"In yours?" asked the husband.

"In the one here," replied the wife, "which amounts to the same thing."

"There are many things in books that are of less value than others that are not there," said the husband, unmoved.

"I am not to be put off in that way. You will not confute me by that," replied the wife. "I tell you that he is a man of renown, and propriety demands that we should take the fact into consideration, and you know that so far as propriety is concerned-"

"Only be quiet," said Rollmaus, soothingly. "I say nothing to the contrary, if needs be; I have eaten many a sour apple on your account."

"On my account!" cried the wife, offended. "Have I been unreasonable-am I a tyrant-am I an Eve who has stood with her husband under the tree, with loose hair, and not even a chemise? Will you compare yourself and me with such a state of things?"

"No," said Rollmaus. "Only be content; you know how we get on together."

"Don't you see that I am right?" replied the wife, soothed. "Believe me, I know also how others get on together, and I tell you I have a presentiment that something is brewing."

"What is brewing?" asked Mr. Rollmaus.

"Something between Ilse and the Professor."

"The devil there is!" exclaimed Mr. Rollmaus, with more vivacity than he had shown the whole day.

"Be quiet, Rollmaus, you will be heard; do not lose command of yourself."

Ilse had remained behind; she was leading her youngest brother, who was tired. The Professor gallantly remained by her. He pointed out to her how well the procession looked; the torches, like large glow worms, in front; behind, the sharply outlined figures, and the flickering of the gleaming light upon the trunks and green branches of the trees. Ilse listened to him long in silence. At last she said: "The most charming thing of the day was the kind way you spoke to our dear neighbor Mrs. Rollmaus. When she was seated by you, I felt troubled in mind, for I thought it would annoy you to listen to the importunate questions of our friend, and it all at once struck me that toward us also you exercise constant consideration; and that thought tormented me. But when I saw that you so kindly and frankly recognized the good that is in our friend and her fullness of soul, I felt that it cost you no great effort of self-command to hold intercourse with us simple folk."

"My dear Miss," exclaimed the Professor, anxiously, "I hope you are convinced that I only said to the worthy lady what came sincerely from my heart?"

"I know it," said Ilse, with warmth, "and the honest soul felt it also herself-she has been quieter and more cheerful than usual the whole day-and therefore I thank you. Yes, from my heart," she added, softly.

Praise from the lips of one beloved is not among the least of the pleasures that a man enjoys. The Professor looked beaming with happiness at his neighbor, who now in the darkness led her brother along at a quicker pace. He did not venture to break the silence; the pure hearts of both had been revealed, and, without speaking a word both felt the stream of warm sentiment that passed from one to the other.

"For him who passes from the midst of books into the paths of men," began the Professor, at last, "the pedantic habit of continued reading there acquired, often makes it easier to derive from a strange mode of life that which is of the highest benefit to his own. For, after all, there is in every life an element that commands reverence, however much it may often be veiled by wondrous accompaniments."

"We are commanded to love our neighbors," said Ilse, "and we endeavor to do so; but when one finds that this love is given so cheerfully and nobly, it is touching; and when one sees such feeling displayed, it becomes an example and elevates the heart. Come, Franz," she said, turning to her brother, "we are not far from home." But Franz stumbled, and, half asleep, declared that his legs ached.

"Up with you, little man," said the Professor, "let me carry you."

Ilse, distressed, tried to prevent it. "I cannot allow that; it is only sleep that makes him so lazy."

"Only till we reach the valley," said the Professor, raising the child on his shoulder. Franz clasped his arms round the Professor's neck, and clinging close to him, was soon fast asleep. When they came to a steep turn of the road, the Professor offered the arm which was free to his companion; but she refused, only supporting herself a little with his proffered hand. But her hand glided down and remained in that of her companion. Thus hand in hand they walked down the last part of the hill into the valley, neither of them speaking a word. When they arrived at the bottom, Ilse gently withdrew her hand, and he released it without a word or pressure; but these few minutes comprised for both a world of happy feelings.

"Come down, Franz," said Ilse, taking her sleeping brother from the arm of her friend. She bent down to the little one to encourage him, and they went on to join the party, who were waiting for them at the brook.

The carriage of the Crown-Inspector drew up. The parting greetings of his wife were very verbose, and her representations had mitigated his obstinacy, so that, cap in hand, he made up his mind to take, with tolerable decorum, a bite of the aforementioned sour apple. He approached the literary gentlemen, and asked them to grant him also the pleasure of a visit; and even the utterance of these friendly words had a softening influence on his honest soul. He now held out his hand to them, and receiving a hearty shake he began to think that the strangers were not in reality so bad as might be supposed. The Proprietor accompanied his guests to the carriage, Hans passed the bandbox in, and the two country-gentlemen, as they bade each other good night, watched the starting of the horses with the eyes of connoisseurs.

CHAPTER VII.
NEW HOSTILITIES

Whilst a bright womanly form rose on the horizon between the Professor and the Doctor, fate decreed that a new feud should break out betwixt the two neighboring houses in the city. It happened thus.

Mr. Hahn had availed himself of the absence of his son to beautify his grounds. His garden ran in a point to the park, and he had bethought him much how this corner might be turned to good account; for the little mound which he had thrown up there, and planted with roses, seemed unsatisfactory. He determined, therefore, to erect a weather-proof summerhouse for such visitors as were not inclined in bad weather to retire to the residence. Everything had been wisely considered before the departure of his son. The following day he caused a slender wooden structure to be erected, with small windows toward the street, and above, instead of a roof, a platform with airy benches, the laths of which projected boldly over the wooden walls and garden palings out into the street. Everything seemed favorable. But when Mr. Hahn, with hearty satisfaction, led his wife up the small side steps on to the platform, and the plump lady, not anticipating anything wrong, sat down on the airy bench, and from thence looked with admiration on the world beneath her, it was soon discovered that the passers-by in the street had to go directly under her, and the sky above was darkened to whoever passed along the fence by the plumage of the great bird that, perched on her high nest, sat with her back turned to the street. Before a quarter of an hour had passed, accordingly, such sharp remarks were heard that the inoffensive Mrs. Hahn was on the point of weeping, and declared to her lord, with unwonted energy, that she would never again allow herself to be treated as a hen, or ascend the platform any more. The family frame of mind was not improved either by the part that Mr. Hummel had taken, for he had stood by the fence of his neighbor's garden during this exhibition of Mrs. Hahn, and had laughed at the vile speeches of the passers-by.

Mr. Hahn, however, after a short struggle between pride and discretion, listened to the voice of his better self, removed the benches and the platform, and erected over the summer-house a beautiful Chinese roof; and on the projections of this roof he hung small bells, which sounded softly when the wind rose. This idea would have been a decided improvement; but, alas! the wickedness of man gave no rest to this work of art for the urchins in the street diverted themselves by continually keeping the bells in movement by means of long switches. On the first night, therefore, the neighborhood was awakened from its slumbers by a concert of many bells. That night Mr. Hahn dreamed that winter was come, and that a merry party of sleighs were passing round his house; he listened, and indignantly discovered that his own bells had been set in motion. He hastened into the garden in his nightdress, and called out, angrily:

"Who is there?"

In an instant the ringing ceased, deep silence and peaceful quiet reigned around. He went up to the garden-house, and looked at his bells, which might be seen swinging under the darkened sky; but roundabout no one was to be discovered. He went back to his bed, but scarcely had he laid himself down when the noise began again, quick and loud, as if pealing for a Christmas party. Again he rushed out of the house, and again the noise ceased; but when he raised himself above the railing and looked around, he saw in the garden opposite the broad figure of Mr. Hummel standing by the hedge, and heard a threatening voice call out:

"What crazy conduct is this?"

"It is inexplicable, Mr. Hummel," exclaimed Mr. Hahn, across the street, in a conciliatory tone.

"Nothing is inexplicable," cried out Mr. Hummel, "but the mischievous insanity of hanging bells in the open air over a public street."

"I resent your attack," called out Mr. Hahn deeply wounded. "I have a right to hang up what I like on my own property."

Then there began a conflict of views across the street, weird and frightful. There Hummel's bass, here Hahn's sharp voice, which gradually rose into a counter-tenor; both figures in long night-dresses, divided by the street and railings, but like two heroes of antiquity belaboring one another with strong language. If one failed to perceive the wild effect given to Mr. Hahn by the red color of his night-dress, he yet might be seen towering upon the height near his Chinese temple, raising his arm imposingly across the horizon; but Mr. Hummel stood in the darkness, overshadowed by the wild vine.

"I will have you before the police court, for disturbing the public peace," cried Mr. Hummel at last, but felt the small hand of his wife at his back, who seized him by his night-dress, turned him round, and gently entreated him not to make a scene.

"And I will inquire before the court who gave you a right to heap abuse upon me from across the street," called out Mr. Hahn, likewise in the act of retiring, for amidst the noise of the fight he had now and then heard the soft words, "Come back, Hahn," and seen his wife behind him wringing her hands. But he was not in a disposition to abandon the field of battle.

"A light and ladder here," he exclaimed, "I will unearth this shameful trick."

The ladder and lanterns speedily made their appearance, brought by the frightened maid-servant. Mr. Hahn mounted up to his bells, and sought long in vain; at last he discovered that some one had contrived to unite the separate bells by a plait of horse-hair and thus had rung them from the outside by a string.

This wild night was followed by a gloomy morn.

"Go to the fellow across the street, Gabriel," said Mr. Hummel, "and ask if, for the sake of peace, he is willing to take down his bells at once. I require my sleep, and I will not suffer that a rabble of thieves shall be allured to my house, make inroads upon the fence, steal my plums, and break into my factory. This man, by his ringing, calls together all the rogues of the neighborhood."

Gabriel replied: "I will go over there for the sake of peace; but only if I may say with civility what I think fit."

"With civility?" repeated Hummel, winking slyly at his confidant. "You do not understand your own interest. So fine an opportunity of making yourself important will not occur soon again, and it would be a pity to let it escape you. But I foresee, Gabriel, that, civil or not, we shall be unable to deal with the man. He's malicious and obstinate and bitter. He is a bulldog, Gabriel. There, you have his character."

Gabriel proceeded to the house of poor Mr. Hahn, who sat, still suffering, before his untasted breakfast, and looked suspiciously at the inmate of the hostile house.

"I come only to inquire," began Gabriel, adroitly, "whether, perhaps, you may have received intelligence through your son of my master?"

"None," answered Mr. Hahn, sorrowfully; "there are times when everything goes wrong, dear Gabriel."

"Yes, what a roguish trick that was, last night," said Gabriel, pityingly.

Mr. Hahn sprang up.

"He called me insane and said I was a coxcomb. Am I to put up with that? I, a man of business, and in my own garden! As for the plaything, you may be right enough; one must not put too much confidence in men. But now my honor is touched, and I tell you the bells shall remain, and I shall place a watchman there every night."

In vain did Gabriel speak rationally to him. Mr. Hahn was inexorable, and called out after him as he was leaving:

"Tell him we shall meet again in court."

Accordingly he went to his attorney, and insisted upon bringing a suit for the abusive language of the previous night.

"Good," said Mr. Hummel, when Gabriel returned from his fruitless mission. "These people compel me to adopt measures of security for myself. I will take care that no strange horse-hair shall be attached to my house. When the rogues sound the bells over there, the dogs shall bark here. Measure for measure, Gabriel."

He went gloomily to his factory, and paced about wildly. His bookkeeper, who appeared to be a much-oppressed man, because he never could obtain his rights from Mr. Hummel, thought it was his duty and a fitting time to speak.

"The ideas of this man Hahn are absurd; all the world finds fault with them."

But the speech did him no good.

"What do this man's ideas signify to you?" cried Hummel. "Are you the householder, and are you or I head of this business? If I choose to be angry it is my affair and not yours. His new clerk, Knips, wears his hair in frizzy curls, and perfumes himself with Eau de Cologne; you may make fun of him about that; that is your right. As to what concerns the rest of the world, your blame of this man's devices is worth about as much as the twittering of the sparrow on the house-top; and if he should every day hang a peal of bells on his shoulders and go in that attire into the counting-house, he would still remain a respectable citizen so far as this street rabble is concerned. Only, as regards myself, it is another thing. I am his neighbor day and night, and if he gets into trouble I also have to suffer. For the rest, I object to all calumnies on my fellow-men. What must be said is my business alone, without associates; remember that."

A few evenings later, Gabriel was standing before the house-door, looking up to the heavens and watching whether a small black cloud, which was slowly floating past, would cover the face of the moon. Just as this took place, and the street and both houses lay in darkness a carriage drove up to the house, and the voice of the master called out: "Is all well?"

"All well," answered Gabriel, and unbuttoned the apron.

Mr. Hummel descended heavily, and behind him was heard an angry growl.

"What have you got in there?" asked Gabriel, with much curiosity, putting his hands into the carriage, but he quickly withdrew them. "The beast bites!" he ejaculated.

"I hope it does," replied Mr. Hummel. "I meant it to bite. I have brought a pair of watch-dogs as a guard against the bell ringers."

He pulled out by a rope two indistinct figures, which rushed about yelping hoarsely, and, circling round Gabriel's legs, viciously drew the cord round him like a noose.

Gabriel extricated himself. The clouds had passed away, and in the bright moon light both dogs were plainly visible.

"They are strange beasts, Mr. Hummel. A curious race. Evidently mongrels," he continued, in a deprecatory tone; "hardly medium size, thick in the chest, and with shaggy hair; the bristles hang over their muzzles like mustachios. The mother must have been a poodle, the father a spitz; I think I also detect some relationship with the pug, and the great-grandfather must have been a terrier. A remarkable product, Mr. Hummel, and somewhat rare. How did you come by the animals?"

"By accident. I could not obtain a dog in the village to-day; but as I was returning through the wood the horses suddenly shied and would not move on. While the coachman was handling them, I all at once perceived near the carriage a large dark man, standing as if he had sprung out of the ground. He was holding the two dogs by a rope, and laughed jeeringly at the abuse of the coachman. 'What is the matter?' I called out to him; 'where are you taking the dogs to?' 'To whosoever wishes to have them,' said the black fellow. 'Lift them into the carriage,' said I. 'I shall do nothing of the sort,' growled the stranger; 'you must fetch them yourself.' I descended and asked him what he wanted for them. He replied 'Nothing.' The matter looked suspicious, but I thought it would be no harm to try

them. I lifted the beasts into the carriage; and found them as quiet as lambs. 'What are their names?' I cried out from the carriage. 'Bräuhahn and Goslar,' said the man, laughing fiendishly."

"But they are no dogs' names, Mr. Hummel," interposed Gabriel, shaking his head.

"That was what I told the man, but he replied, 'they never suffered babtism.' 'But the rope is yours,' I said; and only think, Gabriel, this black fellow answered me: 'Keep it; and hang yourself with it.' I wanted to throw the dogs out of the carriage again, but the man had vanished into the wood like a will-o'-the-wisp."

"That is a dreadful story," said Gabriel, much troubled; "these dogs have been raised in no Christian household. And do you really intend to keep the ill-omened creatures?"

"I shall make the attempt," said Mr. Hummel. "After all, a dog is a dog."

"Be on your guard, Mr. Hummel, there is something mysterious in these beasts."

"Nonsense!"

"They are monsters," continued Gabriel, counting on his fingers; "first, they have not the names of earthly dogs; secondly, they were offered without money; thirdly, no man knows what food they eat."

"As to their appetite, you will not have to wait long to discover what that is," replied the master of the house.

Gabriel drew a bit of bread out of his pocket, and the dogs snapped at it. "In that regard they are of the right species," he said, a little tranquillized; "but what are they to be called in the house?"

"Bräuhahn I shall call Fighthahn," replied Mr. Hummel; "and in my family no dogs shall be called Goslar. I cannot bear the beastly drink." He cast a hostile look at the neighboring house. "Other people have such stuff fetched every day across the street, but that is no reason why I should suffer such a word in my household. The black shall from this day forth be called Fight*hahn* and the red Spite*hahn*-that is settled.

"But, Mr. Hummel, these names are clearly offensive," exclaimed Gabriel; "that will make the matter worse."

"That is my affair," said Mr. Hummel, decidedly. "At night they shall remain in the yard; they must guard the house."

"So long as they do but preserve their bodies," said Gabriel, warningly; "but this kind come and vanish as they please-not as we wish."

"Yet they are not of the devil," rejoined Mr. Hummel, laughing.

"Who speaks of the devil?" replied Gabriel, quickly. "There is no devil-that the Professor will never allow; but of dogs we have various kinds."

So saying, Gabriel took the animals into the hall. Mr. Hummel called out into the room: "Good evening, Philippine. Here, I have brought you a present."

Mrs. Hummel came to the door with a light, and looked astonished at the present, which whined at her feet. This humility disposed the lady to regard them with benevolence.

"But they are frightful," she said, dubiously, as the red and the black sat down on each side of her, wagging their tails land looking up at her from under their shaggy eyebrows. "And why did you bring two?"

"They are not intended for exhibition," returned Mr. Hummel in a pacifying tone; "they are country ware-one is a substitute for the other."

After this presentation they were carried off to a shed. Gabriel once more tried their capacity of eating and drinking; they showed themselves thoroughly satisfactory in this respect, though as regards personal beauty they were not distinguished dogs; and Gabriel went to his room free from anxiety.

When the clock struck ten, and the gate which separated the court-yard from the street was closed, Mr. Hummel went down himself to the dogs' shed to initiate these new watchers into their calling. He was much astonished, on opening the door, to find that they did not require any encouraging words from him-both rushed out between his legs into the yard. As if driven by an

invisible whip, they dashed at a headlong pace round the house and factory-always together, and never silent. Hitherto they had been depressed and quiet; now, either as the result of the good food they had devoured or because their night watch had come, they became so noisy that even Mr. Hummel drew back in astonishment. Their hoarse short bark deafened the horn of the night watchman and the call of their master, who wished to recommend moderation. They chased wildly and incessantly around the court, and a continuous yelping accompanied their stormy career. The windows of the house were thrown open.

"This will be a horrible night, Mr. Hummel," said Gabriel.

"Henry," cried out his wife from her bedroom "this is insupportable."

"It is their first outburst of joy," nothing more, said Mr. Hummel, consolingly, and withdrawing into the house.

But this view of the matter turned out to be erroneous. Throughout the whole night the barking of the dogs sounded from the court-yard. In the houses of the neighborhood, shutters were thrown open, and loud words of reproach addressed to Mr. Hummel. The following morning he arose in a state of great uncertainty. Even his own sound sleep had been disturbed by the reproaches of his wife, who now sat at breakfast angry and depressed with headache. When he entered the court-yard, and gathered from his men the complaints they had heard from the neighbors, even he hesitated for a moment whether he should keep the dogs.

Ill luck would have it that just at this moment Mr. Hahn's porter entered the court-yard, and with defiant mien announced that Mr. Hahn insisted upon Mr. Hummel putting a stop to this outrageous barking, or he should be obliged to seek redress before a justice of the peace.

This attitude of his opponent at once decided the inward struggle of Mr. Hummel.

"If I can bear the barking of my dogs, other people can do so too. The bells play on your side of the way and the dogs sing on mine, and if any one wishes to hear my views before a magistrate he shall hear enough to satisfy him."

He returned to the house and with dignity approached his suffering wife.

"Are two dogs to come between you and me, Henry?" asked the wife, with faltering voice.

"Never," replied Mr. Hummel; "the domestic peace must be preserved. I am sorry that you have a headache, and to please you I would remove the beasts. But I have collided again with that coxcomb across the way. For the second time he threatens me with a suit and the magistrate. My honor is at stake, and I can no longer give in. Be a good wife, Philippine, and try to bear it a few nights longer. Put cotton in your ears, till the dogs have gotten accustomed to their work."

"Henry," replied the wife, wearily, "I have never doubted your heart; but your character is rough, and the voices of the dogs are too horrible. Can you, in order to enforce your will, see your wife suffer, and become seriously ill, from sleeplessness? Will you, in order to maintain your position, sacrifice peace with the neighborhood?"

"I do not want you to be ill, but I will not send away the dogs," replied Mr. Hummel, seizing his felt hat, and going to the factory with heavy step.

If Mr. Hummel indulged in the hope that he had ended the domestic struggle as conqueror, he was greatly in error. There was still another power in his home, who opened the campaign in a different manner. When Mr. Hummel approached his desk in his little counting-house, he saw near the inkstand a nosegay of flowers. Attached to the pink ribbon hung a note which was sealed with a forget-me-not, and addressed-"To my dear Father."

"That is my bright-eyed girl," he murmured, and opening the note read the following lines:

"My dear pa, good morrow!
The dogs cause great sorrow,
They are not delightful;
Their bark is just frightful;

Their ardor and sanguinity
Disturb the vicinity.
For the sake of our neighborhood,
Be noble, generous and good."

Hummel laughed so heartily that the work in the factory stopped, and every one was amazed at his good humor. Then he marked the note with the date of its reception, put it in his pocket-book, and after examining the letters that had arrived, he betook himself into the garden. He saw his little daughter sprinkling the beds with her watering-pot, and his heart swelled with a father's pride. With what grace she turned and bent, and how her dark locks hung round the blooming face, and how actively she raised and swung the watering-pot; and, on perceiving him, when she put it down and held her finger threateningly at him, he was quite enchanted.

"Verses again," he called out to her, "I have received Number Nine."

"And you will be my good papa," cried Laura, hastening toward him and stroking his chin; "do send them away."

"But, my child," said the father, composedly. "I have already spoken to your mother about it, and I have already explained to her why I cannot dispose of them. Now, I cannot do to please you, what I have refused your mother; that would be contrary to all family regulations. Respect your mother, little girl."

"You are a hard-hearted father," replied the daughter, pouting; "and more than that, you are unjust in this affair."

"Oh, oh!" cried the father, "is that the way you approach me?"

"What harm does the ringing of bells over there do to us? The little summer-house is pretty, and when we sit in the garden in the evening, and there is a breeze, and the bells tinkle gently, it sounds just lovely-it is like Mozart's *Magic Flute*."

"Our street is not an opera-house," the father retorted sharply, "but a public thoroughfare; and when my pet dogs bark you can equally well pursue your theatrical ideas, and imagine that you are in the Wolf's Den, in the *Freischütz*."

"No, my father," answered the daughter, eagerly, "you are unjust towards these people; for you wish to spite them, and that vexes me to my heart's core. It is not worthy of my father."

"Yet you must bear it," he replied, doggedly, "for this is a quarrel between men. Police regulations settle such affairs, and your verses are altogether out of place. As regards the names, it is possible that other words like Adolar, Ingomar, and Marquis Posa, might sound better to you women-folk. But this is no reason for me; my names are practical. In the matter of flowers and books, I will do much to please you but in the matter of dogs I cannot take poetry into consideration." So saying, he turned his back upon his daughter, to avoid protracting the dispute.

Laura, however, hastened to her mother's room, and the ladies took counsel together.

"The noise was bad enough," complained Laura, "but the names are terrible. I cannot say those words for my life, and you ought not to allow our servant to do so, either."

"Dear child," answered the experienced mother, "one has to pass through much in this world which is unpleasant, but what grieves me most is the wanton attacks upon the dignity of women in their own houses. I shall say no more on the subject. I agree with you, that both the names by which the dogs are called are an insult to our neighbor. But if your father were to discover that behind his back we called them Phœbus and Azor, it would make matters worse."

"No one at least must utter those other names who cares for my friendship," said Laura, decidedly, and entered into the court-yard.

Gabriel was employing his leisure in making observations on the new comers. He was frequently attracted to the dogs' kennel in order to establish the certainty of the earthly nature of the strangers.

"What is your opinion?" asked Laura, approaching him.

"I have my opinion," answered the servant, peering into the interior of the shed, "namely, that there is something mysterious about them. Did you remark the song of those ravens the other night? No real dog barks like that; they whine and moan and occasionally groan and speak like little children. They eat like other dogs, but their mode of life is unusual. See, how they cower down, as if they had been struck on the mouth, because the sun shines on them. And then, dear young lady, the names!"

Laura looked with curiosity at the beasts.

"We will alter the names secretly, Gabriel; this one shall be called Ruddy."

"That would certainly be better; it would at least not be an insult to Mr. Hahn, but only to the tenant of the basement."

"What do you mean by that?"

"The porter who lives over there is called Ruddy."

"Then," decided Laura, "the red monster shall from henceforth be named The Other; our people shall call him Andres.[2] Tell this to the workmen in the factory."

"Andres!" replied Gabriel. "The name will just suit him. The neighbors would dignify him with the name of Andreas if it were not too much honor to him."

Thus were kind hearts occupied in thwarting the bad signification of the name. But in vain, for, as Laura had correctly noted in her diary, when the ball of mischief has been thrown amongst men, it mercilessly hits the good as well as the bad. The dog was supplied with the most inoffensive name that ever was given; but through a wonderful complication of circumstances, which bid defiance to all human sagacity, it happened that Mr. Hahn himself bore the name of Andreas. Thus the double name of the animal became a double affront to the neighboring house, and bad and good intentions mingled together in a thick, black soup of hatred.

Early in the morning Mr. Hummel appeared at the door, and defiantly, like Ajax, called the two dogs by their hostile names. The porter, Ruddy, heard the call in the cellar, hastened to his master's room, and informed him of this horrible affront. Mrs. Hahn endeavored not to believe it, and maintained that they should, at least, wait for some confirmation. This confirmation did not fail to come; for at noonday Gabriel opened the door of the place where the dogs were confined, and made the creatures come out for a quarter of an hour's sunning in the garden. Laura, who was sitting among her flowers, and was just looking out for her secret ideal-a famous singer, who, with his glossy black hair and military gait was just passing by-determined, like a courageous maiden, not to peer after her favorite through the foliage of the vine arbor, and turned toward the dogs. In order to accustom the red one to his new name, she enticed him with a bit of cake, and called him several times by the unfortunate name, "Andres." At the same moment, Dorchen rushed to Mrs. Hahn, saying: "It is true; now even Miss Laura calls the dog by the Christian name of our master."

Mrs. Hahn stepped to the window much shocked, and herself heard the name of her dear husband. She retreated quickly, for this insult from her neighbors brought tears into her eyes, and she sought for her pocket-handkerchief to wipe them away unperceived by her maid. Mrs. Hahn was a good woman, calm and agreeable, with a tendency to plumpness and an inclination quietly to do anything for the sake of peace. But this heartlessness of the daughter roused her anger. She instantly fetched her cloak from the closet, and went with the utmost determination across the street to the garden of the hostile neighbors.

Laura looked up astonished from the hideous dogs to the unexpected visitor, who came toward her with dignified steps.

"I come to complain, young lady!" began Mrs. Hahn, without further greeting. "The insults that have been heaped upon my husband from this house are insupportable. For your father's conduct you are not responsible; but I think it shocking that a young girl like you should also join in these outrages!"

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[2] *Andres* means "the other."

"What do you mean, Mrs. Hahn?" asked Laura, excitedly.

"I mean the affront of giving a man's name to dogs. You call your dogs by all my husband's names."

"That I have never done," replied Laura.

"Do not deny it," cried out Mrs. Hahn.

"I never speak an untruth," said the girl proudly.

"My husband's name is Andreas Hahn, and what you call this beast is heard by the whole neighborhood."

Laura's pride was roused. "This is a misunderstanding, and the dog is not so called. What you say is unjust."

"How is it unjust?" returned Mrs. Hahn. "In the morning the father, and in the afternoon the daughter call him so."

A heavy weight fell on Laura's heart; she felt herself dragged down into an abyss of injustice and injury. Her father's conduct paralyzed her energies, and tears burst from her eyes.

"I see that you at least feel the wrong you are committing," continued Mrs. Hahn, more calmly. "Do not do it again. Believe me, it is easy to pain others, but it is a sorry business, and my poor husband and I have not deserved it from you. We have seen you grow up before our eyes; and even though we have had no intercourse with your parents, we have always been pleased with you, and no-one in our house has ever wished you ill. You do not know what a good man Mr. Hahn is, but still you ought not to have behaved so. Since we have dwelt here we have experienced many vexations from this house; but that you should share your father's views pains me most."

Laura endeavored in vain to dry her tears. "I repeat to you that you do me injustice; more I cannot say in self-justification, nor will I. You have grieved me more than you know, and I am satisfied that I have a clear conscience."

With these words she hastened into the house, and Mrs. Hahn returned home, uncertain as to the result of her visit.

Laura paced up and down her little room wringing her hands. Innocent and yet guilty in spite of her good will, wounded to the quick, dragged into a family feud, the unhappy results of which could not be foreseen, she reviewed the events of the past day in her excited mind. At last she seated herself at her little writing-table, took out her journal, and confided her sorrows to this silent friend bound in violet leather. She sought comfort from the souls of others who had borne up nobly under similar griefs, and at last found the confirmation of her experience in the expressive well-known passage of Goethe's Faust:

"Reason doth folly, good doth evil grow;
The child must reap the mischief that the fathers sow."

Had she not wished to do what was reasonable and kind, and had not folly and evil arisen from it? And had not misfortune befallen her without her fault merely because she was a child of the house? With this sentence she closed a passionate effusion. But in order not to appear to her conscience devoid of affection, the poor child wrote immediately underneath these words: "My dear, good father." Then she closed the book, feeling more comforted.

But the severest humiliation to her was the feeling that she should be judged unjustly by the people over the way; and she folded her arms and thought how she could justify herself. She, indeed, could do nothing; but there was a worthy man who was the confidant of every one in the house, who had cured her canary bird when ill, and removed a stain from the nose of her little bust of Schiller. She resolved, therefore, to tell only the faithful Gabriel what Mrs. Hahn had said, and not a word to her mother unless obliged to do so.

It happened that toward evening Gabriel and Dorchen entered into conversation in the street. Dorchen began to make bitter complaints of the spitefulness of the Hummels, but Gabriel earnestly advised her not to allow herself to be dragged into these disputes. Said he, "there must be some who take a neutral stand. Be an angel, Dorchen, and bring peace and good will into the house; for the daughter is innocent." Whereupon the history of giving the name was spoken of, and Laura honorably acquitted.

Then, when Gabriel, a little later, incidentally remarked to Laura: "This matter is settled; and Mr. Hahn has said that it had at once appeared to him improbable that you should be so ill-disposed toward him," – a heavy weight fell from her heart, and again her soft song sounded through the house. And yet she did not feel satisfied, for the annoyance to the neighboring house caused by her father's anger still continued. Alas! she could not restrain that violent spirit, but she must endeavor secretly to atone for his injustice. She pondered over this while undressing late at night; but when in bed, after entertaining and rejecting many projects, the right idea suddenly struck her; she jumped up at once, lighted her candle, and ran in her night-dress to the writing-table. There she emptied her purse, and counted over the new dollars that her father had given her at Christmas and on her birthday. These dollars she determined to spend in a secret method of reparation. Highly pleased, she took the precious purse to bed with her, laid it under her pillow, and slept peacefully upon it, although the spectral dogs raged round the house in their wild career, horribly and incessantly.

The following morning Laura wrote in large, stiff characters, on an empty envelope, Mr. Hahn's name and address, and affixed a seal on which was the impression of a violet with the inscription, "I conceal myself," and put it in her pocket. On her way to town to make some purchases she stopped at a hot-house, the proprietor of which was unknown to her. There she bought a bushy plant of dwarf orange, full of flowers and golden fruit-a splendid specimen of the greenhouse; with a beating heart, she drove in a closed cab, till she found a porter, to whom she gave an extraordinary gratuity, and bade him leave the plant and envelope at Mr. Hahn's house without word or greeting of any kind.

The man performed the commission faithfully. Dorchen discovered the plant in the hall, and it caused an agreeable excitement in the Hahn family-fruitless imaginations, repeated inspection, and vain conjectures. When at noon Laura peeped through the arbor into the garden, she had the pleasure of seeing the orange plant occupying a prominent place in front of the white Muse. Beautifully did the white and gold of the shrub glitter across the street. Laura stood long behind the branches, unconsciously folding her hands. Her soul was unburdened of the injustice, and she turned from the hostile house with a feeling of proud satisfaction.

Meanwhile there was a complaint issued and a suit was pending between the two houses, which was seriously increased on that very day by the adoption of the dogs' names "Fighthahn" and "Spitehahn."

Thus the peace in house and neighborhood was still disturbed. At first the pealing of bells had excited public opinion against Mr. Hahn, but this was entirely altered by the introduction of the dogs: the whole street went over to the man of *straw*; the man of *felt* had all the world against him. But Mr. Hummel cared little for this. In the evening he sat in the garden on the upturned boat, looking proudly at the neighboring house, while Fighthahn and the other dog sat at his feet blinking at the moon, who in her usual way looked down maliciously on Mr. Hummel, Mr. Hahn, and all the rest of the world.

It happened on the following night that amidst the barking of the dogs and the light of the moon all the bells were torn down from the temple of Mr. Hahn and stolen.

CHAPTER VIII.
TACITUS AGAIN

There is a common saying that all lost things lie under the claws of the Evil One. Whoever searches for a thing must cry: "Devil, take thy paws away." Then it suddenly appears before the eyes of men. It was so easy to find. They have gone round it a hundred times. They have looked above and below, and have sought it in the most improbable places, and never thought of that which was nearest them. Undoubtedly it was so with the manuscript; it lay under the clutches of the Evil One or of some hobgoblin, quite close to our friends. If they were to stretch out their hands they might lay hold of it. The acquisition was only hindered by one consideration, by the single question, Where? Whether this delay would involve more or less suffering for both the scholars was still doubtful. Nevertheless, they might overcome even this uncertainty; the main point was, that the manuscript really existed and lay somewhere. In short, matters went on the whole as well as possible. The only thing missing was the manuscript.

"I see," said the Doctor one day to his friend, "that you are strenuously exerting yourself to educate and fashion the ideas of the older people of the household. I put my hopes in the souls of the younger generation. Hans, the eldest, is very far from sharing the views of the father and sister; he shows an interest in the old treasure, and if we ourselves should not succeed in making the discovery, at some future period he will not spare the old walls."

In conjunction with Hans, the Doctor secretly resumed his investigations. In quiet hours, when the Proprietor was unsuspectingly riding about his farm, and the Professor working in his room or sitting in the honeysuckle arbor, the Doctor went prying about the house. In the smock-frock of a laborer, which Hans had brought to his room, he searched the dusty corners of the house high and low. More than once he frightened the female servants of the household by suddenly emerging from behind some old bin in the cellar, or by appearing astride on one of the rafters of the roof. In the dairy a hole had been dug for the forming of an ice-pit; one day when the laborers had gone away at noon, Mademoiselle, the housekeeper, passed close to the uncovered pit, suspecting nothing. Suddenly, she beheld a head without a body, with fiery eyes and bristly hair, which slowly groped along the ground and which turned its face to her with a derisive, fiendish laugh. She uttered a shrill cry and rushed into the kitchen, where she sank fainting on a stool and was only revived by the copious sprinkling of water and encouraging words. At dinner she was so much troubled that every one was struck by her uneasiness. But at last it appeared that the fiendish head was to be found on the shoulders of her neighbor, the Doctor, who had secretly descended into the hole to examine the masonry.

It was on this occasion that the Doctor discovered, with some degree of malicious pleasure, that the hospitable roof which protected him and the manuscript from the blast and storm stood over an acknowledged haunted house. There were strange creakings in the old building. Spirits were frequently seen, and the accounts only differed as to whether there was a man in a gray cowl, a child in a white shirt, or a cat as large as an ass. Every one knew that there was in all parts a knocking, rattling, thundering, and invisible throwing of stones. Sometimes all the authority of the Proprietor and his daughter was necessary to prevent the outbreak of a panic among the servants. Even our friends, in the quiet of the hight, heard unaccountable sounds, groans, thundering noises, and startling knocks on the wall. These annoyances of the house the Doctor explained to the satisfaction of the Proprietor by his theory of the old walls. He made it clear that many generations of weasels, rats, and mice had bored through the solid walls and tunnelled out a system of covered passages and strongholds. Consequently, every social amusement and every domestic disturbance which took place among the inmates of the wall was plainly perceptible. But the Doctor listened with secret vexation to the muffled noises of the denizens of the wall. For if they rushed and bustled thus indiscriminately around the manuscript, they threatened to render difficult the future investigations of science. Whenever he heard a violent

gnawing he could not help thinking they were again eating away a line of the manuscript, which would make a multitude of conjectures necessary; and it was not by gnawing alone that this colony of mice would disfigure the manuscript that lay underneath them.

But the Doctor was compensated by other discoveries for the great patience which was thus demanded of him. He did not confine his activity to the house and adjoining buildings. He searched the neighborhood for old popular traditions which here and there lingered in the spinning-room and worked in the shaky heads of old beldames. Through the wife of one of the farm-laborers, he secretly made the acquaintance of an old crone well versed in legendary lore in the neighboring village. After the old woman had recovered from her first alarm at the title of the Doctor and the fear that he had come to take her to task for incompetent medical practice, she sang to him, with trembling voice, the love songs of her youth, and related to him more than her hearer could note down. Every evening the Doctor brought home sheets of paper full of writing and soon found in his collection all the well-known characters of our popular legends-wild hunters, wrinkled hags, three white maidens, many monks, some shadowy water pixies, sprites who appeared in stories as artisan lads, but undeniably sprang from a merman; and finally many tiny dwarfs. Sometimes Hans accompanied him on these excursions to the country people, in order to prevent these visits from becoming known to the father and daughter. Now, it was not impossible that here and there a cave or an old well was supplied with spirits without any foundation; for, when the wise women of the village observed how much the Doctor rejoiced in such communications, the old inventive power of the people awoke from a long slumber. But, on the whole, both parties treated each other with truth and firmness, and, besides, the Doctor was not a man who could easily be deceived.

Once when he was returning to the Manor from one of these visits he met the laborer's wife on a lonely foot-path. She looked cautiously about and at last declared that she had something to impart to him if he would not betray her to the Proprietor. The Doctor promised inviolable secrecy. Upon this the woman stated, that in the cellar of the manor-house, on the eastern side, in the right hand corner, there was a stone, marked with three crosses; behind that lay the treasure. She had heard this from her grandfather, who had it from his father, who had been a servant at the Manor; and at that time the then Crown Inspector had wished to raise the treasure, but when they went in the cellar for that purpose, there had been such a fearful crash and such a noise that they ran away in terror. But that the treasure was there was certain, for she had herself touched the stone, and the signs were distinctly engraved on it. The cellar was now used for wine, and the stone was hidden by a wooden trestle.

The Doctor received this communication with composure, but determined to set about investigating by himself. He did not say a word either to the Professor or to his friend Hans, but watched for an opportunity. His informant sometimes herself carried the wine which was always placed before the guests, to the cellar and back. The next morning he followed her boldly; the woman did not say a word as he entered the cellar behind her, but pointed fearfully to a corner in the wall. The Doctor seized the lamp, shoved half a dozen flasks from their places and groped about for the stone; it was a large hewn stone with three crosses. He looked significantly at the woman-she afterwards related in the strictest confidence that the glasses before his eyes shone at this moment so fearfully in the light of the lamp, that she had become quite terrified-then he went silently up again, determined to take advantage of this discovery on the first opportunity in dealing with the Proprietor.

But a still greater surprise awaited the Doctor; his quiet labor was supported by the good deceased Brother Tobias himself. The friends descended one day to Rossau, accompanied by the Proprietor, who had business in the town. He conducted his guests to the Burgomaster, whom he requested to lay before the gentlemen, as trustworthy men, whatever old writings were in the possession of the authorities. The Burgomaster, who was a respectable tanner, put on his coat and took the learned men to the old monastery. There was not much to be seen; only the outer walls of the old building remained; the minor officials of the crown dwelt in the new parts. Concerning the archives of the council the Burgomaster suggested as probable that there would not be much found in

them; in this matter he recommended the gentlemen to the town-clerk, and went himself to the club in order, after his onerous duties, to enjoy a quiet little game of cards.

The town-clerk bowed respectfully to his literary colleagues, laid hold of a rusty bunch of keys, and opened the small vault of the city hall, where the ancient records, covered with thick dust, awaited the time in which their quiet life was to be ended under the stamping machine of a paper mill. The town-clerk had some knowledge of the papers; he understood fully the importance of the communication which was expected from him, but assured them with perfect truth that, owing to two fires in the town and the disorders of former times, every old history had been lost. There were also no records to be found in any private house; only in the printed chronicles of a neighboring town some notices were preserved concerning the fate of Rossau in the Thirty Years' War. After the war, the place had been left a heap of ruins and almost uninhabited. Since that time the town had lived along without a history, and the town-clerk assured them that nothing was known here of the olden time, and no one cared about it. Perhaps something about the town might be learnt at the Capital.

Our friends continued to walk unweariedly from one intelligent man to another, making inquiries, as in the fairy tale, after the bird with the golden feather. Two little gnomes had known nothing, but now there remained a third-so they went to the Roman Catholic priest. A little old gentleman received them with profound bows. The Professor explained to him, that he was seeking information concerning the ultimate fate of the monastery-above all, what had happened in his closing years to the last monk, the venerable Tobias Bachhuber.

"In those days no register of deaths was required," replied the ecclesiastic. "Therefore, my dear sirs, I cannot promise to give you any information. Yet, if it is only a question of yourselves, and you do not wish to extract anything from the old writings disadvantageous to the Church, I am willing to show you the oldest of the existing books." He went into a room and brought out a long thin book, the edges of which had been injured by the mould of the damp room. "Here are some notices of my predecessors who rest with the Lord; perhaps they may be useful to the gentlemen. More I cannot do, because there is nothing else of the kind existing."

On the introductory page there was a register of the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the place in Latin. One of the first notices was: "In the year of our Lord 1637, and in the month of May, our venerated brother Tobias Bachhuber, the last monk of this monastery, died of the plague. The Lord be merciful to him."

The Professor showed the passage silently to his friend the Doctor, who wrote down the Latin words; they then returned the book with thanks and took their leave.

"The manuscript after all lies in the house," said the Professor, as they went along the street. The Doctor thought of the three crosses and laughed quietly to himself; he had in no way assented to the tactics which his friend thought fit to adopt for the discovery of the manuscript. When the Professor maintained that their only hope rested on the sympathy which they might by degrees awaken in their host, the Doctor entertained the suspicion that his friend was brought to this slow way of carrying on the war not by pure zeal for the manuscript.

The Proprietor, however, maintained an obstinate silence regarding the manuscript. If the Doctor threw out any hint upon the subject, the host made a wry grimace and immediately changed the conversation. It was necessary to put an end to this. The Doctor now determined to insist upon a decision before his departure. When, therefore, they were sitting together in the garden in the evening, and the Proprietor was looking cheerfully and calmly on his fruit trees, the Doctor began the attack:

"I cannot leave this place, my hospitable friend, without reminding you of our contract."

"Of what contract?" inquired their host, like one who did not remember it.

"Regarding the manuscript," continued the Doctor, with emphasis, "which lies concealed in this place."

"Indeed! why you yourself said that every place sounds hollow. So we would have to tear down the house from roof to cellar. I should think we might wait till next spring. When you come to us again; for we should be obliged, under these circumstances, to live in the barns, which now are full."

"The house may, for the present, remain standing," said the Doctor; "but if you still think that the monks took away their monastic property, there is one circumstance which goes against your view. We have discovered at Rossau that the worthy friar, who had concealed the things here in April, died of the pestilence as early as May, according to the church register; here is a 'copy of the entry.'"

The Proprietor looked at the Doctor's memorandum book, closed it and said: "Then his brother monks have taken away the property."

"That is scarcely possible," replied the Doctor, "for he was the last of his order in the monastery."

"Then some of the city people have taken it."

"But the inhabitants of the town abandoned it then, and the place lay for years desolate, in ruins and uninhabited."

"Humph!" began the Proprietor, in good humor; "the learned gentlemen are strict creditors and know how to insists upon their rights. Tell me straightforwardly what you want of me. You must, first of all, point out to me some place that appears suspicious, not only to you, but also to the judgment of others; and that you cannot do with any certainty."

"I know of such a place," answered the Doctor, boldly, "and I wish to suggest to you that the treasure lies there."

The Professor and the Proprietor looked on him with astonishment.

"Follow me into the cellar," cried the Doctor.

A candle was lighted; the Doctor led the way to the place where the wine lay.

"What gives you such victorious confidence?" inquired the Professor, on the way, in a low voice.

"I suspect that you have your secrets," replied the Doctor; "permit me to have mine."

He quickly removed the bottles from the corner, threw the light on the stone, and knocked on the wall with a large key.

"The place is hollow and the stone has a peculiar mark."

"It is true," said the Proprietor; "there is an empty space behind it; it is certainly not small. But the stone is one of the foundation stones of the house, and has not the appearance of ever having been removed from its place."

"After so long a time, it would be difficult to determine that," rejoined the Doctor.

The Proprietor examined the wall himself.

"A large slab lies over it. It would, perhaps, be possible to raise the marked stone from its place." He considered for a moment, and then continued: "I see I must let you have your own way. I will thus make compensation for the first hour of our acquaintance, which has always lain heavy on my conscience. As we three are here in the cellar like conspirators, we will enter into an agreement. I will at once do what I consider to be very useless. In return, whenever you speak or write upon the subject, you must not refuse to bear testimony that I have given in to every reasonable wish."

"We shall see what can be done," replied the Doctor.

"Very well. In the stone quarry at the extremity of my property I have some extra hands at work; they shall remove the stone and then restore it to its place. Thus, I hope, the affair will be forever settled. Ilse, early in the morning let the shelving be removed from the wine-cellar."

The following day the stone-masons came, and the three gentlemen and Ilse descended into the cellar, and looked on curiously while the men exerted their power with pickaxe and crowbar on the square stone. It was placed upon the rock, and great exertions were necessary to loosen it. But the people themselves declared that there was a great cavity behind, and worked with a zeal that was increased by the repute of the haunted house. At last the stone was moved and a dark opening became visible. The spectators approached-both the scholars in anxious suspense; their host and his

daughter also full of expectation. One of the stone-masons hastily seized the light and held it before the opening. A slight vapor came out; the man drew back alarmed.

"There is something white in there," he cried, full of fear and hope.

Ilse looked at the Professor, who with difficulty controlled the excitement that worked in his face. He grasped the light, but she kept it from him, and cried out, anxiously: "Not you." She hastened to the opening and thrust her hand into the hollow space. She laid hold of something tangible. A rattling was heard; she quickly withdrew her hand; but, terrified threw what she had laid hold of on the ground. It was a bone.

All gazed in horror at the object on the ground.

"This is a serious answer to your question," exclaimed the Proprietor. "We pay a dear price for our sport."

He took the light and himself searched the opening; a heap of bones lay there. The others stood around in uncomfortable silence. At last the Proprietor threw a skull out into the cellar, and cried out cheerfully, as a man who is relieved from painful feeling:

"They are the bones of a dog!"

"It was a small dog," assented the stone-mason, striking the bone with his pick. The rotten bone broke in pieces.

"A dog!" cried the Doctor, delighted, forgetting for a moment his blighted hope. "That is instructive. The foundation wall of this house must be very old."

"I am rejoiced that you are contented with this discovery," replied the Proprietor, ironically.

But the Doctor would not be disconcerted, and related how, in the early middle ages, there had been a superstitious custom of enclosing something living in the foundation-wall of solid buildings. The custom descended from the ancient heathen times. The cases were rare where such things were found in old buildings, and the skeleton now found was an indisputable confirmation of the custom.

"If it confirms your views," said the Proprietor, "it confirms mine also. Hasten, men, to replace the stone."

Then the stone-mason lighted up and felt again in the opening and declared that there was nothing more there. The workmen restored the stone to its place, the wine was replaced and the matter settled. The Doctor bore the jeering remarks, of which the Proprietor was not sparing, with great tranquillity, and said to him:

"What we have discovered is certainly not much; but we know now with certainty that the manuscript is not to be found in this part of your house, but in some other. I take with me a careful record of all the hollow places in your house, and we do not give up out claims in regard to this discovery; but we consider you from now on as a man who has borrowed the manuscript for his own private use for an indefinite time, and I assure you that our wishes and desires will incessantly hover about this building."

"Pray allow the persons who dwell there to participate in your good wishes," replied the Proprietor, smiling, "and do not forget that in your researches after the manuscript you have in reality found the dog. For the rest, I hope that this discovery will free my house from the ill-repute of containing treasures, and for the sake of this gain I will be quite content with the useless work."

"That is the greatest error of your life," replied the Doctor, with grave consideration; "just the reverse will take place. All people who have an inclination for hidden treasure will take the discovery in this light, that you are deficient in faith and have not employed the necessary solemnities, therefore the treasure is removed from your eyes and the dog placed there as a punishment. I know better than you what your neighbors will record for posterity. Tarry in peace for your awakening, Tacitus! Your most steadfast friend departs, and he whom I leave behind begins to make undue concessions to this household."

He looked earnestly at the Professor and called Hans to accompany him on a visit to the village, in order to take a grateful leave of his old crones, and to obtain one of the beautiful songs of the people, of which he had discovered traces, to take home with him.

He was gone a long time; for after the song there came to light unexpectedly a wonderful story of a certain Sir Dietrich and his horse, which breathed fire.

When, toward evening, the Professor was looking out for him, he met Ilse who, with her straw hat in her hand, was prepared for a walk.

"If you like," she said, "we will go to meet your friend."

They walked along a meadow between stubble-fields, in which here and there grass was to be seen peeping up amongst the stubble.

"The autumn approaches," remarked the Professor; "that is the first sign."

"Winter-time is tedious to some people," answered Ilse, "but it puts us, like Till Eulenspiegel, in good spirits, for we enjoy its repose, and think of the approaching spring; and when the stormy winds rage round us, and the snow drifts to a man's height in the valleys, we sit at home in warmth and comfort."

"With us in the city the winter passes away almost unheeded. The short days and the white roofs alone remind us of it, for our work goes on independently of changing seasons. Yet the fall of the leaf has from my childhood been depressing to me, and in the spring I always desire to throw aside my books and ramble through the country like a traveling journeyman."

They were standing by a bundle of sheaves. Ilse arranged some of them as a seat, and looked over the fields to the distant hills.

"How different it is with us here," she began after a pause. "We are like the birds which year after year joyously flap their wings and live in contentment. But you think and care about other times and other men that existed long before us. You are as familiar with the past as we are with the rising of the sun and the forms of the stars. If the end of summer is sorrowful to you, it is equally as sorrowful to me to hear and read of past times. Books of history make me very sad. There is so much unhappiness on earth, and it is always the good that come to a sorrowful end. I then become presumptuous, and ask why God has thus ordered it? It is really very foolish to feel thus. But for that reason I do not like to read history."

"I well understand that frame of mind," answered the Professor. "For wherever men seek to enforce their will in opposition to their time and nation, invariably they meet the fate that befalls the weak. Even that which the strongest accomplish has no permanent lastingness. And as men and their works disappear, so do peoples. But we should not irrevocably attach our hearts to the fate of a single man or a single nation, we should rather strive to understand why they have grown great, and why they have perished, and what was the abiding gain that through their life the human race has eternally won. The account of their fortunes will then become but a veil, behind which we discover the operation of other forces and powers of life. We learn that in the men that succumb in this great struggle and in the nations that decline, a still higher hidden life dominates, which lives on creating and destroying in rigid accordance with eternal laws. To discover the laws of this higher life and to feel, to experience the blessing that this creating and destruction has brought into our existence, that is the duty and the ambition of the historian. From this point of view dissolution and death are transformation into new life. And they who have learned thus to look upon and observe the past-for them its study increases their security and ennobles their heart."

Ilse shook her head and cast down her eyes.

"And the Roman whose lost book brought you to us, and of which you have been talking to-day-is he interesting to you because he looked upon the world in the cheerful light that you do?"

"No," answered the Professor, "it is just the reverse that impresses one in his work. His serious mind was never borne aloft by joyful confidence. The fate of his nation, the future of men, lay like a dark impenetrable riddle heavily upon his soul. In the past he saw a better time, freer government,

stronger men, purer morals. In his own people and his own state he saw decadence and dissolution, which even good rulers no longer could retard. It is affecting to see how that high-minded, thoughtful man struggled in doubt. For he doubted whether the horrible fate of millions was the punishment of the Deity or the consequence that no God cared for the lot of mortals. Forebodingly and ironically he contemplates the history of individuals. To him the course of wisdom seems to be to bear the inevitable silently and patiently. When, even for a moment, a brief smile curls his lips, one perceives that he is looking into a hopeless desert; one can imagine fear visible in his eyes, and the rigid expression which remains on one who has been shaken to the innermost core by deadly horrors."

"That is sad," exclaimed Ilse.

"Yes, it is fearful. And it is difficult to understand how any one could endure life, burdened by such despair. The joyful satisfaction of belonging to a nation of growing vigor was not then the lot of either heathen or Christian. It is the highest and most indestructible happiness of man to have confidence in that which exists, and to look with hope to the future. And such is our life now. Much that is weak, corrupt, and perishable surrounds us. But with it all there is growing up an endless abundance of youthful vigor. The root and the trunk of our popular life are sound. Everywhere do we find sincerity in family-life, respect for morals and law, sturdy and solid labor, everywhere energetic activity. In many thousands we find the consciousness that they are increasing the national strength, and in millions that are still far behind them the feeling that they also are laboring to contribute to our civilization. This is our pleasure and glory in modern times, and helps to make us valiant and proud. We well know, indeed, that the joyful feeling of this possession may also be saddened; for temporary disturbances come to every nation in the course of its development. But its progress and prosperity of thriving cannot be thwarted, nor its career hindered, so long as these securities of power and soundness exist. It is this that gives happiness to him whose vocation it is to investigate the past, for he looks down from the salubrious air of the heights into the darkness beneath him."

Ilse gazed on him with wonder and admiration, but he bent over the sheaves which were between them and continued with enthusiasm:

"Each one of us derives the judgment and habit of mind with which he regards the great relations of the world, from the sphere of his own personal experience. Look about you. Here at the laughing summer landscape, yonder at the busy workingmen, and then at that which lies nearest your heart-at your own home and the circle in which you have grown to womanhood. How gentle the light, how warm the hearts, how wise and good and true the minds that surround you! And think what an inestimable gain it is for *me*, to see this, and to enjoy it-enjoy it by your side. And when, poring over my books, I hereafter shall vividly feel how valiant and noble, how sturdy and true is the life of my countrymen about me, I shall evermore in my inmost heart pay, for that, a tribute of thankfulness to you."

He stretched out his hand across the sheaves; Ilse seized it, and clasped it between hers. A warm tear fell upon it. She looked at him with her moistened eyes, while a world of happiness lay in her countenance. Gradually a bright glow suffused her cheeks, she rose, and a look full of devoted tenderness fell upon him; then she walked hastily away from him adown the meadow.

The Professor remained leaning against the sheaves. The meadow-larks on the tips of the ears of grain over his head warbled joyfully. He pressed his cheek against the stack which half concealed him; thus, in happy forgetfulness, he watched the girl descending toward the distant laborers.

When he raised his eyes his friend was standing by him; he beheld a countenance which quivered with inward sympathy, and heard the gentle question:

"What will come of it?"

"Husband and wife," said the Professor decidedly; he pressed his friend's hands, and strode across the fields to the songs of the larks which greeted him from every sheaf.

Fritz was alone. The word had been spoken. A new and awful fate overshadowed the life of his friend. So this was to be the end of it? Thusnelda, instead of Tacitus! Fritz felt alas! that the

social custom of marriage might be a very venerable institution. It was inevitable that most men pass through the uprooting struggle which is the consequence of a change in the mutual relations of life. He could not think of his friend amid his books, with his colleagues, and this woman. He felt painfully that his relation to the Professor must be changed by it. But he did not think long of himself, but anxiously worried about his rash friend; and not less about her who had so dangerously impressed the soul of the other. The faithful rash friend looked angrily upon the surrounding stubble and straw, and he clenched his fists against the deceased Bachhuber; against the valley of Rossau; nay, even against the immediate cause of this mischievous confusion-against the manuscript of Tacitus.

CHAPTER IX.
ILSE

Since the death of her mother Ilse had lived an unvaried home life. Though then scarcely grown up, she had taken charge of the household. Spring and autumn came and went. One year rolled over her head like another. Her father and sisters, the estate, the laborers, and the poor of the valley-these formed her life. More than once a suitor, a sturdy, worthy proprietor of the neighborhood, had asked her hand in marriage. But she felt contented with her home, and she knew that her father wished her to remain with him. In the evening, when the active man rested on the sofa, and the children were sent to bed she sat silently by him with her embroidery, or talked over the small occurrences of the day-the illness of a laborer, the damage done by a hail storm or the name of the new milch cow. It was a lonely country. Much of it was woodland. Most of the estates were small. There were no rich neighbors. And the father, who had worked his way by his energy until he became an opulent man, had no inclination for society life, nor had his daughter. On Sunday the Pastor came to dinner, and then the father's farm-inspectors remained and related the little gossip of the neighborhood over their coffee; the children, who, during the week, were under the charge of a tutor, amused themselves in the garden and fields. When Ilse had a leisure hour she seated herself in her own little sitting-room with a book out of her father's small library-a novel by Walter Scott, a tale by Hauff, or a volume of Schiller.

But now a profusion of thoughts, images, and feeling had been awakened in her mind by this stranger. Much that she had hitherto looked upon with indifference in the outer world now became interesting to her. Like fire-works which unexpectedly shoot up, illuminating particular spots in the landscape with their colored light, his conversation threw a fascinating light, now here and now there, on a life that was strange to her. When he spoke, when his words, copious and choice, flowed from his innermost heart-she bent her head as in a dream, then fixed her eyes on his face. She felt a respect commingled with fear for a human mind that soared so loftily and firmly above the earth. He spoke of the past as intimately as of the present; he knew how to explain the secret thoughts of men who had lived a thousand years ago. Ah! she felt the glory and greatness of human learning to be the merit and greatness of the man who sat opposite to her. The intellectual labor of the centuries appeared to her as a supernatural being which proclaimed from a human mouth things unheard of in her home.

But it was not learning alone. When she looked up at him, she saw beaming eyes, a kindly expression about the eloquent lips, and she felt herself irresistibly attracted by the warmth of the man's nature. Then she sat opposite to him as a quiet listener. But when she entered her room, she knelt down and covered her face with her hands. In this solitude she saw him before her and offered him homage.

Thus she awoke to a new life. It was a state of pure enthusiasm, of unselfish rapture, such as a man knows not and only a woman can experience, – which comes only to a pure, innocent heart when the greatest crisis of earthly existence visits a sensitive soul in the bloom of life.

She saw also that her father was partially under the same magical influence. At dinner, which used to be so silent, conversation now flowed as from a living spring; in the evening, when formerly he used to sit wearily over the newspaper, many things were now discussed, and there were frequent disputes which lasted late into the night. Her father, when he took his bedroom candle from the table, was always in cheerful humor; and more than once he repeated to himself, pacing up and down, sentences that had been uttered by his guest. "He is, in his way, a fine man," he said; "in all things stable and sound; one always knows how to take him."

Occasionally she was alarmed at the Professor's opinions. The two friends, indeed, avoided what might wound the deep faith of their gentle hearer, but in the conversation of the Professor there sometimes seemed to lie hidden a different conception of venerated doctrines and of human duties;

and yet, what he maintained was so noble and good that she could not guard herself against it by her own reasoning.

He was often vehement in his expressions; when he condemned a thing he did it in forcible language, and sometimes became so vehement that the Doctor and even her father withdrew from the contest. She thought then that he was different from almost all men-prouder, nobler, and more decided. When he expected much of others, as is natural to one who has lived in closer intercourse with the ideal world than with real life, it alarmed her to think in what light she must appear to him. But, on the other hand, this same man was ready to acknowledge everything that was good, and he rejoiced like a child when he learned that any one had shown himself brave and energetic.

He was a serious man, and yet he had become a favorite with the children, even more than the Doctor. They confided their little secrets to him, he visited them in their nursery, and gave them advice according to his youthful recollections, as to how they should make a large paper kite; he himself painted the eyes and the mustache, and cut the tassels for the tail. It was a joyful day when the kite rose from the stubble-field for the first time. Then, when evening came, he sat down, surrounded by the children, like the partridge amongst her young. Franz climbed up the arm-chair and played with his hair; one of the bigger ones sat on each knee. Then riddles were propounded and stories told. And when Ilse heard how he repeated and taught small rhymes to the children, her heart swelled with joy that such a mind should hold such intimate intercourse with simple children. And she watched his countenance and saw a child-like expression light up the features of the man, laughing and happy; and she imagined him as a little boy, sitting on his mother's lap. Happy mother!

Then came the hour among the sheaves, the learned discourse which began with Tacitus and ended with a silent acknowledgment of love. The blessed cheerfulness of his countenance, the trembling sound of his voice, had torn away the veil that concealed her own agitated feelings. She now knew that she loved him deeply and eternally, and she had a conviction that he felt just as she did. He, who was so greatly her superior, had condescended to her; she had felt his warm breath and the quick pressure of his hand. As she passed through the field, a glow suffused her cheeks; the earth and heaven, fields and sun-lit wood, floated before her like luminous clouds. With winged feet she hastened down into the woody plain, where the foliage enveloped her. Now she felt herself alone. She unconsciously grasped a slender birch tree, which shook beneath her convulsive grasp, until its leaves fell in a shower around her. She raised her hands to the golden light of the heavens and threw herself down on the mossy ground. Her bosom heaved and panted violently and she trembled with inward excitement. Love had descended from heaven upon the young woman, taking possession of her body and soul with its irresistible power.

Thus she lay a long time. Butterflies played about her hair. A little lizard crept over her hand. The white tips of the wild flowers and the branches of the hazel bent over her, as if these little children of nature wished to veil the deep emotions of the sister who had come to them in the happiest moment of her life.

At last she rose upon her knees, clasped her hands together, and thanked and prayed to God for him.

She became more collected and went into the open valley, no longer the quiet girl she was formerly. Her own life and what surrounded her shone in new colors, and she viewed the world with new feelings. She understood the language of the pair of swallows that circled round her, and with twittering tones passed by her swift as arrows. It was the rapturous joy of life which impelled the little bodies so swiftly through the air, and the birds greeted her with a sisterly song of jubilee. She answered the greeting of the laborers who were going home from the fields, and she looked at one of the women who had been binding the sheaves, and knew exactly what was the state of her feelings. This woman also had, as a maiden, loved a strange lad; it had been a long and unhappy attachment, attended by much sorrow; but now she was comforted going with him to her home, and when she spoke to her mistress she looked proudly on her companion, and Ilse felt how happy was the poor

weary woman. When Ilse entered the farm-yard, and heard the voices of the maids who had waited for her in vain, and the impatient lowing of the cattle, which sounded like a reproach on the loitering mistress, she shook her head gently, as if the admonition was no longer for her, but for another.

When she again passed from the farm buildings into the golden evening light, with fleet steps and elevated head, she perceived with astonishment her father standing by his horse ready to mount, and with him, in quiet conversation, the Doctor, and he whom at this moment she felt a difficulty in encountering. She approached hesitatingly.

"Where have you been lingering. Ilse?" cried the Proprietor. "I must be off," and looking at the agitated countenance of his daughter, he added: "It is nothing of importance. A letter from the invalid forester calls me to his house. One of the Court people has arrived, and I can guess what is wanted of me. I hope to be back at night."

He nodded to the Doctor. "We shall see each other again before your departure."

So saying, he trotted away, and Ilse was thankful in her heart for the incident which made it easier for her to speak with composure to the friends. She walked with them on the road along which her father had ridden, and endeavored to conceal her disquiet by talking on indifferent subjects. She spoke of the hunting castle in the wood, and of the solitude in which the gray-headed forester dwelt among the beech-trees of the forest. But the conversation did not flow; each of those noble hearts was powerfully touched. The Professor and Ilse avoided looking at each other, and the friend could not succeed, by jocose talk, in drawing the lovers down to the small things of life.

Ilse suddenly pointed with her hand to a narrow pass on one side, from which many dark heads were emerging.

"Look! There are the Indians of Mrs. Rollmaus."

A crowd of wild figures came on with quick step, one behind the other. In front a powerful man in a brown smock-frock and shabby hat, with a stout stick in his hand; behind him some young men, then women with little children on their backs; all around and about the troop ran half-naked boys and girls. Most of the strangers were bare-headed, and without shoes. Their long black hair hung about their brown faces, and their wild eyes, even from afar, shone covetously on the walking party.

"When the autumn comes, these people sometimes wander through our country. They are jugglers, going to the fair. But for some years they have not ventured into the neighborhood of our estate."

The troop approached; there was a wild rush out of the gang, and in a moment the friends were surrounded by ten or twelve dusky figures, who pressed on them with passionate gestures, loud cries, and outstretched hands-men, women, and children, in tumultuous confusion. The friends looked with astonishment on their piercing eyes and vehement movements, and on the children, who stamped with their feet, and clawed the strangers with their hands like madmen.

"Back, you wild creatures," cried Ilse, pushing herself through the throng, and placing herself before the friends. "Back with you. Who is the chief of this band?" she repeated with anger, raising her arm commandingly.

The noise was silenced and a brown gypsy woman, not smaller than Ilse, with shining hair arranged in braids and a colored handkerchief about her head, came out from the band, and stretched her hands toward Ilse.

"My children beg," she said; "they hunger and thirst."

It was a large face with sharp features, in which traces of former beauty were visible. With head bent forward, she stood before the young lady, and her sparkling eyes passed peeringly from one countenance to the other.

"We have money only for the men who work for us," answered Ilse, coldly. "For strangers who are thirsty, there is our spring; and to those who are hungry we give bread. You will get nothing more at our house."

Again dozens of arms were raised and again the wild crowd pressed nearer. The gypsy woman drove them back by a call in a foreign tongue.

"We wish to work, Mademoiselle," she said, in fluent German, with a foreign accent; "the men mend old utensils, and we drive away rats and mice from the walls; and if you have a sick horse, we will cure it speedily."

Ilse shook her head negatively. "We do not need your help; where is your pass?"

"We have none," said the woman; "we came from foreign parts," and she pointed to where the sun rises.

"And where will you rest to-night?" asked Ilse.

"We do not know; the sun is going down and my people are weary and barefooted," replied the gypsy woman.

"You must not rest near the farm nor near the village houses. The bread you will receive at the gate of the farm-yard; you may send some one there to fetch it. If you light a fire in any of our fields, take care not to go too near the sheaves; we shall look after you. Let none of you stroll about the estate or into the village to tell fortunes to people, for we do not permit it."

"We do not tell fortunes," answered the woman, touching a small black cross which she wore around her neck. "None here below know the future, nor do we."

Ilse bent her head reverently.

"Well said," said she. "According to the meaning which seems conveyed in your words, you do not remind me in vain of the communion which exists between us. Come to the gate yourself, mother, and await me there; if you need anything for your little ones, I will endeavor to help you."

"We have a sick child, my pretty young lady, and the boys are in want of clothes," begged the gypsy woman. "I will come, and my people shall do as you wish."

She gave a sign, and the wild troop tramped obediently along the side-road that led to the village. The friends looked with curiosity after the band.

"That such a scene should be possible in this country I could never have believed," cried the Doctor.

"They were formerly quite a nuisance to us," replied Ilse, with indifference; "they are seldom about, now. My father keeps strict order, and that they know right well. But we must go back to the farm-yard, for there can be no harm in caution with this thievish race."

They hastened back to the farm-yard. The Doctor lamented heartily that his intended journey prevented him from obtaining information from the strangers respecting the secrets of their language.

Ilse called the Inspector, and the intelligence that there were gypsies in the neighborhood flew like wildfire over the farm. The stables were guarded, the poultry and families of fatted pigs were put in the charge of stout maids, and the shepherds and ploughmen received orders to keep watch at night. Ilse called the children and gave them their supper, but found it difficult to control their excitement. The youngest were given over to Mademoiselle, and under strong protest and many tears were consigned to the secure protection of their beds. Then Ilse collected old gowns and linen, gave a maid two huge loaves, and prepared to go to the gate of the farm-yard, where the gypsy woman was to await her. The Doctor, in his joy about the strangers, had cast off all anxiety concerning his friend.

"Allow us to witness the interview with the sibyl," he begged.

They found the gypsy woman sitting in the dusk before the gate. Near her was a half-grown maiden, with brilliant eyes and long tresses, but scanty dress. The woman rose and received with a distinguished air the bounty which Ilse handed to her.

"Blessings on you, young lady," she exclaimed, "and may all the happiness that you now wish be your portion. You have a face that promises good fortune. Blessings on your golden hair and your blue eyes. I thank you," she concluded, bending her head. "Will not the gentlemen also give my little girl a keepsake?" The wild beauty held out her hand. "Her face is burnt by the sun; be kind to the poor dark girl," begged the old one, looking furtively round.

The Professor shook his head. The Doctor got out his purse and placed a piece of gold in the hand of the woman.

"Have you given up fortune-telling?" he asked laughingly.

"Misfortune visits those who prophesy and those who ask," replied the gypsy woman. "Let the gentleman be on his guard against all that barks and scratches, for there is mischief in store for him from dogs and cats."

Ilse and the Professor laughed. Meanwhile the eyes of the gypsy woman peered restlessly into the bushes.

"We cannot tell fortunes," she continued. "We have no power over the future. And we make mistakes, like others. But we see much, my beautiful lady. And though you do not desire it, yet will I tell it you. The gentleman near you seeks a treasure, and he will find it. But he must take care lest he lose it. And you, proud lady, will be dear to a man that wears a crown, and you shall have the choice to become a queen. The choice and the torment," she added in a lower tone, and her eyes again wandered unquietly about.

"Away with you," cried Ilse, indignantly; "such gossip does not agree with your professions."

"We know nothing," murmured the gypsy woman humbly, grasping the talisman at her neck. "We have only our thoughts, and our thoughts are idle or true, according to a more powerful will. Farewell, my pretty lady," she cried out impressively, and strode with her companion into the darkness.

"How proudly she walks away," exclaimed the Doctor. "I have much respect for the clever woman. She would not tell fortunes, but she could not help recommending herself by a bit of secret knowledge."

"She has long ago learnt all about us from the laborers," replied Ilse, laughing.

"Where have they pitched their camp?" asked the Doctor, with curiosity.

"Probably beyond the village," answered Ilse. "You may see their fires in the valley. These strangers do not like people to come near their camp and see what they have for supper."

They descended slowly into the valley and remained standing on the border of the brook, not far from the garden. All around them the darkness of the evening lay on bush and meadow. The old house stood out on the rock, gloomy under the twilight gray of the heavens. At their feet the water murmured and the leaves of the trees were agitated by the night wind. Silently did the three look upon the vanishing shadows of the landscape. The valley alongside the village lay invisible in the deep gloom of the night. Not one lighted window was to be seen.

"They have disappeared silently like the bats, which are even now flying through the air," said the Doctor.

But the others did not answer. They were no longer thinking of the gypsies.

Then through the still evening a low moan was heard. Ilse started and listened. Again the same weak tone.

"The children!" cried Ilse, in dismay, and rushed toward the hedge which divided the meadow from the orchard. Much alarmed she shook the closed gate, then broke through the hedge, and sprang like a lioness past the espaliers. The friends hastened after her, but could not overtake her. A bright light shone among the trees before her and something moved as she flew on. Two men rose from the ground; one encountered her, but Ilse threw back the arm which was raised to strike her, so that the man reeled and fell back over the weeping children who lay on the grass. Felix, who was behind Ilse, sprang forward and seized the man, while the Doctor the next moment struggled with another, who glided like an eel from under his hands and disappeared in the darkness. Meanwhile the first robber struck at the arm of the Professor with his knife, wrenched himself away from the hand which held him, and in the next moment broke through the hedge. One heard the crackling of the branches, and then all was quiet again.

"They live!" cried Ilse, kneeling on the ground, with panting breath, and embracing the little ones, who now uttered piteous cries. It was Riekchen, in her night-dress, and Franz, also nearly stripped. The children had escaped from the eyes of Mademoiselle and the protection of the bedroom, and slipped into the garden, to see the fire of the gypsies, of which they had heard their sister speak. They had fallen into the hands of some of the fellows belonging to the band, who were looking out for something to steal, and had been robbed of their clothes.

Ilse took the screaming children in her arms, and in vain did the friends try to relieve her of the burden. Silently she hastened with them into the house, rushed into the room, and, still holding them fast, knelt down by them before the sofa, and the friends heard her suppressed sobs. But it was only for a few moments that she lost her self-control. She rose, and looked at the servants, who thronged terrified into the room.

"No harm has happened to the children," she exclaimed. "Go where you have to keep watch and send one of the overseers to me."

The Inspector immediately came.

"A robbery has been committed on our estate," said Ilse, "and those who perpetrated it should be handed over to the law. I request you to seize their camp."

"Their fire is in the ravine behind the village," Replied the Inspector; "one may see the flame and smoke from the upper story. But, Miss Ilse-I say it unwillingly-would it not be more prudent to let the rogues escape? A large portion of the harvest still lies in sheaves; they may set it on fire in the night, out of revenge, or perhaps venture something still worse, in order to free their people."

"No," exclaimed Ilse; "do not hesitate-do not delay. Whether the vagabonds injure us or not will be decided by a higher will. We must do our duty. The crime demands punishment, and the master of this estate is in the position of guardian of the law."

"Let us be quick," said the Professor; "we will accompany you."

"Well, so be it," replied the Inspector, after consideration; "the farm bailiff shall remain here and we others will seek the band at the fire."

He hastened out. The Doctor seized a knobbed stick that was in the corner of the room. "That will suffice for me," he said, laughing, to his friend. "I consider myself bound to show some forbearance toward these thievish associates of my studies, who have not quite forgotten their old tongue." As he was on the point of leaving the room he stopped: "But you must remain behind, for you are bleeding."

Some drops of blood fell from the sleeve of the Professor.

The countenance of the maiden became white as the door against which she leant. "For our sake," she murmured faintly. Suddenly she hastened up to the Professor and bent down to kiss his hand. Felix restrained her.

"It is not worth speaking of Miss Ilse," he exclaimed. "I can move my arm."

The Doctor compelled him to take off his coat and Ilse flew for a bandage.

Fritz examined the wound with the composure of an old duellist. "It is a slight prick in the muscles of the under part of the arm," he said, comforting Ilse; "a little sticking-plaster will be sufficient."

The Professor put on his coat again and seized his hat. "Let us start," he said.

"Oh, no; remain with us," begged Ilse hastening after him.

The Professor looked at her anxious countenance, shook her heartily by the hand and left the room with his friend.

The hasty tread of the men had died away. Ilse went alone through all the rooms in the house. Doors and windows were closed. Hans watched at the door opening into the court-yard, his father's sword in his hand. And the housemaids overlooked the court-yard and garden from the upper floor. Ilse entered the nursery, where the two little ones, surrounded by Mademoiselle and their brothers and sisters, were sitting in their beds and struggling between their last tears and their sleep. Ilse kissed

the tired little ones, laid them down on their pillows, then she hastened out into the yard and listened, now in the direction in which the band lay, now on the other side, where the clatter of horses' hoofs might announce the arrival of her father. All was quiet. The maids from above called to her that the fire of the gypsies was extinguished, and she again hastened up and down, listening anxiously and looking up to the starry heaven.

What a day! A few hours before raised above the cares of earth, and now by a hostile hand dragged back into terror and anxiety! Was this to be a foreboding of her future life? Were the golden doors only opened to be closed again discordantly and a poor soul to be thrown back upon hopeless aspirations? The deceiver had prophesied of one who might wear a crown. Yes, in the realm in which he ruled as king there was a blessed serenity and happy peace. Ah, if it might be permitted to compare the joys of earth with those of heaven, such learning and power of thought gave a foretaste of eternal glory. For thus did the spirits of those who had here been good and wise soar, surrounded by light, in pure clearness of vision, and speak smilingly and happily to one another of all that had been upon earth; the most secret things would be revealed to them, and all that was most deeply veiled become apparent, and they would know that all the pains and sorrows of earth proceeded from eternal goodness and wisdom. And he who here trod this earth, a serene heaven in his heart, he had been wounded in the arm by a wandering vagabond for her sake; and from love for her he had again gone out into the fearful night, and she was troubled with endless anguish on his account. "Protect him, all-merciful God," she prayed, "and help me out of this darkness; give me strength, and enlighten my mind that I may become worthy of the man who beholds Thy countenance in past times, and among people that have passed away."

At last she heard the quick trot, and then the snorting of an impatient horse at the closed door. "Father!" she cried out, hastily drawing back the bolt, and flying into his arms, as he dismounted. The Proprietor was much perplexed as he listened to her rapid report. He threw his horse's bridle to his son, and hastened to the nursery to embrace his little ones, who at the sight of their father remembered their misfortunes, and began to weep and lament.

When the Proprietor entered the farmyard, the farming people were drawn near the house, and the Inspector stated "that no one was to be seen near the fire or in the neighborhood. There was not a trace near the fire of their having encamped there. It had been lighted to mislead. Theft had been their only object here. The greater part of the band had left early in the evening. They are lying concealed somewhere in the woods, and when the sun rises they will be far beyond the frontier. I know the rascals of old."

"He is right," said the Proprietor to the friends, "and I think we have nothing more to fear. Yet we must be very watchful to-night. A poor father thanks you," he continued, with emotion. "The last day you have passed with us, Doctor, has been unpleasantly eventful, which is not usual with us."

"I must say I depart in anxiety about what I leave behind me," replied the Doctor, half jesting, half serious. "Just fancy that now the lost children of Asia are sneaking about these walls!"

"I hope we are rid of the rascals," continued the Proprietor, turning to his daughter; "but you may count upon a different visit soon; our sovereign will be here a few weeks hence. I have been called away only to hear gossip about his visit, and to learn that it is not yet decided where his Serene Highness will breakfast before the hunt. I know what that means. The same thing happened fifteen years ago. There is no help for it; he cannot remain at the Dragon at Rossau. But this visit will not cause us any very serious inconvenience. Let us now wish each other good night and sleep in peace."

Both friends entered their bedroom thoughtfully. The Professor stood at the window, and listened to the tread of the watchmen, who paced around the yard within and without, to the chirruping of the crickets, and to the broken sounds which reached the ear from the slumbering fields. He heard a noise near him, and looked into the countenance of his faithful friend, who in his excitement had clasped his hands.

"She is religious," began Fritz, doubtfully. "Are we not so also?" answered the Professor, drawing himself up to his full height.

"She is as far removed from the tenor of your mind as the holy Saint Elizabeth."

"She has sense," replied the Professor.

"She is firm and self-confident in her own circle, but she will never be at ease in your world."

"She has aptness here-she will have it everywhere."

"You blind yourself," cried Fritz, in despair; "will you disturb the peace of your life by a discord, the issue of which you cannot foresee? Will you demand of her the great change which she must undergo from being a thorough housekeeper to becoming the confidant of your profound investigations? Will you deprive her of the secure self-dependence of an active life and bring into her future, struggle, uncertainty, and doubt? If you will not think of your own peace, it is your duty to show consideration for her life."

The Professor leaned his hot head against the window. At last he began:

"But we are the servants and proclaimers of truth; and while we practice this duty towards every one who will hear us, is it not right and a duty to do it where we love?"

"Do not deceive yourself," answered Fritz. "You, the man of refined feeling, who so willingly recognize in every life the right to what befits it-you would be the last to disturb the harmony of her being, if you did not desire to possess her. What impels you is not a feeling of duty, but passion."

"What I do not demand of a stranger, it behooves me to fulfil in the woman with whom I unite myself for life. And must not every woman that comes to share our life experience a similar change? How high do you place the knowledge of the women in the city who come into our circle?"

"What they know is, as a rule, more unreliable than is good for them or for us," replied Fritz; "but from their youth they are accustomed to view the learning that interests men, with sympathy. The best results of intellectual work are so easily accessible to them that everywhere they find common ground on which they can meet. But here, however charming and admirable this life may appear to our eyes, it is attractive just because it is so strange and different from ours."

"You exaggerate, you distort," cried the Professor. "I have felt deeply in the time that we have passed here how great are the rights that a noble passion has over one's life. This we have forgotten over our books. Who can tell what it is that makes two human beings so love one another, that they cannot part? It is not only pleasure in the existence of the other, nor the necessity of making one's own being complete, nor feeling and fancy alone, which joins the object of our love-although heretofore a stranger-so intimately to us. Is it necessary that the wife should only be the finer reed, which always sounds the same notes that the husband plays-only an octave higher? Speech is incapable of expressing the joy and exultation that I feel when near her; and I can only tell you, my friend, that it is something good and great, and it demands its place in my life. What you now express are only the doubts of cold reason, which is an enemy to all that is in process of becoming, and continues to raise its pretensions until it is subdued by accomplished realities."

"It is not alone reason," replied Fritz, offended. "I did not deserve that you should so misconstrue what I have said. If it was presumptuous in me to speak to you concerning feelings which you now consider sacred, I must say in excuse, that I only assume the right which your friendship has hitherto granted me. I must do my duty to you before I leave you here. If I cannot convince you, try to forget this conversation. I shall never touch upon this theme again."

He left the Professor standing at the window, and went to his bed. He softly took off his boots, threw himself upon the bed, and turned his face to the wall. After a short time he felt his hand seized, the Professor was sitting by his bed clasping his friend's hand without saying a word. At last Fritz withdrew his hand with a hearty pressure and again turned to the wall.

He rose in the early dawn, gently approached the slumbering Professor, and then quietly left the room. The Proprietor awaited him in the sitting-room; the carriage came; there was a short friendly parting, and Fritz drove away, leaving his friend alone among the crickets of the field and the ears of

corn, whose heavy heads rose and fell like the waves of the sea under the morning breeze, the same this year as they had done thousands and thousands of years before.

The Doctor looked back at the rock on which the old house stood, on the terraces beneath, with the churchyard and wooden church, and on the forest which surrounded the foot of the hill; and all the past and the present of this dangerous place rose distinctly before him. Its ancient character of Saxon times had altered little; and he looked on the rock and the beautiful Ilse of Bielstein, as they would have been in the days of yore. Then the rock would have been consecrated to a heathen god. At that time there would have been a tower standing on it. And Ilse would have dwelt there, with her golden hair, in a white linen dress with a garment of otter skin over it. She would have been priestess and prophetess of a wild Saxon race. Where the church stood would have been the sacrificial altar, from which the blood of prisoners of war would have trickled down into the valley.

Again, later, a Christian Saxon chief would have built his log-house there, and again the same Ilse would have sat between the wooden posts in the raised apartment of the women, using her spindle, or pouring black mead into the goblets of the men.

Again, centuries later it would have been a walled castle, with stone mullions to the windows, and a watch-turret erected on the rock; it had become a nest for predatory barons, and Ilse of Bielstein again dwelt there, in a velvet hood which her father had robbed from a merchant on the king's highway. And when the house was assaulted by enemies. Ilse stood among the men on the wall and drew the great crossbow, like a knight's squire.

Again, hundreds of years later, she sat in the hunting-lodge of a prince, with her father, an old warrior of Swedish times. Than she had become pious, and, like a city dame, she cooked jams and preserves, and went down to the pastor to the conventicle. She would not have worn flowers, and sought to know what husband Heaven destined for her by putting her finger at hazard on a passage in the Bible.

And now his friend had met this same Saxon child, tall and strong in body and soul, but still a child of the middle ages, with a placid expression in her beautiful countenance which only changed when the heart was excited by any sudden passion; a mind as if half asleep, and of a nature so child-like and pliant that it was sometimes impossible to know whether she was wise or simple. In her character there still remained something of all those Ilses of the two thousand years that had passed away-a mixture of Sibyl, mead-dispenser, knight's daughter, and pietist. She was of the old German type and the old German beauty, but that she should suddenly become the wife of a Professor, that appeared to the troubled Doctor too much against all the laws of quiet historical development.

CHAPTER X.
THE WOOING

A few hours after his friend had left the estate, the Professor entered the study of the Proprietor, who exclaimed, looking up from his work: "The gypsies have disappeared, and with them your friend. We are all sorry that the Doctor could not remain longer."

"With you lies the decision whether I too shall be permitted to tarry longer here," rejoined the Professor, with such deep earnestness that the host arose, and looked inquiringly at his guest. "I come to ask of you a great boon," continued the Professor, "and I must depart from here if you refuse it me."

"Speak out. Professor," replied he.

"It is impossible for us to continue longer in the open relations of host and guest. For I now seek to win the love of your daughter Ilse."

The Proprietor started, and the hand of the strong man grasped the table.

"I know what I ask of you," cried the Scholar, in an outburst of passion. "I know that I claim the highest and dearest treasure you can give. I know that I shall make your life thereby the poorer. For I shall take from your side what has been your joy, support, and pride."

"And yet," murmured the Proprietor gloomily, "you spare me the trouble of saying that!"

"I fear that at this moment you look upon me as an intruder upon the peace of your home," continued the Professor; "but though it may be difficult for you to be indulgent towards me, you ought to know all. I first saw her in the church, and her religious fervor impressed me powerfully. I have lived in the house with her, and felt more every hour how beautiful and lovable she is. The influence she exercises over me is irresistible. The passion with which she has inspired me has become so great, that the thought of being separated from her fills me with dismay. I long to be united to her and to make her my wife."

Thus spoke the Scholar, as ingenuously as a child.

"And to what extent have you shown your feelings to my daughter?" asked the father.

"I have twice in an outburst of emotion touched her hand," answered the Professor.

"Have you ever spoken to her of your love?"

"If I had I should not stand before you now as I do," rejoined the Professor. "I am entirely unknown to you, and was brought here by peculiar circumstances; and I am not in the happy position of a wooer who can appeal to a long acquaintance. You have shown me unusual hospitality, and I am in duty bound not to abuse your confidence. I will not, unbeknown to you, endeavor to win a heart that is so closely bound up in your life."

The father inclined his head assentingly. "And have you the assurance of winning her love?"

"I am no child and can see that she is warmly-attached to me. But of the depth and duration of the feelings of a young girl neither of us can judge. At times I have had the happy conviction that she cherished a tender passion for me, but it is just the unembarrassed innocence of her feelings that makes me uncertain; and I must confess to you that I know it is possible for those feelings to pass away."

The father looked at this man who thus endeavored to judge impartially, but whose whole frame was trembling. "It is, sir, my duty to yield to the wishes of my child's heart, if they are powerful enough to induce her to leave her home for that of another man-provided that I myself have not the conviction that it would be detrimental to her happiness. Your acquaintance with my daughter has been so short that I do not feel myself in the difficult position of having to give my consent, or to make my daughter unhappy, and your confession makes it possible for me to prevent what would, perhaps, in many respects, be unwelcome to me. Yes, even now you are a stranger to me, and when I invited you to stay with us I did something that may have an unfortunate sequel for me and mine."

As the Proprietor spoke thus in the excitement of the moment, his eyes fell upon the arm which had bled yesterday, and then on the manly features of the pale countenance before him. He broke off his speech, and laying his hand on the shoulder of the other exclaimed: – "No, that is not the sentiment of my heart, and I ought not to answer you thus."

He paced up and down the room endeavoring to find composure.

"But you must listen to a word of confidence, and regard what I say as not the promptings of importunacy," he continued, more tranquilly. "I know well that I have not brought up my daughter for myself, and that I must at some time accustom myself to do without her. But our acquaintance is too short to judge whether my child would find peace or happiness if she were united to you. When I tell you that I honor you and take pleasure in your society, that admission does not affect the question I have to solve. If you were a country gentleman like me, I should listen to your communications with a lighter heart, for during the time of your stay here I should have been able to form a definite opinion of your qualifications. The difference of our vocations makes it not only difficult for me to judge of you, but also dangerous for the future of my child. If a father wishes his daughter to marry a man who pursues an occupation similar to his own, he is justified in so doing in every sphere of life, and more especially is it so with a country gentleman of my stamp; for the qualifications of our children consist partly in this, that they grow up as the helpmeets of their parents. What Ilse has learnt in my house gives me the assurance that, as the wife of a country gentleman, she would fill her place perfectly; nay, she might supply the deficiencies of her husband, and that would secure her a comfortable life, even though her husband did not possess all that was to be desired. As the wife of a Professor, she will have little use for what she knows, and she will feel unhappy at not having learnt many other things."

"I admit that she will be deprived of much; I lay little stress on what you call her deficiencies," said the Professor. "I request you to trust this matter to me and the future."

"Then, Professor, I will answer you as candidly as you have spoken to me. I must not decline your proposal hastily. I will not oppose what may perhaps be for the happiness of my daughter. Yet I cannot, with the imperfect knowledge which I have of your position, assent to it. And I am at this moment in the awkward position of not knowing how I can obtain this knowledge."

"I can well understand how unsatisfactory to you must be any opinion concerning me which you may gather from strangers. Yet you will have to be content to do so," continued the Professor, with dignity.

The father assented silently.

"First," continued the Professor, "I beg to inform you concerning my pecuniary circumstances."

He mentioned his income, gave a faithful account of the sources from which he derived it, and laid a written statement on the writing-table.

"My legal adviser, who bears a high repute in the University, will give you any confirmation you may wish of these details. With respect to my capacity as teacher and my position at the University, I must refer you to the judgment of my colleagues and the opinion which is held concerning it in the city."

The Proprietor looked at the statement.

"Even the significance of these sums as regards your position is not quite clear to me. Having no acquaintance in your town, I have no facilities for obtaining further information concerning you. But, Professor, I will without delay endeavor to obtain all the information I can. I will start for the city of your residence to-morrow."

"How I thank you!" exclaimed the Professor, grasping his hand.

"Not yet," said the Proprietor, withdrawing it.

"I will, of course, if you like, accompany you," continued the Professor.

"I do not wish that," replied the Proprietor. "You need only write letters of introduction for me to your acquaintances. For the rest I must rely upon my own inquiries and on chance. But, Professor, this journey will only confirm your statements, of the truth of which I am already convinced. I may

obtain the judgment of others concerning you, which will no doubt accord with mine. But let us suppose that the information is satisfactory to me, what will be the consequence?"

"That you will permit me to prolong my stay in your house," said the Professor; "that you will trustingly permit me to pay my addresses to your daughter; and that you will give your consent to our marriage as soon as I am certain of your daughter's affection."

"Such preliminaries to wooing are uncommon," said the father, with a saddened smile; "but they are not unwelcome to a farmer. We are accustomed to see fruits ripen slowly. Thus, Professor, after my journey we shall all three retain freedom of choice and a final decision. This conversation-shall it remain a secret?"

"I entreat you, yes," said the Professor.

Again a slight smile flitted over the grave countenance of the host.

"In order to make so sudden a journey less surprising you had better remain here. But, during my absence, refrain from any increase of intimacy with my daughter. You see what great confidence I place in you."

Thus the Professor had compelled his host to become the confidant of his love. It was a delightful compact between passion and conscience that the scholar had entered into, and yet there was an error in this arrangement. The agreement, which he had effected with eager spirit and beating heart, turned out a little different from the manner in which he had represented it to himself and to the father; for, between the three individuals who were now to enter upon this high-minded method of wooing, all easy intercourse had suddenly vanished. When Ilse, beaming with happiness, met the gentlemen on the morning of the eventful conversation, she found her heaven obscured and overshadowed with dark clouds. The Professor was uneasy and gloomy. He worked almost the whole day in his room, and when the little ones in the evening begged him to tell them some stories, he declined, took hold of the head of the little sister with both hands, kissed her forehead and laid his own head upon it as if he wished the child to support him. The words that he addressed to Ilse were few and constrained, and yet his eyes were fixed incessantly upon her, but inquiringly and doubtingly; and Ilse was surprised also at her father, who appeared absent-minded and sorrowful. A secret had arisen between her father and herself that deeply absorbed him; nay, even between the two men matters were not as they had been. Her father, indeed, spoke sometimes in a low voice to the friend, but she observed a constraint in both when they talked on indifferent subjects.

Then the next morning there was the secret journey of the father, which in few words he described as on unimportant business. Had everything changed about her since that eventful evening? Her heart beat anxiously. A sense of insecurity came over her-the fear of something direful that was to befall her. Sorrowfully she withdrew to her room, where she struggled with bitter thoughts and avoided being alone with the man she loved.

Of course the change became at once perceptible to the Professor, and it tortured the sensitive man. Did she wish to repel him in order not to abandon her father? Had that been only pleased astonishment which he had taken for affection of the heart? These anxieties made his demeanor constrained and unequal, and the change in his frame of mind reacted in turn upon Ilse.

She had joyfully opened the flower-bud of her soul to the rising light, but a drop of morning dew had fallen into it and the tender petals had closed again under the burden.

Ilse had acted as doctress and nurse to all who were ill or wounded on the estate. She had succeeded her mother in this honorable office; her fame in the district was considerable, and it was not an unnecessary accomplishment, for Rossau did not possess even one regular practitioner. Ilse knew how to apply her simple remedies admirably; even her father and the Inspectors submitted themselves obediently to her care. She had become so accustomed to the vocation of a Sister of Charity that it did not shock her maidenly feelings to sit by the sick-bed of a working man and she looked without prudery at a wound which had been caused by the kick of a horse or the cut of a scythe. Now the loved one was near her with his wound, not even keeping his arm in a sling, and she was fearful

lest the injury should become greater. How glad she would have been to see the place and to have bandaged it herself! – and in the morning, at breakfast, she entreated him, pointing to his arm: "Will you not, for our sakes, do something for it?"

The Professor, embarrassed, drew his arm back and replied, "It is too insignificant."

She felt hurt and remained silent; but when he went to his room her anxiety became overpowering. She sent the charwoman, who was her trusty assistant in this art, with a commission to him, and enjoined her to enter with an air of decision and, overcoming any opposition of the gentleman, to examine the arm and report to her. When the honest woman said that she was sent by the young lady and that she must insist upon seeing the wound, the Professor, though hesitatingly, consented to show his arm. But when the messenger conveyed a doubtful report, and Ilse, who had been pacing restlessly up and down before the door, again ordered cold poultices through her deputy, the Professor would not apply them. He had good reason; for however painfully he felt the constraint that was imposed upon him in his intercourse with Ilse, yet he felt it would be insupportable entirely to lose sight of her and sit alone in his room with a basin of water. His rejection of her good counsel, however, grieved Ilse still more; for she feared the consequences, and, besides, it pained her that he would not accede to her wishes. When, afterwards, she learnt that he had secretly sent to Rossau for a surgeon, tears came into her eyes, for she considered it as a slight. She knew the pernicious remedies of the drunken quack and she was sure, that evil would result from it. She struggled with herself until evening; at last, anxiety for her beloved overcame all considerations, and when he was sitting with the children in the arbor, she, with anguish of heart and downcast eyes, thus entreated him: "This stranger will occasion you greater pain. I pray you, let me see the wound."

The Professor, alarmed at this prospect which threatened to upset all the self-control which he had attained by laborious struggling, answered, as Ilse fancied, in a harsh tone-but, in truth, he was only a little hoarse through inward emotion-"I thank you, but I cannot allow that."

Ilse then caught hold of her brother and sister who had been in the hands of the gypsies, placed them before him, and exclaimed eagerly: "Do you beseech him, if he will not listen to me."

This little scene was so moving to the Professor, and Ilse looked, in her excitement, so irresistibly lovely, that his composure was overpowered; and in order to remain faithful to her father, he rose and went rapidly out of the garden.

Ilse pressed her hands convulsively together and gazed wildly before her. All had been a dream; the hope she had entertained in a happy hour that he loved her had been a delusion. She had revealed her heart to him, and her warm feelings had appeared to him as the bold forwardness of a stranger. She was in his eyes an awkward country girl, deficient in the refined tact of the city, who had got something into her foolish head because he had sometimes spoken to her kindly. She rushed into her room. There she sank down before her couch and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs.

She was not visible for the rest of the evening. The following day she met the loved one proudly and coldly, said no more than was necessary and struggled secretly with tears and endless sorrow.

All had been arranged for a refined and tender wooing. But when two human beings love one another they ought to tell each other so, frankly and simply, without any previous arrangement, and, indeed-without reserve.

The father had started on his journey. He gave as an excuse some business that he meant to transact on the road. The day following his massive form and anxious countenance might be seen in the streets of the University town. Gabriel was much astonished when the gigantic man, taller than his old friend the sergeant-major of the cuirassiers, rang at the door and brought a letter from his master, in which Gabriel was instructed to place himself and the lodging at the disposal of the gentleman. The stranger walked through the rooms, sat down at the Professor's writing-table and began a cross-questioning conversation with Gabriel, the tenor of which the servant could not understand. The stranger also greeted Mr. Hummel, then went to the University, stopped the students in the street and made inquiries of them; had a conference with the lawyer; visited a merchant with whom he had

had dealings in corn; was conducted by Gabriel to the Professor's tailor, there to order a coat, and Gabriel had to wait long at the door before the gossiping tailor would let the stranger go. He also went to Mr. Hahn to buy a straw hat; and in the evening the tall figure might be seen uncomfortably bent under the Chinese temple, conversing with Mr. Hahn, over a flask of wine. It was a poor father anxiously seeking from indifferent people intelligence which should determine whether he should give his beloved child into the arms of a stranger. What he learnt was even more favorable than he expected. He now discovered what Mrs. Rollmaus had long known, that he whom he had received into his home was, according to the opinion of others, no common man.

When, on returning home, the evening of the following day, he reached the first houses of Rossau, he saw a figure hastening towards him. It was the Professor, who, in impatient expectation, had come to meet him and now hastened up to the carriage with disturbed countenance. The Proprietor sprang from his seat and said gently to the Professor:

"Remain with us, and may Heaven give you every blessing."

As the two men walked up the foot-path together, the Proprietor continued, with a sudden flash of good humor:

"You have compelled me, dear Professor, to act as a spy about your dwelling-place. I have learned that you lead a quiet life, and that you pay your bills punctually. Your servant speaks reverentially of you, and you stand high in the opinion of your neighbors. In the city you are spoken of as a distinguished man, and what you have said of yourself is in all respects confirmed. Your lodgings are very handsome, the kitchen is too small, and your storeroom is smaller than one of our cupboards. From your windows you have at least some view of the country."

Beyond this not a word was spoken concerning the object of the journey, but the Professor listened hopefully to the other observations of the Proprietor, how opulent were the citizens, and how brilliant the shops, also of the height of the houses in the market-place, the throngs of people in the streets, and of the pigeons, which, according to old custom, were kept by the town council, and boldly hopped about like officials among the carriages and passing human beings.

It was early morning, and again the first rays of the sun warmed the earth. After a sleepless night, Ilse hastened through the garden to the little bath-house that her father had built among the reeds and bushes. There she bathed her white limbs in the water, dressed herself quickly and ascended the path which passed by the grotto to the top of the hill, seeking the rays of the sun. As she knew that the cool night air still lay in the lower ground, she climbed still higher, where the hill sloped steeply towards the grotto down into the valley. There, on the declivity, among the copse, she seated herself, far from every human eye, drying her hair in the sun's rays and arranging her morning attire.

She gazed upon her father's house where she supposed the friend still lay slumbering, and looked down before her on the stone roof of the grotto, and on the large tuft of the willow rose, with the white wool of its seed bursting from the pod. She supported her head on her hand, and thought of the evening that had past. How little he had spoken, and her father had scarcely mentioned his journey. But whatever anxious cares passed through her mind, her spirits had been refreshed by the sparkling water, and now the morning cast its mild light over her heart.

There sat the child of the house. She wrung the water out of her hair and rested her white feet on the moss. Near her the bees hummed over the wild thyme, and one little worker circled threateningly round her feet. Ilse moved, and pushed one of her shoes; the shoe slid down, turned a somersault, and went bounding away over moss and stone, till it leapt by the willow rose and disappeared in the depth. She put on the fellow of the fugitive and hastened along the path to the grotto. Turning round the corner of the rock she stepped back startled, for in front of the grotto stood the Professor, thoughtfully contemplating the embroidered arabesques of the shoe. The sensitive man was scarcely less startled than Ilse at this sudden encounter. He also had been impelled to go out into the early morning, to the spot where first the heart of the maiden had revealed itself to him. He had seated himself on a stone at the entrance, and leaned his head against the rock in deep and sorrowful thought. Then he

heard a soft rustling, and, amidst gravel and sand, the little masterpiece of art fell close to his feet. He hastened forward, for he guessed at once to whom the bounding shoe belonged. There he saw the loved one standing before him, in a light morning dress, enveloped in her long blond hair, like a water fairy or a mountain nymph.

"It is my shoe," said Ilse, with embarrassment, concealing her foot.

"I know it," said the man of learning, equally embarrassed, pushing the shoe reverently to the border of her dress. The shoe was quickly slipped on, but the short glimpse of the white foot suddenly gave the Professor heroic courage, such as he had not had for the last few days.

"I will not move from this spot," he cried, resolutely.

Ilse drew back into the grotto and gathered her hair into the net she held in her hand. The Professor stood at the entrance of the sanctuary; near him hung the long shoots of the blackberry, the bees hummed over the wild thyme, and his heart beat. When Ilse, with blushing cheeks, stepped out of the grotto into the light of day, she heard her name uttered by a voice in deep emotion, she felt her hand pressed, an ardent look shot from those true eyes, sweet words fell from his lips, his arm clasped her, and she sank silently on his heart.

As the Professor himself on another occasion had explained, man sometimes forgets that his life rests on a compact with the overwhelming powers of nature, which, unawares, influence the little lords of the world. Thus similar unexpected powers now controlled the Professor and Ilse. I know not what agencies of nature sent the bees, or threw the shoe. Was it the elves in whom Ilse did not believe? Or was it one of the antique acquaintances of the Professor, the goat-footed Pan, who blew his reed-pipes in the grotto?

The wooing had begun in a scientific manner, but it had been brought to a conclusion with little wisdom and without any regard for formality.

CHAPTER XI.
SPITEHAHN

Raven-black night brooded over the hostile houses. The world looked like a great coal-pit in which the lights had been extinguished. The wind howled through the trees of the park. A rustling of leaves and crackling of branches was heard. Nothing was to be seen but a monstrous black curtain that concealed the neighboring woods and a black-tented roof which was spread over the houses. The streets of the city were empty. All who loved their beds had long been lying therein, and whoever possessed a nightcap had now pulled it over his ears. Every human sound was silenced; the striking of the tower-clock was interrupted by the stormy winds, and each tone was driven hither and thither, that no one could count the midnight hour. But around the house of Mr. Hummel the yelping dogs pursued their wild career in the courtyard, undaunted by storm or darkness; and when the wind blew like a bugle-horn between the houses, the pack dispelled sleep from men by their clamor and din.

"This night suits them well," thought Gabriel, in his room. "This is just the weather for them." At last he slept, and dreamt that the two dogs opened the door of his room, placed themselves on two chairs before his bed and alternately snapped their pocket pistols at him.

As he was lying in this unquiet sleep, there was a knock at his door.

"Get up, Gabriel!" called out the old porter from the factory; "an accident has happened."

"Through the dogs," exclaimed Gabriel, springing out of bed.

"Some one must have broken in," cried the man again, through the door, "the dogs are lying on the ground."

Gabriel, alarmed, put on his boots and hastened into the yard, which was dimly lighted by the dawn. There lay the two poor watch-dogs on the ground, with no other sign of life than helpless writhing. Gabriel ran to the warehouse, examined the door and windows, and then the house; every shutter was closed, and no sign of disturbance could be discovered. When he returned, Mr. Hummel was standing before the prostrate dogs.

"Gabriel, a dastardly deed has been perpetrated here. Something has been done to the dogs. Let them both lie there; an investigation must be made. I will send for the police."

"Indeed?" answered Gabriel; "compassion should come first, then the police. Perhaps something may yet be done for the poor brutes."

He took the two animals, carried them to the light, and examined their condition.

"The black one is done for," he said, compassionately. "The red one has still some life in him."

"Go to the veterinary surgeon, Klaus," exclaimed Mr. Hummel, "and ask him to do me the favor to get up at once; he shall be remunerated. This case must be put into the morning paper. I require satisfaction before the magistracy and town council. – Gabriel," he continued, in angry excitement, "the dogs of citizens are being murdered: it is the work of low malice, but I am not the man to put up with such assassins. They shall be made an example of, Gabriel."

Meanwhile Gabriel stroked the fur of the red dog, which rolled its eyes wildly under its shaggy brow and stretched out its paws piteously.

At last the veterinary surgeon came. He found the whole family assembled in the court. Mrs. Hummel, still in her night-dress, brought him a cup of coffee, while drinking which he sympathized with them, and then began the examination. The verdict of the expert pointed to poisoning. The dissection showed that a little dumpling with arsenic had been eaten, and, what vexed Mr. Hummel still more, there were glass splinters besides. For the red dog there was a doubtful prospect of recovery.

It was a gloomy morning for the Hummel family. Before breakfast Mr. Hummel sat down to his writing table and wrote out an advertisement for the daily paper, in which ten dollars reward was offered to any one who would make known the name of the malignant poisoner of his dog. The ten dollars were underlined with three dashes. Then he went to his window and looked savagely upon

the haunts of his opponent and on the Chinese temple which had been the occasion of this new disturbance. Finally he began to pace up and down the room, turning to his wife as he passed and muttering:

"I have not the slightest doubt about the matter-not the slightest doubt."

"I do not understand you," answered his wife, who on this trying morning was taking a second breakfast; "and I do not understand how you can be so positive in this matter. It is true, there is something about those people that has always been repugnant to us, and it may be a misfortune to have such neighbors. But you have no right to assume that they have poisoned the dogs. I cannot think that such an idea could have entered into the head of Mrs. Hahn. I admit that she is an ordinary woman. Moreover, the doctor says it was dumplings; which points to a woman as the guilty person. But when our red dog was caught running off with the snipe they were going to have for dinner, she sent me back the dog with her compliments, saying she thought it was not good behavior in him, as he had eaten three of the birds. That was civil, and I can find no murderous intention in it. And he surely does not look as if he would do anything to our dogs at midnight."

"He is a treacherous fellow," growled Mr. Hummel; "but you have always had your own opinion about those people. He has played the hypocrite toward me from the very first day, when he stood by his pile of bricks before these windows and turned his back upon me. I have always allowed myself to be persuaded by you women to treat him as a neighbor, with greetings and civil speeches; and I have always been silent when you have carried on your idle gossip with the woman over there."

"Our idle gossip, Henry," exclaimed the wife, setting down her coffee-cup with a clatter; "I must beg of you not to forget the respect that is due to me."

"Well, well, I meant no slight," Mr. Hummel hastened to add, hoping to allay the storm which he had inopportunely brought upon himself.

"What you meant, you, of course, know. I take it as I heard it. But it shows little feeling in you, Mr. Hummel, for the sake of a dead dog to treat your wife and daughter as idle gossips."

This disagreement added still more to the gloom and ill-humor of the morning, but did not in any way advance the discovery of the culprit. It was in vain that the mistress of the house, in order to divert her husband's suspicions from the Hahn family, raised many other conjectures, and, with Laura's help, tried to throw the blame on their own employés or the watchman, and that she at last suggested even the shop-porter over the way as the possible evil-doer. Alas! the reputation of the dogs was so dreadful that the Hummel family could more easily count the few people who did not wish evil to the dogs, than the many whose wish and interest it was to see the monsters at the bottom of Cocytus. The news ran like wildfire through the streets, a crowd gathered around the fruit-woman at the corner, and people spoke of the evil deed everywhere, pitilessly, hostilely, and maliciously. Even among those in the streets who tried to show outward signs of sympathy, the prevailing feeling was hardly concealed. It is true there were some sympathisers. First Mrs. Knips, the washerwoman, with voluble indignation; then even Knips the younger ventured pityingly into the neighborhood of the house-he was clerk in the hostile business, having gone over to the enemy, but never ceased to show respect to his former instructor on all occasions, and to pay unacceptable homage to Miss Laura. At last the comedian of the theatre, whom they generally invited on Sundays, came, and related many amusing stories. But even these few faithful adherents were suspected by some of the household. Gabriel distrusted the Knips family, while Laura detested the clerk, and the comedian, formerly a welcome guest, had, some evenings before, in passing by, inconsiderately expressed to a companion, that it would be a praiseworthy deed to remove these dogs from the stage of life. Now this unhappy suggestion was repeated to the mistress of the house, and it lay heavy on her heart. For fifteen years she had accepted this man's homage with pleasure, shown him much friendliness, and given him enthusiastic applause at the theatre, not to speak of the Sunday dinners and preserves. But now when the gentleman lowered his head sympathisingly and expressed his horror and indignation at the deed, his face, from the long habit of comic action, lengthened itself so hypocritically, that Mrs. Hummel

suddenly fancied she saw a devil grinning out of the features of the once esteemed man. Her sharp remarks about Judases frightened in turn the comedian, revealing to him the danger of losing his best house of entertainment, and the more dolorous he felt, the more equivocal became his expression.

During all these occurrences the Hahn family kept quiet in the background. They displayed no signs of undue pleasure, and no unnatural sympathy came from the silent walls. But at mid-day, when Mrs. Hummel went to refresh herself a little in the air, she met her neighbor; and Mrs. Hahn, who since the garden scene had felt herself in the wrong, stopped and expressed her regret in a friendly way that Mrs. Hummel had experienced such an unpleasant accident. But the hostile feeling and suspicion of her husband echoed in the answer. Mrs. Hummel spoke coldly, and both separated with a feeling of animosity.

Meanwhile Laura sat at her writing-table, and noted down in her private journal the events of the day, and with a light heart she concluded with these lines:

"They're dead and gone! Removed the curse of hate-
Erased the stain is from the book of hate."

This prophecy contained about as much truth as if, after the first skirmish of the siege of Troy, Cassandra had noted it down in Hector's album. It was confuted by the endless horrors of the future.

Spitehahn at all events was not gone; his life was saved. But the night's treachery had exercised a sorrowful influence on the creature, both body and soul. He had never been beautiful. But now his body was thin, his head swelled, and his shaggy coat bristly. The glass splinters which the skillful doctor had removed from his stomach seemed to have gotten somehow into his hairs, so that they started bristling from his body like a bottle-brush; his curly tail became bare, only at the end did there remain a tuft of hair, like a bent cork-screw with a cork at the end. He no longer wagged his tail; his yelping ceased; night and day he roved about silently; only occasionally a low, significant growl was heard. He came back to life, but all softer feelings were dead in him; he became averse to human beings, and fostered dark suspicions in his soul; all attachment and fidelity ceased; instead of which he evinced a lurking malice and general vindictiveness. Yet Mr. Hummel did not mind this change; the dog was the victim of unheard-of wickedness, which had been intended for the injury of himself, the proprietor of the house; and had he been ten times more hideous and savage to human beings, Mr. Hummel would still have made a pet of him. He stroked him, and did not take it amiss when the dog showed his gratitude by snapping at the fingers of his master.

Whilst the flames of just irritation still shot forth from this new firebrand of the family peace, Fritz returned from his vacation. His mother immediately related to him all the events of the last few weeks-the bell-ringing, the dogs, the new hostility.

"It was well that you were away. Were the beds at the inns comfortable? They are so careless nowadays of strangers. I hope that in the country, where they rear geese, people show more care. You must talk to your father about this new quarrel, and do what you can to restore peace."

Fritz listened silently to his mother's account, and said soothingly:

"You know it is not the first time. It will pass over."

This news did not contribute to increase the cheerfulness of the Doctor. Sadly he looked from his room on the neighboring house and the windows of his friend. In a short time a new household would be established there; might not then his friendship with the Professor be affected by the disturbances which of old existed between the two houses? He then began to arrange the notes that he had collected on his journey. But today the footprints of the grotto gave him an uncomfortable feeling, and the tales of the wild hunters made him think of Ilse's wise words, "It is all superstition." He put away his papers, seized his hat, and went out, meditating, and not exactly gaily disposed, into the park. When he saw Laura Hummel a few steps before him on the same path, he turned aside, in order not to meet any one from the hostile house.

Laura was carrying a little basket of fruit to her godmother. The old lady resided in her summer house in an adjacent village, and a shady footpath through the park led to it. It was lonely at this hour in the wood, and the birds alone saw how free from care was the smile that played around the little mouth of the agile girl, and how full of glee were the beautiful deep blue eyes that peered into the thicket. But although Laura seemed to hasten, she stopped frequently. First it occurred to her that the leaves of the copper beech would look well in her brown felt hat: she broke off a branch, took off her hat, and stuck the leaves on it; and in order to give herself the pleasure of looking at it, she held her hat in her hand and put a gauze handkerchief over her head for protection against the rays of the sun. She admired the chequered light thrown by the sun on the road. Then a squirrel ran across the path, scrambled quick as lightning up a tree and hid itself in the branches; Laura looked up and perceived its beautiful bushy tail through the foliage, and fancied herself on the top of the tree, in the midst of the foliage and fruit, swinging on a branch, then leaping from bough to bough, and finally taking a walk-high in the air, on the tops of the trees-over the fluttering leaves as though upon green hills.

When she came near the water that flowed on the other side of the path, she perceived that a large number of frogs, sitting in the sun on the bank, sprang into the water with great leaps, as if by word of command. She ran up to them and saw with astonishment that in the water, they had a different appearance; they were not at all so clumsy; they went along like little gentlemen with big stomachs and thick necks, but with long legs which struck out vigorously. Then when a large frog steered up to her and popped his head out of the water, she drew back and laughed at herself. Thus she passed through the wood, herself a butterfly, and at peace with all the world.

But her fate pursued her. Spitehahn, from his usual place on the stone steps, had watched her movements from under the wild hairs that hung over his head whisker-like, he kept her in view, got up at last and trotted silently behind her, undisturbed by the rays of the sun, the basket of fruit, or the red handkerchief of his young mistress. Between the town and the village the road ascended from the valley and its trees to a bare plain, on which the soldiery of the town sometimes manœuvred, and where in peaceful hours a shepherd pastured his flock. The path ran obliquely over the open plain to the village. Laura stopped on the height at times to admire the distant sheep and the brown shepherd, who looked very picturesque with his large hat and crook. She had already passed the flock when she heard a barking and threatening cry behind her; turning round she saw the peaceful community in wild uproar. The sheep scattered in all directions-some running away frightened, others huddled together in a ditch; the shepherd's dogs barked, and the shepherd and his boy ran with raised sticks around the disturbed flock. While Laura was looking astonished at the tumult, the shepherd and his boy rushed up to her, followed by two large dogs. She felt herself seized by a rough man's hand; she saw the angry face of the shepherd, and his stick was brandished close before her eyes.

"Your dog has dispersed my flock. I demand punishment and compensation."

Frightened and pale as death, Laura sought for her purse; she could scarcely find words to say, "I have no dog; let me go, good shepherd."

But the man shook her arm roughly. Two gigantic black dogs sprang upon her and snapped at her handkerchief.

"It is your dog; I know the red rascal," cried the shepherd.

This was quite true, for Spitehahn had also observed the flock of sheep and devised his dire plan. Suddenly, with a hoarse yell, he sprang on a sheep and bit it severely in the leg. Then followed the flight of the flock, rushing together in a heap-Spitehahn in the midst of them, barking, scratching and biting, the brute sped along a dry ditch to the left, and finally down the slope to the wood into the thickest copse. At length he trotted home in safety, showing his teeth, and leaving his young mistress trembling beneath the hand of the shepherd, who was still brandishing his stick over her.

"Let go of the young lady," called out the angry voice of a man. Fritz Hahn sprang forward, pushed back the arm of the shepherd, and caught Laura, fainting, in his arms.

The interposition of a third party drew from the shepherd new complaints, at the conclusion of which he again, in a flaming passion, endeavored to lay hold of the girl, and threatened to set his dogs at the Doctor. But Fritz, deeply roused, exclaimed, "Keep your dogs back, and behave yourself like a man, or I will have you punished. If the dog injured your flock, adequate compensation shall be made. I am ready to be security to you or to the owner of these sheep."

Thus he spoke, holding Laura firmly in his arms; her head lay upon his shoulders, and the red handkerchief hung over his waistcoat down to his breast. "Compose yourself, dear Miss," he said, with tender anxiety.

Laura raised her head and looked fearfully on the countenance which, excited with tenderness and sympathy, bent over her, and she perceived her situation with alarm. Fearful fate! He again, for the third time, the inevitable friend and preserver! She extricated herself from him, and said, in a faint voice, "I thank you, Doctor, I can walk alone now."

"No, I cannot leave you thus," cried Fritz, and again began to negotiate with the shepherd, who meanwhile had fetched the two victims of the murderous dog, and laid them down as proofs of the ill deed. Fritz put his hand into his pocket and handed the shepherd a part of the money promised as compensation, gave him his name, and settled a future meeting with the man, who, after the appearance of the money, became more calm.

"I pray you take my arm," he said, turning chivalrously to Laura.

"I cannot accept that," replied the girl, quite confused, and thinking of the existing hostility.

"It is only my duty as a man," said Fritz, soothingly. "You are too exhausted to go alone."

"Then I beg of you to take me to my godmother; she lives near here."

Fritz took the little basket from her, collected the fruit that had fallen out, and then conducted her to the village.

"I should not have been so much afraid of the man," said Laura, "but the black dogs were so fearful."

She took his arm hesitatingly; for now, when the fright had passed, she felt the painfulness of her situation, and was alas! conscience-smitten. For early in the day she had thought the travelling toilet of the Doctor, as she saw him return home, unendurable; but Fritz was not a man who could long be considered unendurable. He was now full of tender feelings and care for her, endeavored to spare her every roughness on the road, stretching out his foot in going along to put the little stones out of the way. He began an indifferent conversation about her godmother, which obliged her to talk, and brought other thoughts into her head. It happened besides, that he himself highly esteemed the lady in question. Indeed, she had once, when he was a schoolboy, given him a cherry-cake and he had in return composed a poem on her birthday. At the word poem Laura was astounded. In that house, too! Could they write poetry? But then the Doctor spoke very slightingly of the elevating creations of happier hours, and when she asked him:

"Have you really written poetry?"

He answered, laughingly, "Only for home use, like every one."

Then she felt much depressed by his cold disregard of the muse. There certainly was a difference between one style of verse and another; at Hahn's they only wrote about cherry-cakes. But immediately afterwards she blamed herself for her unbecoming thoughts towards her benefactor. So she turned in a friendly way to him and spoke of the pleasure she had found just before in watching the squirrels of the wood. She had once bought one of a boy in the streets and had set it free, and the little animal had twice sprung from the trees upon her shoulders; and she had at last run away with tears in her eyes, that it might remain in the woods. Now, when she saw a squirrel, it always appeared as if it belonged to her; and she undoubtedly deceived herself; but the squirrels seemed to be of the same opinion with regard to her. This story led to the remarkable discovery that the Doctor had had a similar experience with a small owl, and he imitated the way in which the owl nodded its

head when he brought in its food; and in doing so his spectacles looked so much like owl's eyes that Laura could not help laughing.

Conversing in this way they arrived at her godmother's house. Fritz relinquished Laura's arm and wished to take his leave. She remained standing on the threshold with her hand on the latch and said, in an embarrassed tone:

"Will you not come in, at least for a moment, as you know my godmother?"

"With pleasure," replied the Doctor.

Her godmother was sitting in her summer cottage, which was somewhat smaller, damper, and less pleasant than her lodging in the town. When the children of the hostile houses entered together-first Laura, still pale and solemn, behind her the Doctor with an equally serious countenance-the good lady was so astonished that she sat staring on the sofa and could only bring out the words:

"What do I see? Is it possible? You two children together!"

This exclamation dispelled the magic which for a moment had bound the young souls to each other. Laura went coldly up to her godmother and related how the Doctor had accidently come up at the time of her distress. But the Doctor explained that he had only wished to bring the young lady safely to her; then he inquired after the health of the old lady and took his leave.

While her godmother was applying restoratives and determining that Laura should return home another way under the care of her maid-servant, the Doctor went back with light steps to the wood. His frame of mind was entirely changed and a smile frequently passed over his countenance. The thought was constantly recurring to him how the girl had rested in his arms. He had felt her bosom against his; her hair had touched his cheeks and he had gazed on her white neck. The worthy youth blushed at the thought and hastened his steps. In one thing at least the Professor was not wrong-a woman is, after all, very different from the ideal that a man derives from the study of human life and the history of the world. It certainly seemed to the Doctor now that there was something very attractive in wavy locks, rosy cheeks and a beautiful form. He admitted that this discovery was not new, but he had not hitherto felt its value with such distinctness. It had been so touching when she recovered from her swoon, opened her eyes and withdrew herself bashfully from his arms. Also his having defended her so valiantly filled him with cheerful pride. He stopped on the field of battle and laughed out right heartily. Then he went along the same road by which Laura had come from the wood. He looked along the ground as if he could discover the traces of her little feet upon the gravel, and he enjoyed the brightness and warmth of the air, the alluring song of the birds, the fluttering of the dragon-flies, with as light a heart as his pretty neighbor had done shortly before. Then the recollection of his friend came across him. He thought, with satisfaction, of the agitations of the Professor's mind and the commotion which Thusnelda had brought into it. The result had had a droll effect upon the Professor. His friend had been very comical in the pathos of his rising passion. Such a firm, earnest being contrasted curiously with the whimsical attacks which fate makes on the life of earth-born creatures. When he came to the last bush in which rustled one of the little grasshoppers, whose chirping he had often heard in times of anxiety, he spoke out gaily, "Even these have their turn, first the sheep, then the grasshoppers." He began singing half aloud a certain old song in which the grasshoppers were asked to go away and no longer to burden his spirit. Thus he returned home from his walk in right cheerful frame of mind, like a man of the world.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.