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TRACINGS OF THE NORTH OF EUROPE.
VOYAGE TO COPENHAGEN

Ever since the end of a very pleasant excursion in Rhineland and Switzerland in 1848, I had set apart the summer of the present year for a more extended tour, which should embrace the principal German cities and Italy. When the time came, however, those parts of the continent were in such a volcanic state, that unless I had had a decided taste for walking over hot cinders and lava (*'incedere per ignes'*), there was no chance of getting along with any degree of comfort. In these circumstances, I turned my thoughts to a part of Europe which is not perhaps possessed of so many attractions, but which at least had the merit of being sufficiently cool for the foot of the English traveller – namely, the group of countries which rank under the general appellative of Scandinavia. In England these countries are generally regarded as only too cool – which is not altogether true either – and they are accordingly little visited. But here, again, lay a reconciling consideration; for, if neglected, they were just so much the more *recherchés* to the person who should make his way into them. I also reflected on the singular social condition of Norway as a curious study for such a wanderer as myself: it would, I thought, be deeply interesting to try and ascertain if a democratic constitution, and the absence of a law of primogeniture, really did render that country the paradise which it appears to be in the pages of Samuel Laing. Then there were some curious geological and archæological studies to be pursued in Scandinavia. One large lump of it is supposed to be playing a sort of game of see-saw, to the great inconvenience of mariners in the adjacent seas; while another, though now steady, appears to have at some former period been engaged in the same strange procedure. According to some philosophers, there had been a time when a sheet of ice had passed athwart the whole country, rubbing away every asperity from its craggy surface, excepting only the peaks of the highest mountains. Its wild fiords were still as curious for their natural phenomena as for the lonely grandeur of their aspect. And the remains of the early inhabitants of these remote regions, whether in the form of literature, or that of their arms, personal ornaments, and domestic utensils, were, I knew, a treasure of the richest kind to any one taking the least interest in the past history of his species.

Having, for these reasons, determined on a tour through Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, I left Edinburgh in the latter part of June. The readiest course for one proposing such a tour is, in general, either by the steamers which leave London, Hull, and Leith for Hamburg, or those which proceed from the two first of these ports to Copenhagen. At the time of my proposed journey, the Elbe was under blockade by the Danish navy, in consequence of the Sleswig-Holstein war. Copenhagen was therefore the only access. It is much to be regretted that there is no steamer direct from England to any port of Sweden and Norway. There was one to Gottenburg a few years ago; it was discontinued because it did not pay. According to Swedish report, an endeavour to revive it has been obstructed by a demand of the English government that only English steamers shall be employed; apparently a most unreasonable demand, and one not characteristic of the present policy. It would surely be much to be lamented if anything so advantageous to the two countries as a direct intercourse be really prevented by such petty difficulties. Let us hope that not another summer shall elapse without the revival of the Gottenburg steamer.

A railway train conducted me from Edinburgh to Hull in the interval between breakfast and supper, allowing me three hours of pause at York, which I employed in a visit to the Minster. The

consequences of the second conflagration of this superb building are now repaired, and the edifice is probably in a state of completeness, both as to building and decoration, which it never knew in Catholic times. I was led to reflect how strange it was that so much zeal had been expended in the reconstruction of this theatre of an extinct drama – for the Gothic church of the middle ages was strictly a theatre in which to present daily to mankind, under suitably impressive circumstances, the spectacle of a divine sacrifice which had been made for them. Under modern Christianity, this object exists no longer. The ancient church, accordingly, when too large to be rendered into an ordinary place of worship – as is the case with the English cathedrals – becomes, over and above the corner devoted to the reading of a liturgy, a mere antiquarian curiosity. It is strange that what was done in the twelfth century under the impulse of a powerful religious feeling, can now be done, and done more promptly and quickly, under a feeling almost purely romantic. We must of course rejoice that so beautiful a building as York Minster has been redeemed from the ruin into which it was accidentally thrown, and once more made worthy of the homage of the highest taste. Yet we cannot well forget that such works amongst us can only be something simulative or imitative – what the Eglintoune tournament was to real chivalry. The paroxysm of public feeling in which such noble structures originated was a true thing, and one of the finest true things of its era. It is past – it can never be reproduced. The feelings and energies which took that direction are now expended on totally different objects. It is from a different and secondary source that Gothic renovations proceed.

At this time there were in Hull 8000 people out of employment, in consequence of the interruption to the Hamburg trade, and it was said that much misery existed in the town. One would have expected, in such circumstances, that any little job to one of the hangers-on of the streets would have been keenly relished, and the remuneration, if decent in amount, thankfully received. Nevertheless, when I handed a shilling to two men who had, at one turn of three minutes, carried my few packages from the cab on the quay into the vessel, it was contemptuously rejected, and only accepted after it became clear that I would not accede to their demand of half-a-crown. What would a foreigner, in such circumstances, have thought of the state of things which had been described to him as appertaining to Hull? He could scarcely have resisted a supposition that bad times in England are something better than the best times on the continent.

Usually, the passport grievance does not commence till one has set his foot on a foreign soil. On this occasion it began before I left the harbour. At the earnest solicitation of the owners of the steamer, I went to the Danish consul to have my passport *visé*, for the sake of establishing that I had come from a district unaffected by cholera. For this a fee of five shillings was exacted from myself and some other passengers. It was hoped, by such means, that no interruption would occur in the landing of passengers at Copenhagen, and the subsequent proceeding of the vessel to St Petersburg. It will be found that in this object we were disappointed, and that the exaction was to us virtually an act of spoliation. When will states be above the meanness of imposing these petty taxes on travellers, whom one might suppose they would see it to be for their interest to encourage, by every possible act of civility and generosity, to visit their lands?

On rising early next morning, I found the vessel ploughing its way out of the Humber, with the new works of Great Grimsby on the right. This is designed as a new port for the east of England, in connection with certain lines of railway. It is to enclose a hundred and thirty-five acres of the sea-beach, and within this space there will be an entrance basin, accessible at all times to every kind of vessel, besides large docks, piers, and wharfs. The scheme is a magnificent example of English enterprise, and promises to be attended with success. In this event, Hull must fall into a secondary place among British ports. If I am rightly informed – but I only speak upon report – those privileges which have hitherto appeared as her strength will have had no small concern in bringing about the result.

A sea-voyage seems as if it could never be a comfortable thing. The sickness from the motion of the vessel is the first and greatest drawback; but the lesser evils of straitened accommodations,

imperfect ventilation, the odious smell inherent in the vessel, and the monotony of the daily life, are scarcely less felt. Prostrated under a sense of nausea, afraid to rise, and afraid or unable to eat, unable to exert the mind in reading or discourse, one sinks down into a state of mere stupid endurance, almost the most hapless in which one can well be in the course of ordinary existence.

After suffering thus for four-and-twenty hours, I ventured upon deck, and, finding the weather not unpleasant, walked about for an hour or two. Here the want of objects on which to exert the mind beset me, and I became surprised at the interest which the slightest change of circumstances or sights occasioned. We eagerly scanned the dim horizon for vessels, and reckoned them up with the greatest care. We marked every variation in the direction of the wind, and in the ship's course. But all was insufficient to give an agreeable stimulus to the craving mind, and passiveness always appeared, after all, as the best resource. Seeing two vessels at a distance, sailing different ways under one wind, I amused myself by comparing them to two speculative philosophers driving to opposite conclusions from one set of facts.

On the third morning there were some symptoms of our coming near the land, though it was still beyond the ken of vision. One of these symptoms was a couple of small boats. Finding afterwards that we sailed seven hours, or as much as seventy miles, without approaching the land, I wondered that two small boats should be met so far out at sea. Supposing they were fishing-boats, it was the more surprising that it was on a Sunday morning, though this, a passenger explained, might be from an anxiety to make as much as possible of the short season during which fishing can be carried on in these seas. As we approached the opening of the Sound, vessels became more frequent, and at length one happy passenger was able to announce that he saw the 'loom of the land.' It was, as expected, a portion of the north of Jutland, a low tract of sandy downs, presenting scarcely an object for many miles besides a lighthouse and a solitary country church. We soon passed the Skaw Point, amidst a crowd of vessels of all sizes, calling for almost as much care in steering as is necessary in conducting a drosky through the Strand. Then the young moon appeared setting in a cloudless summer sky, and it became delightful to walk along the elevated deck, watching her slow descent into the gleaming wave, interchanging a word of remark now and then with a companion, and mentally speculating on the new scenes which must meet our eyes under the next sun. We were all by this time fully restored to our usual healthy sensations, and each meal, as it came upon the board, was heartily done justice to.

I was awakened next morning at five with the intelligence that we were just about to pass through the Sound. I ascended to the deck in a provisional dress, and soon saw that assemblage of objects which has been made so generally familiar by means of pictures – a low point, fronted with mounds bristling with cannon, and an old pinnacled palace starting up from within a few yards of the water's edge, while the narrow sea in front bears a crowd of vessels of all sizes. We had now an opportunity of examining the coast on either hand, but found nothing worthy of special observation, beyond the smiling character imparted to the landscape by pleasant woods, cottages, and gardens, such as one sees on the coast of England. Behind Elsinore, however, there is a lofty bank, of which I shall afterwards take some notice.

After passing a few miles of the low coast of Sealand – for such is the name of this insulated part of the kingdom of Denmark – we were told that the vessel was near Copenhagen, which, however, shows itself in this direction only by a few traces of steeples and dock-yards, with a screen of green mounds serving as batteries in front. We were quickly brought to a pause in the mouth of the harbour. Every passenger had prepared for immediate landing. The offer of breakfast by the steward was treated disdainfully, as visions of the *Hôtel Royal* rose before us. The captain had gone ashore with our passports, and his return with permission for our landing was instantly expected; when a rumour began to spread that we were to be detained a couple of days in quarantine. It proved to be too true, the government having received intelligence of the revival of cholera in London, which had determined it to subject all vessels coming from England to a quarantine which should interpose five full days between their leaving port and their landing passengers and goods in Denmark. Then all

was dismay, though at first we could scarcely perceive or believe in the extent of our misfortune. The magical five-shillings affidavit of the consul at Hull was reverted to. We had paid our money for being certified clear of infection, and clear of infection we must be: otherwise, what were we to think of that transaction? Our chafing was of course unavailing. The Danish government is unusually tenacious and pedantic about quarantine regulations, to which it sapiently attributes the remarkable fact, that Denmark has never yet had a visit of the Asiatic scourge. There was no chance that it would relent on the present occasion. Slowly, and with a bad grace, did we address ourselves to the formerly-despised breakfast. Our friend the steward no doubt viewed the case in a light peculiar to himself.

Two days were spent in perfect inaction, and consequently with much tedium and dissatisfaction. For my part there is something which makes me placid under such troubles. It is perhaps a negative satisfaction in considering that I cannot be blamed for *this* evil, as I must be for most others which befall me. I grieved to think that there must be two days of tame, unvaried life, before I could step into the new city before me; but meanwhile the circumstances were not positively uncomfortable in any great degree; the company was not marred by any bad element in itself; there were books to read and memoranda to arrange: finally, it could not be helped. I therefore submitted with tolerable cheerfulness.

After all, we were comparatively well dealt with, for we heard of many persons who were obliged to lie for longer periods in quarantine, and to spend their time of duration at a station arranged for the purpose on a part of the coast a few miles off, where life was very much that of a prison. Persons coming from Germany would have to stay there five days. If I am not mistaken, travellers from England by the continental route had at this time to pass a previous quarantine at Hamburg, so that a journey to Denmark by that route could not occupy less than a fortnight. I have since heard of a Scottish merchant having lost a vessel on the south coast of Sweden, and going out there, by way of Copenhagen, to see after his property. From the exigencies of business at home, he had only twelve days in all to give to the excursion. On reaching Copenhagen, he would not be allowed to land till that time had nearly expired, and he would consequently be obliged to return to Scotland without accomplishing his object.

By way of a favour, a party of our passengers (in which I was included) was allowed to go in a boat to bathe at a place in front of one of the batteries, an emissary of the quarantine station hovering near us as a watch, lest we should break rules. Two boys, returning from an English school to St Petersburg for the holidays, were full of frolic. We soon had a riotous scene of ducking and splashing, accompanied by shouts of (I must say) very foolish merriment, and thus would probably help in no small degree to confirm our guard in an impression which is said to be very prevalent in Denmark regarding the English – that they are all a little mad. A companion remarked to me, that certainly men will condescend in some circumstances to a surprising degree of puerility, or rather childishness of conduct: here, for instance, said he, there is scarcely the least difference to be observed between the conduct of the schoolboys and their seniors. Take away the pressure of our ordinary immediate circumstances, and how all our usual habits are dissolved! But this is a theme as trite as it is tempting, and I must cut it short. A lunch after the bath was attended by jocularly nearly as outrageous, and we did not return to the ship till near the dinner hour.

Our company was small, but it was sufficiently various. There were two specimens of the idle English gentleman, if such a term may be applied to the character. They were men in the prime of life, unmarried, handsome, moustached, with an air of high society, yet perfectly affable, and even agreeable, in their intercourse with their fellow-travellers. I hesitate in applying the term idle to these men, as they appear to be far from exemplifying true inactivity. They speak of having travelled and sported in many parts of the world. One is as familiar with the granitic wilds of Finland as with Donegal and Inverness. He spends whole summers of wild hardy life in the deserts near the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, shooting bears and hunting deer, lost to wheaten bread and every luxury for weeks at a time. His frame is sinewy and firmly knit; his habits in eating and drinking are as simple as

possible. The other gentleman has been with his ship through every sea in the East and West. He has left England at the height of the gay season, to perform a journey of four months, commencing with Copenhagen, St Petersburg, and Stockholm, to terminate on the coasts of the Levant. Another of our party is a New Englander, with an air of quiet confidence as remarkable as that of the Englishmen, yet of a totally different character. He is a little of a humorist, and not at all offensive. A fourth is an elderly Lincolnshire farmer, homely, simple, good-natured, full of quaint remark, and not unwilling to be smiled at by his companions on account of his little peculiarities of manners and discourse. We have also a young English student, evidently not of the university caste, delicate in figure, of gentle manners, and possessed of considerable intelligence. Of females we have few, only one being of the genus *lady*, the sister of our bear-hunting friend; the rest are more practical in their character. One is a mother with a charge of young children, whom she is sadly ill-qualified for regulating or keeping in order. Incessantly these juveniles are chattering about something, or else crying and squalling. The mother goes about with a broken-hearted air, and a voice worn down to its lowest and saddest tones, either taking her children's querulousness resignedly, or chiding them crossly for what is chiefly her own blame. To attend even thus imperfectly to the group of little ones, takes the whole time and energy of this poor mother, and of an equally broken-spirited maid; for never does a minute pass when there is not something to be done for them, either in the way of attending to their personal necessities, or preventing them from clapperclawing each other, and saving them from the effects of their own recklessness. The thought occurred to me twenty times a day – verily the *storge* is a most marvellous endowment of the mother's heart, enabling her, as it does, to submit placidly to what every other person would feel to be intolerable misery.

We received a great alarm on the second day of our enforced leisure. A party had gone off in a boat to row about and bathe, without the attendance of a quarantine officer. No harm was meant, but it was imprudent. By and by it was whispered that word had come that, owing to this breach of regulations, we should all be detained a week longer, or else have to pay a heavy fine – perhaps both. This was dire intelligence to our good-natured captain, and not less so to a mercantile person, who had sixteen first-class English horses on board, which he was taking out on speculation to Russia. These animals had to stand in cribs on deck during the whole voyage from Hull to St Petersburg. While the vessel was sailing, it was comparatively well with them, for the motion gave them a certain amount of exercise: but the unexpected stoppage of two days told sorely upon them: it was already remarked that their legs were beginning to swell. The owner declared that a week more of inaction would utterly ruin them. While we were gloomily speculating on all the evils we had to dread, the peccant boat-party returned, and relieved us so far, by declaring that they had scrupulously abstained from approaching the shore or any other vessel. They immediately despatched an assurance to this effect to the quarantine station. Notwithstanding a defying tone on the part of some of the defaulters, we passed the evening in a state of serious apprehension, no one knowing what extent of penalty might be imposed by an authority notoriously ruled by any considerations rather than those of rationality. It was thought, on the strength of former instances, not impossible that each of the grown gentlemen of the party might have to pay twenty or five-and-twenty pounds. One more confident than the rest offered four sovereigns to another as an insurance to cover his own risk, or, as an alternative, proposed to undertake that gentleman's risk for three; and the latter arrangement was actually entered into. Early next morning, when we were all on the *qui vive* to learn our fate, a boat came up, and the magical term so well understood in England, 'All right,' soon spread a general smile over the company. The authorities, by an amazing stretch of generosity and common sense, had agreed to overlook the delinquency, on condition that certain expenses should be paid, amounting to something less than two pounds. The passengers for Copenhagen were therefore permitted to land immediately with their luggage, and the vessel was allowed to commence discharge of cargo, preparatory to proceeding to St Petersburg.

R. C.

THE RETURN OF THE COMPAGNON A SWISS TALE

The early darkness of a winter twilight had already set in, the wind was blowing boisterously, and the snow rapidly descending, when Herman the carpenter reached his cottage after a hard day's toil, there to receive the fond caresses of his children. His wife exchanged his wet clothes for such as were warm and dry, and little Catherine drew his arm-chair to the side of the fire, while the boys, anxious to do their part, brought his large pipe.

'Now, father,' said little Frank, when he saw a column of smoke issuing forth, 'you are happy and comfortable; what shall we do while mother gets supper ready? Tell us a tale.'

'Yes, tell us a story,' repeated the other children with delight.

They were on the point of clustering round, when something passing caught little Catherine's eye. 'Oh,' said the child, 'here is such a poor man in the street, all covered with snow, and who does not seem to know where to go!'

'He is a compagnon' (journeyman), said Frank – 'a whitesmith; I see his tools in his bag. Why does he stop in the street in such weather?'

'He plainly knows not his way,' Catherine replied. 'Shall I go and ask him what he wants?'

'Do so, my child; and give him this small coin, for perhaps he is poor, as I have been, and it will serve to pay for his bed, and something to warm him. Show him the Compagnon's Inn at the end of the street.'

When the child had returned, the clamour was again raised for the story.

'What shall it be?'

'Daniel?'

'No.'

'Perhaps the Black Hunter?'

'Neither of these to-night, my children. I will tell you about the "Return of the Compagnon."'

The children gladly drew round their father to hear his new story, which was as follows: —

It was a beautiful spring morning: the sun had begun to show his radiant face on the summits of the mountains; the little birds cried for their food; the insects of every kind, shaking their wings, began humming among the foliage; the sheep, penned up, were bleating; and the labourers were preparing to resume their toil. A young man, laden with a heavy bag, walked gaily along the road leading to one of the little towns of Switzerland, his dusty feet showing that he had come from afar, and his sunburnt face exhibiting the effects of more southern climes. He was a compagnon carpenter returning to his country after years of absence, and impatient to see his home again. He had walked all night, and now a brilliant sun embellished each successive object that offered itself to his anxious view. He had already seen the steeple of the church of his beloved town, and his true Swiss heart bounded with joy. 'Ha!' exclaimed he, 'how beautiful is the country where we have lived from childhood to manhood! How clear and limpid its waters, how pure its air, how smiling its meadows! My feet have trodden the soil of France, where grows the grape, and Italy, the land of figs and oranges: I have rested under groves of roses, and the sweet lemon-tree has bent over my head, laden with its golden fruits and perfumed flowers: I have, at the sound of the guitar and the castanet, joined at night in the dance with people for whom the middle of the day is the time for repose, and the absence of the sun the signal for labour or pleasure – people whose life flows on in cheerful contentment, because light work suffices for their wants under so warm a sky, and possessed of a soil that nature has covered with her choicest gifts, and does not desolate with the north winds, frosts, and snows. Yes, the poor Swiss compagnon has seen all these things, and has admired them, but never has he wished to live and die among them. He has always sighed for the pale rays of his northern sun, the steep rocks of his

mountains, the uniform colour of his dark pines, and the pointed roof of his cottage, where he still hopes to receive his mother's blessing.'

While these thoughts, and many like them, were crowding into the mind of the young workman, his steps became more and more rapid, and his tired feet seemed to recover their swiftness. All on a sudden, a turn of the road showed him the roofs of his native village, from which curled some clouds of smoke. There was the old church wall, there was the steeple stretching towards heaven. At the sight of this the young traveller stopped short; the tears trickled down his cheek; he exclaimed in a voice broken with emotion, 'I thank thee, my God, for permitting my eyes once more to see these things.' He pursued his walk, devouring with his eyes all he saw. 'Ah, here,' said he, 'is the white wall marking the terrace of the public walk where I used to play so joyfully! ah, there is the arch of the little bridge where we have so often fished! Now I can see the head of the old lime-tree which shades the church: only twenty paces farther is the cottage in which I was born, where I grew up, where I lost my poor father, and where I hope to see my dear mother. It is not in vain I have laboured so long: I have that with me which will comfort her old age.' As he spoke, a small flower attracted his attention: it was a daisy. He stooped down and gathered it, and commenced plucking its leaflets away one after the other. 'It was thus,' he said smiling, 'the day before my departure, that Gertrude gathered a daisy from the bank of the river, and bending her pretty face over the flower to conceal the emotion my departure occasioned, she pulled out the leaflets in silence, and arriving at the last one, she said to me in a low voice, "Adieu, Herman, I shall never marry till you return;" and so saying, fled away, as if she feared having said too much. Soon shall I see her little window with the blue curtain! Oh that I may see my Gertrude there as I used, her eyes rejoicing at my return! Happy the moment when I shall say to her, "Gertrude, here is Herman returned, faithful to his promises, as you have been to yours. Come and share the little wealth I have acquired: come and aid me in rendering my aged mother happy."'

Under the influence of these thoughts the young workman rapidly approached his native town. As he advanced, he interrogated the countenances of those he met, hoping to meet with friendly looks, a recollection of the past, or a few words of welcome, but in vain. At last, as he passed the gates, he saw a man walking gravely to and fro as he smoked his pipe: it was the toll-keeper. Herman, looking at him closely, easily recognised Rodolphe, his playfellow, his earliest friend. He was on the point of rushing into his arms, and exclaiming, 'Here I am again!' – but the tollman looked coldly at him as he passed, and left a cloud of tobacco-smoke behind him. Poor compagnon! the sun of the south has shone too long on thy face; he has made thee a stranger even to those who loved thee: thy best friend knows thee not. Herman's heart sank within him, and he resumed his journey with a sigh. A little farther on he saw a new building in course of erection. An aged man was directing the carpenters in their work, and at the sight of him Herman's heart again rejoiced: it was his old master, whose advice and kindness had made him an honest man and skilful mechanic. To him he chiefly owed his success in life, and he was, moreover, Gertrude's father. 'Ha,' said he, 'if Rodolphe so soon forgets the faces of his friends, my old master will recollect me;' and so saying, he approached him respectfully, hat in hand, and inquired whether he could obtain work for him. The old man looked at him a while before replying; and Herman's heart beat so quickly, that he could scarce conceal his feelings. 'Come to me to-morrow,' at last said the old man; 'I will then examine your certificates: work is not scarce for good hands;' and turning towards his men, resumed his occupations. 'What!' exclaimed the poor compagnon to himself as he turned away, 'am I so changed that my features are not recognised by my old master? What if Gertrude herself – But no, that is impossible! She who could distinguish me in a crowd a hundred paces off, will surely know her Herman again, in spite of his sunburnt face: besides, if her eyes failed her, her heart would prompt her of my presence!' So thinking, he rapidly traversed the little town. There was the old lime-tree, with the rustic seat beneath it; there the fountain, where many women were washing; and there stood the neat little cottage, upon which the young man's eyes now became rivetted. The blue curtain and pots of carnations were there, as they ever had been; and oh, joy, there sat a young woman spinning! Herman's heart bounded with joy; he rushed forward,

and then stopped opposite the window, a few steps only separating him from Gertrude. He remained immovable, so powerful were his emotions, and admired the ripening of her charms which had taken place during his absence: no longer the slender girl of fifteen, but a young woman in all the fulness of her beauty; her whole appearance denoting strength, health, and freshness. 'How beautiful she is!' exclaimed Herman in a low voice. Gertrude did not catch the words, but the voice struck her ear; and seeing a traveller but poorly clad with his eyes fixed on her, said to herself with a sigh, 'Poor fellow, he looks in want;' and throwing him a coin with Heaven's blessing, she shut the window, and disappeared. Alas! the sun of the south has too long shone on the face of the compaignon; his best friends know him not, and his beloved regards him as a stranger! Had she remained at the window, Gertrude must have remarked the expression of the poignant grief Herman endured; and her heart would have divined, that under those toilworn clothes and sunburnt face was concealed him for whose advent she had so often prayed. After long remaining on the same spot, as if his feet were rivetted to the ground, the compaignon tore himself away, and turned towards his home. But how changed in appearance! That buoyant step which, a few moments before, had trod the ground so lightly, was now slow and heavy; excessive fatigue overcame him. The weight of the bag he carried – not felt before – now seemed excessive; his head hung down on his chest, his hopes seemed blasted, and that native land which, a few hours since, he saluted with such joy, now seemed indifferent to him. In vain did the old lime-tree, with its majestic foliage, meet his eyes; in vain did the antique fountain, with its grotesque figures, that should have called to his mind so many childish recollections, stand before him. He saw nothing; his wounded heart felt nothing but sorrow. However, he still advanced towards his home, and a few steps only separated him from the old churchyard wall, near which he had passed so many happy days of boyhood, when he saw an aged woman come tottering down the steps of the portico of the church, supported by a stick. It was his mother returning from offering her daily prayer for his return. 'Oh, how altered is she!' he sorrowfully exclaimed: 'how can I hope her feeble eyes should know her child, when mine can scarcely recognise her timeworn frame!' But no sooner had she approached him, and raised her head, than she fell into his arms, sobbing through her tears, 'My son, my beloved son!' Herman pressed her closely to his breast, and falteringly exclaimed, 'My mother, thou at least hast not forgotten me. Years of absence, the scorching sun, and toilsome labour, conceal me not from you!'

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