

**JOHANN
WOLFGANG
GOETHE**

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
GOETHE

Иоганн Вольфганг Гёте

The Autobiography of Goethe

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Johan Wolfgang von Goethe

The Autobiography of Goethe / Truth and Poetry: From My Own Life

ADVERTISEMENT

Before the following translation was commenced, the first Ten Books had already appeared in America. It was the intention of the Publisher to reprint these without alteration, but on comparing them with the original, it was perceived that the American version was not sufficiently faithful, and therefore the present was undertaken. The Translator, however, is bound to acknowledge, that he found many successful renderings in the work of his predecessor, and these he has engrafted without hesitation.

The title "Truth and Poetry" is adopted in common with the American translation, as the nearest rendering of *Wahrheit und Dichtung*. The "Prose and Poetry of my Life" would, perhaps, convey to the English reader the exact meaning of the Author, although not literally his words.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

As a preface to the present work, which, perhaps, more than another requires one, I adduce the letter of a friend, by which so serious an undertaking was occasioned.

"We have now, my dear friend, collected the twelve parts of your poetical works, and on reading them through, find much that is known, much that is unknown; while much that had been forgotten is revived by this collection. These twelve volumes, standing before us, in uniform appearance, we cannot refrain from regarding as a whole; and one would like to sketch therefrom some image of the author and his talents. But it cannot be denied, considering the vigour with which he began his literary career, and the length of time which has since elapsed, that a dozen small volumes must appear incommensurate. Nor can one forget that, with respect to the detached pieces, they have mostly been called forth by special occasions, and reflect particular external objects, as well as distinct grades of inward culture; while it is equally clear, that temporary moral and æsthetic maxims and convictions prevail in them. As a whole, however, these productions remain without connexion; nay, it is often difficult to believe that they emanate from one and the same writer.

"Your friends, in the meantime, have not relinquished the inquiry, and try, as they become more closely acquainted with your mode of life and thought, to guess many a riddle, to solve many a problem; indeed, with the assistance of an old liking, and a connexion of many years? standing, they find a charm even in the difficulties which present themselves. Yet a little assistance here and there would not be unacceptable, and you cannot well refuse this to our friendly entreaties.

"The first thing, then, we require, is that your poetical works, arranged in the late edition according to some internal relations, may be presented by you in chronological order, and that the states of life and feeling which afforded the examples that influenced you, and the theoretical principles by which you were governed, may be imparted in some kind of connexion. Bestow this labour for the gratification of a limited circle, and perhaps it may give rise to something that will be entertaining and useful to an extensive one. The author, to the most advanced period of his life, should not relinquish the advantage of communicating, even at a distance, with those whom affection binds to him; and if it is not granted to everyone to step forth anew, at a certain age, with surprising and powerful productions, yet just at that period of life when knowledge is most perfect, and consciousness most distinct, it must be a very agreeable and re-animating task to treat former creations as new matter, and work them up into a kind of Last Part, which may serve once more for the edification of those who have been previously edified with and by the artist."

This desire, so kindly expressed, immediately awakened within me an inclination to comply with it; for, if in the early years of life our passions lead us to follow our own course, and, in order not to swerve from it, we impatiently repel the demands of others, so, in bur later days, it becomes highly advantageous to us, should any sympathy excite and determine us, cordially, to new activity. I therefore instantly undertook the preparatory labour of separating the poems of my twelve volumes, both great and small, and of arranging them according to years. I strove to recall the times and circumstances under which each had been produced. But the task soon grew more difficult, as full explanatory notes and illustrations were necessary to fill up the chasms between those which had already been given to the world. For, in the first place, all on which I had originally exercised myself were wanting, many that had been begun and not finished were also wanting, and of many that were finished even the external form had completely disappeared, having since been entirely reworked and cast into a different shape. Besides, I had also to call to mind how I had laboured in the sciences and other arts, and what, in such apparently foreign departments, both individually and in conjunction with friends, I had practised in silence, or had laid before the public.

All this I wished to introduce by degrees for the satisfaction of my well-wishers; but my efforts and reflections always led me further on; since while I was anxious to comply with that very

considerate request, and laboured to set forth in succession my internal emotions, external influences, and the steps which, theoretically and practically, I had trod, I was carried out of my narrow private sphere into the wide world. The images of a hundred important men, who either directly or indirectly had influenced me, presented themselves to my view; and even the prodigious movements of the great political world, which had operated most extensively upon me, as well as upon the whole mass of my contemporaries, had to be particularly considered. For this seems to be the main object of Biography, to exhibit the man in relation to the features of his time; and to show to what extent they have opposed or favoured his progress; what view of mankind and the world he has formed from them, and how far he himself, if an artist, poet, or author, may externally reflect them. But for this is required what is scarcely attainable, namely, that the individual should know himself and his age: himself, so far as he has remained the same under all circumstances; his age, as that which carries along with it, determines and fashions, both the willing and the unwilling; so that one may venture to pronounce, that any person born ten years earlier or later would have been quite a different being, both as regards his own culture and his influence on others.

In this manner, from such reflections and endeavours, from such recollections and considerations, arose the present delineation; and from this point of view, as to its origin, will it be the best enjoyed and used, and most impartially estimated. For anything further it may be needful to say, particularly with respect to the half-poetical, half-historic mode of treatment, an opportunity will, no doubt, frequently occur in the course of the narrative.

PART THE FIRST

FIRST BOOK

Childhood – the City of Frankfurt

On the 28th of August, 1749, at mid-day, as the clock struck twelve, I came into the world, at Frankfort-on-the-Maine. My horoscope was propitious: the sun stood in the sign of the Virgin, and had culminated for the day; Jupiter and Venus looked on him with a friendly eye, and Mercury not adversely; while Saturn and Mars kept themselves indifferent; the Moon alone, just full, exerted the power of her reflection all the more, as she had then reached her planetary hour. She opposed herself, therefore, to my birth, which could not be accomplished until this hour was passed.

These good aspects, which the astrologers managed subsequently to reckon very auspicious for me, may have been the causes of my preservation; for, through the unskilfulness of the midwife, I came into the world as dead, and only after various efforts was I enabled to see the light. This event, which had put our household into sore straits, turned to the advantage of my fellow-citizens, inasmuch as my grandfather, the *Schultheiss*¹, John Wolfgang Textor, took occasion from it to have an *accoucheur* established, and to introduce or revive the tuition of midwives, which may have done some good to those who were born after me.

When we desire to recall what befel us in the earliest period of youth, it often happens that we confound what we have heard from others with that which we really possess from our own direct experience. Without, therefore, instituting a very close investigation into the point, which after all could lead to nothing, I am conscious that we lived in an old house, which in fact consisted of two adjoining houses, that had been opened into each other. A spiral stair-case led to rooms on different levels, and the unevenness of the stories was remedied by steps. For us children, a younger sister and myself, the favourite resort was a spacious floor below, near the door of which was a large wooden lattice that allowed us direct communication with the street and open air. A bird-cage of this sort, with which many houses were provided, was called a Frame (*Geräms*). The women sat in it to sew and knit; the cook picked her salad there; female neighbours chatted with each other, and the streets consequently in the fine season wore a southern aspect. One felt at ease while in communication with the public. We children, too, by means of these frames, were brought into contact with our neighbours, of whom three brothers Von Ochsenstein, the surviving sons of the deceased Schultheiss, living on the other side of the way, won my love, and occupied and diverted themselves with me in many ways.

Our family liked to tell of all sorts of waggeries to which I was enticed by these otherwise grave and solitary men. Let one of these pranks suffice for all. A crockery fair had just been held, from which not only our kitchen had been supplied for a while with articles for a long time to come, but a great deal of small gear of the same ware had been purchased as playthings for us children. One fine afternoon, when every thing was quiet in the house, I whiled away the time with my pots and dishes in the Frame, and finding that nothing more was to be got out of them, hurled one of them into the street. The Von Ochsensteins, who saw me so delighted at the fine smash it made, that I clapped my hands for joy, cried out, "Another." I was not long in flinging out a pot, and as they made no end to their calls for more, by degrees the whole collection, platters, pipkins, mugs and all, were dashed upon the pavement. My neighbours continued to express their approbation, and I was highly delighted to give

¹ A chief judge or magistrate of the town.

them pleasure. But my stock was exhausted, and still they shouted, "More." I ran, therefore, straight to the kitchen, and brought the earthenware, which produced a still livelier spectacle in breaking, and thus I kept running backwards and forwards, fetching one plate after another as I could reach it from where they stood in rows on the shelf. But as that did not satisfy my audience, I devoted all the ware that I could drag out to similar destruction. It was not till afterwards that any one appeared to hinder and save. The mischief was done, and in place of so much broken crockery, there was at least a ludicrous story, in which the roguish authors took special delight to the end of their days.

My father's mother, in whose house we properly dwelt, lived in a large back-room directly on the ground floor, and we were accustomed to carry on our sports even up to her chair, and when she was ill, up to her bedside. I remember her, as it were, a spirit, – a handsome, thin woman, always neatly dressed in white. Mild, gentle, and kind, she has ever remained in my memory.

The Stag-Ditch.

The street in which our house was situated passed by the name of the Stag-Ditch; but as neither stags nor ditches were to be seen, we wished to have the expression explained. They told us that our house stood on a spot that was once outside the city, and that where the street now ran had formerly been a ditch, in which a number of stags were kept. These stags were preserved and fed here because the senate every year, according to an ancient custom, feasted publicly on a stag, which was therefore always at hand in the ditch for such a festival, in case princes or knights interfered with the city's right of chase outside, or the walls were encompassed or besieged by an enemy. This pleased us much, and we wished that such a lair for tame animals could have been seen in our times.

The back of the house, from the second story particularly, commanded a very pleasant prospect over an almost immeasurable extent of neighbouring gardens, stretching to the very walls of the city. But, alas! in transforming what were once public grounds into private gardens, our house and some others lying towards the corner of the street had been much stinted, since the houses towards the horse-market had appropriated spacious out-houses and large gardens to themselves, while a tolerably high wall shut us out from these adjacent paradises.

On the second floor was a room which was called the garden-room, because they had there endeavoured to supply the want of a garden by means of a few plants placed before the window. As I grew older, it was there that I made my favourite, not melancholy but somewhat sentimental, retreat. Over these gardens, beyond the city's walls and ramparts, might be seen a beautiful and fertile plain; the same which stretches towards Höchst. In the summer season I commonly earned my lessons there, and watched the thunder-storms, but could never look my fill at the setting sun, which went down directly opposite my windows. And when, at the same time, I saw the neighbours wandering through their gardens taking care of their flowers, the children playing, parties of friends enjoying themselves, and could hear the bowls rolling and the nine pins dropping, it early excited within me a feeling of solitude, and a sense of vague longing resulting from it, which, conspiring with the seriousness and awe implanted in me by Nature, exerted its influence at an early age, and showed itself more distinctly in after years.

The old, many cornered, and gloomy arrangement of the house was moreover adapted to awaken dread and terror in childish minds. Unfortunately, too, the principle of discipline that young persons should be early deprived of all fear for the awful and invisible, and accustomed to the terrible, still prevailed. We children, therefore, were compelled to sleep alone, and when we found this impossible, and softly slipped from our beds to seek the society of the servants and maids, our father, with his dressing-gown turned inside out, which disguised him sufficiently for the purpose, placed himself in the way, and frightened us back to our resting-places. The evil effect of this any one may imagine. How is he who is encompassed with a double terror to be emancipated from fear? My mother, always cheerful and gay, and willing to render others so, discovered a much better pedagogical expedient. She managed to gain her end by rewards. It was the season for peaches, the

plentiful enjoyment of which she promised us every morning if we overcame our fears during the night. In this way she succeeded, and both parties were satisfied.

In the interior of the house my eyes were chiefly attracted by a series of Roman Views, with which my father had ornamented an ante-room. They were engravings by some of the accomplished predecessors of Piranesi, who well understood perspective and architecture, and whose touches were clear and excellent. There I saw every day, the *Piazza del Popolo*, the *Colosseum*, the *Piazza of St. Peter's* and *St. Peter's Church*, within and without, the castle of *St. Angelo*, and many other places. These images impressed themselves deeply upon me, and my otherwise very laconic father was often so kind as to furnish descriptions of the objects. His partiality for the Italian language, and for every thing pertaining to Italy, was very decided. A small collection of marbles and natural curiosities, which he had brought with him thence, he often showed to us; and he devoted a great part of his time to a description of his travels, written in Italian, the copying and correction of which he slowly and accurately completed, in several parcels, with his own hand. A lively old teacher of Italian, called *Giovinazzi*, was of service to him in this work. The old man moreover did not sing badly, and my mother every day must needs accompany him and herself upon the clavichord, and thus I speedily learned the *Solitario bosco ombroso* so as to know it by heart before I understood it.

My father was altogether of a didactic turn, and in his retirement from business liked to communicate to others what he knew or was able to do. Thus, during the first years of their marriage, he had kept my mother busily engaged in writing, playing the clavichord, and singing, by which means she had been laid under the necessity of acquiring some knowledge and a slight readiness in the Italian tongue.

The Puppet-Show.

Generally we passed all our leisure hours with my grandmother, in whose spacious apartment we found plenty of room for our sports. She contrived to engage us with various trifles, and to regale us with all sorts of nice morsels. But one Christmas evening, she crowned all her kind deeds, by having a puppet-show exhibited before us, and thus unfolding a new world in the old house. This unexpected drama attracted our young minds with great force; upon the Boy particularly it made a very strong impression, which continued to vibrate with a great and lasting effect.

The little stage with its speechless personages, which at the outset had only been exhibited to us, but was afterwards given over for our own use and dramatic vivification, was prized more highly by us children, as it was the last bequest of our good grandmother, whom encroaching disease first withdrew from our sight, and death next tore away from our hearts for ever. Her departure was of still more importance to our family, as it drew after it a complete change in our condition.

As long as my grandmother lived, my father had refrained from any attempt to change or renovate the house, even in the slightest particular, though it was known that he had pretty large plans of building, which were now immediately begun. In Frankfort, as in many other old towns, when anybody put up a wooden structure, he ventured, for the sake of space, to make not only the first, but each successive story project over the lower one, by which means narrow streets especially were rendered somewhat dark and confined. At last a law was passed, that every one putting up a new house from the ground, should confine his projections to the first upper story, and carry the others up perpendicularly. My father, that he might not lose the projecting space in the second story, caring little for outward architectural appearance, and anxious only for the good and convenient arrangement of the interior, resorted to the expedient which others had employed before him, of propping the upper part of the house, until one part after another had been removed from the bottom upwards and a new house, as it were, inserted in its place. Thus, while comparatively none of the old structure remained, the new one merely passed for a repair. Now as the tearing down and building up was done gradually, my father determined not to quit the house, that he might better direct and give his orders – as he possessed a good knowledge of the technicalities of building. At the same time he would not suffer

his family to leave him. This new epoch was very surprising and strange for the children. To see the rooms in which they had so often been confined and pestered with wearisome tasks and studies, the passages they had played in, the walls which had always been kept so carefully clean, all falling before the mason's hatchet and the carpenter's axe – and that from the bottom upwards; to float as it were in the air, propped up by beams, being, at the same time, constantly confined to a certain lesson, or definite task – all this produced a commotion in our young heads that was not easily settled. But the young people felt the inconvenience less, because they had somewhat more space for play than before, and had many opportunities of swinging on beams, and playing at see-saw with the boards.

At first my father obstinately persisted in carrying out his plan; but when at last even the roof was partly removed, and the rain reached our beds, in spite of the carpets that had been taken up, converted into tarpaulin, and stretched over as a defence, he determined, though reluctantly, that the children should be entrusted for a time to some kind friends, who had already offered their services, and sent to a public school.

This transition was rather unpleasant; for when the children who had all along been kept at home in a secluded, pure, refined, yet strict manner, were thrown among a rude mass of young creatures, they were compelled unexpectedly to suffer everything from the vulgar, bad, and even base, since they lacked both weapons and skill to protect themselves.

The Walk Round Frankfort.

It was properly about this period that I first became acquainted with my native city, which I strolled over with more and more freedom, in every direction, sometimes alone, and sometimes in the company of lively companions. To convey to others in any degree the impression made upon me by these grave and revered spots, I must here introduce a description of my birth-place, as in its different parts it was gradually unfolded to me. I loved more than anything else to promenade on the great bridge over the Maine. Its length, its firmness, and its fine appearance, rendered it a notable structure, and it was, besides, almost the only memorial left from ancient times of the precautions due from the civil government to its citizens. The beautiful stream above and below bridge, attracted my eye, and when the gilt weathercock on the bridge-cross glittered in the sunshine, I always had a pleasant feeling. Generally I extended my walk through Sachsenhausen, and for a *Kreutzer* was ferried comfortably across the river. I was now again on this side of the stream, stole along to the wine market, and admired the mechanism of the cranes when goods were unloaded. But it was particularly entertaining to watch the arrival of the market-boats, from which so many and such extraordinary figures were seen to disembark. On entering the city, the Saalhof, which at least stood on the spot where the Castle of Emperor Charlemagne and his successors was reported to have been, was greeted every time with profound reverence. One liked to lose oneself in the old trading town, particularly on market-days, among the crowd collected about the church of St. Bartholomew. From the earliest times, throngs of buyers and sellers had gathered there, and the place being thus occupied, it was not easy in later days to bring about a more roomy and cheerful arrangement. The booths of the so-called *Pfarreisen* were very important places for us children, and we carried many a *Batzen* to them in order to purchase sheets of coloured paper stamped with gold animals. But seldom, however, could one make one's way through the narrow, crowded, and dirty market-place. I call to mind, also, that I always flew past the adjoining meat-stalls, narrow and disgusting as they were, in perfect horror. On the other hand, the Roman Hill (*Römerberg*) was a most delightful place for walking. The way to the New-Town, along by the new shops, was always cheering and pleasant; yet we regretted that a street did not lead into the Zeil by the Church of Our Lady, and that we always had to go a round-about way by the *Hasengasse*, or the Catherine Gate. But what chiefly attracted the child's attention, were the many little towns within the town, the fortresses within the fortress; viz., the walled monastic enclosures, and several other precincts, remaining from earlier times, and more or less like castles – as the Nuremberg Court, the Compostella, the Braunfels, the ancestral house of the family of Stallburg, and several strongholds, in

later days transformed into dwellings and warehouses. No architecture of an elevating kind was then to be seen in Frankfort, and every thing pointed to a period long past and unquiet, both for town and district. Gates and towers, which defined the bounds of the old city, – then further on again, gates, towers, walls, bridges, ramparts, moats, with which the new city was encompassed, – all showed, but too plainly, that a necessity for guarding the common weal in disastrous times had induced these arrangements, that all the squares and streets, even the newest, broadest, and best laid out, owed their origin to chance and caprice and not to any regulating mind. A certain liking for the antique was thus implanted in the Boy, and was specially nourished and promoted by old chronicles and wood-cuts, as for instance, those of Grave relating to the siege of Frankfort. At the same time a different taste was developed in him for observing the conditions of mankind, in their manifold variety and naturalness, without regard to their importance or beauty. It was, therefore, one of our favourite walks, which we endeavoured to take now and then in the course of a year, to follow the circuit of the path inside the city walls. Gardens, courts, and back buildings extend to the *Zwinger*; and we saw many thousand people amid their little domestic and secluded circumstances. From the ornamental and show gardens of the rich, to the orchards of the citizen, anxious about his necessities – from thence to the factories, bleaching-grounds, and similar establishments, even to the burying-grounds – for a little world lay within the limits of the city – we passed a varied, strange, spectacle, which changed at every step, and with the enjoyment of which our childish curiosity was never satisfied. In fact, the celebrated Devil-upon-two-sticks, when he lifted the roofs of Madrid at night, scarcely did more for his friend, than was here done for us in the bright sunshine and open air. The keys that were to be made use of in this journey, to gain us a passage through many a tower, stair and postern, were in the hands of the authorities, whose subordinates we never failed to coax into good-humour.

The Council-House.

But a more important, and in one sense more fruitful place for us, was the Council-House, named from the Romans. In its lower vault-like halls we liked but too well to lose ourselves. We obtained an entrance, too, into the large and very simple session-room of the Council. The walls as well as the arched ceiling were white, though wainscotted to a certain height, and the whole was without a trace of painting, or any kind of carved work; only, high up on the middle wall, might be read this brief inscription:

"One man's word is no man's word,
Justice needs that both be heard."

After the most ancient fashion, benches were ranged around the wainscoting, and raised one step above the floor for the accommodation of the members of the assembly. This readily suggested to us why the order of rank in our senate was distributed by benches. To the left of the door, on the opposite corner, sat the *Schöffen*; in the corner itself the *Schultheiss*, who alone had a small table before him; those of the second bench sat in the space to his left as far as the wall to where the windows were; while along the windows ran the third bench, occupied by the craftsmen. In the midst of the hall stood a table for the registrar (*Protocolführer*).

Once within the *Römer*, we even mingled with the crowd at the audiences of the burgomasters. But whatever related to the election and coronation of the Emperors possessed a greater charm. We managed to gain the favour of the keepers, so as to be allowed to mount the new gay imperial staircase, which was painted in fresco, and on other occasions closed with a grating. The election-chamber, with its purple hangings and admirably-fringed gold borders, filled us with awe. The representations of animals on which little children or genii, clothed in the imperial ornaments and laden with the insignia of the Empire, made a curious figure, were observed by us with great attention; and we even hoped that we might live to see, some time or other, a coronation with our own eyes. They had great

difficulty to get us out of the great imperial hall, when we had been once fortunate enough to steal in; and we reckoned him our truest friend who, while we looked at the half-lengths of all the emperors painted around at a certain height, would tell us something of their deeds.

We listened to many a legend of Charlemagne. But that which was historically interesting for us began with Rudolph of Hapsburg, who by his courage put an end to such violent commotions. Charles the Fourth also attracted our notice. We had already heard of the Golden Bull, and of the statutes for the administration of criminal justice. We knew, too, that he had not made the Frankforters suffer for their adhesion to his noble rival, Emperor Günther of Schwarzburg. We heard Maximilian praised both as a friend to mankind, and to the townsmen, his subjects, and were also told that it had been prophesied of him he would be the last Emperor of a German house; which unhappily came to pass, as after his death the choice wavered only between the King of Spain, (*afterwards*) Charles V., and the King of France, Francis I. With some anxiety it was added, that a similar prophecy, or rather intimation, was once more in circulation; for it was obvious that there was room left for the portrait of only one more emperor – a circumstance which, though seemingly accidental; filled the patriotic with concern.

Having once entered upon this circuit, we did not fail to repair to the cathedral, and there visit the grave of that brave Günther, so much prized both by friend and foe. The famous stone which formerly covered it is set up in the choir. The door close by, leading into the conclave, remained long shut against us, until we at last managed through the higher authorities, to gain access to this celebrated place. But we should have done better had we continued as before to picture it merely in our imagination; for we found this room, which is so remarkable in German history, where the most powerful princes were accustomed to meet for an act so momentous, in no respect worthily adorned, and even disfigured with beams, poles, scaffolding, and similar lumber, which people had wanted to put out of the way. The imagination, for that very reason, was the more excited and the heart elevated, when we soon after received permission to be present in the Council-House, at the exhibition of the Golden Bull to some distinguished strangers.

Imperial Coronations.

The Boy then heard, with much curiosity, what his own family, as well as other older relations and acquaintances, liked to tell and repeat, viz., the histories of the two last coronations, which had followed close upon each other; for there was no Frankforter of a certain age who would not have regarded these two events, and their attendant circumstances, as the crowning glory of his whole life. Splendid as had been the coronation of Charles Seventh, during which particularly the French Ambassador had given magnificent feasts at great cost and with distinguished taste, the results were all the more afflicting to the good Emperor, who could not preserve his capital Munich, and was compelled in some degree to implore the hospitality of his imperial towns.

If the coronation of Francis First was not so strikingly splendid as the former one, it was dignified by the presence of the Empress Maria Theresa, whose beauty appears to have created as much impression on the men, as the earnest and noble form and the blue eyes of Charles Seventh on the women. At any rate, the sexes rivalled each other in giving to the attentive Boy a highly favourable opinion of both these personages. All these descriptions and narratives were given in a serene and quiet state of mind; for the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle had, for the moment, put an end to all feuds; and they spoke at their ease of past contests, as well as of their former festivities – the battle of Dettingen, for instance, and other remarkable events of by-gone years; and all that was important or dangerous seemed, as generally happens when a peace has been concluded, to have occurred only to afford entertainment to prosperous and unconcerned people.

Half a year had scarcely passed away in this narrow patriotism before the fairs began, which always produced an incredible ferment in the heads of all children. The erection, in so short a time, of so many booths, creating a new town within the old one, the roll and crush, the unloading and

unpacking of wares, excited from the very first dawn of consciousness an insatiable active curiosity and a boundless desire for childish property, which the Boy with increasing years endeavoured to gratify, in one way or another, as far as his little purse permitted. At the same time he obtained a notion of what the world produces, what it wants, and what the inhabitants of its different parts exchange with each other.

These great epochs, which came round regularly in spring and autumn, were announced by curious solemnities, which seemed the more dignified because they vividly brought before us the old time, and what had come down from it to ourselves. On Escort-day, the whole population were on their legs, thronging to the *Fahrgasse*, to the bridge, and beyond *Sachsenhausen*; all the windows were occupied, though nothing unusual took place on that day; the crowd seeming to be there only for the sake of jostling each other, and the spectators merely to look at one another; for the real occasion of their coming did not begin till nightfall, and was then rather taken upon trust than seen with the eyes.

The affair was thus: in those old, unquiet times, when every one did wrong according to his pleasure, or helped the right as his liking led him, traders on their way to the fairs were so wilfully beset and harassed by waylayers, both of noble and ignoble birth, that princes and other persons of power caused their people to be accompanied to Frankfort by an armed escort. Now the burghers of the imperial city would yield no rights pertaining to themselves or their district; they went out to meet the advancing party; and thus contests often arose as to how far the escort should advance, or whether it had a right to enter the city at all. But, as this took place, not only in regard to matters of trade and fairs, but also when high personages came, in times of peace or war, and especially on the days of election; and as the affair often came to blows when a train which was not to be endured in the city strove to make its way in along with its lord, many negotiations had from time to time been resorted to, and many temporary arrangements concluded, though always with reservations of rights on both sides. The hope had not been relinquished of composing once for all a quarrel that had already lasted for centuries, inasmuch as the whole institution, on account of which it had been so long and often so hotly contested, might be looked upon as nearly useless, or at least as superfluous.

Meanwhile, on those days, the city cavalry in several divisions, each having a commander in front, rode forth from different gates and found on a certain spot some troopers or hussars of the persons entitled to an escort, who with their leaders were well received and entertained. They stayed till towards evening, and then rode back to the city, scarcely visible to the expectant crowd, many a city knight not being in a condition to manage his horse, or keep himself in the saddle. The most important bands returned by the bridge-gate, where the pressure was consequently the strongest. Last of all, just as night fell, the Nuremberg post-coach arrived, escorted in the same way, and always containing, as the people fancied, in pursuance of custom, an old woman. Its arrival, therefore, was a signal for all the urchins to break out into an ear-splitting shout, though it was utterly impossible to distinguish any one of the passengers within. The throng that pressed after the coach through the bridge-gate was quite incredible, and perfectly bewildering to the senses. The houses nearest the bridge were those, therefore, most in demand among spectators.

The Piper's Court.

Another more singular ceremony, by which the people were excited in broad daylight, was the Piper's-court (*Pfeifer-gericht*). It commemorated those early times when important larger trading-towns endeavoured, if not to abolish tolls altogether, at least to bring about a reduction of them, as they increased in proportion with trade and industry. They were allowed this privilege by the Emperor who needed their aid, when it was in his power to grant it, but commonly only for one year; so that it had to be annually renewed. This was effected by means of symbolical gifts, which were presented before the opening of St. Bartholomew's Fair to the imperial magistrate (*Schultheiss*), who might have sometimes been the chief toll-gatherer; and, for the sake of a more imposing show, the gifts were offered when he was sitting in full court with the *Schöffen*. But when the chief magistrate afterwards

came to be no longer appointed by the Emperor, and was elected by the city itself, he still retained these privileges; and thus both the immunities of the cities from toll, and the ceremonies by which the representatives from Worms, Nuremberg, and Old Bamberg once acknowledged the ancient favour, had come down to our times. The day before Lady-day, an open court was proclaimed. In an enclosed space in the great Imperial Hail, the *Schöffen* took their elevated seats; a step higher, sat the *Schultheiss* in the midst of them; while below on the right hand, were the procurators of both parties invested with plenipotentiary powers. The *Actuarius* begins to read aloud the weighty judgments reserved for this day; the lawyers demand copies, appeal, or do whatever else seems necessary. All at once a singular sort of music announces, if we may so speak, the advent of former centuries. It proceeds from three pipers, one of whom plays an old *shawm*, another a *sack-but*, and the third a *pommer*, or oboe. They wear blue mantles trimmed with gold, having the notes made fast to their sleeves, and their heads covered. Having thus left their inn at ten o'clock, followed by the deputies and their attendants, and stared at by all, natives and strangers, they enter the hall. The law proceedings are stayed – the pipers and their train halt before the railing – the deputy steps in and stations himself in front of the *Schultheiss*. The emblematic presents, which were required to be precisely the same as in the old precedents consisted commonly of the staple wares of the city offering them. Pepper passed, as it were, for everything else; and, even on this occasion, the deputy brought a handsomely turned wooden goblet filled with pepper. Upon it lay a pair of gloves, curiously slashed, stitched, and tasseled with silk – a token of a favour granted and received – such as the Emperor himself made use of in certain cases. Along with this was a white staff, which in former times was not easily dispensable in judicial proceedings. Some small pieces of silver money were added; and the city of Worms brought an old felt hat, which was always redeemed again, so that the same one had been a witness of these ceremonies for many years.

After the deputy had made his address, handed over his present, and received from the *Schultheiss* assurance of continued favour, he quitted the enclosed circle, the pipers blew, the train departed as it had come, the court pursued its business, until the second and at last the third deputy had been introduced. For each came some time after the other; partly that the pleasure of the public might thus be prolonged, and partly because they were always the same antiquated *virtuosi* whom Nuremberg, for itself and its co-cities, had undertaken to maintain and produce annually at the appointed place.

Summer Amusements.

We children were particularly interested in this festival, because we were not a little flattered to see our grandfather in a place of so much honour; and because commonly, on the self-same day, we used to visit him, quite modestly, in order that we might, when my grandmother had emptied the pepper into her spice box, lay hold of a cup or small rod, a pair of gloves or an old *Räder Albus*.² These symbolical ceremonies, restoring antiquity as if by magic, could not be explained to us without leading us back into past times and informing us of the manners, customs, and feelings of those early ancestors who were so strangely made present to us, by pipers and deputies seemingly risen from the dead, and by tangible gifts, which might be possessed by ourselves.

These venerable solemnities were followed, in the fine season, by many festivals, delightful for us children, which took place in the open air, outside of the city. On the right shore of the Maine going down, about half an hour's walk from the gate, there rises a sulphur-spring, neatly enclosed and surrounded by aged lindens. Not far from it stands the *Good-People's-Court*, formerly a hospital erected for the sake of the waters. On the commons around, the herds of cattle from the neighbourhood were collected on a certain day of the year; and the herdsmen, together with their sweethearts, celebrated a rural festival, with dancing and singing, with all sorts of pleasure and

² An old silver coin.

clownishness. On the other side of the city lay a similar but larger common, likewise graced with a spring and still finer lindens. Thither, at Whitsuntide, the flocks of sheep were driven; and, at the same time, the poor, pale orphan children were allowed to come out of their walls into the open air; for the thought had not yet occurred that these destitute creatures, who must some time or other help themselves through the world, ought soon to be brought in contact with it; that instead of being kept in dreary confinement, they should rather be accustomed to serve and to endure; and that there was every reason to strengthen them physically and morally from their infancy. The nurses and maids, always ready to hike a walk, never failed to carry or conduct us to such places, even in our first years; so that these rural festivals belong to the earliest impressions that I can recall.

Meanwhile, our house had been finished, and that too in tolerably short time, because everything had been judiciously planned and prepared, and the needful money provided. We now found ourselves all together again, and felt comfortable: for, when a well-considered plan is once carried out, we forget the various inconveniences of the means that were necessary to its accomplishment. The building, for a private residence, was roomy enough; light and cheerful throughout, with broad staircases, agreeable parlours, and a prospect of the gardens that could be enjoyed easily from several of the windows. The internal completion, and what pertained to mere ornament and finish, was gradually accomplished, and served at the same time for occupation and amusement.

The first thing brought into order was my father's collection of books, the best of which, in calf and half-calf binding, were to ornament the walls of his office and study. He possessed the beautiful Dutch editions of the Latin classics, which for the sake of outward uniformity he had endeavoured to procure all in quarto; and also many other works relating to Roman antiquities, and the more elegant jurisprudence. The most eminent Italian poets were not wanting, and for Tasso he showed a great predilection. There were also the best and most recent Travels; and he took great delight in correcting and completing Keyssler and Nemeiz from them. Nor had he omitted to surround himself with all needful assistants to learning, such as dictionaries of various languages, and encyclopedias of science and art, which with much else adapted to profit and amusement, might be consulted at will.

The other half of this collection, in neat parchment bindings, with very beautifully written titles, was placed in a separate attic. The acquisition of new books, as well as their binding and arrangement, he pursued with great composure and love of order: and he was much influenced in his opinion by the critical notices that ascribed particular merit to any work. His collection of juridical treatises was annually increased by some volumes.

Next, the pictures, which in the old house had hung about promiscuously, were now collected and symmetrically hung on the walls of a cheerful room near the study, all in black frames, set off with gilt mouldings. My father had a principle, which he often and strongly expressed, that one ought to employ the living Masters, and to spend less upon the departed, in the estimation of whom prejudice greatly concurred. He had the notion that it was precisely the same with pictures as with Rhenish wines, which, though age may impart to them a higher value, can be produced in any coming year of just as excellent quality as in years past. After the lapse of some time, the new wine also becomes old, quite as valuable and perhaps more delicious. This opinion he chiefly confirmed by the observation that many old pictures seemed to derive their chief value for lovers of art from the fact that they had become darker and browner; and that the harmony of tone in such pictures was often vaunted. My father, on the other hand, protested that he had no fear that the new pictures would not also turn black in time, though whether they were likely to gain anything by this he was not so positive.

Frankfurt Artists.

In pursuance of these principles, he employed for many years the whole of the Frankfort artists: – the painter Hirt, who excelled in animating oak and beech woods, and other so-called rural scenes, with cattle; Trautmann, who had adopted Rembrandt as his model, and had attained great perfection

in inclosed lights and reflections, as well as in effective conflagrations, so that he was once ordered to paint a companion-piece to a Rembrandt; Schütz, who diligently elaborated landscapes of the Rhine country, in the manner of Sachtlebens; and Junker, who executed with great purity flower and fruit pieces, still life, and figures quietly employed, after the models of the Dutch. But now, by the new arrangement, by more convenient room, and still more by the acquaintance of a skilful artist, our love of art was again quickened and animated. This artist was Seekatz, a pupil of Brinkmann, court-painter at Darmstadt, whose talent and character will be more minutely unfolded in the sequel.

In this way, the remaining rooms were finished, according to their several purposes. Cleanliness and order prevailed throughout. Above all, the large panes of plate-glass contributed towards a perfect lightness, which had been wanting in the old house for many causes, but chiefly on account of the panes, which were for the most part round. My father was cheerful on account of the success of his undertaking, and if his good humour had not been often interrupted because the diligence and exactness of the mechanics did not come up to his wishes, a happier life than ours could not have been conceived, since much good partly arose in the family itself, and partly flowed from without.

But an extraordinary event deeply disturbed the Boy's peace of mind, for the first time. On the 1st of November, 1755, the earthquake at Lisbon took place, and spread a prodigious alarm over the world, long accustomed to peace and quiet. A great and magnificent capital, which was, at the same time, a trading and mercantile city, is smitten, without warning, by a most fearful calamity. The earth trembles and totters, the sea roars up, ships dash together, houses fall in, and over them churches and towers, the royal palace is in part swallowed by the waters, the bursting land seems to vomit flames, since smoke and fire are seen everywhere amid the ruins. Sixty thousand persons, a moment before in ease and comfort, fall together, and he is to be deemed most fortunate who is no longer capable of a thought or feeling about the disaster. The flames rage on, and with them rage a troop of desperadoes, before concealed, or set at large by the event. The wretched survivors are exposed to pillage, massacre, and every outrage: and thus, on all sides, Nature asserts her boundless capriciousness.

Earthquake at Lisbon.

Intimations of this event had spread over wide regions more quickly than the authentic reports: slight shocks had been felt in many places: in many springs, particularly those of a mineral nature, an unusual receding of the waters had been remarked; and so much, the greater was the effect of the accounts themselves, which were rapidly circulated, at first in general terms, but finally with dreadful particulars. Hereupon, the religious were neither wanting in reflections, nor the philosophic in grounds for consolation, nor the clergy in warnings. So complicated an event arrested the attention of the world for a long time; and, as additional and more detailed accounts of the extensive effects of this explosion came from every quarter, the minds already aroused by the misfortunes of strangers, began to be more and more anxious about themselves and their friends. Perhaps the demon of terror had never so speedily and powerfully diffused his terrors over the earth.

The Boy, who was compelled to put up with frequent repetitions of the whole matter, was not a little staggered. God, the Creator and Preserver of Heaven and Earth, whom the explanation of the first article of the Creed declared so wise and benignant, having given both the just and the unjust a prey to the same destruction, had not manifested Himself, by any means, in a fatherly character. In vain the young mind strove to resist these impressions. It was the more impossible, as the wise and scripture-learned could not themselves agree as to the light in which such a phenomenon should be regarded.

The next summer gave a closer opportunity of knowing directly that angry God, of whom the Old Testament records so much. A sudden hail-storm, accompanied by thunder and lightning, violently broke the new panes at the back of our house, which looked towards the west, damaged the new furniture, destroyed some valuable books and other things of worth, and was the more terrible

to the children, as the whole household, quite beside themselves, dragged them into a dark passage, where, on their knees, with frightful groans and cries, they thought to conciliate the wrathful Deity. Meanwhile, my father, who was alone self-possessed, forced open and unhinged the window-frames, by which we saved much glass, but made a broader inlet for the rain that followed the hail, so that after we were finally quieted, we found ourselves in the rooms and on the stairs completely surrounded by floods and streams of water.

These events, startling as they were on the whole, did not greatly interrupt the course of instruction which my father himself had undertaken to give us children. He had passed his youth in the Cobourg Gymnasium, which stood as one of the first among German educational institutions. He had there laid a good foundation in languages, and other matters reckoned part of a learned education, had subsequently applied himself to jurisprudence at Leipzig, and had at last taken his degree at Giessen. His dissertation, "*Electa de aditione Hereditatis*," which had been earnestly and carefully written, is yet cited by jurists with approval.

It is a pious wish of all fathers to see what they have themselves failed to attain, realized in their sons, as if in this way they could live their lives over again, and, at last, make a proper use of their early experience. Conscious of his acquirements, with the certainty of faithful perseverance, and distrusting the teachers of the day, my father undertook to instruct his own children, allowing them to take particular lesson from particular masters only so far as seemed absolutely necessary. A pedagogical *dilettantism* was already beginning to show itself everywhere. The pedantry and heaviness of the masters appointed in the public schools had probably given rise to this evil. Something better was sought for, but it was forgotten how defective all instruction must be, which is not given by persons who are teachers by profession.

My father had prospered in his own career tolerably according to his wishes: I was to follow the same course, only more easily, and much farther. He prized my natural endowments the more, because he was himself wanting in them; for he had acquired everything only by means of unspeakable diligence, pertinacity, and repetition. He often assured me, early and late, both in jest and earnest, that with my talents he would have deported himself very differently, and would not have turned them to such small account.

Juvenile Studies.

By means of a ready apprehension, practice, and a good, memory, I very soon outgrew the instructions which my father and the other teachers were able to give, without being thoroughly grounded in anything. Grammar displeased me, because I regarded it as a mere arbitrary law; the rules seemed ridiculous, inasmuch as they were invalidated by so many exceptions, which had all to be learned by themselves. And if the first Latin work had not been in rhyme, I should have got on but badly in that; but as it was, I hummed and sang it to myself readily enough. In the same way we had a Geography in memory-verses, in which the most wretched doggerel best served to fix the recollection of that which was to be retained: *e. g.:*

Upper-Yssel has many a fen,
Which makes it hateful to all men.

The forms and inflections of language I caught with ease; and I also quickly unravelled what lay in the conception of a thing. In rhetoric, composition, and such matters, no one excelled me, although I was often put back for faults of grammar. Yet these were the attempts that gave my father particular pleasure, and for which he rewarded me with many presents of money, considerable for such a lad.

My father taught my sister Italian in the same room in which I had to commit Cellarius to memory. As I was soon ready with my task, and was yet obliged to sit quiet, I listened with my book before me, and very readily caught the Italian, which struck me as an agreeable softening of Latin.

Other precocities, with respect to memory and the power to combine, I possessed in common with those children who thus acquire an early reputation. For that reason my father could scarcely wait for me to go to college. He very soon declared, that I must study jurisprudence in Leipzig, for which he retained a strong predilection, and I was afterwards to visit some other university and take my degree. As for this second one he was indifferent which I might choose, except that he had for some reason or other a disinclination to Göttingen, to my disappointment, since it was precisely there that I had placed such confidence and high hopes.

He told me further, that I was to go to Wetzlar and Ratisbon as well as to Vienna, and thence towards Italy, although he repeatedly mentioned that Paris should first be seen, because after coming out of Italy nothing else could be pleasing.

These tales of my future youthful travels, often as they were repeated, I listened to eagerly, the more since they always led to accounts of Italy, and at last to a description of Naples. His otherwise serious and dry manner seemed on these occasions to relax and quicken, and thus a passionate wish awoke in us children to participate in the paradise he described.

Private lessons, which now gradually multiplied, were shared with the children of the neighbours. This learning in common did not advance me; the teachers followed their routine; and the rudeness, sometimes the ill-nature, of my companions, interrupted the brief hours of study with tumult, vexation, and disturbance. Chrestomathies, by which learn learning is made pleasant and varied, had not yet reached us. Cornelius Nepos, so dry to young people, the New Testament which was much too easy, and which by preaching and religious instructions had been rendered even common-place, Cellarius and Pasor could impart no kind of interest; on the other hand, a certain rage for rhyme and versification, a consequence of reading the prevalent German poets, took complete possession of us. Me it had seized much earlier, as I had found it agreeable to pass from the rhetorical to the poetical treatment of subjects.

We boys held a Sunday assembly where each of us was to produce original verses. And here I was struck by something strange, which long caused me uneasiness. My poems, whatever they might be, always seemed to me the best. But I soon remarked, that my competitors who brought forth very lame affairs, were in the same condition, and thought no less of themselves. Nay, what appeared yet more suspicious, a good lad (though in such matters altogether unskilful), whom I liked in other respects, but who had his rhymes made by his tutor, not only regarded these as the best, but was thoroughly persuaded they were his own, as he always maintained in our confidential intercourse. Now, as this illusion and error was obvious to me, the question one day forced itself upon me, whether I myself might not be in the same state, whether those poems were not really better than mine, and whether I might not justly appear to those boys as mad as they to me? This disturbed me much and long; for it was altogether impossible for me to find any external criterion of the truth; I even ceased from producing, until at length I was quieted by my own light temperament, and the feeling of my own powers, and lastly by a trial of skill – started on the spur of the moment by our teachers and parents, who had noted our sport – in which I came off well and won general praise.

No libraries for children had at that time been established. The old had themselves still childish notions, and found it convenient to impart their own education to their successors. Except the *Orbis Pictus* of Amos Comenius, no book of the sort fell into our hands; but the large folio Bible, with copperplates by Merian, was diligently gone over leaf by leaf: Gottfried's Chronicles, with plates by the same master, taught us the most notable events of Universal History; the *Acerra Philologica* added thereto all sorts of fables, mythologies and wonders; and, as I soon became familiar with Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the first books of which in particular I studied carefully, my young brain was rapidly furnished with a mass of images and events, of significant and wonderful shapes and occurrences, and I never felt time hang upon my hands, as I always occupied myself in working over, repeating, and reproducing these acquisitions.

Popular Works.

A more salutary moral effect than that of these rude and hazardous antiquities, was produced by Fénelon's *Telemachus*, with which I first became acquainted in Neukirch's translation, and which, imperfectly as it was executed, had a sweet and beneficent influence on my mind. That *Robinson Crusoe* was added in due time, follows in the nature of things; and it may be imagined that the *Island of Falsenberg* was not wanting. Lord Anson's *Voyage round the Globe* combined the dignity of truth with the rich fancies of fable, and while our thoughts accompanied this excellent seaman, we were conducted over all the world, and endeavoured to follow him with our fingers on the globe. But a still richer harvest was to spring up before me, when I lighted on a mass of writings, which, in their present state, it is true, cannot be called excellent, but the contents of which, in a harmless way, bring near to us many a meritorious action of former times.

The publication, or rather the manufacture, of those books which have at a later day become so well known and celebrated under the name *Volkschriften*, *Volksbücher* (popular works or books), was carried on in Frankfort. The enormous sales they met with, led to their being almost illegibly printed from stereotypes on horrible blotting-paper. We children were so fortunate as to find these precious remains of the Middle Ages every day on a little table at the door of a dealer in cheap books, and to obtain them at the cost of a couple of *kreutzer*. The *Eulenspiegel*, the *Four Sons of Haimon*, the *Emperor Octavian*, the *Fair Melusina*, the *Beautiful Magelone*, *Fortunatus*, with the whole race down to the *Wandering Jew*, were all at our service, as often as we preferred the relish of these works to the taste of sweet things. The greatest benefit of this was, that when we had read through or damaged such a sheet, it could soon be repro cured and swallowed a second time.

As a family pic-nic in summer is vexatiously disturbed by a sudden storm, which transforms a pleasant state of things into the very reverse, so the diseases of childhood fall unexpectedly on the most beautiful season of early life. And thus it happened with me. I had just purchased *Fortunatus* with his *Purse and Wishing-hat*, when I was attacked by a restlessness and fever which announced the small-pox. Inoculation was still with us considered very problematical, and although it had already been intelligibly and urgently recommended by popular writers, the German physicians hesitated to perform an operation that seemed to forestall Nature. Speculative Englishmen, therefore, had come to the Continent and inoculated, for a considerable fee, the children of such persons as were opulent and free from prejudices. Still the majority were exposed to the old disease; the infection raged through families, killed and disfigured many children; and few parents dared to avail themselves of a method, the probable efficacy of which had been abundantly confirmed by the result. The evil now invaded our house and attacked me with unusual severity. My whole body was sown over with spots, and my face covered, and for several days I lay blind and in great pain. They tried the only possible alleviation, and promised me heaps of gold if I would keep quiet and not increase the mischief by rubbing and scratching. I controlled myself, while, according to the prevailing prejudice, they kept me as warm as possible, and thus only rendered my suffering more acute. At last, after a woful time, there fell as it were a mask from my face. The blotches had left no visible mark upon the skin, but the features were plainly altered. I myself was satisfied merely with seeing the light of day again, and gradually putting off my spotted skin; but others were pitiless enough to remind me often of my previous condition; especially a very lively aunt, who had formerly regarded me with idolatry, but in after years could seldom look at me without exclaiming – "The deuce, cousin! what a fright he's grown!" Then she would tell me circumstantially how I had once been her delight, and what attention she had excited when she carried me about; and thus I early learned that people very often subject us to a severe atonement for the pleasure which we have afforded them.

Diseases of Childhood.

I neither escaped measles, nor chicken-pox, nor any other of the tormenting demons of childhood; and I was assured each time that it was a great piece of good luck that this malady was now

past for ever. But, alas! another again threatened in the back-ground, and advanced. All these things increased my propensity to reflection; and as I had already practised myself in fortitude, in order to remove the torture of impatience, the virtues which I had heard praised in the Stoics appeared to me highly worthy of imitation, and the more so, as something similar was commended by the Christian doctrine of patience.

While on the subject of these family diseases, I will mention a brother about three years younger than myself, who was likewise attacked by that infection, and suffered not a little from it. He was of a tender nature, quiet and capricious, and we were never on the most friendly terms. Besides, he scarcely survived the years of childhood. Among several other children born afterwards, who like him did not live long, I only remember a very pretty and agreeable girl, who also soon passed away; so that, after the lapse of some years, my sister and I remained alone, and were therefore the more deeply and affectionately attached to each other.

These maladies and other unpleasant interruptions were in their consequences doubly grievous; for my father, who seemed to have laid down for himself a certain calendar of education and instruction, was resolved immediately to repair every delay, and imposed double lessons upon the young convalescent. These were not hard for me to accomplish, but were so far troublesome, that they hindered, and to a certain extent repressed, my inward development, which had taken a decided direction.

From these didactic and pedagogic oppressions, we commonly fled to my grandfather and grandmother. Their house stood in the *Friedberg* street, and appeared to have been formerly a fortress; for, on approaching it, nothing was seen but a large gate with battlements, which were joined on either side to the two neighbouring houses. On entering through a narrow passage, we reached at last a tolerably broad court, surrounded by irregular buildings, which were now all united into one dwelling. We usually hastened at once into the garden, which extended to a considerable length and breadth behind the buildings, and was very well kept. The walks were mostly skirted by vine trellises; one part of the space was used for vegetables, and another devoted to flowers, which from spring till autumn adorned in rich succession the borders as well as the beds. The long wall erected towards the south was used for some well-trained espalier peach-trees, the forbidden fruit of which ripened temptingly before us through the summer. Yet we rather avoided this side, because we here could not satisfy our dainty appetites; and we turned to the side opposite, where an interminable row of currant and gooseberry bushes furnished our voracity with a succession of harvests till autumn. Not less important to us was an old, high, wide-spreading mulberry-tree, both on account of its fruits, and because we were told that the silk-worms fed upon its leaves. In this peaceful region my grandfather was found every evening, tending with genial care and with his own hand the finer growths of fruits and flowers; while a gardener managed the drudgery. He was never vexed by the various toils which were necessary to preserve and increase a fine show of pinks. The branches of the peach-trees were carefully tied to the espaliers with his own hands, in a fan-shape, in order to bring about a full and easy growth of the fruit. The sorting of the bulbs of tulips, hyacinths, and plants of a similar nature, as well as the care of their preservation, he entrusted to none; and I still with pleasure recall to my mind how diligently he occupied himself in inoculating the different varieties of roses. That he might protect himself from the thorns, he put on a pair of those ancient leather gloves, of which three pair were given him annually at the Piper's Court, so that there was no dearth of the article. He wore also a loose dressing-gown, and a folded black velvet cap upon his head, so that he might have passed for an intermediate person between Alcinoüs and Laërtes.

Goethe's Maternal Grandfather.

All this work in the garden he pursued as regularly and with as much precision as his official business; for, before he came down, he always arranged the list of causes for the next day, and read the legal papers. In the morning he proceeded to the Council House, dined after his return, then

nodded in his easy chair, and so went through the same routine every day. He conversed little, never exhibited any vehemence and I do not remember ever to have seen him angry. All that surrounded him was in the fashion of the olden time. I never perceived any alteration in his wainscotted room. His library contained, besides law works, only the earliest books of travels, sea voyages, and discoveries of countries. Altogether I can call to mind no situation more adapted than his to awaken the feeling of uninterrupted peace and eternal duration.

But the reverence which we entertained for this venerable old man was raised to the highest degree by a conviction that he possessed the gift of prophecy, especially in matters that pertained to himself and his destiny. It is true he revealed himself to no one, distinctly and minutely, except to my grandmother; yet we were all aware that he was informed of what was going to happen, by significant dreams. He assured his wife, for instance, at a time when he was still junior Councillor, that on the first vacancy he would obtain the place left open on the bench of the *Schöffen*; and soon afterwards when one of those officers actually died of apoplexy, my grandfather gave orders that his house should be quietly got ready prepared on the day of electing and balloting, to receive his guests and congratulators. Sure enough, the decisive gold ball was drawn in his favour. The simple dream by which he had learned this, he confided to his wife as follows: He had seen himself in the ordinary full assembly of Councilmen, where all went on just as usual. Suddenly, the late *Schöff* rose from his seat, descended the steps, pressed him in the most complimentary manner to take the vacant place, and then departed by the door.

Something like this occurred on the death of the *Schultheiss*. They make no delay in supplying this place, as they always have to fear that the Emperor will at some time resume his ancient right of nominating the officer. On this occasion, the messenger of the Court came at midnight to summon an extraordinary session for the next morning; and as the light in his lantern was about to expire, he asked for a candle's end to help him on his way. "Give him a whole one," said my grandfather to the ladies, "he takes the trouble all on my account." This expression anticipated the result – he was made *Schultheiss*; and what rendered the circumstance particularly remarkable was, that although his representative was the third and last to draw at the ballot, the two silver balls first came out, leaving the golden ball at the bottom of the bag for him.

Perfectly prosaic, simple, and without a trace of the fantastic or miraculous, were the other dreams, of which we were informed. Moreover, I remember that once, as a boy, I was turning over his books and memoranda, and found among some other remarks which related to gardening, such sentences as these: "To-night N. N. came to me and said – " the name and revelation being written in cipher; or "This night I saw – " all the rest being again in cipher, except the conjunctions and similar words, from which nothing could be learned.

It is worthy of note also, that persons who showed no signs of prophetic insight at other times, acquired, for the moment, while in his presence, and that by means of some sensible evidence, presentiments of diseases or deaths which were then occurring in distant places. But no such gift has been transmitted to any of his children or grandchildren, who for the most part have been hearty people, enjoying life, and never going beyond the Actual.

While on this subject, I remember with gratitude many kindnesses I received from them in my youth. Thus, for example, we were employed and entertained in many ways when we visited the second daughter, married to the druggist Melbert, whose house and shop stood near the market, in the midst of the liveliest and most crowded part of the town. There we could look down from the windows pleasantly enough upon the hurly-burly in which we feared to lose ourselves; and though, at first, of all the goods in the shop, nothing had much interest for us but the liquorice, and the little brown stamped cakes made from it, we became in time better acquainted with the multitude of articles bought and sold in that business. This aunt was the most vivacious of all the family. When my mother, in her early years, took pleasure in being neatly dressed, working at some domestic occupation, or reading a book, the other, on the contrary, ran about the neighbourhood to pick up neglected children, take

care of them, comb them, and carry them round, as indeed she did me for a good while. At a time of public festivities, such as coronations, it was impossible to keep her at home. When a little child, she had already scrambled for the money scattered on such occasions; and it was related of her, that once when she had got a good many together, and was looking at them with great delight in the palm of her hand, it was struck by somebody, and all her well-earned booty vanished at a blow. There was another incident of which she was very proud. Once, while standing on a post as the Emperor Charles VII. was passing, at a moment when all the people were silent, she shouted a vigorous "Vivat!" into the coach, which made him take off his hat to her, and thank her quite graciously for her bold salutation.

Everything in her house was stirring, lively, and cheerful, and we children owed her many a gay hour.

Religious Instruction.

In a quieter situation, which was however suited to her character, was a second aunt, married to the Pastor Stark, incumbent of St. Catharine's Church. He lived much alone, in accordance with his temperament and vocation, and possessed a fine library. Here I first became acquainted with Homer, in a prose translation, which may be found in the seventh part of Herr Von Loen's new collection of the most remarkable travels, under the title, *Homer's Description of the Conquest of the Kingdom of Troy*, ornamented with copper-plates, in the theatrical French taste. These pictures perverted my imagination to such a degree, that for a long time I could conceive the Homeric heroes only under such forms. The incidents themselves gave me unspeakable delight; though I found great fault with the work for affording us no account of the capture of Troy, and breaking off so abruptly Math the death of Hector. My uncle, to whom I mentioned this defect, referred me to Virgil, who perfectly satisfied my demands.

It will be taken for granted, that we children had among our other lessons, a continued and progressive instruction in religion. But the Church-Protestantism imparted to us was, properly speaking, nothing but a kind of dry morality: ingenious exposition was not thought of; and the doctrine appealed neither to the understanding nor to the heart. For that reason, there were various secessions from the Established Church. Separatists, Pietists, Herrnhuter (Moravians), Quiet-in-the-Lands, and others differently named and characterized sprang up, all of whom were animated by the same purpose of approaching the Deity, especially through Christ, more closely than seemed to them possible under the forms of the established religion.

The Boy heard these opinions and sentiments constantly spoken of; for the clergy as well as the laity divided themselves into *pro* and *con*. The minority were composed of those who dissented more or less broadly, but their modes of thinking attracted by originality, heartiness, perseverance, and independence. All sorts of stories were told of their virtues and of the way in which they were manifested. The reply of a pious master-tinman was especially noted, who, when one of his craft attempted to shame him by asking "who is really your confessor?" answered with great cheerfulness and confidence in the goodness of his cause, – "I have a famous one – no less than the confessor of King David."

Things of this sort naturally made an impression on the Boy, and led him into similar states of mind. In fact, he came to the thought that he might immediately approach the great God of Nature, the Creator and Preserver of Heaven and Earth, whose earlier manifestations of wrath had been long forgotten in the beauty of the world, and the manifold blessings in which we participate while upon it. The way he took to accomplish this was very curious.

The Boy had chiefly kept to the first article of Belief. The God who stands in immediate connexion with nature, and owns and loves it as his work, seemed to him the proper God, who might be brought into closer relationship with man, as with everything else, and who would take care of him, as of the motion of the stars, the days and seasons, the animals and plants. There were texts of the Gospels which explicitly stated this. The Boy could ascribe no form to this Being; he therefore

sought Him in His works, and would, in the good Old Testament fashion, build Him an altar. Natural productions were set forth as images of the world, over which a flame was to bum, signifying the aspirations of man's heart towards his Maker. He brought out of the collection of natural objects which he possessed, and which had been increased as chance directed, the best ores and other specimens.

The Boy-Priest.

But the next difficulty was, as to how they should be arranged and raised into a pile. His father possessed a beautiful red-lacquered music-stand, ornamented with gilt flowers, in the form of a four-sided pyramid, with different elevations, which had been found convenient for quartets, but lately was not much in use. The Boy laid hands on this, and built up his representatives of Nature one above the other in steps, so that it all looked quite pretty and at the same time sufficiently significant. On an early sunrise his first worship of God was to be celebrated, but the young priest had not yet settled how to produce a flame which should at the same time emit an agreeable odour. At last it occurred to him to combine the two, as he possessed a few fumigating pastils, which diffused a pleasant fragrance with a glimmer, if not with a flame. Nay, this soft burning and exhalation seemed a better representation of what passes in the heart, than an open flame. The sun had already risen for a long time, but the neighbouring houses concealed the East. At last it glittered above the roofs, a burning-glass was at once taken up and applied to the pastils, which were fixed on the summit in a fine porcelain saucer. Everything succeeded according to the wish, and the devotion was perfect. The altar remained as a peculiar ornament of the room which had been assigned him in the new house. Every one regarded it only as a well-arranged collection of natural curiosities. The Boy knew better, but concealed his knowledge. He longed for a repetition of the solemnity. But unfortunately, just as the most opportune sun arose, the porcelain cup was not at hand; he placed the pastils immediately on the upper surface of the stand; they were kindled, and so great was the devotion of the priest, that he did not observe, until it was too late, the mischief his sacrifice was doing. The pastils had burned mercilessly into the red lacker and beautiful gold flowers, and as if some evil spirit had disappeared, had left their black, ineffaceable footprints. By this the young priest was thrown into the most extreme perplexity. The mischief could be covered up, it was true, with the larger pieces of his show-materials, but the spirit for new offerings was gone, and the accident might almost be considered a hint and warning of the danger there always is in wishing to approach the Deity in such a way.

SECOND BOOK

The New Paris – Frankfort Citizen

All that has been hitherto recorded indicates that happy and easy condition in which nations exist during a long peace. But nowhere probably is such a beautiful time enjoyed in greater comfort than in cities living under their own laws, and large enough to include a considerable number of citizens, and so situated as to enrich them by trade and commerce. Strangers find it to their advantage to come and go, and are under a necessity of bringing profit in order to acquire profit. Even if such cities rule but a small territory, they are the better qualified to advance their internal prosperity, as their external relations expose them to no costly undertakings or alliances.

Thus, the Frankforters passed a series of prosperous years during my childhood; but scarcely, on the 28th of August, 1756, had I completed my seventh year, than that world-renowned war broke out, which was also to exert great influence upon the next seven years of my life. Frederick the Second, King of Prussia, had fallen upon Saxony, with sixty thousand men; and instead of announcing his invasion by a declaration of war, he followed it up with a manifesto, composed by himself, as it was said, which explained the causes that had moved and justified him in so monstrous a step. The world, which saw itself appealed to not merely as spectator but as judge, immediately split into two parties, and our family was an image of the great whole.

My grandfather, who, as *Schöff* of Frankfort, had carried the coronation canopy over Francis the First, and had received from the Empress a heavy gold chain with her likeness, took the Austrian side along with some of his sons-in-law and daughters. My father having been nominated to the imperial council by Charles the Seventh, and sympathising sincerely in the fate of that unhappy monarch, leaned towards Prussia, with the other and smaller half of the family. Our meetings, which had been held on Sundays for many years uninterruptedly, were very soon disturbed. The misunderstandings so common among relatives by marriage, now first found a form in which they could be expressed. Contention, discord, silence, and separation ensued. My grandfather, otherwise a serene, quiet, and easy man, became impatient. The women vainly endeavoured to smother the flames; and after some unpleasant scenes, my father was the first to quit the society. At home now we rejoiced undisturbed in the Prussian victories, which were commonly announced with great glee by our vivacious aunt. Every other interest was forced to give way to this, and we passed the rest of the year in perpetual agitation. The occupation of Dresden, the moderation of the king at the outset, his slow but secure advances, the victory at Lowositz, the capture of the Saxons, were so many triumphs for our party. Everything that could be alleged for the advantage of our opponents was denied or depreciated; and as the members of the family on the other side did the same, they could not meet in the streets without disputes arising, as in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Family Disputes.

Thus I also was then a Prussian in my views, or, to speak more correctly, a Fritzian; since what cared we for Prussia? It was the personal character of the great king that worked upon all hearts. I rejoiced with my father in our conquests, readily copied the songs of triumph, and almost more willingly the lampoons directed against the other party, poor as the rhymes might be.

As the eldest grandson and godchild, I had dined every Sunday since my infancy with my grandfather and grandmother, and the hours so spent had been the most delightful of the whole week. But now I relished no morsel that I tasted, because I was compelled to hear the most horrible slanders of my hero. Here blew another wind, here sounded another tone than at home. My liking and even my respect for my grandfather and grandmother fell off. I could mention nothing of this to my parents,

but avoided the matter, both on account of my own feelings, and because I had been warned by my mother. In this way I was thrown back upon myself; and as in my sixth year, after the earthquake at Lisbon, the goodness of God had become to me in some measure suspicious, so I began now, on account of Frederick the Second, to doubt the justice of the public. My heart was naturally inclined to reverence, and it required a great shock to stagger my faith in anything that was venerable. But alas! they had commended good manners and a becoming deportment to us, not for their own sake, but for the sake of the people. What will people say? was always the cry, and I thought that the people must be right good people, and would know how to judge of anything and everything. But my experience went just to the contrary. The greatest and most signal services were defamed and attacked; the noblest deeds, if not denied, were at least misrepresented and diminished; and this base injustice was done to the only man who was manifestly elevated above all his contemporaries, and who daily proved what he was able to do, – and that, not by the populace, but by distinguished men, as I took my grandfather and uncles to be. That parties existed, and that he himself belonged to a party, had never entered into the conceptions of the Boy. He, therefore, believed himself all the more right, and dared hold his own opinion for the better one, since he and those of like mind appreciated the beauty and other good qualities of Maria Theresa, and even did not grudge the Emperor Francis his love of jewelry and money. That Count Daun was often called an old dozer, they thought justifiable.

But now I consider the matter more closely, I trace here the germ of that disregard and even disdain of the public, which clung to me for a whole period of my life, and only in later days was brought within bounds by insight and cultivation. Suffice it to say, that the perception of the injustice of parties had even then a very unpleasant, nay, an injurious effect upon the Boy, as it accustomed him to separate himself from beloved and highly-valued persons. The quick succession of battles and events left the parties neither quiet nor rest. We ever found a malicious delight in reviving and re-sharpening those imaginary evils and capricious disputes; and thus we continued to tease each other, until the occupation of Frankfort by the French some years afterwards, brought real inconvenience into our homes.

In-door Amusements.

Although to most of us the important events occurring in distant parts served only for topics of ardent controversy, there were others who perceived the seriousness of the times, and feared that the sympathy of France might open a scene of war in our own vicinity. They kept us children at home more than before, and strove in many ways to occupy and amuse us. With this view, the puppet-show bequeathed by our grandmother was again brought forth, and arranged in such a way that the spectators sat in my gable room, while the persons managing and performing, as well as the theatre itself as far as the proscenium, found a place in the room adjoining. We were allowed, as a special favour, to invite first one and then another of the neighbours' children as spectators, and thus at the outset I gained many friends; but the restlessness inherent in children, did not suffer them to remain long a patient audience. They interrupted the play, and we were compelled to seek a younger public, which could at any rate be kept in order by the nurses and maids. The original drama to which the puppets had been specially adapted, we had learnt by heart, and in the beginning this was exclusively performed. Soon growing weary of it, however, we changed the dresses and decorations, and attempted various other pieces, which were indeed on too grand a scale for so narrow a stage. Although this presumption spoiled and finally quite destroyed what we performed, such childish pleasures and employments nevertheless exercised and advanced in many ways my power of invention and representation, my fancy and a certain technical skill, to a degree which in any other way could not perhaps have been secured in so short a time, in so confined a space, and at so little expense.

I had early learned to use compasses and ruler, because all the instructions they gave me in geometry were forthwith put into practice, and I occupied myself greatly with pasteboard-work. I

did not stop at geometrical figures, little boxes, and such things, but invented pretty pleasure-houses adorned with pilasters, steps, and flat roofs. However, but little of this was completed.

Far more persevering was I, on the other hand, in arranging, with the help of our domestic (a tailor by trade), an armoury for the service of our plays and tragedies, which we ourselves performed with delight when we had outgrown the puppets. My playfellows, too, prepared for themselves such armouries, which they regarded as quite as fine and good as mine; but I had made provision not for the wants of one person only, and could furnish several of the little band with every requisite, and thus made myself more and more indispensable to our little circle. That such games tended to factions, quarrels, and blows, and commonly came to a sad end in tumult and vexation, may easily be supposed. In such cases certain of my companions generally took part with me, while others sided against me; though many changes of party occurred. One single boy, whom I will-call Pylades, urged by the others, once only left my party, but could scarcely for a moment maintain his hostile position. We were reconciled amid many tears, and for a long time afterwards kept faithfully together.

To him, as well as other well-wishers, I could render myself very agreeable by telling tales, which they most delighted to hear when I was the hero of my own story. It greatly rejoiced them to know that such wonderful things could befall one of their own playfellows; nor was it any harm that they did not understand how I could find time and space for such adventures, as they must have been pretty well aware of all my comings and goings, and how I was occupied the entire day. Not the less necessary was it for me to select the localities of these occurrences, if not in another world, at least in another spot; and yet all was told as having taken place only to-day or yesterday. They rather, therefore, deceived themselves, than were imposed upon by me. If I had not gradually learned, in accordance with the instincts of my nature, to work up these visions and conceits into artistic forms, such vain-glorious beginnings could not have gone on without producing evil consequences for myself in the end.

Considering this impulse more closely, we may see in it that presumption with which the poet authoritatively utters the greatest improbabilities, and requires every one to recognise as real whatever may in any way seem to him, the inventor, as true.

But what is here told only in general terms, and by way of reflection, will perhaps become more apparent and interesting by means of an example. I subjoin, therefore, one of these tales, which, as I often had to repeat it to my comrades, still hovers entire in my imagination and memory.

THE NEW PARIS

A BOY'S LEGEND

On the night before Whit Sunday, not long since, I dreamed that I stood before a mirror, engaged with the new summer clothes which my dear parents had given me for the holiday. The dress consisted, as you know, of shoes of polished leather, with large silver buckles, fine cotton stockings, black nether garments of serge, and a coat of green baracan with gold buttons. The waistcoat of gold cloth was cut out of my father's bridal waistcoat. My hair had been frizzled and powdered, and my curls stuck out from my head like little wings; but I could not finish dressing myself, because I kept confusing the different articles, the first always falling off as soon as I was about to put on the next. In this dilemma, a young and handsome man came to me, and greeted me in the friendliest manner. "O! you are welcome!" said I, "I am very glad to see you here." "Do you know me, then?" replied he, smiling. "Why not?" was my no less smiling answer; "you are Mercury – I have often enough seen you represented in pictures." "I am, indeed," replied he; "and am sent to you by the gods on an important errand. Do you see these three apples?" – he stretched forth his hand, and showed me three apples, which it could hardly hold, and which were as wonderfully beautiful as they were large, the one of a red, the other of a yellow, the third of a green colour. One could not help thinking they were precious stones made into the form of fruit. I would have snatched them, but he drew back, and said, "You must know, in the first place, that they are not for you. You must give them to the three handsomest youths of the city, who then, each according to his lot, will find wives to the utmost of their wishes. Take them, and success to you!" said he, as he departed, leaving the apples in my open hands. They appeared to me to have become still larger. I held them up at once against the light and found them quite transparent; but soon they expanded upwards, and became three beautiful little ladies, about as large as middle-sized dolls, whose clothes were of the colours of the apples. They glided gently up my fingers, and when I was about to catch at them, to make sure of one at least, they had already soared high and far, and I had to put up with the disappointment. I stood there amazed and petrified, holding up my hands and staring at my fingers, as if there were still something on them to see. Suddenly I beheld, upon the very tips, a most lovely girl dancing, smaller than those, but pretty and lively, and as she did not fly away like the others, but remained dancing, now on one finger-point now on another, I regarded her for a long while with admiration. And, as she pleased me so much, I thought in the end I could catch her, and made as I fancied a very adroit grasp. But at the moment I felt such a blow on my head, that I fell down stunned, and did not awake from my stupor till it was time to dress myself and go to church.

During the service I often recalled those images to mind; and also when I was eating dinner at my grand-father's table. In the afternoon, I wished to visit some friends, partly to show myself in my now dress, with my hat under my arm and my sword by my side, and partly to return their visits. I found no one at home, and, as I heard that they were gone to the gardens, I resolved to follow them, and pass the evening pleasantly. My way led towards the entrenchments, and I came to the spot which is rightly called the Bad Wall; for it is never quite safe from ghosts there. I walked slowly, and thought of my three goddesses, but especially of the little nymph; and often held up my fingers, in hopes she might be kind enough to balance herself there again. With such thoughts I was proceeding, when I saw in the wall on my left hand a little gate, which I did not remember to have ever noticed before. It looked low, but its pointed arch would have allowed the tallest man to enter. Arch and wall were chiselled out in the handsomest way, both by mason and sculptor; but it was the door itself which first properly attracted my attention. The old brown wood, though slightly ornamented, was crossed with broad bands of brass, wrought both in relief and intaglio. The foliage on these, with the

most natural birds sitting in it, I could not sufficiently admire. But, what seemed most remarkable, no keyhole could be seen, no latch, no knocker; and from this I conjectured that the door could be opened only from within. I was not in error; for when I went nearer, in order to touch the ornaments, it opened inwards, and there appeared a man whose dress was somewhat long, wide, and singular. A venerable beard enveloped his chin, so that I was inclined to think him a Jew. But he, as if he had divined my thoughts, made the sign of the Holy Cross, by which he gave me to understand that he was a good Catholic Christian. "Young gentleman, how came you here, and what are you doing?" – he said to me, with a friendly voice and manner. "I am admiring," I replied, "the workmanship of this door; for I have never seen anything like it, except in some small pieces in the collections of amateurs." "I am glad," he answered, "that you like such works. The door is much more beautiful inside. Come in, if you like." My heart, in some degree, failed me. The mysterious dress of the porter, the seclusion, and a something, I know not what, that seemed to be in the air, oppressed me. I paused, therefore, under the pretext of examining the outside still longer; and at the same time I cast stolen glances into the garden, for a garden it was which had opened before me. Just inside the door I saw a space. Old linden trees, standing at regular distances from each other, entirely covered it with their thickly interwoven branches, so that the most numerous parties, during the hottest of the day, might have refreshed themselves in the shade. Already I had stepped upon the threshold, and the old man contrived gradually to allure me on. Properly speaking, I did not resist; for I had always heard that a prince or sultan in such a case must never ask whether there be danger at hand. I had my sword by my side, too; and could I not soon have finished with the old man, in case of hostile demonstrations? I therefore entered perfectly reassured; the keeper closed the door, which bolted so softly that I scarcely heard it. He now showed me the workmanship on the inside, which in truth was still more artistic than the outside, explained it to me, and at the same time manifested particular good-will. Being thus entirely at my ease, I let myself be guided in the shaded space by the wall, that formed a circle, where I found much to admire. Niches tastefully adorned with shells, corals, and pieces of ore, poured a profusion of water from the mouths of Tritons into marble basins. Between them were aviaries and other lattice-work, in which squirrels frisked about, guinea-pigs ran hither and thither, with as many other pretty little creatures as one could wish to see. The birds called and sang to us as we advanced; the starlings particularly chattered the silliest stuff. One always cried, Paris! Paris! and the other Narcissus! Narcissus! as plainly as a schoolboy can say them. The old man seemed to continue looking at me earnestly while the birds called out thus, but I feigned not to notice it, and had in truth no time to attend to him; for I could easily perceive that we went round and round, and that this shaded space was in fact a great circle, which inclosed another much more important. Indeed we had actually reached the small door again, and it seemed as though the old man would let me out. But my eyes remained directed towards a golden railing, which seemed to hedge round the middle of this wonderful garden, and which I had found means enough of observing in our walk, although the old man managed to keep me always close to the wall, and therefore pretty far from the centre. And now, just as he was going to the door, I said to him, with a bow, "You have been so extremely kind to me, that I would fain venture to make one more request before I part from you. Might I not look more closely at that golden railing, which appears to inclose in a very wide circle the interior of the garden?" "Very willingly," replied he: "but in that case you must submit to some conditions." "In what do they consist?" I asked hastily. "You must leave here your hat and sword, and must not let go my hand while I accompany you." "Most willingly," I replied; and laid my hat and sword on the nearest stone bench. Immediately he grasped my left hand with his right, held it fast, and led me with some force straight forwards. When we reached the railing, my wonder changed into amazement. On a high socle of marble stood innumerable spears and partisans, ranged beneath each other, joined by their strangely ornamented points, and forming a complete circle. I looked through the intervals, and saw just behind a gently flowing piece of water, bounded on both sides by marble, and displaying in its clear depths a multitude of gold and silver fish, which moved about now slowly

and now swiftly, now alone and now in shoals. I would also fain have looked beyond the canal, to see what there was in the heart of the garden. But I found, to my great sorrow, that the other side of the water was bordered by a similar railing, and with so much art, that to each interval on this side exactly fitted a spear or partisan on the other. These and the other ornaments rendered it impossible for one to see through, stand as one would. Besides, the old man, who still held me fast, prevented me from moving freely. My curiosity, meanwhile, after all that I had seen, increased more and more; and I took heart to ask the old man whether one could not pass over. "Why not?" returned he, "but on new conditions." When I asked him what these were, he gave me to understand that I must put on other clothes. I was satisfied to do so; he led me back towards the wall, into a small neat room, on the sides of which hung many kinds of garments, all of which seemed to approach the oriental costume. I soon changed my dress. He confined my powdered hair under a many coloured net, after having to my horror violently dusted it out. Now standing before a great mirror, I found myself quite handsome in my disguise, and pleased myself better than in my formal Sunday clothes. I made gestures and leaped as I had seen the dancers do at the Fair-theatre. In the midst of this I looked in the glass, and saw by chance the image of a niche which was behind me. On its white ground hung three green cords, each of them twisted up in a way which from the distance I could not clearly discern. I therefore turned round rather hastily, and asked the old man about the niche as well as the cords. He very courteously took a cord down, and showed it to me. It was a band of green silk of moderate thickness; the ends of which joined by green leather with two holes in it, gave it the appearance of an instrument for no very desirable purpose. The thing struck me as suspicious, and I asked the old man the meaning. He answered me very quietly and kindly, "This is for those who abuse the confidence which is here readily shown them." He hung the cord again in its place, and immediately desired me to follow him; for this time he did not hold me, and so I walked freely beside him.

My chief curiosity now was to discover where the gate and bridge, for passing through the railing and over the canal, might be; since as yet I had not been able to find anything of the kind. I therefore watched the golden fence very narrowly as we hastened towards it. But in a moment my sight failed; lances, spears, halberds, and partisans, began unexpectedly to rattle and quiver, and this strange movement ended in all the points sinking towards each other, just as if two ancient hosts, armed with pikes, were about to charge. The confusion to the eyes, the clatter to the ears, was hardly to be borne; but infinitely surprising was the sight when falling perfectly level, they covered the circle of the canal, and formed the most glorious bridge that one can imagine. For now a most variegated garden parterre met my sight. It was laid out in curvilinear beds, which, looked at together, formed a labyrinth of ornaments; all with green borders of a low woolly plant, which I had never seen before; all with flowers, each division of different colours, which being likewise low and close to the ground, allowed the plan to be easily traced. This delicious sight, which I enjoyed in the full sunshine, quite rivetted my eyes. But I hardly knew where I was to set my foot; for the serpentine paths were most delicately laid with blue sand, which seemed to form upon the earth a darker sky, or a sky seen in the water: and so I walked for a while beside my conductor, with my eyes fixed upon the ground, until at last I perceived that, in the middle of this round of beds and flowers, there was a great circle of cypresses or poplar-like trees, through which one could not see, because the lowest branches seemed to spring out of the ground. My guide, without taking me directly the shortest way, led me nevertheless immediately towards that centre: and how was I astonished, when on entering the circle of high trees, I saw before me the peristyle of a magnificent garden-house, which seemed to have similar prospects and entrances on the other sides! The heavenly music which streamed from the building, transported me still more than this model of architecture. I fancied that I heard now a lute, now a harp, now a guitar, and now something tinkling, which did not belong to any of these instruments. The door which we approached opened soon after a light touch by the old man. But how was I amazed, when the portress, who came out, perfectly resembled the delicate girl who had danced upon my fingers in the dream! She greeted me as if we were already acquainted, and invited me to walk in. The old man

remained behind, and I went with her through a short passage, arched and finely ornamented, to the middle hall, the splendid dome-like ceiling of which attracted my gaze on my entrance, and filled me with astonishment. Yet my eye could not linger long on this, being allured down by a more charming spectacle. On a carpet, directly under the middle of the cupola, sat three women, in a triangle, clad in three different colours; one red, the other yellow, the third green. The seats were gilt, and the carpet was a perfect flower-bed. In their arras lay the three instruments which I had been able to distinguish from the outside; for being disturbed by my arrival, they had stopped their playing. "Welcome!" said the middle one, who sat with her face to the door, in a red dress, and with the harp. "Sit down by Alert, and listen, if you are a lover of music."

Now first I remarked that there was a rather long bench placed obliquely before them, on which lay a mandoline. The pretty girl took it up, sat down, and drew me to her side. Now also I looked at the second lady on my right. She wore the yellow dress, and had the guitar in her hand; and if the harp-player was dignified in form, grand in features, and majestic in her deportment, one might remark in the guitar-player an easy grace and cheerfulness. She was a slender blonde – while the other was adorned by dark brown hair. The variety and accordance of their music could not prevent me from remarking the third beauty, in the green dress, whose lute-playing was for me at once touching and striking. She was the one who seemed to notice me the most, and to direct her music to me; only I could not make up my mind about her; for she appeared to me now tender, now whimsical, now frank, now self-willed, according as she changed her mien and mode of playing. Sometimes she seemed to wish to move me, sometimes to tease me; but do what she would, she got little out of me; for my little neighbour, by whom I sat elbow to elbow, had gained me entirely to herself; and while I clearly saw in those three ladies the Sylphides of my dream, and recognised the colours of the apples, I conceived that I had no cause to detain them. The pretty little maiden I would rather have captured, if I had not but too feelingly remembered the blow which she had given me in my dream. Hitherto she had remained quite quiet with her mandoline; but when her mistresses had ceased, they commanded her to perform some pleasant little piece. Scarcely had she jingled off some dancing tune, in a most exciting manner, than she sprang up; I did the same. She played and danced; I was hurried on to accompany her steps, and we executed a kind of little ballet, with which the ladies seemed satisfied; for as soon as we had done, they commanded the little girl to refresh me with something nice till supper should come in. I had indeed forgotten that there was anything in the world beyond this paradise. Alert led me back immediately into the passage by which I had entered. On one side of it she had two well-arranged rooms. In that in which she lived, she set before me oranges, figs, peaches, and grapes; and I enjoyed with great gusto both the fruits of foreign lands and those of our own not yet in season. Confectionary there was in profusion; she filled, too, a goblet of polished crystal with foaming wine; but I had no need to drink, as I had refreshed myself with the fruits. "Now we will play," said she, and led me into the other room. Here all looked like a Christmas fair; but such costly and exquisite things were never seen in a Christmas booth. There were all kinds of dolls, dolls' clothes, and dolls' furniture; kitchens, parlours, and shops, and single toys innumerable. She led me round to all the glass cases, in which these ingenious works were preserved. But she soon closed again the first cases, and said – "That is nothing for you, I know well enough. Here," she said, "we could find building materials, walls and towers, houses, palaces, churches, to put together a great city. But this does not entertain me. We will take something else, which will be pleasant alike to both of us." Then she brought out some boxes, in which I saw an army of little soldiers piled one upon the other, of which I must needs confess that I had never seen anything so beautiful. She did not leave me time to examine them closely in detail, but took one box under her arm, while I seized the other. – "We will go," she said, "upon the golden bridge. There one plays best with soldiers; the lances give at once the direction in which the armies are to be opposed to each other." We had now reached the golden trembling floor; and below me I could hear the waters gurgle, and the fishes splash, while I knelt down to range my columns. All, as I now saw, were cavalry. She boasted that she had the Queen of the Amazons as leader of

her female host. I, on the contrary, found Achilles and a very stately Grecian cavalry. The armies stood facing each other, and nothing could have been seen more beautiful. They were not flat leaden horsemen like ours, but man and horse were round and solid, and most finely wrought; nor could one conceive how they kept their balance, for they stood of themselves, without a support for their feet.

Both of us had inspected our hosts with much self-complacency, when she announced the onset. We had found ordnance in our chests, viz., little boxes full of well-polished agate balls. With these we were to fight against each other from a certain distance, while, however, it was an express condition that we should not throw with more force than was necessary to upset the figures, as none of them were to be injured. Now the cannonade began on both sides, and at first it succeeded to the satisfaction of us both. But when my adversary observed that I aimed better than she, and might in the end win the victory, which depended on the majority of pieces remaining upright, she came nearer, and her girlish way of throwing had then the desired result. She prostrated a multitude of my best troops, and the more I protested the more eagerly did she throw. This at last vexed me, and I declared that I would do the same. In fact, I not only went nearer, but in my rage threw with much more violence, so that it was not long before a pair of her little centaresses flew in pieces. In her eagerness she did not instantly notice it, but I stood petrified when the broken figures joined together again of themselves; Amazon and horse became again one whole, and also perfectly close, set up a gallop from the golden bridge under the lime-trees, and running swiftly backwards and forwards, were lost in their career, I know not how, in the direction of the wall. My fair opponent had hardly perceived this, when she broke out into loud weeping and lamentation, and exclaimed that I had caused her an irreparable loss, which was far greater than could be expressed. But I, by this time provoked, was glad to annoy her, and blindly flung a couple of the remaining agate balls with force into the midst of her army. Unhappily I hit the queen, who had hitherto, during our regular game, been excepted. She flew in pieces, and her nearest officers were also shivered. But they swiftly set themselves up again, and started off like the others, galloping very merrily about under the lime-trees, and disappearing against the wall. My opponent scolded and abused me; but being now in full play, I stooped to pick up some agate balls which rolled about upon the golden lances. It was my fierce desire to destroy her whole army. She, on the other hand, not idle, sprang at me, and gave me a box on the ear which made my head ring again. Having always heard that a hearty kiss was the proper response to a girl's box of the ear, I took her by the ears, and kissed her repeatedly. But she gave such a piercing cry as frightened even me; I let her go, and it was fortunate that I did so; for in a moment I knew not what was happening to me. The ground beneath me began to quake and rattle; I soon remarked that the railings again set themselves in motion; but I had no time to consider, nor could I get a footing so as to fly. I feared every instant to be pierced, for the partisans and lances, which had lifted themselves up, were already slitting my clothes. It is sufficient to say that, I know not how it was, hearing and sight failed me, and I recovered from my swoon and terror at the foot of a lime-tree, against which the pikes in springing up had thrown me. As I awoke, my anger awakened also, and violently increased when I heard from the other side the gibes and laughter of my opponent, who had probably reached the earth somewhat more softly than I. Thereupon I sprang up, and as I saw the little host, with its leader Achilles, scattered around me, having been driven over with me by the rising of the rails, I seized the hero first and threw him against a tree. His resuscitation and flight now pleased me doubly, a malicious pleasure combining with the prettiest sight in the world; and I was on the point of sending all the other Greeks after him, when suddenly hissing waters spurted at me on all sides, from stones and walls, from ground and branches; and wherever I turned dashed against me crossways.

My light garment was in a short time wet through; it was already rent, and I did not hesitate to tear it entirely off my body. I cast away my slippers, and one covering after another. Nay, at last I found it very agreeable to let such a shower-bath play over me in the warm day. Now, being quite naked, I walked gravely along between these welcome waters, where I thought to enjoy myself for some time. My anger cooled, and I wished for nothing more than a reconciliation with my little

adversary. But, in a twinkling the water stopped, and I stood drenched upon the saturated ground. The presence of the old man, who appeared before me unexpectedly, was by no means welcome; I could have wished, if not to hide, at least to clothe myself. The shame, the shivering, the effort to cover myself in some degree, made me cut a most piteous figure. The old man employed the moment in venting the severest reproaches against me. "What hinders me," he exclaimed, "from taking one of the green cords, and fitting it, if not to your neck, to your back?" This threat I took in very ill part. "Refrain," I cried, "from such words, even from such thoughts, for otherwise you and your mistresses will be lost." "Who then are you," he asked in defiance, "who dare speak thus?" "A favourite of the gods," I said, "on whom it depends whether those ladies shall find worthy husbands and pass a happy life, or be left to pine and wither in their magic cell." The old man stepped some paces back. "Who has revealed that to you?" he inquired, with astonishment and concern. "Three apples," I said – "three jewels." "And what reward do you require?" he exclaimed. "Before all things, the little creature," I replied, "who has brought me into this accursed state." The old man cast himself down before me, without shrinking from the wet and miry soil; then he arose without being wetted, took me kindly by the hand, led me into the hall, clad me again quickly, and I was soon once more decked out and frizzled in my Sunday fashion as before. The porter did not speak another word; but before he let me pass the entrance, he stopped me, and showed me some objects on the wall over the way, while, at the same time, he pointed backwards to the door. I understood him; he wished to imprint the objects on my mind, that I might the more certainly find the door, which had unexpectedly closed behind me. I now took good notice of what was opposite to me. Above a high wall rose the boughs of extremely old nut-trees, and partly covered the cornice at the top. The branches reached down to a stone tablet, the ornamented border of which I could perfectly recognise, though I could not read the inscription. It rested on the top-stone of a niche, in which a finely-wrought fountain poured water from cup to cup into a great basin, that formed, as it were, a little pond, and disappeared in the earth. Fountain, inscription, nut-trees, all stood directly one above another; I would paint it as I saw it.

Now, it may well be conceived how I passed this evening and many following days, and how often I repeated to myself this story, which even I could hardly believe. As soon as it was in any degree possible, I went again to the Bad Wall, at least to refresh my remembrance of these signs, and to look at the precious door. But, to my great amazement, I found ad changed. Nut-trees, indeed, overtopped the wall, but they did not stand immediately in contact. A tablet also was inserted in the wall, but far to the right of the trees, without ornament, and with a legible inscription. A niche with a fountain was found far to the left, but with no resemblance whatever to that which I had seen; so that I almost believed that the second adventure was, like the first, a dream; for of the door there is not the slightest trace. The only thing that consoles me is the observation, that these three objects seem always to change their places. For in repeated visits to the spot, I think I have noticed that the nut-trees have moved somewhat nearer together, and that the tablet and the fountain seem likewise to approach each other. Probably, when all is brought together again, the door, too, will once more be visible; and I will do my best to take up the thread of the adventure. Whether I shall be able to tell you what further happens, or whether it will be expressly forbidden me, I cannot say.

This tale, of the truth of which my playfellows vehemently strove to convince themselves, received great applause. Each of them visited alone the place described, without confiding it to me or the others, and discovered the nut-trees, the tablet, and the spring, though always at a distance from each other; as they at last confessed to me afterwards, because it is not easy to conceal a secret at that early age. But here the contest first arose. One asserted that the objects did not stir from the spot and always maintained the same distance: a second averred that they did move, and that too away from each other: a third agreed with the latter as to the first point of their moving, though it seemed to him that the nut-tree, tablet, and fountain rather drew near together: while a fourth had something still more wonderful to announce, which was, that the nut-trees were in the middle, but that the tablet and the fountain were on sides opposite to those which I had stated. With respect to the traces of the

little door they also varied. And thus they furnished me an early instance of the contradictory news men can hold and maintain in regard to matters quite simple and easily cleared up. As I obstinately refused the continuation of my tale, a repetition of the first part was often desired. I was on my guard, however, not to change the circumstances much, and by the uniformity of the narrative I converted the fable into truth in the minds of my hearers.

Yet I was averse to falsehood and dissimulation, and altogether by no means frivolous. Rather, on the contrary, the inward earnestness with which I had early begun to consider myself and the world, was seen even in my exterior, and I was frequently called to account, often in a friendly way, and often in raillery, for a certain dignity which I had assumed. For, although good and chosen friends were certainly not wanting to me, we were always a minority against those who found pleasure in assailing us with wanton rudeness, and who indeed often awoke us in no gentle fashion from that legendary and self-complacent dreaming in which we – I by inventing, and my companions by sympathising – were too readily absorbed. Thus we learned once more, that instead of sinking into effeminacy and fantastic delights, there was reason rather for hardening ourselves, in order either to bear or to counteract inevitable evils.

Juvenile Stoicism.

Among the stoical exercises which I cultivated, as earnestly as it was possible for a lad, was even the endurance of bodily pain. Our teachers often treated us very unkindly and unskilfully, with blows and cuffs, against which we hardened ourselves all the more as obstinacy was forbidden under the severest penalties. A great many of the sports of youth, moreover, depend on a rivalry in such endurances; as, for instance, when they strike each other alternately, with two fingers or the whole fist, till the limbs are numbed, or when they bear the penalty of blows, incurred in certain games, with more or less firmness; when in wrestling or scuffling they do not let themselves be perplexed by the pinches of a half-conquered opponent; or finally, when they suppress the pain inflicted for the sake of teasing, and even treat with indifference the nips and ticklings with which young persons are so active towards each other. Thus we gain a great advantage, of which others cannot speedily deprive us.

But as I made a sort of boast of this impassiveness, the importunity of the others was increased; and, since rude barbarity, knows no limits, it managed to force me beyond my bounds. Let one case suffice for several. It happened once that the teacher did not come for the usual hour of instruction. As long as we children were all together, we entertained ourselves quite agreeably; but when my adherents, after waiting long enough, went away, and I remained alone with three of my enemies, these took it into their heads to torment me, to shame me, and to drive me away. Having left me an instant in the room, they came back with switches, which they had made by quickly cutting up a broom. I noted their design, and as I supposed the end of the hour near, I at once resolved not to resist them till the clock struck. They began, therefore, without remorse, to lash my legs and calves in the cruellest fashion. I did not stir, but soon felt that I had miscalculated, and that such pain greatly lengthened the minutes. My wrath grew with my endurance, and at the first stroke of the hour, I grasped the one who least expected it by the hair behind, hurled him to the earth in an instant, pressing my knee upon his back; the second, a younger and weaker one, who attacked me from behind, I drew by the head under my arm, and almost throttled him with the pressure. The last, and not the weakest, still remained; and my left hand only was left for my defence. But I seized him by the clothes, and with a dexterous twist on my part, and an over precipitate one on his, I brought him down and struck his face on the ground. They were not wanting in bites, pinches, and kicks, but I had nothing but revenge in my limbs as well as in my heart. With the advantage which I had acquired, I repeatedly knocked their heads together. At last they raised a dreadful shout of murder, and were soon surrounded by all the inmates of the house. The switches scattered around, and my legs, which I had bared of the stockings, soon bore witness for me. They put off the punishment, and let me leave the

house; but I declared that in future, on the slightest offence, I would scratch out the eyes, tear off the ears, of any one of them, if not throttle him.

This event, though, as usually happens in childish affairs, it was soon forgotten, and even laughed over, was yet the cause that these instructions in common became fewer, and at last entirely ceased. I was thus again, as formerly, kept more at home, where I found my sister Cornelia, who was only one year younger than myself, a companion always growing more agreeable.

Still, I will not leave this topic without narrating some more stories of the many vexations caused me by my playfellows; for this is the instructive part of such moral communications, that a man may learn how it has gone with others, and what he also has to expect from life; and that whatever comes to pass, he may consider that it happens to him as a man, and not as one specially fortunate or unfortunate. If such knowledge is of little use for avoiding evils, it is very serviceable so far as it qualifies us to understand our condition, and bear or even to overcome it.

Another general remark will not be out of place here, which is, that as the children of the cultivated classes grow up, a great contradiction appears. I refer to the fact, that they are urged and trained, by parents and teachers, to deport themselves moderately, intelligently, and even wisely; to give pain to no one from petulance or arrogance, and to suppress all the evil impulses which may be developed in them; but yet, on the other hand, while the young creatures are engaged in this discipline, they have to suffer from others that which in them is reprimanded and punished. In this way, the poor things are brought into a sad strait between the natural and civilised states, and after restraining themselves for a while, break out according to their characters into cunning or violence.

Rudeness of Juvenile Companions.

Force is rather to be put down by force; but a well-disposed child, inclined to love and sympathy, has little to oppose to scorn and ill-will. Though I managed pretty well to keep off the active assaults of my companions, I was by no means equal to them in sarcasm and abuse; because he who merely defends himself in such cases, is always a loser. Attacks of this sort, consequently, when they went so far as to excite anger, were repelled with physical force, or at least excited strange reflections in me, which could not be without results. Among other advantages which my ill-wishers grudged me, was the pleasure I took in the relations that accrued to the family from my grandfather's position of Schultheiss, since, as he was the first of his class, this had no small effect on those belonging to him. Once, when after the holding of the Piper's-court, I appeared to pride myself on having seen my grandfather in the midst of the council, one step higher than the rest, enthroned, as it were, under the portrait of the Emperor, one of the boys said to me in derision, that like the peacock contemplating his feet, I should cast my eyes back to my paternal grandfather, who had been keeper of the Willow-inn, and would never have aspired to thrones and coronets. I replied that I was in no wise ashamed of that, as it was the glory and honour of our native city that all its citizens might consider each other equal, and every one derive profit and honour from his exertions in his own way. I was sorry only that the good man had been so long dead; for I had often yearned to know him in person, had many times gazed upon his likeness, nay, had visited his tomb, and had at least derived pleasure from the inscription on the simple monument of that past existence to which I was indebted for my own. Another ill-wisher, who was the most malicious of all, took the first aside, and whispered something in his ear, while they still looked at me scornfully. My gall already began to rise, and I challenged them to speak out. "What is more, then, if you will have it," continued the first, "this one thinks you might go looking about a long time before you could find your grandfather!" I now threatened them more vehemently if they did not more clearly explain themselves. Thereupon they brought forward an old story, which they pretended to have overheard from their parents, that my father was the son of some eminent man, while that good citizen had shown himself willing to take outwardly the paternal office. They had the impudence to produce all sorts of arguments; as, for example, that our property came exclusively from our grandmother, that the other collateral relations, who lived in Friedburg and

other places, were all alike destitute of property, and other reasons of the sort, which could merely derive their weight from malice. I listened to them more composedly than they expected, for they stood ready to fly the very moment that I should make a gesture as if I would seize their hair. But I replied quite calmly, and in substance, "that even this was no great injury to me. Life was such a boon, that one might be quite indifferent as to whom one had to thank for it, since at least it must be derived from God, before whom we all were equals." As they could make nothing of it, they let the matter drop for this time; we went on playing together as before, which among children is an approved mode of reconciliation.

Goethe's Reputed Grandfather.

Still those spiteful words inoculated me with a sort of moral disease, which crept on in secret. It would not have displeased me at all to have been the grandson of any person of consideration, even if it had not been in the most lawful way. My acuteness followed up the scent – my imagination was excited, and my sagacity put in requisition. I began to investigate the allegation, and invented or found for it new grounds of probability. I had heard little said of my grandfather, except that his likeness, together with my grandmother's, had hung in a parlour of the old house; both of which, after the building of the new one, had been kept in an upper chamber. My grandmother must have been a very handsome woman, and of the same age as her husband. I remembered, also, to have seen in her room the miniature of a handsome gentleman in uniform, with star and order, which, after her death, and during the confusion of house-building, had disappeared with many other small pieces of furniture. These, and many other things, I put together in my childish head, and exercised that modern poetical talent which contrives to obtain the sympathies of the whole cultivated world by a marvellous combination of the important events of human life.

But as I did not venture to trust such an affair to any one, or even to ask the most remote questions concerning it, I was not wanting in a secret diligence, in order to get, if possible somewhat nearer to the matter. I had heard it explicitly maintained, that sons often bore a decided resemblance to their fathers or grandfathers. Many of our friends, especially Councillor Schneider, a friend of the family, were connected by business with all the princes and noblemen of the neighbourhood, of whom, including both the ruling and the younger branches, not a few had estates on the Rhine and Maine, and in the intermediate country, and who at times honoured their faithful agents with their portraits. These, which I had often seen on the walls from my infancy, I now regarded with redoubled attention, seeking whether I could not detect some resemblance to my father or even to myself, which too often happened to lead me to any degree of certainty. For now it was the eyes of this, now the nose of that, which seemed to indicate some relationship. Thus these marks led me delusively backwards and forwards; and though in the end I was compelled to regard the reproach as a completely empty tale, the impression remained, and I could not from time to time refrain from privately calling up and testing all the noblemen whose images had remained very clear in my fancy. So true is it that whatever inwardly confirms man in his self conceit, or flatters his secret vanity, is so highly desirable to him, that he does not ask further, whether in other respects it may turn to his honour or his disgrace.

But instead of mingling here serious and even reproachful reflections, I rather turn my look away from those beautiful times; for who is able to speak worthily of the fulness of childhood? We cannot behold the little creatures which flit about before us otherwise than with delight, nay, with admiration; for they generally promise more than they perform, and it seems that nature, among the other roguish tricks that she plays us, here also especially designs to make sport of us. The first organs she bestows upon children coming into the world, are adapted to the nearest immediate condition of the creature, which, unassuming and artless, makes use of them in the readiest way for its present purposes. The child, considered in and for itself, with its equals, and in relations suited to its powers, seems so intelligent and rational, and at the same time so easy, cheerful, and clever, that one can hardly wish it further cultivation. If children grew up according to early indications, we should have nothing

but geniuses; but growth is not merely development; the various organic systems which constitute one man, spring one from another, follow each other, change into each other, supplant each other, and even consume each other; so that after a time scarcely a trace is to be found of many aptitudes and manifestations of ability. Even when the talents of the man have on the whole a decided direction, it will be hard for the greatest and most experienced connoisseur to declare them beforehand with confidence, although afterwards it is easy to remark what has pointed to a future.

By no means, therefore, is it my design wholly to comprise the stories of my childhood in these first books; but I will rather afterwards resume and continue many a thread which ran through the early years unnoticed. Here, however, I must remark what an increasing influence the incidents of the war gradually exercised upon our sentiments and mode of life.

The peaceful citizen stands in a wonderful relation to the great events of the world. They already excite and disquiet him from a distance, and even if they do not touch him, he can scarcely refrain from an opinion and a sympathy. Soon he takes a side, as his character or external circumstances may determine. But when such grand fatalities, such important changes, draw nearer to him, then with many outward inconveniences remains that inward discomfort, which doubles and sharpens the evil and destroys the good which is still possible. Then he has really to suffer from friends and foes, often more from those than from these, and he knows not how to secure and preserve either his interests or his inclinations.

Feelings of The Frankforters in 1757.

The year 1757, which still passed in perfectly civic tranquillity, kept us, nevertheless, in great uneasiness of mind. Perhaps no other was more fruitful of events than this. Conquests, achievements, misfortunes, restorations, followed one upon another, swallowed up and seemed to destroy each other; yet the image of Frederick, his name and glory, soon hovered again above all. The enthusiasm of his worshippers grew always stronger and more animated, the hatred of his enemies more bitter, and the diversity of opinion, which separated even families, contributed not a little to isolate citizens, already sundered in many ways and on other grounds. For in a city like Frankfort, where three religions divide the inhabitants into three unequal masses, where only a few men, even of the ruling faith, can attain to political power, there must be many wealthy and educated persons who are thrown back upon themselves, and, by means of studies and tastes, form for themselves an individual and secluded existence. It will be necessary for us to speak of such men, now and hereafter, if we are to bring before us the peculiarities of a Frankfort citizen of that time.

My father, immediately after his return from his travels, had in his own way formed the design, that to prepare himself for the service of the city, he would undertake one of the subordinate offices, and discharge its duties without emolument, if it were conferred upon him without balloting. In the consciousness of his good intentions, and according to his way of thinking and the conception which he had of himself, he believed that he deserved such a distinction, which indeed was not conformable to law or precedent. Consequently, when his suit was rejected, he fell into ill-humour and disgust, vowed that he would never accept of any place, and in order to render it impossible, procured the title of Imperial Councillor, which the Schultheiss and elder *Schöffen* bear as a special honour. He had thus made himself an equal of the highest, and could not begin again at the bottom. The same impulse induced him also to woo the eldest daughter of the Schultheiss, so that he was excluded from the council on this side also. He was now of that number of recluses who never form themselves into a society. They are as much isolated in respect to each other as they are in regard to the whole, and the more so as in this seclusion the character becomes more and more uncouth. My father, in his travels and in the world which he had seen, might have formed some conception of a more elegant and liberal mode of life than was, perhaps, common among his fellow-citizens. In this respect, however, he was not entirely without predecessors and associates.

The name of Uffenbach is well known. At that time there was a Schöff von Uffenbach, who was generally respected. He had been in Italy, had applied himself particularly to music, sang an agreeable tenor, and having brought home a fine collection of pieces, concerts and oratorios were performed at his house. Now, as he sang in these himself, and held musicians in great favour, it was not thought altogether suitable to his dignity, and his invited guests, as well as the other people of the country, allowed themselves many a jocose remark on the matter.

I remember, too, a Baron von Hakel, a rich nobleman, who being married, but childless, occupied a charming house in the Antonius-street, fitted up with all the appurtenances of a dignified position in life. He also possessed good pictures, engravings, antiques, and much else which generally accumulates with collectors and lovers of art. From time to time he asked the more noted personages to dinner, and was beneficent in a careful way of his own, since he clothed the poor in his own house, but kept back their old rags, and gave them a weekly charity, on condition that they should present themselves every time clean and neat in the clothes bestowed on them. I can recall him but indistinctly, as a genial, well-made man; but more clearly his auction, which I attended from beginning to end, and, partly by command of my father, partly from my own impulse, purchased many things that are still to be found in my collections.

At an earlier date than this – so early that I scarcely set eyes upon him – John Michael von Loen gained considerable repute in the literary world, as well as at Frankfort Not a native of Frankfort, he settled there, and married a sister of my grandmother Textor, whose maiden-name was Lindheim. Familiar with the court and political world, and rejoicing in a renewed title of nobility, he had acquired reputation by daring to take part in the various excitements which arose in Church and State. He wrote the *Count of Rivera*, a didactic romance, the subject of which is made apparent by the second title, "or, the Honest Man at Court." This work was well received, because it insisted on morality even in courts, where prudence only is generally at home; and thus his labour brought him applause and respect. A second work, for that very reason, would be accompanied by more danger. He wrote *The Only True Religion*, a book designed to advance tolerance, especially between Lutherans and Calvinists. But here he got in a controversy with the theologians: one Dr. Benner, of Giessen, in particular, wrote against him. Von Loen rejoined; the contest grew violent and personal, and the unpleasantness which arose from it caused him to accept the office of President at Lingen, which Frederick II. offered him, supposing that he was an enlightened, unprejudiced man, and not averse to the new views that more extensively obtained in France. His former countrymen, whom he left in some displeasure, averred that he was not contented there, nay, could not be so, as a place like Lingen was not to be compared with Frankfort. My father also doubted whether the President would be happy, and asserted that the good uncle would have done better not to connect himself with the king, as it was generally hazardous to get too near him, extraordinary sovereign as he undoubtedly was; for it had been seen how disgracefully the famous Voltaire had been arrested in Frankfort, at the requisition of the Prussian Resident Freitag, though he had formerly stood so high in favour, and had been regarded as the king's teacher in French poetry. There was no want, on such occasions, of reflections and examples, to warn one against courts and princes' service, of which a native Frankforter could scarcely form a conception.

Dr. Orth.

An excellent man, Dr. Orth, I will only mention by name, because here I have not so much to erect a monument to the deserving citizens of Frankfort, but rather refer to them so far forth as their renown or personal character had some influence upon me in my earliest years. Dr. Orth was a wealthy man, and was also of that number who never took part in the government, although perfectly qualified to do so by his knowledge and penetration. The antiquities of Germany, and more especially of Frankfort, have been much indebted to him; he published remarks on the so-called *Reformation*

of *Frankfort*, a work in which the statutes of the state are collected. The historical portions of this book I diligently read in my youth.

Von Ochsenstein, the eldest of the three brothers whom I have mentioned above as our neighbours, had not been remarkable during his lifetime, in consequence of his recluse habits, but became the more remarkable after his death, by leaving behind him a direction that common working-men should carry him to the grave, early in the morning, in perfect silence, and without an attendant or follower. This was done, and the affair excited great attention in the city, where they were accustomed to the most pompous funerals. All who discharged the customary offices on such occasions, rose against the innovation. But the stout patrician found imitators in all classes, and though such ceremonies were derisively called ox-burials,³ they came into fashion, to the advantage of many of the more poorly-provided families, while funeral parades were less and less in vogue. I bring forward this circumstance, because it presents one of the earlier symptoms of that tendency to humility and equality, which in the second half of the last century was manifested in so many ways, from above downwards, and broke out in such unlooked-for effects.

Nor was there any lack of antiquarian amateurs. There were cabinets of pictures, collections of engravings, while the curiosities of our own country especially were zealously sought and hoarded. The older decrees and mandates of the imperial city, of which no collection had been prepared, were carefully searched for in print and manuscript, arranged in the order of time, and preserved with reverence, as a treasure of native laws and customs. The portraits of Frankforters, which existed in great number, were also brought together, and formed a special department of the cabinets.

Such men my father appears generally to have taken as his models. He was wanting in none of the qualities that pertain to an upright and respectable citizen. Thus, after he had built his house, he put his property of every sort into order. An excellent collection of maps by Schenck and other geographers at that time eminent, the aforesaid decrees and mandates, the portraits, a chest of ancient weapons, a case of remarkable Venetian glasses, cups and goblets, natural curiosities, works in ivory, bronzes, and a hundred other things, were separated and displayed, and I did not fail, whenever an auction occurred, to get some commission for the increase of his possessions.

The Senkenbergs.

I must still speak of one important family, of which I had heard strange things since my earliest years, and of some of whose members I myself lived to see a great deal that was wonderful – I mean the Senkenbergs. The father, of whom I have little to say, was an opulent man. He had three sons, who even in their youth uniformly distinguished themselves as oddities. Such things are not well received in a limited city, where no one is suffered to render himself conspicuous, either for good or evil. Nicknames and odd stories, long kept in memory, are generally the fruit of such singularity. The father lived at the corner of Hare-street (*Hasengasse*), which took its name from a sign on the house, that represented one hare at least, if not three hares. They consequently called these three brothers only the three Hares, which nick-name they could not shake off for a long while. But as great endowments often announce themselves in youth in the form of singularity and awkwardness, so was it also in this case. The eldest of the brothers was the *Reichshofrath* (Imperial Councillor) von Senkenberg afterwards so celebrated. The second was admitted into the magistracy, and displayed, eminent abilities, which, however, he subsequently abused in a pettifogging and even infamous way, if not to the injury of his native city, certainly to that of his colleagues. The third brother, a physician and man of great integrity, but who practised little, and that only in high families, preserved even in his old age a somewhat whimsical exterior. He was always very neatly dressed, and was never seen in the street otherwise than in shoes and stockings, with a well-powdered curled wig, and his hat under his arm. He walked on rapidly, but with a singular sort of stagger, so that he was sometimes on one

³ A pun upon the name of Ochsenstein. —*Trans.*

and sometimes on the other side of the way, and formed a complete zigzag as he went. The wags said that he made this irregular step to get out of the way of the departed souls, who might follow him in a straight line, and that he imitated those who are afraid of a crocodile. But all these jests and many merry sayings were transformed at last into respect for him, when he devoted his handsome dwelling-house in Eschenheimer-street, with court, garden, and all other appurtenances, to a medical establishment, where, in addition to a hospital designed exclusively for the citizens of Frankfort, a botanic garden, an anatomical theatre, a chemical laboratory, a considerable library, and a house for the director, were instituted in a way of which no university need have been ashamed.

Another eminent man, whose efficiency in the neighbourhood and whose writings, rather than his presence, had a very important influence upon me, was Charles Frederick von Moser, who was perpetually referred to in our district for his activity in business. He also had a character essentially moral, which as the vices of human nature frequently gave him trouble, inclined him to the so-called pious. Thus, what Von Loen had tried to do in respect to court life, he would have done for business-life, introducing into it a more conscientious mode of proceeding. The great number of small German courts gave rise to a multitude of princes and servants, the former of whom desired unconditional obedience, while the latter, for the most part, would work or serve only according to their own convictions. Thus arose an endless conflict, and rapid changes and explosions, because the effects of an unrestricted course of proceeding become much sooner noticeable and injurious on a small scale than on a large one. Many families were in debt, and Imperial Commissions of Debts were appointed: others found themselves sooner or later on the same road; while the officers either reaped an unconscionable profit, or conscientiously made themselves disagreeable and odious. Moser wished to act as a statesman and man of business, and here his hereditary talent, cultivated to a profession, gave him a decided advantage; but he at the same time wished to act as a man and a citizen, and surrender little as possible of his moral dignity. His *Prince and Servant*, his *Daniel in the Lions' Den*, his *Relics*, paint throughout his own condition, in which he felt himself not indeed tortured, but always cramped. They all indicate impatience in a condition, to the bearings of which one cannot reconcile oneself, yet from which one cannot get free. With this mode of thinking and feeling, he was, indeed, often compelled to seek other employments, which, on account of his great cleverness, were never wanting. I remember him as a pleasing, active, and at the same time gentle man.

Klopstock's "Messiah."

The name of Klopstock had already produced a great effect upon us, even at a distance. In the outset, people wondered how so excellent a man could be so strangely named; but they soon got accustomed to this, and thought no more of the meaning of the syllables. In my father's library I had hitherto found only the earlier poets, especially those who in his day had gradually appeared and acquired fame. All these had written in rhyme, and my father held rhyme as indispensable in poetical works. Canitz, Hagedorn, Drollinger, Gellert, Creuz, Haller, stood in a row, in handsome calf bindings, to these were added Neukirch's *Telemachus*, Koppen's *Jerusalem Delivered*, and other translations. I had from my childhood diligently read through the whole of these works, and committed portions to memory, whence I was often called upon to amuse the company. A vexatious era on the other hand opened upon my father, when through Klopstock's *Messiah*, verses, which seemed to him no verses, became an object of public admiration.⁴ He had taken good care not to buy this book; but the friend of the family, Councillor Schneider, smuggled it in, and slipped it into the hands of my mother and her children.

On this man of business, who read but little, the *Messiah*, as soon as it appeared, made a powerful impression. Those pious feelings, so naturally expressed, and yet so beautifully elevated, that agreeable language, even if considered merely as harmonious prose, had so won the otherwise

⁴ The *Messiah* is written in hexameter verse. —*Trans.*

dry man of business, that he regarded the first ten cantos, of which alone we are properly speaking, as the finest Book of Devotion, and once every year in Passion week, when he managed to escape from business, read it quietly through by himself, and thus refreshed himself for the entire year. In the beginning he thought to communicate his emotions to his old friend; but he was much shocked when forced to perceive an incurable dislike cherished against a book of such valuable substance, merely because of what appeared to him an indifferent external form. It may readily be supposed that their conversation often reverted to this topic; but both parties diverged more and more widely from each other, there were violent scenes, and the compliant man was at last pleased to be silent on his favourite work, that he might not lose, at the same time, a friend of his youth, and a good Sunday meal.

It is the most natural wish of every man to make proselytes, and how much did our friend find himself rewarded in secret, when he discovered in the rest of the family hearts so openly disposed for his saint. The copy which he used only one week during the year, was devoted to us all the remaining time. My mother kept it secret, and we children took possession of it when we could, that in leisure hours, hidden in some nook, we might learn the most striking passages by heart, and particularly might impress the most tender as well as the most violent parts on our memory, as quickly as possible.

Porcia's dream we recited in a sort of rivalry, and divided between us the mid dialogue of despair between Satan and Adramelech, who have been cast into the Red Sea. The first part, as the strongest, had been assigned to me, and the second, as a little more pathetic, was undertaken by my sister. The alternate and horrible but well-sounding curses flowed only thus from our mouths, and we seized every opportunity to accost each other with these infernal phrases.

One Saturday evening, in winter – my father always had himself shaved over night, that on Sunday morning he might dress himself for church at his ease – we sat on a footstool behind the stove, and muttered our customary imprecations in a tolerably low voice, while the barber was putting on the lather. But now Adramelech had to lay his iron hands on Satan; my sister seized me with violence, and recited, softly enough, but with increasing passion: —

"Give me thine aid, I intreat thee, will worship thee, if thou requirest,
Thee, thou monster abandoned, yes thee, of all criminals blackest;
Aid me, I suffer the tortures of death, which is vengeful, eternal,
Once, in the times gone by, with a hot fierce hate I could hate thee,
Now I can hate thee no more! E'en this is the sharpest of tortures."

Thus far all went on tolerably; but loudly, with a dreadful voice, she cried the following words:

—

"How am I crushed!"

The good surgeon was startled, and emptied the lather-basin into my father's bosom. There was a great uproar, and a severe investigation was held, especially with respect to the mischief which might have been done if the shaving had been actually going forward. In order to relieve ourselves of all suspicious of wantonness in the affair, we confessed our Satanic characters, and the misfortune occasioned by the hexameters was so apparent, that they were again condemned and banished.

Thin children and common people are accustomed to transform the great and sublime into a sport, and even a jest; and how indeed could they otherwise abide and tolerate it?

THIRD BOOK

Occupation of Frankfort by the French

At that time the general interchange of personal good wishes made the city very lively on New Year's day. Those who otherwise did not easily leave home, donned their best clothes, that for a moment they might be friendly and courteous to their friends and patrons. The festivities at my grandfather's house on this day were pleasures particularly desired by us children. At early dawn the grandchildren had already assembled there to hear the drums, oboes, clarionets, trumpets, and cornets played upon by the military, the city musicians, and whoever else might furnish his tones. The New Year's gifts, sealed and superscribed, were divided by us children among the humbler congratulators, and, as the day advanced, the number of those of higher rank increased. The relations and intimate friends appeared first, then the subordinate officials; even the gentlemen of the council did not fail to pay their respects to the *Schultheiss*, and a select number were entertained in the evening in rooms which were else scarcely opened throughout the year. The tarts, biscuits, marchpane, and sweet wine had the greatest charm for the children, and, besides, the *Schultheiss* and the two Burgomasters annually received from some institutions some article of silver, which was then bestowed upon the grandchildren and godchildren in regular gradation. In fine, this small festival was not wanting in any of those things which usually glorify the greatest.

Occupation of Frankfort by the French.

The New Year's day of 1759 approached, as desirable and pleasant to us children as any preceding one, but full of import and foreboding to older persons. To the passage of the French troops people certainly had become accustomed, and they happened often, but they had been most frequent in the last days of the past year. According to the old usage of an imperial town, the warder of the chief tower sounded his trumpet whenever troops approached, and on this New Year's day he would not leave off, which was a sign that large bodies were in motion on several sides. They actually marched through the city in greater masses on this day, and the people ran to see them pass by. We had generally been used to see them go through in small parties, but these gradually swelled, and there was neither power nor inclination to stop them. In short, on the 2nd of January, after a column had come through Sachsenhausen over the bridge, through the Fahrgasse, as far as the Police Guard House – it halted, overpowered the small company which escorted it, took possession of the before-mentioned Guard House, marched down the Zeil, and after a slight resistance, the main guard were also obliged to yield. In a moment the peaceful streets were turned into a scene of war. The troops remained and bivouacked there until lodgings were provided for them by regular billeting.

This unexpected, and, for many years, unheard-of burden weighed heavily upon the comfortable citizens, and to none could it be more cumbersome than to my father, who was obliged to take foreign military inhabitants into his scarcely finished house, to open for them his well-furnished reception rooms, which were generally closed, and to abandon to the caprices of strangers all that he had been used to arrange and keep so carefully. Siding as he did with the Prussians, he was now to find himself besieged in his own chambers by the French; – it was, according to his way of thinking, the greatest misfortune that could happen to him. Had it, however, been possible for him to have taken the matter more easily, he might have saved himself and us many sad hours, since he spoke French well, and could deport himself with dignity and grace in the daily intercourse of life. For it was the King's Lieutenant who was quartered on us, and he, although a military person, had only to settle civil occurrences, disputes between soldiers and citizens, and questions of debt and quarrels. This was the Count Thorane, a native of Grasse in Provence, not far from Antibes; a tall, thin, stem figure,

with a face much disfigured by the small pox, black fiery eyes, and a dignified, reserved demeanour. His first entrance was at once favourable for the inmates of the house. They spoke of the different apartments, some of which were to be given up, and others retained by the family; and when the Count heard a picture-room mentioned, he immediately requested permission although it was already night, at least to give a hasty look at the pictures by candlelight. He took extreme pleasure in these things, behaved in the most obliging manner to my father who accompanied him, and when he heard that the greater part of the artists were still living, and resided in Frankfort and its neighbourhood, he assured us that he desired nothing more than to know them as soon as possible, and to employ them.

But even this sympathy in respect to art could not change my father's feelings nor bend his character. He permitted what he could not prevent, but kept at a distance in inactivity, and the uncommon state of things around him was intolerable to him, even in the veriest trifle.

Count Thorane.

Count Thorane behaved himself meanwhile in an exemplary manner. He would not even have his maps nailed on the walls, that he might not injure the new hangings. His people were skilful, quiet, and orderly; but, in truth, as during the whole day and a part of the night there was no quiet with him, one complainant quickly following another, arrested persons being brought in and led out, and all officers and adjutants being admitted to his presence; – as, moreover, the Count kept an open table every day; it made in the moderately-sized house, arranged only for a family, and with but one open staircase running from top to bottom, a movement and a buzzing like that in a beehive, although everything was managed with moderation, gravity, and severity.

As mediator between the irritable master of the house, who became daily more of a hypochondriac self-tormentor, and his well-intentioned, but stem and precise military guest, there was a pleasant interpreter, a handsome, corpulent, lively man, who was a citizen of Frankfort, spoke French well, knew how to adapt himself to everything, and only made a jest of many little annoyances. Through him my mother had sent a representation to the Count of the situation in which she was placed, owing to her husband's state of mind. He had explained the matter so skilfully – had laid before him the new and scarcely furnished house, the natural reserve of the owner, his occupation in the education of his family – and all that could be said to the same effect, that the Count, who in his capacity took the greatest pride in the utmost justice, integrity, and honourable conduct, resolved here also to behave in an exemplary manner to those upon whom he was quartered, and, indeed, never swerved from this resolution under varying circumstances during the several years he stayed with us.

My mother possessed some knowledge of Italian, a language not altogether unknown to any of the family; she therefore resolved to learn French immediately, for which purpose the interpreter, for whose child she had stood godmother during these stormy times, and who now therefore, as a gossip,⁵ felt a redoubled interest in our house, devoted every spare moment to his child's godmother – for he lived directly opposite – and above all, he taught her those phrases which she would be obliged to use in her personal intercourse with the Count. This succeeded admirably. The Count was flattered by the pains taken by the mistress of the house at her years, and as he had a cheerful, witty vein in his character, and he liked to exhibit a certain dry gallantry, a most friendly relation arose between them, and the allied godmother and father could obtain whatever they wanted from him.

As I said before, if it had been possible to cheer up my father, this altered state of things would have caused little inconvenience. The Count practised the severest disinterestedness; he even declined receiving gifts which pertained to his situation; the most trifling thing which could have borne the appearance of bribery, he rejected angrily, and even punished. His people were most strictly forbidden to put the proprietor of the house to the least expense. We children, on the contrary, were

⁵ The obsolete word "gossip" has been revived as an equivalent for the German "*Gevatter*." But it should be observed that this word not only signifies godfather, but that the person whose child has another person for godfather (or godmother) is that person's *Gevatter*, or *Gevatterin* (feminine).

bountifully supplied from the dessert. To give an idea of the simplicity of those times, I must take this opportunity to mention that my mother grieved us excessively one day by throwing away the ices which had been sent us from the table, because she would not believe it possible for the stomach to bear real ice, however it might be sweetened.

Besides these dainties, which we gradually learned to enjoy and to digest with perfect ease, it was very agreeable for us children to be in some measure released from fixed hours of study and strict discipline. My father's ill-humour increased, he could not resign himself to the unavoidable. How he tormented himself, my mother, the interpreter, the councillors, and all his friends, only to rid him of the Count! In vain they represented to him that under existing circumstances the presence of such a man in the house was an actual benefit, and that the removal of the Count would be followed by a constant succession of officers or of privates. None of these arguments had any effect. To him the present seemed so intolerable, that his indignation prevented his conceiving anything worse that could follow.

In this way his activity, which he had been used chiefly to employ upon us, was crippled. The lessons he gave us were no longer required with the former exactness, and we tried to gratify our curiosity for military and other public proceedings as much as possible, not only at home, but also in the streets, which was the more easily done, as the front door, open day and night, was guarded by sentries who paid no attention to the running to and fro of restless children.

The many affairs which were settled before the tribunal of the Royal Lieutenant had quite a peculiar charm, from his making it a point to accompany his decisions with some witty, ingenious, or lively turn. What he decreed was strictly just, his manner of expressing it whimsical and piquant. He seemed to have taken the Duke of Ossuna as his model. Scarcely a day passed in which the interpreter did not tell some anecdote or other of this kind to amuse us and my mother. This lively man had made a little collection of such Selomonian decisions; but I only remember the general impression, and cannot recall to my mind any particular case.

By degrees we became better acquainted with the strange character of the Count. This man clearly understood his own peculiarities, and as there were times in which he was seized with a sort of dejection, hypochondria, or by whatever name we may call the evil demon, he withdrew into his room at such hours, which were often lengthened into days, saw no one but his valet, and in urgent cases could not even be prevailed upon to receive any one. But as soon as the Evil Spirit had left him, he appeared as before, active, mild, and cheerful. It might be inferred from the talk of his valet, Saint Jean, a small, thin man of lively good-nature, that in his earlier years he had caused a great misfortune when overcome by this temper; and that therefore, in so important a position as his, exposed to the eyes of all the world, he had earnestly resolved to avoid similar aberrations.

The Frankfort Painters.

During the very first days of the Count's residence with us, all the Frankfort artists, as Hirt, Schütz, Trautmann, Nothnagel, and Junker, were called to him. They showed their finished pictures, and the Count bought what were for sale. My pretty, light room in the gable-end of the attic was given up to him, and immediately turned into a cabinet and studio, for he designed to keep all the artists at work for a long time, especially Seekatz of Darmstadt, whose pencil, particularly in simple and natural representations, highly pleased him. He therefore caused to be sent from Grasse, where his elder brother possessed a handsome house, the dimensions of all the rooms and cabinets; then considered with the artists, the divisions of the walls, and fixed accordingly upon the size of the large oil-pictures, which were not to be set in frames, but to be fastened upon the walls like pieces of tapestry. And now the work went on zealously. Seekatz undertook country scenes, and succeeded extremely well in his old people and children, which were copied directly from nature. His young men did not answer so well, they were almost all too thin, and his women failed from the opposite cause. For as he had a little, fat, good, but unpleasant-looking wife, who would let him have no model

but herself, he could produce nothing agreeable. He was also obliged to exceed the usual size of his figures. His trees had truth, but the foliage was over minute. He was a pupil of Brinkmann, whose pencil in easel pictures is not contemptible.

Schütz, the landscape painter, had perhaps the best of the matter. He was thoroughly master of the Rhine country, and of the sunny tone which animates it in the fine season. Nor was he entirely unaccustomed to work on a larger scale, and then he showed no want of execution or keeping. His paintings were of a cheerful cast.

Trautmann *Rembrandtized* some resurrection-miracles out of the New Testament, and alongside of them set fire to villages and mills. One cabinet was entirely allotted to him, as I found from the designs of the rooms. Hirt painted some good oak and beech forests. His cattle were praiseworthy. Junker, accustomed to the imitation of the most elaborate Dutch, was least able to manage this tapestry-work, but he condescended to ornament many compartments with flowers and fruits for a handsome price.

As I had known all these men from my earliest youth, and had often visited them in their studios, and as the Count also liked to have me with him, I was present at the suggestions, consultations, and orders, as well as at the deliveries of the pictures, and ventured to speak my opinion freely when sketches and designs were handed in. I had already gained among amateurs, particularly at auctions, which I attended diligently, the reputation of being able to tell at once what any historical picture represented, whether taken from Biblical or Profane History, or from Mythology; and even if I did not always hit upon the meaning of allegorical pictures, there was seldom any one present who understood it better than I. Often had I persuaded the artists to represent this or that subject, and I now joyfully made use of these advantages. I still remember writing a circumstantial essay, in which I described twelve pictures which were to exhibit the history of Joseph; some of them were executed.

After these achievements, which were certainly laudable in a boy, I will mention a little disgrace which happened to me within this circle of artists. I was well acquainted with all the pictures which had been from time to time brought into that room. My youthful curiosity left nothing unseen or unexplored. I once found a little black box behind the stove; I did not fail to investigate what might be concealed in it, and drew back the bolt without long deliberation. The picture contained was certainly of a kind not usually exposed to view, and although I tried to bolt it again immediately, I was not quick enough. The Count entered and caught me – "Who allowed you to open that box?" he asked, with all his air of a Royal Lieutenant. I had not much to say for myself, and he immediately pronounced my sentence in a very stern manner. "For eight days," said he, "you shall not enter this room." I made a bow, and walked out. Even this order I obeyed most punctually, so that the good Seekatz, who was then at work in the room, was very much annoyed, for he liked to have me about him; and, out of a little spite, I carried my obedience so far, that I left Seekatz's coffee, which I generally brought him, upon the threshold. He was then obliged to leave his work and fetch it, which he took so ill, that he almost conceived a dislike to me.

French Theatre.

It now seems necessary to state more circumstantially, and to make intelligible how, under these circumstances, I made my way with more or less ease through the French language, which, however, I had never learned. Here, too, my natural gift was of service to me, enabling me easily to catch the sound of a language, its movement, accent, tone, and all other outward peculiarities. I knew many words from the Latin; Italian suggested still more; and by listening to servants and soldiers, sentries and visitors, I soon picked up so much that, if I could not join in conversation, I could at any rate manage single questions and answers. All this, however, was little compared to the profit I derived from the theatre. My grandfather had given me a free ticket, which I used daily, in spite of my father's reluctance, by dint of my mother's support. There I sat in the pit, before a foreign stage, and watched the more narrowly the movement and the expression, both of gesture and speech,

as I understood little or nothing of what was said, and therefore could only derive entertainment from the action and the tone of voice. I understood least of comedy, because it was spoken rapidly, and related to the affairs of common life, of the phrases of which I knew nothing. Tragedy was not so often played, and the measured step, the rhythm of the Alexandrines, the generality of the expression, made it more intelligible to me in every way. It was not long before I took up Racine, which I found in my father's library, and declaimed the pieces to myself, in the theatrical style and manner, as the organ of my ear and the organ of speech, so nearly akin to that, had caught it, and this with considerable animation, although I could not perceive the connexion of a whole speech. I even learned entire passages by rote, like a trained talking-bird, which was easier to me, from having previously committed to memory passages from the Bible which are generally unintelligible to a child, and accustomed myself to reciting them in the tone of the Protestant preachers. The versified French comedy was then much in vogue; the pieces of Destouches, Marivaux, and La CHAISE, were often produced, and I still remember distinctly many characteristic figures. Of those of Molière I recollect less. What made the greatest impression upon me was the *Hypermnestra* of Lemière, which, as a new piece, was brought out with care and often repeated. The *Devin du Village*, *Rose et Colas*, *Annette Lubin*, made each a very pleasant impression upon me. I can even now recall the youths and maidens decorated with ribands, and their gestures. It was not long before the wish arose in me to see the interior of the theatre, for which many opportunities were offered me. For as I had not always patience to hear out the whole pieces, and often carried on all sorts of games with other children of my age in the corridors, and in the milder season even before the door, a handsome, lively boy joined us, who belonged to the theatre, and whom I had seen in many little parts, though only casually. He came to a better understanding with me than with the rest, as I could turn my French to account with him, and he the more attached himself to me because there was no boy of his age or his nation at the theatre, or anywhere in the neighbourhood. We also went together at other times, as well as during the play, and even while the representations went on he seldom left me in peace. He was a most delightful little braggart, chattered away charmingly and incessantly, and could tell so much of his adventures, quarrels, and other strange incidents, that he amused me wonderfully, and I learned from him in four weeks more of the language, and of the power of expressing myself in it, than can be imagined; so that no one knew how I had attained the foreign tongue all at once, as if by inspiration.

In the very earliest days of our acquaintance he took me with him upon the stage, and led me especially to the *foyers*, where the actors and actresses remained during the intervals of the performance, and dressed and undressed. The place was neither convenient nor agreeable, for they had squeezed the theatre into a concert-room, so that there were no separate chambers for the actors behind the stage. A tolerably large room adjoining, which had formerly served for card-parties, was now mostly used by both sexes in common, who appeared to feel as little ashamed before each other as before us children, if there was not always the strictest propriety in putting on or changing the articles of dress. I had never seen anything of the kind before, and yet from habit, after repeated visits, I soon found it quite natural.

"Deronés" and his Sister.

It was not long before a very peculiar interest of my own arose. Young Deronés, for so I will call the boy whose acquaintance I still kept up, was, with the exception of his boasting, a youth of good manners, and very courteous demeanour. He made me acquainted with his sister, a girl who was a few years older than we were, and a very pleasant, well-grown girl, of regular form, brown complexion, black hair and eyes; her whole deportment had about it something quiet, even sad. I tried to make myself agreeable to her in every way, but I could not attract her notice. Young girls think themselves far advanced beyond younger boys, and while aspiring to young men, they assume the manner of an aunt towards the boy whose first inclination is turned towards them. – With a younger brother of his I had no acquaintance.

Often, when their mother had gone to rehearsals, or was out visiting, we met at her house to play and amuse ourselves. I never went there without presenting the fair one with a flower, a fruit, or something else, which she always received very courteously, and thanked me for most politely, but I never saw her sad look brighten, and found no trace of her having given me a further thought. At last I fancied I had discovered her secret. The boy showed me a crayon-drawing of a handsome man, behind his mother's bed, which was hung with elegant silk curtains, remarking at the same time, with a sly look, that this was not papa, but just the same as papa; and as he glorified this man, and told me many things in his circumstantial and ostentatious manner, I thought I had discovered that the daughter might belong to the father, but the other two children to the intimate friend. I thus explained to myself her melancholy look, and loved her for it all the more.

My liking for this girl assisted me in bearing the extravagances of her brother, who was not always within bounds. I had often to endure prolix accounts of his exploits, how he had already often fought, without wishing to injure the other – all for the mere sake of honour. He had always contrived to disarm his adversary, and had then forgiven him; nay, he was such a good fencer, that he was once very much perplexed by striking the sword of his opponent up into a high tree, so that it was not easy to be got again.

What much facilitated my visits to the theatre was, that my free ticket, coming from the hands of the *Schultheiss*, gave me access to any of the seats, and therefore also to those in the proscenium. This was very deep, after the French style, and was bordered on both sides with seats, which, surrounded by a low rail, ascended in several rows one behind another, so that the first seats were but a little elevated above the stage. The whole was considered a place of special honour, and was generally used only by officers, although the nearness of the actors destroyed, I will not say all illusion, but, in a measure, all enjoyment. I have thus experienced and seen with my own eyes the usage or abuse of which Voltaire so much complains. If, when the house was very full at such time as troops were passing through the town, officers of distinction strove for this place of honour, which was generally occupied already, some rows of benches and chairs were placed in the proscenium on the stage itself, and nothing remained for the heroes and heroines but to reveal their secrets in the very limited space between the uniforms and orders. I have even seen the *Hypermnestra* performed under such circumstances.

The curtain did not fall between the acts, and I must yet mention a strange custom which I thought quite extraordinary, as its inconsistency with art was to me, as a good German boy, quite unendurable. The theatre was considered the greatest sanctuary, and any disturbance occurring there would have been instantly resented as the highest crime against the majesty of the public. Therefore in all comedies, two grenadiers stood with their arms grounded, in full view, at the two sides of the back scene, and were witnesses of all that occurred in the bosom of the family. Since, as I said before, the curtain did not fall between the acts, two others, while music struck up, relieved guard, by coming from the wings, directly in front of the first, who retired in the same measured manner. Now, if such a practice was well fitted to destroy all that in the theatre is called illusion, this is the more striking, because it was done at a time when, according to Diderot's principles and examples, the most *natural naturalness* was required upon the stage, and a perfect deception was proposed as the proper aim of theatrical art. Tragedy, however, was absolved from any such military-police regulations, and the heroes of antiquity had the right of guarding themselves; nevertheless, the same grenadiers stood near enough behind the side-scenes.

I will also mention that I saw Diderot's "Father of a Family," and "The Philosophers" of Palissot, and still perfectly remember the figure of the philosopher in the latter piece going upon all fours, and biting into a raw head of lettuce.

Duel with "Deronés."

All this theatrical variety could not, however, keep us children always in the theatre. In fine weather we played in front of it, and in the neighbourhood, and committed all manner of absurdities,

which, especially on Sundays and festivals, by no means corresponded to our personal appearance; for I and my comrades then appeared dressed as I described myself in the tale, with the hat under the arm, and a little sword, the hilt of which was ornamented with a large silk knot. One day when we had long gone in this way, and Derones had joined us, he took it into his head to assert to me that I had insulted him, and must give him satisfaction. I could not, in truth, conceive what was the cause of this; but I accepted his challenge, and was going to draw my sword. However, he assured me that in such cases it was customary to go to secluded spots, in order to be able to settle the matter more conveniently. We therefore went behind some barns, and placed ourselves in the proper position. The duel took place in a somewhat theatrical style, the blades clashed, and the thrusts followed close upon each other; but in the heat of the combat he remained with the point of his sword lodged in the knot of my hilt. This was pierced through, and he assured me that he had received the most complete satisfaction; then embraced me, also theatrically, and we went to the next coffee-house to refresh ourselves with a glass of almond-milk after our mental agitation, and to knit more closely the old bond of friendship.

On this occasion I will relate another adventure which also happened to me at the theatre, although at a later time. I was sitting very quietly in the pit with one of my playmates, and we looked with pleasure at a *pas seul*, which was executed with much skill and grace by a pretty boy about our own age – the son of a French dancing-master who was passing through the city. After the fashion of dancers, he was dressed in a close vest of red silk, which ending in a short hoop-petticoat, like a runner's apron, floated above the knee. We had given our meed of applause to this young artist with the whole public, when – I know not how – it occurred to me to make a moral reflection. I said to my companion, "How handsomely this boy was dressed, and how well he looked; who knows in how tattered a jacket he may sleep to-night!" – All had already risen, but the crowd prevented our moving. A woman who had sat by me, and who was now standing close beside me, chanced to be the mother of the young artist, and felt much offended by my reflection. Unfortunately, she knew German enough to understand me, and spoke it just as much as was necessary to scold. She abused me violently. Who was I, she would like to know, that had a right to doubt the family and respectability of this young man? At all events, she would be bound he was as good as I, and his talents might probably procure him a fortune, of which I could not even venture to dream. This moral lecture she read me in the crowd, and made those about me wonder what rudeness I had committed. As I could neither excuse myself nor escape from her, I was really embarrassed, and when she paused for a moment, said without thinking, "Well! why do you make such a noise about it? – to-day red, to-morrow dead."⁶ These words seemed to strike the woman dumb. She stared at me, and moved away from me as soon as it was in any degree possible. I thought no more of my words; only, some time afterwards, they occurred to me, when the boy, instead of continuing to perform, became ill, and that very dangerously. Whether he died or not, I cannot say.

Such intimations, by an unseasonably or even improperly spoken word, were held in repute even by the ancients, and it is very remarkable that the forms of belief and of superstition have always remained the same among all people and in all times.

From the first day of the occupation of our city, there was no lack of constant diversion, especially for children and young people. Plays and balls, parades, and marches through the town, attracted our attention in all directions. The last particularly were always increasing, and the soldiers' life seemed to us very merry and agreeable.

Marshal de Broglio.

The residence of the King's Lieutenant at our house procured us the advantage of seeing by degrees all the distinguished persons in the French army, and especially of beholding close at hand the leaders whose names had already been made known to us by reputation. Thus we looked from

⁶ A German proverb, "Heute roth, morgen todt."

stairs and landing-places, as if from galleries, very conveniently upon the generals who passed by. Before all I remember the Prince Soubise as a handsome, courteous gentleman, but most distinctly the Marechal de Broglio, who was a younger man, not tall, but well-built, lively, active, and abounding in keen glances.

He often came to the King's Lieutenant, and it was soon remarked that the conversation was on weighty matters. We had scarcely become accustomed to having strangers quartered upon us in the first three months, when a rumour was obscurely circulated that the Allies were on the march, and that Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick was coming to drive the French from the Maine. Of these, who could not boast of any especial success in war, no high opinion was held, and after the battle of Rossbach it was thought they might be dispersed. The greatest confidence was placed in Duke Ferdinand, and all those favourable to Prussia awaited with eagerness their delivery from the yoke hitherto borne. My father was in somewhat better spirits – my mother was apprehensive. She was wise enough to see that a small present evil might easily be exchanged for a great affliction; since it was but too plain that the French would not advance to meet the Duke, but would wait an attack in the neighbourhood of the city. A defeat of the French, a flight, a defence of the city, if it were only to cover their rear and hold the bridge, a bombardment, a sack – all these presented themselves to the excited imagination, and gave anxiety to both parties. My mother, who could bear everything but suspense, imparted her fears to the Count through the interpreter. She received the answer usual in such cases: she might be quite easy, for there was nothing to fear, and should keep quiet and mention the matter to no one.

Many troops passed through the city; we learned that they halted at Bergen. The coming and going, the riding and running constantly increased, and our house was in an uproar day and night. At this time I often saw Marshal de Broglio, always cheerful, always the same in look and manner, and I was afterwards pleased to find a man whose form had made such a good and lasting impression upon me, so honourably mentioned in history.

Thus, after an unquiet Passion-week, the Good-Friday of 1759 arrived. A profound stillness announced the approaching storm. We children were forbidden to quit the house: my father had no quiet, and went out. The battle began: I ascended to the garret, where indeed I was prevented seeing the country round, but could very well hear the thunder of cannon and the general discharge of musketry. After some hours we saw the first symptoms of the battle in a line of wagons, in which the wounded, with various sad mutilations and gestures, were slowly drawn by us, to be taken to the convent of St. Mary, now transformed into a hospital. The compassion of the citizens was instantly moved. Beer, wine, bread, and money were distributed to those who were yet able to take them. But when, some time after, wounded and captive Germans were seen in the train, the pity knew no limits, and it seemed as if everybody would strip himself of every moveable that he possessed to assist his suffering countrymen.

The prisoners, however, were an evidence of a battle unfavourable to the allies. My father, whose party feelings made him quite certain that these would come off victorious, had the violent temerity to go forth to meet the expected victors, without thinking that the beaten party must pass over him in their flight. He first repaired to his garden before the Friedberg gate, where he found everything lonely and quiet, then he ventured to the Bernheim heath, where he soon descried various stragglers of the army, who were scattered and amused themselves by shooting at the boundary-stones, so that the rebounding lead whizzed round the head of the inquisitive wanderer. He therefore considered it more prudent to go back, and learned on enquiry what the report of the firing might have before informed him, that all stood well for the French, and that there was no thought of retreating. Reaching home in an ill-humour, the sight of his wounded and captured countrymen brought him altogether out of his usual self-command. He also caused various donations to be given to the passers by, but only the Germans were to have them, which was not always possible, as fate had packed together both friend and foe.

My mother and we children, who had already relied on the Count's word, and had therefore passed a tolerably quiet day, were highly rejoiced, and my mother doubly consoled, the next day, when having consulted the oracle of her treasure-box, by the prick of a needle, she received a very comfortable answer, both for present and future. We wished our father similar faith and feelings; we flattered him as much as we could; we entreated him to take some food, from which he had abstained all day; but he repulsed our caresses and every enjoyment, and betook himself to his chamber. Our joy, however, was not interrupted; the affair was decided; the King's Lieutenant, who, against his habit, had been on horseback to-day, at last returned home, where his presence was more necessary than ever. We sprang to meet him, kissed his hands, and testified our delight. This seemed much to please him. "Well," said he more kindly than usual, "I am glad also for your sakes, my dear children." He immediately ordered that sweetmeats, sweet wine, and the best of everything should be given us, and went to his room, already surrounded by a crowd of the urgent, the demanding, and the suppliant.

Quarrel with Count Thorane.

We had now a fine collation, pitied our poor father who would not partake of it, and pressed our mother to call him in; but she, more prudent than we, well knew how distasteful such gifts would be to him. In the meantime she had prepared some supper, and would readily have sent a portion up to his room, but he never tolerated such an irregularity even in the most extreme cases; and after the sweet things were removed, we endeavoured to persuade him to come down into the ordinary dining-room. At last he allowed himself to be persuaded unwillingly, and we had no notion of the mischief which we were preparing for him and ourselves. The staircase ran through the whole house, along all the ante-rooms. My father in coming down had to go directly past the Count's apartment. This ante-room was so full of people, that the Count, to get through much at once, resolved to come out, and this happened unfortunately at the moment when my father descended. The Count met him cheerfully, greeted him, and remarked, "You will congratulate yourselves and us that this dangerous affair is so happily terminated." "By no means!" replied my father in a rage; "would that it had driven you to the devil, even if I had gone with you." The Count restrained himself for a moment, and then broke out with wrath – "You shall pay for this," cried he; "you shall find that you have not thus insulted the good cause and myself for nothing!"

My father, meanwhile, came down very calmly, seated himself near us, seemed more cheerful than before, and began to eat. We were glad of this, unconscious of the dangerous method in which he had rolled the stone from his heart. Soon afterwards my mother was called out, and we had great pleasure in chattering to our father about the sweet things the Count had given us. Our mother did not return. At last the interpreter came in. At a hint from him we were sent to bed; it was already late, and we willingly obeyed. After a night quietly slept through, we heard of the violent commotion which had shaken the house the previous evening. The King's Lieutenant had instantly ordered my father to be led to the guard-house. The subalterns well knew that he was never to be contradicted; yet they had often earned thanks by delaying the execution of his orders. The interpreter, whose presence of mind never forsook him, contrived to excite this disposition in them very strongly. The tumult, moreover, was so great, that a delay brought with it its own concealment and excuse. He had called out my mother, and put the adjutant, as it were, into her hands, that by prayers and representations she might gain a brief postponement of the matter. He himself hurried up to the Count, who with great self-command had immediately retired into the inner room, and would rather allow the most urgent affair to stand still, than wreak on an innocent person the ill-humour once excited in him, and give a decision derogatory to his dignity.

The address of the interpreter to the Count, the train of the whole conversation, were often enough repeated to us by the fat interpreter, who prided himself not a little on the fortunate result, so that I can still describe it from recollection.

The "Gossip" and Count Thorane.

The interpreter had ventured to open the cabinet and enter, an act which was severely prohibited. "What do you want?" shouted the Count, angrily. "Out with you! – no one but St. Jean has a right to enter here."

"Well, suppose I am St. Jean for a moment," answered the interpreter.

"It would need a powerful imagination for that! Two of him would not make one such as you. Retire!"

"Count, you have received a great gift from heaven, and to that I appeal."

"You think to flatter me! Do not fancy you will succeed."

"You have the great gift, Count, even in moments of passion – in moments of rage, of listening to the opinions of others."

"Well, well, the question now is just about opinions, to which I have listened too long. I know but too well that we are not liked here, and that these citizens look askance at us."

"Not all!"

"Very many. What! These towns will be imperial towns, will they? They saw their emperor elected and crowned, and when, being unjustly attacked, he is in danger of losing his dominions and surrendering to an usurper; when he fortunately finds faithful allies who pour out their blood and treasure in his behalf – they will not put up with the slight burden that falls to their share, towards humbling the enemy!"

"But you have long known these sentiments, and have endured them like a wise man; they are, besides, held only by a minority. A few, dazzled by the splendid qualities of the enemy, whom you yourself prize as an extraordinary man, a few only – as you are aware."

"Yes, indeed! I have known and suffered it too long, otherwise this man would not have presumed to utter such insults to my face, and at the most critical moment. Let them be as many as they please, they shall be punished in the person of this their audacious representative, and perceive what they have to expect."

"Only delay, Count."

"In certain things one cannot act too promptly."

"Only a little delay, Count."

"Neighbour, you think to mislead me into a false step; you shall not succeed."

"I would neither lead you into a false step nor restrain you from one; your resolution is just; it becomes the Frenchman and the King's Lieutenant; but consider that you are also Count Thorane!"

"He has no right to interfere here."

"But the gallant man has a right to be heard."

"What would he say then?"

"King's Lieutenant," he would begin, "you have so long had patience with so many gloomy, untoward, bungling men, if they were not really too bad. This man has certainly been too bad, but control yourself, King's Lieutenant, and every one will praise and extol you on that account."

"You know I can often endure your jests, but do not abuse my good-will. These men – are they then completely blinded? Suppose we had lost the battle, what would have been their fate at this moment? We fight up to the gates, we shut up the city, we halt, we defend ourselves to cover our retreat over the bridge. Think you, the enemy would have stood with his hands before him? He throws grenades, and what he has at hand, and they catch where they can. This house-holder – what would he have? Hero, in these rooms, a bomb might now have burst, and another have followed it; – in these rooms, the cursed China-paper of which I have spared, incommoding myself, by not nailing up my maps! They ought to have spent the whole day on their knees."

How many would have done that!"

"They ought to have prayed for a blessing on us, and to have gone out to meet the generals and officers with tokens of honour and joy, and the wearied soldiers with refreshments. Instead of

this, the poison of party-spirit destroys the fairest and happiest moments of my life, won by so many cares and efforts."

"It is party-spirit; but you will only increase it by the punishment of this man. Those who think with him will proclaim you a tyrant and a barbarian: – they will consider him a martyr, who has suffered for the good cause; and even those of the other opinion, who are now his opponents, will see in him only their fellow-citizen, will pity him, and while they confess your justice, will yet feel that you have proceeded too severely."

"I have listened to you too much already, – now, away with you!"

"Hear only this. Remember this is the most unheard-of thing that could befall this man, this family. You have had no reason to be edified by the good-will of the master of the house; but the mistress has anticipated all your wishes, and the children have regarded you as their undo. With this single blow, you will for ever destroy the peace and happiness of this dwelling. Indeed, I may say, that a bomb falling into the house, would not have occasioned greater desolation. I have so often admired your self-command, Count; give me this time opportunity to adore you. A warrior is worthy of honour who considers himself a guest in the house of an enemy; but here there is no enemy, only a mistaking man. Control yourself, and you will acquire an everlasting fame."

"That would be odd," replied the Count, with a smile.

"Merely natural," continued the interpreter; "I have not sent the wife and children to your feet, because I know you detest such scenes; but I will depict to you this wife and these children, how they will thank you. I will depict them to you conversing all their lives of the battle of Bergen, and of your magnanimity on this day, relating it to their children, and children's children, and inspiring even strangers with their own interest for you: an act of this kind can never perish."

"But you do not hit my weak side yet, interpreter! About posthumous fame I am not in the habit of thinking; that is for others, not for me; but to do right at the moment, not to neglect my duty, not to prejudice my honour – that is my care. We have already had too many words; now go – and receive the thanks of the thankless, whom I spare."

Thorane's Magnanimity.

The interpreter, surprised and moved by this unexpectedly favourable issue, could not restrain his tears, and would have kissed the Count's hands. The Count motioned him off, and said severely and seriously, "You know I cannot bear such things." And with these words he went into the ante-room, to attend to his pressing affairs, and hear the claims of so many expectant persons. So the matter was disposed of, and the next morning we celebrated with the remnants of the yesterday's sweetmeats, the passing over of an evil through the threatenings of which we had happily slept.

Whether the interpreter really spoke so wisely, or merely so painted the scene to himself, as one is apt to do after a good and fortunate action, I will not decide; at least he never varied it in repeating it. Indeed, this day seemed to him both the most anxious and the most glorious in his life.

One little incident will show how the Count in general rejected all false parade, never assumed a title which did not belong to him, and how witty he was in his more cheerful moods.

A man of the higher class, who was one of the abstruse, solitary Frankforters, thought he must complain of the quartering of the soldiers upon him. He came in person, and the interpreter proffered him his services, but the other supposed that he did not need them. He came before the Count with a most becoming bow, and said, "Your excellency!" The Count returned the bow, as-well as the "excellency." Struck by this mark of honour, and not supposing but that the title was too humble, he stooped lower, and said, "Monseigneur." "Sir," said the Count, very seriously, "we will not go further, or else we may easily bring it to Majesty." The ether gentleman was extremely confused, and had not a word to utter. The interpreter, standing at some distance, and apprised of the whole affair, was wicked enough not to move, but the Count, with much cheerfulness, continued, "Well now, for instance, sir, what is your name?" "Spangenberg," replied the other. "And mine," said the Count, "is

Thorane. Spangenberg, what is your business with Thorane? Now, then, let us sit down; the affair shall at once be settled."

And thus the affair was indeed settled at once, to the great satisfaction of the person I have here named Spangenberg, and the same evening, in our family circle, the story was not only told by the waggish interpreter, but was given with all the circumstances and gestures.

After these confusions, disquietudes, and grievances, the former security and thoughtlessness soon returned, in which the young particularly live from day to day, if it be in any degree possible. My passion for the French theatre grew with every performance. I did not miss an evening, though on every occasion, when after the play I sat down with the family to supper, – often putting up with the remains, – I had to endure the constant reproaches of my father, that theatres were useless, and would lead to nothing. In these cases I adduced all and every argument which is at hand for the apologists of the stage when they fall into a difficulty like mine. Vice in prosperity and virtue in misfortune, are in the end set right by poetical justice. Those beautiful examples of misdeeds punished, *Miss Sarah Sampson*, and the *Merchant of London*, were very energetically cited on my part; but, on the other hand, I often came off worst when the *Fouberies de Scapin*, and others of the sort, were in the bill, and I was forced to bear reproaches for the delight felt by the public in the deceits of intriguing servants, and the successful follies of prodigal young men. Neither party was convinced; but my father was very soon reconciled to the theatre when he saw that I advanced with incredible rapidity in the French language.

Juvenile Attempt at the Drama.

Men are so constituted that everybody would rather undertake himself what he sees done by others, whether he has aptitude for it or not. I had soon exhausted the whole range of the French stage; several pieces I had already witnessed for the third and fourth times; all had passed before my eyes and mind, from the stateliest tragedy to the most frivolous after-piece; and as when a child I had presumed to imitate Terence, I did not fail now as a boy, on a much more inciting occasion, to copy the French forms to the best of my ability and want of ability. There were then performed some half-mythological, half-allegorical pieces in the taste of PIRON; they partook somewhat of the nature of parody, and were much liked. These representations particularly attracted me: the little gold wings of a lively Mercury, the thunderbolt of a disguised Jupiter, an amorous Danaë, or by whatever name a fair one visited by the gods might be called, if indeed it were not a shepherdess or huntress to whom they descended. And as elements of this kind, from *Ovid's Metamorphosis*, or the *Pantheon Mythicum* of Pomey, were humming in swarms about my head – I had soon put together in my imagination a little piece of the kind, of which I can only say that the scene was rural, and that there was no lack in it of king's daughters, princes, or gods. Mercury, especially, made so vivid an impression on my senses, that I could almost be sworn that I had seen him with my own eyes.

I presented my friend Derones with a very neat copy, made by myself, which he accepted with quite a special grace, and with a truly patronizing air, glanced hastily over the manuscript, pointed out a few grammatical blunders, found some speeches too long, and at last promised to examine and judge the work more attentively when he had the requisite leisure. To my modest question, whether the piece could by any chance be performed, he assured me that it was not altogether impossible. In the theatre, he said, a great deal went by favour, and he would support me with all his heart: only the affair must be kept private; for he had himself once on a time surprised the directors with a piece of his own, and it would certainly have been acted if it had not been too soon detected that he was the author. I promised him all possible silence; and already saw in my mind's eye the name of my piece posted up in large letters on the comers of the streets and squares.

Light-minded as my friend generally was, the opportunity of playing the master was but too desirable. He read the piece through with attention, and while he sat down with me to make some trivial alterations, turned the whole thing, in the course of the conversation, completely topsy-turvy,

so that not one stone remained on another. He struck out, added, took away one character, substituted another, – in short, went on with the maddest wantonness in the world, so that my hair stood on end. My previous persuasion that he must understand the matter, allowed him to have his way, for he had often laid before me so much about the Three Unities of Aristotle, the regularity of the French drama, the probability, the harmony of the verse, and all that belongs to these, that I was forced to regard him, not merely as informed, but thoroughly grounded. He abused the English and scorned the Germans; in short, he laid before me the whole dramaturgic litany which I have so often in my life been compelled to hear.

Like the boy in the fable, I carried my mangled offspring home, and strove in vain to bring it to life. As, however, I would not quite abandon it, I caused a fair copy of my first manuscript, after a few alterations, to be made by our clerk, which I presented to my father, and thus gained so much that for a long time he let me eat my supper in quiet after the play was over.

Dramatic Theories.

This unsuccessful attempt had made me reflective, and I resolved now to learn at the very sources, these theories, these laws, to which every one appealed, but which had become suspicious to me chiefly through the impoliteness of my arrogant master. This was not indeed difficult, but laborious. I immediately read Corneille's *Treatise on the Three Unities*, and learned from that how people would have it, but why they desired it so was by no means clear to me; and what was worst of all, I fell at once into still greater confusion when I made myself acquainted with the disputes on the *Cid*, and read the prefaces in which Corneille and Racine are obliged to defend themselves against the critics and public. Here at least I plainly saw that no man knew what he wanted; that a piece like *the Cid*, which had produced the noblest effect, was to be condemned at the command of an all-powerful cardinal; that Racine, the idol of the French living in my day, who had now also become my idol – (for I had got intimately acquainted with him when Schöff Von Olenschlager made us children act *Britannicus*, in which the part of Nero fell to me) – that Racine, I say, even in his own day, was not able to get on with the amateurs nor critics. Through all this I became more perplexed than ever, and after having pestered myself a long time with this talking backwards and forwards, and theoretical quackery of the previous century, threw them to the dogs, and was the more resolute in casting all the rubbish away, the more I thought I observed that the authors themselves who had produced excellent things, when they began to speak about them, when they set forth the grounds of their treatment, when they desired to defend, justify, or excuse themselves, were not always able to hit the proper mark. I hastened back again, therefore, to the living present, attended the theatre far more zealously, read more scrupulously and connectedly, so that I had perseverance enough this time to work through the whole of Racine and Molière, and a great part of Corneille.

The King's Lieutenant still lived at our house. He in no respect had changed his deportment, especially towards us; but it was observable, and the interpreter made it still more evident to us, that he no longer discharged his duties with the same cheerfulness and zeal as at the outset, though always with the same rectitude and fidelity. His character and habits, which showed the Spaniard rather than the Frenchman; his caprices, which were not without their influence on his business; his unbending will under all circumstances; his susceptibility as to everything that concerned his person or reputation – all this together might perhaps sometimes bring him into conflict with his superiors. Add to this, that he had been wounded in a duel, which had arisen in the theatre, and it was deemed wrong that the King's Lieutenant, himself chief of police, should have committed a punishable offence. As I have said, all this may have contributed to make him live more retired, and here and there perhaps to act with less energy.

Meanwhile, a considerable part of the pictures he had ordered had been delivered. Count Thorane passed his leisure hours in examining them, while in the aforesaid gable-room he had them nailed up, canvas after canvas, large and small, side by side, and because there was want of space,

even one over another, and then taken down and rolled up. The works were constantly inspected anew; the parts that were considered the most successful were repeatedly enjoyed; but there was no want of wishes that this or that had been differently done.

Hence arose a new and very singular operation. As one painter best executed figures, another middle-grounds and distances, a third trees, a fourth flowers, it struck the Count that these talents might perhaps be combined in the paintings, and that in this way perfect works might be produced. A beginning was made at once, by having for instance some beautiful cattle painted into a finished landscape. But because there was not always adequate room for all, and a few sheep more or less was no great matter to the cattle-painter, the largest landscape proved in the end too narrow. Now also the painter of figures had to introduce the shepherd, and some travellers; these deprived each other of air, as we may say; and we marvelled that they were not all stifled, even in the most open country. No one could anticipate what was to come of the matter, and when it was finished it gave no satisfaction. The painters were annoyed. They had gained something by their first orders, but lost by these after-labours, though the Count paid for them also very liberally. And as the parts worked into each other in one picture by several hands, produced no good effect after all the trouble, every one, at last, fancied that his own work had been spoiled and destroyed by that of the others; hence the artists were within a hair's-breadth of falling out, and becoming irreconcilably hostile to each other. These alterations, or rather additions, were made in the before-mentioned studio, where I remained quite alone with the artists; and it amused me to hunt out from the studies, particularly of animals, this or that individual or group, and to propose it for the foreground or the distance, in which respect they many times, either from conviction or kindness, complied with my wishes.

The Painter Seekatz.

The partners in this affair were therefore greatly discouraged, especially Seekatz, a very hypochondriacal, retired man, who indeed by his incomparable humour was the best of companions among friends, but who, when he worked, desired to work alone, abstracted and perfectly free. This man, after solving difficult problems, and finishing them with the greatest diligence and the warmest love, of which he was always capable, was forced to travel repeatedly from Darmstadt to Frankfort, either to change something in his own pictures, or to touch up those of others, or even to allow, under his superintendence, a third person to convert his pictures into a variegated mess. His peevishness augmented, his resistance became more decided, and a great deal of effort was necessary on our part to guide this "gossip" – for he was one also – according to the Count's wishes. I still remember that when the boxes were standing ready to pack up all the pictures, in the order in which the upholsterer at their place of destination might fix them up at once, a small but indispensable bit of afterwork was demanded, but Seekatz could not be moved to come over. He had, by way of conclusion, done the best he could, having represented in paintings to be placed over the doors, the four elements as children and boys, after life, and having expended the greatest care, not only on the figures, but on the accessories. These were delivered and paid for, and he thought he was quit of the business for ever; but now he was to come over again, that he might enlarge, by a few touches of his pencil, some figures, the size of which was too small. Another, he thought, could do it just as well; he had already set about some new work; in short, he would not come. The time for sending off the pictures was at hand; they must also have opportunity to dry; every delay was precarious; and the Count, in despair, was about to have him fetched in military fashion. We all wished to see the pictures finally gone, and found at last no expedient than for the gossip interpreter to seat himself in a wagon, and fetch over the refractory subject, with his wife and child. He was kindly received by the Count, well treated, and at last dismissed with liberal payment.

After the pictures had been sent away, there was great peace in the house. The gable-room in the attic was cleaned and given up to me; and my father, when he saw the boxes go, could not refrain from wishing to send off the Count after them. For much as the tastes of the Count coincided with

his own, much as he must have rejoiced to see his principle of patronizing living artists so generously followed out by a man richer than himself, much as it may have flattered him that his collection had been the occasion of bringing so considerable a profit to a number of brave artists in a pressing time, he nevertheless felt such a repugnance to the foreigner who had intruded into his house, that he could not think well of any of his doings. One ought to employ painters, but not degrade them to paper-stainers; one ought to be satisfied with what they have done, according to their conviction and ability, even if it does not thoroughly please one, and not be perpetually carping at it. In short, in spite of all the Count's own generous endeavours, there could, once for all, be no mutual understanding. My father only visited that room when the Count was at table, and I can recall but one instance, when, Seekatz having excelled himself, and the wish to see these pictures having brought the whole house together, my father and the Count met, and manifested a common pleasure in these works of art, which they could not take in each other.

Departure of Thorane.

Scarcely, therefore, had the house been cleared of the chests and boxes, than the plan for removing the Count, which had formerly been begun, but was afterwards interrupted, was resumed. The endeavour was made to gain justice by representations, equity by entreaties, favour by influence, and the quarter-masters were prevailed upon to decide thus: the Count was to change his lodgings, and our house, in consideration of the burden borne day and night for several years uninterruptedly, was to be exempt for the future from billeting. But, to furnish a plausible pretext for this, we were to take in lodgers on the first floor, which the Count had occupied, and thus render a new quartering as it were impossible. The Count, who after the separation from his dear pictures felt no further peculiar interest in the house, and hoped moreover to be soon recalled and placed elsewhere, was pleased to move without opposition to another good residence, and left us in peace and good-will. Soon afterwards he quitted the city, and received different appointments in gradation, but, it was rumoured, not to his own satisfaction. Meantime, he had the pleasure of seeing the pictures which he had preserved with so much care felicitously arranged in his brother's chateau; he wrote sometimes, sent dimensions, and had different pieces executed by the artists so often named. At last we heard nothing further about him, except after several years we were assured that he had died as governor of one of the French colonies in the West Indies.

FOURTH BOOK

Studies – The Bible – Frankfort Characters

Much inconvenience as the quartering of the French had occasioned us, we had become so accustomed to it, that we could not fail to miss it, nor could we children fail to feel as if the house were deserted. Moreover it was not decreed that we should again attain perfect family unity. New lodgers were already agreed upon, and after some sweeping and scouring, planing and rubbing with bees'-wax, painting and varnishing, the house was completely restored again. The chancery-director Moritz, with his family, very worthy friends of my parents, moved in. He was not a native of Frankfort, but an able jurist and man of business, and managed the legal affairs of many small princes, counts, and lords. I never saw him otherwise than cheerful and pleasant, and diligent with his law papers. His wife and children, gentle, quiet, and benevolent, did not indeed increase the sociableness of our house, for they kept to themselves; but a stillness, a peace returned, which we had not enjoyed for a long time. I now again occupied my attic room, in which the ghosts of the many pictures sometimes hovered before me, while I strove to frighten them away by labour and study.

The Counsellor of Legation Moritz, a brother of the chancellor, came from this time often to our house. He was even more a man of the world, had a handsome figure, while his manners were easy and agreeable. He also managed the affairs of different persons of rank, and on occasions of meetings of creditors and imperial commissions frequently came into contact with my father. They had a high opinion of each other, and commonly stood on the side of the creditors, though they were generally obliged to perceive, much to their vexation, that a majority of the agents on such occasions are usually gained over to the side of the debtors. The counsellor of legation readily communicated his knowledge, was a friend to the mathematics, and as these did not occur in his present course of life, he made himself a pleasure by helping me on in this branch of study. I was thus enabled to finish my architectural sketches more accurately than heretofore, and to profit more by the instruction of a drawing-master, who now also occupied us an hour every day.

Lessons in Drawing.

This good old man was indeed only half an artist. We were obliged to draw and combine strokes, from which eyes and noses, lips and ears, nay, at last, whole faces and heads, were to arise, but of natural or artistic forms there was no thought. We were tormented a long while with this *quid pro quo* of the human figure, and when the so-called Passions of Le Brun were given us to copy, it was supposed at last that we had made great progress. But ever, these caricatures did not improve us. Then we went off to landscapes, foliage, and all the things which in ordinary instruction are practised without consistency or method. Finally we dropped into close imitation and neatness of strokes, without troubling ourselves about the merit or taste of the original.

In these attempts our father led the way in an exemplary manner. He had never drawn, but he was unwilling to remain behind now that his children pursued this art, and would give, even in his old age, an example how they should proceed in their youth. Several heads, therefore, of Piazzetta, from his well-known sheets in small octavo, he copied with an English lead-pencil upon the finest Dutch paper. In these he not only observed the greatest clearness of outline, but most accurately imitated the hatching of the copper-plate with a light hand – only too slightly, as in his desire to avoid hardness he brought no keeping into his sketches. Yet they were always soft and accurate. His unrelaxing and untiring assiduity went so far, that he drew the whole considerable collection number by number, while we children jumped from one head to another, and chose only those that pleased us.

About this time the long-debated project, long under consideration, for giving us lessons in music, was earned into effect; and the last impulse to it certainly deserves mention. It was settled that we should learn the harpsichord; but there was always a dispute about the choice of a master. At last I went once accidentally into the room of one of my companions, who was just taking his lesson on the harpsichord, and found the teacher a most charming man. For each finger of the right and left hand he had a nickname, by which he indicated in the merriest way when it was to be used. The black and white keys were likewise symbolically designated, and even the tones appeared under figurative names. Such a motley company worked most pleasantly together. Fingering and time seemed to become perfectly easy and obvious, and while the scholar was put into the best humour, everything else succeeded beautifully.

The Eccentric Music-master.

Scarcely had I reached home, than I importuned my parents to set about the matter in good earnest at last, and give us this incomparable man for our master on the harpsichord. They hesitated, and made inquiries; they indeed heard nothing bad of the teacher; but, at the same time, nothing particularly good. Meanwhile I had informed my sister of all the droll names; we could hardly wait for the lesson, and succeeded in having the man engaged.

The reading of the notes began first, but as no jokes occurred here, we comforted ourselves with the hope that when we went to the harpsichord, and the fingers were needed, the jocular method would commence. But neither keys nor fingering seemed to afford opportunity for any comparisons. Dry as the notes were, with their strokes on and between the five lines, the black and white keys were no less so: and not a syllable was heard either of "thumbling," "point-erling," or "goldfinger," while the countenance of the man remained as imperturbable during his dry teaching as it had been before during his dry jests. My sister reproached me most bitterly for having deceived her, and actually believed that it was all an invention of mine. But I was myself confounded and learned little, though the man at once went regularly enough to work; for I kept always expecting that the former jokes would make their appearance, and so consoled my sister from one day to another. They did not reappear, however, and I should never have been able to explain the riddle if another accident had not solved it for me.

One of my companions came in during a lesson, and at once all the pipes of the humorous *jet d'eau* were opened; the "thumblings" and "pointerlings," the "pickers" and "stealers," as he used to call the fingers, the "falings" and "galings," meaning "f" and "g," the "fielings" and "gielings," meaning "f" and "g" sharp,⁷ became once more extant, and made the most wonderful mannikins. My young friend could not leave off laughing, and was rejoiced that one could learn in such a merry manner. He vowed that he would give his parents no peace until they had given him such an excellent man for a teacher.

And thus the way to two arts was early enough opened to me, according to the principles of a modern theory of education, merely by good luck, and without any conviction that I should be furthered therein by a native talent. My father maintained that everybody ought to learn drawing; for which reason, he especially venerated the Emperor Maximilian, by whom this had been expressly commanded. He therefore held me to it more steadily than to music, which, on the other hand, he especially recommended to my sister, and even out of the hours for lessons kept her fast, during a good part of the day, at her harpsichord.

But the more I was in this way made to press on, the more I wished to press forward of myself, and my hours of leisure were employed in all sorts of curious occupations. From my earliest years I felt a love for the investigation of natural things. It is often regarded as an instinct of cruelty that children like at last to break, tear, and devour objects with which for a long time they have played,

⁷ The names of the sharp notes in German terminate in "is," and hence "f" and "g" sharp are called "fis" and "gis."

and which they have handled in various manners. Yet even in this way is manifested the curiosity, the desire of learning how such things hang together, how they look within. I remember that as a child, I pulled flowers to pieces to see how the leaves were inserted into the calyx, or even plucked birds to observe how the feathers were inserted into the wings. Children are not to be blamed for this, when even our naturalists believe they get their knowledge oftener by separation and division than by union and combination, – more by killing than by making alive.

An armed loadstone, very neatly sewed up in scarlet cloth, was one day destined to experience the effects of this spirit of inquiry. For the secret force of attraction which it exercised not only on the little iron bar attached to it, but which was of such a kind that it could gain strength and could daily bear a heavier weight – this mysterious virtue had so excited my admiration, that for a long time I was pleased with merely staring at its operation. But at last I thought I might arrive at some nearer revelation by tearing away the external covering. This was done, but I became no wiser in consequence, as the naked iron taught me nothing further. This also I took off, and I held in my hand the mere stone, with which I never grew weary of making experiments of various kinds on filings and needles – experiments from which my youthful mind drew no further advantage beyond that of a varied experience. I could not manage to reconstruct the whole arrangement; the parts were scattered, and I lost the wondrous phenomenon at the same time with the apparatus.

Nor was I more fortunate in putting together an electrical machine. A friend of the family, whose youth had fallen in the time when electricity occupied all minds, often told us how as a child he had desired to possess such a machine, had got together the principal requisites, and by the aid of an old spinning-wheel and some medicine bottles, had produced tolerable results. As he readily and frequently repeated the story, and imparted to us some general information on electricity, we children found the thing very plausible, and long tormented ourselves with an old spinning-wheel and some medicine bottles, without producing even the smallest result. We nevertheless adhered to our belief, and were much delighted when at the time of the fair, among other rarities, magical and legerdemain tricks, an electrical machine performed its marvels, which, like those of magnetism, were at that time already very numerous.

The want of confidence in the public method of instruction was daily increasing. People looked about for private tutors, and because single families could not afford the expense, several of them united to attain their object. Yet the children seldom agreed, the young man had not sufficient authority, and after frequently repeated vexations, there were only angry partings. It is not surprising, therefore, that other arrangements were thought of which should be more permanent as well as more advantageous.

Pfeil's Boarding-School.

The thought of establishing boarding-schools (*Pensionen*) had arisen from the necessity which every one felt for having the French language taught and communicated orally. My father had brought up a young person who had been his footman, valet, secretary, and in short successively all in all. This man, whose name was Pfeil, spoke French well. After he had married, and his patrons had to think of a situation for him, they hit upon the plan of making him establish a boarding-school, which extended gradually into a small academy, in which everything necessary, and at last even Greek and Latin, were taught. The extensive connexions of Frankfort caused young French and English men to be brought to this establishment, that they might learn German and be otherwise cultivated. Pfeil, who was a man in the prime of life, and of the most wonderful energy and activity, superintended the whole very laudably, and as he could never be employed enough, and was obliged to keep music-teachers for his scholars, he set about music on the occasion, and practised the harpsichord with such zeal that, without having previously touched a note, he very soon played with perfect readiness and spirit. He seemed to have adopted my father's maxim, that nothing can more cheer and excite young people, than when at mature years one declares one's self again a learner, and at an age when new accomplishments are

acquired with difficulty, one endeavours, nevertheless, by zeal and perseverance, to excel the younger, who are more favoured by nature.

By this love of harpsichord-playing Pfeil was led to the instruments themselves, and while he hoped to obtain the best, came into connexion with Frederici of Gera, whose instruments were celebrated far and wide. He took a number of them on sale, and had now the joy of seeing not only one piano, but many, set up in his residence, and of practising and being heard upon them.

The vivacity of this man brought a great rage for music into our house. My father remained on lasting good terms with him up to certain points of dispute. A large piano of Frederici was purchased also for us, which I, adhering to my harpsichord, hardly touched, but which so much increased the troubles of my sister, as, to do proper honour to the new instrument, she had to spend some time longer every day in practice; while my father as overseer, and Pfeil as a model and encouraging friend, alternately took their positions at her side.

A singular taste of my father caused much inconvenience to us children. This was the cultivation of silk, of the advantages of which, when it should be more widely extended, he had a high opinion. Some acquaintances at Hanau, where the breeding of the worms was carried on with great care, gave him the immediate impulse. At the proper season, the eggs were sent to him from that place, and as soon as the mulberry-trees showed sufficient leaves, they had to be stripped, and the scarcely visible creatures were most diligently tended. Tables and stands, with boards, were set up in a garret chamber, to afford them more room and sustenance; for they grew rapidly, and after their last change of skin were so voracious, that it was scarcely possible to get leaves enough to feed them; nay, they had to be fed day and night, as everything depends upon there being no deficiency of nourishment when the great and wondrous change is about to take place in them. If the weather was favourable, this business might indeed be regarded as a pleasant amusement; but if the cold set in, so that the mulberry-trees suffered, it was exceedingly troublesome. Still more unpleasant was it when rain fell during the last epoch, for these creatures cannot at all endure moisture, and the wet leaves had to be carefully wiped and dried, which could not always be done quite perfectly; and for this, or perhaps some other reason also, various diseases came among the flock, by which the poor things were swept off in thousands. The corruption which ensued produced a smell really pestilential, and because the dead and diseased had to be taken away and separated from the healthy, the business was indeed extremely wearisome and repulsive, and caused many an unhappy hour to us children.

After we had one year passed the finest weeks of the spring and summer in tending the silkworms, we were obliged to assist our father in another business, which, though simpler, was no less troublesome. The Roman views, which, bound by black rods at the top and bottom, had hung for many years on the walls of the old house, had become very yellow, through the light, dust, and smoke, and not a little unsightly through the flies. If such uncleanness was not to be tolerated in the new house, yet, on the other hand, these pictures had gained in value to my father, in consequence of his longer absence from the places represented. For in the outset such copies only serve to refresh and vivify the impressions shortly before received. They seem trifling in comparison, and at the best only a melancholy substitute. But as the remembrance of the original forms fades more and more, the copies imperceptibly assume their place, they become as dear to us as those once were, and what we at first contemned, now gains esteem and affection. Thus it is with all copies, and particularly with portraits. No one is easily satisfied with the counterfeit of an object still present, but how we value every *silhouette* of one who is absent or departed.

In short, with this feeling of his former extravagance, my father wished that these engravings might be restored as much as possible. It was well known that this could be done by bleaching; and the operation, always critical with large plates; was undertaken under rather unfavourable circumstances. For the large boards on which the smoked engravings were moistened and exposed to the sun, stood in the gutters before the garret windows, leaning against the roof, and were therefore liable to many accidents. The chief point was, that the paper should never thoroughly dry, but must be kept constantly

moist. This was the duty of my sister and myself; and the idleness, which would have been otherwise so desirable, was excessively annoying, on account of the tedium and impatience, and the watchfulness which allowed of no distraction. The end, however, was attained, and the bookbinder who fixed each sheet upon thick paper, did his best to match and repair the margins, which had been here and there torn by our inadvertence. All the sheets together were bound in a volume, and for this time preserved.

Lessons in English.

That we children might not be wanting in every variety of life and learning, a teacher of the English language must announce himself just at this time, who pledged himself to teach English to anybody not entirely raw in languages, within four weeks; and to advance him to such a degree that, with some diligence, he could help himself further. His price was moderate, and he was indifferent as to the number of scholars at one lesson. My father instantly determined to make the attempt, and took lessons, in connexion with my sister and myself, from this expeditious master. The hours were faithfully kept; there was no want of repeating our lessons; other exercises were neglected rather than this, during the four weeks; and the teacher parted from us, and we from him, with satisfaction. As he remained longer in the town, and found many employers, he came from time to time to look after us and to help us, grateful that we had been among the first who placed confidence in him, and proud to be able to cite us as examples to the others.

My father, in consequence of this, entertained a new anxiety that English might neatly stand in the series of my other studies in languages. Now, I will confess that it became more and more burdensome for me to take my occasions for study now from this grammar or collection of examples, now from that; now from one author, now from another, and thus to divert my interest in a subject every hour. It occurred to me, therefore, that I might despatch all at once, and I invented a romance of six or seven brothers and sisters, who, separated from each other and scattered over the world, should communicate with each other alternately as to their conditions and feelings. The eldest brother gives an account in good German of all the manifold objects and incidents of his journey. The sister, in a ladylike style, with short sentences and nothing but stops, much as *Siegwart* was afterwards written, answers now him, now the other brothers, partly about domestic matters, and partly about affairs of the heart. One brother studies theology, and writes a very formal Latin, to which he often adds a Greek postscript. To another brother, holding the place of mercantile clerk at Hamburgh, the English correspondence naturally falls, while a still younger one at Marseilles has the French. For the Italian was found a musician, on his first trip into the world; while the youngest of all, a sort of pert nestling, had applied himself to Jew-German, the other languages having been cut off from him, and by means of his frightful cyphers brought the rest of them into despair, and my parents into a hearty laugh at the good notion.

I sought for matter to fill up this singular form by studying the geography of the countries in which my creations resided, and by inventing for those dry localities all sorts of human incidents, which had some affinity with the characters and employments of my heroes. Thus my exercise-books became much more voluminous, my father was better satisfied, and I was much sooner made aware of the acquirements and the sort of readiness in which I was wanting.

Now, as such things once begun have no end and no limits, so it happened in the present case; for, while I strove to attain the odd Jew-German, and to write it as well as I could read it, I soon discovered that I ought to know Hebrew, from which alone the modern corrupted dialect could be derived and handled with any certainty. I consequently explained the necessity of my learning Hebrew to my father, and earnestly besought his consent, for I had a still higher object. Everywhere I heard it said that to understand the Old as well as the New Testament, the original languages were requisite. The latter I could read quite easily, because, that there might be no want of exercise even on Sundays, the so-called Epistles and Gospels had, after church, to be recited, translated, and in some measure

explained. I now designed doing the same thing with the Old Testament, the peculiarities of which had always especially interested me.

Rector Albrecht.

My father, who did not like to do anything by halves, determined to request the rector of our Gymnasium, one Dr. Albrecht, to give me private lessons weekly, until I should have acquired what was most essential in so simple a language, for he hoped that if it would not be despatched as soon as English was learned, it could at least be managed in double the time.

Rector Albrecht was one of the most original figures in the world, short, broad, but not fat, ill-shaped without being deformed, – in short, an Æsop in gown and wig. His more than seventy-years-old face was completely twisted into a sarcastic smile, while his eyes always remained large, and, though red, were always brilliant and intelligent. He lived in the old cloister of the Barefoot Friars, the seat of the Gymnasium. Even as a child, I had often visited him in company with my parents, and had, with a kind of trembling delight, glided through the long dark passages, the chapels transformed into reception-rooms, the place broken up and full of stairs and corners. Without annoying me, he questioned me familiarly whenever we met, and praised and encouraged me. One day, on the changing of the pupil's places after a public examination, he saw me standing as a mere spectator, not far from his chair, while he distributed the silver *præmia virtutis et diligentia*. I was probably gazing very eagerly upon the little bag out of which he drew the medals; he nodded to me, descended a step, and handed me one of the silver pieces. My joy was great, although others thought that this gift bestowed upon a boy not belonging to the school was out of all order. But for this the good old man cared but little, having always played the eccentric, and that in a striking manner. He had a very good reputation as a schoolmaster, and understood his business, although age no more allowed him to practise it thoroughly. But almost more than by his own infirmities was he hindered by greater circumstances, and, as I already knew, he was satisfied neither with the consistory, the inspectors, the clergy, nor the teachers. To his natural temperament, which inclined to satire, and the watching for faults and defects, he allowed free play, both in his programs and his public speeches, and as Lucian was almost the only writer whom he read and esteemed, he spiced all that he said and wrote with biting ingredients.

Fortunately for those with whom he was dissatisfied, he never went directly to work, but only jeered at the defects which he wanted to reprove, with hints, allusions, classic passages, and Scripture texts. His delivery, moreover – he always read his discourses – was unpleasant, unintelligible, and, above all, was often interrupted by a cough, but more frequently by a hollow paunch-convulsing laugh, with which he was wont to announce and accompany the biting passages. This singular man I found to be mild and obliging when I began to take lessons from him. I now went to him daily at six o'clock in the evening, and always experienced a secret pleasure when the outer door closed behind me, and I had to thread the long dark cloister-passage. We sat in his library at a table covered with oil-cloth, a much-read Lucian never quitting his side.

Hebrew Studies.

In spite of all my willingness, I did not get at the matter without difficulty, for my teacher could not suppress certain sarcastic remarks as to the real truth about Hebrew. I concealed from him my designs upon Jew-German, and spoke of a better understanding of the original text. He smiled at this, and said I should be satisfied if I only learned to read. This vexed me in secret, and I concentrated all my attention when we came to the letters. I found an alphabet something like the Greek, of which the forms were easy, and the names, for the most part, not strange to me. All this I had soon comprehended and retained, and supposed we should now go to reading. That this was done from right to left I was well aware. But now, all at once appeared a new army of little characters and signs, of points and strokes of all sorts, which were in fact to represent vowels. At this I wondered the more, as there were manifestly vowels in the larger alphabet, and the others only appeared to be hidden under strange appellations. It was also taught, that the Jewish nation, so long as it flourished, actually

were satisfied with the first signs, and knew no other way to write and read. Most willingly then would I have gone on along this ancient, and, as it seemed to me, easier path; but my worthy declared rather sternly, that we must go by the grammar as it had been approved and composed. Reading without these points and strokes, he said, was a very hard undertaking, and could be accomplished only by the learned, and those who were well practised. I must therefore make up my mind to learn these little characters; but the matter became to me more and more confused. Now, it seemed, some of the first and larger primitive letters had no value in their places, in order that their little after-born kindred might not stand there in vain. Now they indicated a gentle breathing, now a guttural more or less rough, and now served as mere equivalents. But, finally, when one fancied that one had well noted everything, some of these personages, both great and small, were rendered inoperative, so that the eyes always had very much, and the lips very little to do.

As that of which I already knew the contents had now to be stuttered in a strange gibberish, in which a certain snuffle and gargle were not a little commended as something unattainable, I in a certain degree deviated from the matter, and diverted myself in a childish way with the singular names of these accumulated signs. There were "emperors," "kings," and "dukes,"⁸ which, as accents, governing here and there, gave me not a little entertainment. But even these shallow jests soon lost their charm. Nevertheless, I was indemnified, inasmuch as by reading, translating, repeating, and committing to memory, the substance of the book came out more vividly, and it was this, properly, about which I desired to be enlightened. Even before this time the contradiction between tradition and the actual and possible had appeared to me very striking, and I had often put my private tutors to a non-plus with the sun which stood still on Gibeon, and the moon in the vale of Ajalon, to say nothing of other improbabilities and incongruities. Everything of this kind was now awakened, while, in order to master the Hebrew, I occupied myself exclusively with the Old Testament, and studied it, though no longer in Luther's translation, but in the literal version of Sebastian Schmid, printed under the text which my father had procured for me. Here, unfortunately, our lessons began to be defective, so far as practice in the language was concerned. Reading, interpreting, grammar, transcribing, and the repetition of words, seldom lasted a full half hour; for I immediately began to aim at the sense of the matter, and, though we were still engaged in the first book of Moses, to utter several things suggested to me by the later books. At first the good old man tried to restrain me from such digressions, but at last they seemed to entertain him also. It was impossible for him to suppress his characteristic cough and chuckle, and although he carefully avoided giving me any information that might have compromised himself, my importunity was not relaxed; nay, as I cared more to set forth my doubts than to learn their solution, I grew constantly more vivacious and bold, seeming justified by his deportment. Yet I could get nothing out of him, except that ever and anon he would exclaim, with his peculiar shaking laugh, "Ah! mad fellow! ah! mad boy!"

Still, my childish vivacity, which scrutinized the Bible on all sides, may have seemed to him tolerably serious and worthy of some assistance. He therefore referred me, after a time, to the large English Biblical work which stood in his library, and in which the interpretation of difficult and doubtful passages was attempted in an intelligent and judicious manner. By the great labours of German divines the translation had obtained advantages over the original. The different opinions were cited, and at last a kind of reconciliation was attempted, so that the dignity of the book, the ground of religion, and the human understanding might in some degree co-exist. Now, is often as towards the end of the lesson I came out with my usual questions and doubts, so often did he point to the repository. I took the volume, he let me read, turned over his Lucian, and when I made any remarks on the book, his ordinary laugh was the only answer to my sagacity. In the long summer days he let me sit as long as I could read, many times alone; after a time he suffered me to take one volume after another home with me.

⁸ These are the technical names for classes of accents in the Hebrew grammar. —*Trans.*

The Old Testament.

A man may turn whither he pleases, and undertake anything whatsoever, but he will always return to the path which nature has once prescribed for him. Thus it happened also with me in the present case. My trouble about the language, about the contents of the Sacred Scriptures themselves, ended at last in producing in my imagination a livelier picture of that beautiful and famous land, its environs and its vicinities, as well as of the people and events by which that little spot of earth was made glorious for thousands of years.

This small space was to see the origin and growth of the human race; thence we were to derive our first and only accounts of primitive history; and such a locality was to lie before our imagination, no less simple and comprehensible than varied and adapted to the most wonderful migrations and settlements. Here, between four designated rivers, a small delightful spot was separated from the whole habitable earth, for youthful man. Here he was to unfold his first capacities, and here at the same time was the lot to befall him, which was appointed for all his posterity, namely, that of losing peace by striving after knowledge. Paradise was trifled away; men increased and grew worse; and the Elohim, not yet accustomed to the wickedness of the new race, became impatient and utterly destroyed it. Only a few were saved from the universal deluge; and scarcely had this dreadful flood ceased, than the well known ancestral soil lay once more before the grateful eyes of the preserved.

Two rivers out of four, the Euphrates and Tigris, still flowed in their beds. The name of the first remained; the other seemed to be pointed out by its course. Minuter traces of Paradise were not to be looked for after so great a revolution. The renewed race of man went forth from hence a second time; it found occasion to sustain and employ itself in all sorts of ways, but chiefly to gather around it large herds of tame animals and to wander with them in every direction.

This mode of life, as well as the increase of the families, soon compelled the people to disperse. They could not at once resolve to let their relatives and friends go for ever; they hit upon the thought of building a lofty tower which should show them the way back from the far distance. But this attempt, like their first endeavour, miscarried. They could not be at the same time happy and wise, numerous and united. The Elohim confounded their minds – the building remained unfinished – the men were dispersed – the world was peopled, but sundered.

But our regards, our interests, are still fastened to these regions. At last the founder of a race again goes forth from hence, and is so fortunate as to stamp a distinct character upon his descendants, and by that means to unite them for all time to come into a great nation, inseparable through all changes of place or destiny.

From the Euphrates, Abraham, not without divine guidance, wanders towards the west. The desert opposes no invincible barrier to his march. He attains the Jordan, passes over its waters, and spreads himself over the fair southern regions of Palestine. This land was already occupied, and tolerably inhabited. Mountains, not extremely high, but rocky and barren, were severed by many watered vales favourable to cultivation. Towns, villages, and solitary settlements lay scattered over the plain and on the slopes of the great valley, the waters of which are collected in Jordan. Thus inhabited, thus tilled was the land; but the world was still large enough, and the men were not so circumspect, necessitous, and active, as to usurp at once the whole adjacent country. Between their possessions were extended large spaces, in which grazing herds could freely move in every direction. In one of these spaces Abraham resides; his brother Lot is near him; but they cannot long remain in such places. The very condition of a land, the population of which is now increasing, now decreasing, and the productions of which are never kept in equilibrium with the wants, produces unexpectedly a famine, and the stranger suffers alike with the native, whose own support he has rendered difficult by his accidental presence. The two Chaldean brothers move onward to Egypt, and thus is traced out for us the theatre on which, for some thousands of years, the most important events of the world were to be enacted. From the Tigris to the Euphrates, from the Euphrates to the Nile, we see the

earth peopled; and this space also is traversed by a well-known, heaven-beloved man, who has already become worthy to us, moving to and fro with his goods and cattle, and, in a short time, abundantly increasing them. The brothers return; but, taught by the distress they have endured, they determine to part. Both, indeed, tarry in Southern Canaan; but while Abraham remains at Hebron, near the wood of Mamre, Lot departs for the valley of Siddim, which, if our imagination is bold enough to give Jordan a subterranean outlet, so that in place of the present Dead Sea we should have dry ground, can and must appear like a second Paradise; a conjecture all the more probable, because the residents about there, notorious for effeminacy and wickedness, lead us to infer that they led an easy and luxurious life. Lot lives among them, but apart.

But Hebron and the wood of Mamre appear to us as the important place where the Lord speaks with Abraham, and promises him all the land as far as his eye can reach in four directions. From these quiet districts, from these shepherd tribes, who can associate with celestials, entertain them as guests, and hold many conversations with them, we are compelled to turn our glance once more towards the East, and to think of the condition of the surrounding world, which on the whole, perhaps, may have been like that of Canaan.

Families hold together: they unite, and the mode of life of the tribes is determined by the locality which they have appropriated or appropriate. On the mountains which send down their waters to the Tigris, we find warlike populations, who even thus early foreshadow those world-conquerors and world-rulers – and in a campaign, prodigious for those times, give us a prelude of future achievements. Chedor Laomer, king of Elam, has already a mighty influence over his allies. He reigns a long while; for twelve years before Abraham's arrival in Canaan, he had made all the people tributary to him as far as the Jordan. They revolted at last, and the allies equipped for war. We find them unawares upon a route by which probably Abraham also reached Canaan. The people on the left and lower side of the Jordan were subdued. Chedor Laomer directs his march southwards towards the people of the Desert, then wending north, he smites the Amalekites, and when he has also overcome the Amorites, he reaches Canaan, falls upon the kings of the valley of Siddim, smites and scatters them, and marches with great spoil up the Jordan, in order to extend his conquests as far as Lebanon.

Among the captives, despoiled and dragged along with their property, is Lot, who shares the fate of the country in which he lives a guest. Abraham learns this, and here at once we behold the patriarch a warrior and hero. He gathers together his servants, divides them into troops, attacks and falls upon the luggage of booty, confuses the victors, who could not suspect another enemy in the rear, and brings back his brother and his goods, with a great deal more belonging to the conquered kings. Abraham, by means of this brief contest, acquires, as it were, the whole land. To the inhabitants he appears as a protector, saviour, and, by his disinterestedness, a king. Gratefully the kings of the valley receive him: – Melchisedek, the king and priest, with blessings.

Now the prophecies of an endless posterity are renewed, nay, they take a wider and wider scope. From the waters of the Euphrates to the river of Egypt all the lands are promised him; but yet there seems a difficulty with respect to his next heirs. He is eighty years of age, and has no son. Sarai, less trusting in the heavenly powers than he, becomes impatient; she desires, after the oriental fashion, to have a descendant by means of her maid. But scarcely is Hagar given up to the master of the house, scarcely is there hope of a son, than dissensions arise. The wife treats her own dependent ill enough, and Hagar flies to seek a happier position among other tribes. She returns, not without a higher intimation, and Ishmael is born.

Abraham is now ninety-nine years old, and the promises of a numerous posterity are constantly repeated, so that in the end the pair regard them as ridiculous. And yet Sarai becomes at last pregnant and brings forth a son, to whom the name of Isaac is given.

Natural and Revealed Religion.

History, for the most part, rests upon the legitimate propagation of the human race. The most important events of the world require to be traced to the secrets of families: and thus the marriages of the patriarchs give occasion for peculiar considerations. It is as if the Divinity, who loves to guide the destiny of mankind, wished to prefigure here connubial events of every kind. Abraham, so long united by childless marriage to a beautiful woman whom many coveted, finds himself, by his hundredth year, the husband of two women, the father of two sons; and at this moment his domestic peace is broken. Two women, and two sons by different mothers, cannot possibly agree. The party less favoured by law, usage, and opinion, must yield. Abraham must sacrifice his attachment to Hagar and Ishmael. Both are dismissed, and Hagar is compelled now, against her will, to go upon a road which she once took in voluntary flight, at first, it seems, to the destruction of herself and child; but the angel of the Lord, who had before sent her back, now rescues her again, that Ishmael also may become a great people, and that the most improbable of all promises may be fulfilled beyond its limits.

Two parents in advanced years, and one son of their old age – here, at last, one might expect domestic quiet and earthly happiness. By no means. Heaven is yet preparing the heaviest trial for the patriarch. But of this we cannot speak without premising several considerations.

If a natural universal religion was to arise, and a special revealed one to be developed from it, the countries in which our imagination has hitherto lingered, the mode of life, the race of men, were the fittest for the purpose. At least, we do not find in the whole world anything equally favourable and encouraging. Even to natural religion, if we assume that it arose earlier in the human mind, there pertains much of delicacy of sentiment; for it rests upon the conviction of an universal providence, which conducts the order of the world as a whole. A particular religion, revealed by Heaven to this or that people, carries with it the belief in a special providence which the Divine Being vouchsafes to certain favoured men, families, races, and people. This faith seems to develop itself with difficulty from man's inward nature. It requires tradition, usage, and the warrant of a primitive time.

Beautiful is it, therefore, that the Israelitish tradition represents the very first men who confide in this particular providence as heroes of faith, following all the commands of that high Being on whom they acknowledge themselves dependent, just as blindly as, undisturbed by doubts, they are unwearied in awaiting the later fulfilments of his promises.

As a particular revealed religion rests upon the idea that one man can be more favoured by Heaven than another, so it also arises pre-eminently from the separation of classes. The first men appeared closely allied; but their employments soon divided them. The hunter was the freest of all; from him was developed the warrior and the ruler. Those who tilled the field bound themselves to the soil, erected dwellings and barns to preserve what they had gained, and could estimate themselves pretty highly, because their condition promised durability and security. The herdsman in his position seemed to have acquired the most unbounded condition and unlimited property. The increase of herds proceeded without end, and the space which was to support them widened itself on all sides. These three classes seemed from the very first to have regarded each other with dislike and contempt; and as the herdsman was an abomination to the townsman, so did he in turn separate from the other. The hunters vanish from our sight among the hills, and re-appear only as conquerors.

The patriarchs belonged to the shepherd class. Their manner of life upon the ocean of deserts and pastures, gave breadth and freedom to their minds; the vault of heaven, under which they dwelt, with all its nightly stars, elevated their feelings; and they, more than the active, skilful huntsman, or the secure, careful, householding husbandman, had need of the immovable faith that a God walked beside them, visited them, cared for them, guided and saved them.

We are compelled to make another reflection in passing to the rest of the history. Humane, beautiful, and cheering as the religion of the patriarchs appears, yet traits of savageness and cruelty run through it, out of which man may emerge, or into which he may again be sunk.

That hatred should seek to appease itself by the blood, by the death of the conquered enemy, is natural; that men concluded a peace upon the battle-field among the ranks of the slain, may easily be

conceived; that they should in like manner think to give validity to a contract by slain animals, follows from the preceding. The notion also that slain creatures could attract, propitiate, and gain over the gods, whom they always looked upon as partisans, either opponents or allies, is likewise not at all surprising. But if we confine our attention to the sacrifices, and consider the way in which they were offered in that primitive time, we find a singular, and, to our notions, altogether repugnant custom, probably derived from the usages of war, viz., that the sacrificed animals of every kind, and whatever number was devoted, had to be hewn in two halves, and laid out on two sides, so that in the space between them were those who wished to make a covenant with the Deity.

Another dreadful feature wonderfully and portentously pervades that fair world, namely, that everything consecrated or vowed must die. This also was probably an usage of war transferred to peace. The inhabitants of a city which forcibly defends itself are threatened with such a vow; it is taken by storm or otherwise. Nothing is left alive; – men never, and often women, children, and even cattle, share a similar fate. Such sacrifices are rashly and superstitiously and with more or less distinctness promised to the gods, and those whom the votary would willingly spare, even his nearest of kin, his own children, may thus bleed, the expiatory victims of such a delusion.

The Old Testament.

In the mild and truly patriarchal character of Abraham, such a savage kind of worship could not arise; but the Godhead,⁹ which often, to tempt us, seems to put forth those qualities which man is inclined to assign to it, imposes a monstrous task upon him. He must offer up his son as a pledge of the new covenant, and, if he follows the usage, must not only kill and burn him, but cut him in two, and await between the smoking entrails a new promise from the benignant Deity. Abraham blindly, and without lingering, prepares to execute the command; to Heaven the will is sufficient. Abraham's trials are now at an end, for they could not be carried further. But Sarai dies, and this gives Abraham an opportunity for taking typical possession of the land of Canaan. He requires a grave, and this is the first time he looks out for a possession in this earth. He had before this probably sought out a two-fold cave by the grove of Mamre. This he purchases with the adjacent field, and the legal form which he observes on the occasion, shows how important this possession is to him. Indeed it was more so, perhaps, than he himself supposed; for there he, his sons and his grandsons, were to rest, and by this means, the proximate title to the whole land, as well as the everlasting desire of his posterity to gather themselves there, was most properly grounded.

From this time forth the manifold incidents of the family life become varied. Abraham still keeps strictly apart from the inhabitants, and though Ishmael, the son of an Egyptian woman, has married a daughter of that land, Isaac is obliged to wed a kinswoman of equal birth with himself.

Abraham despatches his servant to Mesopotamia, to the relatives whom he had left behind there. The prudent Eleazer arrives unknown, and, in order to take home the right bride, tries the readiness to serve of the girls at the well. He asks to drink himself, and Rebecca, unasked, waters his camels also. He gives her presents, he demands her in marriage, and his suit is not rejected. He conducts her to the home of his lord, and she is wedded to Isaac. In this case, too, issue has to be long expected. Rebecca is not blessed until after some years of probation, and the same discord which in Abraham's double marriage arose through two mothers, here proceeds from one. Two boys of opposite characters wrestle already in their mother's womb. They come to light, the elder lively and vigorous, the younger gentle and prudent. The former becomes the father's, the latter the mother's favourite. The strife for precedence, which begins even at birth, is ever going on. Esau is quiet and indifferent as to the birthright which fate has given him; Jacob never forgets that his brother forced him back. Watching every opportunity of gaining the desirable privilege, he buys the birthright of his

⁹ It should be observed that in this Biblical narrative, when we have used the expressions "Deity," "Godhead," or "Divinity," Goethe generally has "die Götter," or "the Gods." —*Trans*,

brother, and defrauds him of their father's blessing. Esau is indignant, and vows his brother's death; Jacob flees to seek his fortune in the land of his forefathers.

Now, for the first time, in so noble a family appears a member who has no scruple in attaining by prudence and cunning the advantages which nature and circumstances have denied him. It has often enough been remarked and expressed, that the Sacred Scriptures by no means intend to set up any of the patriarchs and other divinely-favoured men as models of virtue. They, too, are persons of the most different characters, with many defects and failings. But there is one leading trait, in which none of these men after God's own heart can be wanting – that is, an immovable faith that God has special care of them and their families.

The Old Testament.

General, natural religion, properly speaking, requires no faith; for the persuasion that a great producing, regulating, and conducting Being conceals himself, as it were, behind Nature, to make himself comprehensible to us – such a conviction forces itself upon every one. Nay, if we for a moment let drop this thread, which conducts us through life, it may be immediately and everywhere resumed. But it is different with a special religion, which announces to us that this Great Being distinctly and pre-eminently interests himself for one individual, one family, one people, one country. This religion is founded on faith, which must be immovable if it would not be instantly destroyed. Every doubt of such a religion is fatal to it. One may return to conviction, but not to faith. Hence the endless probation, the delay in the fulfilment of so often repeated promises, by which the capacity for faith in those ancestors is set in the clearest light.

It is in this faith also that Jacob begins his expedition, and if by his craft and deceit he has not gained our affections, he wins them by his lasting and inviolable love for Rachel, whom he himself woos on the instant, as Eleazar had courted Rebecca for his father. In him the promise of a countless people was first to be fully unfolded; he was to see many sons around him, but through them and their mothers was to endure manifold sorrows of heart.

Seven years he serves for his beloved, without impatience and without wavering. His father-in-law, crafty like himself, and disposed, like him, to consider legitimate this means to an end, deceives him, and so repays him for what he has done to his brother. Jacob finds in his arms a wife whom he does not love. Laban, indeed, endeavours to appease him, by giving him his beloved also after a short time, and this but on the condition of seven years of further service. Vexation arises out of vexation. The wife he does not love is fruitful, the beloved one bears no children. The latter, like Sarai, desires to become a mother through her handmaiden; the former grudges her even this advantage. She also presents her husband with a maid; but the good patriarch is now the most troubled man in the world – he has four women, children by three, and none from her he loves. Finally she also is favoured, and Joseph tomes into the world, the late fruit of the most passionate attachment. Jacob's fourteen years of service are over, but Laban is unwilling to part with him, his chief and most trusty servant. They enter into a new compact, and portion the flocks between them. Laban retains the white ones as most numerous, Jacob has to put up with the spotted ones, as the mere refuse. But he is able here too to secure his own advantage; and as by a paltry mess (*of pottage*) he had procured the birthright, and by a disguise his father's blessing, he manages by art and sympathy to appropriate to himself the best and largest part of the herds; and on this side also he becomes the truly worthy progenitor of the people of Israel, and a model for his descendants. Laban and his household remark the result, if not the stratagem. Vexation ensues; Jacob flees with his family and goods, and partly by fortune, partly by cunning, escapes the pursuit of Laban. Rachel is now about to present him another son, but dies in the travail: Benjamin, the child of sorrow, survives her; but the aged father is to experience a still greater sorrow from the apparent loss of his son Joseph.

Perhaps some one may ask why I have so circumstantially narrated histories so universally known and so often repeated and explained. Let the inquirer be satisfied with the answer, that I could

in no other way exhibit, how with my distracted life and desultory education, I concentrated my mind and feelings in quiet action on one point; that I was able in no other way to depict the peace that prevailed about me, even when all without was so wild and strange. If an ever busy imagination, of which that tale may bear witness, led me hither and thither, if the medley of fable and history, mythology and religion, threatened to bewilder me, I readily fled to those oriental regions, plunged into the first books of Moses, and there, amid the scattered shepherd-tribes, found myself at once in the greatest solitude and the greatest society.

History of Joseph.

These family scenes, before they were to lose themselves in a history of the Jewish nation, show us now, in conclusion, a form by which the hopes and fancies of the young in particular are agreeably excited: Joseph, the child of the most passionate wedded love. He seems to us tranquil and clear, and predicts to himself the advantages which are to elevate him above his family. Cast into misfortune by his brothers, he remains steadfast and upright in slavery, resists the most dangerous temptations, rescues himself by prophecy, and is elevated according to his deserts to high honours. He shows himself first serviceable and useful to a great kingdom, then to his own kindred. He is like his ancestor Abraham in repose and greatness, his grandfather Isaac in silence and devotedness. The talent for traffic inherited from his father he exercises on a large scale. It is no longer flocks which are gained for himself from a father-in-law, but people, with all their possessions, which he knows how to purchase for a king. Extremely graceful is this natural story, only it appears too short, and one feels called upon to paint it in detail.

Such a filling-up of biblical characters and events given only in outline, was no longer strange to the Germans. The personages of both the Old and New Testaments had received through Klopstock a tender and affectionate nature, highly pleasing to the Boy as well as to many of his contemporaries. Of Bodmer's efforts in this line little or nothing came to him; but *Daniel in the Lion's Den*, by Moser, made a great impression on the young heart. In that work a right-minded man of business and courtier arrives at high honours through manifold tribulations, and the piety for which they threatened to destroy him became early and late his sword and buckler. It had long seemed to me desirable to work out the history of Joseph, but I could not get on with the form, particularly as I was conversant with no kind of versification which would have been adapted to such a work. But now I found a treatment of it in prose very suitable, and I applied all my strength to its execution. I now endeavoured to discriminate and paint the characters, and by the interpolation of incidents and episodes, to make the old simple history a new and independent work. I did not consider, what, indeed, youth cannot consider, that subject-matter was necessary to such a design, and that this could only arise by the perceptions of experience. Suffice, it to say, that I represented to myself all the incidents down to the minutest details, and narrated them accurately to myself in their succession.

What greatly lightened this labour was a circumstance which threatened to render this work, and my authorship in general, exceedingly voluminous. A young man of various capacities, but who had become imbecile from over exertion and conceit, resided as a ward in my father's house, lived quietly with the family, and if allowed to go on in his usual way, was contented and agreeable. He had with great care written out notes of his academical course, and had acquired a rapid legible hand. He liked to employ himself in writing better than in anything else, and was pleased when something was given him to copy; but still more when he was dictated to, because he then felt carried back to his happy academical years. To my father, who was not expeditious in writing, and whose German letters were small and tremulous, nothing could be more desirable, and he was consequently accustomed, in the conduct of his own and other business, to dictate for some hours a day to this young man. I found it no less convenient, during the intervals, to see all that passed through my head fixed upon paper by the hand of another, and my natural gift of feeling and imitation grew with the facility of catching up and preserving.

As yet I had not undertaken any work so large as that biblical prose-epic. The times were tolerably quiet, and nothing recalled my imagination from Palestine and Egypt. Thus my manuscripts swelled more and more every day, as the poem, which I recited to myself, as it were, in the air, stretched along the paper; and only a few pages from time to time needed to be rewritten.

When the work was done – for to my own astonishment it really came to an end – I reflected that from former year, many poems were extant, which did not even now appear to me utterly despicable, and which, if written together in the same size with Joseph, would make a very neat quarto, to which the title "Miscellaneous Poems" might be given. I was pleased with this, as it gave me an opportunity of quietly imitating well-known and celebrated authors. I had composed a good number of so-called Anacreontic poems, which, on account of the convenience of the metre and the easiness of the subject, flowed forth readily enough. But these I could not well take, as they were not in rhyme, and my desire before all things was to show my father something that would please him. So much the more, therefore, did the spiritual odes seem suitable, which I had very zealously attempted in imitation of the *Last Judgment* of Elias Schlegel. One of these, written to celebrate the descent of Christ into hell, received much applause from my parents and friends, and had the good fortune to please myself for some years afterwards. The so-called texts of the Sunday church-music, which were always to be had printed, I studied with diligence. They were, indeed, very weak, and I could well believe that my verses, of which I had composed many in the prescribed manner, were equally worthy of being set to music, and performed for the edification of the congregation. These and many like them I had for more than a year before copied with my own hand, because through this private exercise I was released from the copies of the writing-master. Now, all were corrected and put in order, and no great persuasion was needed to have them neatly copied by the young man who was so fond of writing. I hastened with them to the bookbinder, and when very soon after I handed the nice-looking volume to my father, he encouraged me with peculiar satisfaction to furnish a similar quarto every year; which he did with the greater conviction, as I had produced the whole in my spare moments alone.

Plitt's Sermons.

Another circumstance increased my tendency to these theological, or rather biblical studies. The senior of the ministry, John Philip Fresenius, a mild man, of handsome, agreeable appearance, who was respected by his congregation and the whole city as an exemplary pastor and good preacher, but who, because he stood forth against the Herrnhuters, was not in the best odour with the peculiarly pious; while, on the other hand, he had made himself famous, and almost sacred, with the multitude, by the conversion of a free-thinking General who had been mortally wounded – this man died, and his successor, Plitt, a tall, handsome, dignified man, who brought from his *Chair* (he had been a Professor in Marburg) the gift of teaching rather than of edifying, immediately announced a sort of religious course, to which his sermons were to be devoted in a certain methodical connexion. I had already, as I was compelled to go to church, remarked the distribution of the subject, and could now and then show myself off by a pretty complete recitation of a sermon. But now as much was said in the congregation, both for and against the new senior, and many placed no great confidence in his announced didactic sermons, I undertook to write them out more carefully, and I succeeded the better from having made smaller attempts in a seat very convenient for hearing, but concealed from sight. I was extremely attentive and on the alert; the moment he said Amen I hastened from the church and consumed a couple of hours in rapidly dictating what I had fixed in my memory and on paper, so that I could hand in the written sermon before dinner. My father was very proud of this success, and the good friend of the family, who had just come in to dinner, also shared in the joy. Indeed, this friend was very well-disposed to me, because I had so made his *Messiah* my own, that in my repeated visits to him to get impressions of seals for my collection of coats-of-arms, I could recite long passages from it till the tears stood in his eyes.

The next Sunday I prosecuted the work with equal zeal, and as the mechanical part of it mainly interested me, I did not reflect upon what I wrote and preserved. During the first quarter these efforts may have continued pretty much the same; but as I fancied at last, in my self-conceit, that I found no particular enlightenment as to the Bible, nor clearer insight into dogmas, the small vanity which was thus gratified seemed to me too dearly purchased for me to pursue the matter with the same zeal. The sermons, once so many-leaved, grew more and more meagre; and before long I should have relinquished this labour altogether, if my father, who was a fast friend to completeness, had not, by words and promises, induced me to persevere till the last Sunday in Trinity – though, at the conclusion, scarcely more than the text, the statement, and the divisions were scribbled on little pieces of paper.

My father was particularly pertinacious on this point of completeness. What was once undertaken must be finished, even if the inconvenience, tedium, vexation, nay, uselessness of the thing begun were plainly manifested in the meantime. It seemed as if he regarded completeness as the only end, and perseverance as the only virtue. If in our family circle, in the long winter evenings, we had begun to read a book aloud, we were compelled to finish, though we were all in despair about it, and my father himself was the first to yawn. I still remember such a winter when we had thus to work our way through Bower's *History of the Popes*. It was a terrible time, as little or nothing that occurs in ecclesiastical affairs can interest children and young people. Still, with all my inattention and repugnance, so much of that reading remained in my mind that I was able, in after times, to take up many threads of the narrative.

Lessons in Fencing.

Amid all these heterogeneous occupations and labours, which followed each other so rapidly that one could hardly reflect whether they were permissible and useful, my father did not lose sight of the main object. He endeavoured to direct my memory and my talent for apprehending and combining to objects of jurisprudence, and therefore gave me a small book by Hopp, in the shape of a catechism, and worked up according to the form and substance of the Institutions. I soon learned questions and answers by heart, and could represent the catechist as well as the catechumen; and, as in religious instruction at that time, one of the chief exercises was to find passages in the Bible as readily as possible, so here a similar acquaintance with the *Corpus Juris* was found necessary, in which, also, I soon became completely versed. My father wished me to go on, and the little Struve was taken in hand; but here affairs did not proceed so rapidly. The form of the work was not so favourable for beginners, that they could help themselves on, nor was my father's method of illustration so liberal as greatly to interest me.

Not only by the warlike state in which we lived for some years, but also by civil life itself, and the perusal of history and romances, was it made clear to me that there were many cases in which the laws are silent and give no help to the individual, who must then see how to get out of the difficulty by himself. We had now reached the period when, according to the old routine, we were, besides other things, to learn to fence and ride, that we might guard our skins upon occasion, and have no pedantic appearance on horseback. As to the first, the practice was very agreeable to us; for we had already, long ago, contrived to make broad-swords out of hazel-sticks, with basket-hilts, neatly woven of willow, to protect the hands. Now we might get real steel blades, and the clash we made with them was very merry.

There were two fencing-masters in the city: an old earnest German, who went to work in a severe and solid style, and a Frenchman, who sought to gain his advantage by advancing and retreating, and by light fugitive thrusts, which he always accompanied by cries. Opinions varied as to whose manner was the best. The little company with which I was to take lessons sided with the Frenchman, and we speedily accustomed ourselves to move backwards and forwards, make passes and recover, always breaking out into the usual exclamations. But several of our acquaintance had gone to the German teacher, and practised precisely the opposite. These distinct modes of treating so important

an exercise, the conviction of each that his master was the best, really caused a dissension among the young people, who were of about the same age, and the fencing-schools occasioned serious battles, – for there was almost as much fighting with words as with swords; and to decide the matter in the end, a trial of skill between the two teachers was arranged, the consequences of which I need not circumstantially describe. The German stood in his position like a wall, watched his opportunity, and contrived to disarm his opponent over and over again with his cut and thrust. The latter maintained that this mattered not, and proceeded to exhaust the other's wind by his agility. He fetched the German several lunges, too, which, however, if they had been in earnest, would have sent himself into the next world.

On the whole, nothing was decided or improved, except that some went over to our countryman, of whom I was one. But I had already acquired too much from the first master; and hence a considerable time elapsed before the new one could break me of it, who was altogether less satisfied with us renegades than with his original pupils.

As to riding, it fared still worse with me. It happened that they sent me to the course in the autumn, so that I commenced in the cool and damp season. The pedantic treatment of this noble art was highly repugnant to me. From first to last the whole talk was about sitting the horse, and yet no one could say in what a proper sitting consisted, though all depended on that; for they went to and fro on the horse-without stirrups. Moreover, the instruction seemed contrived only for cheating and degrading the scholars. If one forgot to hook or loosen the curb-chain, or let his switch fall down, or even his hat, – every delay, every misfortune, had to be atoned for by money, and one was even laughed at besides. This put me in the worst of humours, particularly when I found the place of exercise itself quite intolerable. The great nasty space, either wet or dusty, the cold, the mouldy smell, all together was in the highest degree repugnant to me; and since the stable-master always gave the others the best and me the worst horses to ride, perhaps because they bribed him by breakfasts and other gifts, or even by their own cleverness; since he kept me waiting, and, as it seemed, slighted me, I spent the most disagreeable hours in an employment that ought to have been the most pleasant in the world. Nay, the impression of that time and of these circumstances has remained with me so vividly, that although I afterwards became a passionate and daring rider, and for days and weeks together scarcely got off my horse, I carefully shunned covered riding-courses, and at least passed only a few moments in them. The case often happens that when the elements of an exclusive art are taught us, this is done in a painful and revolting manner. The conviction that this is both wearisome and injurious, has given rise in later times to the educational maxim, that the young must be taught everything in an easy, cheerful, and agreeable way: from which, however, other evils and disadvantages have proceeded.

With the approach of spring, times became again more quiet with us, and if in earlier days I had endeavoured to obtain a sight of the city, its ecclesiastical, civil, public and private structures, and especially found great delight in the still prevailing antiquities, I afterwards endeavoured, by means of Lersner's *Chronicle*, and other Frankfortian books and pamphlets belonging to my father, to revive the persons of past times. This seemed to me to be well attained by great attention to the peculiarities of times and manners, and of distinguished individuals.

The Rebel Fettmilch.

Among the ancient remains, that which, from my childhood, had been remarkable to me, was the skull of a state criminal, fastened up on the tower of the bridge, who, out of three or four, as the naked iron spikes showed, had, since 1616, been preserved in spite of the encroachments of time and weather. Whenever one returned from Sachsenhausen to Frankfort, one had this tower before one, and the skull was directly in view. As a boy, I liked to hear related the history of these rebels – Fettmilch and his confederates – how they had become dissatisfied with the government of the city, had risen up against it, plotted a mutiny, plundered the Jews' quarter, and excited a fearful riot, but were at last captured, and condemned to death by a deputy of the emperor. Afterwards I felt anxious

to know the most minute circumstance, and to hear what sort of people they were. When from an old contemporary book, ornamented with woodcuts, I learned that while these men had indeed been condemned to death, many councillors had at the same time been deposed, because various kinds of disorder and very much that was unwarrantable was then going on; when I heard the nearer particulars now all took place, I pitied the unfortunate persons who might be regarded as sacrifices made for a future better constitution. For from that time was dated the regulation which allows the noble old house of Limpurg, the Frauenstein-house, sprung from a club, besides lawyers, tradespeople, and artisans, to take a part in a government, which, completed by a system of ballot, complicated in the Venetian fashion, and restricted by the civil colleges, was called to do right, without acquiring any special privilege to do wrong.

Among the things which excited the misgivings of the Boy, and even of the youth, was especially the state of the Jewish quarter of the city (*Judenstadt*), properly called the Jew-street (*Judengasse*), as it consisted of little more than a single street, which in early times may have been hemmed in between the walls and trenches of the town, as in a prison (*Zwinger*.) The closeness, the filth, the crowd, the accent of an unpleasant language, altogether made a most disagreeable impression, even if one only looked in as one passed the gate. It was long before I ventured in alone, and I did not return there readily, when I had once escaped the importunities of so many men unwearied in demanding and offering to traffic. At the same time the old legends of the cruelty of the Jews towards Christian children, which we had seen hideously illustrated in *Gottfried's Chronicle*, hovered gloomily before my young mind. And although they were thought better of in modern times, the large caricature, still to be seen, to their disgrace, on an arched wall under the bridge tower, bore extraordinary witness against them; for it had been made, not through private ill-will, but by public order.

However, they still remained, nevertheless, the chosen people of God, and passed, no matter how it came about, as a memorial of the most ancient times. Besides, they also were men, active and obliging, and even to the tenacity with which they clung to their peculiar customs, one could not refuse one's respect. The girls, moreover, were pretty, and were far from displeased when a Christian lad, meeting them on the sabbath in the Fischerfeld, showed himself kindly and attentive. I was consequently extremely curious to become acquainted with their ceremonies. I did not desist until I had frequently visited their school, had assisted at a circumcision and a wedding, and had formed a notion of the Feast of the Tabernacles. Everywhere I was well received, pleasantly entertained, and invited to come again; for they were persons of influence by whom I had been either introduced or recommended.

Public Burning of a Book.

Thus, as a young resident in a large city, I was thrown about from one object to another, and horrible scenes were not wanting in the midst of the municipal quiet and security. Sometimes a more or less remote fire aroused us from our domestic peace, sometimes the discovery of a great crime, with its investigation and punishment, set the whole city in an uproar for many weeks. We were forced to be witnesses of different executions; and it is worth remembering, that I was also once present at the burning of a book. The publication was a French comic romance, which indeed spared the state, but not religion and manners. There was really something dreadful in seeing punishment inflicted on a lifeless thing. The packages burst asunder in the fire, and were raked apart by an oven-fork, to be brought in closer contact with the flames. It was not long before the kindled sheets were wafted about in the air, and the crowd caught at them with eagerness. Nor could we rest until we had hunted up a copy, while not a few managed likewise to procure the forbidden pleasure. Nay, if it had been done to give the author publicity, he could not himself have made a more effectual provision.

But there were also more peaceable inducements which took me about in every part of the city. My father had early accustomed me to manage for him his little affairs of business. He charged me particularly to stir up the labourers whom he set to work, as they commonly kept him waiting longer

than was proper; because he wished everything done accurately, and was used in the end to lower the price for a prompt payment. In this way, I gained access to all the workshops; and as it was natural to me to enter into the condition of others, to feel every species of human existence, and sympathize in it with pleasure, these commissions were to me the occasion of many most delightful hours, and I learned to know every one's method of proceeding, and what joy and sorrow, what advantages and hardships, were incident to the indispensable conditions of this or that mode of life. I was thus brought nearer to that active class which connects the lower and upper classes. For, if on the one side stand those who are employed in the simple and rude products, and on the other those who desire to enjoy something that has been already worked up; the manufacturer, with his skill and hand, is the mediator through whom the other two receive something from each other; each is enabled to gratify his wishes in his own way. The household economy of many crafts, which took its form and colour from the occupation, was likewise an object of my quiet attention; and thus was developed and strengthened in me the feeling of the equality, if not of all men, yet of all human conditions, – the mere fact of existence seeming to me the main point, and all the rest indifferent and accidental.

As my father did not readily allow himself an expense which would be at once consumed in a momentary enjoyment – as I can scarcely call to mind that we ever took a walk together, and spent anything in a place of amusement, – he was, on the other hand, not niggardly in procuring such things as had a good external appearance in addition to inward value. No one could desire peace more than he, although he had not felt the smallest inconvenience during the last days of the war. With this feeling, he had promised my mother a gold snuffbox, set with diamonds, which she was to receive as soon as peace should be publicly declared. In the expectation of the happy event, they had laboured now for some years on this present. The box, which was tolerably large, had been executed in Hanau, for my father was on good terms with the gold-workers there, as well as with the heads of the silk establishments. Many designs were made for it; the cover was adorned by a basket of flowers, over which hovered a dove with the olive-branch. A vacant space was left for the jewels, which were to be set partly in the dove and partly on the spot where the box is usually opened. The jeweller to whom the execution and the requisite stones were entrusted was named Lautensak, and was a brisk, skilful man, who like many artists, seldom did what was necessary, but usually works of caprice, which gave him pleasure. The jewels were very soon set, in the shape in which they were to be put upon the box, on some black wax, and looked very well; but they would not come off to be transferred to the gold. In the outset, my father let the matter rest; but as the hope of peace became livelier, and finally when the stipulations – particularly the elevation of the Archduke Joseph to the Roman throne – seemed more precisely known, he grew more and more impatient, and I had to go several times a week, nay, at last, almost daily, to visit the tardy artist. By means of my unremitted teasing and exhortation, the work went on, though slowly enough; for as it was of that kind which can be taken in hand or laid aside at will, there was always something by which it was thrust out of the way, and put aside.

Lautensak's Bouquet.

The chief cause of this conduct, however, was a task which the artist had undertaken on his own account. Everybody knew that the Emperor Francis cherished a strong liking for jewels, and especially for coloured stones. Lautensak had expended a considerable sum, and as it afterwards turned out larger than his means, on such gems, out of which he had begun to shape a nosegay, in which every stone was to be tastefully disposed, according to its shape and colour, and the whole form a work of art worthy to stand in the treasure-vaults of an emperor. He had, in his desultory way, laboured for many years upon it, and now hastened – because after the hoped-for peace the arrival of the Emperor, for the coronation of his son, was expected in Frankfort – to complete it and finally to put it together. My desire to become acquainted with such things he used very dexterously in order to distract me as a bearer of threats, and to lead me away from my intention. He strove to impart a knowledge of these stones to me, and made me attentive to their properties and value, so in

that in the end I knew his whole bouquet by heart, and quite as well as he could have demonstrated its virtues to a customer. It is even now before me, and I have since seen more costly, but not more graceful specimens of show and magnificence in this sort. He possessed, moreover, a pretty collection of engravings, and other works of art, with which he liked to amuse himself; and I passed many hours with him, not without profit. Finally, when the Congress of Hubertsburg was finally fixed, he did for my sake more than was due; and the dove and flowers actually reached my mother's hands on the festival in celebration of the peace.

I then received also many similar commissions to urge on painters with respect to pictures which had been ordered. My father had confirmed himself in the notion – and few men were free from it – that a picture painted on wood was greatly to be preferred to one that was merely put on canvas. It was therefore his great care to possess good oak boards, of every shape, because he well knew that just on this important point the more careless artists trusted to the joiners. The oldest planks were hunted up, the joiners were obliged to go accurately to work with gluing, painting, and arranging, and they were then kept for years in an upper room, where they could be sufficiently dried. A precious board of this kind was intrusted to the painter Junker, who was to represent on it an ornamental flower-pot, with the most important flowers drawn after nature in his artistic and elegant manner. It was just about the spring-time, and I did not fail to take him several times a week the most beautiful flowers that fell in my way, which he immediately put in, and by degrees composed the whole out of these elements with the utmost care and fidelity. On one occasion I had caught a mouse, which I took to him, and which he desired to copy as a very pretty animal; nay, really represented it, as accurately as possible, gnawing an ear of corn at the foot of the flower-pot. Many such inoffensive natural objects, such as butterflies and chafers, were brought in and represented, so that finally, as far as imitation and execution were concerned, a highly valuable picture was put together.

Hence I was not a little astonished when the good man formally declared one day, when the work was just about to be delivered, that the picture no longer pleased him, – since, while it had turned out quite well in its details, it was not well composed as a whole, because it had been produced in this gradual manner; and he had perpetrated a blunder in the outset, in not at least devising a general plan for light and shade, as well as for colour, according to which the single flowers might have been arranged. He examined with me the minutest parts of the picture, which had arisen before my eyes during a half year, and had in many respects pleased me, and managed to convince me perfectly, much to my regret. Even the copy of the mouse he regarded as a mistake; for many persons, he said, have a sort of horror of such animals, and they should not be introduced where the object is to excite pleasure. As it commonly happens with those who are cured of a prejudice, and imagine themselves much more knowing than they were before, I now had a real contempt for this work of art, and agreed perfectly with the artist when he caused to be prepared another tablet of the same size, on which, according to his taste, he painted a better formed vessel and a more artistically arranged nosegay, and also managed to select and distribute the little living accessories in an ornamental and agreeable way. This tablet also he painted with the greatest care, though altogether after the former copied one, or from memory, which, through a very long and assiduous practice, came to his aid. Both paintings were now ready, and we were thoroughly delighted with the last, which was certainly the more artistic and striking of the two. My father was surprised with two pictures instead of one, and to him the choice was left. He approved of our opinion, and of the reasons for it, and especially of our good-will and activity; but, after considering both pictures some days, decided in favour of the first, without saying much about the motives of his choice. The artist, in an ill-humour, took back his second well-meant picture, and could not refrain from the remark that the good oaken tablet on which the first was painted had certainly its effect on my father's decision.

Oil-Cloth Factory.

Now I am again speaking of painting, I am reminded of a large establishment, where I passed much time, because both it and its managers especially attracted me. It was the great oil-cloth factory which the painter NOTHNAGEL had erected; an expert artist, but one who by his mode of thought inclined more to manufacture than to art. In a very large space of courts and gardens, all sorts of oil-cloths were made, from the coarsest that are spread with a trowel, and used for baggage-wagons and similar purposes, and the carpets impressed with figures, to the finer and the finest, on which sometimes Chinese and grotesque, sometimes natural flowers, sometimes figures, sometimes landscapes were represented by the pencils of accomplished workmen. This multiplicity, to which there was no end, amused me vastly. The occupation of so many men, from the commonest labour to that in which a certain artistic worth could not be denied, was to me extremely attractive. I made the acquaintance of this multitude of younger and older men, working in several rooms one behind the other, and occasionally lent a hand myself. The sale of these commodities was extraordinarily brisk. Whoever at that time was building or furnishing a house, wished to provide for his lifetime, and this oil-cloth carpeting was certainly quite indestructible. Nothnagel had enough to do in managing the whole, and sat in his office surrounded by factors and clerks. The remainder of his time he employed in his collection of works of art, consisting chiefly of engravings, in which, as well as in the pictures he possessed, he traded occasionally. At the same time he had acquired a taste for etching; he etched a variety of plates, and prosecuted this branch of art even into his latest years.

As his dwelling lay near the Eschenheim gate, my way when I had visited him led me out of the city to some pieces of ground which my father owned beyond the gates. One was a large orchard, the soil of which was used as a meadow, and in which my father carefully attended the transplanting of trees, and whatever else pertained to their preservation, though the ground itself was leased. Still more occupation was furnished by a very well-preserved vineyard beyond the Friedberg gate, where between the rows of vines, rows of asparagus were planted and tended with great care. Scarcely a day passed in the fine season in which my father did not go there, and as on these occasions we might generally accompany him, we were provided with joy and delight from the earliest productions of spring to the last of autumn. We also learned to occupy ourselves with gardening matters, which, as they were repeated every year, became in the end perfectly known and familiar to us. But after the manifold fruits of summer and autumn, the vintage at last was the most lively and the most desirable: nay, there is no question that as wine gives a freer character to the very places and districts where it is grown and drunk, so also do these vintage-days, while they close summer and at the same time open the winter, diffuse an incredible cheerfulness. Joy and jubilation pervade a whole district. In the daytime, huzzas and shoutings are heard from every end and corner, and at night rockets and fire-balls, now here, now there, announce that the people, everywhere awake and lively, would willingly make this festival last as long as possible. The subsequent labour at the wine-press, and during the fermentation in the cellar, gave us also a cheerful employment at home, and thus we ordinarily reached winter without being properly aware of it.

These rural possessions delighted us so much the more in the spring of 1763, as the 15th of February in that year was celebrated as a festival day, on account of the conclusion of the Hubertsberg peace, under the happy results of which the greater part of my life was to flow away. But before I go further, I think I am bound to mention some men who exerted an important influence on my youth.

Frankfort Characters – Von Olenschlager.

Von Olenschlager, a member of the Frauenstein family, a Schöff, and son-in-law of the above-mentioned Dr. Orth, a handsome, comfortable, sanguine man. In his official holiday costume he could well have personated the most important French prelate. After his academical course, he had employed himself in political and state affairs, and directed even his travels to that end. He greatly esteemed me, and often conversed with me on matters which chiefly interested him. I was with him when he wrote his *Illustration of the Golden Bull*; when he managed to explain to me very clearly the

worth and dignity of that document. My imagination was led back by it to those wild and unquiet times, so that I could not forbear representing what he related historically, as if it were present, by pictures of characters and circumstances, and often by mimicry. In this he took great delight, and by his applause excited me to repetition.

I had from childhood the singular habit of always learning by heart the beginnings of books, and the divisions of a work, first of the five books of Moses, and then of the *Æneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. I now did the same thing with the *Golden Bull*, and often provoked my patron to a smile, when I quite seriously and unexpectedly exclaimed, "*Omne regnum in se divisum desolabitur; nam principes ejus facti sunt socii furum.*"¹⁰ The knowing man shook his head, smiling, and said doubtfully, "What times those must have been, when at a grand Diet, the Emperor had such words published in the face of his princes!"

There was a great charm in Von Olenschlager's society. He received little company, but was strongly inclined to intellectual amusement, and induced us young people from time to time to perform a play; for such exercises were deemed particularly useful to the young. We gave the *Canute* of Schlegel, in which the part of the king was assigned to me, Elfrida to my sister, and Ulfo to the younger son of the family. We then ventured on the *Britannicus*,¹¹ for, besides our dramatic talents, we were to bring the language into practice. I took Nero, my sister, Agrippina, and the younger son, Britannicus. We were more praised than we deserved, and fancied that we had done it even beyond the amount of praise. Thus I stood on the best terms with this family, and have been indebted to them for many pleasures and a speedier development.

Frankfort Characters – Von Reineck.

Von Reineck, of an old patrician family, able, honest, but stubborn, a meagre, swarthy man, whom I never saw smile. The misfortune befell him that his only daughter was carried off by a friend of the family. He pursued his son-in-law with the most vehement prosecution; and because the tribunals, with their formality, were neither speedy nor sharp enough to gratify his desire of vengeance, he fell out with them; and there arose quarrel on quarrel, suit on suit. He retired completely into his own house and its adjacent garden, lived in a spacious but melancholy lower-room, into which for many years no brush of a white washer, and perhaps scarcely the broom of a maid-servant, had found its way. Me he could readily endure, and he had especially commended to me his younger son. He many times asked his oldest friends, who knew how to humour him, his men of business and agents, to dine with him, and on these occasions never omitted inviting me. There was good eating and better drinking at his house. But a large stove, that let out the smoke from many cracks, caused the greatest pain to his guests. One of the most intimate of these once ventured to remark upon this, by asking the host whether he could put up with such an inconvenience all the winter. He answered, like a second Timon or Heautontimoroumenos: "Would to God this was the greatest evil of those which torment me!" It was long before he allowed himself to be persuaded to see his daughter and grandson. The son-in-law never again dared to come into his presence.

On this excellent but unfortunate man my visits had a very favourable effect; for while he liked to converse with me, and particularly instructed me on world and state affairs, he seemed to feel himself relieved and cheered. The few old friends who still gathered round him, often, therefore, made use of me when they wished to soften his peevish humour, and persuade him to any diversion. He now really rode out with us many times, and again contemplated the country, on which he had not cast an eye for so many years. He called to mind the old landowners, and told stories of their characters and actions, in which he showed himself always severe, but often cheerful and witty. We now tried also to bring him again among other men, which, however, nearly turned out badly.

¹⁰ Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation; for the princes thereof have become the associates of robbers. —*Trans.*

¹¹ Racine's tragedy. —*Trans.*

About the same age, if indeed not older, was one Herr Von Malapert, a rich man, who possessed a very handsome house by the Horse-market, and derived a good income from salt-pits. He also lived quite secluded: but in summer he was a great deal in his garden, near the Bockenheim gate, where he watched and tended a very fine plot of pinks.

Von Reineck was likewise an amateur of pinks; the season of flowering had come, and suggestions were made as to whether these two could not visit each other. We introduced the matter, and persisted in it, till at last Von Reineck resolved to go out with us one Sunday afternoon. The greeting of the two old gentlemen was very laconic, indeed, almost pantomimic, and they walked up and down by the long pink frames with true diplomatic strides. The display was really extraordinarily beautiful, and the particular forms and colours of the different flowers, the advantages of one over the other, and their rarity, gave at last occasion to a sort of conversation which appeared to get quite friendly; at which we others rejoiced the more because we saw the most precious old Rhine wine in cut decanters, fine fruits, and other good things spread upon a table in a neighbouring bower. But these, alas, we were not to enjoy. For Von Reineck unfortunately saw a very fine pink with its head somewhat hanging down; he therefore took the stalk near the calyx very cautiously between his fore and middle fingers, and lifted the flower so that he could well inspect it. But even this gentle handling vexed the owner. Von Malapert courteously, indeed, but stiffly enough, and somewhat self-complacently, reminded him of the *Oculis, non manibus*.¹² Von Reineck had already let go the flower, but at once took fire at the words, and said in his usual dry, serious manner, that it was quite consistent with an amateur to touch and examine them in such a manner. Whereupon he repeated the act, and took the flower again between his fingers. The friends of both parties – for Von Malapert also had one present – were now in the greatest perplexity. They set one hare to catch another (that was our proverbial expression, when a conversation was to be interrupted, and turned to another subject), but it would not do; the old gentleman had become quite silent, and we feared every moment that Von Reineck would repeat the act, when it would be all over with us. The two friends kept their principals apart by occupying them, now here, now there, and at last we found it most expedient to make preparation for departure. Thus, alas! we were forced to turn our backs on the inviting side-board, yet unenjoyed.

Frankfort Characters – Hofrath Huisgen.

Hofrath Huisgen, not born in Frankfort, of the reformed¹³ religion, and therefore incapable of public office, including the profession of advocate, which, however, because much confidence was placed in him as an excellent jurist, he managed to exercise quietly, both in the Frankfort and the imperial courts, under assumed signatures, was already sixty years old when I took writing lessons with his son, and so came into his house. His figure was tall without being thin, and broad without corpulency. You could not look, for the first time, on his face, which was not only disfigured by smallpox, but deprived of an eye, without apprehension. He always wore on his bald head a perfectly white bell-shaped cap, tied at the top with a ribbon. His morning-gowns, of calamanco or damask, were always very clean. He dwelt in a very cheerful suite, of rooms on the ground-floor by the *Allée*, and the neatness of everything about him corresponded with this cheerfulness. The perfect arrangement of his papers, books, and maps, produced a favourable impression. His son Heinrich Sebastian, afterwards known by various writings on Art, gave little promise in his youth. Good-natured but dull, not rude but blunt, and without any special liking for instruction, he rather sought to avoid the presence of his father, as he could get all he wanted from his mother. I, on the other hand, grew more and more intimate with the old man, the more I knew of him. As he attended only to important cases, he had time enough to occupy and amuse himself in another manner. I had not long frequented his house, and heard his doctrines, than I could well perceive that he stood in opposition

¹² Eyes, not hands. —*Trans.*

¹³ That is to say, he was a Calvinist, as distinguished from a Lutheran. —*Trans.*

to God and the world. One of his favourite books was *Agrippa de Vanitate Scientiarum*, which he especially commended to me, and so set my young brains in a considerable whirl for a long time. In the happiness of youth I was inclined to a sort of optimism, and had again pretty well reconciled myself with God or the Gods; for the experience of a series of years had taught me that there was much to counterbalance evil, that one can well recover from misfortune, and that one may be saved from dangers and need not always break one's neck. I looked with tolerance, too, on what men did and pursued, and found many things worthy of praise which my old gentleman could not by any means abide. Indeed, once when he had sketched the world to me, rather from the distorted side, I observed from his appearance that he meant to close the game with an important trump-card. He shut tight his blind left eye, as he was wont to do in such cases, looked sharp out of the other, and said in a nasal voice, "Even in God I discover defects."

My Timonic mentor was also a mathematician, but his practical turn drove him to mechanics, though he did not work himself. A clock, wonderful indeed in those days, which indicated not only the days and hours, but the motions of the sun and moon, he caused to be made according to his own plan. On Sunday, about ten o'clock in the morning, he always wound it up himself, which he could do the more regularly, as he never went to church. I never saw company nor guests at his house; and only twice in ten years do I remember to have seen him dressed and walking out of doors.

My various conversations with these men were not insignificant, and each of them influenced me in his own way. From every one I had as much attention as his own children, if not more, and each strove to increase his delight in me as in a beloved son, while he aspired to mould me into his moral counterpart. Olenschlager would have made me a courtier, Von Reineck a diplomatic man of business; both, the latter particularly, sought to disgust me with poetry and authorship. Huisgen wished me to be a Timon after his fashion, but, at the same time, an able juris-consult; a necessary profession, as he thought, with which one could in a regular manner defend oneself and friends against the rabble of mankind, succour the oppressed, and above all, pay off a rogue; though the last is neither especially practicable nor advisable.

But if I liked to be at the side of these men to profit by their counsels and directions, younger persons, only a little older than myself, roused me to immediate emulation. I name here before all others, the brothers Schlosser and Griesbach. But, as I came subsequently into a more intimate connexion with these, which lasted for many years uninterruptedly, I will only say for the present, that they were then praised as being distinguished in languages and other studies which opened the academical course, and held up as models, and that everybody cherished the certain expectation that they would once do something uncommon in church and state.

With respect to myself, I also had it in my mind to produce something extraordinary, but in what it was to consist was not clear. But as we are apt to think rather upon the reward which may be received than upon the merit which is to be acquired, so, I do not deny, that if I thought of a desirable piece of good fortune, it appeared to me most fascinating in the shape of that laurel garland which is woven to adorn the poet.

FIFTH BOOK

Gretchen – Coronation Ceremonies

Every bird has its decoy, and every man is led and misled in a way peculiar to himself. Nature, education, circumstances, and habit kept me apart from all that was rude; and though I often came into contact with the lower classes of people, particularly mechanics, no close connexion grew out of it. I had indeed boldness enough to undertake something uncommon and perhaps dangerous, and many times felt disposed to do so; but I was without the handle by which to grasp and hold it.

Meanwhile I was quite unexpectedly involved in an affair which brought me near to a great hazard, and at least for a long time into perplexity and distress. The good terms on which I before stood with the boy whom I have already named Pylades was maintained up to the time of my youth. We indeed saw each other less often, because our parents did not stand on the best footing with each other; but when we did meet, the old raptures of friendship broke out immediately. Once we met in the alleys which offer a very agreeable walk between the outer and inner gate of Saint Gallus. We had scarcely returned greetings, than he said to me, "I hold to the same opinion as ever about your verses. Those which you recently communicated to me, I read aloud to some pleasant companions, and not one of them will believe that you have made them." "Let it pass," I answered; "we will make them and enjoy them, and the others may think and say of them what they please."

"There comes the unbeliever now," added my friend. "We will not speak of it," I replied; "what is the use of it? one cannot convert them." "By no means," said my friend; "I cannot let the affair pass off in this way."

After a short and indifferent conversation, my young comrade, who was but too well disposed towards me, could not suffer the matter to drop, without saying to the other, with some resentment, "Here is my friend who made those pretty verses, for which you will not give him credit!" "He will certainly not be offended at that," answered the other, "for we do him an honour when we suppose that more learning is required to make such verses than one of his years can possess." I replied with something indifferent; but my friend continued, "It will not cost much labour to convince you. Give him any theme, and he will make you a poem on the spot." I assented, we were agreed, and the other asked me whether I would venture to compose a pretty love-letter in rhyme, which a modest young woman might be supposed to write to a young man, to declare her inclination. "Nothing is easier than that," I answered, "if I only had writing materials." He pulled out his pocket almanac, in which there were a great many blank leaves, and I sat down upon a bench to write. They walked about in the meanwhile, but always kept me in sight. I immediately brought the required situation before my mind, and thought how agreeable it must be if some pretty girl were really attached to me, and would reveal her sentiments to me, either in prose or verse. I therefore began my declaration with delight, and in a little while executed it in a flowing measure, between doggerel and madrigal, with the greatest possible *naïveté*, and in such a way that the sceptic was overcome with admiration, and my friend with delight. The request of the former to possess the poem I could the less refuse, as it was-written in his almanac; and I willingly saw the documentary evidence of my capabilities in his hands. He departed-with many assurances of admiration and respect, and wished for nothing more than that we should often meet; so we settled soon to go together into the country.

Our party actually took place, and was joined by several more young people of the same rank. They were men of the middle, or, if you please, of the lower class, who were not wanting in brains, and who moreover, as they had gone through school, were possessed of various knowledge and a certain degree of culture. In a large, rich city there are many modes of gaining a livelihood. These got on by copying for the lawyers, and by advancing the children of the lower order more than is usual

in common schools. With grown-up children, who were about to be confirmed, they went through the religious courses; then, again, they assisted factors and merchants in some way, and were thus enabled to enjoy themselves frugally in the evenings, and particularly on Sundays and festivals.

First Acquaintance With Gretchen.

On the way there, while they highly extolled my love-letter, they confessed to me that they had made a very merry use of it, viz. – that it had been copied in a feigned hand, and, with a few pertinent allusions, had been sent to a conceited young man, who was now firmly persuaded that a lady to whom he had paid distant court was excessively enamoured of him, and sought an opportunity for closer acquaintance. They at the same time told me in confidence, that he desired nothing more now than to be able to answer her in verse; but that neither he nor they were skilful enough, so that they earnestly solicited me to compose the much-desired reply.

Mystifications are and will continue to be an amusement for idle people, whether more or less ingenious. A venial wickedness, a self-complacent malice, is an enjoyment for those who have neither resources in themselves nor a wholesome external activity. No age is quite exempt from such pruriences. We had often tricked each other in our childish years; many sports turn upon mystification and trick. The present jest did not seem to me to go further; I gave my consent. They imparted to me many particulars which the letter ought to contain, and we brought it home already finished.

A little while afterwards I was urgently invited, through my friend, to take part in one of the evening feasts of that society. The lover, he said, was willing to bear the expense on this occasion, and desired expressly to thank the friend who had shown himself so excellent a poetical secretary.

We came together late enough, the meal was most frugal, the wine drinkable: while as for the conversation, it turned almost entirely on jokes upon the young man, who was present, and certainly not very bright, and who, after repeated readings of the letter, almost believed that he had written it himself.

My natural good-nature would not allow me to take much pleasure in such a malicious deception, and the repetition of the same subject soon disgusted me. I should certainly have passed a tedious evening, if an unexpected apparition had not revived me. On our arrival the table had already been neatly and orderly covered, and sufficient wine had been put on; we sat down and remained alone, without requiring further service. As there was, however, a want of wine at last, one of them called for the maid; but instead of the maid there came in a girl of uncommon, and, when one saw her with all around her, of incredible beauty. "What do you desire?" she asked, after having cordially wished us a good evening; "the maid is ill in bed. Can I serve you?" "The wine is out," said one; "if you would fetch us a few bottles, it would be very kind." "Do it, Gretchen,"¹⁴ said another, "it is but a cat's leap from here." "Why not?" she answered, and taking a few empty bottles from the table, she hastened out. Her form, as seen from behind, was almost more elegant. The little cap sat so neatly upon her little head, which a slender throat united very gracefully to her neck and shoulders. Everything about her seemed choice, and one could survey her whole form the more at ease, as one's attention was no more exclusively attracted and fettered by the quiet, honest eyes and lovely mouth. I reproved my comrades for sending the girl out alone at night, but they only laughed at me, and I was soon consoled by her return, as the publican lived only just across the way. "Sit down with us, in return," said one. She did so; but, alas, she did not come near me. She drank a glass to our health, and speedily departed, advising us not to stay very long together, and not to be so noisy, as her mother was just going to bed. It was not, however, her own mother, but the mother of our hosts.

The form of that girl followed me from that moment on every path; it was the first durable impression which a female being had made upon me; and as I could find no pretext to see her at home, and would not seek one, I went to church for love of her, and had soon traced out where she

¹⁴ The diminutive of Margaret. —*Trans.*

sat. Thus, during the long Protestant service, I gazed my fill at her. When the congregation left the church I did not venture to accost her, much less to accompany her, and was perfectly delighted if she seemed to have remarked me and to have returned my greeting with a nod. Yet I was not long denied the happiness of approaching her. They had persuaded the lover, whose poetical secretary I had been, that the letter written in his name had been actually despatched to the lady, and had strained to the utmost his expectations that an answer must soon come. This, also, I was to write, and the waggish company entreated me earnestly, through Pylades, to exert all my wit and employ all my art, in order that this piece might be quite elegant and perfect.

Gretchen's Advice.

In the hope of again seeing my fair one, I went immediately to work, and thought of everything that would be in the highest degree pleasing if Gretchen were writing it to me. I imagined I had written out everything so completely from her form, her nature, her manner, and her mind, that I could not refrain from wishing that it were so in reality, and lost myself in rapture at the mere thought that something similar could be sent from her to me. Thus I mystified myself, while I intended to impose upon another; and much joy and much trouble was yet to arise out of the affair. When I was once more summoned, I had finished, promised to come, and did not fail at the appointed hour. There was only one of the young people at home; Gretchen sat at the window spinning; the mother was going to and fro. The young man desired that I should read it over to him; I did so, and read not without emotion, as I glanced over the paper at the beautiful girl; and when I fancied that I remarked a certain uneasiness in her deportment, and a gentle flush on her cheeks, I uttered better and with more animation that which I wished to hear from herself. The cousin, who had often interrupted me with commendations, at last entreated me to make some amendments. These affected some passages which indeed were rather suited to the condition of Gretchen than to that of the lady, who was of a good family, wealthy, and known and respected in the city. After the young man had designated the desired changes, and had brought me an inkstand, but had taken leave for a short time on account of some business, I remained sitting on the bench against the wall, behind the large table, and essayed the alterations that were to be made, on the large slate, which almost covered the whole table, with a pencil that always lay in the window, because upon this slate reckonings were often made, and various memoranda noted down, and those coming in or going out even communicated with each other.

I had for a-while written different things and rubbed them out again, when I exclaimed impatiently, "It will not do!" "So much the better," said the dear girl, in a grave tone; "I wished that it might not do! You should not meddle in such matters." She arose from the distaff, and stepping towards the table, gave me a severe lecture, with a great deal of good sense and kindness. "The thing seems an innocent jest; it is a jest, but it is not innocent. I have already lived to see several cases, in which our young people, for the sake of such mere mischief, have brought themselves into great difficulty." "But what shall I do?" I asked; "the letter is written, and they rely upon me to alter it." "Trust me," she replied, "and do not alter it; nay, take it back, put it in your pocket, go away, and try to make the matter straight through your friend. I will also put in a word; for look you, though I am a poor girl, and dependent upon these relations, – who indeed do nothing bad, though they often, for the sake of sport or profit, undertake a good deal that is rash, – I have resisted them, and would not copy the first letter, as they requested. They transcribed it in a feigned hand, and if it is not otherwise, so may they also do with this. And you, a young man of good family, rich, independent, why will you allow yourself to be used as a tool in a business which can certainly bring no good to you, and may possibly bring much that is unpleasant?" I was glad to hear her speaking thus continuously, for generally she introduced but few words into conversation. My liking for her grew incredibly, – I was not master of myself, – and replied, "I am not so independent as you suppose; and of what use is wealth to me, when the most precious thing I can desire is wanting?"

She had drawn my sketch of the poetic epistle towards her, and read it half aloud in a sweet and graceful manner. "That is very pretty," said she, stopping at a sort of *naïve* point; "but it is a pity that it is not destined for a real purpose." "That were indeed very desirable," I cried, "and, oh! how happy must he be, who receives from a girl he infinitely loves, such an assurance of her affection." "There is much required for that," she answered; "and yet many things are possible." "For example," I continued, "if any one who knew, prized, honoured, and adored you, laid such a paper before you, what would you do?" I pushed the paper nearer to her, which she had previously pushed back to me. She smiled, reflected for a moment, took the pen, and subscribed her name. I was beside myself with rapture, sprang up, and would have embraced her. "No kissing!" said she, "that is so vulgar; but let us love if we can." I had taken up the paper, and thrust it into my pocket. "No one shall ever get it," said I; "the affair is closed. You have saved me." "Now complete the salvation," she exclaimed, "and hurry off, before the others arrive, and you fall into trouble and embarrassment." I could not tear myself away from her; but she asked me in so kindly a manner, while she took my right hand in both of hers, and lovingly pressed it! The tears stood in my eyes; I thought hers looked moist. I pressed my face upon her hands and hastened away. Never in my life had I found myself in such perplexity.

Juvenile Love.

The first propensities to love in an uncorrupted youth take altogether a spiritual direction. Nature seems to desire that one sex may by the senses perceive goodness and beauty in the other. And thus to me, by the sight of this girl – by my strong inclination for her – a new world of the beautiful and the excellent had arisen. I read my poetical epistle a hundred times through, gazed upon the signature, kissed it, pressed it to my heart, and rejoiced in this amiable confession. But the more my transports increased, the more did it pain me, not to be able to visit her immediately, and to see and converse with her again; for I dreaded the reproofs and importunities of her cousins. The good Pylades, who might have arranged the affair, I could not contrive to meet. The next Sunday, therefore, I set out for Niederrad, where these associates generally used to go, and actually found them there. I was, however, greatly surprised, when, instead of behaving in a cross, distant manner, they came up to me with joyful countenances. The youngest particularly was very friendly, took me by the hand, and said, "You have lately played us a sorry trick, and we were very angry with you; but your absconding and taking away the poetical epistle has suggested a good thought to us, which otherwise might never have occurred. By way of atonement, you may treat us to-day, and you shall learn at the same time the notion we have, which will certainly give you pleasure." This address put me in no little perplexity; for I had about me only money enough to regale myself and a friend; but to treat a whole company, and especially one which did not always stop at the right time, I was by no means prepared; nay, the proposal astonished me the more, as they had always insisted, in the most honourable manner, that each one should pay only his own share. They smiled at my distress, and the youngest proceeded, "Let us first take a seat in the bower, and then you shall learn more." We sat down, and he said, "When you had taken the love-letter with you, we talked the whole affair over again, and came to a conclusion that we had gratuitously misused your talent to the vexation of others and our own danger, for the sake of a mere paltry love of mischief, when we could have employed it to the advantage of all of us. See, I have here an order for a wedding-poem, as well as for a dirge. The second must be ready immediately, the other can wait a week. Now, if you make these; which is easy for you, you will treat us twice, and we shall long remain your debtors." This proposition pleased me in every respect; for I had already in my childhood looked with a certain envy on the occasional poems,¹⁵ of which then several circulated every week, and at respectable marriages especially came to light by the dozen, because I thought I could make such things as well, nay, better than others. Now an opportunity was offered me to show myself, and especially to see myself in print. I did not

¹⁵ That is to say, a poem written for a certain occasion, as a wedding, funeral, &c. The German word is "*Gelegenheitsgedicht*."
—*Trans.*

appear disinclined. They acquainted me with the personal particulars and the position of the family; I went somewhat aside, made my plan, and produced some stanzas. However, when I returned to the company, and the wine was not spared, the poem began to halt, and I could not deliver it that evening. "There is still time till to-morrow evening," they said; "and we will confess to you that the fee which we receive for the dirge is enough to get us another pleasant evening to-morrow. Come to us; for it is but fair that Gretchen too should sup with us, as it was she properly who gave us the notion." My joy was unspeakable. On my way home I had only the remaining stanzas in my head, wrote down the whole before I went to sleep, and the next morning made a very neat fair copy. The day seemed infinitely long to me; and scarcely was it dusk, than I found myself again in the narrow little dwelling beside the dearest of girls.

Gretchen and Her Friends.

The young persons with whom in this way I formed a closer and closer connexion were not properly low, but ordinary sort of people. Their activity was commendable, and I listened to them with pleasure when they spoke of the manifold ways and means by which one could gain a living; above all they loved to tell of people, now very rich, who had begun with nothing. Others to whom they referred had, as poor clerks, rendered themselves indispensable to their employers, and had finally risen to be their sons-in-law: while others had so enlarged and improved a little trade in matches and the like, that they were now prosperous merchants and tradesmen. But above all, to young men, who were active on their feet, the trade of agent and factor, and the undertaking of all sorts of commissions and charges for helpless rich men was, they said, a most profitable means of gaining a livelihood. We all heard this eagerly, and each one fancied himself somebody, when he imagined, at the moment, that there was enough in him, not only to get on in the world, but to acquire an extraordinary fortune. But no one seemed to carry on this conversation more earnestly than Pylades, who at last confessed that he had an extraordinary passion for a girl, and was actually engaged to her. The circumstances of his parents would not allow him to go to universities, but he had endeavoured to acquire a fine handwriting, a knowledge of accounts, and the modern languages, and would now do his best in hopes of attaining that domestic felicity. The cousins praised him for this, although they did not approve of a premature engagement to a girl, and they added, that while forced to acknowledge him to be a fine good fellow, they did not consider him active or enterprising enough to do anything extraordinary. While he, in vindication of himself, circumstantially set forth what he thought himself fit for, and how he was going to begin, the others were also incited, and each one began to tell what he was now able to do, doing, or carrying on, what he had already accomplished, and what he saw immediately before him. The turn at last came to me. I was to set forth my course of life and prospects, and while I was considering, Pylades said, "I make this one proviso, if we all would stand on a level, that he does not bring into the account the external advantages of his position. He should rather tell us a tale how he would proceed if at this moment he were thrown entirely upon his own resources, as we are."

Gretchen, who till this moment, had kept on spinning, rose and seated herself as usual at the end of the table. We had already emptied some bottles, and I began to relate the hypothetical history of my life in the best humour. "First of all, then, I commend myself to you," said I, "that you may continue the custom you have begun to bestow on me. If you gradually procure me the profit of all the occasional poems, and we do not consume them in mere feasting, I shall soon come to something. But then you must not take it ill if I dabble also in your handicraft." Upon this I told them what I had observed in their occupations, and for which I held myself fit at any rate. Each one had previously rated his services in money, and I asked them to assist me also in completing my establishment. Gretchen had listened to all hitherto very attentively, and that in a position which well suited her, whether she chose to hear or to speak. With both hands she clasped her folded arms, and rested them on the edge of the table. Thus she could sit a long while without moving anything but her head, which was never done without occasion or meaning. She had several times put in a word and helped us on

over this and that, when we halted in our projects, and then was again still and quiet as usual. I kept her in my eye, and it may readily be supposed that I had not devised and uttered my plan without reference to her. My passion for her gave to what I said such an air of truth and probability, that for a moment I deceived myself, imagined myself as lonely and helpless as my story supposed, and felt extremely happy in the prospect of possessing her. Pylades had closed his confession with marriage, and the question arose among the rest of us, whether our plans went as far as that. "I have not the least doubt on that score," said I, "for properly a wife is necessary to every one of us, in order to preserve at home and enable us to enjoy as a whole what we rake together abroad in such an odd way." I then made a sketch of a wife, such as I wished, and it must have turned out strangely if she had not been a perfect counterpart of Gretchen.

The dirge was consumed; the epithalamium now stood beneficially at hand; I overcame all fear and care, and contrived, as I had many acquaintances, to conceal my actual evening entertainments from my family. To see and to be near the dear girl was soon an indispensable condition of my being. The friends had grown just as accustomed to me, and we were almost daily together, as if it could not be otherwise. Pylades had, in the meantime, introduced his fair one into the house, and this pair passed many an evening with us. They, as bride and bridegroom, though still very much in the bud, did not conceal their tenderness; Gretchen's deportment towards me was only suited to keep me at a distance. She gave her hand to no one, not even to me; she allowed no touch; yet she many times seated herself near me, particularly when I wrote or read aloud, and then laying her arm familiarly upon my shoulder, she looked over the book or paper. If, however, I ventured on a similar freedom towards her, she withdrew, and would not soon return. This position she often repeated, and indeed all her attitudes and motions were very uniform, but always equally fitting, beautiful, and charming. But such a familiarity I never saw her practise towards anybody else.

The Höchst Market-Ship.

One of the most innocent, and at the same time amusing, parties of pleasure in which I engaged with different companies of young people, was this: that we seated ourselves in the Höchst market-ship, observed the strange passengers packed away in it, and bantered and teased, now this one, now that, as pleasure or caprice prompted. At Höchst we got out at the same time as the market-boat from Mentz arrived. At a hotel there was a well-spread table, where the better sort of travellers, coming and going, ate with each other, and then proceeded, each on his way, as both ships returned. Every time, after dining, we sailed up to Frankfort, having, with a very large company, made the cheapest water-excursion that was possible. Once I had undertaken this journey with Gretchen's cousins, when a young man joined us at table in Höchst, who might be a little older than we were. They knew him, and he got himself introduced to me. He had something very pleasing in his manner, though he was not otherwise distinguished. Coming from Mentz, he now went back with us to Frankfort, and conversed with me of everything that related to the internal arrangements of the city, and the public offices and places, on which he seemed to me to be very well informed. When we separated he bade me farewell, and added, that he wished I might think well of him, as he hoped on occasion to avail himself of my recommendation. I did not know what he meant by this, but the cousins enlightened me some days after; they spoke well of him, and asked me to intercede with my grandfather, as a moderate appointment was just now vacant, which this friend would like to obtain. I at first excused myself, because I had never meddled in such affairs; but they went on urging me until I resolved to do it. I had already many times remarked that, in these grants of offices, which unfortunately were often regarded as matters of favour, the mediation of my grandmother or an aunt had not been without effect. I was now so advanced as to arrogate some influence to myself. For that reason, to gratify my friends, who declared themselves under every sort of obligation for such a kindness, I overcame the timidity of a grandchild, and undertook to deliver a written application that was handed in to me.

One Sunday, after dinner, as my grandfather was busy in his garden, all the more because autumn was approaching, and I tried to assist him on every side; I came forward with my request and the petition, after some hesitation. He looked at it, and asked me whether I knew the young man. I told him in general terms what was to be said, and he let the matter rest there. "If he has merit, and moreover good testimonials, I will favour him for your sake and his own." He said no more, and for a long while I heard nothing of the matter.

Gretchen's New Situation.

For some time I had observed that Gretchen span no more, but on the other hand was employed in sewing, and that, too, on very fine work, which surprised me the more, as the days were already shortening, and winter was coming on. I thought no farther about it, only it troubled me that several times I had not found her at home in the morning as formerly, and could not learn, without importunity, whither she had gone. Yet I was destined one day to be surprised in a very odd manner. My sister, who was getting herself ready for a ball, asked me to fetch her some so-called Italian flowers, at a fashionable milliner's. They were made in convents, and were small and pretty; myrtles especially, dwarf-roses, and the like, came out quite beautifully and naturally. I granted her the favour, and went to the shop where I had already often been with her. Hardly had I entered and greeted the proprietress, than I saw sitting in the window a lady, who in a lace cap looked very young and pretty, and in a silk mantilla seemed very well shaped. I could easily recognize that she was an assistant, for she was occupied in fastening a ribbon and feathers upon a hat: The milliner showed me the long box with single flowers of various sorts; I looked them over, and as I made my choice glanced again towards the lady in the window; but how great was my astonishment when I perceived an incredible similarity to Gretchen, nay, was forced to be convinced at last that it was Gretchen herself. No doubt remained, when she winked with her eyes and gave me a sign that I must not betray our acquaintance. I now with my choosing and rejecting drove the milliner into despair more than even a lady could have done. I had, in fact, no choice, for I was excessively confused, and at the same time liked to linger, because it kept me near the girl, whose disguise annoyed me, though in that disguise she appeared to me more enchanting than ever. Finally, the milliner seemed to lose all patience, and with her own hands selected for me a whole bandbox full of flowers, which I was to place before my sister and let her choose for herself. Thus I was, as it were, driven out of the shop, while she sent the box first by one of her girls.

Scarcely had I reached home than my father caused me to be called, and communicated to me that it was now quite certain that the Archduke Joseph would be elected and crowned King of Rome. An event so highly important was not to be expected without preparation, nor allowed to pass with mere gaping and staring. He wished, therefore, he said, to go through with me the election and coronation-diaries of the two last coronations, as well as through the last capitulations of election, in order to remark what new conditions might be added in the present instance. The diaries were opened, and we occupied ourselves with them the whole day till far into the night, while the pretty girl, sometimes in her old house-dress, sometimes in her new costume, ever hovered before me, backwards and forwards among the most august objects of the Holy Roman Empire. This evening it was impossible to see her, and I lay awake through a very restless night. The study of yesterday was the next day zealously resumed, and it was not till towards evening that I found it possible to visit my fair one, whom I met again in her usual house-dress. She smiled when she saw me, but I did not venture to mention anything before the others. When the whole company sat quietly together again, she began and said, "It is unfair that you do not confide to our friend what we have lately resolved upon." She then continued to relate, that after our late conversation, in which the discussion was how any one could get on in the world, something was also said of the way in which a woman could enhance the value of her talent and labour, and advantageously employ her time. The cousins had consequently proposed that she should make an experiment at a milliner's who was just then in want of an assistant.

They had, she said, arranged with the woman; she went there so many hours a-day, and was well paid; only when there she was obliged, for propriety's sake, to conform to a certain dress, which, however, she left behind her every time, as it did not at all suit her other modes of life and employment. I was indeed set at rest by this declaration, but it did not quite please me to know that the pretty girl was in a public shop, and at a place where the fashionable world found a convenient resort. But I betrayed nothing, and strove to work off my jealous care in silence. For this the younger cousin did not allow me a long time, as he once more came forward with a proposal for an occasional poem, told me all the personalities, and at once desired me to prepare myself for the invention and disposition of the work. He had already spoken with me several times concerning the proper treatment of such a theme, and as I was voluble in these cases, he readily asked me to explain to him circumstantially what is rhetorical in these things, to give him a notion of the matter, and to make use of my own and others' labours in this kind for examples. The young man had some brains, though he was without a trace of a poetical vein, and now he went so much into particulars, and wished to have such an account of everything, that I gave utterance to the remark: "It seems as if you wanted to encroach upon my trade and steal away my customers!" "I will not deny it," said he, smiling, "as I shall do you no harm by it. This will only continue to the time when you go to the university, and till then you must allow me still to profit something by your society." "Most cordially," I replied, and I encouraged him to draw out a plan, to choose a metre according to the character of his subject, and to do whatever else might seem necessary. He went to work in earnest, but did not succeed. I was in the end compelled to re-write so much of it, that I could more easily and better have written it all from the beginning myself. Yet this teaching and learning, this mutual labour, afforded us good entertainment: Gretchen took part in it and had many a pretty notion, so that we were all pleased, we may indeed say, happy. During the day she worked at the milliner's: in the evenings we generally met together, and our contentment was not even disturbed when at last the commissions for occasional poems began to leave off. Still we felt hurt once, when one of them came back under protest, because it did not suit the party who ordered it. We consoled ourselves, however, as we considered it our very best work, and could therefore declare the other a bad judge. The cousin, who was determined to learn something at any rate, resorted to the expedient of inventing problems, in the solution of which we always found amusement enough, but as they brought in nothing, our little banquets had to be much more frugally managed.

Preparations for the Election.

That great political object, the election and coronation of a King of Rome, was pursued with more and more earnestness. The assembling of the electoral college, originally appointed to take place at Augsburg in the October of 1763, was now transferred to Frankfort, and both at the end of this year and in the beginning of the next, preparations went forward, which should usher in this important business. The beginning was made by a parade never yet seen by us. One of our chancery officials on horseback, escorted by four trumpeters likewise mounted, and surrounded by a guard of infantry, read in a loud clear voice at all the corners of the city, a prolix edict, which announced the forthcoming proceedings, and exhorted the citizens to a becoming deportment suitable to the circumstances. The council was occupied with weighty considerations, and it was not long before the Imperial Quarter-Master, despatched by the Hereditary Grand Marshal, made his appearance, in order to arrange and designate the residences of the ambassadors and their suites, according to the old custom. Our house lay in the Palatine district, and we had to provide for a new but agreeable billeting. The middle story, which Count Thorane had formerly occupied, was given up to a cavalier of the Palatinate, and as Baron von Königsthal, the Nuremberg *chargé d'affaires*, occupied the upper floor, we were still more crowded than in the time of the French. This served me as a new excuse to be out of doors, and to pass the greater part of the day in the streets, that I might see all that was open to public view.

After the preliminary alteration and arrangement of the rooms in the town-house had seemed to us worth seeing, after the arrival of the ambassadors one after another, and their first solemn

ascent in a body, on the 6th of February, had taken place, we admired the coming in of the imperial commissioners, and their ascent also to the *Römer*, which was made with great pomp. The dignified person of the Prince of Lichtenstein made a good impression; yet connoisseurs maintained that the showy liveries had already been used on another occasion, and that this election and coronation would hardly equal in brilliancy that of Charles the Seventh. We younger folks were content with what was before our eyes; all seemed to us very fine, and much of it perfectly astonishing.

The electoral congress was fixed at last for the 3rd of March. New formalities again set the city in motion, and the alternate visits of ceremony on the part of the ambassadors kept us always on our legs. We were compelled, too, to watch closely, as we were not only to gape about, but to note everything well, in order to give a proper report at home, and even to make out many little memoirs, on which my father and Herr von Königsthal had deliberated, partly for our exercise and partly for their own information. And certainly this was of peculiar advantage to me, as I was enabled very tolerably to keep a living election and coronation-diary, as far as regarded externals.

Baron Von Plotho.

The person who first of all made a durable impression upon me was the chief ambassador from the electorate of Mentz, Baron von Erthal, afterwards Elector. Without having anything striking in his figure, he was always highly pleasing to me in his black gown trimmed with lace. The second ambassador, Baron von Groschlag, was a well-formed man of the world, easy in his exterior, but conducting himself with great decorum. He everywhere produced a very agreeable impression. Prince Esterhazy, the Bohemian envoy, was not tall, though well-formed, lively, and at the same time eminently decorous, without pride or coldness. I had a special liking for him, because he reminded me of Marshal de Broglio. Yet the form and dignity of these excellent persons vanished, in a certain degree, before the prejudice that was entertained in favour of Baron von Plotho, the Brandenburg ambassador. This man, who was distinguished by a certain parsimony, both in his own clothes and in his liveries and equipages, had been greatly renowned from the time of the seven years' war, as a diplomatic hero. At Ratisbon, when the Notary April thought, in the presence of witnesses, to serve him with the declaration of outlawry which had been issued against his king, he had, with the laconic exclamation: "What! you serve: " thrown him, or caused him to be thrown, down stairs. We believed the first, because it pleased us best, and we could readily believe it of the little compact man, with his black, fiery eyes glancing here and there. All eyes were directed towards him, particularly when he alighted. There arose every time a sort of joyous whispering, and but little was wanting to a regular explosion, or a shout of *Vivat! Bravo!* So high did the king, and all who were devoted to him, body and soul, stand in favour with the crowd, among whom, besides the Frankforters, were Germans from all parts.

On the one hand these things gave me much pleasure; as all that took place, no matter of what nature it might be, concealed a certain meaning, indicated some internal relation, and such symbolic ceremonies again, for a moment, represented as living the old Empire of Germany, almost choked to death by so many parchments, papers, and books. But, on the other hand, I could not suppress a secret displeasure, when I was forced, at home, on my father's account, to transcribe the internal transactions, and at the same time to remark that here several powers, which balanced each other, stood in opposition, and only so far agreed, as they designed to limit the new ruler even more than the old one; that every one valued his influence only so far as he hoped to retain or enlarge his privileges, and better to secure his independence. Nay, on this occasion they were more attentive than usual, because they began to fear Joseph the Second, his vehemence and probable plans.

With my grandfather and other members of the council, whose families I used to visit, this was no pleasant time, they had so much to do with meeting distinguished guests, complimenting, and the delivery of presents. No less had the magistrate, both in general and in particular, to defend himself, to resist, and to protest, as every one on such occasions desires to extort something from

him, or burden him with something, and few of those to whom he appeals support him, or lend him their aid. In short, all that I had read in *Lersner's Chronicle* of similar incidents on similar occasions, with admiration of the patience and perseverance of those good old councilmen, came once more vividly before my eyes.

Many vexations arise also from this, that the city is gradually overrun with people, both useful and needless. In vain are the courts reminded, on the part of the city, of prescriptions of the Golden Bull, now, indeed, obsolete. Not only the deputies with their attendants, but many persons of rank, and others who come from curiosity or for private objects, stand under protection, and the question as to who is to be billeted out, and who is to hire his own lodging, is not always decided at once. The tumult constantly increases, and even those who have nothing to give, or to answer for, begin to feel uncomfortable.

Even we young people, who could quietly contemplate it all, ever found something which did not quite satisfy our eyes or our imagination. The Spanish mantles, the huge feathered hats of the ambassadors, and other objects here and there, had indeed a truly antique look; but there was a great deal, on the other hand, so half-new or entirely modern, that the affair assumed throughout a motley, unsatisfactory, often tasteless appearance. We were very happy to learn, therefore, that great preparations were made on account of the journey to Frankfort of the Emperor and future King; that the proceedings of the college of electors, which were based on the last electoral capitulation, were now going forward rapidly; and that the day of election had been appointed for the 27th of March. Now there was a thought of fetching the insignia of the Empire from Nuremberg and Aix-la-Chapelle, and next we expected the entrance of the Elector of Mentz, while the disputes with his ambassadors about the quartering ever continued.

Meanwhile I pursued my clerical labours at home very actively, and perceived many little suggestions (*monita*) which came in from all sides, and were to be regarded in the new capitulation. Every rank desired to see its privileges guaranteed and its importance increased in this document. Very many such observations and desires were, however, put aside; much remained as it was, though the suggestors (*monentes*) received the most positive assurances that the neglect should in no wise ensue to their prejudice.

In the meanwhile the office of Imperial Marshal was forced to undertake many dangerous affairs; the crowd of strangers increased, and it became more and more difficult to find lodgings for them. Nor was there unanimity as to the limits of the different precincts of the Electors. The magistracy wished to keep from the citizens the burdens which they were not bound to bear, and thus day and night there were hourly grievances, redresses, contests, and misunderstandings.

The entrance of the Elector of Mentz happened on the 21st of May. Then began the cannonading, with which for a long time we were often to be deafened. This solemnity was important in the series of ceremonies; for all the men whom we had hitherto seen, high as they were in rank, were still only subordinates; but here appeared a sovereign, an independent prince, the first after the Emperor, preceded and accompanied by a large retinue worthy of himself. Of the pomp which marked his entrance I should have much to tell, if I did not purpose returning to it hereafter, and on an occasion which no one could easily guess.

Lavater.

What I refer to is this: – the same day, Lavater, on his return home from Berlin, came through Frankfort, and saw the solemnity. Now, though such worldly formalities could not have the least value for him, this procession, with its display and all its accessories, might have been distinctly impressed on his very lively imagination; for, many years afterwards, when this eminent but singular man showed me a poetical paraphrase of, I believe, the Revelation of St. John, I discovered the entrance of Anti-Christ copied, step by step, figure by figure, circumstance by circumstance, from the entrance of the Elector of Mentz into Frankfort, in such a manner, too, that even the tassels on the heads of the dun-

coloured horses were not wanting. More can be said on this point when I reach the epoch of that strange kind of poetry, by which it was supposed that the myths of the Old and New Testaments were brought nearer to our view and feelings when they were completely travestied into the modern style, and clothed with the vestments of present life, whether gentle or simple. How this mode of treatment gradually obtained favour, will be likewise discussed hereafter; yet I may here simply remark that it could not well be carried further than it was by Lavater and his emulators, one of these having described the three holy kings riding into Bethlehem, in such modern form, that the princes and gentlemen whom Lavater used to visit were not to be mistaken as the persons.

We will then for the present allow the Elector Emeric Joseph to enter the Compostello incognito, so to speak, and turn to Gretchen, whom, just as the crowd was dispersing, I spied in the crowd, accompanied by Pylades and his mistress, the three now seeming to be inseparable. We had scarcely come up to each other and exchanged greetings, than it was agreed that we should pass the evening together, and I kept the appointment punctually. The usual company had assembled, and each one had something to relate, to say, or to remark – how one had been most struck by this thing and another by that. "Your speeches," said Gretchen at last, "perplex me even more than the events of the time themselves. What I have seen I cannot make out; and should very much like to know what a great deal of it means." I replied that it was easy for me to render her this service. She had only to say what particularly interested her. This she did, and as I was about to explain some points, it was found that it would be better to proceed in order. I not unskilfully compared these solemnities and functions to a play, in which the curtain was let down at will, while the actors played on, and was then raised again, so that the spectators could once more, to some extent, take part in the action. As now I was very loquacious when I was allowed my own way, I related the whole, from the beginning down to the time present, in the best order; and to make the subject of my discourse more apparent, did not fail to use the pencil and the large slate. Being only slightly interrupted by some questions and obstinate assertions of the others, I brought my discourse to a close, to the general satisfaction, while Gretchen, by her unbroken attention, had highly encouraged me. At last she thanked me, and envied, as she said, all who were informed of the affairs of this world, and knew how this and that came about and what it signified. She wished she were a boy, and managed to acknowledge, with much kindness, that she was indebted to me for a great deal of instruction. "If I were a boy," said she, "we would learn something good together at the university." The conversation continued in this strain; she definitively resolved to take instruction in French, of the absolute necessity of which she had become well aware in the milliner's shop. I asked her why she no longer went there; for dining the latter times, not being able to go out much in the evening, I had often passed the shop during the day for her sake, merely to see her for a moment. She explained that she had not liked to expose herself there in these unsettled times. As soon as the city returned to its former condition she intended to go there again.

Approach of the Election.

Then the discourse was on the impending day of election. I contrived to tell, at length, what was going to happen, and how, and to support my demonstrations in detail by drawings on the tablet; for I had the place of conclave, with its altars, thrones, seats, and chairs, perfectly before my mind. We separated at the proper time, and in a peculiarly comfortable frame of mind.

For, with a young couple who are in any degree harmoniously formed by nature, nothing can conduce to a more beautiful union than when the maiden is anxious to learn, and the youth inclined to teach. There arises from it a well-grounded and agreeable relation. She sees in him the creator of her spiritual existence, and he sees in her a creature that ascribes her perfection, not to nature, not to chance, nor to any one-sided inclination, but to a mutual will; and this reciprocation is so sweet, that

we cannot wonder, if from the days of the old and the new¹⁶ Abelard, the most violent passions, and as much happiness as unhappiness, have arisen from such an intercourse of two beings.

With the next day began great commotion in the city, on account of the visits paid and returned which now took place with the greatest ceremony. But what particularly interested me, as a citizen of Frankfort, and gave rise to a great many reflections, was the taking of the oath of security (*Sicherheitseides*) by the council, the military, and the body of citizens, not through representatives, but personally, and in mass: first, in the great hall of the Römer, by the magistracy and staff-officers; then in the great square (*Platz*), the Römerberg, by all the citizens, according to their respective ranks, gradations, or quarterings; and lastly by the rest of the military. Here one could survey at a single glance the entire commonwealth, assembled for the honourable purpose of swearing security to the head and members of the Empire, and unbroken peace during the great work now impending. The Electors of Treves and of Cologne had now also arrived in person. On the evening before the day of election all strangers are sent out of the city, the gates are closed, the Jews are confined to their quarter, and the citizen of Frankfort prides himself not a little that he alone may be a witness of so great a solemnity.

All that had hitherto taken place was tolerably modern; the highest and high personages moved about only in coaches; but now we were going to see them in the primitive manner on horseback. The concourse and rush were extraordinary. I managed to squeeze myself into the Römer, which I knew as familiarly as a mouse does the private corn-loft, till I reached the main entrance, before which the Electors and ambassadors, who had first arrived in their state-coaches, and had assembled above, were now to mount their horses. The stately, well-trained steeds were covered-with richly laced housings, and ornamented in every way. The Elector Emeric Joseph, a comfortable-looking man, looked well on horseback. Of the other two I remember less, excepting that the red princes' mantles, trimmed with ermine, which we had been accustomed to see only in pictures before, seemed to us very romantic in the open air. The ambassadors of the absent temporal Electors, with their Spanish dresses of gold brocade, embroidered over with gold, and trimmed with gold lace, likewise did our eyes good; and the large feathers particularly, that waved most splendidly from the hats, which were cocked in the antique style. But what did not please me were the short modern breeches, the white silk stockings, and the fashionable shoes. We should have liked half-boots – gilded as much as they pleased – sandals, or something of the kind, that we might have seen a more consistent costume.

In deportment the Ambassador Von Plotho again distinguished himself from all the rest. He appeared lively and cheerful, and seemed to have no great respect for the whole ceremony. For when his front-man, an elderly gentleman, could not leap immediately on his horse, and he was therefore forced to wait some time in the grand entrance, he did not refrain from laughing, till his own horse was brought forward, upon which he swung himself very dexterously, and was again admired by us as a most worthy representative of Frederick the Second.

Now the curtain was for us once more let down. I had indeed tried to force my way into the church; but that place was more inconvenient than agreeable. The voters had withdrawn into the *sanctum*, where prolix ceremonies usurped the place of a deliberate consideration as to the election. After long delay, pressure, and bustle, the people at last heard the name of Joseph the Second, who was proclaimed King of Rome.

Approach of the Emperor and King.

The thronging of strangers into the city became greater and greater. Everybody went about in his holiday clothes, so that at last none but dresses entirely of gold were found worthy of note. The Emperor and King had already arrived at *Heusenstamm*, a castle of the Counts of Schönborn, and were there in the customary manner greeted and welcomed; but the city celebrated this important

¹⁶ The "new Abelard" is St. Preux, in the *Nouvelle Heloise* of Rousseau. —*Trans.*

epoch by spiritual festivals of all the religions, by high masses and sermons; and on the temporal side by incessant firing of cannon as an accompaniment to the *Te Deums*.

If all these public solemnities, from the beginning up to this point, had been regarded as a deliberate work of art, not much to find fault with would have been found. All was well prepared. The public scenes opened gradually, and went on increasing in importance; the men grew in number, the personages in dignity, their appurtenances, as well as themselves, in splendour; and thus it advanced with every day, till at last even a well-prepared and firm eye became bewildered.

The entrance of the Elector of Mentz, which we have refused to describe more completely, was magnificent and imposing enough to suggest to the imagination of an eminent man, the advent of a great prophesied World-Ruler; even we were not a little dazzled by it. But now our expectation was stretched to the utmost, as it was said that the Emperor and the future King were approaching the city. At a little distance from Sachsenhausen, a tent had been erected, in which the entire magistracy remained, to show the appropriate honour, and to proffer the keys of the city to the chief of the Empire. Further out, on a fair spacious plain, stood another – a state pavilion, whither the whole body of electoral princes and ambassadors repaired, while their retinues extended along the whole way, that gradually, as their turns came, they might again move towards the city, and enter properly into the procession. By this time the Emperor reached the tent, entered it, and the princes and ambassadors, after a most respectful reception, withdrew, to facilitate the passage of the chief ruler.

The Imperial Carriage.

We others who remained in the city to admire this pomp within the walls and streets, still more than could have been done in the open fields, were very well entertained for a while by the barricade set up by the citizens in the lanes, by the throng of people, and by the various jests and improprieties which arose, till the ringing of bells and the thunder of cannon announced to us the immediate approach of Majesty. What must have been particularly grateful to a Frankforter was, that on this occasion, in the presence of so many sovereigns and their representatives, the imperial city of Frankfort also appeared as a little sovereign; for her equerry opened the procession; chargers with armorial trappings, upon which the white eagle on a red field looked very fine, followed him; then came attendants and officials, drummers and trumpeters, and deputies of the council, accompanied by the clerks of the council, in the city livery, on foot. Immediately behind these were the three companies of citizen cavalry, very well mounted – the same that we had seen from our youth, at the reception of the escort and on other public occasions. We rejoiced in our participation of the honour, and in our hundred-thousandth part of a sovereignty which now appeared in its full brilliancy. The different trains of the Hereditary Imperial Marshal, and of the envoys deputed by the six temporal Electors, marched after these step by step. None of them consisted of less than twenty attendants, and two state-carriages – some even of a greater number. The retinue of the spiritual Electors was ever on the increase, – their servants and domestic officers seemed innumerable, – the Elector of Cologne and the Elector of Treves had above twenty state-carriages, and the Elector of Mentz quite as many alone. The servants, both on horseback and on foot, were clothed most splendidly throughout; the lords in the equipages, spiritual and temporal, had not omitted to appear richly and venerably dressed, and adorned with all the badges of their orders. The train of his Imperial Majesty now, as was fit, surpassed all the rest. The riding-masters, the led horses, the equipages, the shabracks and caparisons, attracted every eye, and the sixteen six-horse gala-wagons of the Imperial Chamberlains, Privy Councillors, High Chamberlain, High Stewards, and High Equerry, closed, with great pomp, this division of the procession, which, in spite of its magnificence and extent, was still only to be the van-guard.

But now the line concentrated itself more and more, while the dignity and parade kept on increasing. For, in the midst of a chosen escort of their own domestic attendants, the most of them on foot, and a few on horseback, appeared the Electoral ambassadors as well as the Electors in person, in

ascending order, each one in a magnificent state-carriage. Immediately behind the Elector of Mentz, ten imperial footmen, one and forty lackeys, and eight Heyducks,¹⁷ announced their Majesties. The most magnificent state-carriage, furnished even at the back part with an entire window of plate-glass, ornamented with paintings, lacker, carved work, and gilding, covered with red embroidered velvet on the top and inside, allowed us very conveniently to behold the Emperor and King, the long-desired heads, in all their glory. The procession was led a long circuitous route, partly from necessity, that it might be able to unfold itself, and partly to render it visible to the great multitude of people. It had passed through Sachsenhausen, over the bridge, up the Fahrgasse, then down the Zeile, and turned towards the inner city through the Katharinenpforte, formerly a gate, and since the enlargement of the city, an open thoroughfare. Here it had been fortunately considered that, for a series of years, the external grandeur of the world had gone on expanding both in height and breadth. Measure had been taken, and it was found that the present imperial state-carriage could not, without striking its carved work and other outward decorations, get through this gateway, through which so many princes and emperors had gone backwards and forwards. The matter was debated, and to avoid an inconvenient circuit, it was resolved to take up the pavements, and to contrive a gentle descent and ascent. With the same new they had also removed all the projecting eaves from the shops and booths in the street, that neither crown, nor eagle, nor the genii should receive any shock or injury.

Eagerly as *we* directed our eyes to the high personages when this precious vessel with such precious contents approached us, we could not avoid turning our looks upon the noble horses, their harness, and its embroidery; but the strange coachmen and outriders, both sitting on the horses, particularly struck us. They looked as if they had come from some other nation, or even worn another world, with their long black and yellow velvet coats, and their caps with large plumes of feathers, after the imperial court fashion. Now the crowd became so dense that it was impossible to distinguish much more. The Swiss guard on both sides of the carriage, the Hereditary Marshal holding the Saxon sword upwards in his right hand, the Field-Marschals, as leaders of the Imperial Guard, riding behind the carriage, the imperial pages in a body, and finally, the Imperial Horse-guard (*Hatschiergarde*) itself, in black velvet frocks (*Flügelröck*), with all the seams edged with gold, under which were red coats and leather-coloured camisoles, likewise richly decked with gold! One scarcely recovered oneself from sheer seeing, pointing, and showing, so that the scarcely less splendidly clad body-guards of the Electors were barely looked at, and we should perhaps have withdrawn from the windows, if we had not wished to take a view of our own magistracy, who closed the procession in their fifteen two-horse coaches, and particularly the clerk of the council, with the city keys on red velvet cushions. That our company of city grenadiers should cover the rear, seemed to us honourable enough, and we felt doubly and highly edified as Germans and as Frankfurters by this great day.

Maria Theresa.

We had taken our place in a house which the procession had to pass again when it returned from the cathedral. Of religious services, of music, of rites and solemnities, of addresses and answers, of propositions and readings aloud, there was so much in church, choir, and conclave, before it came to the swearing of the electoral capitulation, that we had time enough to partake of an excellent collation, and to empty many bottles to the health of our old and young ruler. The conversation, in the meanwhile, as is usual on such occasions, reverted to the time past, and there were not wanting aged persons who preferred that to the present, at least with respect to a certain human interest and impassioned sympathy which then prevailed. At the coronation of Francis the First all had not been so settled as now; peace had not yet been concluded; France and the Electors of Brandenburg and the Palatinate were opposed to the election; the troops of the future emperor were stationed at Heidelberg, where he had his head-quarters, and the insignia of the Empire coming from Aix, were almost carried

¹⁷ A class of attendants dressed in Hungarian costume. —*Trans.*

off by the inhabitants of the Palatinate. Meanwhile negotiations went on, and on neither side was the affair conducted in the strictest manner. Maria Theresa, though then pregnant, comes in person to see the coronation of her husband, which is at last carried into effect. She arrived at Aschaffenburg, and went on board a yacht in order to repair to Frankfort. Francis, from Heidelberg, thinks to meet his wife, but comes too late; she has already departed. Unknown, he throws himself into a little boat, hastens after her, reaches her ship, and the loving pair is delighted at this surprising meeting. The story spreads immediately, and all the world sympathizes with this tender pair, so richly blessed with their children, who have been so inseparable since their union, that once on a journey from Vienna to Florence they are forced to keep quarantine together on the Venetian border. Maria Theresa is welcomed in the city with rejoicings, she enters the *Roman Emperor* inn, while the great tent for the reception of her husband is erected on the Bornheim heath. There of the spiritual Electors is found only Mentz, and of the ambassadors of the temporal Electors, only Saxony, Bohemia, and Hanover. The entrance begins, and what it may lack of completeness and splendour is richly compensated by the presence of a beautiful lady. She stands upon the balcony of the well-situated house, and greets her husband with cries of *Vivat* and clapping of hands; the people joined, excited to the highest enthusiasm. As the great are, after all, men, the citizen thinks them his equals when he wishes to love them, and that he can best do when he can picture them to himself as loving husbands, tender parents, devoted brothers, and true friends. At that time all happiness had been wished and prophesied, and to-day it was seen fulfilled in the first-born son; to whom everybody was well inclined on account of his handsome youthful form, and upon whom the world set the greatest hopes, on account of the great qualities that he showed.

We had become quite absorbed in the past and future, when some friends who came in recalled us to the present. They were of those who know the value of novelty, and therefore hasten to announce it first. They were even able to tell of a fine humane trait in those exalted personages whom we had seen go by with the greatest pomp. It had been concerted that on the way, between Heusenstamm and the great tent, the Emperor and King should find the Landgrave of Darmstadt in the forest. This old prince, now approaching the grave, wished to see once more the master to whom he had been devoted in former times. Both might remember the day when the Landgrave brought over to Heidelberg the decree of the Electors choosing Francis as Emperor, and replied to the valuable presents he received with protestations of unalterable devotion. These eminent persons stood in a grove of firs, and the Landgrave, weak with old age, supported himself against a pine, to continue the conversation, which was not without emotion on both sides. The place was afterwards marked in an innocent way, and we young people sometimes wandered to it.

Thus several hours had passed in remembrance of the old and consideration of the new, when the procession, though curtailed and more compact, again passed before our eyes, and we were enabled to observe and mark the detail more closely, and imprint it on our minds for the future.

From that moment the city was in uninterrupted motion; for until each and every one whom it behoved, and of whom it was required, had paid their respects to the highest dignities, and exhibited themselves one by one, there was no end to the marching to and fro, and the court of each one of the high persons present could be very conveniently repeated in detail.

Now, too, the insignia of the Empire arrived. But that no ancient usage might be omitted even in this respect, they had to remain half a day till late at night in the open field, on recount of a dispute about territory and escort between the Elector of Mentz and the city. The latter yielded, the people of Mentz escorted the insignia as far as the barricade, and so the affair terminated for this time.

At Evening with Gretchen.

In these days I did not come to myself. At home I had to write and copy; everything had to be seen; and so ended the month of March, the second half of which had been so rich in festivals for us. I had promised Gretchen a faithful and complete account of what had lately happened, and of what

was to be expected on the coronation-day. This great day approached; I thought more how I should tell it to her than of what properly was to be told; all that came under my eyes and my pen I merely worked up rapidly for this sole and immediate use. At last I reached her residence somewhat late one evening, and was not a little proud to think how my discourse on this occasion would be much more successful than the first unprepared one. But a momentary incitement often brings us, and others through us, more joy than the most deliberate purpose can afford; I found, indeed, pretty nearly the same company, but there were some unknown persons among them. They sat down to play, all except Gretchen and her younger cousin, who remained with me at the slate. The dear girl expressed most gracefully her delight that she, though a stranger, had passed for a citizen on the election-day, and had taken part in that unique spectacle. She thanked me most warmly for having managed to take care of her, and for having been so attentive as to procure her, through Pylades, all sorts of admissions by means of billets, directions, friends, and intercessions.

She liked to hear about the jewels of the Empire. I promised her that we should, if possible, see these together. She made some jesting remarks when she learned that the garments and crown had been tried on the young king. I knew where she would gaze at the solemnities of the coronation-day, and directed her attention to everything that was impending, and particularly to what might be minutely inspected from her place of view.

Thus we forgot to think about time; it was already past midnight; and I found that I unfortunately had not the house-key with me. I could not enter the house without making the greatest disturbance. I communicated my embarrassment to her. "After all," said she, "it will be best for the company to remain together." The cousins and the strangers had already had this in mind, because it was not known where they would be lodged for the night. The matter was soon decided; Gretchen went to make some coffee, after bringing in and lighting a large brass lamp, furnished with oil and wick, because the candles threatened to burn out.

The coffee served to enliven us for several hours, but the game gradually slackened; conversation failed; the mother slept in the great chair; the strangers, weary from travelling, nodded here and there, and Pylades and his fair one sat in a corner. She had laid her head on his shoulder and had gone to sleep, and he did not keep long awake. The younger cousin sitting opposite to us by the slate, had crossed his arms before him, and slept with his face resting upon them. I sat in the window-corner, behind the table, and Gretchen by me. We talked in a low voice: but at last sleep overcame her also, she leaned her head on my shoulder, and sank at once into a slumber. Thus I now sat, the only one awake, in a most singular position, in which the kind brother of death soon put me also to rest. I went to sleep, and when I awoke it was already bright day. Gretchen was standing before the mirror arranging her little cap; she was more lovely than ever, and when I departed cordially pressed my hands. I crept home by a roundabout way; for, on the side towards the little *Stag-ditch*

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