КОЛЛЕКТИВ АВТОРОВ

TALES FROM THE GERMAN, COMPRISING SPECIMENS FROM THE MOST CELEBRATED AUTHORS

Коллектив авторов

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Содержание

Various
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INTRODUCTION

The object of the translators of the following tales was to present the English public with a collection, which should combine effectiveness with variety, and at the same time should contain specimens of the most celebrated writers of prose fiction whom Germany has produced. The names of the authors will, they think, be a sufficient guarantee that they have not failed in this last respect, and if the reader finds himself amused or interested by the series, they will have succeeded entirely.

It will be remembered that the collection is a collection of tales only, and that it was absolutely necessary, according to the plan of the book, that these tales should be numerous. Any thing like a lengthened novel was therefore excluded, as it would have exceeded the prescribed limits, or rendered impossible that variety which the translators considered an essential of their work. That short tales, from their very nature, cannot often

promote any very high purpose, and that amusement for a leisure hour is their principal purpose, the translators are perfectly aware, admitting that their collection, generally speaking, does not convey that amount of instruction in life and thought, which might be obtained from more elaborate works, such as, for example, the *Wilhelm Meister* of Göthe. At the same time they trust that Kleist's *Michael Koldhaas*, Zschokke's *Alamontade*, Schiller's *Criminal from Lost Honour*[1] and even Hauff's fanciful *Cold Heart*, will be acceptable to those who look for something beyond mere amusement, and that some readers will be found to appreciate the psychological truth and profundity of Hoffmann's tales beneath their fantastic exterior.

In their versions of the tales the translators have endeavoured, to the utmost of their power, to be correct, preferring even hardness of language to liberties with the original text. The initials in the table of contents will show who was the translator of each particular tale; but it must not be supposed that they worked so separately that the printer and the binder have alone connected the results of their labours. Every tale when finished by the translator was carefully revised by his colleague. In those instances alone have the translators deviated from the original, where they found passages and phrases that they conceived would not accord with English notions of propriety. That in such

[1] The fact that Schiller's "Ghost Seer" is so familiar in an English garb, that it is almost an English novel, is a sufficient reason that it does not appear in this collection. Almost the same may be said of the more celebrated romance of La Motte Fouqué.

instances they have softened or omitted, needs no apology.[2]

It has been suggested to the translators that a notice of the authors and the works themselves might, with advantage, be prefixed to the collection. With this suggestion they have complied, trusting that the limited space allowed will be a sufficient excuse for the very sketchy nature of the biographies, if indeed the following notices are worthy of that name.

Göthe and Schiller have attained that universal celebrity, that it would be mere impertinence to say any thing about their lives in a sketch like this. Those eminent promoters of German literature in this country, Mr. T. Carlyle and Sir E. B. Lytton, have done all they could to make the English public familiar with the life of Schiller, and a tolerably full notice of his literary progress will be found in No. LX. of the *Foreign Quarterly Review*. Those who can read German are recommended to the elaborate life of Schiller by Dr. Hoffmeister, which is a perfect treasury of information and criticism. The materials for a biography of Göthe lie scattered through a vast quantity or correspondence, reminiscences, conversations, and characteristics; but a biography, such as the greatness of the subject requires, is still a desideratum in German literature.

The *New Paris*, by Göthe, which appears in this collection, is

[2] This has been especially the case with "Libussa," which is often indelicate in the original. An oversight in the translation of that tale should, however, be corrected. The provincial word, "Imme," should be translated "Queen-bee," not "ant." Vide p. 14, line 5 from the bottom.

from that delightful autobiography, to which the poet has given the name of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. The circumstances under which it is told are sufficiently explained by the short introduction prefixed to it. Schiller's *Criminal from Lost Honour* was written during what is called the "second period" of his life, when after the completion of *Don Carlos* he had quitted dramatic writing for a time, and devoted himself to the study of philosophy and history. The facts of the story he had learned from his friend Abel at an early period. Hoffmeister's remarks on this story may be found interesting.

"This misguided man, Wolf," says Hoffmeister, "appears as a mournful sacrifice to the law, which, from this example, should learn mercy. The severity of law has, from a merely conventional offence, elicited a grievous crime, and him, who sinned from thoughtlessness, and was delivered to the care of justice, she has cast off as though he were absolutely worthless. The progress in crime, which is gradually forced upon the man by civil institutions, and his return to virtue, when vice has completed her lesson, are developed and painted to our eyes with extraordinary art. Every action is deduced from thoughts and motives; and these, again, are deduced from states of mind, which necessarily result from the reciprocal action which the soul of the man, and the circumstances by which he was surrounded, had upon each other. Everywhere do we find natural connexion; not a link in the chain is wanting. This psychological novel, like a tragedy, awakens in the reader not only pity, but terror. He feels that

in the situation of the unhappy man, he would not have been better himself. The writer fulfils his purpose of plucking us down from our proud security. Man is just as good or bad, we say to ourselves, as his external situation; out external situation is the fate of all of us; and we see in the history of a single individual a sketch of the common lot of man. Moreover, this history of the 'criminal' is so remarkable in point of style, that one always reads it with fresh interest. The language is extremely simple, clear, and natural, and there is not a trace of the wearisome, constantly occurring breaks, and the affected antitheses that marked Schiller's early style. Every thing shows that the author moved in a clear, free element. In some portions he has been eminently successful; as, for instance, in describing the poacher's state of mind, when he is about to point his gun, at his evil genius, Robert. If, after all our praise, we have one particular to blame, it is this circumstance, that the weakly and delicate 'host of the Sun,' who had not as yet distinguished himself in the trade of thieving, should have been unanimously chosen by the robbers for their leader, on his first entrance into their cave. Although he was well known to them as a good poacher, they might yet have reasonable doubts whether he was qualified to be their captain."

Before quitting Göthe and Schiller, it is as well to state that Göthe was born at Frankfort on the Maine, on the 28th of August, 1749, and died at Weimar on the 22nd of March, 1832; and that Schiller was born at Marbach, on the Neckar, on the 10th of November, 1759, and died at Weimar on the 9th of May,

1805.

Johann August Musäus, one of the most popular tale writers of Germany, was born at Jena, in 1735. His father was a justice there, and was soon afterwards removed to Eisenach, by an official appointment. Young Musäus was educated by a relation named Weissenborn, who held the situation of "General Superintendent" at Eisenach, and with whom he lived from the age of nine to that of nineteen. He studied theology for four years at Jena, and it is thought he might have succeeded as a pastor had not the peasants of Eisenach refused to accept him, because he had been convicted of the grievous crime of – dancing. In consequence of this check to his theological career, he turned his thoughts to literature, and made his first essay by a parody on Richardson's celebrated novel, called *Grandison the Second*, which first appeared in 1760. In 1763 he was made Pagenhofmeister (governor of the pages) at the court of Weimar, and some years afterwards professor at the Gymnasium of that place. A considerable period elapsed before he again appeared as an author, when he satirised Lavater in a novel called the *Physiognomical Travels*. This had an immense success, encouraged by which, he proceeded to collect materials for his *Popular Tales of the Germans*. This collection he made in a singular manner. Sometimes he would gather round him a crowd of old women with their spinning-wheels and listen to their gossip, sometimes he would hear the stories of children from the street. On one occasion, his wife, returning from a visit, was

surprised, as she opened the room-door, by a cloud of tobacco smoke, through which she at last discovered her husband sitting with an old soldier, who was telling him all sorts of tales. On the stories collected by him thus strangely, and afterwards narrated with great humour, though with occasional vulgarity, the fame of Musäus chiefly depends. They were written under the assumed name of Runkel, and were designed, according to the author's own statement, to put an end to the taste for sentimentality. He began a new series of tales called *Ostrich Feathers*, of which he only completed one volume. On the 28th of October, 1787, he died of a polypus in the heart, and a handsome monument was erected to him by an unknown hand. His *Popular Tales* were, at the request of his widow, re-edited after his death by the celebrated Wieland, and this is the edition now current. The story of *Libussa*, which is taken from the *Popular Tales* is founded on the Latin history of Bohemia, by Dubravius, and the work of Æneas Sylvius, *De Boliemorum gestis et origine*. The fables which are uttered by the personages will be found in Dubravius.

The name of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter is almost as well known here as that of Göthe and Schiller; but the eccentricity of his style, and the quantity of local allusions with which he abounds, will probably for ever prevent his works from being extensively read out of Germany. Jean Paul was born at Wimsiedel, in the Baireuth territory, in the early part of 1763, and died at Baireuth on the 14th of November, 1825. He first wrote under the signature of "Jean Paul" only, this he extended

to "J. P. F. Halsus," and it was to his *Quintus Fixlein* (1796), that he first affixed his real and entire name. In 1780 he went to Leipzig, but this he soon abandoned and resided for some time at Schwarzbach. He visited various cities where he was greatly respected, and received the title of "Legationsrath" from the Duke of Sachsen-Hildburghausen, with a pension, which was afterwards paid by the King of Bavaria. His favourite residence was, however, his native Baireuth. A complete edition of his works, which are very numerous, was published at Berlin in 21 vols., small octavo, in the year 1840, and another in 4 vols., royal octavo, has been published by Baudry of Paris. The short tale of the *Moon* will give the reader a slight notion – only a slight one – of Jean Paul's peculiarities. It is prefixed in the original to *Quintus Fixlein*. An interesting paper on Jean Paul will be found in Mr. Carlyle's admirable *Miscellanies*.

The fame of Ludwig Tieck as a writer of romances, and an enthusiastic admirer of all that belongs to the romantic period of literature, is almost as great in England as in Germany. In the history of the "romantic" school, Tieck takes a most prominent position, being one of the chief colleagues and most zealous partisans of the brothers Schlegel. He was born at Berlin on the 31st of May, 1773, and even at school displayed his talents for composition by the commencement of his *Abdallah*. He studied at Halle, Göttingen, and Erlangen, and read history and poetry, both ancient and modern, with great assiduity. In 1796, his novel, *William Lovell*, was published at Berlin. A

journey from Berlin to Jena made him acquainted with the Schlegels and Hardenberg (Novalis), and at Weimar he became intimate with Herder. His satirical dramas of *Blue Beard* and *Puss in Boots*, displayed an Aristophanic vein, and his works relating to art, began to attract general attention. These were *The Outpourings from the Heart of an Art-loving Cloister-brother* (Berlin, 1797), the *Fantasies of Art* (Hamburg, 1799), and *Franz Sternbald's Travels* (Berlin, 1798), in all of which his friend Wackenrode more or less took a part. Tieck cultivated his taste for the fine arts by a residence in Dresden, Munich, and Rome, and at Jena kept up his acquaintance with Schelling and the Schlegels. In the years 1799-1801, he published his translation of *Don Quixote*, and about the same period several works of imagination. In 1801-2 he resided at Dresden, and edited, with A. W. Schlegel, the *Musenalmanach*. For the diffusion of a taste for the middle-age literature of Germany, Tieck made an important contribution by his publication of a selection of the *Minnelieder* from the Swabian period, that is to say, the period of the German emperors during the dynasty of the Hohenstauffen family, with an elaborate preface, in which he called the attention of the Germans to their old poetry. In 1804 appeared his romantic drama of *The Emperor Octavian*, and in 1805 he published, in connexion with T. Schlegel, the works of his deceased friend Hardenberg (Novalis),[3] which may be classed among the most extraordinary phenomena of modern

[3] An admirable paper on Novalis is in Mr. Carlyle's *Miscellanies*.

literature. The preface to this edition is entirely by Tieck. A long pause now ensued in the midst of his literary productiveness, during which he visited Rome. In 1814 and 1816 appeared his *Old English Theatre*, consisting of translations from our early drama, and in the same year he published the work to which, more than to any other, he owes his celebrity in this country, his *Phantasus*. The entire work has never been translated, but the tales which are introduced into it, such as the *Blond Eckbert* and the *Trusty Eckart*, are generally known. Another contribution to the study of the old German literature he made by his edition of Ulrich von Lichtenstein's *Frauendienst* (service of ladies), a kind of romance, by a celebrated Minnesänger, and a collection of plays under the title of Old German Theatre. In 1818 he visited London, where he was received with great respect, and employed his time in making collections for the study of Shakspeare, in Schlegel's translation of whom he has taken an important part. Since 1821 he has chiefly been engaged with a series of novels, which are widely different from his former manner, and he is now (we believe) resident at Berlin. The tales from the *Phantasus* being already so generally known, one of a totally different kind has been given in this volume. The powerful tale of the *Klausenburg* is from Tieck's collected novels.

Heinrich von Kleist, from whom two tales have been taken, is another poet of the romantic school, and was born at Frankfort on the Oder, in 1777. He led an unsettled kind of life, residing successively at Paris, Dresden, and Berlin, and after the battle

of Jena, retired from the latter city to Königsberg, where he devoted himself to literary pursuits. Returning to Berlin during the French occupation of Prussia, he was taken prisoner, and though he was shortly afterwards released, this imprisonment seems to have had a fatal effect upon a temperament naturally morbid. In 1811, at Potsdam, he voluntarily terminated his own existence, and that of an invalid lady of his acquaintance. His works, which are somewhat numerous, consist of dramas and tales, and are all distinguished by a sort of rugged power. Of his plays, the most celebrated is the romantic drama, *Käthchen von Heilbronn*, and of his tales, the narrative of *Michael Kohlhaas*, contained in this collection. A complete edition of his works was published at Berlin, in 1821, by the indefatigable, Ludwig Tieck. The critical remarks which he has made on *Kohlhaas*, may be extracted with profit.

"*Michael Kohlhaas*," says Tieck, "is unquestionably the most remarkable of all Kleist's narratives, and if we see with what firmness he sketches the various forms, how faithfully the events and feelings are deduced from each other, with what steadiness the narrator advances, step by step, we are tempted to believe that this style is more suitable to the author, and that his talents might have shone forth more brilliantly here than in the drama. Here, as in his plays, we see, as in the form of a law-suit, the misfortune and the guilt of a remarkable man unfolded before his eyes. Few writers understand how to shake our hearts to the very depth, like Kleist, and this is precisely because he goes to work with so

steady a purpose, and consciously avoids all soft sentimentality. The insulted and injured Kohlhaas becomes unhappy; – nay, becomes a criminal through his misery and his keen sense of justice, until he is called back from his career by the revered Luther, and by his means obtains a hearing for his suit, so that he can stand boldly forward. It is only by chance without any fault on his own part, that he finds at Dresden, that his position has grown more unfavourable. It is unnecessary to call attention to the masterly hand which has portrayed all the characters from the prince and Luther, down to the humblest menial, in such living colours, that we seem to behold the realities themselves. Whether it was by intention or unconsciously, the writer has made important deviations from history. This might be excused on account of his leading motive, and the admirable freshness of his colouring; but he is more culpable for his incorrectness in the necessary circumstances of an event, which did not happen so very long ago, – circumstances which can scarcely escape the recollection of the reader. Kleist forgets that Wittenberg, not Dresden, was the residence of the Elector of Saxony. Moreover, he describes Dresden just according to its present aspect. The old town, (Altstadt) scarcely existed at the time, and what shall we say of the elector himself, who appears as a romantic, amorous, eccentric, fantastical personage, when certainly it must have been either Frederick the Wise, or the Steadfast, who belonged to the period of the narrative? By over haste – for it certainly was not from design – this excellent story loses its proper costume

and accompanying circumstances, whereas it would have been far more effective had the author allowed himself time to place himself in the period with greater truth. Another consequence of this deficiency in true locality is, that the author, after long alluring us by his truth and nature, leads us through a fanciful visionary world, which will not accord with the previous one, which he has taught us to know so accurately. That wondrous gipsy, who afterwards turns out to be the deceased wife of Kohlhaas, that mysterious inscription, those ghost-like forms, that sick, half-mad, and, afterwards, disguised elector; those weak, for the most part, characterless forms, which, nevertheless, come forward with a pretension, as if they would be considered superior to the real world previously described, as if they would sell as dearly as possible that mysterious nature, which comes to us little as possible, – that horrible foreboding which the author suddenly feels in the presence of the creatures of his own fancy – all this, we say, reminds us so forcibly of many a weak product of our times, and of the ordinary demands of the reading public, that we are forced, mournfully, to admit that even distinguished authors, like Kleist – who in other respects does not participate in these diseases of his day – must pay their tribute to the time that has produced them."

No literature can produce a more original writer, than Ernst Theodore Amadeus Hoffmann, from whom the translators have not scrupled to take three stories. Some have called Hoffmann an imitator of Jean Paul, but the assertion seems to be made rather

because both writers are of an eccentric and irregular character, than because their eccentricities and irregularities are similar. However wild may be the subjects of Hoffmann, and however rambling his method of treating them, his style is remarkably lucid; and while Jean Paul is one of the most difficult authors for a foreigner to read, Hoffmann is comparatively easy. He was born at Königsberg on the 24th of January, 1776, where he studied law, and in 1800 became assessor of the government at Posen. In 1802 he became a councillor of the government at Plock, and in 1803 went in a similar capacity to Warsaw. His legal career was terminated by the invasion of the French, in 1806, and he made use of his musical talents to obtain a subsistence. In the autumn of 1808 he accepted the invitation of Count Julius von Soden to go to a theatre at Bamberg, where he was appointed musical director. The theatre soon closed, and he was reduced to such distress that he was forced to part with his last coat. He then occupied himself with musical instruction, and contributed to the Leipzig *Musikalische Zeitung*. From 1813 to 1815 he conducted the orchestra of a theatrical company, alternately in Dresden and Leipzig, and in 1816 was appointed councillor of the royal *Kammergericht* in Berlin, where he died on the 24th of July, 1822. Hoffmann had devoted himself to music from his earliest years, he composed the music for an opera on the subject of Undine, played at the Berlin theatre, and many of his writings have an immediate reference to the feelings and fortunes of the musician. This is conspicuous in

the collection called, *Fantasia-pieces in Callot's Manner*, which he published in 1814, and which was followed by his *Devil's Elixir*, published in 1816. His works, consisting of narratives, are very numerous, and were published at Berlin, in fifteen volumes, and by Baudry, of Paris, in one volume, royal octavo. Among the most conspicuous are the fantastic *Confessions of Tomcat Murr*, the collection called the *Scrapions Brothers*, and *Master Flea*. Many of Hoffmann's stories have been translated into English, but they have not been so successful here as in France, where, when the translations appeared, they created a complete *furore*. Of the tales in this collection, the *Sandman*, and the *Jesuits' Church*, are from the "night-pieces," and the *Elementary Spirit* is from Hoffmann's "later works." In all these stories it will be observed that Hoffmann's purpose is to point out the ill-effect of a morbid desire after an imaginary world, and a distaste for realities. Different as their adventures are, there is a striking similarity in the characters of Nathaniel, Victor, and the painter Berthold, and Hoffmann seems to be exhibiting his own internal nature as the extreme of unhealthiness. The same tone may be perceived in his other writings, and his obvious reverence for the prosaic and common-place, as the antithesis to himself, is remarkable. The story of the *Sandman* had its origin in a discussion which actually took place between La Motte Fouqué and some friends, at which Hoffmann was present. Some of the party found fault with the cold, mechanical deportment of a young lady of their acquaintance, while La Motte Fouqué

zealously defended her. Here Hoffmann caught the notion of the automaton Olympia, and the arguments used by Nathaniel are those that were really employed by La Motte Fouqué.

A writer of extraordinary fancy and invention, but working for a more obvious purpose, and producing narratives more related in character to popular legends, was Wilhelm Hauff, of whom likewise there are three specimens in this volume. He was born on the 29th of November, 1809, at Stuttgard, and in early life showed a great predilection for telling childish narratives. Being designed for the theological profession, he went to the University of Tübingen in 1820. Afterwards he became a private teacher at Stuttgard, and began his literary career with the *Almanach of Tales for the year* 1826. This was followed by *Contributions from Satan's Memoirs*, and the *Man in the Moon*, the latter of which was designed to satirise the popular writer Clauren. Hauff's historical romance of *Lichtenstein* acquired great celebrity, and the collection of tales called the *Caravan*, which have contributed to this volume, are in the happiest vein. Hauff needs only to be known to become popular in any country. His works, which are somewhat numerous, although he died before he had completed his twenty-sixth year (18th of November, 1827), were published in a complete edition by the poet Gustav Schwab, in 1830.

Adam Oehlenschläger appears as the head of the romantic party in Denmark, though he is as well known to the Germans as the Danes, having published his works in both languages. He was born near Copenhagen, on the 14th of November, 1779, and

passed his youth in the Castle Friedrichsberg, where his father was castellan. He began to study law in 1800, but soon quitted the study, and, at the cost of the government, travelled through Germany, France, and Italy. He was then appointed Professor of "Æsthetics" at the University of Copenhagen, and, in 1816, took another journey through the countries above-named, and visited Sweden in 1829, where he was received with enthusiasm, and was made Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Lund. The dramatic tale of *Aladdin*, published at Leipzig in 1808, first made him known in Germany, and his fame has been maintained by a variety of narratives, some founded on the legends of his own country; and a number of dramas, of which his beautiful *Corregio* is the most celebrated. The tale of *Ali and Gulhyndi*, which appears in this collection, is most striking for its felicitous resemblance of the Oriental style of fiction. Oehlenschläger's entire works were published at Breslau, in eighteen volumes.

Karl Immermann, who is exceedingly admired by a section of the German literati, was born at Magdeburg, in 1796, and died at Düsseldorf in 1841. He was a precocious genius, having composed a drama and a romance at the early age of sixteen. Joining the volunteers during the war with France, he was present during the whole campaign in the Netherlands, and was in France in 1815. He became, in 1827, counsellor of the provincial court (Landgerichtsrath) at Düsseldorf. At this time he entertained a notion of forming a national German theatre; but his scheme proved a failure, notwithstanding he adopted all

sorts of decorative means to ensure success. His works, which are very numerous, have been collected, and one of them, a mythical drama, called *Merlin*, is placed by his admirers, with more enthusiasm than judgment, by the side of Göthe's *Faust*. The tale in this volume is from his *Munchhausen*, a work of unequal merit, but displaying great genius and originality. A very full account of it will be found in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, No. LXI.

Franz Karl van der Velde, the author of *Axel*, was a popular author of historical romances, born at Breslau in 1779. Passing through a variety of judicial appointments, he died at Breslau in 1824. His works, which were published at Dresden, in 1824, occupy twenty-five volumes.

Of all the modern writers of Germany, there is none more truly popular than Johann Heinrich Daniel Zschokke, however doubtful it may be whether his wonderful popularity be commensurate with his merit. He was born at Magdeburg, in 1771; and, after the completion of his juvenile education, travelled about with a company of strolling players. Becoming reconciled with his relations, after this vagabond life, he went to the University at Frankfort on the Oder, where he studied in a desultory manner. After travelling through Germany, Switzerland, and France, he settled in the Grisons, and took a most active part in Swiss politics, to follow which would exceed the bounds of a sketch of this sort. His *History of Switzerland* is a standard work; and his collection of tales, copious as it is, forms

a vast treasury of fiction for his admirers. The account which Zschokke himself gives of his *Alamontade*, is added to that tale.[4]

Here closes this imperfect sketch. It is not intended to convey any new information to those who are acquainted with German literature; but it may, at least, be of use in conveying a few facts and dates to the general English reader.

[4] To Zschokke is attributed the religious work *Stunden der Andacht*, a judicious selection from which has been translated by Mr. Haas.

LIBUSSA

BY J. H. MUSÆUS

Deep in the Bohemian forest, of which now only a shadow remains, dwelt years ago, when it spread itself far and wide into the country, a little spiritual people, aeriel, uncorporeal, and shunning the light. They were of a finer nature than mankind, which is formed out of gross clay, and were therefore imperceptible to the coarser sense; but to the more refined they were half visible by moonlight, being well known to the poets under the name of the Dryads, and to the old bards under the name of the Elves. From time immemorial they had lived undisturbed here, until the forest suddenly resounded with the tumult of war; Duke Czech, of Hungary, crossed the mountains with his Slavonic hordes, to seek a new dwelling-place in this spot. The beautiful inhabitants of the aged oaks, of rocks, caves and grottoes, as well as those of the reeds in ponds and marshes fled from the noise of weapons, and the snorting of war-horses. Even for the mighty Erl-king the tumult was too much, and he removed his court to the more remote deserts. One elf alone could not resolve to quit her beloved oak, and when the wood was hewn down in every direction to make the land arable, she

alone had the courage to defend her tree against the power of the new comers, and chose its lofty top for her abode.

Among the courtiers of the duke was a young squire, named Crocus, full of courage and youthful fire, active, well made, and of noble stature. To him was entrusted the care of his master's horses, which he sometimes drove out to feed in the forest. Often he rested under the oak which the elf inhabited; she regarded the stranger with pleasure, and when at night he slumbered by the root, she whispered pleasant dreams into his ear, predicted to him in significant images the events of the coming day; or if one of his horses had strayed in the wilderness, and the keeper had lost all traces of him, and went to sleep with heavy heart, he saw in his dream the marks of the concealed path which led to the spot where the stray horse was feeding.

The farther the new settlers spread the nearer did they approach the dwelling of the elf, who by means of her faculty of divination foresaw how soon the axe threatened her tree of life, and therefore resolved to communicate her trouble to her friend. One moonlight summer's evening Crocus drove his herd later than usual into the fence, and hastened to his usual couch beneath the tall oak. His road wound about a lake well stored with fish, in the silver waves of which the golden crescent was reflected in the shape of a glittering cone. Straight over this shining part of the lake, on the opposite shore, he perceived in the vicinity of the oak a female form, that seemed to be walking on the cool bank. This apparition surprised the young warrior. "Whence," he

thought to himself, "could this maiden come, so solitary in these deserts, at the time of evening twilight?" But the adventure was of such a nature, that to a young man it was more alluring than alarming to search into the affair. He doubled his pace without losing sight of the form which occupied his attention, and soon reached the place where he had first perceived her, under the oak. It now seemed to him as if what he saw was more of a shadow than a reality. He stood astounded, and a cold shuddering came over him; but he heard a soft voice, which whispered to him these words: "Come hither, dear stranger, and be not afraid; I am no deceptive form, no delusive shadow; I am the elf of this grove, the dweller in the oak, under the thick-leaved boughs of which thou hast often slumbered; I lulled thee to sweet delightful repose, foretold to thee what would befall thee, and if a mare or a colt of thy herd had strayed, I told thee of the place where it was to be found. Repay this favour by another service which I require of thee. Be the protector of this tree, which has so often protected thee against sun and rain, and prevent the murderous axe of thy brothers, who are destroying the woods, from injuring this venerable trunk."

The young warrior, whose courage revived at this soft discourse, answered thus: "Goddess or mortal, whichever thou art, ask of me whatever thou pleasest, and if I can I will accomplish it. But I am only a humble man among my people, the servant of my lord the duke. If he says to me to-day or to-morrow, 'feed your horses here, feed them there,' how shall I

be able to protect thy tree in this remote wood? But if thou commandest it I will leave the service of my prince, dwell in the shadow of thine oak, and protect it as long as my life lasts." "Do so," said the elf, "and thou wilt not repent of it." Upon this she vanished, and there was a rustling in the tree above, as if some loud evening breeze had caught itself there, and was moving the leaves. Crocus stood for awhile quite enchanted at the heavenly apparition which had appeared to him. Such a delicate, truly feminine creature, of such a slender form, and of such noble appearance he had never seen among the stunted Slavonic girls. At last he stretched him upon the soft moss, although sleep did not close his eyes; morning twilight surprised him in a tumult of delicious sensations, which were to him as strange and novel as the first beam of light to the newly opened eyes of one who has been born blind. At the break of day he hastened to the duke's palace, asked for his dismissal, packed up his baggage, and hastily started with his head filled with glowing fantasies and his burden on his back, for his delightful retreat in the forest.

During his absence, however, an artificer among the people, by trade a miller, had pitched upon the sound straight trunk of the oak as an axle for his mill-wheel, and went with his men to fell it. The trembling elf sighed when the greedy saw began with its iron teeth to gnaw the foundations of her dwelling. From the top of the tree she looked anxiously around for her faithful protector; but her glance was unable to discover him anywhere, and her consternation rendered the gift of prophecy peculiar to

her race so ineffective, that she no more ventured to decipher her impending fate than the sons of Esculapius with their boasted "prognosis" are able to tell when death will knock at their own doors.

However Crocus was on his way, and so near the scene of this mournful catastrophe, that the noise of the creaking saw reached his ears. He augured no good from this noise in the forest, and setting wings to his feet beheld – horrible sight – the impending destruction of the tree he had taken under his protection in his very presence. Like a madman he flew upon the workmen with his spear and drawn sword, and frightened them from their work; for they thought that a mountain demon was in their presence and fled in great confusion. Fortunately the tree's wound was curable, and in a few summers the scar had disappeared.

In the hours of rest in the evening, after the new-comer had selected a spot for his future dwelling, had marked out the space to be hedged in for a little garden, and had again considered in his mind the whole plan of the hermitage in which he designed to pass his days, far removed from human society, in the service of a shadowy friend, who seemed to be totally unreal, the elf appeared to him on the banks of the lake, and with graceful gestures thus accosted him: "Thanks, dear stranger, that thou hast prevented the strong arms of thy brethren from felling this tree, to which my life is attached; for know that mother nature, who has endowed my race with such various powers and faculties, has nevertheless united our life to the growth and duration of the

oaks. Through us does the queen of the forest raise her venerable head above the rabble of other trees and shrubs; we promote the circulation of the sap through trunk and branches, so that she gains strength to combat with the whirlwind, and to defy for centuries the destroying power of time. On the other hand, our life is knit to hers. When the oak, to whom fate has assigned us as a partner, grows old, we grow old with it, and when it dies, we die away also, and sleep like mortals, a sleep of death, until by the eternal revolution of all things, chance or some secret arrangement of nature unites our being to a new germ, which opened by our vivifying power, sprouts up after a long time to a mighty tree, and affords us the joys of life anew. From this thou mayst perceive what a service thou hast rendered me by thy assistance, and what gratitude is due to thee. Require of me the reward of thy noble act, reveal to me the desire of thy heart, and it shall be fulfilled at once."

Crocus was silent. The sight of the charming elf had made upon him more impression than her discourse, of which he understood but little. She perceived his confusion, and to extricate him from it took a dry reed from the bank of the lake, broke it into three pieces, and said: "Choose one of these three, or take one without choice. In the first is fame and honour, in the second are riches and wise use of them, and in the third happy love is contained for thee." The young man cast his eyes to the ground and answered: "Daughter of Heaven, if thou intendest to grant the wish of my heart, know that it is not contained in the

three reeds which thou offerest; my heart seeks a still greater reward. What is honour but the fuel of pride, what are riches but the root of avarice, and what is love but the trap of passion, to ensnare the noble liberty of the heart? Grant me my desire of resting beneath the shadow of thy oak, from the fatigue of the campaign, and of hearing from thy sweet mouth doctrines of wisdom, that thus I may decipher the future." "Thy wish," replied the elf, "is great, but what thou deservest at my hands is not less, and therefore let it be as thou hast requested. The bandage before thy corporeal eyes shall vanish, that thou mayst behold the secrets of hidden wisdom. With the enjoyment of the fruit take also the shell, for the wise man is also held in honour. He alone is rich, for he desires no more than he actually needs, and he tastes the nectar of love without poisoning it with impure lips." When she had said this she again presented him the three pieces of reed, and vanished.

The young hermit prepared his bed of moss under the oak, highly delighted at the reception which the elf had accorded him. Sleep overcame him like an armed man, cheerful morning dreams danced round his head, and nourished his fancy with the fragrance of happy anticipations. As soon as he woke he joyously began his day's work, built himself a commodious hut, dug his garden, and planted roses and lilies, and other sweetly-smelling flowers and vegetables, not without cabbages and kitchen herbs, besides an assortment of fruit-trees. The elf did not fail to pay him a visit in the twilight of every evening, took pleasure in the

produce of his industry, walked with him hand in hand along the reedy bank of the pond, until the waving reed murmured forth a melodious evening greeting to the friendly pair, when the breeze rustled through it. The elf initiated her docile pupil into the secrets of nature, instructed him in the origin and issue of things, taught him their natural and magical qualities and virtues, and formed the rough warrior to a thinker and a philosopher.

In the same degree as the feelings and senses of the young man became more refined by his intercourse with the fair shadow, the tender form of the elf became denser, and acquired more consistency. Her bosom was filled with animation and life, fire glistened from her hazel eyes, and with the form of a young girl, she seemed also to have acquired the feelings of one. In a few months the sighing Crocus was blessed with the happiness which the third reed had promised him, and did not regret that the freedom of his heart was ensnared by the trap of love. Although the marriage of the tender pair took place without witnesses, it was productive of as much happiness as the most obstreperous nuptials, and in due time pledges of conjugal affection were not wanting. The elf presented her husband with three daughters at one birth, and the delighted father, in the first embrace, called her who had cried in his house before the two others, Bela; the next Therba, and the youngest Libussa. All were like genii in the beauty of their form; and although they did not consist of such a delicate material as their mother, their corporeal nature was finer than the coarse earthy form of their father. They were also

free from all the infirmities of children, and needed no leading strings, for, after the first nine days, they all ran like so many partridges. As they grew up, they displayed all their mother's talent for detecting hidden things, and predicting the future.

With the aid of time, Crocus also acquired much knowledge of these mysteries. When the wolf had dispersed the cattle in the wood, and the shepherds searched about for their lost sheep and oxen; when the woodmen missed an adze or a hatchet, they sought advice from the wise Crocus, who told them where to find what they had lost. If a bad neighbour made away with any of the common property, broke at night-time into the fold or dwelling of another, robbed him, or murdered his host, and no one could guess who was the criminal, the wise Crocus was always sought for counsel. He then summoned the community to a grass-plot, made them form a circle, stepped into the midst of it, and let the infallible sieve turn, which invariably pointed out the malefactor. His fame was thus spread over all the land of Bohemia, and whoever had an affair or any business of importance, consulted the wise man as to its issue. Nay, cripples and sick persons sought from him aid and recovery; even diseased cattle were brought to him, and he knew how to cure ailing cows with his shadow, as well as the renowned St. Martin, of Schierbach. The concourse of people that sought him increased every day, just as if the tripod of the Delphic Apollo had been removed to the Bohemian forest; and although Crocus, without gain and reward, gave his information to those that questioned him, and healed the sick

and crippled, the treasure of his mysterious wisdom proved very productive, and brought him great profit; for the people pressed to him with their gifts, and quite overwhelmed him with the proofs of their good-will. He first revealed the secret of washing gold out of the sand of the Elbe, and received a tenth from all who collected the gold sand. Thus his means and his wealth were increased; he built strong castles and palaces, he kept large herds of cattle, he possessed fertile lands, woods, and fields, and imperceptibly found himself in the possession of all the wealth which the liberal elf had prophetically enclosed for him, in the second piece of reed.

One fine summer evening, when Crocus, with his attendants, was returning from an excursion, where he had settled the boundary disputes of two neighbouring congregations at their request, he perceived his wife on the brink of the pond, where she had first appeared to him. She beckoned to him with her hand, so he dismissed his retinue, and hastened to embrace her. As usual, she received him with tender love, but her heart was oppressed and mournful, while from her eyes trickled ethereal tears, so fair and transient, that they were hastily absorbed by the air, without reaching the earth. Crocus was astonished at the sight, for he had never seen the eyes of his wife look otherwise than cheerful, and with all the brilliancy of youthful joy. "What ails thee, beloved of my heart?" said he; "my soul is torn by uneasy forebodings. Tell me, what is the meaning of these tears?" The elf sighed, leaned her head mournfully on his shoulder, and

said: "Dear husband, in thine absence I have read in the book of fate, that an unhappy destiny threatens my tree of life; I must leave thee for ever. Follow me to the castle, that I may bless my children, for from this day you will never see me again." "Oh, my beloved," replied Crocus, "banish these melancholy thoughts! What misfortune can threaten thy tree? Are not its roots and trunk firmly fixed? Look at its healthy branches, as, laden with fruit and leaves, they extend themselves, and see how it raises its top to the clouds. As long as this arm moves, it shall defend itself against every impious man who shall dare to injure its trunk." – "Weak is the protection," replied she, "which a mortal arm can afford! Ants can only contend with ants, gnats only with gnats, and all the worms of the earth can merely guard off their like. What can the strongest of you do against the operations of nature, or the inscrutable decrees of fate? The kings of the earth can easily overthrow the little mounds which you call your fortresses and castles, but the slightest breeze scorns their power, rustles when its pleases, and heeds not their command. Thou hast already defended this oak against the might of man, but canst thou also resist the whirlwind, when it arises to strip the leaves from its boughs; or if a concealed worm gnawed at its core, could you draw it forth and crush it?"

Discoursing thus, the affectionate pair entered the castle. The slender maidens sprang joyfully towards them, as they were accustomed to do on their mother's evening visits, gave an account of their daily occupation, brought their embroidery and

needle-work as a proof of their industry and skill; but, on this occasion, the hour of domestic happiness was totally joyless. The girls soon perceived that the traces of deep sorrow were imprinted on their father's face, and saw with sympathising grief their mother's tears, without venturing to inquire into the cause. Their mother gave them many wise instructions and good admonitions; but her discourse was like the song of a swan, as if she were about to take leave of the world. She remained with her beloved family till the morning-star arose; she then embraced her husband and children with melancholy tenderness, retired to her tree as usual, at day-break, through a secret door, and left them all to the most melancholy forebodings.

Nature was in breathless silence as the sun rose; but his beaming head was soon obscured by dark heavy clouds. It was a sultry day; the whole atmosphere was electrical. Distant thunders rolled along over the wood, and echo, with a hundred voices, repeated the fearful sound in the winding valleys. At noon, a forked flash of lightning darted down upon the oak, and shattered root and branches in one moment, with resistless force, so that the fragments lay scattered far and wide in the forest. When this was told to Crocus, he rent his clothes, and went out with his daughters to mourn over his wife's tree of life, and to collect and preserve the splinters as precious relics. The elf was no more to be seen from that day.

After some years, the tender girls grew up, their virgin form bloomed as a rose starting from the bud, and the fame of their

beauty was spread all over the country. The noblest youths among the people came forward, and had all sorts of petitions to lay before Father Crocus, and ask his advice. In truth this was but a pretext, that they might ogle the lovely girls, as young fellows often feign some business with the fathers, if they wish to coax the daughters. The three daughters lived together in great ease and concord, little aware of their own talents. The gift of prophecy was possessed by them all in equal degree, and their discourses were oracles without their knowing it. Soon, however, their vanity was excited by the voice of flattery, the word-catchers snapped up every sound from their lips, the Seladons interpreted every gesture, traced the slightest smile, watched the glance of their eyes, drawing from them indications more or less favourable, fancied they would thence gather their destinies, and from that time it has been the custom among lovers to question the good or bad star of love in the horoscope of the eyes. Scarcely had vanity insinuated itself into the virgin heart, than pride was at the door with all the rabble of his train, – self-love, self-praise, obstinacy, selfishness, and all these stole in together. The elder sisters vied with each other, to excel the younger in her arts, and secretly envied her on account of her superior charms, for although all were very beautiful, Libussa was the most beautiful of them all. The Lady Bela particularly devoted herself to the study of herbs, as Lady Medea did in the days of old. She knew their hidden virtues, and how to extract from them efficacious poisons and antidotes, as well as to prepare

from them scents, pleasant and unpleasant, for the invincible powers. When her censer smoked, she charmed down the spirits from the immeasurable space of ether on the other side of the moon, and they became subject to her, that with their fine organs they might inhale these sweet perfumes, but when she flung the offensive scent into the censer, she would have forced the Zihim and Ohim out of the desert.

The Lady Therba was as ingenious as Circe in contriving magic spells of all sorts, which had force enough to sway the elements, to raise storms and whirlwinds, hail and tempest, to shake the very bowels of the earth, or to lift it out of its very hinges. She made use of these arts to terrify the people, that she might be honoured and feared as a goddess, and knew better how to accommodate the weather to the wishes and caprices of mankind, than wise nature herself. Two brothers quarrelled because they never could agree in their wishes. One was a husbandman, who always wished for rain that his seed might thrive. The other was a potter, who always wished for sunshine, that he might dry his earthen pots, which were destroyed by the rain. Because the heavens never would satisfy them, they went one day with rich presents to the house of the wise Crocus, and told their wishes to Therba. The elf's daughter smiled at the boisterous complaints of the brothers against the beneficent arrangements of nature, and satisfied the wishes of both, letting rain fall on the seed of the agriculturist, and sunshine on the field of the potter. By their magic arts the two sisters acquired

great fame and vast wealth, for they never communicated their gifts without reward; they built castles and villas out of their treasures; they laid out fine pleasure gardens; they were never weary of feasting and merry-making, and they jilted the suitors who sought their love.

Libussa had not the proud vain disposition of her sisters. Although she possessed the same faculty of penetrating into the secrets of nature and using her hidden virtues, she was satisfied with the share of miraculous power she had inherited from her mother without carrying it further, that she might make a profit of it. Her vanity did not go beyond the consciousness of her own beauty; she did not thirst after riches, and she did not, like her sisters, wish either to be feared or honoured. When these kept up a constant bustle in their villas, hurried from one exciting pleasure to another, and attached the flower of the Bohemian knighthood to their triumphal car, she remained at home in her father's dwelling, managed the household affairs, gave council to those who asked for it, kindly assisted the oppressed and distressed, – and all from mere good will without any reward. Her disposition was gentle and modest, her life chaste and virtuous such as became a noble maiden. She was, to be sure, secretly pleased at the victories which her beauty gained over the hearts of men, and she received the sighs and cooing of pining adorers, as a fitting tribute to her charms, but no one dared breathe to her a word of love, or presume to solicit her heart. Yet the wag Cupid loves better than any thing to exercise his rights with the coy, and

will often throw his burning torch on a low straw-thatched shed when he intends to fire a lofty palace.

An old knight, who had come into the land with an army of the Czechites, had settled deep in the forest. He had made the wilderness arable, and had laid out an estate, on which he intended to pass the remainder of his days in peace, living on the produce of his fields. However a powerful neighbour took possession of the property, and drove out the knight, whom a hospitable countryman took in, giving him a shelter in his own dwelling. The poor old man had a son, who was the only prop and consolation of his age – a fine youth, who however possessed nothing but a hunting spear, and a well practised fist to support his father. The plunder by the unjust Nabal excited his revenge, and he armed himself to repel force with force. The command of the careful old man, who did not wish to expose the life of his son to any danger, disarmed the noble youth, but afterwards he was determined not to relinquish his original design. So his father called him, and said, "Go, my son, to the wise Crocus, or to the wise virgins his daughters, and ask them whether the gods approve of thine enterprise, and will grant a favourable issue to it. If so, thou mayst gird on thy sword, take thy spear in thy hand, and fight for thy patrimony. If not, remain here till thou hast closed mine eyes, and then do as seems right to thee."

The youth set out and first reached the palace of Bela, which had the appearance of a temple, inhabited by a goddess. He knocked and desired to be admitted, but the porter, as soon as

he saw that the stranger appeared with empty hands, dismissed him as a beggar, and closed the door in his face. He proceeded sorrowfully, and came to the dwelling of Therba, where he knocked and desired a hearing. The porter peeped out of the window, and said, "If thou bearest gold in thy pocket so that thou canst weigh it out to my mistress, she will give thee one of her wise sayings that will tell thee thy fate. If not, go and gather on the shore of the Elbe as much of it as the tree has leaves, the sheaf has ears, and the bird has feathers, and then I will open this door for thee." The youth thus again deceived, departed quite out of heart, especially when he learned that the prophet Crocus had gone to Poland, to officiate as umpire between some Magnates, who could not agree together. He expected no better reception from the third sister, and when he saw her paternal forest-castle from a hill in the distance, he did not venture to approach it, but concealed himself in a thick bush to brood over his grief. He was soon roused from his gloomy reflections by a noise like the tramp of horses' feet. A flying roe darted through the bushes followed by a beautiful huntress and her attendants, all mounted on magnificent steeds. She hurled a javelin which whizzed through the air without reaching the animal. The youth who watched the scene, at once caught up his cross-bow, and from the twanging string sent forth a winged arrow which darted at once through the heart of the beast, so that it fell down on the spot. The lady, surprised at this unexpected phenomena, looked round for the unknown hunter, which, when

the marksman perceived, he stepped forward and bowed humbly to the ground. The Lady Libussa thought she had never seen a handsomer man. At the very first glance his frame made upon her so strong an impression that she could not help being involuntarily prepossessed in his favour, and confessing he was of a noble figure. "Tell me, dear stranger," said she, "who are thou, and what chance has conducted thee to these precincts?" The youth rightly surmised that his good fortune had allowed him to find what he sought, so he modestly communicated his wishes, not forgetting to say, how uncivilly he had been dismissed from the doors of her sisters, and how much he had been afflicted in consequence. She cheered his mind with kind words. "Follow me to my dwelling," said she, "I will question for thee the book of fate, and to-morrow at sunrise I will give thee information."

The youth obeyed her orders: here there was no churlish porter to prevent his entrance into the palace; here the lovely resident exercised the law of hospitality most liberally towards him. He was delighted with this favourable reception, but still more so with the charms of his fair hostess. The enchanting form flitted before his eyes all night, and he carefully guarded against the approach of sleep, that the events of the past day which he reflected on with delight might not leave his thoughts for a single moment. The Lady Libussa on the other hand, enjoyed a gentle slumber, for retirement from the impressions of the outward senses, which disturb the fine anticipations of the future, is indispensable to the gift of prophecy. Nevertheless the glowing

fancy of the elf's sleeping daughter united the form of the young stranger to all the visionary forms that appeared to her in the night. She found him where she did not seek him, and under such circumstances that she could not understand how she should have any relation to this stranger. When the fair prophetess, on waking early in the morning, endeavoured as usual to separate and unravel the visions of the night, she was disposed to reject them altogether as illusions that had sprung from an aberration of fancy, and to give them no more attention. But a dark feeling told her that the creation of her fancy was not a mere empty dream, but that it pointed to certain events, which the future would unfold, and that this same prophetic fancy, had in the night just passed, overheard the secret counsels of destiny better than ever, and had blabbed them out to her. In the same way, she found that the guest now under her roof was violently inflamed with ardent love, and her heart quite as unreservedly made her the same confession with respect to him; but she set the seal of secrecy upon the information, while the modest youth, on his side, had vowed that he would impose silence on his tongue and on his eyes, that he might not expose himself to contemptuous refusal: for the barrier which fortune had set up between him and the daughter of Crocus seemed to him insurmountable.

Although the fair Libussa knew perfectly well what answer to give to the young man's question, she felt it very difficult to allow him to depart so quickly. At sunrise she appointed a meeting with him in the garden and said: "The veil of darkness

still hangs before my eyes; to know thy destiny wait till sunset." In the evening she said: "Wait till sunrise: " on the following morning "Wait throughout this day," and on the third, "Have patience till to-morrow." At last, on the fourth day, she dismissed him, because she had no pretext for detaining him any longer, without discovering her secret, and with kind words she gave him this information: "It is not the will of the gods that thou shouldst contend with a mighty one in the land; endurance is the lot of the weaker. Go to thy father: be the consolation of his age, and support him with the labour of thy industrious hand. Take from my herd two white bulls as a present, and take this rod to guide them. When it blooms and bears fruit the spirit of prophecy will rest upon thee." The youth considered himself unworthy of the lovely maiden's presents, and blushed to accept a gift without being able to return it. With lips void of eloquence, but with a demeanour so much the more eloquent, he took a sorrowful farewell, and found tied up by the gate a couple of white bulls, as plump and shining as the divine bull of old, upon whose sleek back the virgin Europa swam through the blue waves. Joyfully he unloosened them, and drove them gently along. The road here seemed but a few yards in length, so completely was his soul occupied with the thoughts of the fair Libussa, and as he felt he never could share her love, he vowed he would, at any rate, never love another as long as he lived. The old knight was delighted at his son's return, and still more delighted when he learned that the advice of the wise Crocus's daughter so perfectly accorded

with his own wishes. The youth being destined by the gods to follow the calling of a husbandman, did not delay to yoke his white bulls to the plough. The first attempt succeeded according to his wishes; the bulls were so strong and so spirited, that in one day they turned up more land than twelve oxen would commonly have managed.

Duke Czech, who had conducted the first expedition of his people into Bohemia, had died long ago, and his descendants inherited neither his dignity nor his principality. The Magnates, to be sure, assembled after his decease, to make a new election, but their savage, stormy temperaments did not allow them to come to any rational decision. Selfishness and arrogance turned the first state assembly of Bohemia into a Polish diet;[5] too many hands seized the princely mantle at once, so they tore it to pieces, and it belonged to nobody. The government fell into a kind of anarchy; every one did as he pleased; the strong oppressed the weak, the rich the poor, the great the little. There was no longer any general security in the country, and nevertheless these mad caps thought their new republic was admirably constituted. "All" they cried "is in order; every thing goes its way with us as everywhere else; the wolf eats the lamb, the kite eats the pigeon, and the fox eats the fowl." However, this mad constitution had no stability; and after the intoxication of visionary freedom was dissipated, and the people had again become sober, reason once

[5] A proverbial expression in Germany for a scene of riot, on account of the disturbances that usually took place at Polish elections.

more asserted her rights, and the patriots, the honest citizens, and all in fact in the country, who had any love for their fatherland, took counsel to destroy the present idol, the many-headed hydra, and to unite the people again under a sovereign. "Let us," they said, "choose a prince who shall rule over us, according to the custom of our fathers, who shall curb licentiousness, and administer justice and the laws. Not the strongest, the bravest, nor the richest, but the wisest shall be our duke!" The people being weary of the oppressions of the petty tyrants, were on this occasion unanimous, and answered the proposition with loud applause. A general assembly was appointed, and the choice of all fell upon the wise Crocus. A deputation was sent to invite him to take possession of his dignity, and although he was not covetous of the distinguished honour, he did not delay to accord with the wishes of the people. He was dressed in the purple, and he proceeded with great pomp to Vizegrad, the princely residence, where the people met him with loud rejoicings, and swore allegiance to him as their sovereign. He now perceived that even the third slip of reed offered him by the liberal elf had bestowed its gift upon him.

His love of equity and his wise legislation extended his fame over all the countries round. The Sarmatian princes, who used incessantly to quarrel, brought their disputes from a great distance to his tribunal. He weighed, with the infallible weight and measure of natural equity, in the scales of justice, and when he opened his mouth, it was as if the venerable Solon or the

wise Solomon, between the twelve lions from his throne, gave judgment. Once, when some rebels had conspired against the peace of their country, and had set all the excitable nation of Poles by the ears, he marched to Poland at the head of his army, and suppressed the civil war. There likewise was he made duke by a great part of the people, out of gratitude for the peace which he had given them. He built there the city of Cracow, which still bears his name, and has the right of crowning the Polish king to the present day. Crocus reigned with great glory to the termination of his life. When he perceived that his end was approaching, and that he should now leave this world, he ordered to be made of the remains of the oak, which his wife the elf had inhabited, a box to contain his bones. He then departed in peace, wept over by his three daughters, who laid him in the box, and buried him as he had commanded, while the whole country mourned his loss.

As soon as the funeral pomp had ended, the states assembled to consider who should now occupy the vacant throne. The people were unanimous for a daughter of Crocus, only they could not agree which of the three sisters should be chosen. The Lady Bela had the fewest adherents, for her heart was not good, and she often used her magic lantern to make mischief. Nevertheless she had inspired the people with such fear, that no one ventured to object to her for fear of rousing her vengeance. When it came to the vote, all the electors were silent, there was no voice for her and none against her. At sunset the representatives broke

up the meeting, and deferred the election to the following day. Then the Lady Therba was proposed, but confidence in her own magic spells had turned her head, she was proud, supercilious, and wished to be viewed as a goddess; and if incense was not always offered to her, she was peevish, wilful and ill-tempered, displaying all those qualities which deprive the fair sex of their flattering epithet. She was not so much feared as her elder sister, but then she was not more beloved. For this reason the place of election was as still as a funeral feast, and there was no voting. On the third day the Lady Libussa was proposed. As soon as this name was uttered, a familiar whispering was heard throughout the circle, the solemn faces became unwrinkled and brightened up, and every one of the electors could communicate to his neighbour some good quality of the lady. One lauded her unassuming demeanour, another her modesty, the third her wisdom, the fourth the infallibility of her predictions, the fifth her disinterested conduct to all who asked counsel, the tenth her chastity, ninety others her beauty, and the last her thriftiness. When a lover sketches such a list of his mistress's perfections, it is always a matter of doubt whether she really possesses one of them, but the public in its decisions does not easily err on the favourable side, though it often does on the unfavourable one. By reason of qualities so laudable, and so universally recognised, the Lady Libussa was certainly the most powerful candidate for the throne, as far as the hearts of the electors were concerned; nevertheless the preference of the younger sisters to the elder one

has so often, as experience testifies, disturbed domestic peace, that it was to be feared, in a more important affair, the peace of the country would be interrupted. This consideration put the wise guardians of the people to such great embarrassment, that they could not come to any decision at all. An orator was wanted who should attach the weight of his eloquence to the good will of the electors, if the affair was to make any progress, and the good wishes of the electors were to have any effect. Such an orator appeared as if called for.

Wladomir, one of the Bohemian magnates, next in rank to the duke, had long sighed for the charming Libussa, and had solicited her hand in the lifetime of her father, Crocus. He was one of his most faithful vassals, and was beloved by him as a son, and therefore had the good father wished that love might unite the pair together. The coy mind of the maiden was, however, invincible, and he would on no account force her affections. Prince Wladomir did not allow himself to be scared by this doubtful aspect of affairs, and fancied that by fidelity and perseverance he might bear up against the lady's hard disposition, and render it pliable by tenderness. He had attached himself to the duke's train, as long as he lived, without advancing one step nearer to the goal of his wishes. Now he thought he had found an opportunity of opening her closed heart, by a meritorious act, and of gaining, from magnanimous gratitude, what, it seemed, he could not obtain by love. He ventured to expose himself to the hatred and revenge of the two dreaded sisters, and to raise

his beloved to the throne at the peril of his life. Marking the wavering irresolution of the assembly, he took up the discourse and said: "Brave knights and nobles of the people, I will lay a simile before you, from which you may learn how to complete this election to the advantage of your father-land." Silence having been commanded, he proceeded thus: "The bees had lost their queen, and the whole hive was melancholy and joyless. They flew out idly and sparingly, they had scarcely spirits for making honey, and their pursuit and nourishment was on the decline. They therefore thought seriously about a new sovereign who should preside over their affairs, that all order and discipline might not be lost. The wasp then came and said: 'Make me your queen, I am strong and terrible, the stout horse fears my sting, I can defy even your hereditary foe the lion, and prick his mouth when he approaches your honey-tree. I will guard you and protect you.' This discourse was pleasing enough to the bees, but after mature deliberation the wisest among them said: 'Thou art vigorous and terrible to be sure, but we dread that very sting which is to defend us; therefore thou canst not be our queen.' Then the humble bee came up humming, and said: 'Take me for your queen! Do you not hear that the rustle of my wings announces rank and dignity? Besides, I too have a sting to protect you.' The bees answered, we are a peaceful and quiet race; the proud noise of thy wings would annoy us and disturb the pursuits of our industry; thou canst not be our queen.' Then the ant desired a hearing: 'Although I am larger and stronger than you,' she said, 'my superiority can

never injure you, for see I am entirely without the dangerous sting, I am of a gentle disposition, and besides that, a friend of order, of frugality, know how to preside over the honey-tree and to encourage labour.' The bees then said: 'Thou art worthy to govern us – we will obey thee – be thou our queen!'"

Wladomir paused. The whole assembly divined the purport of the discourse, and the minds of all were favourably disposed towards the Lady Libussa. Yet at the very moment when they were about to collect the votes, a croaking raven flew over the place of election; this unfavourable omen interrupted all further deliberation, and the election was deferred to the following day. The Lady Bela had sent the ill-omened bird to disturb the proceedings, for she knew well enough the inclination of the voters, and Prince Wladomir had inspired her with the bitterest hate. She held counsel with her sister Therba, and they came to the determination that they would be revenged on the common calumniator, who had insulted both of them, and despatched a heavy nightmare, that should squeeze the soul out of his body. The bold knight suspected nothing of this danger, but went, as was his wont, to wait upon his mistress, and received from her the first kind look, from which he promised himself a whole heaven of bliss. If any thing could increase his delight, it was the present of a rose which adorned the lady's bosom, and which she gave him with the order that he was to let it wither by his heart. To these words he gave an interpretation very different from that which was meant, since no science is more fallacious than the

art of expounding in love. There mistakes are quite at home. The enamoured knight was bent on keeping the rose fresh and blooming as long as possible; he set it in fresh water in a flower-pot, and went to sleep with the most flattering hopes.

In the gloomy hour of midnight came the destroying angel, sent by the Lady Bela. He glided in; he blew open, with his gasping breath, the locks and bolts on the doors of the bed-room, and fell with immense weight on the sleeping knight, pressing him down with such suffocating force, that he thought, when he woke, a mill-stone had been rolled upon his neck. In this painful situation, while he fancied the last moment of his life was come, he fortunately thought of the rose which stood in the flower-pot by his bed, pressed it to his heart, and said: "Fade away with me, fair rose, and perish on my lifeless bosom, as a proof that my last thought was bestowed on thy lovely possessor." At once his heart became lighter, the heavy nightmare could not resist the magic power of the flower, his oppressive weight did not now exceed that of so much down; the dislike of the perfume soon drove him out of the chamber altogether, and the narcotic quality of the scent again lulled the knight into a refreshing slumber. At sunrise he rose fresh and cheerful, and rode to the place of election to ascertain what impression his simile had made on the minds of the electors, and to observe the course that the affair might take this time; intending, at all events, if any opposing gale should arise, and threaten to run aground the wavering boat of his hopes and wishes, at once to seize on the helm and steer directly against

it.

This time, however, there was no danger. The solemn electoral senate had during the night so thoroughly ruminated on, and digested Wladomir's parable, that it was actually infused into their very heart and mind. A brisk knight, who perceived these favourable crises, and who in affairs of the heart sympathised with the tender Wladomir, endeavoured either to deprive the latter of the honour of placing the lady on the Bohemian throne, or at any rate to share it with him. He stepped forward, drew his sword, proclaimed with a loud voice, Libussa, Duchess of Bohemia, and desired every one who had the same opinion to draw the sword like him and defend his choice. At once several hundred swords glittered on the place of election, a loud cry of joy announced the new sovereign, and on all sides resounded the shout of the people: "Let Libussa be our duchess!" A deputation was appointed, with Prince Wladomir and the sword-drawer at the head of it, to announce to the lady her elevation to the ducal rank. With the modest blush which gives to female charms the highest expression of grace, she accepted the sovereignty over the people, and every heart was subjugated by the magic of her pleasing aspect. The people paid her homage with the greatest delight, and although the two sisters envied her, and employed their secret arts to avenge themselves both on her and their country, for the slight that had been offered them, endeavouring by the leaven of calumny and malicious interpretation of all their sister's deeds and actions, to bring about in the nation a shameful

ferment, and to undermine the peace and happiness of her mild virgin dominion; yet Libussa knew how to meet these unsisterly attempts with prudence, and to annihilate all the hostile plans and spells of the unnatural pair, till at last they were tired of exercising upon her their inefficient powers.

The sighing Wladomir waited in the meanwhile with the most ardent longing for the development of his fate. More than once he ventured to foresee the end in the lovely eyes of his sovereign, but Libussa had imposed a deep silence on the inclinations of her heart, and it is always a precarious proceeding to require from a mistress a verbal declaration without a previous intercourse with the eyes and their significant glances. The one favourable sign which still kept his hopes alive was the imperishable rose, which, though a year had elapsed, blossomed as freshly now as on the evening when he received it from the hand of the fair Libussa. A flower from a maiden's hand, a nosegay, a ribbon, or a lock of hair, is certainly more valuable than a tooth dropped out, but nevertheless all these pretty things are but doubtful pledges of love, unless some more certain expressions gives them a determined signification. Wladomir, therefore quietly played the part of a sighing swain in the court of his idol, and waited to see what time and circumstances might produce in his favour. The boisterous knight Mizisla, on the other hand, carried on his plan with far more spirit, and did all he could to make himself conspicuous on every occasion. On the day of homage he was the first vassal who made the oath of allegiance to the new princess;

he followed her as inseparably as the moon follows the earth, that by unasked-for services he might show his devotion to her person, and on solemn occasions and in processions he made his sword flash in her eyes, that she might not forget what good service it had done her.

Nevertheless, following the way of the world, Libussa seemed very near to have forgotten the furtherers of her good fortune; since, when an obelisk once stands upright, we think no more of the levers and instruments that raised it – at least so did the candidates for her heart interpret the lady's coldness. Both, however, were wrong; the noble sovereign was neither insensible nor ungrateful; but her heart was no more so completely in her power, that she could do with it whatever she pleased. Love had already decided in favour of the slim hunter. The first impression which the sight of him had made on her heart was still so strong, that no second one could efface it. Three years had passed, and the colours of imagination with which the graceful youth had been sketched, were neither rubbed out, nor had they become faint, and thus her love was proved to be perfect. For the love of the fair sex is of such a nature and quality, that if it will stand the test of three moons, it will generally last three times three, and longer, according to the evidence and example of our own times. When the heroic sons of Germany swam over distant seas, to fight out the domestic squabble of the wilful daughter of Britannia with her mother country, they tore themselves from the arms of their fair ones, with mutual protestations of truth and

fidelity; but before they had passed the last buoy of the Weser, the greater part of them were forgotten by their Chloes. The fickle damsels, tired of having their hearts unoccupied, filled up the gap with new intrigues; but the faithful ones, who had had constancy enough to endure the Weser ordeal, and who, when the owners of their hearts were on the other side of the black buoy, had been guilty of no infidelity – these, they say, have kept their vow inviolate, until the return of their heroes into their German father-land, and now merit from the hands of love the reward of their constancy.

It was therefore less remarkable, that, under the circumstances, the Lady Libussa could refuse the hand of the blooming knights who solicited her heart, than that the fair Queen of Ithaca let a whole host of suitors sigh after her in vain, while her heart had only the grey-bearded Ulysses in reserve. Nevertheless, rank and high birth so very much overbalanced the attachment the lady felt for the beloved of her heart, that any thing more than a Platonic passion – that empty shade, which neither warms nor nourishes – was not to be hoped. Although, in those remote times, people cared as little about writing out genealogies, according to parchment and pedigree, as they did about arranging classes of beetles according to their wings and feelers, or flowers according to their stamens, pistils, calyx, and nectary, they knew, nevertheless, that the delicious grape alone associates with the stately elm, and not the weed that creeps along the hedge. A *mésalliance* caused by a difference of rank

an inch wide, did not then, certainly, excite so much pedantic noise as in our classic days; but, however, a difference a yard wide, especially if rivals stood in the interval, and perceived the distance of the two ends, was observable enough. All this, and more than this, the lady maturely weighed in her prudent mind, and therefore she did not give a hearing to the deceitful prattler, passion, loud as it might speak to the advantage of the youth, who was favoured by love. As a chaste vestal, she made an irrevocable vow that she would keep her heart locked up in virgin secresy for the period of her life, and that she would not answer any address of her suitors, either with her eyes or with her gestures; with the reserve, however, that she might platonise as much as she pleased, by way of compensation. This monastic system pleased the two aspirants so little, that they did not know what to make of the killing coldness of their sovereign; jealousy, the companion of love, whispered into their ear; one thought the other was his rival, and their spirit of observation was unwearying, in trying to make discoveries, which both of them dreaded. But the Lady Libussa, with prudence and acuteness, weighed out her scanty favours to the two honourable knights with such an equal balance, that neither scale kicked the beam.

Tired of waiting in vain, both the knights left their princess's court, and with secret discontent retired to the estates, which Duke Crocus had granted them for military service. Both took home such a stock of ill-humour, that Prince Wladomir was a perfect pest to all his vassals and neighbours, while Prince

Mizisla turned sportsman, chasing deer and foxes over the fields and enclosures of his subjects, and often treading three quarters of corn, when with his train he was following a hare. This occasioned many complaints in the country; but, however, there was no judge to remedy the evil, for no one likes to contend with the stronger, and hence this way the oppression of the people never reached the throne of the duchess. Nevertheless, through her supernatural power, no act of injustice, within the wide boundaries of her realm, remained hidden; and because her disposition corresponded to the tender character of her lovely form, she was afflicted at the wickedness of her vassals, and the wrongs committed by the strongest. She consulted with herself as to how the evil could be remedied, and prudence suggested that she should follow the example of the wise gods, who, in administering justice, never punish the offender directly the offence is committed; although slowly stepping vengeance is sure, sooner or later, to strike at last. The young princess summoned all the knighthood and states to a general diet, and caused it to be publicly proclaimed, that whoever had a complaint to make, or a wrong to denounce, might come forward freely and without fear, and should have a safe conduct. Then the oppressed and harassed came from all parts of the country; litigious folks came besides; in fact, all who had some law affair in hand. Libussa sat on the throne, like the goddess Themis, with sword and scales, and uttered justice with unfailing judgment, and without respect of persons, for she was not led astray, and

the labyrinthian courses of chicane did not mislead her, as they do the thick heads of stupid magistrates, while every body was surprised at the wisdom with which she unravelled the tangled skein of law-suits in affairs of meum and teum, and at the unwearied patience with which she found out, and wound off, the hidden thread of justice, without pulling a wrong end.

When the throng of parties who had assembled at the bar of the tribunal had gradually diminished, and the sittings were about to terminate – on the very last court-day, a settler on the borders of the wealthy Wladomir's estate, and a deputation from the subjects of the sporting Mizisla, desired a hearing, that they might bring in their complaint. They were admitted, and the settler spoke first. "An industrious planter," said he, "enclosed a little piece of ground on the bank of a broad river, the silver stream of which flowed, gently murmuring, into the pleasant valley below; for he thought that the fair stream would protect him on one side from the voracious animals that might devour his crops, and also water the roots of his fruit-trees, that they might soon ripen and grow up, and bear fruit plentifully. However, just as his fruit began to get ripe, the deceitful river became troubled, its quiet waters began to swell and roar, overwhelmed the bank, tore away one piece of the fruitful field after another, and made for themselves a bed in the middle of the cultured soil, to the great sorrow of the poor planter, who was forced to give up his property, as a sport for the malice of his powerful neighbour, whose raging flood he himself escaped with difficulty. Mighty

daughter of the wise Crocus, the poor planter entreats thee to give orders to the haughty stream, that it may cease to roll its proud waves over the field of the industrious husbandman, that it may no more thus absorb the sweat of his brow, and his hopes of a prosperous harvest, but quietly flow within the limits of its own proper bed."

During this discourse, a cloud gathered on the serene brow of the fair Libussa, a manly earnestness shone from her eyes, and those around became all ear, that they might hear her decision, which was as follows: "Thy cause is plain and right; no violence shall pervert its justice. A firm dam shall set a proper limit and measure to the wild stream, that it may not flow beyond; and I, with its fishes, will make thee a seven-fold compensation for the depredation of its waters." She then made a sign for the eldest of the deputation to speak; and, turning his head to the court, he said thus: "Wise daughter of the renowned Crocus, tell us to whom belongs the seed of the field – to the sower, who has buried it in the earth, that it may spring up and multiply, or to the hurricane who hurls it down, and scatters it?" – "To the sower," she replied. "Then," said the speaker, "give orders to the hurricane, that it may not select our fields as the spot for its wantonness, trample down our grain, and shake our fruit-trees." —

"So be it," said the duchess; "I will tame the hurricane, and banish it from your fields. It shall fight with the clouds, and scatter them, when they rise from the earth, threatening the land with hail and heavy storms."

Prince Wladomir and the knight Mizisla were both present at the general court. When they heard the complaint that had been made, and heard the solemn sentence of the princess, they grew pale, and smothering their wrath fixed their eyes upon the ground, not daring to own to themselves how much they were galled at being condemned by the sentence from the mouth of a woman. For although to shield their honour, the complainants had modestly hung an allegoric veil over their accusation, and even the just decision of the sovereign judge had shown a prudent respect for this covering, the web was, notwithstanding, so fine and transparent, that whoever had eyes could see what stood behind it. As they did not venture to appeal from the throne of the princess to the people, the judgment just given against them having caused general exultation, they could only submit with it, although most unwillingly. Wladomir made seven-fold reparation to his neighbour the settler, for the injury that had been done, and Nimrod Mizisla was obliged to pledge his knightly word that he would not select his subject's corn fields as a place for hare-hunting. At the same time Libussa gave them a glorious employment, that they might exercise their activity, and restore the tone of knightly virtue to their name, which now sounded discordantly like a cracked vessel. She placed both at the head of her army, which she sent out against Zornebock, prince of the Salians, a giant, and moreover a powerful sorcerer, who was then about making war against Bohemia, and imposed upon them as a penance, the condition that they should not return to

their court, until one brought the plume and the other the golden spurs of the monster as a trophy of victory.

The unfading rose still preserved its magic power during this expedition, rendering Prince Wladomir as invulnerable to mortal weapons, as Achilles the hero, and as nimble and active as Achilles the swift-footed. The armies met on the northern border of the territory, and the signal to fight was given. The Bohemian heroes flew through the opposing forces like storm and whirlwind, and mowed down the thick crop of lances, as the reaper's sickle mows down a field of wheat. Zornebock fell a victim to their mighty sword-cuts; they returned back to Vizegrad in triumph with the booty they had acquired, and the spots and soils which had before tainted their knightly virtue, they had washed out in the blood of the enemy. The Duchess Libussa rewarded them with all the distinctions of princely favour, dismissed them, when the army was disbanded to their own residence, and as a new mark of her esteem gave them a ruddy apple from her own garden for a keepsake, with the instructions that they were to share it peaceably without cutting it. They went their way, placed the apple on a shield, and had it carried before them, while they consulted together how they should set about making division with proper discretion, so that they might not be mistaken in their gentle sovereign's meaning.

Before they reached the crossway that was to separate them, so that each might follow the road that led to his own residence, they adhered to the treaty of partition amicably enough, but now

the point was who should keep the apple, to which they both had equal right. Only one, it was evident, could retain it, and both promised themselves such wonders that each longed to possess it. Upon this they quarrelled, and the sword nearly had to decide to whom the fortune of arms had assigned the indivisible apple. A shepherd, however, happened to be driving his flock along the same road, so they chose him for their umpire, and laid their case before him, probably because the three celebrated goddesses had applied to a shepherd to settle their affair about an apple. The man reflected a little, and said,

"In this present of an apple lies a deeply hidden signification; yet who can probe it but the wise maiden who has there concealed it? I suspect that the apple is a deceitful fruit, which grew upon the tree of discord, and the red skin of which signifies bloody contentions among you, knights, – that one shall irritate the other, and that neither shall reap any joy from the gift. For tell me how is it possible to share an apple without dividing it?" The two knights took to heart the shepherd's advice, which they thought contained great wisdom. "Thou art right," said they, "has not the base apple already kindled anger and quarrel between us? Were we not on the point of fighting for the deceptive gift of the proud maiden who hates us both? Did she not place us at the head of her army, because she thought we should be killed? And because that method did not succeed, she now arms us with the knife of discord against each other. We declare ourselves free from the deceitful gift; neither of us shall bear the apple, but it shall be the

reward of thy honest decision. The fruit of the law-suit belongs to the judge, and the parings to the contending parties."

The knights then went their way, while the shepherd devoured the subject of the suit with that ease, which is peculiar to judges. The duchess's equivocal gift annoyed them greatly, and when on returning home, they found that they could not lord it over their vassals and subjects so arbitrarily as before, but were forced to obey the laws, their indignation increased still more. They entered into an alliance offensive and defensive, made for themselves a faction in the country, and the numerous rebels who joined them they despatched to all the districts around, that they might cry down female government. "Oh, shame!" cried they, "that we are subject to a woman who gathers our laurels that she may twine them round her distaff. A man ought to be master of the house, not a woman, – that is man's peculiar right, – that is the custom among all people. What is an army without a duke to march in front of his warriors, but a helpless trunk without a head? Let us appoint a prince who may rule over us, and whom we may obey."

Discourses of this kind did not remain concealed from the vigilant princess. She knew, besides, whence the wind came, and what the sound of it signified; and, therefore, she called a select assembly of the deputies, stepped into the midst of them with the dignity and splendour of an earthly goddess, while her speech flowed like honey from her virgin lips. "There is a rumour in the country," said she to the assembly, "that you desire a duke, who

will lead you to battle, and that you consider it inglorious to show further obedience to me. Nevertheless, from your own free and unconfined desire, you chose from the midst of you, not a man, but one of the daughters of the people, and clothed her with the purple that she might rule over you according to the usage and custom of the country. Now, whoever can convict me of a fault in my government, let him come forward freely and openly and bear witness against me. If, however, I have administered justice after the manner of my father Crocus; if I have made the hills straight, the crooked places even, the abysses passable; if I have secured your harvests, rescued your herds from the wolf, and guarded your fruit-trees; if I have bowed the stiff-neck of the violent, aided the oppressed, and given a staff to support the weak, then, I say, it becomes you to adhere to your promise, and, according to your oath of fealty, to be faithful and true to me, and to do me good service. If you think it inglorious to serve a woman, you should have considered that before you appointed me to be your princess. If there was any thing wrong in that choice, it reverts to yourselves. However, this proceeding on your part shows that you do not understand your own interest. The female hand is soft and gentle, accustomed to raise only gentle breezes with the fan; but man's arm is sinewy and rough, heavy and oppressive, when he holds the weight of authority. Besides, do you know, that when a woman rules, the sovereignty is still in the hand of man? For she gives hearing to wise councillors; but when the distaff excludes from the throne, there is female government; for the girls, who

please the king's eyes, have possession of his heart. Reflect well, then, on what you do, that you may not repent too late of your fickleness."

The speaker from the throne was silent, a deep reverential silence prevailed in the hall of assembly, and no one ventured to utter a word against her. Nevertheless Prince Wladomir and his party did not abandon their project, but whispered among themselves: "The cunning chamois is striving not to leave the rich pasture; but the hunter's horn shall sound still louder, and scare it away." The next day they stirred up the body of knights, loudly to request the queen to choose a husband within three days, and by the choice of her heart to give the people a prince, who should share the government with her. At this sudden demand, which seemed to be the voice of the people, a virgin blush tinged the cheeks of the charming Libussa, and her bright eye saw all the rocks beneath the water, that threatened her on this occasion. Even if, according to the custom of the great world, she attempted to bring her inclinations under the sway of policy, she could, at any rate, only give her hand to one suitor, and then she saw that all the rest would regard their rejection as an insult and meditate revenge. Besides the secret vow of her heart was to her sacred and inviolable, and therefore she prudently endeavoured to avoid the pressing request of the deputies, and to make one attempt more to dissuade them altogether from having a duke. "After the death of the eagle," she said, "the feathered tribe chose the wood-pigeon for their queen, and all the birds were obedient

to her soft cooing voice. Yet, being light and airy, as is the nature of birds, they soon altered this resolution, and began to repent. The haughty peacock thought that he was more qualified to rule; the greedy hawk accustomed to chase the small birds considered it disgraceful to be subject to a dove. They therefore made for themselves a faction, and appointed the purblind owl as their spokesman to propose a new election for a king. The dull bustard, the unwieldy mountain-cock, the lazy stork, the lack-brain heron, and all the larger birds chattered and cackled loud applause, and the host of little birds from foolishness twittered, in the same manner, from hedge and bush. Then the warlike kite rose boldly into the air, and all the birds cried out, 'What a majestic flight! What a lightning glance in those rolling eyes of fire, what an expression of superiority in the hooked beak, and the widely-grasping claws! The bold, hardy kite shall be our ruler.' Scarcely had the bird of prey ascended the throne, than he displayed his activity and strength to his fellow-subjects with great tyranny and arrogance. From the larger birds he plucked their feathers, and the little singing birds he tore to pieces."

Plain as the meaning of this discourse was, it made but little impression on the minds of those who were anxious for a change of government, and the popular decision that the Lady Libussa should choose a husband within three days, remained valid. At this Prince Wladomir much rejoiced in his heart, for he now thought he should gain the lovely prize for which he had so long striven in vain. Love and ambition fired his wishes, and made

eloquent his mouth, which had hitherto only allowed itself secret sighs. He went to the court and solicited a hearing of the duchess. "Gracious sovereign of thy people and of my heart," he said, "from thee no secret is concealed, thou knowest the flames that glow in this bosom, as purely and holily as those upon the altar of the gods, and thou knowest the celestial fire that has kindled them. The time is at hand when thou must give a prince to the land, at the bidding of thy people. Can'st thou slight a heart which only lives and beats for thee? To be worthy of thee I have ventured my life and blood in raising thee to the throne of thy father. Let me have the merit of maintaining thee there by the tie of tender love; let us share the possession of the throne and of thy heart. The former shall be thine, the latter mine, and then will my happiness be exalted above the lot of mortals." The Lady Libussa deported herself in a very maiden-like manner on hearing this address, and covered her face with a veil that she might conceal the gentle blush that gave a deeper colour to her cheek. With her hand she made a sign for Prince Wladomir to withdraw, without opening her mouth, as if to consider how she should answer him with respect to his suit.

The bold knight Mizisla then announced himself and desired to be admitted. "Loveliest of the daughters of princes," he said, as he entered the audience-chamber, "the beautiful dove, the queen of the realms of air shall, as thou knowest, no more coo alone, but seek for herself a mate. The proud peacock, as the story goes, makes his varied feathers glitter in her eyes, and imagines

that he will dazzle her with their brilliancy, but she is modest and wise, and will not unite herself to the haughty peacock. The greedy hawk, once a bird of prey, has quite cast off his nature; he is good and gentle, nay without guile, for he loves the fair dove, and hopes that she will espouse him. His crooked beak and sharp claws should not mislead thee. These he needs to protect his beloved dove, that no other bird may injure her or endeavour to overthrow the seat of her dominion, for he is faithful and true, and first vowed fealty to her on the day of her elevation. Tell me then, wise princess, if the gentle dove will deign to bestow on her faithful hawk the love to which he aspires?"

The Lady Libussa did as before, made a sign for the knight also to retire, and after she had let him wait awhile called in the two suitors and said, "I owe you a debt of gratitude, noble knights, inasmuch as you both assisted me in succeeding to the Bohemian crown, which my father Crocus wore with glory. And I have not forgotten that zeal in my cause, of which you remind me. Moreover, it is not hidden from me that you virtuously love me, for your looks and actions have long expressed the feelings of your hearts. That my heart has remained closed to you, and has not given love for love, do not ascribe that to mere coyness; I did not mean to insult you, but merely to come to a right decision of a dubious matter. I weighed your merits, and the index of the balance stood still. Therefore I resolved to leave the decision of your fate to yourselves, and offered you the possession of my heart by the enigmatical apple, that I might see who had the

greatest share of wisdom and intelligence, so as to appropriate to himself the indivisible gift. Now tell me, without delay, in whose hand is the apple. Whoever has gained it from the other, let him from this hour take my throne and my heart for his prize." The two suitors looked upon each other with wonder, grew pale and were dumb. At last Prince Wladomir after a long pause broke silence and said, "The enigmas of the wise are to the foolish, a nut in a toothless mouth; a pearl which the fowl rakes out of the sand, a light in the hand of the blind. Therefore, oh, princess! be not angry that we knew neither how to use nor how to prize thy gift. Thy design, which we did not know we misinterpreted, and we thought thou hadst cast between us an apple of discord, which should incite us to feuds and combat, and therefore each of us abandoned participation in thy gift, and got rid of the fruit of contention, a sole possession of which neither of us would have left to the other."

"You have yourself uttered the judgment," said the lady; "if an apple was enough to arouse your jealousy, what battle would you have waged for a myrtle wreath that encircles a crown." With this decision she dismissed the knights, who were greatly annoyed that they had listened to the senseless arbitrator, and had thoughtlessly flung away the pledge of love, that was to have gained them the bride. They now considered, each one by himself, how they might yet carry out their plans, and by force or cunning obtain the Bohemian throne with its charming possessor.

The Lady Libussa was not inactive during the three days that were left her for deliberation, but was constantly considering how she might meet the pressing wishes of her people, give the nation a duke, and herself a husband, according to the choice of her heart. She feared that Prince Wladomir would urge his pretensions with force, or at any rate deprive her of the throne. Necessity assisted love, and inspired her with the resolution of carrying out the plan, with which, as with a pleasant dream, she had often amused herself; for, indeed, what mortal is there, whose head is not haunted by some phantom or other, at which he grasps in a vacant hour, that he may play with it as with a doll? The gift of prophecy has always been associated with a glowing fancy; consequently the fair Libussa readily listened at times to this pleasant playmate, and the agreeable confidant always entertained her with the image of the young hunter, who had made so permanent an impression on her heart. A thousand projects came into her head, which her imagination flattered her were easy and practicable. Now she had a plan of rescuing the dear youth from obscurity, placing him in the army, and advancing him from one post of honour to another; fancy would then at once fling a wreath of laurel on his brow, and lead him crowned with victory and glory to the throne, which she shared with him, delighted. Now she gave the romance another turn; she armed her favourite as a knight-errant out upon adventures, conducted him to her court, turned him into a Huon of Bordeaux, and was in no want of wonderful apparatus to endow him as

friend Oberon did his protégé. But when cool reflection again took possession of her maiden mind, and the variegated figures of the magic lantern grew pale at the bright ray of prudence, the lovely dream had vanished. She thought how great would be the risk of such a proceeding, and what mischief might befal her land and people, if jealousy and envy incited against her the hearts of the Magnates, and the alarm of discord give the signal for rebellion. She therefore carefully concealed the inclinations and wishes of her heart from the keen eye of the observer, and allowed nothing to be perceived.

However, now the people were desirous for a prince, the affair had taken another turn, and she had only to make her own wishes accord with those of the nation. She fortified her courage with manly resolution, and when the third day dawned she put on all her jewels, placing on her head the chaste crown of myrtle. Attended by her maidens, who were all adorned with wreaths of flowers, she ascended the throne full of high courage and gentle dignity. The assembly of knights and vassals around her was all ear, that it might catch from her lovely mouth the name of the fortunate prince with whom she had resolved to share her heart and throne. "Nobles of my people," said she to the assembly, "the lot of your destiny still lies untouched in the urn of concealment, and you are still as free as my horses that feed in the meadow, before bridle and bit have curbed them, and the weight of the rider and the burden of the saddle have pressed their slender back. It now behoves you to tell me, whether the

time which you have granted me for the choice of a husband has cooled the warm desire of seeing a prince ruling over you, and prompted you quietly to examine your project, or whether you still adhere unchangeably to your intention." For a moment she was silent, but the tumult among the people, the noise and whispering together with the gestures of the assembled senators, did not leave her long in uncertainty, and the speaker confirmed the ultimatum, that the decision was left to the choice of her heart. "Well!" she said, "the lot is cast; I answer for nothing. The gods have selected for the kingdom of Bohemia a prince who will wield his sceptre with wisdom and justice. The young cedar tree does not raise its head above the strong oaks; concealed among the trees of the forest it grows, surrounded by ignoble brushwood, but soon it will extend its branches so as to shade the root, and its crown will touch the clouds. Nobles of the people, select from among you a deputation of twelve honest men, to seek the prince and accompany him to the throne. My horse shall show them the path, trotting before you free and unburdened; and as a sign that you have found that which you are sent out to seek, observe that the man whom the gods have selected for your prince, will at the time when you approach him, be taking his meal at an iron table, beneath the open sky, and in the shadow of a lonely tree. To him must you pay homage, and adorn him with the signs of princely dignity. The white horse will allow him to mount his back, and bring him here to court that he may be my husband and your sovereign."

She then dismissed the assembly with the cheerful, but bashful mien, which is customary with brides when they expect the arrival of the bridegroom. All were astonished at her speech, and the prophetic spirit which peered from it rushed upon their minds like an utterance of the gods, to which the mob blindly attaches belief, and about which none but thinkers indulge in sapient opinions. The deputation was appointed, and the white horse stood in readiness, bridled and adorned with Asiatic magnificence, as if it was to bear the Grand Seignior to the mosque. The cavalcade was soon in motion, amid the concourse of curious people, who were shouting with joy, and the white horse proudly led the way. Soon, however, the train disappeared from the eyes of the spectators, and nothing was to be seen but a cloud of dust rising in the distance, for the spirited horse as soon as he came into the open country began to run as swiftly as a British racer, indeed so swiftly, that the deputation had a difficulty in following him. Although the rapid courser seemed left entirely to himself, an invisible power directed his course, guided his bridle, and spurred his sides. The Lady Libussa by the magic she had inherited from her mother, had been able so to train the horse that he neither deviated to the right or the left of his path, but with great speed hurried at once to his destination, and now when all seemed arranged so as to fulfil her wishes, she awaited with tender longing the arrival of the comer.

The deputies in the meanwhile had had a fine chase; they had already performed a journey of several miles, uphill and

downhill, they had swam through the Moldau and the Elbe, and because their stomachs reminded them of meal-time, they thought again of the wondrous table, at which their new prince, according to the words of the lady, was to be seated. On this subject they made all sorts of remarks and comments. One inconsiderate knight said to his fellows: "Methinks our lady duchess has sent us to make April fools of us, for who ever heard of a man in Bohemia that dined at an iron table. What do you lay that our rash undertaking will bring us any thing besides jeering and mockery?" But another, who was more intelligent, thought that the iron table might have a symbolical meaning, and that they would perhaps meet with some knight-errant reposing under a tree, after the fashion of the wandering brotherhood, and serving up his frugal meal on his brazen shield. A third said jestingly:

"I fear that our way will take us straight down to the workshop of the Cyclops, and that we shall have to take back to our Venus the lame Vulcan or one of his mates, who makes a table of his anvil."

Discussing in this fashion they saw their leader, the white horse, which had considerably the start of them, trot across a newly ploughed field, and, to their surprise, stop by a ploughman. They flew at once to the spot, and found a peasant sitting on a plough, which had been turned upside down, beneath the shade of a wild pear tree, and eating his black bread from an iron ploughshare, which he used as a table. He seemed pleased with the beautiful horse, treated him kindly, and offered him a bit of

his meal, and which he eat out of his hand. The ambassadors were very much astonished at this sight, but nevertheless none of them doubted that they had found their man. They approached him with reverence, and the eldest taking up the discourse said:

"The Duchess of Bohemia has sent us to thee, and bids us announce to thee that it is the will and decree of the gods that thou shalt exchange that plough for the throne of this territory, and that goad for the sceptre. She chooses thee for her husband, that with her thou mayst rule over Bohemia."

The young peasant thought they were making game of him, which seemed to him very *mal-à-propos*, especially as he thought they had fathomed the secret of his heart, and were come to scoff at his weakness. He, therefore, answered somewhat haughtily, in order to return scorn for scorn:

"Let us see whether your duchy is worthy of this plough? If the prince cannot satisfy his hunger, drink more merrily, nor sleep more soundly than the peasant, it is certainly not worth the trouble to change this fruitful field for the land of Bohemia, or this smooth ox-goad for a sceptre; – for tell me, will not a salt-cellar as well season my morsel as a bushel?"

Upon this one of the twelve remarked: "The mole shunning the light, grovels for the worms under ground, that he may support himself, for he has not eyes that can endure the beam of day, nor feet that are made to run like those of the swift roe; the scaly crab crawls in the mud of the lakes and marshes, loves best to dwell among the roots of the trees and brushwood on the river

side, for he lacks fins to swim; and the domestic cock, kept in the poultry-yard, does not venture to fly over the low wall, for he is too timid to trust himself to his wings, like the up-soaring kite. Now if eyes are given for seeing, feet for walking, fins for swimming, and wings for flying, thou wilt not grovel in the earth like a mole, hide in the marsh like an unwieldy crab, or, like the lord of poultry, be content to crow on a dunghill, but thou wilt come forward into the light of day, run, swim, or fly to the clouds, accordingly as nature has endowed thee with her gifts. For an active man is not content with being what he is, but strives to become what he can be. Therefore try to be that which the gods have appointed thee, and then thou wilt be able to judge whether or not the land of Bohemia is worth a field in exchange."

This serious discourse of the delegate, in which nothing of a jesting nature was to be perceived, and still more the insignia of princely dignity – the purple raiment, the staff of government, and the golden sword, which the ambassadors produced as vouchers and testimonials of their true mission – at last overcame the mistrust of the doubting ploughman. At once his soul became enlightened; and the transporting thought was awakened in him, that the Lady Libussa had divined the feelings of his heart, had perceived his constancy and fidelity, by the aid of her faculty to discover what was hidden, and had determined to reward them in a manner which he would never have hoped for even in a dream. The gift of prophecy promised to him by his oracle came again into his mind, and he reflected that this promise must be

accomplished now or never. He quickly seized his hazel staff, set it deep in the field, heaped loose earth about it, as one does when one plants trees, and behold, the staff was immediately decked with buds, and shot forth sprouts and branches covered with leaves and flowers. Two of the verdant boughs faded, and their dry foliage became a sport for the winds, but the third grew with so much the greater strength, and its fruits ripened. The spirit of prophecy then descended on the rapt ploughman, and, opening his lips, he spoke thus:

"Messengers of the Princess Libussa and of the Bohemian people, hear the words of Premislas, the son of Mnatha, the honourable knight, to whom, touched by the spirit of prophecy, the clouds of the future are opened. You call upon the man who was guiding his plough to take the management of your principality before his daily work is finished. Ah, would that the plough had surrounded the field with its furrows as far as the boundary stone, for then Bohemia would have been an independent land for ever! Now that you have too soon disturbed the work of the ploughman, the boundaries of your land will be the portion and inheritance of a neighbour, and your remote posterity will cleave to him in indissoluble union. The three branches of the verdant staff promise your princess three sons. Two of them will fade away as immature shoots, but the third will inherit the throne, and through him will the fruit of later descendants be ripened, until the eagle shall fly over the mountains and nestle in the land, and then fly away to return as

unto his own possession. If then the son of the gods[6] shall come forth, who is a friend to the ploughman, and frees him from his slavish chains – then mark him, posterity, for thou wilt have cause to bless thy fate. He, when he has trodden under foot the serpent of superstition, will stretch out his hand towards the increasing moon to pluck it from the heavens, that he himself may illumine the world as a beneficent star."

The venerable deputation stood in silent reverence, staring at the prophet like so many dunces; it seemed as though a god was speaking in him. But he turned away from the deputies to the companions of his wearisome toil – the two white oxen, loosened them from the yoke, and set them at liberty, upon which they bounded merrily about the grassy field, then visibly faded away, as light clouds melt into air, and finally vanished completely. Premislas now took off his rustic wooden shoes, and went to wash himself in the neighbouring brook. Costly garments were put on him, he girded himself with the sword in knightly fashion, and had the golden spurs fastened. He then sprang upon the white horse which allowed him to mount with docility. As he was just on the point of quitting the estate he had hitherto possessed, he told the deputies to carry after him the wooden shoes, which he had now put off, and preserve them as a testimony that the humblest of the people had once been raised to the highest rank in Bohemia, and as a *memento* that he and his posterity might not presume upon the rank he had acquired, but, mindful of their

[6] An allusion to the Emperor Joseph II.

origin, might honour and protect the peasant class from which they had sprung. Hence arose the old custom of exhibiting to the kings of Bohemia a pair of shoes on the day of their coronation – a custom which was observed until the race of Premislas became extinct. The hazel itself, which had been planted, grew and bore fruit, spreading its roots widely around, and sending forth new shoots until at last the whole field was turned into a wood of hazel trees, which proved most advantageous to the neighbouring village in whose land this district was included. For, in commemoration of this wonderful planting, the kings of Bohemia granted a charter to this community, that they should never be obliged to contribute more in the way of taxes than one pint of hazel-nuts. This important privilege, according to report, their descendants enjoy to the present day.

Although the horse, which now bore the bridegroom to his fair owner, seemed to outstrip the winds, Premislas made him sometimes feel the golden spurs to accelerate him still more. The speed of the courser, swift as it was, did not appear to him more so than the pace of a tortoise, so anxious was he to look once more on the face of the fair Libussa, whose form, though seven years had elapsed, still floated before him fresh and charming. He now looked forward, not to gaze vainly upon her, as upon a rare anemone in the varied garden of a florist, but to a happy union of victorious love. He thought only of the myrtle crown, which, in the estimation of lovers, stands far above the crown of kings, and if he had weighed dignity and love one against

the other, the land of Bohemia without the Lady Libussa would have kicked the beam like a clipped ducat in a money-changer's balance.

The sun was just setting when the new prince was led in triumph into Vizegrad. The Lady Libussa was in her garden, where she had filled a little basket with ripe plums, when the arrival of her future husband was announced. She approached modestly with all the maidens of her court, received him as a bridegroom bestowed upon her by the gods, and concealed the choice of her heart by an apparent resignation to the will of the invisible powers. The eyes of all the court were directed with great curiosity towards the newcomer, but they saw nothing in him more than a handsome slender young man. As for his external appearance there were several courtiers who could vie with him in their thoughts, and who could not understand why the gods had despised the anti-chamber and had not rather selected from themselves a rosy-cheeked champion instead of the sun-burnt ploughman, as a husband and partner in dominion for the young princess. With Prince Wladomir and the knight Mizisla it was especially obvious that they gave up their claims unwillingly. Hence it was now the care of the princess to justify the work of the gods, and to declare that Squire Premislas made amends for his deficiency on the score of brilliant extraction by his intellect and acuteness. She had caused a noble meal to be prepared, not in the least inferior to that with which the hospitable Queen Dido formerly entertained the pious Eneas. After the cup of welcome

had passed readily from mouth to mouth, the gifts of the joy-bestirring Bacchus had inspired cheerfulness and good humour, and part of the night had already past in jest and pastime, she suggested a game at riddles, and because the divination of things concealed was her peculiar forte, she resolved the riddles that were proposed to the satisfaction of all present.

When it was her turn to propose, she called Prince Wladomir, the Knight Mizisla, and Squire Premislas to her, and said: "Now, my friends, set about solving a riddle, which I will propose, that it may be apparent which is the wisest and cleverest among you. I have destined for each of you, out of this basket, a gift of the plums, which I have picked in my garden. One of you shall have half of them and one more, the second shall again have half and one more, and the third shall again have half and three more. Supposing now that the basket is thus emptied, tell me how many plums are in it now."

The hasty knight, Mizisla, measured the fruit-basket with his eyes – not the sense of the problem with his understanding – and said: "That which can be solved by the sword I will solve readily, but thy riddles, gracious princess, are rather too subtle for me. Nevertheless, in accordance with thy wishes, I will make a venture at random. I guess that if the plums be well counted, they will be found to amount to three score."

"Thou hast made a mistake, dear knight," answered the Lady Libussa. "If there were as many more, half as many more, and a third as many more, as the basket contains now and five more

added to that, the number would by so much exceed three score as it is now short of it."

Prince Wladomir calculated slowly and laboriously, as if the post of general controller of the finances were the reward for solving the riddle, and at last gave out five-and-forty as the value of the renowned number. The lady then said:

"If there were a third as many more, half as many more, and a sixth as many more as there are now, there would then be in my basket as much more than forty-five as there now are under that number."

Although the very commonest hand at figures, would have deciphered the problem without trouble; nevertheless, for a bad calculation the gift of divination is absolutely indispensable, if he would come off with honour, and not appear ridiculous. Now as this gift had been fortunately communicated to the wise Premislas, it cost him neither ingenuity nor exertion to discover the solution of the riddle.

"Intimate associate of the heavenly powers," he said, "whoever undertakes to discover thy high-soaring and divine meaning, ventures to fly after the eagle, when he hides himself in the clouds. Nevertheless, I will follow thy secret flight as far as the eye, which is illumined by thee, can reach. I decide that the plums thou hast concealed in the basket are thirty in number, – neither more nor less."

The lady looked at him kindly and said; "Thou hast traced the glimmering spark that lies deep in the ashes, and light gleams

upon thee out of mist and darkness; thou hast guessed my riddle."

She then opened the basket, counted out fifteen plums into Prince Wladomir's hat with one more, and there remained fourteen. Of these she gave seven to the Knight Mizisla with one more, and six remained in the basket. The half of these she awarded to the wise Premislas, then gave him the three others, and the basket was empty. The whole court was amazed at the arithmetical wisdom of the fair Libussa, and the acuteness of her clever bridegroom. No one could comprehend how human intellect was able on the one hand to bind a common number so enigmatically in words, and on the other to pick out such an ingenious mystery with such perfect confidence. The lady awarded the empty basket to the two knights, who could not obtain her love, as a memorial of a terminated amour. Hence arises the custom, which exists to the present time, of saying that a rejected lover has received a *basket* from his mistress.[7]

When all was in readiness for the homage, and the nuptials, both these ceremonies were celebrated with great pomp. The Bohemian people had now a duke, and the fair Libussa a husband, both to their heart's content, and what was most surprising this result was brought about by trickery, which does not generally bear the reputation of being the most skilful negotiator. If one of the two parties had been deceived, certainly it was not the sage Libussa, but the people, as indeed is frequently

[7] The expression "Einen Korb bekommen," to meet with a refusal, is familiar to every reader of German.

the case. The land of Bohemia had nominally a duke, but in point of fact the government remained in a female hand as before. Premislas was a perfect pattern of a docile obedient husband, who did not dispute the rule of his wife, either in the household or the state. His thoughts and wishes sympathised as perfectly with her own, as two similarly tuned strings, of which the untouched one spontaneously repeats the sound, which the louder one has uttered. Libussa had not, however, the proud, vain disposition of those ladies who wish to pass for great matches, and are always superciliously reminding the poor wight, whose fortune they think they have made, of his wooden shoes; but she imitated the celebrated Queen of Palmyra, and governed by the superiority of her talents, as Zenobia managed her good-natured Odenatus.

The happy pair lived in the enjoyment of unchanging love, according to the fashion of that time, when the instinct which unites hearts was as firm and durable as the cement and mortar which renders the walls of the old world so firm and indestructible. Duke Premislas now became one of the most doughty knights of his age, and the Bohemian court one of the most brilliant in Germany. A large number of knights and nobles, as well as a great concourse of common people gradually assembled from all parts of the territory. The consequence was, that the court-city became too narrow for the inhabitants, and therefore Libussa called her people in office to her, and ordered them to build a city on the spot where they should find a man who knew how to make the wisest use of teeth at noon. They

went out and found at the appointed time a man who was busied in sawing a block asunder. They decided that this industrious person made an incomparably better use of the teeth of his saw at noon than the parasite made of the teeth in his jaws at the table of the great, and they did not doubt that they had found the place which the princess had appointed for the foundation of the new city. They therefore drew the ploughshare round the field to mark the compass of the city wall. On asking the working man what he intended to make out of the piece of wood he was cutting, he answered: "Prah," which in the Bohemian tongue signifies the threshold of a door. Libussa therefore called the new city Praha, that is Prague, the well-known royal city on the Moldau in Bohemia. The prediction of Premislas concerning his posterity was punctually fulfilled. His wife became mother of three princes, two of whom died in their youth, while the third grew to man's estate, and from him sprung a brilliant race of kings, who flourished on the Bohemian throne for ages.

THE CRIMINAL FROM LOST HONOUR

BY FRIEDRICH SCHILLER

In the whole history of man there is no chapter more instructive for the heart and mind than the annals of his errors. On the occasion of every great crime a proportionally great force was in motion. If by the pale light of ordinary emotions the play of the desiring faculty is concealed, in the situation of strong passion it becomes the more striking, the more colossal, the more audible, and the acute investigator of humanity, who knows how much may be properly set down to the account of the mechanism of the ordinary freedom of the will, and how far it is allowable to reason by analogy, will be able from this source to gather much fresh experience for his psychology, and to render it applicable to moral life.

The human heart is something so uniform and at the same time so compound! One and the same faculty or desire may play in a thousand forms and directions, may produce a thousand contradictory phenomena, may appear differently mingled in a thousand characters, and a thousand dissimilar characters and actions might be spun out of one kind of inclination, though the

particular man, about whom the question was raised, might have no suspicion of such affinity. If, as for the other kingdoms of nature, a Linnæus for the human race were to arise, who could classify according to inclinations and impulses, how great would be the empire, when many a person whose vices are now stifled in a narrow social sphere, and in the close confines of the law, was found in the same order with the monster Borgia.

Considered from this point of view, the usual mode of treating history is open to much objection, and herein, I think, lies the difficulty, owing to which the study of history has always been so unfruitful for civil life. Between the vehement emotions of the man in action, and the quiet mind of the reader, to whom the action is presented, there is such a repelling contrast, such a wide interval, that it is difficult, nay, impossible for the latter, even to suspect a connexion. A gap remains between the subject of the history and the reader which cuts off all possibility of comparison or application, and which, instead of awakening that wholesome alarm, that warns too secure health, merely calls forth the shake of the head denoting suspicion. We regard the unhappy person, who was still a man as much as ourselves, both when he committed the act and when he atoned for it, as a creature of another species, whose blood flows differently from our own, and whose will does not obey the same regulations as our own. His fate teaches us but little, as sympathy is only founded on an obscure consciousness of similar peril, and we are far removed even from the bare suspicion of such similarity. The relation

being lost, instruction is lost with it, and history, instead of being a school of cultivation, must rest content with the humble merit of having satisfied our curiosity. If it is to become any thing more and attain its great purpose, it must choose one of these two plans: either the reader must become as warm as the hero, or the hero must become as cold as the reader.

I am aware that many of the best historians, both of ancient and modern times, have adhered to the first method, and have gained the heart of their reader, by a style which carries him along with the subject. But this is an usurpation on the part of the author, and an infringement on the republican freedom of the reading public, which is itself entitled to sit in judgment: it is at the same time a violation of the law of boundaries, since this method belongs exclusively and properly to the orator and the poet. The last method is alone open to the historian.

The hero then must be as cold as the reader or – what comes to the same thing – we must become acquainted with him before he begins to act; we must see him not only perform, but will his action. His thoughts concern us infinitely more than his deeds, and the sources of his thoughts still more than the consequences of his deeds. The soil of Vesuvius has been explored to discover the origin of its eruption; and why is less attention paid to a moral than to a physical phenomenon? Why do we not equally regard the nature and situation of the things which surround a certain man, until the tinder collected within him takes fire? The dreamer, who loves the wonderful is charmed by the singularity

and wonder of such a phenomenon; but the friend of truth seeks a mother for these lost children. He seeks her in the unalterable structure of the human soul, and in the variable conditions by which it is influenced from without, and by searching both these he is sure to find her. He is now no more astonished to see the poisonous hemlock thriving in that bed, in every other part of which wholesome herbs are growing, to find wisdom and folly, virtue and vice, together in the same cradle.

Not to mention any of the advantages which psychology derives from such a method of treating history, this method has alone the preference, because it uproots the cruel scorn and proud security with which erect and untempted virtue commonly looks down upon the fallen, because it diffuses the mild spirit of toleration, without which no fugitive can return, no reconciliation between the law and its offender is possible, no infected member of society can escape utter mortification.

Had the criminal of whom I am now about to speak a right to appeal to that spirit of toleration? Was he really lost for the body of the state, without a possibility of redemption? I will not anticipate the reader's verdict. Our leniency will no more avail him, since he perished by the hand of the executioner, but the dissection of his crime will perhaps instruct humanity, and possibly instruct justice also.

Christian Wolf was the son of an innkeeper in a provincial town (the name of which must be concealed for reasons which will be obvious in the sequel), and, his father being dead, he

assisted his mother in the business till his twentieth year. The business was bad, and Wolf had many an idle hour. Even from his school days he was notorious as a loose kind of fellow. Grown up girls complained of his audacity, and the lads of the town reverenced his inventive powers. Nature had neglected his person. A little insignificant figure, curly hair of an unpleasant blackness, a flat nose, and a swollen upper lip, which had been moreover put out of its place by the kick of a horse, gave a repulsiveness to his appearance, which scared all the women away from him, and afforded abundant material for the wit of his comrades.

Obstinately did he endeavour to gain what had been denied him; because he was unpleasant he determined to please. He was sensual, and persuaded himself that he was in love. The girl whom he chose ill-treated him; he had reason to fear his rivals were more fortunate; nevertheless the girl was poor. A heart that was closed to his endearments might possibly open to his presents, but he himself was oppressed by want, and his vain endeavour to produce an effective exterior absorbed the small gains of his miserable business. Too indolent and too ignorant to restore his dilapidated affairs by speculation, too proud, and also too delicate to exchange the condition of master which he had hitherto held, for that of peasant, he saw but one path before him – a path which thousands before and after him have taken with better success – that of stealing honestly. His native town bordered on a wood, which belonged to the sovereign;

he turned poacher, and the profits of his depredations were faithfully placed in the hands of his mistress.

Among the lovers of Johanna was Robert, a huntsman in the service of the forester. This man soon perceived the advantage which had been gained over him by the liberality of his rival, and filled with envy, he investigated the source of this change. He appeared more frequently at the Sun – this was the sign of the inn – and his watchful eye, sharpened by envy and jealousy, soon showed him whence the money had been procured. A short time before, a severe edict had been revived against poachers, condemning transgressors to the house of correction. Robert was unwearied in observing the secret paths of his rival, and finally succeeded in catching the unwary man in the very fact. Wolf was apprehended, and it was only by the sacrifice of all his property, that he was able – and then with difficulty – to escape the awarded punishment by a fine.

Robert triumphed. His rival was beaten out of the field, and Johanna's favour was at an end, now he was a beggar. Wolf knew his enemy, and this enemy was the happy possessor of Johanna. An oppressive feeling of want was combined with offended pride, necessity and jealousy raged together against his sensitiveness, hunger drove him out upon the wide world, revenge and passion held him fast. For a second time he turned poacher, but Robert's redoubled vigilance was again too much for him. Now he experienced all the severity of the law, for he had nothing more to give, and in a few weeks he was consigned to the house

of correction attached to the capital.

This year of punishment had passed, absence had increased his passion, and his stubbornness had become greater under the weight of his misfortune. Scarcely had he regained his freedom than he hastened to the place of his birth to show himself to his Johanna. He appeared, and all shunned him. Pressing necessity at last subdued his pride, and overcame his sense of personal weakness, – he offered himself to the opulent of the place, as willing to serve for daily hire. The farmer shrugged his shoulders as he saw the weakly looking creature, and the stout bony frame of a rival applicant was decisive against him in the mind of the unfeeling patron. He made one effort more. One office was still left – the very last post of an honest name. He applied for the vacant place of herdsman of the town, but the peasant would not trust his pigs to a scape-grace. Frustrated in every effort, rejected at every place, he became a poacher for the third time, and for a third time had the misfortune of falling into the hands of his watchful enemy.

The double relapse had increased the magnitude of the offence. The judges looked into the book of laws, but not into the criminal's state of mind. The decree against poachers required a solemn and exemplary satisfaction; and Wolf was condemned to work for three years in the fortification, with the mark of the gallows branded on his back.

This period also had elapsed, and he quitted the fortification, a very different man from the man he was when he entered it. Here

began a new epoch in his life. Let us hear him speak himself, as he afterwards confessed to his spiritual adviser, and before the court. "I entered the fortification," he said, "as an erring man, and I left it – a villain. I had still possessed something in the world which was dear to me, and my pride had bowed down under shame. When I was brought to the fortification, I was confined with three and twenty prisoners, two of whom were murderers, while all the rest were notorious thieves and vagabonds. They scoffed at me, when I spoke of God, and encouraged me to utter all sorts of blasphemies against the Redeemer. Obscene songs were sung in my presence, which, graceless fellow as I was, I could not hear without disgust and horror; and what I saw done, was still more revolting to my sense of decency. There was not a day in which some career of shame was not repeated, in which some evil project was not hatched. At first I shunned these people, and avoided their discourse as much as possible; but I wanted the sympathy of some fellow creature, and the barbarity of my keepers had even denied me my dog. The labour was hard and oppressive, my body weak; I wanted assistance, and, if I must speak out, I wanted compassion also, and this I was forced to purchase with the last remains of my conscience. Thus did I ultimately become inured to what was most detestable, and in the quarter of the year I had surpassed my instructors.

"I now thirsted after the day of liberty, as I thirsted after revenge. All men had offended me, for all were better and happier than me. I considered myself the martyr of natural rights,

the victim of the law. Grinding my teeth, I rubbed my chains, when the sun rose behind the mountain on which the fortification stood; – a wide prospect is a two-fold hell for a prisoner. The free breeze that whistled through the loop-holes of my tower, the swallow that perched on the iron bar of my grating, seemed to insult me with their liberty, and made my confinement the more hideous. Then I swore a fierce, unconquerable hate against all that resembles man, and faithfully have I kept my oath.

"My first thought, as soon as I was free, was my native town. Little as I had to hope there for my future support, much was promised to my hunger for revenge. My heart beat more wildly as I saw the church-steeple rise in the distance from the wood. It was no more that heartfelt comfort, which I felt, when first I returned thither. The remembrance of all the afflictions, all the persecutions which I had suffered then roused me at once from a frightful torpor; every wound bled afresh, every scar was opened. I quickened my steps, for I walked in the thought of terrifying my enemy by my sudden appearance, and I now thirsted as much after new humiliation as I had before trembled at it.

"The bells were ringing for vespers, while I stood in the middle of the market. The congregation was thronging to church. I was now recognised, and every one who came near me shyly shrank back. I was always very fond of little children, and even now, by an involuntary impulse, I gave a groschen to a boy who was skipping by me. The boy stared at me for a moment, and then flung the groschen into my face. Had my blood been cooler I

should have remembered that the beard, which I had brought with me from the fortification, disfigured my face in the most frightful manner, but my bad heart had infected my reason. Tears, such as I had never shed, ran down my cheeks.

"'The boy does not know who I am, nor whence I come,' I now said to myself, half aloud, 'and yet he shuns me like some noxious beast. Have I any mark on my forehead, or have I ceased to look like a man because I can no longer love one?' The contempt of this boy wounded me more bitterly than three years' service in the galleys, for I had done him a kindness, and could not charge him with personal hatred.

"I sat down in a timber-yard opposite the church. What I actually desired I do not know, but this I know, that I rose with indignation; when, of all my acquaintance that passed, not one would give me a greeting. Deeply offended, I left the spot to seek a lodging, when just as I was turning the corner of a street I ran against my Johanna. 'The host of the Sun!' she cried aloud, and made a movement to embrace me. 'Thou returned, dear host of the Sun – God be praised!' Her attire bespoke misery and hunger, her aspect denoted the abandoned condition to which she had sunk. I quickly surmised what had happened; some of the prince's dragoons who had met me, made me guess that there was a garrison in the town. 'Soldier's wench!' cried I, and laughing, I turned my back upon her. I felt comforted that in the rank of living beings there was still one creature below me. I had never loved her.

"My mother was dead, my creditors had paid themselves with my small house. I had lost every body and every thing. All the world shunned me as though I were venomous, but I had at last forgotten shame. Before, I had retired from the sight of men because contempt was unendurable. Now I obtruded myself upon them, and felt delight in scaring them. I was easy because I had nothing more to lose, and nothing more to guard. I no more needed any good quality, because none believed I could have any.

"The whole world lay open before me, and in some strange province I might have passed for an honest man, but I had lost the spirit even to appear one. Despair and shame had at last forced this mood upon me. It was the last refuge that was left me, to learn to do without honour, because I had no longer a claim to it. Had my pride and vanity survived my degradation, I must have destroyed myself.

"What I had actually resolved upon was yet unknown even to myself. I had to be sure a dark remembrance that I wished to do something bad. I wished to merit my fate. The laws, I thought, were beneficial to the world, and therefore I embraced the determination of violating them. Formerly I had sinned from necessity and levity, now it was from free choice, and for my own pleasure.

"My first plan was to continue my poaching. Hunting altogether had gradually become a passion with me, and besides I was forced to live some way. But this was not all; I was tickled at the thought of scorning the princely edict, and of injuring

my sovereign to the utmost of my power. I no more feared apprehension, for I had a bullet ready for my discoverer, and I knew that I should not miss my man. I killed all the game that came across me, a small quantity of which I sold on the border, but the greater part I left to rot. I lived miserably, that I might be able to afford powder and ball. My devastations in the great hunt were notorious, but suspicion no longer touched me. My aspect dissipated it: my name was forgotten.

"This kind of life lasted for several months. One morning I had, as usual rambled through the wood, to follow the track of a deer. I had wearied myself for two hours in vain, and was already beginning to give up my prey as lost, when I suddenly discovered it within gun-shot. I was about to take aim and fire, when I was suddenly startled by the appearance of a hat which lay on the ground a few paces before me. I looked closer, and discovered the huntsman Robert, who from behind the thick trunk of an oak tree was levelling his gun at the very animal which I had designed to shoot. At this sight a deadly coldness passed through my bones. Here was the man whom I detested more than any living thing, and this man within reach of my bullet. At the moment I felt as if the whole world depended on the firing of my gun, and the hatred of my whole life seemed concentrated in the tip of the finger that was to give the fatal pressure to the trigger. An invisible fatal hand was suspended over me, the index of my destiny pointed irrevocably to this black minute. My arm trembled, when I allowed my gun the fatal choice, my teeth

chattered as in an ague fit, and my breath, with a suffocating sensation, was confined in my lungs. For the duration of one minute did the barrel of the gun waver uncertainly between the man and the deer, one minute – and one more – and yet one more. It was a doubtful and obstinate contest between revenge and conscience, but revenge gained the victory, and the huntsman lay dead on the ground.

"My gun fell as it had been fired. 'Murderer,' I stammered out slowly – the wood was as silent as a churchyard, and I could hear plainly that I said 'murderer.' When I drew nearer, the man had died. Long did I stand speechless before the corse, when a shrill burst of laughter came as a relief. 'Will you keep counsel now, friend?' said I, and boldly stepping up to the murdered man, I turned round his face towards myself. His eyes were wide open. I was serious, and again became suddenly still. An extraordinary feeling took possession of me.

"Hitherto I had sinned on account of my disgrace, but now something had happened for which I had not yet atoned. An hour before, I think, no man could have persuaded me that there was any thing under heaven worse than myself, whereas, now I began to suspect that my condition an hour before was, perhaps, an enviable one.

"God's judgments did not occur to me, – but I had a dim recollection of sword and cord, and the execution of an infanticide which I saw while a school-boy. There was something peculiarly terrible to me in the thought that my life from this

moment had become forfeit. More I do not recollect. My first wish was that Robert was still living. I endeavoured forcibly to recall to my mind all the wrong that the deceased had done me during his life, – but strange to say, my memory seemed to have perished. I could recall nothing of that, which a quarter of an hour before had impelled me to madness. I did not understand how I had been induced to commit this murder.

"I was yet standing by the corpse. The crack of some whips, and the noise of carts, which were passing through the wood, brought me to my senses. The deed had been committed scarcely a quarter of a mile from the high road, and I was forced to think of my own safety.

"Unintentionally I strayed deeper into the wood. On the way, it struck me that the deceased once possessed a watch. I needed money to reach the border – and yet I lacked courage to return to the spot, where the dead man lay. A thought of the devil and of an omnipotence of the deity began to terrify me. However, I summoned all my audacity, and resolved to set all hell at defiance. I returned to the place. I found what I had expected, and also money amounting to rather more than a dollar in a green purse. Just as I was about to put them both up, I suddenly stopped, and began to reflect. It was no fit of shame, nor was it the fear of increasing my crime by plunder. I believe it was out of a spirit of defiance that I flung away the watch, and only kept half the money. I wished to be taken for a personal enemy of the murdered man, but not for one who had robbed him.

"I now fled deeper into the wood, which I knew extended four German miles to the north, and there touched the border of the country. Till noon I ran breathless. The rapidity of my flight had dissipated the anguish of my conscience, but the return of that anguish was frightful, when my strength more and more declined. A thousand hideous forms passed before me, and struck into my heart, like sharp knives. Between a life filled with an increasing terror of death, and a violent end, the awful choice was now left me – and choose I must. I had not the heart to quit the world by self-destruction, and I was terrified at the prospect of remaining in it. Fixed as it were between the certain torments of life, and the uncertain terrors of eternity – unable to live or to die – I passed the sixth hour of my flight – an hour brimful of horrors, such as no living man could narrate.

"Slowly – absorbed in myself, and with my hat unconsciously slouched over my face, as if I wished to conceal myself from the eye of inanimate nature, – I had insensibly followed a narrow path, which led me through the deepest part of the thicket – when suddenly a rough imperious voice called to me, 'stop.' The voice was quite close; my abstraction and the slouched hat had prevented me from looking round. I raised my eyes and saw a wild man, armed with a great knotted club, approaching me. His figure was almost gigantic – at least my first surprise made me think so – and the colour of his skin was a yellow mulatto sort of black, with which the whiteness of a squinting eye stood in terrible contrast. Instead of a girdle he had a thick rope wound

twice round a green woollen coat, in which were stuck a broad knife and a pistol. The cry was repeated, and a powerful arm held me fast. The sound of a man had frightened me, but the aspect of a villain gave me new heart. In my present situation, I had cause to tremble before every honest man, but none to tremble before a robber.

"'Who is there?' said the apparition.

"'One like yourself,' was my answer, 'if you really correspond to your appearance.'

"'That is not the way out? What are you looking for here?'

"'What is that to you?' retorted I, insolently.

"The man considered me twice from top to toe. It seemed as though he wished to compare my figure with his own, and my answer with my figure. 'You speak as rudely as a beggar,' he said at last.

"'Perhaps so. I was a beggar yesterday.'

"The man laughed. 'One could swear you did not want to pass for any thing better now.'

"'For something worse then.' – I wished to proceed.

"'Softly friend, why in such a hurry? What time have you to lose?'

"I reflected for a moment. How the words came to my tongue I do not know. 'Life is short,' said I, slowly, 'and hell lasts for ever!'

"He stared at me. 'May I be d – d,' he said at last, 'if thou hast not brushed close by a gallows.'

"'Very possibly. So good bye for the present, comrade!'

"'*Topp*, comrade!' he cried, as he drew a tin flask out of his hunting-pouch, took a good draught from it, and handed it to me. Flight and anguish had exhausted my energies, and nothing had passed my lips the whole day. I had already feared that I should have sunk from exhaustion in this wood, where no refreshment was to be expected for three miles round. Judge how joyfully I responded to this health. With the animating draught new strength flowed into my bones, new courage into my heart, and I felt hope and the love of life. I began to think that perhaps I was not quite wretched; so much at least was the welcome beverage all to do. Yes, I must even confess that my situation approached that of happiness, for at last, after a thousand vain hopes, I had found a creature who seemed similar to myself. In the condition to which I had fallen I should have drank good fellowship with the spirit of evil himself for the sake of having a confidant.

"The man had stretched himself out on the grass. I did the same.

"'Your liquor has done me good,' said I. 'We must become acquainted.'

"He struck fire to light his pipe.

"'Have you carried on this business long?'

"He looked hard at me. 'What do you mean by that?'

"'Has this often been stained with blood?' I drew the knife from his girdle.

"'Who are you?' said he, in a fearful tone, and he laid down his pipe.

"'A murderer like you, but only a beginner.'

"The man stared at me, and took up his pipe again. 'Do you reside here?' he said at last.

"'Three miles off. I am the host of the Sun at – , of whom perhaps you have heard.'

"The man sprung up as if possessed. 'The poacher Wolf,' he cried hastily.

"'The same!'

"'Welcome, comrade, welcome!' cried he, and shook my hands violently. 'That is brave, that I have you at last, mine host of the Sun. Day and night have I been thinking how to get you. I know you well. I know all. I have reckoned on you long ago.'

"'Reckoned on me! For what?'

"'The whole country round is full of you. You have enemies! A bailiff has oppressed you, Wolf! They have ruined you, and the wrongs you have suffered cry aloud to Heaven.'

"The man became warm. 'Because you have shot a few hogs, which the prince feeds in our fields they have dragged you about for years in the house of correction and the fortification, they have robbed you of your house and business and made you a beggar. Has it come to this, brother, that a man is worth no more than a hare? Are we not better than brutes of the field? And a fellow like you could suffer that?'

"'Could I alter it?'

"'That we shall see. But tell me, whence do you come, and what do you purpose?'

"I began to tell him all my history. The man, without waiting till I had finished it, sprung up with joyous impatience, and drew me after him. 'Come, brother host of the Sun,' said he, 'now you are ripe, now I have you when I wanted you. I shall get honour by you. Follow me.'

"'Where will you take me?'

"'Do not stop to ask, but follow.' He then forcibly dragged me along.

"We had proceeded about a quarter of a mile. The wood became more and more steep, pathless and wild, neither of us uttered a word, until at last my leader's whistle startled me out of my meditations. I raised my eyes, we were standing on the edge of a steep rock, which was bowed down into a deep cleft. A second whistle answered from the interior hollow of the rock, and a ladder slowly rose from the abyss, as of its own accord. My conductor descended first, and told me to wait till he returned. 'I must first chain up my dog,' said he, 'you are strange here, and the beast would tear you to pieces.'

"I now stood alone before the abyss, and well I knew that I was alone. The improvidence of my leader did not escape my attention. It only required a hearty resolution to draw up the ladder; then I should have been free, and my flight would have been secure. I confess that I perceived that. I looked down into the abyss, which was now to receive me, and it dimly reminded me of the descent into hell, from which there is no redemption. I began to shudder at the career I was about to enter; only a

rapid flight could save me. I resolved on this flight; I had already stretched my hand towards the ladder, but at once there was a thunder in my ears, a noise about me like the scornful laughter of hell, and it seemed to say: 'What can a murderer risk?' My arm fell back as if paralysed. I had reckoned rightly, the time for repentance had passed, the murder I had committed lay towering up behind me like a rock, and cut off my retreat for ever. At the same time my conductor re-appeared and told me I might come. There was now no longer any choice. I clambered down.

"We had proceeded some steps, beneath the wall of the rock, when the ground became wider and some huts were visible. In the midst of these was a round grass plat, on which about eighteen or twenty persons were lying round a charcoal fire. 'Here comrades,' said my conductor, placing me in the centre of the circle. 'Our host of the Sun! Bid him welcome!'

"'The host of the Sun!' cried all at once, and they all – men and women – rose and pressed round me. Shall I confess it. The joy was hearty and unaffected, confidence, nay, esteem appeared in every face; one pressed my hand, another familiarly shook me by my coat – the whole scene resembled that at the re-appearance of an old and valued friend. My arrival had interrupted the feast, which they had just begun. They now continued it, and invited me to pledge the welcome. Game of all kinds formed the meal, and the wine flask passed without flagging from hand to hand. Good cheer and unity seemed to animate the entire band, and the contest among them all was who should show the most

extravagant delight at my arrival.

"They had seated me between two women, which was the post of honour at the table. I expected to find the refuse of their sex, but how great was my astonishment when I discovered among this infamous troop the most beautiful female forms that my eyes had ever beheld. Margaret, the eldest and most beautiful of the two, was called Miss, and could scarcely have been five-and-twenty. Her words were very bold, and her gestures still more so. Maria, the younger, was married, but she had fled from a husband, who had ill-used her. She was more elegant, but pale and delicate-looking, and less striking to the eye than her fiery neighbour. Both women strove hard to excite my passion. The beautiful Margaret endeavoured to overcome my bashfulness by loose jests, but the whole woman was repulsive to me, and the bashful Maria had gained my heart for ever.

"'You see, brother host of the Sun,' began the man who had brought me, 'You see how we live together, and every day is like this one. Is it not true, comrades?'

"'Every day like this!' repeated the whole band.

"'If, then, you can resolve to find pleasure in our mode of life, strike a bargain and be our leader. I have held that post hitherto, but I will give it up to you. Are you content, comrades.'

"A joyful 'Yes!' was responded from every throat.

"My head was on fire, my brain was turned, and my blood was boiling with wine and passion. The world had cast me out as infected with the plague, but here I found a brotherly reception,

honour, and comfort. Whatever choice I made death awaited me, but here I could at least sell my life for a higher price. Sensuality was my most violent tendency; hitherto the other sex had only shown me contempt, but here I should find favour and boundless enjoyment. My determination cost me but little. 'I stay with you, comrades,' cried I, loudly and resolutely, and walked into the midst of the band. 'I remain with you,' I cried again, 'if you will give me my beautiful neighbour.' All agreed to grant my request, and I was the declared possessor of a harlot, and owner of a band of robbers."

The following part of the history I entirely pass over; the merely detestable has nothing instructive for the reader. An unfortunate man who had sunk to this depth, would at last necessarily allow himself all that raises the indignation of mankind. He did not, however, commit another murder, as he himself confessed upon the rack.

The fame of this man shortly spread over the entire province. The high roads became unsafe; the citizens were rendered uneasy by the burglaries committed in the night; the name of the "Host of the Sun" became the terror of the country-people, justice searched for him, and a reward was offered for his head. He was fortunate enough to frustrate all attempts made against his liberty, and cunning enough to turn to the account of his safety the superstition of the wonder-loving peasantry. His comrades had to spread the report that he had made a compact with the devil, and understood witchcraft. The district in which he played

his part, belonged less at that time than now to the enlightened part of Germany; the reports were believed, and his person was secure. No one showed a desire to attack the dangerous fellow who had the devil at his service.

He had already for a year followed his melancholy profession, when it began to grow insupportable. The band at whose head he stood, did not fulfil his brilliant expectations. A seductive exterior had dazzled him amid the fumes of the wine; now he saw with horror how frightfully he had been deceived. Hunger and want took the place of that superfluity by which his senses had been lulled; very often he had to risk his life on a meal, which was scarcely sufficient to keep him from starvation. The phantom of that brotherly concord vanished; envy, suspicion, and jealousy raged among this abandoned crew. Justice had offered a reward to any one who should deliver him up alive, with a solemn pardon if he were an accomplice – a powerful temptation for the dregs of the earth! The unhappy man knew his peril. The honesty of those who betrayed God and man, was a bad security for his life. From this moment sleep was gone; a deadly and eternal anguish preyed on his repose; the hideous spectre of suspicion rattled behind him, wherever he fled, tortured him when he was awake, lay down by him when he went to sleep, and scared him with horrible visions. His conscience, which had been for some time dumb, now recovered its speech, and the adder of remorse, which had slept, now awoke amid the general storm of his bosom. All his hatred was now diverted from mankind, and turned its frightful

edge against himself. He now forgave all nature, and found none but himself to execrate.

Vice had completed its instruction of this unhappy being; his naturally good sense at last overcame the mournful delusion. Now he felt how low he had fallen, calm melancholy took the place of grinding despair. With tears he wished the past were recalled, for now he felt certain that he could go through it differently. He began to hope that he might be allowed to become honest, because he felt that he could be so. At the highest point of his depravity, he was perhaps nearer to goodness than before his first fault.

About the same time, the seven years' war had broken out, and recruiting was going on with vigour. This circumstance inspired the unhappy man with hope, and he wrote a letter to his sovereign, an extract of which I insert:

"If your princely favour feels no repugnance towards descending to me, if criminals of my class are not beyond the sphere of your mercy, grant me a hearing, I beg of your most serene highness! I am a murderer and a robber; the law condemns me to death, the tribunals are in search of me, and I offer myself to serve as a volunteer. But at the same time, I bring a singular request before your throne. I detest my life, and do not fear death, but it is terrible for me to die without having lived. I would live to make reparation for a portion of the past, I would live to make some atonement to the state, which I have offended. My execution will be an example to the world, but no compensation

for my deeds. I detest vice, and have a burning desire for integrity and virtue. I have shown the talents for becoming formidable to my country – I hope I have some left to be of service to it.

"I know that I am asking something which is unprecedented. My life is forfeit, and it is not for me to negotiate with justice. But I do not appear in bonds and fetters before you – I am still free – and fear on my part has the smallest share in my request.

"It is for mercy that I ask. If I had a claim to justice, I should no longer venture to assert it. But of one thing I may remind my judge. The epoch of my crimes begins with the judgment that for ever deprived me of honour. Had fairness been less denied me on that occasion, I should not now, perhaps, have stood in need of mercy.

"Show mercy, my prince, instead of justice. If it is in your princely power to move the law in my favour, then grant me my life. From henceforth it shall be devoted to your service. If you can do so, let me learn your gracious will from the public journals, and I will appear in the metropolis on your word as a prince. If you have resolved otherwise, let justice do her part, I must do mine."

This petition remained unanswered, and so did a second, and a third, in which the applicant asked for a trooper's place in the prince's service. His hopes for a pardon were utterly extinguished, so he resolved to quit the country, and to die as a brave soldier in the service of the King of Prussia.

He succeeded in escaping from his land, and began his

journey. The road led him through a little provincial town, where he wished to pass the night. A short time before, mandates of exceeding strictness had been published throughout the country, requiring a severe examination of travellers, because the sovereign, a prince of the empire, had taken part in the war. The toll-collector (*Thorschreiber*) of this little town had just received a mandate, and he was sitting on a bench before the toll-bar, when the "Host of the Sun" came up. The appearance of this man had in it something comical, and at the same time wild and terrible. The lean pony which he rode, and the grotesque choice of his attire, in which his taste had probably been less consulted than the chronology of his thefts, contrasted singularly enough with a face over which so many raging passions were spread, like mangled corpses on a field of battle. The collector was struck by the sight of this strange wanderer. He had grown grey at the toll-bar, and by attending to his office for forty years had become an infallible physiognomist of all the vagabonds about. The falcon-glance of this investigator did not miss its man on this occasion. He at once fastened the town-gate, and asked the rider for his passport while he secured his bridle. Wolf was prepared for chances of this kind, and actually had with him a passport, which he had taken shortly before while plundering a merchant. This single voucher, however, did not suffice to counteract the observation of forty years, and to move the oracle of the toll-bar to a recantation. He trusted his eyes more than the paper, and Wolf was obliged to follow him to the office of the bailiff.

The superior of the office examined the passport and declared it correct. He was an ardent lover of news, and it was his delight to chatter over the newspaper by his bottle. The passport told him that the bearer had come straight from those foreign countries, where the theatre of the war was situated. He hoped to get private intelligence from the stranger, and sent back a secretary with the passport to invite him to partake of a bottle of wine.

In the meanwhile the "Host of the Sun" was standing in front of the office, and the whimsical spectacle had assembled the rabble of the town in throngs. The people whispered into one another's ears, pointed at the horse and rider, till at last the insolence of the mob increased to a loud tumult. The horse, at which every one pointed, was unluckily a stolen one, and Wolf fancied that it had been described in placards and was recognised. The unexpected hospitality of the superior confirmed his suspicion. He now considered it certain that the falsity of his passport was discovered, and that the invitation was only a snare to catch him alive and without resistance. His bad conscience besotted him, so he clapped spurs to his horse and rode off without giving a reply.

This sudden flight was the signal for an uproar.

"A thief!" cried all; and off they flew after him. To the rider it was a matter of life and death; he had already the start, his followers panted breathlessly, and he seemed to be on the point of escape. But a heavy hand pressed invisibly towards him, the watch of his destiny had run down, the inexorable Nemesis

detained her debtor. The street to which he trusted had no outlet, and he was forced to turn back towards his persecutors.

The noise of this event had in the meanwhile set the whole town in an uproar; throng pressed on throng, all the streets were lined, and a host of enemies were marching towards him. He showed a pistol, the mob receded, and he would have made a way through the crowd by force. "A shot from this," said he, "for the mad fool who detains me." A general pause was dictated by fear, when at last, a bold journeyman blacksmith darted on his arm from behind, caught the finger with which the insane man was about to fire, and forced it out of joint. The pistol fell, the disarmed man was pulled from his horse, and dragged to the office in triumph.

"Who are you?" asked the judge in a somewhat brutal tone.

"A man who is resolved to answer no question until it is put more courteously."

"Who are you?"[8]

"That which I represented myself to be. I have travelled all through Germany, and never found impudence at home, anywhere but here."

"Your speedy flight renders you very suspicious. Why did you fly?"

"Because I was tired of being the laughing-stock of your

[8] These questions appear the same in English, but the first in German is "Wer seyd Ihr," and the second "Wer sind Sie." According to German usage the latter alone is courteous.

rabble."

"You threatened to fire."

"My pistol was not loaded."

The weapon was examined, and, true enough, it contained no bullet.

"Why did you secretly carry arms?"

"Because I have with me articles of value, and because I have been warned against a certain 'Host of the Sun,' who is said to be roving about these parts."

"Your replies argue much for your audacity, but little for the goodness of your cause. I will give you till to-morrow to discover the truth to me."

"I shall abide by what I have already said."

"Let him be conducted to the tower."

"To the tower? I hope, Herr Superior, that there is still justice in this country. I shall require satisfaction."

"I will give it you as soon as you are acquitted."

The next morning the superior reflected that the stranger might be innocent after all; a dictatorial address could effect nothing with his obstinacy, and it might, perhaps, be better to treat him with respect and moderation. He collected the jury of the place, and had the prisoner brought forward.

"Forgive me for the first outbreak, sir, if I accosted you somewhat hardly yesterday."

"Very readily, if you treat me thus."

"Our laws are severe, and your affair made a noise. I cannot

release you without committing a breach of duty. Appearance is against you, and I wish you would say something, by which it might be refuted."

"What, if I know nothing?"

"Then I must lay the case before the government, and you will, in the meanwhile, remain closely confined."

"And then?"

"Then you run the risk of being flogged over the border as a vagrant, or, if mercy is shown, of being placed among the recruits."

He was silent for some minutes, and appeared to be undergoing a severe contest, then he suddenly turned to the judge.

"Can I be alone with you for a quarter of an hour?"

The jury cast ambiguous glances at one another, but withdrew at a commanding sign from their head.

"Now, what do you want?"

"Your demeanour of yesterday, Herr Superior, would never have brought me to a confession, for I set force at defiance. The moderation with which you have treated me to-day has given me confidence and respect for you. I think that you are an honourable man."

"What have you to say to me?"

"I see that you are an honourable man; I have long wished for a man like you. Give me, I pray, your right hand."

"To what end?"

"That head is gray and reverend. You have been long in the world – have felt many sorrows – is it not so? And have become more humane."

"Sir, to what does this tend?"

"You are now distant by only one step from eternity – soon, soon will you need mercy from God. You will not deny it to man. Do you suspect nothing? With whom do you suppose you are speaking?"

"What do you mean? You terrify me."

"If you do not already suspect – write to your prince how you found me, and that I myself of my free choice was my own betrayer – that God will be merciful unto him as he now shows mercy unto me. Entreat for me, old man, and then let a tear fall on your report: I am – the 'Host of the Sun.'"

J. O.

THE COLD HEART

BY WILHELM HAUFF

Those who travel through Swabia should always remember to cast a passing glance into the Schwarzwald,[9] not so much for the sake of the trees (though pines are not found everywhere in such prodigious numbers, nor of such a surpassing height), as for the sake of the people, who show a marked difference from all others in the neighbourhood around. They are taller than ordinary men, broad-shouldered, have strong limbs, and it seems as if the bracing air which blows through the pines in the morning, has allowed them, from their youth upwards, to breathe more freely, and has given them a clearer eye and a firmer, though ruder, mind than the inhabitants of the valleys and plains. The strong contrast they form to the people living without the limits of the "Wald," consists, not merely in their bearing and stature, but also in their manners and costume. Those of the Schwarzwald of the Baden territory dress most handsomely; the men allow their beards to grow about the chin just as nature gives it; and their black jackets, wide trousers, which are plaited in small folds, red stockings, and painted hats surrounded by a broad brim, give them a strange, but

[9] The Black Forest.

somewhat grave and noble appearance. Their usual occupations are the manufacturing of glass, and the so-called Dutch clocks, which they carry about for sale over half the globe.

Another part of the same race lives on the other side of the Schwarzwald; but their occupations have made them contract manners and customs quite different from those of the glass manufacturers. Their *Wald* supplies their trade; felling and fashioning their pines, they float them through the *Nagold* into the *Neckar*, from thence down the Rhine as far as Holland; and near the sea the *Schwarzwälder* and their long rafts are well known. Stopping at every town which is situated along the river, they wait proudly for purchasers of their beams and planks; but the strongest and longest beams they sell at a high price to Mynheers, who build ships of them. Their trade has accustomed them to a rude and roving life, their pleasure consisting in drifting down the stream on their timber, their sorrow in wandering back again along the shore. Hence the difference in their costume from that of the glass manufacturers. They wear jackets of a dark linen cloth, braces a hand's breadth wide, displayed over the chest, and trousers of black leather, from the pocket of which a brass rule sticks out as a badge of honour; but their pride and joy are their boots, which are probably the largest that are worn in any part of the world, for they may be drawn two spans above the knee, and the raftsmen may walk about in water at three feet depth without getting their feet wet.

It is but a short time ago that the belief in hobgoblins of the

wood prevailed among the inhabitants, this foolish superstition having been eradicated only in modern times. But the singularity about these hobgoblins who are said to haunt the Schwarzwald, is, that they also wear the different costumes of the people. Thus it is affirmed of the *Glass-mannikin*, a kind little sprite three feet and a half high, that he never shows himself except in a painted little hat with a broad brim, a doublet, white trousers, and red stockings; while Dutch Michel, who haunts the other side of the forest, is said to be a gigantic, broad-shouldered fellow wearing the dress of a raftsman; and many who have seen him say they would not like to pay for the calves whose hides it would require to make one pair of his boots, affirming that, without exaggeration, a man of the middle height may stand in one of them with his head only just peeping out.

The following strange adventure with these spirits is said to have once befallen a young Schwarzwälder: – There lived a widow in the Schwarzwald, whose name was Frau Barbara Munk; her husband had been a charcoal-burner, and after his death she had by degrees prevailed upon her boy, who was now sixteen years old, to follow his father's trade. Young Peter Munk, a sly fellow, submitted to sit the whole week near the smoking stack of wood, because he had seen his father do the same; or, black and sooty and an abomination to the people as he was, to drive to the nearest town and sell his charcoal. Now, a charcoal-burner has much leisure for reflection, about himself and others; and when Peter Munk was sitting by his stack, the

dark trees around him, as well as the deep stillness of the forest, disposed his heart to tears, and to an unknown secret longing. Something made him sad, and vexed him, without his knowing exactly what it was. At length, however, he found out the cause of his vexation, – it was his condition. "A black, solitary charcoal-burner," he said to himself; "it is a wretched life. How much more are the glass-manufacturers, and the clockmakers regarded; and even the musicians, on a Sunday evening! And when Peter Munk appears washed, clean, and dressed out in his father's best jacket with the silver buttons and bran new red stockings – if then, any one walking behind him, thinks to himself, 'I wonder who that smart fellow is?' admiring, all the time, my stockings and stately gait; – if then, I say, he passes me and looks round, will he not say, 'Why, it is only Peter Munk, the charcoal-burner."

The raftsmen also on the other side of the wood were an object of envy to him. When these giants of the forest came over in their splendid clothes, wearing about their bodies half a hundred weight of silver, either in buckles, buttons or chains, standing with sprawling legs and consequential look to see the dancing, swearing in Dutch, and smoking Cologne clay pipes a yard long, like the most noble Mynheers, then he pictured to himself such a raftsman as the most perfect model of human happiness. But when these fortunate men put their hands into their pocket, pulled out handsful of thalers and staked a Sechsbatzner piece upon the cast of a die, throwing their five or ten florins to and fro, he was almost mad and sneaked sorrowfully home to his hut.

Indeed he had seen some of these gentlemen of the timber trade, on many a holy-day evening, lose more than his poor old father had gained in the whole year. There were three of these men, in particular, of whom he knew not which to admire most. The one was a tall stout man with ruddy face, who passed for the richest man in the neighbourhood; he was usually called fat "Hesekiel." Twice every year he went with timber to Amsterdam, and had the good luck to sell it so much dearer than the rest that he could return home in a splendid carriage, while they had to walk. The second was the tallest and leanest man in the whole *Wald*, and was usually called "the tall Schlurker;" it was his extraordinary boldness that excited Munk's envy, for he contradicted people of the first importance, took up more room than four stout men, no matter how crowded the inn might be, setting either both his elbows upon the table, or drawing one of his long legs on the bench; yet, notwithstanding all this, none dared to oppose him, since he had a prodigious quantity of money. The third was a handsome young fellow, who being the best dancer far around, was hence called "the king of the ball-room." Originally poor he had been servant to one of the timber merchants, when all at once he became immensely rich; for which some accounted by saying he had found a pot full of money under an old pine tree, while others asserted that he had fished up in the Rhine, near Bingen, a packet of gold coins with the spear which these raftsmen sometimes throw at the fish as they go along in the river, that packet being part of the great "Niebelungenhort," which is

sunk there. But however this might be, the fact of his suddenly becoming rich caused him to be looked upon as a prince by young and old.

Often did poor Peter Munk the coal burner think of these three men, when sitting alone in the pine forest. All three indeed had one great fault, which made them hated by every body: this was their insatiable avarice, their heartlessness towards their debtors and towards the poor, for the Schwarzwälder are naturally a kind-hearted people. However, we all know how it is in these matters; though they were hated for their avarice, yet they commanded respect on account of their money, for who but they could throw away thalers, as if they could shake them from the pines?

"This will do no longer," said Peter one day to himself, when he felt very melancholy, it being the morrow after a holiday when every body had been at the inn; "if I don't soon thrive I shall make away with myself; Oh that I were as much looked up to and as rich as the stout Hesekiel, or as bold and powerful as the tall Schlurker, or as renowned as the king of the ball-room, and could like him throw thalers instead of kreutzers to the musicians! I wonder where the fellow gets his money!" Reflecting upon all the different means by which money may be got, he could please himself with none, till at length he thought of the tales of those people who, in times of old, had become rich through the Dutchman Michel, or the glass-mannikin. During his father's lifetime other poor people often made their calls, and then their

conversation was generally about rich persons, and the means by which they had come by their riches; in these discourses the glass-mannikin frequently played a conspicuous part. Now, if Peter strained his memory a little he could almost recall the short verse which one must repeat near the Tannenbühl in the heart of the forest, to make the sprite appear. It began as follows:

> "Keeper of wealth in the forest of pine,
> Hundreds of years are surely thine:
> Thine is the tall pine's dwelling place – "

But he might tax his memory as much as he pleased, he could remember no more of it. He often thought of asking some aged person what the whole verse was. However, a certain fear of betraying his thoughts kept him back, and moreover he concluded that the legend of the glass-mannikin could not be very generally known, and that but few were acquainted with the incantation, since there were not many rich persons in the Wald; – if it were generally known, why had not his father, and other poor people, tried their luck? At length, however, he one day got his mother to talk about the mannikin, and she told him what he knew already, as she herself remembered only the first line of the verse, but she added, that the sprite would show himself only to those who had been born on a Sunday, between eleven and two o'clock. He was, she said, quite fit for evoking him, as he was born at twelve o'clock at noon; if he but knew the verse.

When Peter Munk heard this he was almost beside himself

with joy and desire to try the adventure. It appeared to him enough to know part of the verse, and to be born on a Sunday, for the glass-mannikin to show himself. Consequently when he one day had sold his coals, he did not light a new stack, but put on his father's holiday jacket, his new red stockings, and best hat, took his blackthorn stick, five feet long into his hand, and bade farewell to his mother, saying, "I must go to the magistrate in the town, for we shall soon have to draw lots who is to be soldier, and therefore I wish to impress once more upon him that you are a widow, and I am your only son." His mother praised his resolution; but he started for the Tannenbühl. This lies on the highest point of the Schwarzwald, and not a village or even a hut was found, at that time, for two leagues around, for the superstitious people believed it was haunted; they were even very unwilling to fell timber in that part, though the pines were tall and excellent, for often the axes of the wood-cutters had flown off the handle into their feet, or the trees falling suddenly, had knocked the men down, and either injured or even killed them; moreover, they could have used the finest trees from there only for fuel, since the raftsmen never would take a trunk from the Tannenbühl as part of a raft, there being a tradition that both men and timber would come to harm, if they had a tree from that spot on the water. Hence the trees there grew so dense and high that is was almost night at noon. When Peter Munk approached the place, he felt quite awe-stricken, hearing neither voice nor footstep except his own; no axe resounded, and even the birds

seemed to shun the darkness amidst the pines.

Peter Munk had now reached the highest point of the Tannenbühl, and stood before a pine of enormous girth, for which a Dutch ship-builder would have given many hundred florins on the spot. "Here," said he, "the treasure-keeper (Schatzhauser) no doubt lives," and pulling off his large hat, he made a low bow before the tree, cleared his throat, and said, with a trembling voice, "I wish you a good evening, Mr. Glass-mannikin." But receiving no answer, and all around remaining silent as before, he thought it would probably be better to say the verse, and therefore murmured it forth. On repeating the words, he saw, to his great astonishment, a singular and very small figure peep forth from behind the tree. It seemed to him as if he had beheld the glass-mannikin, just as he was described, the little black jacket, red stockings, hat, all even to the pale, but fine shrewd countenance of which the people so much talked, he thought he had seen. But alas, as quickly as it had peeped forth, as quickly it had disappeared again. "Mr. Glass-mannikin," cried Peter Munk, after a short hesitation, "pray don't make a fool of me; if you fancy that I have not seen you, you are vastly mistaken, I saw you very well peeping forth from behind the tree." Still no answer, only at times he fancied he heard a low, hoarse tittering behind the tree. At length his impatience conquered this fear, which had still restrained him, and he cried, "Wait, you little rascal, I will have you yet." At the same time he jumped behind the tree, but there was no Schatzhauser, and only a pretty little

squirrel was running up the tree.

Peter Munk shook his head; he saw he had succeeded to a certain degree in the incantation, and that he perhaps only wanted one more rhyme to the verse to evoke the glass-mannikin; he tried over and over again, but could not think of any thing. The squirrel showed itself on the lowest branches of the tree, and seemed to encourage or perhaps to mock him. It trimmed itself, it rolled its pretty tail, and looked at him with its cunning eyes. At length he was almost afraid of being alone with this animal; for sometimes it seemed to have a man's head, and to wear a three cornered hat, sometimes to be quite like another squirrel, with the exception only of having red stockings and black shoes on its hind feet. In short it was a merry little creature, but still Peter felt an awe, fancying that all was not right.

Peter now went away with more rapid strides than he had come. The darkness of the forest seemed to become blacker and blacker; the trees stood closer to each other, and he began to be so terrified that he ran off in a trot, and only became more tranquil when he heard dogs bark at a distance, and soon after descried the smoke of a hut through the trees. But on coming nearer and seeing the dress of the people, he found that having taken the contrary direction he had got to the raftsmen instead of the glass-makers. The people living in the hut were wood-cutters, consisting of an aged man with his son who was the owner, and some grown up grand-children. They received Peter Munk, who begged a night's quarter, hospitably enough without

asking his name or residence, they gave him cider to drink, and in the evening a large black cock, the best meal in the Schwarzwald, was served up for supper.

After this meal the housewife and her daughters took their distaffs and sat round a large pine torch, which the boys fed with the finest rosin; the host with his guest sat smoking and looking at the women; while the boys were busy carving wooden spoons and forks. The storm was howling and raging through the pines in the forest without, and now and then very heavy blasts were heard, and it was as if whole trees were breaking off and crashing down. The fearless youths were about to run out to witness this terrific and beautiful spectacle, but their grandfather kept them back with a stern look and these words: "I would not advise any of you," cried he, "to go now outside the door; by heavens he never would return, for Michel the Dutchman is building this night a new raft in the forest."

The younger of them looked at him with astonishment, having probably heard before of Michel, but they now begged their grandpapa to tell them some interesting story of him. Peter Munk who had heard but confused stories of Michel the Dutchman on the other side of the forest, joined in this request, asking the old man who and where he was. "He is the lord of the forest," was the answer, "and from your not having heard this at your age, it follows that you must be a native of those parts just beyond the Tannenbühl or perhaps still more distant. But I will tell you all I know, and how the story goes about him. A hundred years

ago or thereabouts, there were far and wide no people more upright in their dealings than the Schwarzwälder, at least so my grandfather used to tell me. Now, since there is so much money in the country, the people are dishonest and bad. The young fellows dance and riot on Sundays, and swear to such a degree that it is horrible to hear them; whereas formerly it was quite different, and I have often said and now say, though he should look in through the window, that the Dutchman Michel is the cause of all this depravity. A hundred years ago then there lived a very rich timber merchant who had many servants; he carried his trade far down the Rhine and was very prosperous, being a pious man. One evening a person such as he had never seen came to his door; his dress was like that of the young fellows of the Schwarzwald, but he was full a head taller than any of them, and no one had ever thought there could be such a giant. He asked for work, and the timber-merchant, seeing he was strong, and able to carry great weights, agreed with him about the wages and took him into his service. He found Michel to be a labourer such as he had never yet had; for in felling trees he was equal to three ordinary men, and when six men were pulling at one end of a trunk he would carry the other end alone. After having been employed in felling timber for six months, he came one day before his master, saying, 'I have now been cutting wood long enough here, and should like to see what becomes of my trunks; what say you to letting me go with the rafts for once?' To which his master replied, 'I have no objection, Michel, to your seeing a little of the world; to be

sure I want strong men like yourself to fell the timber, and on the river all depends upon skill; but, nevertheless, be it for this time as you wish.'

"Now the float with which Michel was to go, consisted of eight rafts, and in the last there were some of the largest beams. But what then? The evening before starting, the tall Michel brought eight beams to the water, thicker and longer than had ever been seen, and he carried every one of them as easily upon his shoulder as if it had been a rowing pole, so that all were amazed. Where he had felled them, no one knows to this day. The heart of the timber-merchant was leaping with joy when he saw this, calculating what these beams would fetch; but Michel said, 'Well, these are for my travelling on, with those chips I should not be able to get on at all.' His master was going to make him a present of a pair of boots, but throwing them aside, Michel brought out a pair the largest that had ever been seen, and my grandfather assured me they weighed a hundred pounds and were five feet long.

"The float started; and if Michel had before astonished the wood-cutters, he perfectly astonished the raftsmen; for his raft, instead of drifting slowly down the river as they thought it would, by reason of the immense beams, darted on like an arrow, as soon as they came into the Neckar. If the river took a turn, or if they came to any part where they had a difficulty in keeping the middle stream or were in danger of running aground, Michel always jumped into the water, pushing his float either to the right

or to the left, so that he glided past without danger. If they came to a part where the river ran straight, Michel often sprang to the foremost raft, and making all put up their poles, fixed his own enormous pole in the sand, and by one push made the float dart along, so that it seemed as if the land, trees, and villages were flying by them. Thus they came in half the time they generally occupied to Cologne on the Rhine, where they formerly used to sell their timber. Here Michel said, 'You are but sorry merchants and know nothing of your advantage. Think you these Colognese want all the timber from the Schwarzwald for themselves? I tell you no, they buy it of you for half its value, and sell it dear to Holland. Let us sell our small beams here, and go to Holland with the large ones; what we get above the ordinary price is our own profit.'

"Thus spoke the subtle Michel, and the others consented; some because they liked to go and see Holland, some for the sake of the money. Only one man was honest, and endeavoured to dissuade them from putting the property of their master in jeopardy or cheating him out of the higher price. However they did not listen to him and forgot his words, while Michel forgot them not. So they went down the Rhine with the timber, and Michel, guiding the float soon brought them to Rotterdam. Here they were offered four times as much as at Cologne, and particularly the large beams of Michel fetched a very high sum. When the Schwarzwälders beheld the money, they were almost beside themselves with joy. Michel divided the money, putting

aside one-fourth for their master, and distributing the other three among the men. And now they went into the public houses with sailors and other rabble, squandering their money in drinking and gambling; while the honest fellow who had dissuaded them was sold by Michel to a slave-trader and has never been heard of since. From that time forward Holland was a paradise to the fellows from the Schwarzwald, and the Dutchman Michel their king. For a long time the timber merchants were ignorant of this proceeding, and before people were aware, money, swearing, corrupt manners, drunkenness and gambling were imported from Holland.

"When the thing became known, Michel was nowhere to be found, but he was not dead; for a hundred years he has been haunting the forest, and is said to have helped many in becoming rich at the cost of their souls of course: more I will not say. This much, however, is certain, that to the present day, in boisterous nights, he finds out the finest pines in the Tannenbühl where people are not to fell wood; and my father has seen him break off one of four feet diameter, as he would break a reed. Such trees he gives to those who turn from the right path and go to him; at midnight they bring their rafts to the water and he goes to Holland with them. If I were lord and king in Holland, I would have him shot with grape, for all the ships that have but a single beam of Michel's, must go to the bottom. Hence it is that we hear of so many shipwrecks; and if it were not so, how could a beautiful, strong ship as large as a church, be sunk. But as often as Michel

fells a pine in the forest during a boisterous night, one of his old ones starts from its joints, the water enters, and the ship is lost, men and all. So far goes the legend of the Dutchman Michel; and true it is that all the evil in the Schwarzwald dates from him. Oh! he can make one rich," added the old man mysteriously; "but I would have nothing from him; I would at no price be in the shoes of fat Hesekiel and the long Schlurker. The king of the ballroom, too, is said to have made himself over to him."

The storm had abated during the narrative of the old man; the girls timidly lighted their lamps and retired, while the men put a sackful of leaves upon the bench by the stove as a pillow for Peter Munk, and wished him good night.

Never in his life had Peter such heavy dreams as during this night; sometimes he fancied the dark gigantic Michel was tearing the window open and reaching in with his monstrous long arm a purse full of gold pieces, which jingled clearly and loudly as he shook them; at another time he saw the little friendly glass-mannikin riding upon a huge green bottle about the room, and thought he heard again the same hoarse laughter as in the Tannenbühl; again something hummed into his left ear the following verse:

"In Holland I wot,
There's gold to be got,
Small price for a lot,
Who would have it not?"

Again he heard in his right ear the song of the Schatzhauser in the green forest, and a soft voice whispered to him, "Stupid Coal-Peter, stupid Peter Munk you cannot find a rhyme with 'place,' and yet are born on a Sunday at twelve o'clock precisely. Rhyme, dull Peter, rhyme!"

He groaned, he wearied himself to find a rhyme, but never having made one in his life, his trouble in his dream was fruitless. When he awoke the next morning with the first dawn, his dream seemed strange to him; he sat down at the table with his arms crossed, and meditated upon the whisperings that were still ringing in his ears. He said to himself, "Rhyme, stupid Peter, rhyme," knocking his forehead with his finger, but no rhyme would come. While still sitting in this mood, looking gloomily down before him and thinking of a rhyme with "place," he heard three men passing outside and going into the forest, one of whom was singing,

> "I stood upon the brightest place,
> I gazed upon the plain,
> And then – oh then – I saw that face,
> I never saw again."

These words flashed like lightning through Peter's ear and hastily starting up, he rushed out of the house, thinking he was mistaken in what he had heard, ran after the three fellows and seized, suddenly and rudely, the singer by the arm, crying at the same time, "Stop, friend, what was it you rhymed with 'place?'

Do me the favour to tell me what you were singing."

"What possesses you, fellow?" replied the Schwarzwälder. "I may sing what I like; let go my arm, or – "

"No, you shall tell me what you were singing," shouted Peter, almost beside himself, clutching him more tightly at the same time. When the other two saw this, they were not long in falling foul upon poor Peter with their large fists, and belabouring him till the pain made him release the third, and he sank exhausted upon his knees. "Now you have your due," said they, laughing, "and mark you, madcap, never again stop people like us upon the highway."

"Woe is me!" replied Peter with a sigh, "I shall certainly recollect it. But now that I have had the blows, you will oblige me by telling me plainly what he was singing." To this they laughed again and mocked him; but the one who had sung repeated the song to him, after which they went away laughing and singing.

"Face," then said the poor belaboured Peter as he got up slowly; "will rhyme with 'place,' now glass-mannikin, I will have another word with you." He went into the hut, took his hat and long stick, bid farewell to the inmates, and commenced his way back to the Tannenbühl. Being under the necessity of inventing a verse, he proceeded slowly and thoughtfully on his way; at length, when he was already within the precincts of the Tannenbühl, and the trees became higher and closer, he found his verse, and for joy cut a caper in the air. All at once he saw coming from behind the trees a gigantic man dressed like a raftsman, who held in his

hand a pole as large as the mast of a ship. Peter Munk's knees almost gave way under him, when he saw him slowly striding by his side, thinking he was no other than the Dutchman Michel. Still the terrible figure kept silence, and Peter cast a side glance at him from time to time. He was full a head taller than the biggest man Peter had even seen; his face expressed neither youth nor old age, but was full of furrows and wrinkles; he wore a jacket of linen, and the enormous boots being drawn above his leather breeches, were well known to Peter from hearsay.

"What are you doing in the Tannenbühl, Peter Munk?" asked the wood king at length, in a deep, roaring voice.

"Good morning, countryman," replied Peter, wishing to show himself undaunted, but trembling violently all the while.

"Peter Munk," replied Michel, casting a piercing, terrible glance at him, "your way does not lie through this grove."

"True, it does not exactly," said Peter; "but being a hot day, I thought it would be cooler here."

"Do not lie, Peter," cried Michel, in a thundering voice, "or I strike you to the ground with this pole; think you I have not seen you begging of the little one?" he added mildly. "Come, come, confess it was a silly trick, and it is well you did not know the verse; for the little fellow is a skinflint, giving but little; and he to whom he gives is never again cheerful in his life. Peter, you are but a poor fool and I pity you in my soul; you, such a brisk handsome fellow, surely could do something better in the world, than make charcoal. While others lavish big thalers and ducats,

you can scarcely spend a few pence; 'tis a wretched life."

"You are right, it is truly a wretched life."

"Well," continued Michel, "I will not stand upon trifles, you would not be the first honest good fellow whom I have assisted at a pinch. Tell me, how many hundred thalers do you want for the present?" shaking the money in his huge pocket, as he said this, so that it jingled just as Peter had heard it in his dream. But Peter's heart felt a kind of painful convulsion at these words, and he was cold and hot alternately; for Michel did not look as if he would give away money out of charity, without asking any thing in return. The old man's mysterious words about rich people occurred to him, and urged by an inexplicable anxiety and fear, he cried "Much obliged to you, sir, but I will have nothing to do with you and know you well," and at the same time he began to run as fast as he could. The wood spirit, however, strode by his side with immense steps, murmuring and threatening "You will yet repent it, Peter, it is written on your forehead and to be read in your eyes that you will not escape me. Do not run so fast, listen only to a single rational word; there is my boundary already." But Peter, hearing this and seeing at a little distance before him a small ditch, hastened the more to pass this boundary, so that Michel was obliged at length to run faster, cursing and threatening while pursuing him. With a desperate leap Peter cleared the ditch, for he saw that the Wood-spirit was raising his pole to dash it upon him; having fortunately reached the other side, he heard the pole shatter to pieces in the air as if

against an invisible wall, and a long piece fell down at his feet.

He picked it up in triumph to throw it at the rude Michel; but in an instant he felt the piece of wood move in his hand, and, to his horror, perceived that he held an enormous serpent, which was raising itself up towards his face with its venomous tongue and glistening eyes. He let go his hold, but it had already twisted itself tight round his arm and came still closer to his face with its vibrating head; at this instant, however, an immense black cock rushed down, seized the head of the serpent with its beak, and carried it up in the air. Michel, who had observed all this from the other side of the ditch, howled, cried, and raved when he saw the serpent carried away by one more powerful than himself.

Exhausted and trembling, Peter continued his way; the path became steeper, the country wilder, and soon he found himself before the large pine. He again made a bow to the invisible glass-mannikin, as he had done the day before, and said,

> "Keeper of wealth in the forest of pine,
> Hundreds of years are surely thine,
> Thine is the tall pine's dwelling place,
> Those born on Sunday see thy face."

"You have not quite hit it," said a delicate fine voice near him, "but as it is you, Peter, I will not be particular." Astonished he looked round, and lo! under a beautiful pine there sat a little old man in a black jacket, red stockings, and a large hat on his head. He had a tiny affable face and a little beard as fine as a spider's

web; and strange to see, he was smoking a pipe of blue glass. Nay, Peter observed to his astonishment, on coming nearer, that the clothes, shoes, and hat of the little man were also of coloured glass, which was as flexible as if it were still hot, bending like cloth to every motion of the little man.

"You have met the lubber Michel, the Dutchman?" asked the little man, laughing strangely between each word. "He wished to frighten you terribly; but I have got his magic cudgel, which he shall never have again."

"Yes, Mr. Schatzhauser," replied Peter, with a profound bow, "I was terribly frightened. But I suppose the black cock was yourself, and I am much obliged to you for killing the serpent. The object of my visit to you, however, is to ask your advice; I am in very poor circumstances, for charcoal-burning is not a profitable trade; and being still young I should think I might be made something better, seeing so often as I do how other people have thriven in a short time; I need only mention Hezekiel, and the king of the ball-room, who have money like dirt."

"Peter," said the little man, gravely, blowing the smoke of his pipe a long way off, "don't talk to me of these men. What good have they from being apparently happy for a few years here, and the more unhappy for it afterwards? You must not despise your trade; your father and grandfather were honest people, Peter Munk, and they carried on the same trade. Let me not suppose it is love of idleness that brings you to me."

Peter was startled at the gravity of the little man, and blushed.

"No, Mr. Schatzhauser," said he; "idleness is the root of every vice, but you cannot blame me, if another condition pleases me better than my own. A charcoal-burner is, in truth, a very mean personage in this world; the glass manufacturer, the raftsmen, and clock-makers, are people much more looked upon."

"Pride will have a fall," answered the little man of the pine wood, rather more kindly. "What a singular race you are, you men! It is but rarely that one is contented with the condition in which he was born and bred, and I would lay a wager that if you were a glass-manufacturer, you would wish to be a timber-merchant, and if you were a timber-merchant you would take a fancy to the ranger's place, or the residence of the bailiff. But no matter for that; if you promise to work hard, I will get you something better to do. It is my practice to grant three wishes to those born on a Sunday, who know how to find me out. The first two are quite free from any condition, the third I may refuse, should it be a foolish one. Now, therefore, Peter, say your wishes; but mind you wish something good and useful."

"Hurrah!" shouted Peter; "you are a capital glass-mannikin, and justly do people call you the treasure-keeper, for treasures seem to be plentiful with you. Well then, since I may wish what my heart desires, my first wish is that I may be able to dance better than the king of the ball-room, and to have always as much money in my pocket as fat Hezekiel."

"You fool!" replied the little man, angrily, "what a paltry wish is this, to be able to dance well and to have money for gambling.

Are you not ashamed of this silly wish, you blockish Peter? Would you cheat yourself out of good fortune? What good will you and your poor mother reap from your dancing well? What use will money be to you, which according to your wish is only for the public-house, thereto be spent like that of the wretched king of the ball-room? And then you will have nothing for the whole week and starve. Another wish is now left free to you; but have a care to desire something more rational."

Peter scratched himself behind his ears, and said, after some hesitation, "Now I wish the finest and richest glass-factory in the Schwarzwald, with every thing appertaining to it, and money to carry it on."

"Is that all?" asked the little man, with a look of anxiety; "is there nothing else, Peter?"

"Why you might add a horse and chaise."

"Oh, you stupid Peter!" cried the little man, while he flung his glass pipe against a thick pine so that it broke in a hundred pieces. "Horses? a carriage? Sense, I tell you, sense – common sense and judgment you ought to have wished, but not a horse and chaise. Come, come, don't be so sad, we will do all we can to make it turn out for the best, even as it is, for the second wish is on the whole not altogether foolish. A good glass-factory will support its man; but you ought to have wished judgment and sense in addition; a horse and chaise would come as a matter of course."

"But, Mr. Schatzhauser," replied Peter, "I have another wish left, and might very well wish sense, if I am so much in need of

it, as you seem to think."

"Say no more about it. You will get involved in many an embarrassment yet, when you will be glad of being at liberty to obtain your third wish. And now proceed on your way home." Drawing a small bag from his pocket, he said: "There are two thousand florins; let that be enough, and don't come again asking for money, for, if you do, I must hang you up to the highest pine. That is the way I have always acted, ever since I have lived in the forest. Three days ago old Winkfritz died, who had a large glass-factory in the Unterwald. Go there to-morrow morning, and make a fair offer for it. Look well to yourself. Be prudent and be industrious; I will come to see you from time to time, and assist you with word and deed, since you have not wished for common sense. But I must repeat it seriously; your first wish was evil. Guard against frequenting the public-house, Peter, no one who did so, ever prospered long." The little man, while thus talking to him, had taken a new pipe, of the most beautiful glass, from his pocket, charged it with dry fir-apples, and stuck it into his little toothless mouth. Then drawing out a large burning-glass, he stepped into the sun and lighted it. When he had done this, he kindly offered his hand to Peter, added a few more words of salutary advice which he might carry on his way, puffed and blew still faster, and finally disappeared in a cloud of smoke, which smelled of genuine Dutch canaster, and, slowly curling upwards, vanished amidst the tops of the pines.

On his arrival home, Peter found his mother in great anxiety

about him, for the good dame thought in reality her son had been drawn among the recruits. He, however, was in great glee and full of hope, and related to her how he had met with a good friend in the forest, who had advanced him money to begin another trade. Although his mother had been living for thirty years in a charcoal-burner's hut, and was as much accustomed to the sight of sooty people, as any miller's wife is to the floury face of her husband; yet, as soon as her Peter showed her a more splendid lot, she was vain enough to despise her former condition, and said: "In truth, as the mother of a man who possesses a glass-manufactory, I shall indeed be something different from neighbour Kate and Betsy, and shall in future sit more consequentially at church among the people of quality." Her son soon came to terms with the heir of the glass manufactory. He kept the workmen he found, and made them work day and night at manufacturing glass. At first he was well enough pleased with his new trade; he was in the habit of walking leisurely into the factory, striding up and down with an air of consequence and with his hands in his pockets, looking now in one corner, now in another, and talking about various things at which his workmen often used to laugh heartily. His chief delight, however, was to see the glass blown, when he would often set to work himself, and form the strangest figures of the soft mass. But he soon took a dislike to the work; first came only for an hour in the day, then only every other day, and finally only once a week, so that his workmen did just what they liked.

All this proceeded from his frequenting the public-house. The Sunday after he had come back from the Tannenbühl he went to the public-house, and who should be jumping there already but the king of the ball-room; fat Hezekiel also was already sitting by a quart pot, playing at dice for crown-pieces. Now Peter quickly put his hand into his pocket to feel whether the glass-mannikin had been true to his word, and lo! his pockets were stuffed full of silver and gold. He also felt an itching and twitching in his legs, as if they wished to dance and caper. When the first dance was over, he took his place with his partner at the top next to the "king of the ball-room;" and if the latter jumped three feet high, Peter jumped four; if he made fantastic and graceful steps, Peter twined and twisted his legs in such a manner that all the spectators were utterly amazed with delight and admiration. But when it was rumoured in the dancing-room that Peter had bought a glass manufactory, and when people saw that Peter, as often as he passed the musicians, threw a six-batzner piece to them, there was no end of astonishment. Some thought he had found a treasure in the forest, others were of opinion that he had succeeded to some fortune, but all respected him now, and considered him a made man, simply because he had plenty of money. Indeed that very evening he lost twenty florins at play, and yet his pockets jingled and tingled as if there were a hundred thalers in them.

When Peter saw how much respected he was, he could no longer contain himself with joy and pride. He threw away

handfuls of money and distributed it profusely among the poor, knowing full well as he did how poverty had formerly pinched him. The feats of the king of the ball-room were completely eclipsed by those of the new dancer, and Peter was surnamed the "emperor of the ball-room." The most daring gamblers did not stake so much as he did on a Sunday, neither did they, however, lose so much; but then, the more he lost, the more he won. This was exactly what he had demanded from the glass-mannikin; for he had wished he might always have as much money in his pocket as fat Hezekiel, and it was to this very man he lost his money. If he lost twenty or thirty florins at a stroke, they were immediately replaced in his own pocket, as soon as Hezekiel pocketed them. By degrees he carried his revelling and gambling further than the worst fellows in the Schwarzwald, and he was oftener called "gambling Peter" than "emperor of the ball-room," since he now gambled almost all the week days. In consequence of his imprudence, his glass manufactory gradually fell off. He had manufactured as much as ever could be made, but he had failed to purchase, together with the factory, the secret of disposing of it most profitably. At length it accumulated to such a degree that he did not know what to do with it, and sold it for half-price to itinerant dealers in order to pay his workmen.

Walking homewards one evening from the public house, he could not, in spite of the quantity of wine he had drunk to make himself merry, help thinking with terror and grief of the decline of his fortune. While engaged in these reflections, he all at once

perceived some one walking by his side. He looked round, and behold it was the glass-mannikin. At the sight of him he fell into a violent passion, protested solemnly, and swore that the little man was the cause of all his misfortune. "What am I now to do with the horse and chaise?" he cried; "of what use is the manufactory and all the glass to me? Even when I was merely a wretched charcoal-burner, I lived more happily, and had no cares. Now I know not when the bailiff may come to value my goods and chattels, and seize all for debt."

"Indeed?" replied the glass-mannikin, "indeed? I am then the cause of your being unfortunate. Is that your gratitude for my benefits? Who bade you wish so foolishly? A glass-manufacturer you wished to be, and you did not know where to sell your glass! Did I not tell you to be cautious in what you wished? Common sense, Peter, and prudence, you wanted."

"A fig for your sense and prudence," cried Peter; "I am as shrewd a fellow as any one, and will prove it to you, glass-mannikin," seizing him rudely by the collar as he spoke these words, and crying, "have I now got you, Schatzhauser? Now I will tell you my third wish, which you shall grant me. I'll have instantly, on the spot, two hundred thousand hard thalers and a house. Woe is me!" he cried, suddenly shaking his hand, for the little man of the wood had changed himself into red-hot glass, and burned in his hand like bright fire. Nothing more was to be seen of him.

For several days his swollen hand reminded him of his

ingratitude and folly. Soon, however, he silenced his conscience, saying: "Should they sell my glass, manufactory and all, still fat Hezekiel is certain to me; and as long as he has money on a Sunday, I cannot want."

"Very true, Peter! But, if he has none?" And so it happened one day, and it proved a singular example in arithmetic. For he came one Sunday in his chaise to the inn, and at once all the people popped their heads out of the windows, one saying, "There comes gambling Peter;" a second saying, "Yes, there is the emperor of the ball-room, the wealthy glass-manufacturer;" while a third shook his head, saying, "It is all very well with his wealth, but people talk a great deal about his debts, and somebody in town has said that the bailiff will not wait much longer before he distrains upon him."

At this moment the wealthy Peter saluted the guests at the windows, in a haughty and grave manner, descended from his chaise, and cried: "Good evening, mine Host of the Sun. Is fat Hezekiel here?"

To this question a deep voice answered from within: "Only come in, Peter; your place is kept for you, we are all here, at the cards already."

Peter entering the parlour, immediately put his hand into his pocket, and perceived, by its being quite full, that Hezekiel must be plentifully supplied. He sat down at the table among the others and played, losing and winning alternately; thus they kept playing till night, when all sober people went home. After having

continued for some time by candle-light, two of the gamblers said: "Now it is enough, and we must go home to our wives and children."

But Peter challenged Hezekiel to remain. The latter was unwilling, but said, after a while, "Be it as you wish; I will count my money, and then we'll play dice at five florins the stake, for any thing lower is, after all, but child's play." He drew his purse, and, after counting, found he had a hundred florins left; now Peter knew how much he himself had left, without counting first. But if Hezekiel had before won, he now lost stake after stake, and swore most awfully. If he cast a *pasch*, Peter immediately cast one likewise, and always two points higher. At length he put down the last five florins on the table, saying, "Once more; and if I lose this stake also, yet I will not leave off; you will then lend me some of the money you have won now, Peter; one honest fellow helps the other."

"As much as you like, even if it were a hundred florins," replied Peter, joyful at his gain, and fat Hezekiel rattled the dice and threw up fifteen; "Pasch!" he exclaimed, "now we'll see!" But Peter threw up eighteen, and, at this moment, a hoarse, well-known voice said behind him, "So! that was the last."

He looked round, and behind him stood the gigantic figure of Michel the Dutchman. Terrified, he dropped the money he had already taken up. But fat Hezekiel, not seeing Michel, demanded that Peter should advance him ten florins for playing. As if in a dream Peter hastily put his hand into his pocket, but there was

no money; he searched in the other pocket, but in vain; he turned his coat inside out, not a farthing, however, fell out; and at this instant he first recollected his first wish; viz., to have always as much money in his pocket as fat Hezekiel. All had now vanished like smoke.

The host and Hezekiel looked at him with astonishment as he still searched for and could not find his money; they would not believe that he had no more left; but when they at length searched his pockets, without finding any thing, they were enraged, swearing that gambling Peter was an evil wizard, and had wished away all the money he had won home to his own house. Peter defended himself stoutly, but appearances were against him. Hezekiel protested he would tell this shocking story to all the people in the Schwarzwald, and the host vowed he would, the following morning early go into the town and inform against Peter as a sorcerer, adding that he had no doubt of his being burnt alive. Upon this they fell furiously upon him, tore off his coat, and kicked him out of doors.

Not one star was twinkling in the sky to lighten Peter's way as he sneaked sadly towards his home, but still he could distinctly recognise a dark form striding by his side, which at length said, "It is all over with you, Peter Munk; all your splendour is at an end, and this I could have foretold you even at the time when you would not listen to me, but rather ran to the silly glass dwarf. You now see to what you have come by disregarding my advice. But try your fortune with me this time, I have compassion on

your fate. No one ever yet repented of applying to me, and if you don't mind the walk to the Tannenbühl, I shall be there all day to-morrow and you may speak to me, if you will call." Peter now very clearly perceived who was speaking to him, but feeling a sensation of awe, he made no answer and ran towards home.

When, on the Monday morning, he came to his factory, he not only found his workmen, but also other people whom no one likes to see; viz., the bailiff and three beadles. The bailiff wished Peter good morning, asked him how he had slept, and then took from his pocket a long list of Peter's creditors, saying, with a stern look, "Can you pay or not? Be short, for I have no time to lose, and you know it is full three leagues to the prison." Peter in despair confessed he had nothing left, telling the bailiff he might value all the premises, horses, and carts. But while they went about examining and valuing the things, Peter said to himself, "Well, it is but a short way to the Tannenbühl, and as the *little* man has not helped me, I will now try for once the *big* man." He ran towards the Tannenbühl as fast as if the beadles were at his heels. On passing the spot where the glass-mannikin had first spoken to him, he felt as if an invisible hand were stopping him, but he tore himself away and ran onwards till he came to the boundary which he had well marked. Scarcely had he, almost out of breath, called, "Dutch Michel, Mr. Dutch Michel!" than suddenly the gigantic raftsman with his pole stood before him.

"Have you come then?" said the latter, laughing. "Were they going to fleece you and sell you to your creditors? Well, be easy,

all your sorrow comes, as I have always said, from the little glass-mannikin, the Separatist and Pietist. When one gives, one ought to give right plentifully and not like that skinflint. But come," he continued, turning towards the forest, "follow me to my house, there we'll see whether we can strike a bargain."

"Strike a bargain?" thought Peter. "What can he want of me, what can I sell to him? Am I perhaps to serve him, or what is it that he can want?" They went at first up-hill over a steep forest path, when all at once they stopped at a dark, deep, and almost perpendicular ravine. Michel leaped down as easily as he would go down marble steps; but Peter almost fell into a fit when he saw him below, rising up like a church steeple reaching him an arm as long as a scaffolding pole with a hand at the end as broad as the table in the ale house, and calling in a voice which sounded like the deep tones of a death bell, "Set yourself boldly on my hand, hold fast by the fingers and you will not fall off." Peter, trembling, did as he was ordered, sat down upon his hand and held himself fast by the thumb of the giant.

They now went down a long way and very deep, yet, to Peter's astonishment, it did not grow darker; on the contrary, the daylight seemed rather to increase in the chasm, and it was sometime before Peter's eyes could bear it. Michel's stature became smaller as Peter came lower down, and he stood now in his former size before a house just like those of the wealthy peasants of the Schwarzwald. The room into which Peter was led differed in nothing but its appearance of solitariness from those of other

people. The wooden clock, the stove of Dutch tiles, the broad benches and utensils on the shelves were the same as anywhere else. Michel told him to sit down at the large table, then went out of the room and returned with a pitcher of wine and glasses. Having filled these, they now began a conversation, and Dutch Michel expatiated on the pleasures of the world, talked of foreign countries, fine cities and rivers, so that Peter, at length, feeling a yearning after such sights, candidly told Michel his wish.

"If you had courage and strength in your body to undertake any thing, could a few palpitations of your stupid heart make you tremble; and the offences against honor, or misfortunes, why should a rational fellow care, for either? Did you feel it in your head when they but lately called you a cheat and a scoundrel? Or did it give you a pain in your stomach, when the bailiff came to eject you from your house? Tell me, where was it you felt pain?"

"In my heart," replied Peter, putting his hand on his beating breast, for he felt as if his heart was anxiously turning within him.

"Excuse me for saying so, but you have thrown away many hundred florins on vile beggars and other rabble; what has it profited you? They have wished you blessings and health for it; well, have you grown the healthier for that? For half that money you might have kept a physician. A blessing, a fine blessing forsooth, when one is distrained upon and ejected! And what was it that urged you to put your hand into your pocket, as often as a beggar held out his broken hat? – Why your heart again, and ever your heart, neither your eyes, nor your tongue, nor your arms,

nor your legs, but your heart; you have, as the proverb truly says, taken too much to heart."

"But how can we accustom ourselves to act otherwise? I take, at this moment, every possible pains to suppress it, and yet my heart palpitates and pains me."

"You, indeed, poor fellow!" cried Michel, laughing; "you can do nothing against it; but give me this scarcely palpitating thing, and you will see how comfortable you will then feel."

"My heart to you?" cried Peter, horrified. "Why, then, I must die on the spot! Never!"

"Yes, if one of your surgeons would operate upon you and take out your heart, you must indeed die; but with me it is a different thing; just come in here and convince yourself."

Rising at these words, he opened the door of a chamber and took Peter in. On stepping over the threshold, his heart contracted convulsively, but he minded it not, for the sight that presented itself was singular and surprising. On several shelves glasses were standing, filled with a transparent liquid, and each contained a heart. All were labelled with names which Peter read with curiosity; there was the heart of the bailiff in F., that of fat Hezekiel, that of the "king of the ball-room," that of the ranger; there were the hearts of six usurious corn-merchants, of eight recruiting officers, of three money-brokers; in short, it was a collection of the most respectable hearts twenty leagues around.

"Look!" said Dutch Michel, "all these have shaken off the anxieties and cares of life; none of these hearts any longer beat

anxiously and uneasily, and their former owners feel happy now they have got rid of the troublesome guest."

"But what do they now carry in their breasts instead?" asked Peter, whose head was nearly swimming at what he beheld.

"*This*," replied he, taking out of a small drawer, and presenting to him – a heart of stone.

"Indeed!" said Peter, who could not prevent a cold shuddering coming over him. "A heart of marble? But, tell me, Mr. Michel, such a heart must be very cold in one's breast."

"True, but very agreeably cool. Why should a heart be warm? For in winter its warmth is of little use, and good strong Kirschwasser does more than a warm heart, and in summer when all is hot and sultry, you can't think how cooling such a heart is. And, as before said, such a heart feels neither anxiety nor terror, neither foolish compassion nor other grief."

"And that is all you can offer me," asked Peter, indignantly, "I looked for money and you are going to give me a stone."

"Well! an hundred thousand florins, methinks, would suffice you for the present. If you employ it properly, you may soon make it a million."

"An hundred thousand!" exclaimed the poor coal-burner, joyfully. "Well, don't beat so vehemently in my bosom, we shall soon have done with one another. Agreed, Michel, give me the stone, and the money, and the alarum you may take out of its case."

"I always thought you were a reasonable fellow," replied

Michel, with a friendly smile; "come, let us drink another glass, and then I will pay you the money."

They went back to the room and sat down again to the wine, drinking one glass after another till Peter fell into a profound sleep.

He was awakened by the cheerful blast of a post-boy's bugle, and found himself sitting in a handsome carriage, driving along on a wide road. On putting his head out he saw in the airy distance the Schwarzwald lying behind him. At first he could scarcely believe that it was his own self sitting in the carriage, for even his clothes were different from those he had worn the day before; but still he had such a distinct recollection that, giving up at length all these reflections, he exclaimed, "I am Peter and no other, that is certain."

He was astonished that he could no longer, in the slightest degree, feel melancholy now he for the first time departed from his quiet home and the forests where he had lived so long. He could not even press a tear out of his eyes or utter a sigh, when he thought of his mother, who must now feel helpless and wretched; for he was indifferent to every thing: "Well," he said, "tears and sighs, yearning for home and sadness proceed indeed from the heart, but thanks to Dutch Michel, mine is of stone and cold." Putting his hand upon his breast, he felt all quiet and no emotion. "If Michel," said he, beginning to search the carriage, "keeps his word as well with respect to the hundred thousand florins as he does with the heart, I shall be very glad." In his search he

found articles of dress of every description he could wish, but no money. At length, however, he discovered a pocket containing many thousand thalers in gold, and bills on large houses in all the great cities. "Now I have what I want," thought he, squeezed himself into the corner of the carriage and went into the wide world.

For two years he travelled about in the world, looked from his carriage to the right and left up the houses, but whenever he alighted he looked at nothing except the sign of the hotel, and then ran about the town to see the finest curiosities. But nothing gladdened him, no pictures, no building, no music, no dancing, nor any thing else had any interest for, or excited his stone heart; his eyes and ears were blunted for every thing beautiful. No enjoyment was left him but that which he felt in eating and drinking and sleep; and thus he lived running through the world without any object, eating for amusement and sleeping from *ennui*. From time to time he indeed remembered that he had been more cheerful and happier, when he was poor and obliged to work for a livelihood. Then he was delighted by every beautiful prospect in the valley, by music and song, then he had for hours looked in joyful expectation towards the frugal meal which his mother was to bring him to the kiln.

When thus reflecting on the past, it seemed very strange to him, that now he could not even laugh, while formerly he had laughed at the slightest joke. When others laughed, he only distorted his mouth out of politeness, but his heart did not

sympathise with the smile. He felt he was indeed exceedingly tranquil, but yet not contented. It was not a yearning after home, nor was it sadness, but a void, desolate feeling, satiety and a joyless life that at last urged him to his home.

When, after leaving Strasburg, he beheld the dark forest of his native country; when for the first time he again saw the robust figures, the friendly and open countenances of the Schwarzwälder; when the homely, strong, and deep, but harmonious sounds struck upon his ear, he quickly put his hand upon his heart, for his blood flowed faster, thinking he must rejoice and weep at the same time; but how could he be so foolish? he had a heart of stone, and stones are dead and can neither smile nor weep.

His first walk was to Michel who received him with his former kindness. "Michel," said he, "I have now travelled and seen every thing, but all is dull stuff and I have only found *ennui*. The stone I carry about with me in my breast, protects me against many things; I never get angry, am never sad, but neither do I ever feel joyful, and it seems as if I was only half alive. Can you not infuse a little more life into my stone heart, or rather, give me back my former heart? During five-and-twenty years I had become quite accustomed to it, and though it sometimes did a foolish thing, yet it was, after all, a merry and cheerful heart."

The sylvan spirit laughed grimly and sarcastically at this, answering, "When once you are dead, Peter Munk, it shall not be withheld; then you shall have back your soft, susceptible heart,

and may then feel whatever comes, whether joy or sorrow. But here, on this side of the grave, it can never be yours again. Travelled you have indeed, Peter, but in the way you lived, your travelling could afford you no satisfaction. Settle now somewhere in the world, build a house, marry, and employ your capital; you wanted nothing but occupation; being idle, you felt *ennui*, and now you lay all the blame to this innocent heart." Peter saw that Michel was right with respect to idleness, and therefore proposed to himself to become richer and richer. Michel gave him another hundred thousand florins, and they parted as good friends.

The report soon spread in Schwarzwald that "Coal Peter," or "gambling Peter" had returned, and was much richer than before. It was here as it always is. When he was a beggar he was kicked out of the inn, but now he had come back wealthy, all shook him by the hand when he entered on the Sunday afternoon, praised his horse, asked about his journey, and when he began playing for hard dollars with fat Hezekiel, he stood as high in their estimation as ever before. He no longer followed the trade of glass manufacturer, but the timber trade, though that only in appearance, his chief business being in corn and money transactions. Half the people of the Schwarzwald became by degrees his debtors, and he lent money only at ten per cent., or sold corn to the poor who, not being able to pay ready money, had to purchase it at three times its value. With the bailiff he now stood on a footing of the closest friendship, and if any one failed paying Mr. Peter Munk on the very day the money was due, the

bailiff with his beadles came, valued house and property, sold all instantly, and drove father, mother, and child, out into the forest. This became at first rather troublesome to Peter, for the poor outcasts besieged his doors in troops, the men imploring indulgence, the women trying to move his stony heart, and the children moaning for a piece of bread. But getting a couple of large mastiffs, he soon put an end to this cat's music, as he used to call it, for he whistled and set them on the beggars, who dispersed screaming. But the most troublesome person to him was "the old woman," who, however, was no other than Frau Munk, Peter's mother. She had been reduced to great poverty and distress, when her house and all was sold, and her son, on returning wealthy, had troubled himself no more about her. So she came sometimes before his house, supporting herself on a stick, as she was aged, weak, and infirm; but she no more ventured to go in, as he had on one occasion driven her out; and she was much grieved at being obliged to prolong her existence by the bounties of other people, while her own son might have prepared for her a comfortable old age. But his cold heart never was moved by the sight of the pale face and well known features, by the imploring looks, outstretched withered hands and decaying frame. If on a Saturday she knocked at the door, he put his hand grumbling into his pocket for a six-batzen-piece, wrapped it in a bit of paper and sent it out by a servant. He heard her tremulous voice when she thanked him, and wished him a blessing in this world, he heard her crawl away coughing from the door, but he thought of

nothing, except that he had again spent six-batzen for nothing.

At length Peter took it into his head to marry. He knew that every father in the Schwarzwald would gladly give him his daughter, but he was fastidious in his choice, for he wished that every body should praise his good fortune and understanding in matrimony as well as in other matters. He therefore rode about the whole forest, looking out in every direction, but none of the pretty Schwarzwülder girls seemed beautiful enough for him. Having finally looked out in vain for the most beautiful at all the dancing-rooms, he was one day told the most beautiful and most virtuous girl in the whole forest was the daughter of a poor wood-cutter. He heard she lived quiet and retired, was industrious and managed her father's household well, and that she was never seen at a dancing-room, not even at Whitsuntide or the Kirchweihfest.[10] When Peter heard of this wonder of the Schwarzwald, he determined to court her, and, having inquired where the hut was, rode there. The father of the beautiful Elizabeth received the great gentleman with astonishment, but was still more amazed when he heard it was the rich Herr Peter who wished to become his son-in-law. Thinking all his cares and poverty would now be at an end, he did not hesitate long in giving his consent, without even asking the beautiful Elizabeth, and the good child was so dutiful that she became Frau Peter Munk without opposition.

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[10] A great festival in German villages, general during the months of October and November.

But the poor girl did not find the happiness she had dreamt of. She believed she understood the management of a house well, but she could never give satisfaction to Herr Peter; she had compassion on poor people, and, as her husband was wealthy, thought it no sin to give a poor woman a penny, or a dram to a poor aged man. This being one day found out by Peter, he said to her, with angry look and gruff voice, "Why do you waste my property upon ragamuffins and vagabonds? Have you brought any thing of your own to the house that you can give away? With your father's beggar's staff you could not warm a soup, and you lavish my money like a princess. Once more let me find you out, and you shall feel my hand." The beautiful Elizabeth wept in her chamber over the hard heart of her husband, and often wished herself at home in her father's poor hut rather than with the rich, but avaricious and sinful Peter. Alas! had she known that he had a heart of marble and could neither love her nor any body else, she would not, perhaps, have wondered. But as often as a beggar now passed while she was sitting before the door, and drawing his hat off, asked for alms, she shut her eyes that she might not behold the distress, and closed her hand tight that she might not put it involuntarily in her pocket and take out a kreutzer. This caused a report and obtained an ill name for Elizabeth in the whole forest, and she was said to be even more miserly than Peter Munk. But one day Frau Elizabeth was again sitting before the door spinning and humming an air, for she was cheerful because it was fine weather, and Peter was taking a ride in the country, when a little

old man came along the road, carrying a large heavy bag, and she heard him panting at a great distance. Sympathising, she looked at him and thought how cruel it was to place such a heavy burden upon an aged man.

In the meanwhile the little man came near, tottering and panting, and sank under the weight of his bag almost down on the ground just as he came opposite Frau Elizabeth.

"Oh, have compassion on me, good woman, and give me a drink of water," said the little man, "I can go no farther, and must perish from exhaustion."

"But you ought not to carry such heavy loads at your age?" said she.

"No more I should if I were not obliged to work as carrier from poverty and to prolong my life," replied he. "Ah, such rich ladies as you know not how painful poverty is, and how strengthening a fresh draught in this hot weather."

On hearing this she immediately ran into the house, took a pitcher from the shelf and filled it with water; but she had only gone a few paces back to take it to him, when, seeing the little man sit on his bag miserable and wretched, she felt pity for him, and recollecting that her husband was from home, she put down the pitcher, took a cup, filled it with wine, put a loaf of rye bread on it and gave it to the poor old man. "There," she said, "a draught of wine will do you more good than water, as you are very old; but do not drink so hastily, and eat some bread with it."

The little man looked at her in astonishment till the big tears

came into his eyes; he drank and said, "I have grown old, but have seen few people who were so compassionate and knew how to spend their gifts so handsomely and cordially as you do, Frau Elizabeth. But you will be blessed for it on earth; such a heart will not remain unrequited."

"No, and she shall have her reward on the spot," cried a terrible voice, and looking round they found it was Herr Peter with a face as red as scarlet. "Even my choicest wine you waste upon beggars, and give my own cup to the lips of vagabonds? There, take your reward." His wife fell prostrate before him and begged his forgiveness, but the heart of stone knew no pity, and flourishing the whip he held in his hand he struck her with the ebony handle on her beautiful forehead with such vehemence, that she sunk lifeless into the arms of the old man. When he saw what he had done it was almost as if he repented of the deed immediately; he stooped to see whether there was yet life in her, but the little man said in a well-known voice, "Spare your trouble, Peter; she was the most beautiful and lovely flower in the Schwarzwald, but you have crushed it and never again will see it bloom."

Now the blood fled from Peter's cheek and he said, "It is you then, Mr. Schatzhauser? well, what is done is done then, and I suppose this was to happen. But I trust you will not inform against me."

"Wretch," replied the glass-mannikin, "what would it profit me if I brought your mortal part to the gallows? It is not earthly

tribunals you have to fear, but another and more severe one; for you have sold your soul to the evil one."

"And if I have sold my heart," cried Peter, "it is no one's fault but yours and your deceitful treasures; your malicious spirit brought me to ruin; you forced me to seek help from another, and upon you lies the whole responsibility." He had scarcely uttered these words than the little man grew enormously tall and broad, his eyes it is said became as large as soup plates, and his mouth like a heated furnace vomiting flames. Peter fell upon his knees, and his stone heart did not protect his limbs from trembling like an aspen leaf. The sylvan spirit seized him, as if with vultures' claws, by the nape of the neck, whirled him round as the storm whirls the dry leaves, and dashed him to the ground so that his ribs cracked within him. "You worm of dust," he cried, in a voice roaring like thunder, "I could crush you if I wished, for you have trespassed against the lord of the forest; but for the sake of this dead woman that fed and refreshed me, I give you a week's respite. If you do not repent I shall return and crush your bones, and you will go hence in your sins."

It was already evening when some men passing by saw the wealthy Peter Munk lying on the ground. They turned him over and over to see whether there was still life in him, but for a long time looked in vain. At length one of them went into the house, fetched some water and sprinkled some on his face. Peter fetched a deep sigh and opened his eyes, looked for a long time around, and asked for his wife Elizabeth, but no one had seen her.

He thanked the men for their assistance, crawled into his house, searched everywhere, but in vain, and found what he imagined to be a dream a sad reality. As he was now quite alone strange thoughts came into his mind; he did not indeed fear any thing, for his heart was quite cold; but when he thought of the death of his wife his own forcibly came to his mind, and he reflected how laden he should go hence – heavily laden with the tears of the poor; with thousands of the curses of those who could not soften his heart; with the lamentations of the wretched on whom he had set his dogs; with the silent despair of his mother; with the blood of the beautiful and good Elizabeth; and yet he could not even so much as give an account of her to her poor old father, should he come and ask "Where is my daughter, your wife?" How then could he give an account to Him – to Him to whom belong all woods, all lakes, all mountains, and the life of men?

This tormented him in his dreams at night, and he was awoke every moment by a sweet voice crying to him "Peter, get a warmer heart!" And when he was awoke he quickly closed his eyes again, for the voice uttering this warning to him could be none other but that of his Elizabeth. The following day he went into the inn to divert his thoughts, and there met his friend, fat Hezekiel. He sat down by him and they commenced talking on various topics, of the fine weather, of war, of taxes, and lastly, also of death, and how such and such a person had died suddenly. Now Peter asked him what he thought about death, and how it would be after death. Hezekiel replied, "That the body was

buried, but that the soul went either up to heaven or down to hell."

"Then the heart also is buried?" asked Peter, anxiously.

"To be sure that also is buried."

"But supposing one has no longer a heart?" continued Peter.

Hezekiel gave him a terrible look at these words. "What do you mean by that? Do you wish to rally me? Think you I have no heart?"

"Oh, heart enough, as firm as stone," replied Peter.

Hezekiel looked in astonishment at him, glancing round at the same time to see whether they were overheard, and then said, "Whence do you know that? Or does your own perhaps no longer beat within your breast?"

"It beats no longer, at least, not in my breast;" replied Peter Munk. "But tell me, as you know what I mean, how will it be with our hearts?"

"Why does that concern you, my good fellow?" answered Hezekiel, laughing. "Why you have plenty here upon earth, and that is sufficient. Indeed, the comfort of our cold hearts is that no fear at such thoughts befals us."

"Very true, but still one cannot help thinking of it, and though I know no fear now, still I well remember how I was terrified at hell when yet an innocent little boy."

"Well, it will not exactly go well with us," said Hezekiel; "I once asked a schoolmaster about it, who told me that the hearts are weighed after death to ascertain the weight of their sins. The light ones rise, the heavy sink, and methinks our stone hearts will

weigh heavy enough."

"Alas, true," replied Peter; "I often feel uncomfortable that my heart is so devoid of sympathy, and so indifferent when I think of such things." So ended their conversation.

But the following night Peter again heard the well-known voice whispering into his ear five or six times, "Peter, get a warmer heart!" He felt no repentance at having killed his wife, but when he told the servants that she had gone on a journey, he always thought within himself, where is she gone to? Six days had thus passed away, and he still heard the voice at night, and still thought of the sylvan spirit and his terrible menace; but on the seventh morning, he jumped up from his couch and cried, "Well, then, I will see whether I can get a warmer heart, for the cold stone in my breast makes my life only tedious and desolate." He quickly put on his best dress, mounted his horse, and rode towards the Tannenbühl.

Having arrived at that part where the trees stand thickest, he dismounted, and went with a quick pace towards the summit of the hill, and as he stood before the thick pine he repeated the following verse:

> "Keeper of wealth in the forest of pine,
> Hundreds of years are surely thine:
> Thine is the tall pine's dwelling place —
> Those born on Sunday see thy face."

The glass-mannikin appeared, not looking friendly and kindly

as formerly, but gloomy and sad; he wore a little coat of black glass, and a long glass crape hung floating from his hat, and Peter well knew for whom he mourned.

"What do you want with me, Peter Munk?" asked he with a stern voice.

"I have one more wish, Mr. Schatzhauser," replied Peter, with his look cast down.

"Can hearts of stone still wish?" said the former. "You have all your corrupt mind can need, and I could scarcely fulfil your wish."

"But you have promised to grant me three wishes, and one I have still left."

"I can refuse it if it is foolish," continued the spirit; "but come, let me hear what you wish."

"Well, take the dead stone out of me, and give me a living heart," said Peter.

"Have I made the bargain about the heart with you?" asked the glass-mannikin. "Am I the Dutch Michel, who gives wealth and cold hearts? It is of him you must seek to regain your heart."

"Alas! he will never give it back," said Peter.

"Bad as you are, yet I feel pity for you," continued the little man, after some consideration; "and as your wish is not foolish, I cannot at least refuse my help. Hear then. You can never recover your heart by force, only by stratagem, but probably you will find it without difficulty; for Michel will ever be stupid Michel, although he fancies himself very shrewd. Go straightway to him,

and do as I tell you." He now instructed Peter fully, and gave him a small cross of pure glass, saying, "He cannot touch your life and will let you go when you hold this before him and repeat a prayer. When you have obtained your wish return to me."

Peter took the cross, impressed all his words on his memory, and started on his way to the Dutchman Michel's residence; there he called his name three times and immediately the giant stood before him.

"You have slain your wife?" he asked, with a grim laugh. "I should have done the same, she wasted your property on beggars; but you will be obliged to leave the country for some time; and I suppose you want money and have come to get it?"

"You have hit it," replied Peter; "and pray let it be a large sum, for it is a long way to America."

Michel leading the way they went into his cottage; there he opened a chest containing much money and took out whole rolls of gold. While he was counting it on the table Peter said, "You're a wag, Michel. You have told me a fib, saying that I had a stone in my breast, and that you had my heart."

"And is it not so then?" asked Michel, astonished. "Do you feel your heart? Is it not cold as ice? Have you any fear or sorrow? Do you repent of any thing?"

"You have only made my heart to cease beating, but I still have it in my breast, and so has Hezekiel, who told me you had deceived us both. You are not the man who, unperceived and without danger, could tear the heart from the breast; it would

require witchcraft on your part."

"But I assure you," cried Michel, angrily, "you and Hezekiel and all the rich people, who have sold themselves to me, have hearts as cold as yours, and their real hearts I have here in my chamber."

"Ah! how glibly you can tell lies," said Peter, laughing, "you must tell that to another to be believed; think you I have not seen such tricks by dozens in my journeys? Your hearts in the chamber are made of wax; you're a rich fellow I grant, but you are no magician."

Now the giant was enraged and burst open the chamber door, saying, "Come in and read all the labels and look yonder is Peter Munk's heart; do you see how it writhes? Can that too be of wax?"

"For all that, it is of wax," replied Peter. "A genuine heart does not writhe like that. I have mine still in my breast. No! you are no magician."

"But I will prove it to you," cried the former angrily. "You shall feel that it is your heart." He took it, opened Peter's waistcoat, took the stone from his breast, and held it up. Then taking the heart, he breathed on it, and set it carefully in its proper place, and immediately Peter felt how it beat, and could rejoice again. "How do you feel now?" asked Michel, smiling.

"True enough, you were right," replied Peter, taking carefully the little cross from his pocket. "I should never have believed such things could be done."

"You see I know something of witchcraft, do I not? But, come, I will now replace the stone again."

"Gently, Herr Michel," cried Peter, stepping backwards, and holding up the cross, "mice are caught with bacon, and this time you have been deceived;" and immediately he began to repeat the prayers that came into his mind.

Now Michel became less and less, fell to the ground, and writhed like a worm, groaning and moaning, and all the hearts round began to beat, and became convulsed, so that it sounded like a clockmaker's workshop.

Peter was terrified, his mind was quite disturbed; he ran from the house, and, urged by the anguish of the moment, climbed up a steep rock, for he heard Michel get up, stamping and raving, and denouncing curses on him. When he reached the top, he ran towards the Tannenbühl; a dreadful thunder-storm came on; lightning flashed around him, splitting the trees, but he reached the precincts of the glass-mannikin in safety.

His heart beat joyfully – only because it did beat; but now he looked back with horror on his past life, as he did on the thunderstorm that was destroying the beautiful forest on his right and left. He thought of his wife, a beautiful, good woman, whom he had murdered from avarice; he appeared to himself an outcast from mankind, and wept bitterly as he reached the hill of the glass-mannikin.

The Schatzhauser was sitting under a pine-tree, and was smoking a small pipe; but he looked more serene than before.

"Why do you weep, Peter?" asked he, "have you not recovered your heart? Is the cold one still in your breast?"

"Alas! sir," sighed Peter, "when I still carried about with me the cold stony heart, I never wept, my eyes were as dry as the ground in July; but now my old heart will almost break with what have done. I have driven my debtors to misery, set the dogs on the sick and poor, and you yourself know how my whip fell upon her beautiful forehead."

"Peter, you were a great sinner," said the little man. "Money and idleness corrupted you, until your heart turned to stone, and no longer knew joy, sorrow, repentance, or compassion. But repentance reconciles; and if I only knew that you were truly sorry for your past life, it might yet be in my power to do something for you."

"I wish nothing more," replied Peter, dropping his head sorrowfully. "It is all over with me, I can no more rejoice in my lifetime; what shall I do thus alone in the world? My mother will never pardon me for what I have done to her, and I have perhaps brought her to the grave, monster that I am! Elizabeth, my wife, too, – rather strike me dead, Herr Schatzhauser, then my wretched life will end at once."

"Well," replied the little man, "if you wish nothing else, you can have it, so my axe is at hand." He quietly took his pipe from his mouth, knocked the ashes out, and put it into his pocket. Then rising slowly, he went behind the pines. But Peter sat down weeping in the grass, his life had no longer any value for him,

and he patiently awaited the deadly blow. After a short time, he heard gentle steps behind him, and thought, "Now he is coming."

"Look up once more, Peter Munk," cried the little man. He wiped the tears from his eyes and looked up, and beheld his mother, and Elizabeth his wife, who kindly gazed on him. Then he jumped up joyfully, saying, "You are not dead, then, Elizabeth, nor you, mother; and have you forgiven me?"

"They will forgive you," said the glass-mannikin, "because you feel true repentance, and all shall be forgotten. Go home now, to your father's hut, and be a charcoal-burner as before; if you are active and honest, you will do credit to your trade, and your neighbours will love and esteem you more than if you possessed ten tons of gold." Thus saying, the glass-mannikin left them. The three praised and blessed him, and went home.

The splendid house of wealthy Peter stood no longer; it was struck by lightning, and burnt to the ground, with all its treasures. But they were not far from his father's hut, and thither they went, without caring much for their great loss. But what was their surprise when they reached the hut; it was changed into a handsome farm-house, and all in it was simple, but good and cleanly.

"This is the glass-mannikin's doing," cried Peter.

"How beautiful!" said Frau Elizabeth; "and here I feel more at home than in the larger house, with many servants."

Henceforth Peter Munk became an industrious and honest man. He was content with what he had, carried on his trade

cheerfully, and thus it was that he became wealthy by his own energy, and respected and beloved in the whole forest. He no longer quarrelled with his wife, but honoured his mother, and relieved the poor who came to his door. When, after twelvemonths, Fran Elizabeth presented him with a beautiful little boy, Peter went to the Tannenbühl, and repeated the verse as before. But the glass-mannikin did not show himself.

"Mr. Schatzhauser," he cried loudly, "only listen to me. I wish nothing but to ask you to stand godfather to my little son." But he received no answer, and only a short gust of wind rushed through the pines, and cast a few cones on the grass.

"Then I will take these as a remembrance, as you will not show yourself," cried Peter, and he put them in his pocket, and returned home. But when he took off his jacket, and his mother turned out the pockets before putting it away, four large rolls of money fell out; and when they opened them, they found them all good and new Baden dollars, and not one counterfeit, and these were the intended godfather's gift for little Peter, from the little man in the Tannenbühl. Thus they lived on, quietly and cheerfully; and many a time Peter Munk, when gray-headed, would say, "It is indeed better to be content with little, than to have wealth and a cold heart."

C. A. F.

THE WONDERS IN THE SPESSART

BY KARL IMMERMANN

[This tale occurs in the novel of "Münchhausen," the narrator telling it to the object of his affections. It is necessary to state this to render the opening intelligible. The story is probably intended to satirize the speculative tendency of the Germans, and old Albertus Magnus seems a sort of representative of Hegel, whom Immermann openly attacks in the course of the "Münchhausen." To me the expression "dialectic thought," which occurs in the Hegelian sense at p. 85, is conclusive in this respect. – J. O.]

"Did you ever, Lisbeth, on a clear sunny day, go through a beautiful wood, in which the blue sky peered through the green diadems above you, where the exhalation of the trees was like a breath of God, and when thy foot scattered a thousand glittering pearls from the pointed grass?"

"Yes, lately, Oswald dear, I went through the mountains to collect the rents. It is delightful to walk in a green fresh wood; I could ramble about one for whole days without meeting a soul, and without being in the least terrified. The turf is God's mantle, and we are guarded by a thousand angels, whether we sit or stand upon it. Now a hill – now a rock! I ran and ran, because I always

thought, 'Behind, then, must be flying the wonderful bird with its blue and red wings, its golden crown upon its head.' I grew hot and red with running, but not weary. One does not get weary in a wood."

"And when you did not see the wonderful bird behind the hill in the hedge, you stood still hard-breathing, and you heard afar in the valley of oaks the sound of the axe, which is the forest clock, and tells that man's hour is running even in such a lovely solitude."

"Or farther, Oswald, the free prospect up the hill between the dark round beeches, and still closer, the brow of the hill crowned with lofty trunks! There red cows were feeding, and shook their bells, there the dew on the grass gave a silvery hue to the sunlit valley, and the shadows of the cows and the trees played at hide-and-seek with each other."

"Well, then, on such a sunny morning many hundred years ago, two young men met one another in the wood. It was in the great woody ridge of mountains, called Spessart, which forms the boundary between the joyous districts of the Rhine and the fertile Fraconia. That is a wood, dear Lisbeth, which is ten leagues broad and twenty long, covering plains and mountains, clifts and valleys.

"On the great highway, which runs straight from the Rhine-land to Würzburg and Bamberg, these young men met each other. One came from the west, the other from the east. Their animals were as opposite as their directions. The one from the east sat

upon a bay horse, which pranced merrily, and he looked right stately in his gay armour, and his cap of red velvet, from which the heron's plume descended; the one from the west wore a black cap without any mark of distinction, a long student's cloak of the same colour, and rode on a humble mule.

"When the young knight had approached the travelling student, he stopped his bay, saluted the other in a friendly way, and said: 'Good friend, I was just going to alight, and to take my morning snack, but since two are required for love, gaming, and eating, if these three pleasant affairs are to go off properly, I beg leave to ask you, whether you will dismount and be my partner? A mouthfull of grass would no less suit your gray, than my bay. The day will be hot, and the beasts require some repose.'

"The travelling student was pleased with this offer. Both alighted and seated themselves by the roadside on the wild thyme and lavender, from which, as they sat down, a white cloud of perfumes ascended, and a hundred bees that were disturbed in their labours arose humming. A squire, who had followed the young knight with a heavy laden horse, took charge of the two animals, gave his master a goblet and bottle, together with bread and meat from the knapsack, unbridled the beasts, and let them graze by the roadside.

"The travelling student felt the side-pocket of his cloak, drew back his hand with an air of vexation, and cried: 'Out upon my eternal abstraction! This very morning, I had packed up my breakfast so neatly in the inn, and then something else must needs

come into my head, and make me forget my provisions.'

"'If that is all,' cried the young knight, 'here is enough for you and me!' He divided the bread and meat, filled the goblet, and gave the other both liquid and solid. At the same time he examined him more closely, while the other on his side examined him also, and then a cry of astonishment was uttered by them both:

"'Are you not?' – 'Nay, art *thou* not?' they cried.

"'I am indeed Conrad of Aufsess!' cried the young knight.

"'And I Peter of Stellen,' cried the other. They embraced each other, and could hardly contain themselves for joy at this unexpected meeting.

"They were indeed playfellows, who had met by accident in the verdant Spessart. Their fathers had been friends, and the sons had often played at bat and ball together; had quarrelled a hundred times, and as often made it up again. However, young Peter was always more quiet and reflective than his playfellow, who thought about nothing but the names of weapons and riding-equipage. At last Peter declared to his father that he wished to become learned, and he went to Cologne to sit at the feet of the celebrated Albertus Magnus, who was master of all the human sciences then known, and of whom, report said, that he was also deeply initiated in the occult arts.

"A considerable time had elapsed, since either of the playfellows had heard any thing of the other. After the first storm of joy had subsided, and breakfast was removed, the knight asked

the student what had occurred to him.

"'To that, my friend, I can give a very short answer, and ought to give thee a very long one. A short one, if I merely portray the outward form and shell of my life hitherto; a long one – ah, an infinitely long one, if thou desirest to taste the inner kernel of this shell.'

"'Eh, silly fellow,' cried the knight, 'what hard discourse is this? Give the shell and a bit of the kernel, if the whole nut is too large for a single meal.'

"'Then know,' replied the other, 'that my visible course of life was between narrow banks. I dwelt in a little dark street, at the back of a house inhabited by quiet people. My window looked upon a garden to the trees and shrubs of which a solemn background was formed by the wall of the Templars' house. I kept myself very solitary, associating neither with the citizens, nor with the students. The result is that I know nothing about the large city, except the street leading from my house to the Dominican convent, where my great master taught. When I returned to my cell, and had kept awake till midnight by my studying lamp, I sometimes looked out of window to cool my heated eyes by exposure to the deep starry heaven. I then often saw a light in the Templars' house opposite; the knights in the white mantles of their order passed along the galleries, like spirits in the glare of red torches, vanished behind the pillars, and re-appeared. In the extreme corner of the wing, curtains were let down before the windows, but through the thinner parts of these a

singular light shone, while behind them melodies could be heard, sounding through the night sweetly and solemnly, like forbidden desires.

"'Thus did my days pass insignificant to outward appearance, but internally a brilliant festival of all sorts of wonders. Albertus now distinguished me above his other pupils; and in a short time I observed that he repeated to me with a particular emphasis, certain words, which passed unheeded by the rest. These were words which pointed to the mysterious connection of all human knowledge, and a common root, shooting into the darkest secrecy of that great tree, which in the light above unfolded its mighty branches; – as grammar, dialectics, eloquence, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. At such words his eyes would rest upon me, with the most penetrating glance, and my looks told him, that he had kindled in me a deep desire for the last and greatest treasures of his mind.

"'By degrees, I became the confidant of his secret laboratory, and the pupil to which he intended to bequeath, as a precious legacy, a portion of his talent. There is only one marrow of things, which here in the metal is heavy and presses down, there in the waving plant, or the volatile bird, struggles to free itself from the original kernel. All things undergo a perpetual change. The Creator indeed works in nature, but nature also works for herself. And he who has the right power at his command can call forth her own peculiar independent life, so that the limbs which would otherwise remain bound in the Creator, will unfold themselves

to new movements. My great master conducted me with a secure hand to that spring, where the marrow of things is flowing. I dipped my finger therein, and all my senses were at once filled with a superhuman power of perception. We often sat together in the sooty melting-room, and looked into the glow of the furnace; he before, on a low stool, I cowering behind him, giving the coals or the pieces of ore, which he flung into the crucible with his left hand, while with the right he affectionately held me. Then the metals defended themselves; the salts and acids crackled; the great Regulus, who rules all the world wished, as in a stormy fortress, to guard himself in the midst of sharp-angled crystals; the red, blue, and green vassals were kindled in wrath, and as if to keep us off, stretched their glaring spears towards us, but we broke through the works and destroyed the garrison, and the shining king humbly surrendered himself over the ruins of dross. Gold in itself is nothing to him whose heart is not set on earthly things, but to perceive this dearest and most precious boon of nature in all and every thing, even in what is most trifling and insignificant, that is a great matter to the philosopher. At other times the stars showed us their curious circles which separated themselves as history, and sunk to the earth, or the intimate connection of tones and numbers was awakened to us and showed us links which no word can describe, but which are again much more revealed by tones and numbers. But in all this mysterious essence and interweaving, that it might not again become a cold sticky mass, floated, ever combining and ever freeing, that which

separates itself, both in itself and in things, amid the contest of ever fading youth – the great, the unfathomable, the dialectic thought.

"'Oh blessed satisfying time of the opened intelligence, of the wandering through the inner halls of the palace, at the metal doors of which others knock in vain! At last – "

"The wandering student, whose lips during the narrative had been glowing more and more, took a deep red colour, while a strange fire flashed from his eyes, stopped short here, as though suddenly sobered from his inspiration. The knight wished in vain for the completion of the discourse, and then said to his friend: 'Well —*at last*?'

"'At last,' replied the student, in a tone of feigned indifference, 'we were obliged to separate, if only for a short time. My great master now sends me to Ratisbon to ask for certain papers from the sacristy of the cathedral, which he left there as bishop. I shall bring them to him, and shall then, indeed, if I can, pass my life with him.'

"The young knight poured the rest of his wine into the goblet, looked into it, and drank the wine more slowly than before. 'Thou hast told me strange things,' he began after a silence, 'but they do not stagger me. God's world appears to me so beautifully adorned, that I should take no delight in tearing away the charming veil, and looking in to the innermost core of things, as thou callest it. The sky is blue, the stars shine, the wood rustles, the plants give fragrance, and this blue, this shining,

this rustling, this fragrance – are they not the most beautiful things that can be, behind which there is nothing more beautiful? Pardon me, I do not envy thee thy secret knowledge. Poor fellow! this knowledge does not give thee a colour. Thy cheeks are quite pale and sunken.'

"'Every one has his appointed path, one this, the other that,' replied the scholar. 'It is not the bounding of blood that constitutes life. Marble is white, and walls of marble generally enclose the spot in which stand the statues of the gods, yet enough of this, and now for thyself. What hast thou done since I last saw thee?'

"'Oh! of that,' cried the young knight Conrad, with his usual light-heartedness, 'there is little to be told! I got upon horseback and got off again, I went about to many a good prince's court, thrust many a spear, gained many thanks, missed many thanks, and peeped into many a lovely woman's eye. I can write my name, and press the knob of my sword in wax by the side of it, and I can rhyme a song, though not so well as Master Godfried of Strasburg.[11] I have gone through the initiatory ceremonies, and was dubbed a knight at Firchheim. Now I am riding to Mayence, where the emperor is going to hold a tournament, to tumble about a little and enjoy life.'

"The student looked at the sun's place, and said: 'It is a pity that after such a friendly meeting we must so soon part. Nevertheless it is necessary, if we each design to fulfil our purpose to-day.'

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[11] One of the most celebrated poets in the 12th and 13th centuries.

"'Come with me to Mayence,' cried the other, as he jumped up, and eyed the student with a singularly compassionate look, which, however, allowed a smile to appear. 'Leave that gloomy Ratisbon, and the cathedral and the sacristy; cheer up thy face among jolly fellows, by the round table, in the wine-cellar, and before the flowery windows of fair damsels. Let the sound of flute and shaum purify thine ears of the awful vigils of the Templars, who are considered mischievous heretics and Baffomets' priests over all Christendom. Come to Mayence, Peter!'

"He was already in his saddle, when he uttered these last words, and stretched out his hand as if in supplication, towards his friend, who turned aside and drew back his arm in token of refusal. 'What has come into your head?' he said, smiling reluctantly. 'Ah, friend Conrad, if I had already said every one has his appointed way, I would cry out to thee turn back, thou volatile heedless one! Youth fades away, the jest becomes hushed, the laugh will one day be found suddenly to fail, because the face has become too stiff, or grins repulsively from withered wrinkles! Woe then to him whose garners are not full, whose chambers are not stored! Ah, there must be something dismal in such a base, impoverished old age, and the proverb is right which says: 'Those who at morn too merry are, shall reap at night sorrow and care.' Looking upon thee thus, oh brother of my youth, I may well feel troubled about thee, for who knows in what altered condition I may find thee again.'

"The knight gave the student's hand a hearty shake and cried: 'Perhaps thou wilt be transformed when we meet again – wilt be decked out in velvet and satin, and surpass us all!' He darted off, and in the distance the student heard him sing a song which was then in every mouth, and sounded something like this:

'No fairer flow'r, I vow, is known
Than that bright rose, sweet woman's lips,
With such luxuriance swelling.
Close-lock'd at first, this flow'ret keeps,
When as an infant bud 'tis shown
All bold assaults repelling.
But every flow'r is wash'd by May,
On rosy lips he plants a kiss,
And straight we see them fully blowing.
Then rosy lips should find a kiss,
And every kiss should in its day
Find lips with fondness glowing.'

"A butterfly flew up before the student. 'Is not the life of most men,' he said, 'to be compared to the fluttering of this moth? Light and motley he goes flaunting about, and yet how barren and short are his joys.' He rolled about his great eyes, but only an empty alternation of light and shade reached these dim mirrors, not the full form, the fine colour. The wood looked on him from its green depths with an irresistible glance. 'Suppose,' he said, 'I leave my patient beast awhile on this grass-plot; it will not run

away from me, and I feel the warmest desire to wander there for an hour. How refreshing it must be in the depths of the wood!'

"He turned aside from the high road by a narrow path, which, after winding for a short distance through the tall trees, sloped down into the wood. Soon he found himself in a perfect solitude, with a rustling, whispering, and whining round him, while only a few single gleams of sun-light reflected with a green hue, played about him like ignis fatui. Sometimes he thought he heard his name called behind him in the distance, and – he did not know why – the call appeared to him hateful and repulsive. Then again he would take the sound to be a mere delusion, but whatever he thought he always got deeper and deeper into the dark forest. Large gnarled roots lay like snakes across the way, stretched out, so that the student was in danger of tumbling every moment. Stag-beetles stood like noble game in the moor, while the purest hues of golden vegetation shone from little nooks in the rocks. The perspiration stood on his forehead, and with increasing rapidity he penetrated the thicket, and fled from the bright sunny world without. It was not only the exercise of walking that made him hot, his mind was also labouring under a burden of heavy recollections. At last, after the pathway had long vanished from beneath his feet, he came to a beautiful, smooth, dark spot, among some mighty oak-trees. Still he heard his name called in the distance. 'Here,' he said, 'the rude sound yonder will no more reach me; here I shall be quietly concealed.' He sunk down upon a great mossy stone, his heart heaved, he was struggling

with a powerful desire. 'Forgive my presumption, great master,' he cried, 'but there is a knowledge which must be followed by action, otherwise it crushes a mortal. Here, nearer to the heart of the great mother, where amid sprouting and growing, her pulse beats more audibly, – here must I utter the magic word, which I heard from thy sleeping lips, when thou spakest it in a dream; the word, at the sound of which the creature casts aside its veil, the powers which labour beneath bark and hide, and in the kernel of the rock, become visible, and the language of birds becomes intelligible to the ear.'

"His lips already quivered to utter the word, but he restrained himself, for there appeared before his eyes the sorrowful glance with which his great master, Albertus, had entreated him to make no use of the art he had accidentally acquired, since heavy things impended over him who uttered the magic word designedly.

"Nevertheless, he did call it out loudly into the wood, as if the prohibition and his own fear had given it additional force, and while he did so, he stretched out his right hand.

"At once he felt a blow and a jerk, that made him think he had been struck by lightning. His eyes were blinded, and it seemed as though a violent whirlwind was hurling him through the immeasurable space. As terrified and giddy he felt about him with his hands, he touched indeed the mossy stone on which he had been standing, and therefore in his mind regained the earth, but now he had a new and unpleasant sign. For as previously he had been flung about the universe like an atom, it now seemed

to him as if his body were infinitely extended. Amid the most frightful agonies, this newly-wakened power forced his limbs to such a monstrous size, that he thought he must be touching the sky. The bones of his head and chest were become as capacious as temples; into his ears fell strange, heavenly sounds of distracting effect, and he said to himself: 'That is the song of the stars in their golden orbits.' The pains at last were exchanged for a titillating pleasurable sensation, during which he felt his body again shrink up to its ordinary size, while the gigantic form remained standing around him like an outer shell, or a kind of atmosphere in aërial outline. The darkness left his eyes, while great, yellow-shining surfaces of light, as with the sensation of dazzling, freed themselves from the pupils and glided into the corners, where they gradually disappeared.

"While he thus regained his sight, a clear-toned, sweet chorus – he did not know whether it was the birds alone, or whether the boughs, bushes, and grasses joined in – sang quite plainly round him:

'Yes, he shall hear it,
Yes, he must bear it;
To us he belongs alone.
Soon will he
By the green-wood tree,
Be dumb and cold as a stone.'

"In the block of mossy rock a light murmuring was audible. It

seemed as though the stone wished to move itself and could not, like one in a trance. The student looked upon its surface, and lo! the green and red veins were running together into a very ancient countenance, which from its weary eyes looked upon him with such a mournful and supplicating aspect, that he turned aside with horror, and sought consolation among the trees, plants, and birds.

"Among these all was changed likewise. When he trod on the short brown moss, it shrieked and groaned at the ungentle pressure, and he saw how it wrung its little hairy hands and shake its green or yellow heads. The stems of the plants and the trunks of the trees were in a constant spiral motion, and at the same time the bark, or the outer skin, allowed him to look into the inside, where little sprites were pouring fine glistening drops into the tubes. The clear fluid ran from tube to tube, while valves unceasingly opened and shut, until in the capillary tubes of the leaves at the very top, it was transformed to a green bloom. Soft explosions and fire now arose in the veins of the leaves; their finely cut lips ceaselessly breathed forth a kind of ethereal flame, while ceaselessly also the heavier part of those igneous phenomena glided about the leaves in soft waves of vapour. In the blue-bell flowers that were on the damp soil there was a ringing and singing; they consoled the poor old face of stone with a lively song, and told him that if they could only free themselves from the ground they would with right good will release him. Out of the air strange green, red, and yellow signs, which seemed about

to join themselves to some form, and then again were dissipated, peered at the student; worms and chafers crawled or stepped to him on every side, uttering all sorts of confused petitions. One wished to be this, another that; one wished for a new cover to his wings, another had broken his proboscis; those that were accustomed to float in the air begged for sunshine, those that crawled, for damp. All this rabble of insects called him their deity, so that his brain was nearly turned.

"Among the birds there was no end to the chirping, twittering, and tale-telling. A spotted woodpecker clambered up and down the bark of an oak, hacked and picked after the worms, and was never tired of crying: 'I am the forester, I must take care of the wood.' The wren said to the finch: 'There is no more friendship among us. The peacock will not allow me to strike a circle, thinking that no one has a right to do so but himself, and therefore he has accused me to the supreme tribunal. Nevertheless I can strike as good a circle as he with my little brown tail.' 'Leave me alone,' replied the finch, 'I eat my grain and care for nothing else. I have cares of quite another sort. The proper artistical melody I can only add to my native woodland song when they have blinded me, but it is a terrible thing that no good can be done with one unless one is so horribly maimed.' Others chattered about thefts and murders, which no one but the birds had seen.

'Over the road they fly,
Traced by no mortal eye.'

"Then they perched themselves stiffly on the branches and peeped down mockingly at the scholar, while two impudent titmice cried out: 'There stands the conjurer listening to us and cannot make out what has happened to him.' 'Well, how he will stare!' screamed the whole troop, and off they flew with a chirping which sounded half like laughter.

"The scholar now felt something thrown in his face, and looking up, saw an ill-bred squirrel that had flung a hollow nut at his forehead, and now lay flat with his belly upon the bough, staring him full in the face, and crying: 'The full one for me, the hollow for thee!' 'Ye misbehaved rabble, let the strange gentleman alone,' cried a black and white magpie that came wagging her tail up to him, through the grass. She then seated herself on the student's shoulder, and said into his ear: 'You must not judge of us all according to these uncourteous beasts, learned sir, there are well bred folks among us. Only see, through that aperture, yonder wise gentleman, the wild boar, how quietly he stands and eats his acorns, and fosters his thoughts in silence. Willingly I will give you my company and tell you all that I know, for talking is my delight, especially with old people.'

"'There you are out in your reckoning,' said the student, 'I am still young.'

"'Heavens, how men can deceive themselves,' cried the magpie, and she looked very thoughtful.

"The student now thought he heard, from the depth of the

wood, a sigh, the sound of which penetrated his heart. He asked the cause of his white and black companion, and she told him she would ask two lizards, who were eating their breakfast. He accordingly went, with the magpie on his shoulder, to the place where these creatures were to be found, and beheld a very pretty sight. The two lizards, sure enough, were genteel young ladies, for they sat under a great mushroom, which stretched its golden yellow roof over them like a splendid marquee. There they sat imbibing, with their little brown tongues, the dew from the grass, and then wiping their mouths with one of the blades, they went to take a walk together in a neighbouring grove of fern, which seemingly belonged to the one who had invited her friend to the visit. 'Shack! shack!' cried the magpie, 'the gentleman wants to know who it was that sighed.' The lizards raised their heads, waggled their tails and cried,

> 'In the bower by the spring the Princess sleeps;
> Safely the spider the lady keeps.'

"'Hem,' said the magpie, shaking her head, 'to think that one can be so forgetful. To be sure in the adjoining beechen-bower slumbers the fair Princess Doralice, about whom wicked King Spider has spun his web. Oh, if you could save her, learned sir!' The student's heart was stirred, and he asked the magpie where the bower was. The bird flew before him, from bough to bough, to show him the way, till at last they came to a quiet meadow,

enclosed all round, through which a streamlet, taking its source from a cleft in the rocks, was flowing among some pretty bowers formed by beech-trees. These trees had struck their branches into the earth, and thus arched over the ground like a roof, through which the fine leaves of the fern were peering forth, forming as it were the gables and loopholes of the little leafy dwelling. Upon these the magpie sprang, peeped through a loophole, and whispered mysteriously, 'Here sleeps the princess!" The student approached with beating heart, knelt before the opening of the bower and looked within. Ah, there was a sight that set his whole soul and senses into a commotion more violent than when he uttered the magical word! On the moss, which rose like a pillow round its fair burden, the loveliest maiden was lying asleep. Her head was somewhat raised, one arm was placed under it, and her white fingers glistened through the gold-brown hair, which in long soft streams delicately wound about her neck and bosom. With unspeakable delight and, at the same time, with a feeling of melancholy the student gazed upon the noble face, the purple lips, the full white limbs, which cast a bright reflection on the dark moss. The circumstance that the sleeper, as if oppressed by some mysterious weight, appeared to breathe in a soft agony, only rendered her more charming in his eyes; he felt that his heart was captivated for ever, and that those lips alone could still his passion. 'Is it not a shame,' said the magpie, as she hopped through the hole into the bower and perched on the sleeper's arm, 'that so lovely a princess should thus be bound by a web?' 'A

web?' asked the student; 'she is indeed lying there wrapped in her white veil.' 'Oh, folly!' cried the magpie, 'I tell you that is all cobweb, and King Spider made it.' 'But who is King Spider?'

"'In his human state he was a wealthy maker of yarn,' replied the magpie, pleasantly wagging her tail. 'His factory was not distant from here, being by the river-side without the wood, and about a hundred workmen spun under him. The yarn they used to wash in the stream. This was the dwelling-place of the Nixy, who was very much enraged, that they troubled his clear waters with their filthy washing, especially as all his children, the trout and the smelts, died from the carious matter: he tangled the yarn, the waves were forced to cast it over the shore, he drove it downwards into the whirlpool to warn the master-spinner, but all was in vain. At last, on Midsummer-day, when the river-spirits have power to frighten and to injure, he sprinkled some magic water in the faces of the whole troop of spinners and their chief, as they were carrying on their washing as boldly and unscrupulously as ever, and just as bloodthirsty men may be changed into wear-wolves, and wear-cats, so did they become wear-spiders. They all ran from the river to the wood, and were hanging everywhere from the trees and bushes by their web. The workmen have become diminutive spiders, and catch flies and gnats, but their master has retained nearly his former size, and is called the spider-king. He lies in watch for pretty girls, spins his web round them, lulls their senses with his poisonous exhalations, and then sucks the blood from their hearts. At last he overcame this princess, who

had strayed from her retinue in the wood. See, there, there, he is stirring among the bushes."

"And indeed it seemed to the student as if he saw glimmering through the branches, right opposite to him, the body of a gigantic spider; two hairy feet, as thick as human arms, were working their way through the foliage. He felt dreadfully alarmed for the lovely sleeper, and wished to oppose the monster. 'Vain is your attempt!' cried the magpie, flapping her wings; 'all enchanted men have fearful power, and this monster could strangle you with his web; however, strew some fern-seed on the breast of the fair one; that will make her invisible to the spider-king, and so long as any particle of it remains, its virtue will last.' In the greatest haste the student rubbed the brown dust from the under surface of a fern-leaf, and did as the bird had desired. While during this act, he bent over the sleeper, his cheek felt her breath. Enraptured, he cried, 'Are there no means of freeing this beloved form?' 'Oh,' screamed the bird, as she madly flew round the student with a sort of zig-zag motion, 'if you ask me about means, there are many indeed. Our wise old man in the cleft has the yew-tree in keeping, and if you can get a branch of that, and with it touch the fair one thrice upon the forehead, all her bonds will be dissolved:

'Before the yew tree,
All magic must flee.'

She will then sink in your arms, and belong to you, as her deliverer.'

"At this moment it seemed as though the sleeper heard the bird's discourse. Her beautiful face was suffused with a delicate redness, and her features took the expression of an ineffable desire. 'Lead me to the wise old man!' cried the student, half beside himself.

"The bird hopped into the bushes, and the student hurried after her. The magpie fluttered up a narrow rocky path which soon led over a marsh and wildly scattered blocks of stones, with great peril to the traveller. The student was forced to clamber from block to block that he might not sink into the marsh. His knees trembled, his heart heaved, his temples were bathed in a cold sweat. As he hastened along he plucked off flowers and leaves and sprinkled them on the stones that he might again find his way. At last he stood on an eminence of considerable height upon a spacious rocky portal, from the dark hollow of which an icy-cold breeze blew towards him. Here nature seemed to be in her primitive state of fermention, so fearfully and in such wild disorder did the masses of stone stand over, by, and before the cavern.

"'Here dwells our wise man!' cried the magpie, while she bristled up her feathers from her head to her tail, which gave her a most unpleasant and repulsive appearance, 'I will announce you, and ask how he feels disposed as to your wish.' With these words, she slipped into the hollow, and almost immediately jumped

back again, crying, 'The old man is peevish and obstinate, and he will not give you the bough of yew, unless you stop up all the chinks in the cavern, for he says the draught annoys him. Before you can do this, many years may have passed.'

"The student plucked up as much of the moss and herbage as he could, and, not without a feeling of dread, entered the cavern. Within strangely-shaped stalactites were staring at him from the walls, and he did not know where to turn his eyes to avoid these hideous forms. He wished to penetrate deeper by the rocky path, but from the further corner a voice snorted forth to him: 'Back! disturb me not in my researches, pursue thy occupation there in the front!' He wished to discover who was speaking, but only saw a pair of red fiery eyes, that shone out of the darkness. He now set about his task, stopped up with moss and herbage every chink through which a glimmer of daylight passed, but this was a difficult, and – as it seemed to him – an endless task. For when he thought he had done with one cranny and might turn to another, the stopping fell out, and he was obliged to begin anew. The snorting thing at the back of the cavern went on rattling out sounds without meaning, only occasionally uttering intelligible words, which seemed to denote that the creature was boasting of its deep investigations.

"Time appeared to the student to be hastening along with the greatest rapidity, while he was pursuing his work of despair. Days, weeks, months, years, seemed to come and go, and yet he felt nothing like hunger or thirst. He fancied he was nearly mad,

and with a kind of feigned passion, quietly repeated to himself the year in which he had entered the wood, and that it was on the day of Peter and Paul, that he might not lose all notion of time. The image of his beloved sleeper appeared to him as from a far distance, he wept with desire and sorrow, and yet he felt no tears flowing down his cheeks. All at once it seemed to him as if he saw a well-known figure approach the sleeper, contemplate her with rapture, and then bend over her as if to kiss her. At this moment he was entirely conscious of pain and jealousy, and, forgetting all around him, he darted towards the dark background of the cavern. 'The yew-branch!' he cried, eagerly. 'There it grows,' said the glaring snorting thing, and at the same time he felt in his hand the branch of a tree, which grew from a dark chink in the grotto. He was in the act of breaking one of the branches, when he heard a whimpering noise around him, the glaring creature snorted louder than ever, the cavern reeled, shook, and fell in, all became dark in the eyes of the student, and he involuntarily shouted out:

'Before the yew tree,
All magic must flee.'

"When his eyes again became clear, he looked around him. A dry, strangely-discoloured stick was in his hand. He stood amid a heap of stones, which arched themselves to a cavern, which was not very large. In the depth of it he heard shrill,

piping sounds, like those commonly uttered by great owls. The place around seemed changed. It was a moderate eminence, bare, and scanty, and sprinkled over with stones of no remarkable magnitude, between which the path by which he had ascended, led on one side, through the damp soil, to the abyss. Of the large blocks of rock, nothing more was to be seen. He was freezing with cold, although the sun was high in the heavens, and, as it seemed to him, in the same place as when he went out to fetch the bough, which had now become a withered stick in his hand. Stepping over the stones, he went down the path; the journey seemed wearisome, he was obliged to support himself on the stick, his head hung down on his breast, and he heard his breath, as it struggled forth with difficulty. On a slippery part of the pathway his foot slid, and he was obliged to cling to the hedge. In this act his hand came close to his eye, and appeared gray and wrinkled. 'Good God!' cried he, seized with horror, 'have I then so long – ?' He did not dare to utter his own thoughts. 'No,' said he, forcibly calming himself, 'it is the cold wood-breeze that so freezes me; the exertion has made me weak, and the broken greenish light, which falls through the hedges, gives my hands this singular colour.' He stepped farther, and saw, lying on the stones, the wild flowers and leaves, which he had thrown, on his ascent, to mark the way. They were as fresh as if they had been but just placed there. This was a new riddle for him. A charcoal-burner was chopping away the trees by the wayside, and cutting off branches; so he asked him what day it was. 'Eh, father,' said

the man, 'are you such a bad Christian, that you do not know the Apostles' days? This is Peter and Paul's day, when the stag leaves the wood for the corn. I am cutting out a toy for my young one, out of the veiny bough. For any other purpose, I do not work on this day; but that is all for pleasure and pastime, and is allowed, says the chaplain.'

"'I pray you, my good fellow,' said the student, who felt a sensation of horror, more and more painful, pervading him, 'tell in what year of our Lord we are!' The charcoal-burner, whom even the holiday's wash had not quite freed from soot, raised up his strong-limbed black figure from among the green bushes, and, after some hesitation, told the year.

"'Oh, my Redeemer!' shrieked the student, and, no longer supported by his stick, he fell upon the stones. He then cast the stick away, and crawled trembling down the stony path.

The black charcoal-burner, amazed, came out of the hedge upon the stones, with the branch in his hand, saw the stick lying before him, crossed himself, and said: 'That is off the yew-tree, which grows yonder on the Eulenstein, where the owl has his nest. They say that it will enchant, and free that which is enchanted already. God help us! the old man has uttered wicked things.' He then returned to the bushes, to go to his hut, and cut the plaything for his boy.

"In the pleasant woodland meadow below, near the beechen arbour, and by the clear brook, which had there washed its banks to a wide basin, sat the young knight, Conrad, and the fair one

whom he had awakened from slumber without any magic arts. The red, blue, and yellow flower-cups pressed forth out of the grass around them, and the pair bloomed in youth and beauty – the knight in gay accoutrements, the maiden in her silver-bright veil, as the fairest flower that decked the enamel. He had his arm gently round her waist, and said, looking with every appearance of sincerity into her eye: 'By the ashes of my dear mother, and by the holy sign on the hilt of this sword, I am, as I have named myself to thee, lord of castles, and ruler of my own life, and I entreat thee, thou lovely wonder of this forest, to let thy lips speak the word which shall make me thine for ever, with the blessing of the priest before the altar.'

"'And what word dost thou desire?' said the fair one, as she modestly lowered her eye-lashes. 'Have not my eye, my cheek, my palpitating bosom told all? Love[12] is a powerful queen, she pursues her path unawares, and seizes whom she pleases, without suffering resistance. Conduct me, before the decline of day, to the pious abbess of the cloister at Odenwald, she will take me under her protection, and there will I abide between quiet walls, till you come, and fetch me to your home.'

"She was about to rise, but the young knight softly detained her, and said, 'Let us yet remain a few moments in this spot where my happiness sprang up, like a golden legend. I still fear that you will vanish from my sight, like some charming wood nymph. Help me to believe in thee and thy lovely mortality. How didst

[12] The old word for "lore" *Minne*, from which "Minnesinger" is derived, is feminine.

thou come hither? What had befallen thee?'

"'This morning,' replied the fair one, 'I had fled into the forest from my guardian, Count Archimbald, whose wicked designs, whether upon me or my property I know not, were suddenly most frightfully apparent. Of what use is a rich inheritance to youth and woman? She is always left to herself and unprotected. I wished to fly to the abbess, I wished to apply to the emperor at Mayence, indeed I scarcely knew what I wished. Thus I came into these green halls of trees, my thoughts were not directed to the true Aid, my thoughts were at war with Heaven. Suddenly, while I saw this meadow already before me, I fancied that something was spoken over yonder in the bushes, upon which I felt myself and all around me transformed. I cannot describe the word nor the sound of it, my beloved. The song of the nightingale is harsh to its sweetness, and the rolling of the thunder is but a weak whisper compared to it. It was certainly the most mysterious and the most compulsory communication which is possible between heaven and earth. On me it exercised an irresistible power, as it fell into a mind that had lost all self-control, into the tumult of my senses, and there was in me no holy thought to oppose it. My eyes closed, and yet I could see the path before me, which my feet, as though conducted by soft, invisible hands, were forced to tread. I slept and yet I did not sleep; it was an indescribable situation under the influence of which I at length sank down on the soft recess in yonder arbour. Every thing around me was speaking and singing, I felt within me the billow-like commotion

of the most tumultuous rapture, every drop of my blood flashed and danced through my veins, and yet in the depth of my soul there was the most extreme horror at my state, and the most ardent prayer for an awakening from my slumber. I perceived at the same time that nothing of the horror appeared in my face, for strange to say I could look at myself, and I saw that my cheeks smiled with delight, as if songs of heavenly joy were sung to me. The sensation of pleasure penetrated deeper and deeper into my heart, that of horror receded more and more, and I felt dreadfully alarmed lest this one small point should be totally extinguished, and I should have nothing but pleasure. In this state of trouble, and apparently the loss of all consciousness, I vowed that I would belong to him, who should awaken and deliver me. I now perceived through my closed eyelids a dark form stooping over me. The form was large and noble, and yet I felt a deep repugnance towards this person, while the thought that it might be he, who had uttered the fatal word passed through my mind like a shadow; nevertheless I still cried out, silently indeed, but yet loudly, to myself, 'If he wakens thee and delivers thee, thou must belong to him for this ineffable benefit, for thou hast vowed it.' He did not awaken me!'

"'I – I have awakened thee, my dearest love, and not by charms and benedictions, no; but with a burning kiss on thy red lips!' cried the young knight, with transport, as he embraced the fair Emma. 'Strange have been the wonders in the Spessart which have brought us together. On the highway yonder I had

parted from my dear friend Peter, after the strangest and most intricate discussion. When I had proceeded a few hundred paces I suddenly felt very uneasy about him, so I alighted, and wished again and again to exhort him to leave his dark ways, and go with me to Mayence. As soon as I turned, I saw him slip into the wood. I cried his name, but he heard me not. My spurs hindered me from walking fast; I could only follow him in the distance, but nevertheless I did not desist from calling after him, although it was all in vain. At last I lost sight of his black cloak among the trees. The beautiful green meadow was sparkling before me, and I wished to look at the bright radiance of the flowers, so I came hither, after looking for my friend in every direction. In the wood around me, there was a constant stirring and waving from the breezes, the worms were all in motion, the birds chirped and fluttered in a manner quite peculiar. However there was no influence over me, probably because I was thinking of the plain good path to which I would willingly bring Peter. When I found thee sleeping, the most acute pity, together with the power of the sweetest love, affected my heart, and I felt joyous. I nevertheless shed the most scalding tears that ever flowed from my lively eyes. I think I was allowed to peep into the corner, where that horror thou speakest of, dwelt. Sobbing and laughing at the same time, I cried

'I vow there's not a flow'r that blows,
Can rival woman's rosy lips,

Where ev'ry sweet is dwelling.
The rose at May's soft kisses glows,
And sure a kiss should grace those lips
So fondly, sweetly swelling.'

"'And then my lips, in God's name, gave thine their greeting.'

"'And the fetters fell from me, I awoke, and my first glance met thy faithful, weeping eye,' cried the fair Emma. 'I thanked God, on whose name I again thought, for my deliverance; and then I thanked Him that it was thou, and not that dark man, that had delivered me.'

"The young knight became thoughtful. 'I fear,' said he, 'that all the mysterious wonders of this wood stand in connexion with Peter. I fear that on this day, when I have gained my love, I have lost my friend. What can have become of him?'

"The youthful pair started from each other, for they saw in the water at their feet, between their own blooming heads, an icy gray, aged one reflected. 'Here he is,' said a trembling, stooping old man, with hair as white as snow, who stood behind them. He wore the new black cloak of the student.

"'Yes,' said the old man, with weak, faint voice, 'I am thy friend, Peter of Stetten. I have stood long behind you, and I have heard your converse, and our fates are clear enough. It is still the day of Peter and Paul, on which we met and parted on the highway, which is scarcely a thousand paces from here, and since we parted, perhaps an hour may have elapsed, for the shadow which yonder hedge casts upon the turf, is but a little

increased. Before that hour we were four-and-twenty years of age; but during that hour you have become sixty minutes older, and I sixty years. I am now four-and-eighty. Thus do we see each other again; indeed I did not think it.'

"Conrad and Emma had arisen. She clung timidly to her lover, and said softly: 'It is a poor madman.' But the old man said: 'No, fair Emma, I am not mad. I have loved thee; my spell influenced thee, and thou mightest have been mine, had I been permitted to kiss thy rosy lips in God's name – the only benediction by which fair love may be awakened. Instead of this, I was forced to go in quest of the yew-bough, and to keep the wind and weather out of the owl's cave. All has happened of necessity. He has gained the bride, I have gained – death.'

"Conrad had been looking with fixed eyes at the countenance of the old man, to see if he could detect among the wrinkles one former lineament of the friend of his youth. At last he stammered forth: 'I entreat thee, man, tell us how this transformation was brought about, lest our brains be turned, and we do something frightful.'

"'Whoever tempts God and nature shall behold sights, the presence of which shall quickly wither him,' replied the old man. 'Therefore, man, even if he see the plants grow, and understand the discourse of birds, remains as simple as before, allows a foolish magpie to pass off upon him fables of a princess and a spider-king, and takes ladies' veils for cobwebs. Nature is a curtain, no magical word can remove it – it will only make thyself

an old fable.'

"He retired slowly into the depths of the wood, whither Conrad did not venture to follow him. He conducted his Emma from the shadow of the trees to the broad road, where the light played in all its colours around the tops of the trees.

"For some time did travellers in the Spessart hear a hollow and ghost-like voice, behind the rocks and thick groups of trees, utter rhymes, which to some sounded like nonsense, to others like perfect wisdom. If they followed the sound, they found the old man, whose years were yet so few, as with faded eyes, and hands resting on his knees, he looked fixedly in the distance, and uttered sentences, none of which have been preserved. Soon, however, they were heard no more, neither was the corpse of the old man discovered.

"Conrad married his Emma; she bore him fair children, and he lived happily with her to an advanced age."

J. O.

NOSE, THE DWARF

BY W. HAUFF

[This story is from the collection called "The Sheik of Alexandria and his Slaves," and is supposed to be told by a slave to the Sheik.]

Sir, those people are much mistaken who fancy that there were no fairies and enchanters, except in the time of Haroun Al Raschid, Lord of Bagdad, or even pronounce untrue those accounts of the deeds of genii and their princes, which one hears the story-tellers relate in the market-places of the town. There are fairies now-a-days, and it is but a short time since that I myself was witness of an occurrence in which genii were evidently playing a part, as you will see from my narrative. In a considerable town of my dear fatherland, Germany, there lived many years ago a cobbler, with his wife, in an humble but honest way. In the daytime he used to sit at the corner of a street mending shoes and slippers; he did not refuse making new ones if any body would trust him, but then he was obliged to buy the leather first, as his poverty did not enable him to keep a stock. His wife sold vegetables and fruit, which she cultivated in a small garden outside the town-gates, and many people were glad to buy

of her, because she was dressed cleanly and neatly, and knew well how to arrange and lay out her things to the best advantage.

Now this worthy couple had a beautiful boy, of a sweet countenance, well made, and rather tall for his age, which was eight years. He was in the habit of sitting in the market with his mother, and often carried home part of the fruit and vegetables for the women and cooks who had made large purchases; he seldom, however, returned from one of these journeys without bringing either a beautiful flower, a piece of money, or a cake, which the mistresses of such cooks gave him as a present, because they were always pleased to see the handsome boy come to the house.

One day the cobbler's wife was sitting as usual in the marketplace, having before her some baskets with cabbages and other vegetables, various herbs and seeds, besides some early pears, apples, and apricots, in a small basket. Little James (this was the boy's name) sat by her, crying the things for sale in a loud voice: "This way, gentlemen, see what beautiful cabbages, what fragrant herbs; early pears, ladies, early apples and apricots; who will buy? My mother sells cheap."

While the boy was thus crying, an old woman was coming across the market; her dress was rather tattered and in rags, she had a small, sharp face, quite furrowed with age, red eyes, and a pointed, crooked nose, which reached down to her chin; in her walk she supported herself by a long stick, and yet it was difficult to say exactly how she walked, for she hobbled and shuffled

along, and waddled as if she were on casters, and it was as if she must fall down every instant and break her pointed nose on the pavement.

The cobbler's wife looked attentively at this old woman. For sixteen years she had been sitting daily in the market, yet she had never observed this strange figure, and therefore involuntarily shuddered when she saw the old hag hobbling towards her and stopping before her baskets.

"Are you Jane, the greengrocer?" she asked in a disagreeable, croaking voice, shaking her head to and fro.

"Yes, I am," replied the cobbler's wife; "what is your pleasure?"

"We'll see, we'll see, we'll look at your herbs – look at your herbs, to see whether you have what I want," answered the old woman; and stooping down she thrust her dark brown, unsightly hands into the herb-basket, and took up some that were beautifully spread out, with her long spider-legged fingers, bringing them one by one up to her long nose, and smelling them all over. The poor woman almost felt her heart break when she saw the old hag handle her herbs in this manner, but she dared not say any thing to her, the purchasers having a right to examine the things as they pleased; besides which, she felt a singular awe in the presence of this old woman. After having searched the whole basket, she muttered, "wretched stuff, wretched herbs, nothing that I want – were much better fifty years ago – wretched stuff! wretched stuff!"

Little James was vexed at these words. "Hark ye," he cried, boldly, "you are an impudent old woman; first you thrust your nasty brown fingers into these beautiful herbs and squeeze them together, then you hold them up to your long nose, so that no one seeing this will buy them after you, and you abuse our goods, calling them wretched stuff, though nevertheless the duke's cook himself buys all his herbs of us."

The old woman leered at the bold boy, laughed disgustingly, and said in a hoarse voice, "Little son, little son, you like my nose then, my beautiful long nose? You shall have one too in the middle of your face that shall reach down to your chin."

While she thus spoke she shuffled up to another basket containing cabbages. She took the most beautiful white heads up in her hand, squeezed them together till they squeaked, and then throwing them into the basket again without regard to order, said as before, "Wretched things! wretched cabbages!"

"Don't wriggle your head about in that ugly fashion," cried the little boy, somewhat frightened; "why your neck is as thin as a cabbage-stalk and might easily break, then your head would fall into the basket, and who would buy of us?"

"You don't like such thin necks then, eh?" muttered the old woman with a laugh. "You shall have none at all, your head shall be fixed between your shoulders, that it may not fall down from the little body."

"Don't talk such nonsense to the little boy," at length said the cobbler's wife, indignant at the long-looking, examining, and

smelling of the things; "if you wish to buy any thing be quick, for you scare away all my other customers."

"Well, be it as you say," cried the old woman, with a furious look, "I will buy these six heads of cabbages; but you see I must support myself by my stick, and cannot carry any thing, therefore, allow your little son to carry them home for me, I will reward him for it."

The little boy would not go with her, and began to cry, for he was terrified at the ugly old woman, but his mother commanded him earnestly to go, as she thought it a sin to load the feeble old soul with this burden. Still sobbing, he did as he was ordered, and followed the old woman over the market.

She proceeded but slowly, and was almost three-quarters of an hour before she arrived at a very remote part of the town, where she at length stopped in front of a small dilapidated house. She now pulled out of her pocket an old rusty hook, and thrust it dexterously into a small hole in the door, which immediately opened with a crash. But what was the astonishment of little James as he entered! The interior of the house was magnificently adorned, the ceiling and walls were of marble, the furniture of the most beautiful ebony, inlaid with gold and polished stones, the floor was of glass, and so smooth, that little James several times slipped and fell down. The old woman now took a small silver whistle from her pocket, and blew a tune on it which sounded shrilly through the house. Immediately some guinea-pigs came down the stairs, and little James was much amazed at

their walking upright on their hind legs, wearing on their paws nut-shells instead of shoes, men's clothes on their bodies, and even hats in the newest fashion on their heads.

"Where are my slippers, ye rascally crew?" cried the old woman, striking at them with her stick, so that they jumped squeaking into the air; "how long am I to stand here waiting?"

They quickly scampered up the stairs and returned with a pair of cocoa-nut shells lined with leather, which they placed dexterously upon the old woman's feet.

Now all her limping and shuffling was at an end. She threw away her stick, and glided with great rapidity over the glass floor, pulling little James after her with her hand. At length she stopped in a room which was adorned with a great variety of utensils, and which almost resembled a kitchen, although the tables were of mahogany, and the sofas covered with rich cloth, more fit for a drawing-room.

"Sit down," said the old woman, very kindly, pressing him into a corner of a sofa, and placing a table before him in such a manner that he could not get out again; "sit down, you have had a heavy load to carry, human heads are not so light – not so light."

"But, woman," replied the little boy, "you talk very strangely; I am, indeed, tired, but they were cabbage heads I was carrying, and you bought them of my mother."

"Why, you know but little about that," said the old woman, laughing, as she took the lid from the basket and brought out a human head, which she held by the hair. The little boy was

frightened out of his senses at this; he could not comprehend how it all came to pass; and thinking of his mother, he said to himself, "If any one were to hear of these human heads, my mother would certainly be prosecuted."

"I must give you some reward now, as you are so good," muttered the old woman; "have patience for a minute, and I will prepare you a soup which you will remember all your life." Having said this, she whistled again, and immediately there came first some guinea-pigs dressed like human beings; they had tied round them kitchen aprons, fastened by a belt, in which were stuck ladles and carving-knives; after them came skipping in a number of squirrels, that wore large, wide Turkish trousers, walked upright, and had small caps of green velvet on their heads. These seemed to be the scullions, for they climbed very nimbly up the walls and brought down pans and dishes, eggs and butter, herbs and flour, and carried it to the hearth. The old woman slided continually to and fro upon her cocoa-nut slippers, and little James observed that she was very anxious to cook something good for him. Now the fire crackled and blazed up higher, there was a smoking and bubbling in the saucepan, and a pleasant odour spread over the room, but the old woman kept running up and down, the squirrels and guinea-pigs after her, and as often as she passed the hearth she poked her long nose into the pot. At length it began to boil and hiss, the steam rose from the pot, and the scum flowed down into the fire. She then took off the saucepan, and pouring some into a silver basin, gave it

to James.

"Now, my dear little son, now," said she, "eat this soup and you will have in your own person all that you admired so much in me. You shall moreover become a clever cook, that you may be something at least, but as for the herb, that you shall never find, because your mother did not have it in her basket."

The little boy did not exactly understand what she was saying, but was the more attentive to eating his soup, which he relished uncommonly. His mother had cooked various savoury soups, but never any like this. The flavour of the fine herbs and spice ascended from it, and it was at the same time very sweet, and very sharp and strong. While he was sipping the last drops of the delicious soup, the guinea-pigs lighted some Arabian incense which floated through the room in blue clouds, which became thicker and thicker, and then descended. The smell of the incense had a stupifying effect upon the boy; in vain did he repeatedly say to himself that he must return to his mother, for as often as he endeavoured to rouse himself, as often did he relapse into slumber and, at length, actually fell into a profound sleep upon the old woman's sofa.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.