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Содержание

The German Classics of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Volume 06 / Masterpieces of German Literature Translated into English. in Twenty Volumes

THE LIFE OF HEINRICH HEINE

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I

more self-centered and at the same time more unreserved than Heinrich Heine. It may be said that everything which Heine wrote gives us, and was intended to give us, first of all some new impression of the writer; so that after a perusal of his works we know him in all his strength and weakness, as we can know only an amiable and communicative egotist; moreover, besides losing no opportunity for self-expression, both in and out of season, Heine published a good deal of frankly autobiographical matter, and wrote memoirs, only fragments of which have come down to us, but of which more than has yet appeared will perhaps ultimately be made accessible. Heine's life, then, is to us for the most part an open book. Nevertheless, there are many obscure passages in it, and there remain many questions not to be answered with certainty, the first of which is as to the date of his birth. His own statements on this subject are contradictory, and the original records are lost. But it seems probable that he was born on the thirteenth of December, 1797, the eldest child of Jewish parents recently domiciled at Düsseldorf on the Rhine.

The parentage, the place, and the time were almost equally significant aspects of the constellation under which young Harry Heine—for so he was first named—began his earthly career. He was born a Jew in a German city which, with a brief interruption, was for the first sixteen years of his life administered by the French. The citizens of Düsseldorf in general had little reason, except for high taxes and the hardships incident to conscription in the French armies, to complain of the foreign dominion.

Their trade flourished, they were given better laws, and the machinery of justice was made much less cumbersome than it had been before. But especially the Jews hailed the French as deliverers; for now for the first time they were relieved of political disabilities and were placed upon a footing of equality with the gentile population. To Jew and gentile alike the military achievements of the French were a source of satisfaction and admiration; and when the Emperor of the French himself came to town, as Heine saw him do in 1810, we can easily understand how the enthusiasm of the boy surrounded the person of Napoleon, and the idea that he was supposed to represent, with a glamor that never lost its fascination for the man. To Heine, Napoleon was the incarnation of the French Revolution, the glorious new-comer who took by storm the intrenched strongholds of hereditary privilege, the dauntless leader in whose army every common soldier carried a field marshal's baton in his knapsack. If later we find Heine mercilessly assailing the repressive and reactionary aristocracy of Germany, we shall not lightly accuse him of lack of patriotism. He could not be expected to hold dear institutions of which he felt only the burden, without a share in the sentiment which gives stability even to institutions that have outlived their usefulness. Nor shall we call him a traitor for loving the French, a people to whom his people owed so much, and to whom he was spiritually akin.

French influences, almost as early as Hebrew or German, were among the formative forces brought to bear upon the quick-

witted but not precocious boy. Heine's parents were orthodox, but by no means bigoted Jews. We read with amazement that one of the plans of the mother, ambitious for her firstborn, was to make of him a Roman Catholic priest. The boy's father, Samson Heine, was a rather unsuccessful member of a family which in other representatives—particularly Samson's brother Salomon in Hamburg—attained to wealth and prominence in the world of finance.

Samson Heine seems to have been too easy-going, self-indulgent, and ostentatious, to have made the most of the talents that he unquestionably had. Among his foibles was a certain fondness for the pageantry of war, and he was in all his glory as an officer of the local militia. To his son Gustav he transmitted real military capacity, which led to a distinguished career and a patent of nobility in the Austrian service. Harry Heine inherited his father's more amiable but less strenuous qualities. Inquisitive and alert, he was rather impulsive than determined, and his practical mother had her trials in directing him toward preparation for a life work, the particular field of which neither she nor he could readily choose. Peira, or Betty, Heine was a stronger character than her husband; and in her family, several members of which had taken high rank as physicians, there had prevailed a higher degree of intellectual culture than the Heines had attained to. She not only managed the household with prudence and energy, but also took the chief care of the education of the children. To both parents Harry Heine paid the homage of true filial affection;

and of the happiness of the home life, *The Book Le Grand* and a number of poems bear unmistakable witness. The poem "My child, we were two children" gives a true account of Harry and his sister Charlotte at play.

In Düsseldorf, Heine's formal education culminated in attendance in the upper classes of a Lyceum, organized upon the model of a French Lycée and with a corps of teachers recruited chiefly from the ranks of the Roman Catholic clergy. The spirit of the institution was rationalistic and the discipline wholesome. Here Heine made solid acquisitions in history, literature, and the elements of philosophy. Outside of school, he was an eager spectator, not merely of stirring events in the world of politics, but also of many a picturesque manifestation of popular life—a spectator often rather than a participant; for as a Jew he stood beyond the pale of both the German and the Roman Catholic traditions that gave and give to the cities of the Rhineland their characteristic naïve gaiety and harmless superstition. Such a poem as *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar* would be amazing as coming from an unbeliever, did we not see in it evidence of the poet's capacity for perfect sympathetic adoption of the spirit of his early environment. The same is true of many another poetic expression of simple faith, whether in Christianity or in the mythology of German folk-lore.

Interest in medieval Catholicism and in folk-lore is one of the most prominent traits in the Romantic movement, which reached its culmination during the boyhood of Heine. The history of

Heine's connection with this movement is foreshadowed by the circumstances of his first contact with it. He tells us that the first book he ever read was *Don Quixote* (in the translation by Tieck). At about the same time he read *Gulliver's Travels*, the tales of noble robbers written by Goethe's brother-in-law, Vulpius, the wildly fantastic stories of E.T.A. Hoffmann, Schiller's *Robbers*; but also Uhland's ballads, and the songs collected by Arnim and Brentano in *The Boy's Magic Horn*. That is to say: At the time when in school a critical and skeptical mind was being developed in him by descendants of the age of enlightenment, his private reading led him for the most part into the region of romanticism in its most exaggerated form. At the time, furthermore, when he took healthy romantic interest in the picturesque Dusseldorf life, his imagination was morbidly stimulated by furtive visits to a woman reputed to be a witch, and to her niece, the daughter of a hangman. His earliest poems, the *Dream Pictures*, belong in an atmosphere charged with witchery, crime, and the irresponsibility of nightmare. This coincidence of incompatible tendencies will later be seen to account for much of the mystery in Heine's problematic character.

It having been decided, perhaps because the downfall of Napoleon shut the door of all other opportunity, that Heine should embark upon a mercantile career, he was given a brief apprenticeship, in 1815 at Frankfurt, in the following years at Hamburg, under the immediate patronage of his uncle Salomon who, in 1818, even established the young poet in a dry goods

business of his own. The only result of these experiments was the demonstration of Heine's total inaptitude for commercial pursuits. But the uncle was magnanimous and offered his nephew the means necessary for a university course in law, with a view to subsequent practice in Hamburg. Accordingly, after some brushing up of Latin at home, Heine in the fall of 1819 was matriculated as a student at the University of Bonn.

In spite of failure to accomplish his immediate purpose, Heine had not sojourned in vain at Hamburg. He had gained the good will of an opulent uncle whose bounty he continued almost uninterruptedly to enjoy to the end of his days. But in a purpose that lay much nearer to his heart he had failed lamentably; for, always sensitive to the charms of the other sex, Heine had conceived an overpowering passion for his cousin Amalie, the daughter of Salomon, only to meet with scornful rebuffs at the hands of the coquettish and worldly-minded heiress. There is no reason to suppose that Amalie ever took her cousin's advances seriously. Her father certainly did not so take them. On the other hand, there is equally little reason to doubt the sincerity and depth of Heine's feelings, first of unfounded hope, then of persistent despair that pursued him in the midst of other occupations and even in the fleeting joys of other loves. The most touching poems included among the *Youthful Sorrows* of his first volume were inspired by Amalie Heine.

At Bonn Heine was a diligent student. Though never a roysterer, he took part in various extra-academic enterprises,

was a member of the *Burschenschaft*, that democratic-patriotic organization so gravely suspected by the reactionary governments, and made many friends. He duly studied history and law; he heard Ernst Moritz Arndt interpret the *Germania* of Tacitus; but more especially did he profit by official and personal relations with A.W. Schlegel, who taught Heine what he himself knew best, namely, the secret of literary form and the art of metrical expression.

The fall of 1820 saw Heine at Göttingen, the Hanoverian university to which, shortly before, the Americans Ticknor and Everett had repaired and at which in that very year Bancroft had attained his degree of doctor of philosophy. Here, however, Heine was repelled by the aristocratic exclusiveness of the Hanoverian squires who gave the tone to student society, as well as by the mummified dryness of the professors. In marked contrast to the patriotic and romantic spirit of Bonn he noted here with amazement that the distinguished Germanist Benecke lectured on the *Nibelungenlied* to an auditory of nine. His own residence was destined this time to be brief; for serious quarrels coming to the ear of the faculty, he was, on January 23, 1821, advised to withdraw; and in April he enrolled himself as a student at the University of Berlin.

The next three years were filled with manifold activities. As a student Heine was deeply impressed by the absolute philosophy expounded by Hegel; as a Jew he lent a willing hand to the endeavors of an association recently founded for the amelioration

of the social and political condition of the Hebrews; in the drawing room of Rahel Levin, now the wife of Varnhagen von Ense, he came in touch with gifted men and women who were ardent admirers of Goethe, and some of whom, a quarter of a century before, had befriended Friedrich Schlegel; and in the subterranean restaurant of Lutter and Wegener he joined in the revels of Hoffmann, Grabbe, and other eccentric geniuses. Heine now began to be known as a man of letters. After having, from 1817 on, printed occasional poems in newspapers and magazines, he published in December, 1821 (with the date 1822), his first volume, entitled simply *Poems*; he wrote newspaper articles on Berlin and on Poland, which he visited in the summer of 1822; and in the spring of 1823 he published *Tragedies together with a Lyrical Intermezzo*—two very romantic and undramatic plays in verse, separated in the volume by a short series of lyrical poems.

Meanwhile Amalie Heine had been married and Harry's parents had moved to Lüneburg. Regret for the loss of Amalie soon gave way to a new passion for a very young girl, whose identity remains uncertain, but who was probably Amalie's little sister Therese. In any case, Heine met the new love on the occasion of a visit to Lüneburg and Hamburg in the spring of 1823, and was haunted by her image during the summer spent at Cuxhaven. Here Heine first saw the sea. In less exalted moods he dallied with fisher maidens; he did not forget Amalie; but the youthful grace and purity of Therese dominate most

of the poems of this summer. The return from the watering place gave Heine the title *The Return Home* for this collection of pieces which, when published in 1826, was dedicated to Frau Varnhagen von Ense.

Uncle Salomon, to whom the *Tragedies* had been affectionately inscribed, was not displeased with the growing literary reputation of his nephew. But he saw no sense in the idea that Heine already entertained of settling in Paris. He insisted that the young man should complete his studies; and so, in January, 1824, Heine once more betook himself to Göttingen, where on the twenty-first of July, 1825, he was duly promoted *Doctor utriusque Juris*. In the summer of 1824 he made the trip through the Hartz mountains which served as the basis of *The Journey to the Hartz*; immediately before his promotion he submitted to baptism in the Lutheran church as Christian Johann Heinrich Heine.

Submission is the right word for this conversion. It was an act of expediency such as other ambitious men found unavoidable in those days; but Heine performed it in a spirit of bitterness caused not so much by a sense of apostasy as by contempt for the conventional Christianity that he now embraced. There can be no sharper contrast than that presented by such a poem as *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar* and sundry satirical pieces not included in this volume.

Two vacations at Norderney, where Heine renewed and deepened acquaintance with his beloved North Sea, not very

resolute attempts to take up the practice of law in Hamburg, a trip to London, vain hopes of a professorship in Munich, a sojourn in Italy, vacillations between Hamburg, Berlin, and the North Sea, complete the narrative of Heine's movements to the end of the first period of his life. He was now Heine the writer: poet, journalist, and novelist. *The Journey to the Hartz*, first published in a magazine, *Der Gesellschafter*, in January and February, 1826, was issued in May of that year by Campe in Hamburg, as the first volume of *Pictures of Travel*, beginning with the poems of *The Return Home* and concluding with the first group of hymns to the North Sea, written at Norderney in the previous year. *Pictures of Travel II*, issued in 1827, consisted of the second cycle of poems on the *North Sea*, an account in prose of life on the island, entitled *Norderney, The Book Le Grand*, to which epigrams by Immermann were appended, and extracts from *Letters from Berlin* published in 1822. *Pictures of Travel III* (1830) began with experiences in Italy, but degenerated into a provoked but ruthless attack upon Platen. *Pictures of Travel IV* (1831) included *English Fragments*, the record of Heine's observations in London, and *The City of Lucca*, a supplementary chapter on Italy. In October, 1827, Heine collected under the title *Book of Songs* nearly all of his poems written up to that time.

The first period in Heine's life closes with the year 1831. The Parisian revolution of July, 1830, had turned the eyes of all Europe toward the land in which political experiments are made for the benefit of mankind. Many a German was attracted

thither, and not without reason Heine hoped to find there a more promising field for the employment of his talents than with all his wanderings he had discovered in Germany. Toward the end of May, 1831, he arrived in Paris, and Paris was thenceforth his home until his death on the seventeenth of February, 1856.

II

In the preface to the second edition of the *Book of Songs*, written at Paris in 1837, Heine confessed that for some time past he had felt a certain repugnance to versification; that the poems therewith offered for the second time to the public were the product of a time when, in contrast to the present, the flame of truth had rather heated than clarified his mind; and expressed the hope that his recent political, theological, and philosophical writings—all springing from the same idea and intention as the poems—might atone for any weakness in the poems. Heine wrote poetry after 1831, and he wrote prose before 1831; but in a general way what he says of his two periods is correct: before his emigration he was primarily a poet, and afterwards primarily a critic, journalist, and popular historian. In his first period he wrote chiefly about his own experiences; in his second, chiefly about affairs past and present in which he was interested.

As to the works of the first period, we might hesitate to say whether the *Pictures of Travel* or the *Book of Songs* were the more characteristic product. In whichever way our judgment

finally inclined, we should declare that the *Pictures of Travel* were essentially prosified poems and that the poems were, in their collected form, versified *Pictures of Travel*; and that both, moreover, were dominated, as the writings after 1831 were dominated, by a romantically tinged longing for individual liberty.

The title *Pictures of Travel*, to which Heine gave so definite a connotation, is not in itself a true index to the multifarious contents of the series of traveler's notes, any more than the volumes taken each by itself were units. Pages of verse followed pages of prose; and in the *Journey to the Hartz*, verse interspersed in prose emphasizes the lyrical character of the composition. Heine does indeed give pictures of some of the scenes that he visits; but he also narrates his passage from point to point; and at every point he sets forth his recollections, his thoughts, his dreams, his personal reaction upon any idea that comes into his head; so that the substance, especially of the *Journey to the Hartz*, is less what was to be seen in the Hartz than what was suggested to a very lively imagination; and we admire the agility with which the writer jumps from place to place quite as much as the suppleness with which he can at will unconditionally subject himself to the genius of a single locality. For Heine is capable of writing straightforward descriptive prose, as well-ordered and as matter-of-fact as a narrative of Kleist's. But the world of reality, where everything has an assignable reason for its being and doing, is not the world into which he most delights to conduct us.

This world, on the contrary, is that in which the water "murmurs and rustles so wonderfully, the birds pour forth broken love-sick strains, the trees whisper as if with a thousand maidens' tongues, the odd mountain flowers peep up at us as if with a thousand maidens' eyes, stretching out to us their curious, broad, drolly scalloped leaves; the sunrays flash here and there in sport, the herbs, as though endowed with reason, are telling one another their green legends, all seems enchanted"—in other words, a wonderland disturbed by no doubts on the part of a rationalistic Alice. And a further secret of this fascinating, though in the long run exasperating style, is the sublime audacity with which Heine dances now on one foot and now on the other, leaving you at every moment in amused perplexity, whether you shall next find him standing firmly on mother earth or bounding upward to recline on the clouds.

"A mixture of description of nature, wit, poetry, and observation à la Washington Irving" Heine himself called the *Journey to the Hartz*. The novelty lay in the mixture, and in the fact that though the ingredients are, so to speak, potentized in the highest degree, they are brought to nearly perfect congruence and fusion by the irresistible solvent of the second named. The *Journey to the Hartz* is a work of wit, in the present sense, and in the older sense of that word. It is a product of superior intelligence—not a *Sketch Book*, but a single canvas with an infinitude of details; not a *Sentimental Journey*—although Heine can outdo Sterne in sentimentality, he too persistently

outdoes him also in satire—the work, fragmentary and outwardly formless, is in essence thoroughly informed by a two-fold purpose: to ridicule pedantry and philistinism, and to extol nature and the life of those uncorrupted by the world.

A similar unity is unmistakable in the *Book of Songs*. It would be difficult to find another volume of poems so cunningly composed. If we examine the book in its most obvious aspect, we find it beginning with *Youthful Sorrows* and ending with hymns to the North Sea; passing, that is to say, from the most subjective to the most objective of Heine's poetic expressions. The first of the *Youthful Sorrows* are *Dream Pictures*, crude and grotesque imitations of an inferior romantic *genre*; the *North Sea Pictures* are magnificent attempts in highly original form to catch the elusive moods of a great natural element which before Heine had played but little part in German poetry. From the *Dream Pictures* we proceed to *Songs* (a very simple love story told in forms as nearly conventional as Heine ever used), to *Romances* which, with the notable exception of *The Two Grenadiers* and *Belshazzar*, are relatively feeble attempts at the objectivation of personal suffering; and thence to *Sonnets*, direct communications to particular persons. Thereupon follow the *Lyrical Intermezzo* and the *Return Home*, each with a prologue and an epilogue, and with several series of pieces which, like the *Songs* above mentioned, are printed without titles and are successive sentences or paragraphs in the poet's own love story. This he tells over and over again, without monotony, because the story gains in

significance as the lover gains in experience, because each time he finds for it a new set of symbols, and because the symbols become more and more objective as the poet's horizon broadens. Then come a few pieces of religious content (culminating in *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*), the poems in the *Journey to the Hartz* (the most striking of which are animated by the poetry of folk-lore)—these poems clearly transitional to the poetry of the ocean which Heine wrote with such vigor in the two cycles on the North Sea. The movement is a steady climax.

The truth of the foregoing observations can be tested only by an examination of the entire *Book of Songs*. The total effect is one of arrangement. The order of the sections is chronological; the order of the poems within the sections is logical; and some poems were altered to make them fit into the scheme. Each was originally the expression of a moment; and the peculiarity of Heine as a lyric poet is his disposition to fix a moment, however fleeting, and to utter a feeling, of however slight consequence to humanity it might at first blush seem to be. In the *Journey to the Hartz* he never lost an opportunity to make a point; in his lyrical confessions he suppressed no impulse to self-revelation; and seldom did his mastery of form fail to ennoble even the meanest substance.

Some of Heine's most perfect products are his smallest. Whether, however, a slight substance can be fittingly presented only in the briefest forms, or a larger matter calls for extended treatment, the method is the same, and the merit lies in the

justness and suggestiveness of details. Single points, or points in juxtaposition or in succession, not the developed continuity of a line, are the means to the effect which Heine seeks. Connecting links are left to be supplied by the imagination of the reader. Even in such a narrative poem as *Belshazzar* the movement is *staccato*; we are invited to contemplate a series of moments; and if the subject is impiety and swift retribution, we are left to infer the fact from the evidence presented; there is neither editorial introduction nor moralizing conclusion. Similarly with *The Two Grenadiers*, a presentation of character in circumstance, a translation of pictorial details into terms of action and prophecy; and most strikingly in *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*, a poem of such fundamentally pictorial quality that it has been called a triptych, three depicted scenes in a little religious drama.

It is in pieces like these that we find Heine most successfully making of himself the interpreter of objects in the outside world. The number of such objects is greater than is everywhere believed—though naturally his success is surest in the case of objects congenial to him, and the variety of these is not great. Indeed, the outside world, even when he appears to treat it most objectively, proves upon closer examination to be in the vast majority of cases only a treasure-trove of symbols for the expression of his inner self. Thus, *Poor Peter* is the narrative of a humble youth unfortunate in love, but poor Peter's story is Heine's; otherwise, we may be sure, Heine would not have

thought it worth the telling. Nothing could seem to be less the property of Heine than *The Lorelei*; nevertheless, he has given to this borrowed subject so personal a turn that instead of the siren we see a human maiden, serenely indifferent to the effect of her charms, which so take the luckless lover that, like the boatman, he, Heine, is probably doomed ere long to death in the waves.

Toward the outside world, then, Heine's habitual attitude is not that of an interpreter; it is that of an artist who seeks the means of expression where they may be found. He does not, like Goethe and Mörike, read out of the phenomena of nature and of life what these phenomena in themselves contain; he reads into them what he wishes them to say. *The Book of Songs* is a human document, but it is no document of the life of humanity; it is a collection of kaleidoscopic views of one life, a life not fortified by wholesome coöperation with men nor nourished with the strength of nature, but vivifying nature with its own emotions. Heine has treated many a situation with overwhelming pathos, but none from which he was himself so completely absent as Mörike from the kitchen of The *Forsaken Maiden*. Goethe's "Hush'd on the hill" is an apostrophe to himself; but peace which the world cannot give and cannot take away is the atmosphere of that poem; whereas Heine's "The shades of the summer evening lie" gets its principal effectiveness from fantastic contributions of the poet's own imagination.

The length to which Heine goes in attributing human emotions to nature is hardly to be paralleled before or since. His aim

not being the reproduction of reality, nor yet the objectivation of ideas, his poetry is essentially a poetry of tropes-that is, the conception and presentation of things not as they are but as they may be conceived to be. A simple illustration of this method may be seen in *The Herd-Boy*. Uhland wrote a poem on a very similar subject, *The Boy's Mountain Song*. But the contrast between Uhland's hardy, active, public-spirited youth and Heine's sleepy, amorous individualist is no more striking than the difference between Uhland's rhetorical and Heine's tropical method. Heine's poem is an elaboration of the single metaphor with which it begins: "Kingly is the herd-boy's calling." The poem *Pine and Palm*, in which Heine expresses his hopeless separation from the maiden of whom he dreams—incidentally attributing to Amalie a feeling of sadness and solitude to which she was a stranger—is a bolder example of romantic self-projection into nature. But not the boldest that Heine offers us. He transports us to India, and there—

> The violets titter, caressing,
> Peeping up as the planets appear,
> And the roses, their warm love confessing,
> Whisper words, soft perfumed, to each ear.

Nor does he allow us to question the occurrence of these marvels; how do we know what takes place on the banks of the Ganges, whither we are borne on the wings of song? This, indeed, would be Heine's answer to any criticism based upon

Ruskin's notion as to the "pathetic fallacy." If the setting is such as to induce in us the proper mood, we readily enter the non-rational realm, and with credulous delight contemplate wonders such as we too have seen in our dreams; just as we find the romantic syntheses of sound and odor, or of sound and color, legitimate attempts to express the inexpressible. The atmosphere of prose, to be sure, is less favorable to Heine's habitual indulgence in romantic tropes.

Somewhat blunted by over-employment is another romantic instrument, eminently characteristic of Heine, namely, irony. Nothing could be more trenchant than his bland assumption of the point of view of the Jew-baiter, the hypocrite, or the slave-trader. It is as perfect as his adoption of childlike faith in *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*. Many a time he attains an effect of ironical contrast by the juxtaposition of incongruous poems, as when a deification of his beloved is followed by a cynical utterance of a different kind of love. But often the incongruity is within the poem itself, and the poet, destroying the illusion of his created image, gets a melancholy satisfaction from derision of his own grief. This procedure perfectly symbolizes a distracted mind; it undoubtedly suggests a superior point of view, from which the tribulations of an insignificant individual are seen to be insignificant; but in a larger sense it symbolizes the very instability and waywardness of Heine himself. His emotions were unquestionably deep and recurrent, but they were not constant. His devotion to ideals did not preclude indulgence in very unideal

pleasures; and his love of Amalie and Therese, hopeless from the beginning, could not, except in especially fortunate moments, avoid erring in the direction either of sentimentality or of bitterness. But Heine was too keenly intellectual to be indulgent of sentimentality, and too caustic to restrain bitterness. Hence the bitter-sweet of many of his pieces, so agreeably stimulating and so suggestive of an elastic temperament.

There is, however, a still more pervasive incongruity between this temperament and the forms in which it expressed itself. Heine's love poems—two-thirds of the *Book of Songs*—are written in the very simplest of verses, mostly quatrains of easy and seemingly inevitable structure. Heine learned the art of making them from the *Magic Horn*, from Uhland, and from Eichendorff, and he carried the art to the highest pitch of virtuosity. They are the forms of the German Folk-song, a fit vehicle for homely sentiments and those elemental passions which come and go like the tide in a humble heart, because the humble heart is single and yields unresistingly to their flow. But Heine's heart was not single, his passion was complex, and the greatest of his ironies was his use of the most unsophisticated of forms for his most sophisticated substances. This, indeed, was what made his love poetry so novel and so piquant to his contemporaries; this is one of the qualities that keep it alive today; but it is a highly individual device which succeeded only with this individual; and that it was a device adopted from no lack of capacity in other measures appears from the perfection

of Heine's sonnets and the incomparable free rhythmic verses of the *North Sea* cycles.

Taken all in all, *The Book of Songs* was a unique collection, making much of little, and making it with an amazing economy of means.

III

Heine's first period, to 1831, when he was primarily a literary artist, nearly coincides with the epoch of the Restoration (1815-1830). Politically, this time was unproductive in Germany, and the very considerable activity in science, philosophy, poetry, painting, and other fine arts stood in no immediate relation to national exigencies. There was indeed plenty of agitation in the circles of the *Burschenschaft*, and there were sporadic efforts to obtain from reluctant princes the constitutions promised as a reward for the rising against Napoleon; but as a whole the people of the various states seemed passive, and whatever was accomplished was the work of individuals, with or without royal patronage, and, in the main, in continuation of romantic tendencies. But with the Revolution of July, 1830, the political situation in Germany became somewhat more acute, demands for emancipation took more tangible form, and the so-called "Young Germans "—Wienbarg, Gutzkow, Laube, Mundt, Börne, and others-endeavored in essays, novels, plays, and pamphlets to stir up public interest in questions of

political, social, and religious reform.

Many passages in Heine's *Pictures of Travel* breathe the spirit of the Young German propaganda—the celebrated confession of faith, for example, in the *Journey to the Hartz*, in which he declares himself a knight of the holy spirit of iconoclastic democracy. In Paris he actively enlisted in the cause, and for about fifteen years continued, as a journalist, the kind of expository and polemic writing that he had developed in the later volumes of the *Pictures of Travel*. Regarding himself, like many an expatriate, as a mediator between the country of his birth and the country of his adoption, he wrote for German papers accounts of events in the political and artistic world of France, and for French periodicals more ambitious essays on the history of religion, philosophy, and recent literature in Germany. Most of the works of this time were published in both French and German, and Heine arranged also for the appearance of the *Pictures of Travel* and the *Book of Songs* in French translations. To all intents and purposes he became a Frenchman; from 1836 or 1837 until 1848 he was the recipient of an annual pension of 4,800 francs from the French government; he has even been suspected of having become a French citizen. But he in no sense curbed his tongue when speaking of French affairs, nor was he free from longing to be once more in his native land.

In Germany, however, he was commonly regarded as a traitor; and at the same time the Young Germans, with the more influential of whom he soon quarreled, looked upon him as a

renegade; so that there was a peculiar inappropriateness in the notorious decree of the Bundesrat at Frankfurt, voted December 10, 1835, and impotently forbidding the circulation in Germany of the writings of the Young Germans: Heine, Gutzkow, Laube, Wienbarg, and Mundt—in that order. But the occupants of insecure thrones have a fine scent for the odor of sedition, and Heine was an untiring sapper and miner in the modern army moving against the strongholds of aristocrats and priests. A keen observer in Hamburg who was resolved, though not in the manner of the Young Germans, to do his part in furthering social reform, Friedrich Hebbel, wrote to a friend in March, 1836: "Our time is one in which action destined to be decisive for a thousand years is being prepared. What artillery did not accomplish at Leipzig must now be done by pens in Paris."

During the first years of his sojourn in Paris Heine entered gleefully into all the enjoyment and stimulation that the gay capital had to offer. "I feel like a fish in water" is a common expression of contentment with one's surroundings; but when one fish inquires after the health of another, he now says, Heine told a friend, "I feel like Heine in Paris." The well-accredited German poet quickly secured admission to the circle of artists, journalists, politicians, and reformers, and became a familiar figure on the boulevards. In October, 1834, be made the acquaintance of a young Frenchwoman, Crescence Eugenie Mirat, or Mathilde, as he called her, and fell violently in love with her. She was a woman of great personal attractiveness, but entirely without

education, frivolous, and passionate. They were soon united; not for long, Heine thought, and he made efforts to escape from her seductive charms, but ineffectually; and like Tannhäuser, he was drawn back to his Frau Venus with an attachment passing all understanding. From December, 1835, Heine regarded her as his wife, and in 1841 they were married. But Mathilde was no good housekeeper; Heine was frequently in financial straits; he quarreled with his relatives, as well as with literary adversaries in Germany and France; and only after considerable negotiation was peace declared, and the continuation of a regular allowance arranged with Uncle Salomon.

Moreover, Heine's health was undermined. In the latter thirties he suffered often from headaches and afflictions of the eyes; in the middle of the forties paralysis of the spinal cord began to manifest itself; and for the last ten years of his life he was a hopelessly stricken invalid, finally doomed for five years to that "mattress grave" which his fortitude no less than his woeful humor has pathetically glorified. His wife cared for him dutifully, he was visited by many distinguished men of letters, and in 1855 a ministering angel came to him in the person of Elise von Krinitz ("Camille Selden") whom he called "*Die Mouche*" and for whom he wrote his last poem, *The Passion Flower*, a kind of apology for his life.

Meantime contentions, tribulations, and a wasting frame seemed only to sharpen the wits of the indomitable warrior. *New Songs* (1844) contains, along with negligible cynical pieces, a

number of love songs no whit inferior to those of the *Book of Songs*, romances, and scorching political satires. The *Romanzero* (1851) is not unfairly represented by such a masterpiece as *The Battlefield of Hastings*. And from this last period we have two quasi-epic poems: *Atta Troll* (1847; written in 1842) and *Germany* (1844), the fruit of the first of Heine's two trips across the Rhine.

Historically and poetically, *Atta Troll* is one of the most remarkable of Heine's works. He calls it *Das letzte freie Waldlied der Romantik* ("The last free forest-song of romanticism.") Having for its principal scene the most romantic spot in Europe, the valley of Roncesvaux, and for its principal character a dancing bear, the impersonation of those good characters and talentless men who, in the early forties, endeavored to translate the prose of Young Germany into poetry, the poem flies to the merriest, maddest height of romanticism in order by the aid of magic to kill the bear and therewith the vogue of poetry degraded to practical purposes. Heine knew whereof he spoke; for he had himself been a mad romanticist, a Young German, and a political poet; and he was a true prophet; for, though he did not himself enter the promised land, he lived to see, in the more refined romanticism of the Munich School and the poetic realism of Hebbel and Ludwig, the dawn of a new day in the history of German literature.

Heine did not enter the promised land. Neither can we truthfully say that he saw it as it was destined to be. His eye

was on the present, and in the present he more clearly discerned what ought not to be than what gave promise of a better future. In the war for the liberation of humanity he professed to be, and he was, a brave soldier; but he lacked the soldier's prime requisite, discipline. He never took a city, because he could not rule his spirit. Democracy was inscribed upon his banner, sympathy for the disenfranchised bound him to it, but not that charity which seeketh not her own, nor the loyalty that abides the day when imperfection shall become perfection. Sarcasm was his weapon, ridicule his plan of campaign, and destruction his only accomplishment.

We shall not say that the things destroyed by Heine deserved a better fate. We shall not think of him either as a leader or as a follower in a great national movement. He was not the one man of his generation through whom the national consciousness, even national discontent, found expression; he was the man whose self-expressions aroused the widest interest and touched the tenderest chords. To be called perhaps an alien, and certainly no monumental German character, Heine nevertheless made use, with consummate artistry, of the fulness of German culture at a time when many of the after-born staggered under the weight of a heritage greater than they could bear.

HEINRICH HEINE

* * * * *

DEDICATION[1] (1822)

I have had dreams of wild love wildly nursed,
  Of myrtles, mignonette, and silken tresses,
  Of lips, whose blames belie the kiss that blesses,
Of dirge-like songs to dirge-like airs rehearsed.

My dreams have paled and faded long ago,
  Faded the very form they most adored,
  Nothing is left me but what once I poured
Into pathetic verse with feverish glow.

Thou, orphaned song, art left. Do thou, too, fade!
  Go, seek that visioned form long lost in night,
  And say from me—if you upon it light—
With airy breath I greet that airy shade!

* * * * *

[1] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

SONGS (1822)

1[2]

Oh, fair cradle of my sorrow,
  Oh, fair tomb of peace for me,
Oh, fair town, my last good-morrow,
  Last farewell I say to thee!

Fare thee well, thou threshold holy,
  Where my lady's footsteps stir,
And that spot, still worshipped lowly,
  Where mine eyes first looked on her!

Had I but beheld thee never,
  Thee, my bosom's beauteous queen,
Wretched now, and wretched ever,
  Oh, I should not thus have been!

Touch thy heart?—I would not dare that:
  Ne'er did I thy love implore;
Might I only breathe the air that
  Thou didst breathe, I asked no more.

[2] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

Yet I could not brook thy spurning,
  Nor thy cruel words of scorn;
Madness in my brain is burning,
  And my heart is sick and torn.

So I go, downcast and dreary,
  With my pilgrim staff to stray,
Till I lay my head aweary
  In some cool grave far away.

2[3]

Cliff and castle quiver grayly
  From the mirror of the Rhine
Where my little boat swims gaily;
  Round her prow the ripples shine.

Heart at ease I watch them thronging—
  Waves of gold with crisping crest,
Till awakes a half-lulled longing
  Cherished deep within my breast.

Temptingly the ripples greet me
  Luring toward the gulf beneath,

[3] Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

Yet I know that should they meet me
They would drag me to my death.

Lovely visage, treacherous bosom,
Guile beneath and smile above,
Stream, thy dimpling wavelet's blossom
Laughs as falsely as my love.

3[4]

I despaired at first—believing
I should never bear it. Now
I have borne it—I have borne it.
Only never ask me How.

* * * * *

[4] Translator: T. Brooksbank. Permission William Heinemann, London.

A LYRICAL INTERMEZZO (1822-23)

1[5]

'Twas in the glorious month of May,
  When all the buds were blowing,
I felt—ah me, how sweet it was!—
  Love in my heart a-growing.

'Twas in the glorious month of May,
  When all the birds were quiring,
In burning words I told her all
  My yearning, my aspiring.

2[6]

Where'er my bitter tear-drops fall,
  The fairest flowers arise;
And into choirs of nightingales
  Are turned my bosom's sighs.

[5] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

[6] Translator: J.E. Wallis. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

And wilt thou love me, thine shall be
  The fairest flowers that spring,
And at thy window evermore
  The nightingales shall sing.

3[7]

The rose and the lily, the moon and the dove,
  Once loved I them all with a perfect love.
I love them no longer, I love alone
  The Lovely, the Graceful, the Pure, the One
Who twines in one wreath all their beauty and love,
  And rose is, and lily, and moon and dove.

4[8]

Dear, when I look into thine eyes,
My deepest sorrow straightway flies;
But when I kiss thy mouth, ah, then

[7] Translator: Richard Garnett. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

[8] Translator: Alma Strettell. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

No thought remains of bygone pain!

And when I lean upon thy breast,
No dream of heaven could be more blest;
But, when thou say'st thou lovest me,
I fall to weeping bitterly.

5[9]

Thy face, that fair, sweet face I know,
I dreamed of it awhile ago;
It is an angel's face, so mild—
And yet, so sadly pale, poor child!

Only the lips are rosy bright,
But soon cold Death will kiss them white,
And quench the light of Paradise
That shines from out those earnest eyes.

[9] Translator: Alma Strettell. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

6[10]

Lean close thy cheek against my cheek,
That our tears together may blend, love,
And press thy heart upon my heart,
That from both one flame may ascend, love!

And while in that flame so doubly bright
Our tears are falling and burning,
And while in my arms I clasp thee tight
I will die with love and yearning.

7[11]

I'll breathe my soul and its secret
  In the lily's chalice white;
The lily shall thrill and reëcho
  A song of my heart's delight.

The song shall quiver and tremble,

[10] Translator: Franklin Johnson. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

[11] Translator: J.E. Wallis. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

Even as did the kiss
That her rosy lips once gave me
In a moment of wondrous bliss.

8[12]

The stars have stood unmoving
Upon the heavenly plains
For ages, gazing each on each,
With all a lover's pains.

They speak a noble language,
Copious and rich and strong;
Yet none of your greatest schoolmen
Can understand that tongue.

But I have learnt it, and never
Can forget it for my part—
For I used as my only grammar
The face of the joy of my heart.

[12] Translator: T. Brooksbank. Permission William Heinemann, London.

9[13]

On the wings of song far sweeping,
  Heart's dearest, with me thou'lt go
Away where the Ganges is creeping;
  Its loveliest garden I know—

A garden where roses are burning
  In the moonlight all silent there;
Where the lotus-flowers are yearning
  For their sister belovèd and fair.

The violets titter, caressing,
  Peeping up as the planets appear,
And the roses, their warm love confessing,
  Whisper words, soft-perfumed, to each ear.

And, gracefully lurking or leaping,
  The gentle gazelles come round:
While afar, deep rushing and sweeping,
  The waves of the Ganges sound.

We'll lie there in slumber sinking
  Neath the palm-trees by the stream,

[13] Translator: Charles G. Leland. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

Rapture and rest deep drinking,
  Dreaming the happiest dream.

10[14]

The lotos flower is troubled
  By the sun's too garish gleam,
She droops, and with folded petals
  Awaiteth the night in a dream.

'Tis the moon has won her favor,
  His light her spirit doth wake,
Her virgin bloom she unveileth
  All gladly for his dear sake.

Unfolding and glowing and shining
  She yearns toward his cloudy height;
She trembles to tears and to perfume
  With pain of her love's delight.

[14] Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

11[15]

The Rhine's bright wave serenely
  Reflects as it passes by
Cologne that lifts her queenly
  Cathedral towers on high.

A picture hangs in the dome there,
  On leather with gold bedight,
Whose beauty oft when I roam there
  Sheds hope on my troubled night.

For cherubs and flowers are wreathing
  Our Lady with tender grace;
Her eyes, cheeks, and lips half-breathing
  Resemble my loved one's face.

12[16]

I am not wroth, my own lost love, although

[15] Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

[16] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

My heart is breaking—wroth I am not, no!
For all thou dost in diamonds blaze, no ray
Of light into thy heart's night finds its way.

I saw thee in a dream. Oh, piteous sight!
I saw thy heart all empty, all in night;
I saw the serpent gnawing at thy heart;
I saw how wretched, O my love, thou art!

13[17]

When thou shalt lie, my darling, low
  In the dark grave, where they hide thee,
Then down to thee I will surely go,
  And nestle in beside thee.

Wildly I'll kiss and clasp thee there,
  Pale, cold, and silent lying;
Shout, shudder, weep in dumb despair,
  Beside my dead love dying.

The midnight calls, up rise the dead,
  And dance in airy swarms there;
We twain quit not our earthly bed,

[17] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

I lie wrapt in your arms there.

Up rise the dead; the Judgment-day
To bliss or anguish calls them;
We twain lie on as before we lay,
And heed not what befalls them.

14[18]

A young man loved a maiden,
But she for another has sigh'd;
That other, he loves another,
And makes her at length his bride.

The maiden marries, in anger,
The first adventurous wight
That chance may fling before her;
The youth is in piteous plight.

The story is old as ages,
Yet happens again and again;
The last to whom it happen'd,
His heart is rent in twain.

[18] Translator: J.E. Wallis. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

15[19]

A lonely pine is standing
  On the crest of a northern height;
He sleeps, and a snow-wrought mantle
  Enshrouds him through the night.

He's dreaming of a palm-tree
  Afar in a tropic land,
That grieves alone in silence
  'Mid quivering leagues of sand.

16[20]

My love, we were sitting together
  In a skiff, thou and I alone;
'Twas night, very still was the weather,
  Still the great sea we floated on.

Fair isles in the moonlight were lying,

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[19] Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

[20] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

Like spirits, asleep in a trance;
Their strains of sweet music were sighing,
And the mists heaved in an eery dance.

And ever, more sweet, the strains rose there,
The mists flitted lightly and free;
But we floated on with our woes there,
Forlorn on that wide, wide sea.

17[21]

I see thee nightly in dreams, my sweet,
Thine eyes the old welcome making,
And I fling me down at thy dear feet
With the cry of a heart that is breaking.

Thou lookest at me in woful wise
With a smile so sad and holy,
And pearly tear-drops from thine eyes
Steal silently and slowly.

Whispering a word, thou lay'st on my hair
A wreath with sad cypress shotten;
awake, the wreath is no longer there,

[21] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

And the word I have forgotten.

* * * * *

SONNETS (1822)
TO MY MOTHER

1[22]

I have been wont to bear my head on high,
  Haughty and stern am I of mood and mien;
  Yea, though a king should gaze on me, I ween,
I should not at his gaze cast down my eye.
But I will speak, dear Mother, candidly:
  When most puffed up my haughty mood hath been,
  At thy sweet presence, blissful and serene,
I feel the shudder of humility.

Does thy soul all unknown my soul subdue,
Thy lofty soul that pierces all things through
And speeds on lightning wings to heaven's blue?
Or am I racked by what my memories tell
Of frequent deeds which caused thy heart to swell—
That beauteous heart which loved me, ah! too well.

[22] Translator: T. Brooksbank. Permission William Heinemann, London.

2[23]

With foolish fancy I deserted thee;
I fain would search the whole world through to learn
If in it I perchance could love discern,
That I might love embrace right lovingly.
I sought for love as far as eye could see,
My hands extending at each door in turn,
Begging them not my prayer for love to spurn—
Cold hate alone they laughing gave to me.
And ever search'd I after love; yes, ever
Search'd after love, but love discover'd never,
And so I homeward went with troubled thought;
But thou wert there to welcome me again,
And, ah, what in thy dear eye floated then
That was the sweet love I so long had sought.

* * * * *

[23] Translator: Edgar Alfred Bowring. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

POOR PETER[24] (1822)

1

Grete and Hans come dancing by,
  They shout for very glee;
Poor Peter stands all silently,
  And white as chalk is he.

Grete and Hans were wed this morn,
  And shine in bright array;
But ah, poor Peter stands forlorn,
  Dressed for a working-day.

He mutters, as with wistful eyes
  He gazes at them still:
"'Twere easy—were I not too wise—
  To do myself some ill…."

[24] Translator: Alma Strettell. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

2

"An aching sorrow fills my breast,
  My heart is like to break;
It leaves me neither peace nor rest,
  And all for Grete's sake.

"It drives me to her side, as though
  She still could comfort me;
But in her eyes there's something now
  That makes me turn and flee.

"I climb the highest hilltop where
  I am at least alone;
And standing in the stillness there
  I weep and make my moan."

3

Poor Peter wanders slowly by;
So pale is he, so dull and shy,
The very neighbors in the street
Turn round to gaze, when him they meet.

The maids speak low: "He looks, I ween,
As though the grave his bed had been."
Ah no, good maids, ye should have said
"The grave will soon become his bed."

He lost his sweetheart—so, may be,
The grave is best for such as he;
There he may sleep the years away,
And rest until the Judgment-day.

* * * * *

THE TWO GRENADIERS[25] (1822)

To France were traveling two grenadiers,
  From prison in Russia returning,
And when they came to the German frontiers,
  They hung down their heads in mourning.

There came the heart-breaking news to their ears
  That France was by fortune forsaken;
Scattered and slain were her brave grenadiers,
  And Napoleon, Napoleon was taken.

Then wept together those two grenadiers
  O'er their country's departed glory;
"Woe's me," cried one, in the midst of his tears,
  "My old wound—how it burns at the story!"

The other said: "The end has come,
  What avails any longer living
Yet have I a wife and child at home,
  For an absent father grieving.

"Who cares for wife? Who cares for child?
  Dearer thoughts in my bosom awaken;

[25] Translator: W.H. Furness. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

Go beg, wife and child, when with hunger wild,
  For Napoleon, Napoleon is taken!

"Oh, grant me, brother, my only prayer,
  When death my eyes is closing:
Take me to France, and bury me there;
  In France be my ashes reposing.

"This cross of the Legion of Honor bright,
  Let it lie near my heart, upon me;
Give me my musket in my hand,
  And gird my sabre on me.

"So will I lie, and arise no more,
  My watch like a sentinel keeping,
Till I hear the cannon's thundering roar,
  And the squadrons above me sweeping.

"Then the Emperor comes! and his banners wave,
  With their eagles o'er him bending,
And I will come forth, all in arms, from my grave,
  Napoleon, Napoleon attending!"

* * * * *

BELSHAZZAR[26] (1822)

To midnight now the night drew on;
In slumber deep lay Babylon.

The King's house only was all aflare,
For the King's wild crew were at revel there.

Up there in the King's own banquet hall,
Belshazzar held royal festival.

The satraps were marshaled in glittering line
And emptied their beakers of sparkling wine.

The beakers they clinked, and the satraps' hurras
in the ears of the stiff-necked King rang his praise.

The King's hot cheeks were with revel dyed,
The wine made swell his heart with pride.

Blind madness his haughty stomach spurred,
And he slandered the Godhead with sinful word,

And strutting in pride he blasphemed, the crowd

[26] Translator: John Todhunter. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

Of servile courtiers applauding loud.

The King commanded with haughty stare;
The slave was gone, and again was there.

Much wealth of gold on his head bare he;
'Twas reft from Jehovah's sanctuary.

And the King took hold of a sacred cup
With his impious hand, and they filled it up;

And he drank to the bottom in one deep draught,
And loud, the foam on his lips, he laughed:

"Jehovah! Thy glories I spit upon;
I am the King of Babylon!"

But scarce had the awful words been said
When the King's heart withered with secret dread.

The boisterous laughter was stifled all,
And corpselike still did wax the hall;

Lo! lo! on the whited wall there came
The likeness of a man's hand in flame,

And wrote, and wrote, in letters of flame,
And wrote and vanished, and no more came.

The King stark-staring sat, a-quail,
With knees a-knocking, and face death-pale,

The satraps' blood ran cold—none stirred;
They sat like statues, without a word.

The Magians came; but none of them all
Could read those letters of flame on the wall.

But in that same night of his vaunting vain
By his satraps' hand was Belshazzar slain.

* * * * *

THE PILGRIMAGE TO KEVLAAR[27] (1823)

1

The mother stood at the window;
  Her son lay in bed, alas!
"Will you not get up, dear William,
  To see the procession pass?"

"O mother, I am so ailing,
  I neither can hear nor see;
I think of my poor dead Gretchen,
  And my heart grows faint in me."

"Get up, we will go to Kevlaar;
  Your book and your rosary take;
The Mother of God will heal you,
  And cure your heart of its ache."

The Church's banners are waving,
  They are chanting a hymn divine;

[27] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

'Tis at Köln is that procession,
  At Köln upon the Rhine.

With the throng the mother follows;
  Her son she leads with her; and now
They both of them sing in the chorus,
  "Ever honored, O Mary, be thou!"

2

The Mother of God at Kevlaar
  Is drest in her richest array;
She has many a cure on hand there,
  Many sick folk come to her today.

And her, for their votive offerings,
  The suffering sick folk greet
With limbs that in wax are molded,
  Many waxen hands and feet.

And whoso a wax hand offers,
  His hand is healed of its sore;
And whoso a wax foot offers,
  His foot it will pain him no more.

To Kevlaar went many on crutches

Who now on the tight-rope bound,
And many play now on the fiddle
Had there not one finger sound.

The mother she took a wax taper,
And of it a heart she makes
"Give that to the Mother of Jesus,
She will cure thee of all thy aches."

With a sigh her son took the wax heart,
He went to the shrine with a sigh;
His words from his heart trickle sadly,
As trickle the tears from his eye.

"Thou blest above all that are blest,
Thou virgin unspotted divine,
Thou Queen of the Heavens, before thee
I lay all my anguish and pine.

"I lived with my mother at Köln,
At Köln in the town that is there,
The town that has hundreds many
Of chapels and churches fair.

"And Gretchen she lived there near us,
But now she is dead, well-a-day!
O Mary! a wax heart I bring thee,
Heal thou my heart's wound, I pray!

"Heal thou my heart of its anguish,
  And early and late, I vow,
With its whole strength to pray and to sing, too,
  'Ever honored, O Mary, be thou!'"

3

The suffering son and his mother
  In their little bed-chamber slept;
Then the Mother of God came softly,
  And close to the sleepers crept.

She bent down over the sick one,
  And softly her hand did lay
On his heart, with a smile so tender,
  And presently vanished away.

The mother sees all in her dreaming,
  And other things too she marked;
Then up from her slumber she wakened,
  So loudly the town dogs barked.

There lay her son, to his full length
  Stretched out, and he was dead;
And the light on his pale cheek flitted
  Of the morning's dawning red.

She folded her hands together,
  She felt as she knew not how,
And softly she sang and devoutly,
  "Ever honored, O Mary, be thou!"

* * * * *

THE RETURN HOME (1823-24)

1[28]

Once upon my life's dark pathway
  Gleamed a phantom of delight;
Now that phantom fair has vanished,
  I am wholly wrapt in night.

Children in the dark, they suffer
  At their heart a spasm of fear;
And, their inward pain to deaden,
  Sing aloud, that all may hear.

I, a madcap child, now childlike
  In the dark to sing am fain;
If my song be not delightsome,
  It at least has eased my pain.

[28] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

2[29]

We sat at the fisherman's cottage,
And gazed upon the sea;
Then came the mists of evening,
And rose up silently.

The lights within the lighthouse
Were kindled one by one,
We saw still a ship in the distance
On the dim horizon alone.

We spoke of tempest and shipwreck,
Of sailors and of their life,
And how 'twixt clouds and billows
They're tossed, 'twixt joy and strife.

We spoke of distant countries
From North to South that range,
Of strange fantastic nations,
And their customs quaint and strange.

The Ganges is flooded with splendor,
And perfumes waft through the air,

[29] Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

And gentle people are kneeling
To Lotos flowers fair.

In Lapland the people are dirty,
Flat-headed, large-mouthed, and small;
They squat round the fire and, frying
Their fishes, they shout and they squall.

The girls all gravely listened,
Not a word was spoken at last;
The ship we could see no longer,
Darkness was settling so fast.

3[30]

You lovely fisher-maiden,
Bring now the boat to land;
Come here and sit beside me,
We'll prattle hand in hand.

Your head lay on my bosom,
Nor be afraid of me;
Do you not trust all fearless
Daily the great wild sea?

[30] Translator: James Thomson. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

My heart is like the sea, dear,
  Has storm, and ebb, and flow,
And many purest pearl-gems
  Within its dim depth glow.

4[31]

My child, we were two children,
  Small, merry by childhood's law;
We used to creep to the henhouse,
  And hide ourselves in the straw.

We crowed like cocks, and whenever
  The passers near us drew—
"Cock-a-doodle!" They thought
  'Twas a real cock that crew.

The boxes about our courtyard
  We carpeted to our mind,
And lived there both together—
  Kept house in a noble kind.

The neighbor's old cat often

[31] Translator: Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

Came to pay us a visit;
We made her a bow and courtesy,
Each with a compliment in it.

After her health we asked,
Our care and regard to evince—
(We have made the very same speeches
To many an old cat since).

We also sat and wisely
Discoursed, as old folks do,
Complaining how all went better
In those good old times we knew—

How love, and truth, and believing
Had left the world to itself,
And how so dear was the coffee,
And how so rare was the pelf.

The children's games are over,
The rest is over with youth—
The world, the good games, the good times,
The belief, and the love, and the truth.

5[32]

E'en as a lovely flower,
  So fair, so pure thou art;
I gaze on thee, and sadness
  Comes stealing o'er my heart.

My hands I fain had folded
  Upon thy soft brown hair,
Praying that God may keep thee
  So lovely, pure, and fair.

6[33]

I would that my love and its sadness
  Might a single word convey,
The joyous breezes should bear it,
  And merrily waft it away.

They should waft it to thee, beloved,

[32] Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

[33] Translator: "Stratheir." Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

This soft and wailful word,
At every hour thou shouldst hear it,
Where'er thou art 'twould be heard.

And when in the night's first slumber
Thine eyes scarce closing seem,
Still should my word pursue thee
Into thy deepest dream.

7[34]

The shades of the summer evening lie
On the forest and meadows green;
The golden moon shines in the azure sky
Through balm-breathing air serene.

The cricket is chirping the brooklet near,
In the water a something stirs,
And the wanderer can in the stillness hear
A plash and a sigh through the furze.

There all by herself the fairy bright
Is bathing down in the stream;
Her arms and throat, bewitching and white,

[34] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

In the moonshine glance and gleam.

8[35]

I know not what evil is coming,
But my heart feels sad and cold;
A song in my head keeps humming,
A tale from the times of old.

The air is fresh and it darkles,
And smoothly flows the Rhine;
The peak of the mountain sparkles
In the fading sunset-shine.

The loveliest wonderful maiden
On high is sitting there,
With golden jewels braiden,
And she combs her golden hair.

With a golden comb sits combing,
And ever the while sings she
A marvelous song through the gloaming
Of magical melody.

[35] Translator: James Thomson. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

It hath caught the boatman, and bound him
In the spell of a wild, sad love;
He sees not the rocks around him,
He sees only her above.

The waves through the pass keep swinging,
But boatman or boat is none;
And this with her mighty singing
The Lorelei hath done.

* * * * *

TWILIGHT[36] (1825-26)

By the dim sea-shore
Lonely I sat, and thought-afflicted.
The sun sank low, and sinking he shed
Rose and vermilion upon the waters,
And the white foaming waves,
Urged on by the tide,
Foamed and murmured yet nearer and nearer—
A curious jumble of whispering and wailing,
A soft rippling laughter and sobbing and sighing,
And in between all a low lullaby singing.
Methought I heard ancient forgotten legends,
The world-old sweet stories,
Which once, as a boy,
I heard from my playmates,
When, of a summer's evening,
We crouched down to tell stories
On the stones of the doorstep,
With small listening hearts,
And bright curious eyes;
While the big grown-up girls
Were sitting opposite
At flowery and fragrant windows,

[36] Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

Their rosy faces
Smiling and moonshine-illumined.

* * * * *

HAIL TO THE SEA[37] (1825-26)

Thalatta! Thalatta!
Hail to thee, thou eternal sea!
Hail to thee, ten thousand times, hail!
With rejoicing heart
I bid thee welcome,
As once, long ago, did welcome thee
Ten thousand Greek hearts—
Hardship-battling, homesick-yearning,
World-renowned Greek hearts.

The billows surged,
They foamed and murmured,
The sun poured down, as in haste,
Flickering ripples of rosy light;
Long strings of frightened sea-gulls
Flutter away shrill screaming;
War-horses trample, and shields clash loudly,
And far resounds the triumphant cry:
Thalatta! Thalatta!

Hail to thee, thou eternal sea!
Like accents of home thy waters are whispering,

[37] Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

And dreams of childhood lustrous I see
Through thy limpid and crystalline wave,
Calling to mind the dear old memories
Of dear and delightful toys,
Of all the glittering Christmas presents,
Of all the red-branched forests of coral,
The pearls, the goldfish and bright-colored shells,
Which thou dost hide mysteriously
Deep down in thy clear house of crystal.

Oh, how have I languished in dreary exile!
Like unto a withered flower
In the botanist's capsule of tin,
My heart lay dead in my breast.
Methought I was prisoned a long sad winter,
A sick man kept in a darkened chamber;
And now I suddenly leave it,
And outside meets me the dazzling Spring,
Tenderly verdant and sun-awakened;
And rustling trees shed snowy petals,
And tender young flowers gaze on me
With their bright fragrant eyes,
And the air is full of laughter and gladness,
And rich with the breath of blossoms,
And in the blue sky the birds are singing—
Thalatta! Thalatta!

Oh, my brave Anabasis-heart!
How often, ah! how sadly often

Wast thou pressed hard by the North's fair Barbarians!
From large and conquering eyes
They shot forth burning arrows;
With crooked words as sharp as a rapier
They threatened to pierce my bosom;
With cuneiform angular missives they battered
My poor stunned brains;
In vain I held out my shield for protection,
The arrows hissed and the blows rained down,
And hard pressed I was pushed to the sea
By the North's fair Barbarians—
And, breathing freely, I greet the sea,
The sea my deliverer, the sea my friend—
Thalatta! Thalatta!

* * * * *

IN THE HARBOR[38] (1825-26)

Happy is he who hath reached the safe harbor,
Leaving behind him the stormy wild ocean,
And now sits cosy and warm
In the good old Town-Cellar of Bremen.

How sweet and homelike the world is reflected,
In the chalice green of Rhinewine Rummer.
And how the dancing microcosm
Sunnily glides down the thirsty throat!
Everything I behold in the glass—
History, old and new, of the nations,
Both Turks and Greeks, and Hegel and Gans,
Forests of citron and big reviews,
Berlin and Shilda, and Tunis and Hamburg;
But, above all, thy image, Beloved,
And thy dear little head on a gold-ground of Rhenish!

Oh, how fair, how fair art thou, Dearest!
Thou art as fair as the rose!
Not like the Rose of Shiras,
That bride of the nightingale, sung by Hafis,
Not like the Rose of Sharon,

[38] Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

That mystic red rose, exalted by prophets—
Thou art like the "Rose, of the Bremen Town-Cellar,"
Which is the Rose of Roses;
The older it grows the sweeter it blossoms,
And its breath divine it hath all entranced me,
It hath inspired and kindled my soul;
And had not the Town-Cellar Master gripped me
With firm grip and steady,
I should have stumbled!

That excellent man! We sat together
And drank like brothers;
We spoke of wonderful mystic things,
We sighed and sank in each other's arms,
And me to the faith of love he converted;
I drank to the health of my bitterest foes,
And I forgave all bad poets sincerely,
Even as I may one day be forgiven;

I wept with devotion, and at length
The doors of salvation were opened unto me,
Where the sacred Vats, the twelve Apostles,
Silently preach, yet oh, so plainly,
Unto all nations.

These be men forsooth!
Of humble exterior, in jackets of wood,
Yet within they are fairer and more enlightened
Than all the Temple's proud Levites,

Or the courtiers and followers of Herod,
Though decked out in gold and in purple;
Have I not constantly said:
Not with the herd of common low people,
But in the best and politest of circles
The King of Heaven was sure to dwell!

Hallelujah! How lovely the whisper
Of Bethel's palm-trees!
How fragrant the myrtle-trees of Hebron!
How sings the Jordan and reels with joy!
My immortal spirit likewise is reeling,
And I reel in company, and, joyously reeling,
Leads me upstairs and into the daylight
That excellent Town-Cellar Master of Bremen.

Thou excellent Town-Cellar Master of Bremen!
Dost see on the housetops the little angels
Sitting aloft, all tipsy and singing?
The burning sun up yonder
Is but a fiery and drunken nose—
The Universe Spirit's red nose;
And round the Universe Spirit's red nose
Reels the whole drunken world.

* * * * *

A NEW SPRING (1831)

1[39]

Soft and gently through my soul
Sweetest bells are ringing,
Speed you forth, my little song,
Of springtime blithely singing!

Speed you onward to a house
Where sweet flowers are fleeting!
If, perchance, a rose you see,
Say, I send her greeting!

2[40]

Thy deep blue eyes enchant me,
So lovingly they glow;

[39] Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

[40] Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

My gazing soul grows dreamy,
My words come strange and slow.

Thy deep blue eyes enchant me
Wherever I may go:
An ocean of azure fancies
O'erwhelms me with its flow.

3[41]

Was once an ancient monarch,
Heavy his heart, his locks were gray,
This poor and aged monarch
Took a wife so young and gay.

Was once a page-boy handsome,
With lightsome heart and curly hair,
The silken train he carried
Of the queen so young and fair.

Dost know the old, old story?
It sounds so sweet, so sad to tell—
Both were obliged to perish,
They loved each other too well.

[41] Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

* * * * *

ABROAD[42] (1834)

Oh I had once a beauteous Fatherland!
High used to seem
The oak—so high!—the violets nodded kind—
It was a dream.

In German I was kissed, in German told
(You scarce would deem
How sweetly rang the words): "I love thee well!—"
It was a dream.

* * * * *

[42] Translator: Margaret Armour. Permission William Heinemann, London.

THE SPHINX[43] (1839)

It is the fairy forest old,
  With lime-tree blossoms scented!
The moonshine with its mystic light
  My soul and sense enchanted.

On, on I roamed, and, as I went,
  Sweet music o'er me rose there;
It is the nightingale—she sings
  Of love and lovers' woes there.

She sings of love and lovers' woes,
  Hearts blest, and hearts forsaken:
So sad is her mirth, so glad her sob,
  Dreams long forgot awaken.

Still on I roamed, and, as I went,
  I saw before me lowering
On a great wide lawn a stately pile,
  With gables peaked and towering.

Closed were its windows, everywhere
  A hush, a gloom, past telling;

[43] Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.

It seemed as though silent Death within
  These empty halls were dwelling.

A Sphinx lay there before the door,
  Half-brutish and half-human,
A lioness in trunk and claws,
  In head and breasts a woman.

A lovely woman! The pale cheek
  Spoke of desires that wasted;
The hushed lips curved into a smile,
  That wooed them to be tasted.

The nightingale so sweetly sang,
  I yielded to their wooing;
And as I kissed that winning face,
  I sealed my own undoing.

The marble image thrilled with life,
  The stone began to quiver;
She drank my kisses' burning flame
  With fierce convulsive shiver.

She almost drank my breath away;
  And, to her passion bending,
She clasped me close, with her lion claws
  My hapless body rending.

Delicious torture, rapturous pang!

The pain, the bliss, unbounded!
Her lips, their kiss was heaven to me,
Her claws, oh, how they wounded.

The nightingale sang: "O beauteous Sphinx!
O love, love! say, why this is,
That with the anguish of death itself
Thou minglest all thy blisses?

"Oh beauteous Sphinx, oh, answer me,
That riddle strange unloosing!
For many, many thousand years
Have I on it been musing!"

GERMANY[44] (1842)

Germany's still a little child,
  But he's nursed by the sun, though tender;
He is not suckled on soothing milk,
  But on flames of burning splendor.

One grows apace on such a diet;
  It fires the blood from languor.
Ye neighbors' children, have a care
  This urchin how ye anger!

He is an awkward infant giant;
  The oak by the roots uptearing,
He'll beat you till your backs are sore,
  And crack your crowns for daring.

He is like Siegfried, the noble child,
  That song-and-saga wonder;
Who, when his fabled sword was forged,
  His anvil cleft in sunder!

To you, who will our Dragon slay,
  Shall Siegfried's strength be given.
Hurrah! how joyfully your nurse

[44] Translator: Margaret Armour. Permission William Heinemann, London.

Will laugh on you from heaven!

The Dragon's hoard of royal gems
You'll win, with none to share it.
Hurrah! how bright the golden crown
Will sparkle when you wear it!

* * * * *

ENFANT PERDU[45] (1851)

In Freedom's War, of "Thirty Years" and more,
  A lonely outpost have I held—in vain!
With no triumphant hope or prize in store,
  Without a thought to see my home again.

I watched both day and night; I could not sleep
  Like my well-tented comrades far behind,
Though near enough to let their snoring keep
  A friend awake, if e'er to doze inclined.

And thus, when solitude my spirits shook,
  Or fear—for all but fools know fear sometimes—
To rouse myself and them, I piped and took
  A gay revenge in all my wanton rhymes.

Yes! there I stood, my musket always ready,
  And when some sneaking rascal showed his head,
My eye was vigilant, my aim was steady,
  And gave his brains an extra dose of lead.

But war and justice have far different laws,
  And worthless acts are often done right well;

[45] Translator: Lord Houghton. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.

The rascals' shots were better than their cause,
  And I was hit—and hit again, and fell!

That outpost is abandoned; while the one
  Lies in the dust, the rest in troops depart;
Unconquered—I have done what could be done,
  With sword unbroken, and with broken heart.

* * * * *

THE BATTLEFIELD OF HASTINGS[46] (1855)

Deeply the Abbot of Waltham sighed
When he heard the news of woe:
How King Harold had come to a pitiful end,
And on Hastings field lay low.

Asgod and Ailrik, two of his monks,
On the mission drear he sped
To search for the corse on the battle-plain
Among the bloody dead.

The monks arose and went sadly forth,
And returned as heavy-hearted.
"O Father, the world's a bitter world,
And evil days have started.

"For fallen, alack! is the better man;
The Bastard has won, and knaves
And scutcheoned thieves divide the land,
And make the freemen slaves.

"The veriest rascals from Normandy,
In Britain are lords and sirs.

[46] Translator: Margaret Armour. Permission William Heinemann, London.

I saw a tailor from Bayeux ride
  With a pair of golden spurs.

"O woe to all who are Saxon born!
  Ye Saxon saints, beware!
For high in heaven though ye dwell,
  Shame yet may be your share.

"Ah, now we know what the comet meant
  That rode, blood-red and dire,
Across the midnight firmament
  This year on a broom of fire.

"'Twas an evil star, and Hastings' field
  Has fulfilled the omen dread.
We went upon the battle-plain,
  And sought among the dead.

"While still there lingered any hope
  We sought, but sought in vain;
King Harold's corse we could not find
  Among the bloody slain."

Asgod and Ailrik spake and ceased.
  The Abbot wrung his hands.
Awhile he pondered, then he sighed,
  "Now mark ye my commands.

"By the stone of the bard at Grendelfield,

Just midway through the wood,
One, Edith of the Swan's Neck, dwells
In a hovel poor and rude.

"They named her thus, because her neck
Was once as slim and white
As any swan's—when, long ago,
She was the king's delight.

"He loved and kissed, forsook, forgot,
For such is the way of men.
Time runs his course with a rapid foot;
It is sixteen years since then.

"To this woman, brethren, ye shall go,
And she will follow you fain
To the battle-field; the woman's eye
Will not seek the king in vain.

"Thereafter to Waltham Abbey here
His body ye shall bring,
That Christian burial he may have,
While for his soul we sing."

The messengers reached the hut in the wood
At the hour of midnight drear.
"Wake, Edith of the Swan's Neck, rise
And follow without fear.

"The Duke of Normandy has won
  The battle, to our bane.
On the field of Hastings, where he fought,
  The king is lying slain.

"Arise and come with us; we seek
  His body among the dead.
To Waltham Abbey it shall be borne.
  'Twas thus our Abbot said."

The woman arose and girded her gown,
  And silently went behind
The hurrying monks. Her grizzly hair
  Streamed wildly on the wind.

Barefoot through bog and bush and briar
  She followed and did not stay,
Till Hastings and the cliffs of chalk
  They saw at dawn of day.

The mist, that like a sheet of white
  The field of battle cloaked,
Melted anon; with hideous din
  The daws flew up and croaked.

In thousands on the bloody plain
  Lay strewn the piteous corses,
Wounded and torn and maimed and stripped,
  Among the fallen horses.

The woman stopped not for the blood;
  She waded barefoot through,
And from her fixed and staring eyes
  The arrowy glances flew.

Long, with the panting monks behind,
  And pausing but to scare
The greedy ravens from their food,
  She searched with eager care.

She searched and toiled the livelong day,
  Until the night was nigh;
Then sudden from her breast there burst
  A shrill and awful cry.

For on the battle-field at last
  His body she had found.
She kissed, without a tear or word,
  The wan face on the ground.

She kissed his brow, she kissed his mouth,
  She clasped him close, and pressed
Her poor lips to the bloody wounds
  That gaped upon his breast.

His shoulder stark she kisses too,
  When, searching, she discovers
Three little scars her teeth had made

When they were happy lovers.

The monks had been and gotten boughs,
And of these boughs they made
A simple bier, whereon the corse
Of the fallen king was laid.

To Waltham Abbey to his tomb
The king was thus removed;
And Edith of the Swan's Neck walked
By the body that she loved.

She chanted litanies for his soul
With a childish, weird lament
That shuddered through the night. The monks
Prayed softly as they went.

* * * * *

THE ASRA[47] (1855)

Every evening in the twilight,
To and fro beside the fountain
Where the waters whitely murmured,
Walked the Sultan's lovely daughter.

And a youth, a slave, was standing
Every evening by the fountain
Where the waters whitely murmured;
And his cheek grew pale and paler.

Till one eve the lovely princess
Paused and asked him on a sudden:
"I would know thy name and country;
I would know thy home and kindred."

And the slave replied, "Mohammed
Is my name; my home is Yemen;
And my people are the Asras;
When they love, they love and die."

[47] Translator: Margaret Armour. Permission William Heinemann, London.

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THE PASSION FLOWER[48] (1856)

I dreamt that once upon a summer night
  Beneath the pallid moonlight's eerie glimmer
I saw where, wrought in marble dimly bright,
  A ruin of the Renaissance did shimmer.

Yet here and there, in simple Doric form,
  A pillar like some solitary giant
Rose from the mass, and, fearless of the storm,
  Reared toward the firmament its head defiant.

O'er all that place a heap of wreckage lay,
  Triglyphs and pediments and carven portals,
With centaur, sphinx, chimera, satyrs gay—
  Figures of fabled monsters and of mortals.

A marble-wrought sarcophagus reposed
  Unharmed 'mid fragments of these fabled creatures;
Its lidless depth a dead man's form inclosed,
  The pain-wrung face now calm with softened features.

A group of straining caryatides
  With steadfast neck the casket's weight supported,
Along both sides whereof there ran a frieze

[48] Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

Of chiseled figures, wondrous ill-assorted.

First one might see where, decked in bright array,
A train of lewd Olympians proudly glided,
Then Adam and Dame Eve, not far away,
With fig-leaf aprons modestly provided.

Next came the people of the Trojan war—
Paris, Achilles, Helen, aged Nestor;
Moses and Aaron, too, with many more—
As Judith, Holofernes, Haman, Esther.

Such forms as Cupid's one could likewise see,
Phoebus Apollo, Vulcan, Lady Venus,
Pluto and Proserpine and Mercury,
God Bacchus and Priapus and Silenus.

Among the rest of these stood Balaam's ass—
A speaking likeness (if you will, a braying)—
And Abraham's sacrifice, and there, alas!
Lot's daughters, too, their drunken sire betraying.

Near by them danced the wanton Salome,
To whom John's head was carried in a charger;
Then followed Satan, writhing horribly,
And Peter with his keys—none e'er seemed larger

Changing once more, the sculptor's cunning skill
Showed lustful Jove misusing his high power,

When as a swan he won fair Leda's will,
  And conquered Danaë in a golden shower.

Here was Diana, leading to the chase
  Her kilted nymphs, her hounds with eyeballs burning;
And here was Hercules in woman's dress,
  His warlike hand the peaceful distaff turning.

Not far from them frowned Sinai, bleak and wild,
  Along whose slope lay Israel's nomad nation;
Next, one might see our Savior as a child
  Amid the elders holding disputation.

Thus were these opposites absurdly blent—
  The Grecian joy of living with the godly
Judean cast of thought!—while round them bent
  The ivy's tendrils, intertwining oddly.

But—wonderful to say!—while dreamily
  I gazed thereon with glance returning often,
Sudden methought that I myself was he,
  The dead man in the splendid marble coffin.

Above the coffin by my head there grew
  A flower for a symbol sweet and tragic,
Violet and sulphur-yellow was its hue,
  It seemed to throb with love's mysterious magic.

Tradition says, when Christ was crucified

On Calvary, that in that very hour
These petals with the Savior's blood were dyed,
And therefore is it named the passion-flower.

The hue of blood, they say, its blossom wears,
And all the instruments of human malice
Used at the crucifixion still it bears
In miniature within its tiny chalice.

Whatever to the Passion's rite belongs,
Each tool of torture here is represented
The crown of thorns, cup, nails and hammer, thongs,
The cross on which our Master was tormented.

'Twas such a flower at my tomb did stand,
Above my lifeless form in sorrow bending,
And, like a mourning woman, kissed my hand,
My brow and eyes, with silent grief contending.

And then—O witchery of dreams most strange!—
By some occult and sudden transformation
This flower to a woman's shape did change—
'Twas she I loved with soul-deep adoration!

'Twas thou in truth, my dearest, only thou;
I knew thee by thy kisses warm and tender.
No flower-lips thus softly touched my brow,
Such burning tears no flower's cup might render!
Mine eyes were shut, and yet my soul could see

Thy steadfast countenance divinely beaming,
As, calm with rapture, thou didst gaze on me,
Thy features in the spectral moonlight gleaming.

We did not speak, and yet my heart could tell
The hidden thoughts that thrilled within thy bosom.
No chaste reserve in spoken words may dwell—
With silence Love puts forth its purest blossom.

A voiceless dialogue! one scarce might deem,
While mute we thus communed in tender fashion,
How time slipped by like some seraphic dream
Of night, all woven of joy and fear-sweet passion.

Ah, never ask of us what then we said;
Ask what the glow-worm glimmers to the grasses,
Or what the wavelet murmurs in its bed,
Or what the west wind whispers as it passes.

Ask what rich lights from carbuncles outstream,
What perfumed thoughts o'er rose and violet hover—
But never ask what, in the moonlight's beam,
The sacred flower breathed to her dead lover.

I cannot tell how long a time I lay,
Dreaming the ecstasy of joys Elysian,
Within my marble shrine. It fled away—
The rapture of that calm untroubled vision.

Death, with thy grave-deep stillness, thou art best,
  Delight's full cup thy hand alone can proffer;
The war of passions, pleasure without rest—
  Such boons are all that vulgar life can offer.

Alas! a sudden clamor put to flight
  My bliss, and all my comfort rudely banished;
'Twas such a screaming, ramping, raging fight
  That mid the uproar straight my flower vanished.

Then on all sides began a savage war
  Of argument, with scolding and with jangling.
Some voices surely I had heard before—
  Why, 'twas my bas-reliefs had fall'n a-wrangling!

Do old delusions haunt these marbles here,
  And urge them on to frantic disputations?
The terror-striking shout of Pan rings clear,
  While Moses hurls his stern denunciations.

Alack! the wordy strife will have no end,
  Beauty and Truth will ever be at variance,
A schism still the ranks of man will rend
  Into two camps, the Hellenes and Barbarians.

Both parties thus reviled and cursed away,
  And none who heard could tell the why or whether,
Till Balaam's ass at last began to bray
  And soon outbawled both gods and saints together.

With strident-sobbing hee-haw, hee-haw there—
  His unremitting discords without number—
That beast so nearly brought me to despair
  That I cried out—and wakened from my slumber.

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Prose

THE JOURNEY TO THE HARZ[49] (1824)

BY HEINRICH HEINE

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

"Nothing is permanent but change, nothing constant but death. Every pulsation of the heart inflicts a wound, and life would be an endless bleeding were it not for Poetry. She secures to us what Nature would deny—a golden age without rust, a spring which never fades, cloudless prosperity and eternal youth."—BÖRNE.

Black dress coats and silken stockings,
  Snowy ruffles frilled with art,
Gentle speeches and embraces—
  Oh, if they but held a heart!

[49] Translator: T. Brooksbank. Permission William Heinemann, London.

Held a heart within their bosom,
  Warmed by love which truly glows;
Ah! I'm wearied with their chanting
  Of imagined lovers' woes!

I will climb upon the mountains,
  Where the quiet cabin stands,
Where the wind blows freely o'er us,
  Where the heart at ease expands.

I will climb upon the mountains,
  Where the sombre fir-trees grow;
Brooks are rustling, birds are singing,
  And the wild clouds headlong go.

Then farewell, ye polished ladies,
  Polished men and polished hall!
I will climb upon the mountains,
  Smiling down upon you all.

The town of Göttingen, celebrated for its sausages and its University, belongs to the King of Hanover, and contains nine hundred and ninety-nine dwellings, divers churches, a lying-in hospital, an observatory, a prison for students, a library, and a "Ratskeller," where the beer is excellent. The stream which flows by the town is called the Leine, and is used in summer for bathing, its waters being very cold, and in more than one place it is so broad that Lüder was obliged to take quite a run

ere he could leap across. The town itself is beautiful, and pleases most when one's back is turned to it. It must be very ancient, for I well remember that five years ago, when I matriculated there (and shortly after received notice to quit), it had already the same gray, prim look, and was fully furnished with catch-polls, beadles, dissertations, *thés dansants*, washerwomen, compendiums, roasted pigeons, Guelphic orders, graduation coaches, pipe-heads, court-councilors, law-councilors, expelling councilors, professors ordinary and extraordinary. Many even assert that, at the time of the Great Migrations, every German tribe left behind in the town a loosely bound copy of itself in the person of one of its members, and that from these descended all the Vandals, Frisians, Suabians, Teutons, Saxons, Thuringians,[50] and others, who at the present day still abound in Göttingen, where, separately distinguished by the color of their caps and pipe-tassels, they may be seen straying singly or in hordes along the Weender Street. They still fight their battles on the bloody arena of the *Rasenmill, Ritschenkrug*, and *Bovden*, still preserve the mode of life peculiar to their savage ancestors, and still, as at the time of the migrations, are governed partly by their *Duces*, whom they call "chief cocks," and partly by their primevally ancient law-book, known as the *Comment*, which fully deserves a place among the *leges barbarorum*.

The inhabitants of Göttingen are generally divided into Students, Professors, Philistines, and Cattle, the points of

[50] Names of Student's Corps.

difference between these castes being by no means strictly defined. The "Cattle" class is the most important. I might be accused of prolixity should I here enumerate the names of all the students and of all the regular and irregular professors; besides, I do not just at present distinctly remember the appellations of all the former gentlemen; while among the professors are many who as yet have no name at all. The number of the Göttingen "Philistines" must be as numerous as the sands (or, more correctly speaking, as the mud) of the seashore; indeed, when I beheld them of a morning, with their dirty faces and clean bills, planted before the gate of the collegiate court of justice, I wondered greatly that such an innumerable pack of rascals should ever have been created by the Almighty.

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It was as yet very early in the morning when I left Göttingen, and the learned –, beyond doubt, still lay in bed, dreaming as usual that he wandered in a fair garden, amid the beds of which grew innumerable white papers written over with citations. On these the sun shone cheerily, and he plucked up several here and there and laboriously planted them in new beds, while the sweetest songs of the nightingales rejoiced his old heart.

Before the Weender Gate I met two small native schoolboys, one of whom was saying to the other, "I don't intend to keep company any more with Theodore; he is a low blackguard,

for yesterday he didn't even know the genitive of *Mensa*." Insignificant as these words may appear, I still regard them as entitled to be recorded—nay, I would even write them as town-motto on the gate of Göttingen, for the young birds pipe as the old ones sing, and the expression accurately indicates the narrow, petty academic pride so characteristic of the "highly learned" Georgia Augusta.[51] The fresh morning air blew over the highroad, the birds sang cheerily, and, little by little, with the breeze and the birds, my mind also became fresh and cheerful. Such refreshment was sorely needed by one who had long been confined in the Pandect stable. Roman casuists had covered my soul with gray cobwebs; my heart was as though jammed between the iron paragraphs of selfish systems of jurisprudence; there was an endless ringing in my ears of such sounds as "Tribonian, Justinian, Hermogenian, and Blockheadian," and a sentimental brace of lovers seated under a tree appeared to me like an edition of the *Corpus Juris* with closed clasps. The road began to take on a more lively appearance. Milkmaids occasionally passed, as did also donkey-drivers with their gray pupils. Beyond Weende I met the "Shepherd" and "Doris." This is not the idyllic pair sung by Gessner, but the duly and comfortably appointed university beadles, whose duty it is to keep watch and ward so that no students fight duels in Bovden, and, above all, that no new ideas (such as are generally obliged to remain in quarantine for several decades outside of Göttingen) are smuggled in by speculative

[51] Name of the University of Göttingen.

private lecturers. Shepherd greeted me as one does a colleague, for he, too, is an author, who has frequently mentioned my name in his semi-annual writings. In addition to this, I may mention that when, as was frequently the case, he came to cite me before the university court and found me "not at home," he was always kind enough to write the citation with chalk upon my chamber door. Occasionally a one-horse vehicle rolled along, well packed with students, who were leaving for the vacation or forever.

In such a university town there is an endless coming and going. Every three years beholds a new student-generation, forming an incessant human tide, where one semester-wave succeeds another, and only the old professors stand fast in the midst of this perpetual-motion flood, immovable as the pyramids of Egypt. Only in these university pyramids no treasures of wisdom are buried.

From out the myrtle bushes, by Rauschenwasser, I saw two hopeful youths appear … singing charmingly the Rossinian lay of "Drink beer, pretty, pretty 'Liza!" These sounds I continued to hear when far in the distance, and after I had long lost sight of the amiable vocalists, as their horses, which appeared to be gifted with characters of extreme German deliberation, were spurred and lashed in a most excruciating style. In no place is the skinning alive of horses carried to such an extent as in Göttingen; and often, when I beheld some lame and sweating hack, which, to earn the scraps of fodder which maintained his wretched life, was obliged to endure the torment of some roaring blade, or draw a

whole wagon-load of students, I reflected: "Unfortunate beast! Most certainly thy first ancestors, in some horse-paradise, did eat of forbidden oats."

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Beyond Nörten the sun flashed high in heaven. His intentions toward me were evidently good, and he warmed my brain until all the unripe thoughts which it contained came to full growth. The pleasant Sun Tavern in Nörten is not to be despised, either; I stopped there and found dinner ready. All the dishes were excellent and suited me far better than the wearisome, academical courses of saltless, leathery dried fish and cabbage *réchauffé*, which were served to me in Göttingen. After I had somewhat appeased my appetite, I remarked in the same room of the tavern a gentle man and two ladies, who were about to depart. The cavalier was clad entirely in green; he even had on a pair of green spectacles which cast a verdigris tinge upon his copper-red nose. The gentleman's general appearance was like what we may presume King Nebuchadnezzar's to have been in his later years, when, according to tradition, he ate nothing but salad, like a beast of the forest. The Green One requested me to recommend him to a hotel in Göttingen, and I advised him, when there, to inquire of the first convenient student for the Hotel de Brübach. One lady was evidently his wife—an altogether extensively constructed dame, gifted with a rubicund square mile

of countenance, with dimples in her cheeks which looked like spittoons for cupids. A copious double chin appeared below, like an imperfect continuation of the face, while her high-piled bosom, which was defended by stiff points of lace and a many-cornered collar, as if by turrets and bastions, reminded one of a fortress. Still, it is by no means certain that this fortress would have resisted an ass laden with gold, any more than did that of which Philip of Macedon spoke. The other lady, her sister, seemed her extreme antitype. If the one were descended from Pharaoh's fat kine, the other was as certainly derived from the lean. Her face was but a mouth between two ears; her breast was as inconsolably comfortless and dreary as the Lüneburger heath; while her absolutely dried-up figure reminded one of a charity table for poor theological students. Both ladies asked me, in a breath, if respectable people lodged in the Hotel de Brübach. I assented to this question with a clear conscience, and as the charming trio drove away I waved my hand to them many times from the window. The landlord of The Sun laughed, however, in his sleeve, being probably aware that the Hotel de Brübach was a name bestowed by the students of Göttingen upon their university prison.

Beyond Nordheim mountain ridges begin to appear, and the traveler occasionally meets with a picturesque eminence. The wayfarers whom I encountered were principally peddlers, traveling to the Brunswick fair, and among them there was a group of women, every one of whom bore on her back an

incredibly large cage nearly as high as a house, covered over with white linen. In this cage were every variety of singing birds, which continually chirped and sung, while their bearers merrily hopped along and chattered together. It seemed droll thus to behold one bird carrying others to market.

The night was as dark as pitch when I entered Osterode. I had no appetite for supper, and at once went to bed. I was as tired as a dog and slept like a god. In my dreams I returned to Göttingen and found myself in the library. I stood in a corner of the Hall of Jurisprudence, turning over old dissertations, lost myself in reading, and, when I finally looked up, remarked to my astonishment that it was night and that the hall was illuminated by innumerable over-hanging crystal chandeliers. The bell of the neighboring church struck twelve, the hall doors slowly opened, and there entered a superb colossal female form, reverentially accompanied by the members and hangers-on of the legal faculty. The giantess, though advanced in years, retained in her countenance traces of severe beauty, and her every glance indicated the sublime Titaness, the mighty Themis. The sword and balance were carelessly grasped in her right hand, while with the left she held a roll of parchment. Two young *Doctores Juris* bore the train of her faded gray robe; by her right side the lean Court Councilor Rusticus, the Lycurgus of Hanover, fluttered here and there like a zephyr, declaiming extracts from his last hand-book of law, while on her left her *cavalier servente*, the privy-councilor of Justice Cujacius,

hobbled gaily and gallantly along, constantly cracking legal jokes, himself laughing so heartily at his own wit that even the serious goddess often smiled and bent over him, exclaiming, as she tapped him on the shoulder with the great parchment roll, "You little scamp, who begin to trim the trees from the top!" All of the gentlemen who formed her escort now drew nigh in turn, each having something to remark or jest over, either a freshly worked-up miniature system, or a miserable little hypothesis, or some similar abortion of their own insignificant brains. Through the open door of the hall many strange gentlemen now entered, who announced themselves as the remaining magnates of the illustrious Order—mostly angular suspicious-looking fellows, who with extreme complacency blazed away with their definitions and hair-splittings, disputing over every scrap of a title to the title of a pandect. And other forms continually flocked in, the forms of those who were learned in law in the olden time—men in antiquated costume, with long councilors' wigs and forgotten faces, who expressed themselves greatly astonished that they, the widely famed of the previous century, should not meet with special consideration; and these, after their manner, joined in the general chattering and screaming, which, like ocean breakers, became louder and madder around the mighty goddess, until she, bursting with impatience, suddenly cried, in a tone of the most agonized Titanic pain, "Silence! Silence! I hear the voice of the beloved Prometheus. Mocking cunning and brute force are chaining the Innocent One to the rock of martyrdom,

and all your prattling and quarreling will not allay his wounds or break his fetters!" So cried the goddess, and rivulets of tears sprang from her eyes; the entire assembly howled as if in the agonies of death, the ceiling of the hall burst asunder, the books tumbled madly from their shelves. In vain did Münchhausen step out of his frame to call them to order; it only crashed and raged all the more wildly. I sought refuge from this Bedlam broken loose in the Hall of History, near that gracious spot where the holy images of the Apollo Belvedere and the Venus de Medici stand near each other, and I knelt at the feet of the Goddess of Beauty. In her glance I forgot all the wild excitement from which I had escaped, my eyes drank in with intoxication the symmetry and immortal loveliness of her infinitely blessed form; Hellenic calm swept through my soul, while above my head Phoebus Apollo poured forth, like heavenly blessings, the sweetest tones of his lyre.

Awaking, I continued to hear a pleasant, musical sound. The flocks were on their way to pasture, and their bells were tinkling. The blessed golden sunlight shone through the window, illuminating the pictures on the walls of my room. They were sketches from the War of Independence, which faithfully portrayed what heroes we all were; further, there were scenes representing executions on the guillotine, from the time of the revolution under Louis XIV., and other similar decapitations which no one could behold without thanking God that he lay quietly in bed drinking excellent coffee, and with his head

comfortably adjusted upon neck and shoulders.

After I had drunk my coffee, dressed myself, read the inscriptions upon the window-panes, and settled my bill at the inn, I left Osterode.

This town contains a certain quantity of houses and a given number of inhabitants, among whom are divers and sundry souls, as may be ascertained in detail from Gottschalk's "Pocket Guide-Book for Harz Travelers." Ere I struck into the highway, I ascended the ruins of the very ancient Osteroder Burg. They consisted merely of the half of a great, thick-walled tower, which appeared to be fairly honeycombed by time. The road to Clausthal led me again uphill, and from one of the first eminences I looked back once more into the dale where Osterode with its red roofs peeps out from among the green fir-woods, like a moss-rose from amid its leaves. The sun cast a pleasant, tender light over the whole scene. From this spot the imposing rear of the remaining portion of the tower may be seen to advantage.

There are many other ruined castles in this vicinity. That of Hardenberg, near Nörten, is the most beautiful. Even when one has, as he should, his heart on the left—that is, the liberal side—he cannot banish all melancholy feeling on beholding the rocky nests of those privileged birds of prey, who left to their effete descendants only their fierce appetites. So it happened to me this morning. My heart thawed gradually as I departed from Göttingen; I again became romantic, and as I went on I made up this poem:

Rise again, ye dreams forgotten;
  Heart-gate, open to the sun!
Joys of song and tears of sorrow
  Sweetly strange from thee shall run.

I will rove the fir-tree forest,
  Where the merry fountain springs,
Where the free, proud stags are wandering,
  Where the thrush, my darling, sings.

I will climb upon the mountains,
  On the steep and rocky height,
Where the gray old castle ruins
  Stand in rosy morning light.

I will sit awhile reflecting
  On the times long passed away,
Races which of old were famous,
  Glories sunk in deep decay.

Grows the grass upon the tilt-yard,
  Where the all-victorious knight
Overcame the strongest champions,
  Won the guerdon of the fight.

O'er the balcony twines ivy,
  Where the fairest gave the prize,
Him who all the rest had vanquished

Overcoming with her eyes.

Both the victors, knight and lady,
Fell long since by Death's cold hand;
So the gray and withered scytheman
Lays the mightiest in the sand.

After proceeding a little distance, I met with a traveling journeyman who came from Brunswick, and who related to me that it was generally believed in that city that their young Duke had been taken prisoner by the Turks during his tour in the Holy Land, and could be ransomed only by an enormous sum. The extensive travels of the Duke probably originated this tale. The people at large still preserve that traditional fable-loving train of ideas which is so pleasantly shown in their "Duke Ernest." The narrator of this news was a tailor, a neat little youth, but so thin that the stars might have shone through him as through Ossian's misty ghosts. Altogether, he was made up of that eccentric mixture of humor and melancholy peculiar to the German people. This was especially expressed in the droll and affecting manner in which he sang that extraordinary popular ballad, "A beetle sat upon the hedge, *summ, summ!*" There is one fine thing about us Germans—no one is so crazy but that he may find a crazier comrade who will understand him. Only a German *can* appreciate that song, and in the same breath laugh and cry himself to death over it. On this occasion I also remarked the depth to which the words of Goethe have penetrated the national

life. My lean comrade trilled occasionally as he went along —"Joyful and sorrowful, thoughts are free!" Such a corruption of text is usual among the multitude. He also sang a song in which "Lottie by the grave of Werther" wept. The tailor ran over with sentimentalism in the words—

> "Sadly by the rose-beds now I weep,
> Where the late moon found us oft alone!
> Moaning where the silver fountains sleep,
> Once which whispered joy in every tone."

* * * * *

The hills here became steeper, the fir-woods below were like a green sea, and white clouds above sailed along over the blue sky. The wildness of the region was, as it were, tamed by its uniformity and the simplicity of its elements. Nature, like a true poet, abhors abrupt transitions. Clouds, however fantastically formed they may at times appear, still have a white, or at least a subdued hue, harmoniously corresponding with the blue heaven and the green earth; so that all the colors of a landscape blend into one another like soft music, and every glance at such a natural picture tranquilizes and reassures the soul. The late Hofmann would have painted the clouds spotted and chequered. And, like a great poet, Nature knows how to produce the greatest effects

with the most limited means. She has, after all, only a sun, trees, flowers, water, and love to work with. Of course, if the latter be lacking in the heart of the observer, the whole will, in all probability, present but a poor appearance; the sun is then only so many miles in diameter, the trees are good for firewood, the flowers are classified according to their stamens, and the water is wet.

A little boy who was gathering brushwood in the forest for his sick uncle pointed out to me the village of Lerrbach, whose little huts with gray roofs lie scattered along for over a mile through the valley. "There," said he, "live idiots with goitres, and white negroes." By white negroes the people mean "albinos." The little fellow lived on terms of peculiar understanding with the trees, addressing them like old acquaintances, while they in turn seemed by their waving and rustling to return his salutations. He chirped like a thistle-finch; many birds around answered his call, and, ere I was aware, he had disappeared amid the thickets with his little bare feet and his bundle of brush. "Children," thought I, "are younger than we; they can remember when they were once trees or birds, and are consequently still able to understand them. We of larger growth are, alas, too old for that, and carry about in our heads too many sorrows and bad verses and too much legal lore." But the time when it was otherwise recurred vividly to me as I entered Clausthal. In this pretty little mountain town, which the traveler does not behold until he stands directly before it, I arrived just as the clock was striking twelve and

the children came tumbling merrily out of school. The little rogues, nearly all red-cheeked, blue-eyed, flaxen-haired, sprang and shouted and awoke in me melancholy and cheerful memories —how I once myself, as a little boy, sat all the forenoon long in a gloomy Catholic cloister school in Düsseldorf, without so much as daring to stand up, enduring meanwhile a terrible amount of Latin, whipping, and geography, and how I too hurrahed and rejoiced, beyond all measure when the old Franciscan clock at last struck twelve. The children saw by my knapsack that I was a stranger, and greeted me in the most hospitable manner. One of the boys told me that they had just had a lesson in religion, and showed me the Royal Hanoverian Catechism, from which they were questioned on Christianity. This little book was very badly printed, so that I greatly feared that the doctrines of faith made thereby but an unpleasant blotting-paper sort of impression upon the children's minds. I was also shocked at observing that the multiplication table—which surely seriously contradicts the Holy Trinity—was printed on the last page of the catechism, as it at once occurred to me that by this means the minds of the children might, even in their earliest years, be led to the most sinful skepticism. We Prussians are more intelligent, and, in our zeal for converting those heathen who are familiar with arithmetic, take good care not to print the multiplication table in the back of the catechism.

I dined at The Crown, at Clausthal. My repast consisted of spring-green parsley-soup, violet-blue cabbage, a pile of

roast veal, which resembled Chimborazo in miniature, and a sort of smoked herring, called "Bückings," from the inventor, William Bücking, who died in 1447, and who, on account of the invention, was so greatly honored by Charles V. that the great monarch in 1556 made a journey from Middleburg to Bievlied in Zealand for the express purpose of visiting the grave of the great man. How exquisitely such dishes taste when we are familiar with their historical associations!

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In the silver refinery, as has so frequently happened in life, I could get no glimpse of the precious metal. In the mint I succeeded better, and saw how money was made. Beyond this I have never been able to advance. On such occasions mine has invariably been the spectator's part, and I verily believe that, if it should rain dollars from heaven, the coins would only knock holes in my head, while the children of Israel would merrily gather up the silver manna. With feelings in which comic reverence was blended with emotion, I beheld the new-born shining dollars, took one in my hand as it came fresh from the stamp, and said to it, "Young Dollar, what a destiny awaits thee! What a cause wilt thou be of good and of evil! How thou wilt protect vice and patch up virtue! How thou wilt be beloved and accursed! How thou wilt aid in debauchery, pandering, lying, and murdering! How thou wilt restlessly roll along through clean and

dirty hands for centuries, until finally, laden with tresspasses and weary with sin, thou wilt be gathered again unto thine own, in the bosom of an Abraham, who will melt thee down, purify thee, and form thee into a new and better being, perhaps an innocent little tea-spoon, with which my own great-great-grandson will mash his porridge."

I will narrate in detail my visit to "Dorothea" and "Caroline," the two principal Clausthaler mines, having found them very interesting.

Half an hour away from the town are situated two large dingy buildings. Here the traveler is transferred to the care of the miners. These men wear dark and generally steel-blue colored jackets, of ample girth, descending to the hips, with pantaloons of a similar hue, a leather apron tied on behind, and a rimless green felt hat which resembles a decapitated nine-pin. In such a garb, with the exception of the "back-leather," the visitor is also clad, and a miner, his "leader," after lighting his mine-lamp, conducts him to a gloomy entrance resembling a chimney-hole, descends as far as the breast, gives him a few directions relative to grasping the ladder, and requests him to follow fearlessly. The affair is entirely devoid of danger, though it at first appears quite otherwise to those unacquainted with the mysteries of mining. Even the putting on of the dark convict-dress awakens very peculiar sensations. Then one must clamber down on all fours, the dark hole is so *very* dark, and Lord only knows how long the ladder may be! But we soon remark that this is not the only

ladder descending into the black eternity, for there are many, of from fifteen to twenty rounds apiece, each standing upon a board capable of supporting a man, and from which a new hole leads in turn to a new ladder. I first entered the "Caroline," the dirtiest and most disagreeable Caroline with whom I ever had the pleasure of becoming acquainted. The rounds of the ladders were covered with wet mud. And from one ladder we descend to another with the guide ever in advance, continually assuring us that there was no danger so long as we held firmly to the rounds and did not look at our feet, and that we must not for our lives tread on the side plank, where the buzzing barrel-rope runs, and where two weeks ago a careless man was knocked down, unfortunately breaking his neck by the fall. Far below is a confused rustling and humming, and we continually bump against beams and ropes which are in motion, winding up and raising barrels of broken ore or of water. Occasionally we pass galleries hewn in the rock, called "stulms," where the ore may be seen growing, and where some solitary miner sits the livelong day, wearily hammering pieces from the walls. I did not descend to those deepest depths where it is reported that the people on the other side of the world, in America, may be heard crying, "Hurrah for Lafayette!" Between ourselves, where I did go seemed to me deep enough in all conscience; there was an endless roaring and rattling, uncanny sounds of machinery, the rush of subterranean streams, sickening clouds of ore-dust continually rising, water dripping on all sides, and the miner's lamp gradually growing dimmer

and dimmer. The effect was really benumbing, I breathed with difficulty, and had trouble in holding to the slippery rounds. It was not *fright* which overpowered me, but, oddly enough, down there in the depths, I remembered that a year before, about the same time, I had been in a storm on the North Sea, and I now felt that it would be an agreeable change could I feel the rocking of the ship, hear the wind with its thunder-trumpet tones, while amid its lulls sounded the hearty cry of the sailors, and all above was freshly swept by God's own free air—yes, sir! Panting for air, I rapidly climbed several dozens of ladders, and my guide led me through a narrow and very long gallery toward the "Dorothea" mine. Here it was airier and fresher, and the ladders were cleaner, though at the same time longer and steeper, than in the "Caroline." I felt revived and more cheerful, particularly as I again observed traces of human beings. Far below I saw wandering, wavering lights; miners with their lamps came upwards one by one with the greeting, "Good luck to you!" and, receiving the same salutation from us, went onwards and upwards. Something like a friendly and quiet, yet, at the same time, painful and enigmatical recollection flitted across my mind as I met the deep glances and earnest pale faces of these young and old men, mysteriously illuminated by their lanterns, and thought how they had worked all day in lonely and secret places in the mines, and how they now longed for the blessed light of day and for the glances of wives and children.

My guide himself was an absolutely honest, thoroughly loyal

German specimen. With inward joy he pointed out to me the "place" where the Duke of Cambridge, when he visited the mines, dined with all his train, and where the long wooden table yet stands; with the accompanying great chair, made of ore, in which the Duke sat. "This is to remain as an eternal memorial," said the good miner, and he related with enthusiasm how many festivities had then taken place, how the entire "stulm" had been adorned with lamps, flowers, and decorations of leaves; how a miner boy had played on the cithern and sung; how the dear, delighted, fat Duke had drained many healths, and what a number of miners (himself especially) would cheerfully die for the dear, fat Duke, and for the whole house of Hanover. I am moved to my very heart when I see loyalty thus manifested in all its natural simplicity. It is such a beautiful sentiment, and such a purely *German* sentiment! Other people may be wittier, more intelligent, and more agreeable, but none is so faithful as the real German race. Did I not know that fidelity is as old as the world, I would believe that a German heart had invented it. German fidelity is no modern "Yours very truly," or "I remain your humble servant." In your courts, ye German princes, ye should cause to be sung, and sung again, the old ballad of *The Trusty Eckhart and the Base Burgund* who slew Eckhart's seven children, and still found him faithful. Ye have the truest people in the world, and ye err when ye deem that the old, intelligent, trusty hound has suddenly gone mad, and snaps at your sacred calves!

And, like German fidelity, the little mine-lamp has guided us

quietly and securely, without much flickering or flaring, through the labyrinth of shafts and stulms. We ascend out of the gloomy mountain-night—sunlight flashes around—"Good luck to you!"

Most of the miners dwell in Clausthal, and in the adjoining small town of Zellerfeld. I visited several of these brave fellows, observed their little households, heard many of their songs, which they skilfully accompany with their favorite instrument, the cithern, and listened to old mining legends, and to their prayers which they are accustomed to offer daily in company ere they descend the gloomy shaft; and many a good prayer did I offer up with them! One old climber even thought that I ought to remain among them, and become a man of the mines; but as I took my leave notwithstanding, he gave me a message to his brother, who dwelt near Goslar, and many kisses for his darling niece.

Tranquil even to stagnation as the life of these people may appear, it is, nevertheless, a real and vivid life. That ancient trembling crone who sits behind the stove opposite the great clothes-press may have been there for a quarter of a century, and all her thinking and feeling is, beyond a doubt, intimately blended with every corner of the stove and the carvings of the press. And clothes-press and stove *live*—for a human being hath breathed into them a portion of her soul.

It was only in such deeply contemplative life as this, in such "direct relationship" between man and the things of the outer world, that the German fairy tale could originate, the peculiarity

of which consists in the fact that in it not only animals and plants, but also objects apparently inanimate, speak and act. To thoughtful harmless people in the quiet homeliness of their lowly mountain cabins or forest huts, the inner life of these objects was gradually revealed; they acquired a necessary and consistent character, a sweet blending of fantastic humor and purely human sentiment, and thus we find in the fairy tale—as something marvelous and yet at the same time quite natural—the pin and the needle wandering forth from the tailor's home and losing their way in the dark; the straw and the coal seeking to cross the brook and coming to grief; the dust-pan and broom quarreling and fighting on the stairs. Thus the mirror, when interrogated, shows the image of the fairest lady, and even drops of blood begin to utter obscure and fearful words of the deepest compassion. And this is the reason why our life in childhood is so infinitely significant, for then all things are of the same importance, nothing escapes our attention, there is equality in every impression; while, when more advanced in years, we must act with design, busy ourselves more exclusively with particulars, carefully exchange the pure gold of observation for the paper currency of book definitions, and win in *breadth* of life what we lost in depth.

Now, we are grown-up, respectable people, we often inhabit new dwellings; the housemaid daily cleans them and changes at her will the position of the furniture, which interests us but little, as it is either new or may belong today to Jack, tomorrow

to Isaac. Even our very clothes are strange to us; we hardly know how many buttons there are on the coat we wear—for we change our garments as often as possible, and none of them remains deeply identified with our external or inner history. We can hardly remember how that brown vest once looked, which attracted so much laughter, and yet on the broad stripes of which the dear hand of the loved one so gently rested!

The old dame who sat behind the stove opposite the clothes-press wore a flowered dress of some old-fashioned material, which had been the bridal robe of her departed mother. Her great-grandson, a fair-haired boy, with flashing eyes, clad in a miner's dress, sat at her feet and counted the flowers on her dress. It may be that she has narrated to him many a story connected with that dress—many serious and pretty stories, which the boy will not readily forget, which will often recur to him when he, a grown-up man, works alone in the midnight galleries of the "Caroline," and which he in turn will narrate when the dear grandmother has long been dead, and he himself, a silver-haired, tranquil old man, sits amid the circle of *his* grand-children behind the stove, opposite the great clothes-press.

I lodged that night too in The Crown, where the Court Councilor B–, of Göttingen, had arrived meanwhile, and I had the pleasure of paying my respects to the old gentleman. After writing my name in the book of arrivals, I turned over the leaves of the month of July and found therein, among others, the much loved name of Adalbert von Chamisso, the biographer of the

immortal *Schlemihl*. The landlord remarked of Chamisso that the gentleman had arrived during one terrible storm and departed in another.

The next morning I had again to lighten my knapsack, and threw overboard an extra pair of boots; then I arose and went on to Goslar, where I arrived without knowing how. This much alone do I remember, that I sauntered up hill and down dale, gazing upon many a lovely meadow vale; silver waters rippled and murmured, sweet woodbirds sang, the bells of the flocks tinkled, the many shaded green trees were gilded by the sun, and, over all, the blue silk canopy of heaven was so transparent that one could look through the depths even to the Holy of Holies, where angels sit at the feet of God, studying thorough-bass in the features of the eternal countenance. But I was all the time lost in a dream of the previous night, which I could not banish from my thoughts. It was an echo of the old legend—how a knight descended into a deep fountain beneath which the fairest princess of the world lay buried in a deathlike magic slumber. I myself was the knight, and the dark mine of Clausthal was the fountain. Suddenly innumerable lights gleamed around me, watchful dwarfs leapt from every cranny in the rocks, grimacing angrily, cutting at me with their short swords, blowing shrilly on horns, which summoned more and ever more of their comrades, and frantically nodding their great heads. But as I hewed them down with my sword the blood flowed, and I for the first time remarked that they were not really dwarfs, but the red-blooming,

long-bearded thistle-tops, which I had the day before hewed down on the highway with my stick. At last they all vanished, and I came to a splendid lighted hall, in the midst of which stood my heart's loved one, veiled in white, and immovable as a statue. I kissed her mouth, and then—O Heavens!—I felt the blessed breath of her soul and the sweet tremor of her lovely lips. It seemed that I heard the divine command, "Let there be light!" and a dazzling flash of eternal light shot down, but at the same instant it was again night, and all ran chaotically together into a wild turbulent sea! A wild turbulent sea, indeed, over whose foaming waves the ghosts of the departed madly chased one another, their white shrouds floating in the wind, while behind all, goading them on with cracking whip, ran a many-colored harlequin—and I was the harlequin! Suddenly from the black waves the sea monsters raised their misshapen heads, snatched at me with extended claws, and I awoke in terror.

Alas, how the finest fairy tales may be spoiled! The knight, in fact, when he has found the sleeping princess, ought to cut a piece from her priceless veil, and when, by his bravery, she has been awakened from her magic sleep and is again seated on her golden throne in her palace, the knight should approach her and say, "My fairest princess, dost thou not know me?" Then she will answer, "My bravest knight, I know thee not!" And then he shows her the piece cut from her veil, exactly fitting the deficiency, and she knows that he is her deliverer, and both tenderly embrace, and the trumpets sound, and the marriage is celebrated. It is really a

very peculiar misfortune that *my* love-dreams so seldom have so fine a conclusion.

The name of Goslar rings so pleasantly, and there are so many very ancient and imperial associations connected therewith, that I had hoped to find an imposing and stately town. But it is always the same old story when we examine celebrities too closely. I found a nest of houses, drilled in every direction with narrow streets of labyrinthine crookedness, and amid which a miserable stream, probably the Gose, winds its sad and muddy way. The pavement of the town is as ragged as Berlin hexameters. Only the antiquities which are imbedded in the frame or mounting of the city—that is to say, its remnants of walls, towers, and battlements—give the place a piquant look. One of these towers, known as the "Zwinger," or donjonkeep, has walls of such extraordinary thickness that entire rooms are excavated therein. The open place before the town, where the world-renowned shooting matches are held, is a beautiful large plain surrounded by high mountains. The market is small, and in its midst is a spring fountain, the waters from which pours into a great metallic basin. When an alarm of fire is raised, they strike several times on this cup-formed basin, which gives out a very loud vibration. Nothing is known of the origin of this work. Some say that the devil placed it once during the night on the spot where it stands. In those days people were as yet fools, nor was the devil any wiser, and they mutually exchanged gifts.

The town hall of Goslar is a whitewashed guard-room. The

Guildhall, hard by, has a somewhat better appearance. In this building, equidistant from roof and ceiling, stands the statues of German emperors. Blackened with smoke and partly gilded, in one hand the sceptre, and in the other the globe, they look like roasted college beadles. One of the emperors holds a sword instead of a sceptre. I cannot imagine the reason of this variation from the established order, though it has doubtless some occult signification, as Germans have the remarkable peculiarity of meaning something in whatever they do.

In Gottschalk's *Handbook* I had read much of the very ancient cathedral, and of the far-famed imperial throne at Goslar. But when I wished to see these curiosities, I was informed that the church had been torn down, and that the throne had been carried to Berlin. We live in deeply significant times, when millennial churches are destroyed and imperial thrones are tumbled into the lumber-room.

A few memorials of the late cathedral of happy memory are still preserved in the church of St. Stephen. These consist of stained glass pictures of great beauty, a few indifferent paintings, including a Lucas Cranach, a wooden Christ crucified, and a heathen altar of some unknown metal. The latter resembles a long square coffer, and is upheld by caryatides, which in a bowed position hold their hands above their heads in support, and are making the most hideous grimaces. But far more hideous is the adjacent large wooden crucifix of which I have just spoken. This head of Christ, with its real hair and thorns and blood-

stained countenance, represents, in the most masterly manner, the death of a *man*—but not of a divinely-born Savior. Nothing but physical suffering is portrayed in this image—not the sublime poetry of pain. Such a work would be more appropriately placed in a hall of anatomy than in a house of the Lord.

The sacristan's wife—an artistic expert—who led me about, showed me a special rarity. This was a many-cornered, well-planed blackboard covered with white numerals, which hung like a lamp in the middle of the building. Oh, how brilliantly does the spirit of invention manifest itself in the Protestant Church! For who would think it! The numbers on this board are those of the Psalms for the day, which are generally chalked on a common black tablet, and have a very sobering effect on an esthetic mind, but which, in the form above described, even ornament the church and fully make up for the want of pictures by Raphael. Such progress delights me infinitely, since I, as a Protestant and a Lutheran, am ever deeply chagrined when Catholic opponents ridicule the empty, God-forsaken appearance of Protestant churches.

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The churchyard at Goslar did not appeal to me very strongly, but a certain very pretty blonde-ringleted head which peeped smilingly from a parterre window *did*. After dinner I again sought out this fascinating window, but, instead of a maiden, I beheld

a glass containing white bellflowers. I clambered up, stole the flowers, put them quietly in my cap, and descended, unheeding the gaping mouths, petrified noses, and goggle eyes, with which the people in the street, and especially the old women, regarded this qualified theft. As I, an hour later, passed by the same house, the beauty stood by the window, and, as she saw the flowers in my cap, she blushed like a ruby and started back. This time I had seen the beautiful face to better advantage; it was a sweet, transparent incarnation of summer-evening breeze, moonshine, nightingale notes, and rose perfume. Later, in the twilight hour, she was standing at the door. I came—I drew near—she slowly retreated into the dark entry. I followed, and, seizing her hand, said, "I am a lover of beautiful flowers and of kisses, and when they are not given to me I steal them." Here I quickly snatched a kiss, and, as she was about to flee, whispered soothingly, "Tomorrow I leave this town, probably never to return." Then I perceived a faint pressure of the lovely lips and of the little hand and I —hurried smilingly away. Yes, I must smile when I reflect that unconsciously I uttered the magic formula by which our red-and blue-coated cavaliers more frequently win female hearts than by their mustachioed attractiveness—"Tomorrow I leave, probably never to return."

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During the night which I passed at Goslar, a remarkably

curious occurrence befell me. Even now I cannot think of it without terror. I am not cowardly by nature and Heaven knows that I have never experienced any special anguish when, for example, a naked blade has sought to make acquaintance with my nose or when I have lost my way at night in a wood of ill repute, or when, at a concert, a yawning lieutenant has threatened to swallow me—but *ghosts* I fear almost as much as the *Austrian Observer*[52]. What is fear? Does it originate in the brain or in the emotions? This was a point which I frequently disputed with Dr. Saul Ascher, when we accidentally met in the Café Royal in Berlin, where for a long time I used to take dinner. The Doctor invariably maintained that we feared anything, because we recognized it as fearful, by a certain process of reasoning, for reason alone is an active power—the emotions are not. While I ate and drank my fill, the Doctor continued to demonstrate to me the advantages of reason. Toward the end of his demonstration, he was accustomed to look at his watch and remark conclusively, "Reason is the highest principle!" Reason! Never do I hear this word without recalling Dr. Saul Ascher, with his abstract legs, his tight-fitting transcendental-grey long coat, his forbidding icy face, which could have served as frontispiece for a textbook of geometry. This man, deep in the fifties, was a personified straight line. In his striving for the positive, the poor man had, by dint of philosophizing, eliminated all the splendid things from life, such as sunshine, religion, and flowers, so that there remained nothing

[52] Name of an Austrian periodical.

for him but the cold positive grave. The Apollo Belvedere and Christianity were the two special objects of his malice, and he had even published a pamphlet against the latter, in which he had demonstrated its unreasonableness and untenableness. In addition to this, he has written a great number of books, in all of which *Reason* shines forth in all its peculiar excellence, and as the poor Doctor meant what he said in all seriousness, he was, so far, deserving of respect. But the great joke consisted precisely in this, that the Doctor invariably cut such a seriously absurd figure when he could not comprehend what every child comprehends, simply because it is a child. I visited the Doctor of Reason several times in his own house, where I found him in company with very pretty girls; for Reason, it seems, does not prohibit the enjoyment of the things of this world. Once, however, when I called, his servant told me the "Herr Doctor" had just died. I experienced as much emotion on this occasion as if I had been told that the "Herr Doctor" had just moved.

To return to Goslar. "The highest principle is Reason," said I soothingly to myself, as I slid into bed. But it availed me nothing. I had just been reading in Varnhagen von Ense's *German Tales,* which I had brought with me from Clausthal, that terrible story of the son who went about to murder his father and was warned in the night by the ghost of his mother. The wonderful truthfulness with which this story is depicted, caused, while reading it, a shudder of horror in all my veins. Ghost-stories invariably thrill us with additional horror when read during a

journey, and by night in a town, in a house, and in a room where we have never been before. We involuntarily reflect, "How many horrors may have been perpetrated on this very spot where I now lie!" Meanwhile, the moon shone into my room in a doubtful, suspicious manner; all kinds of uncalled-for shapes quivered on the walls, and as I raised myself in bed and glanced fearfully toward them, I beheld—

There is nothing so uncanny as when a man accidentally sees his own face by moonlight in a mirror. At the same instant there struck a deep-booming, yawning bell, and that so slowly and wearily that after the twelfth stroke I firmly believed that twelve full hours must have passed and that it would begin to strike twelve all over again. Between the last and next to the last tones, there struck in very abruptly, as if irritated and scolding, another bell, which was apparently out of patience with the slowness of its colleague. As the two iron tongues were silenced, and the stillness of death sank over the whole house, I suddenly seemed to hear, in the corridor before my chamber, something halting and shuffling along, like the unsteady steps of an old man. At last my door opened, and there entered slowly the late departed Dr. Saul Ascher. A cold fever ran through me. I trembled like an ivy leaf and scarcely dared to gaze upon the ghost. He appeared as usual, with the same transcendental-grey long coat, the same abstract legs, and the same mathematical face; only this latter was a little yellower than usual, the mouth, which formerly described two angles of 22-1/2 degrees, was pinched together,

and the circles around the eyes had a somewhat greater radius. Tottering, and supporting himself as usual upon his Malacca cane, he approached me, and said in his usual drawling accent but in a friendly manner, "Do not be afraid, nor believe that I am a ghost. It is a deception of your imagination, if you believe that you see me as a ghost. What is a ghost? Define one. Deduce for me the conditions of the possibility of a ghost. What reasonable connection is there between such an apparition and reason? Reason, I say, *Reason!"* Here the ghost proceeded to analyze reason, cited from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, part II, section I, book 2, chap. 3, the distinction between phenomena and noumena, then went on to construct a hypothetical system of ghosts, piled one syllogism on another, and concluded with the logical proof that there are absolutely no ghosts. Meanwhile the cold sweat ran down my back, my teeth clattered like castanets, and from very agony of soul I nodded an unconditional assent to every assertion which the phantom doctor alleged against the absurdity of being afraid of ghosts, and which he demonstrated with such zeal that once, in a moment of distraction, instead of his gold watch he drew a handful of grave-worms from his vest-pocket, and remarking his error, replaced them with a ridiculous but terrified haste. "Reason is the highest—!" Here the clock struck *one*, but the ghost vanished.

The next morning I left Goslar and wandered along, partly at random, and partly with the intention of visiting the brother of the Clausthal miner. Again we had beautiful Sunday weather. I

climbed hill and mountain, saw how the sun strove to drive away the mists, and wandered merrily through the quivering woods, while around my dreaming head rang the bell-flowers of Goslar. The mountains stood in their white night-robes, the fir-trees were shaking sleep out of their branching limbs, the fresh morning wind curled their drooping green locks, the birds were at morning prayers, the meadow-vale flashed like a golden surface sprinkled with diamonds, and the shepherd passed over it with his bleating flock.

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After much circuitous wandering I came to the dwelling of the brother of my Clausthal friend. Here I stayed all night and experienced the following beautiful poem—

Stands the but upon the mountain
  Where the ancient woodman dwells
There the dark-green fir-trees rustle,
  Casts the moon its golden spells.

In the but there stands an arm-chair,
  Richly carved and cleverly;
He who sits therein is happy,
  And that happy man am I.

On the footstool sits a maiden,

On my lap her arms repose,
With her eyes like blue stars beaming,
And her mouth a new-born rose.

And the dear blue stars shine on me,
Wide like heaven's great arch their gaze;
And her little lily finger
Archly on the rose she lays.

Nay, the mother cannot see us,
For she spins the whole day long;
And the father plays the cithern
As he sings a good old song.

And the maiden softly whispers,
Softly, that none may hear;
Many a solemn little secret
Hath she murmured in my ear.

"Since I lost my aunt who loved me,
Now we never more repair
To the shooting-lodge at Goslar,
And it is so pleasant there!

"Here above it is so lonely,
On the rocks where cold winds blow;
And in winter we are always
Deeply buried in the snow.

"And I'm such a timid creature,
  And I'm frightened like a child
At the evil mountain spirits,
  Who by night are raging wild"

Silent falls the winsome maiden,
  Frightened by her own surmise,
Little hands, so white and dimpled,
  Pressing on her sweet blue eyes.

Louder now the fir-trees rustle,
  Spinning-wheel more harshly drones;
In their pauses sounds the cithern,
  And the old song's simple tones:

"Do not fear, my tender nursling,
  Aught of evil spirits' might;
For good angels still are watching
  Round thy pathway day and night."

Now the fir-tree's dark-green fingers
  Tap upon the window low,
And the moon, a yellow listener,
  Casts within her sweetest glow.

Father, mother, both are sleeping,
  Near at hand their rest they take;
But we two, in pleasant gossip,
  Keep each other long awake.

"That thou prayest much too often,
  Seems unlikely, I declare;
On thy lips there is a quiver
  Which was never born of prayer.

"Ah! that heartless, cold expression
  All my being terrifies—
Though my darkling fear is lessened
  By thy frank and honest eyes.

"Yet I doubt if thou believest
  What is held for truth by most;
Hast thou faith in God the Father,
  In the Son and Holy Ghost?"

"Ah, my darling! when an infant
  By my mother's knee I stood,
I believed in God the Father,
  In the Ruler great and good.

"He who made the world so lovely,
  Gave man beauty, gave him force,
And to sun and moon and planets
  Pre-appointed each its course.

"As I older grew, my darling,
  And my way in wisdom won,
I in reason comprehended,

And believe now in the Son—

"In the well-loved Son, who, loving,
Oped the gates of Love so wide;
And for thanks—as is the custom—
By the world was crucified.

"Now, that I in full-grown manhood
Reading, travel, wisdom boast;
Still my heart expands, and, truly
I believe the Holy Ghost,

"Who bath worked the greatest wonders—
Greater still he'll work again;
He bath broken tyrants' strongholds,
Broken every vassal's chain.

"Ancient deadly wounds he healeth,
He renews man's ancient right;
All to him, born free and equal,
Are as nobles in his sight.

"Clouds of evil flee before him,
And those cobwebs of the brain
Which forbade us love and pleasure,
Scowling grimly on our pain.

"And a thousand knights in armor
Hath he chosen and required

To fulfil his holy bidding—
  All with noblest zeal inspired.

"Lo! I their precious swords are gleaming,
  And their banners wave in fight!
What! Thou fain would'st see, my darling,
  Such a proud and noble knight?

"Well, then, gaze on me, my dearest;
  I am of that lordly host,
Kiss me! and you kiss a chosen
  Champion of the Holy Ghost!"

Silently the moon conceals her
  Down behind the sombre trees,
And the lamp which lights our chamber
  Flickers in the evening breeze.

But the starry eyes are beaming
  Softly o'er the dimpled cheeks,
And the purple rose is glowing,
  While the gentle maiden speaks.

"Little people—fairy goblins—
  Steal away our meat and bread;
In the chest it lies at evening,
  In the morning it has fled.

"From our milk the little people

Steal the cream and all the best;
Then they leave the dish uncovered,
And our cat drinks up the rest.

"And the cat's a witch, I'm certain,
For by night, when storms arise,
Oft she seeks the haunted hill-top
Where the fallen tower lies.

"There was once a splendid castle.
Home of joy and weapons bright,
Where there swept in stately pageant
Lady, page, and armèd knight.

"But a sorceress charmed the castle,
With its lords and ladies fair;
Now it is a lonely ruin,
And the owls are nesting there.

"But my aunt hath often told me,
Could I speak the proper word,
In the proper place up yonder,
When the proper hour occurred,

"I should see the ruins changing
Swiftly to a castle bright,
And again in stately dances
Dame and page and gallant knight.

"He who speaks the word of power
  Wins the castle for his own,
And the knight with drum and trumpet
  Loud will hail him lord alone."

So the simple fairy pictures
  From the little rose-mouth bloom,
And the gentle eyes are shedding
  Star-blue lustre through the gloom.

Round my hand the little maiden
  Winds her gold locks as she will,
Gives a name to every finger,
  Kisses, smiles, and then is still.

All things in the silent chamber,
  Seem at once familiar grown,
As if e'en the chairs and clothes-press,
  Well of old to me were known.

Now the clock talks kindly, gravely,
  And the cithern, as 'twould seem,
Of itself is faintly chiming,
  And I sit as in a dream.

Now the proper hour is striking,
  Here the charm should now be heard;
Child, how would'st thou be astonished,
  Should I speak the magic word!

If I spoke that word, then fading
  Night would thrill in fearful strife;
Trees and streams would roar together
  As the mountains woke to life.

Ringing lutes and goblin ditties
  From the clefted rock would sound,
Like a mad and merry spring-tide
  Flowers grow forest-high around.

Thousand startling, wondrous flowers,
  Leaves of vast and fabled form,
Strangely perfumed, wildly quivering,
  As if thrilled with passion's storm.

In a crimson conflagration
  Roses o'er the tumult rise;
Giant lilies, white as crystal,
  Shoot like columns to the skies.

Great as suns, the stars above us
  Gaze adown with burning glow;
Fill the lilies' cups gigantic
  With their lights' abundant flow.

We ourselves, my little maiden,
  Would be changed more than all;
Torchlight gleams o'er gold and satin

Round us merrily would fall.

Thou thyself would'st be the princess,
And this hut thy castle high;
Ladies, lords, and graceful pages
Would be dancing, singing by.

I, however, I have conquered
Thee, and all things, with the word!
Serfs and castle—lo! with trumpet
Loud they hail me as their Lord!

The sun rose. The mists flitted away like phantoms at the third crow of the cock. Again I wandered up hill and down dale, while above me soared the fair sun, ever lighting up new scenes of beauty. The Spirit of the Mountain evidently favored me, well knowing that a "poetical character" has it in his power to say many a fine thing of him, and on this morning he let me see his Harz as it is not, most assuredly, seen by every one. But the Harz also saw me as I am seen by few, and there were as costly pearls on my eyelashes as on the grass of the valley. The morning dew of love wet my cheeks; the rustling pines understood me; their twigs parted and waved up and down, as if, like mute mortals, they would express their joy with gestures of their hands, and from afar I heard beautiful and mysterious chimes, like the sound of bells belonging to some hidden forest church. People say that these sounds are caused by the cattle-bells, which, in the Harz

ring with remarkable clearness and purity.

It was noon, according to the position of the sun, as I chanced upon such a flock, and its shepherd, a friendly, light-haired young fellow, told me that the great hill at whose base I stood was the old, world-renowned Brocken. For many leagues around there is no house, and I was glad enough when the young man invited me to share his meal. We sat down to a *déjeûner dînatoire*, consisting of bread and cheese. The sheep snatched up our crumbs, while pretty glossy heifers jumped around, ringing their bells roguishly, and laughing at us with great merry eyes. We made a royal meal, my host appearing to me every inch a king; and as he is the only monarch who has ever given me bread, I will sing his praises right royally:

Kingly is the herd-boy's calling,
  On the knoll his throne is set,
O'er his hair the sunlight falling
  Gilds a living coronet.

Red-marked sheep that bleat so loudly
  Are his courtiers cross-bedight,
Calves that strut before him proudly
  Seem each one a stalwart knight.

Goats are actors nimbly springing,
  And the cows and warblers gay
With their bell and flute-notes ringing
  Form the royal orchestra.

And whene'er the music hushes,
  Soft the pine-tree murmurs creep;
Far away a cataract rushes—
  Look, our noble king's asleep!

Meanwhile through the kingdom bounding
  Rules the dog as minister,
Till his bark from cliffs rebounding
  Echoes to the sleeper's ear.

Yawning syllables he utters—
  "Ruling is too hard a task.
Were I but at home," he mutters,
  "With my queen 'tis all I'd ask.

"On her arm my head reposes
  Free from care, how happily!
And her loving glance discloses
  Kingdom wide enough for me."[53]

We took leave of each other in a friendly manner, and with a light heart I began to ascend the mountain. I was soon welcomed by a grove of stately firs, for which I entertain great respect in every regard, for these trees have not found growing to be such an easy business, and during the days of their youth it fared hard with them. The mountain is here sprinkled with a great

[53] Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

number of blocks of granite, and most of the trees were obliged either to twine their roots over the stones, or to split them in two, and thus laboriously to search for the soil from which to draw their nourishment. Here and there stones lie on top of one another, forming, as it were, a gate, and over all rise the trees, twining their naked roots down over the stone portals, and only laying hold of the soil when they reach its base, so that they appear to be growing in the air; and yet, as they have forced their way up to that startling height and grown into one with the rocks, they stand more securely than their comfortable comrades, who are rooted in the tame forest soil of the level country. So it is in life with those great men who have strengthened and established themselves by resolutely overcoming the obstacles and hindrances of their early years. Squirrels climbed amid the fir-twigs, while, beneath, yellow deer were quietly grazing. I cannot comprehend, when I see such a noble, lovable animal, how educated and refined people can take pleasure in hunting and killing it. Such a creature was once more merciful than man, and suckled the pining Schmerzenreich of the holy Genofeva. Most beautiful were the golden sun-rays shooting through the dark-green of the firs. The roots of the trees formed a natural stairway, and everywhere my feet encountered swelling beds of moss, for the stones are here covered foot-deep, as if with light-green velvet cushions. Everywhere a pleasant freshness and the dreamy murmur of streams. Here and there we see water rippling silver-clear amid the rocks, washing the bare roots and fibres of

trees. Bend down toward all this ceaseless activity and listen, and you will hear, as it were, the mysterious history of the growth of the plants, and the quiet pulsations of the heart of the mountain. In many places the water jets strongly up amid rocks and roots, forming little cascades. It is pleasant to sit in such places. There is such a wonderful murmuring and rustling, the birds pour forth broken lovesick strains, the trees whisper as if with a thousand maidens' tongues, the odd mountain flowers peep up at us as if with a thousand maidens' eyes, stretching out to us their curious, broad, drolly-scalloped leaves; the sun-rays flash here and there in sport; the herbs, as though endowed with reason, are telling one another their green legends; all seems enchanted and it becomes more and more mysterious; an old, old dream is realized—the loved one appears! Alas, that she so quickly vanishes!

The higher we ascend, so much the shorter and more dwarflike do the fir-trees become, shrinking up, as it were, within themselves, until finally only whortleberries, bilberries, and mountain herbs remain. It is also sensibly colder. Here, for the first time, the granite boulders, which are frequently of enormous size, become fully visible. These may well have been the balls which evil spirits cast at one another on the Walpurgis night, when the witches come riding hither on brooms and pitchforks, when the mad, unhallowed revelry begins, as our credulous nurses have told us, and as we may see it represented in the beautiful Faust pictures of Master Retsch. Yes, a young poet, who, while journeying from Berlin to Gottingen passed the

Brocken on the first evening in May, even noticed how certain ladies who cultivated *belles-lettres*, were holding their esthetic tea-circle in a rocky corner, how they comfortably read aloud the *Evening Journal*, how they praised as universal geniuses their poetic billy-goats which hopped bleating around their table, and how they passed a final judgment on all the productions of German literature. But when they at last fell upon *Ratcliff* and *Almansor*, utterly denying to the author aught like piety or Christianity, the hair of the youth rose on end, terror seized him —I spurred my steed and rode onwards!

In fact, when we ascend the upper half of the Brocken, no one can well help thinking of the amusing legends of the Blocksberg, and especially of the great mystical German national tragedy of Doctor Faust. It ever seemed to me that I could hear the cloven foot scrambling along behind, and some one breathing humorously. And I verily believe that "Mephisto" himself must breathe with difficulty when he climbs his favorite mountain, for it is a road which is to the last degree exhausting, and I was glad enough when I at last beheld the long-desired Brocken house.

This house, as every one knows from numerous pictures, is situated on the summit of the mountain, consists of a single story, and was erected in the year 1800 by Count Stolberg-Wernigerode, in behalf of whom it is managed as a tavern. On account of the wind and cold in winter its walls are incredibly thick. The roof is low. From its midst rises a towerlike observatory, and near the house lie two little out-buildings, one

of which in earlier times served as shelter to the Brocken visitors.

On entering the Brocken house, I experienced a somewhat unusual and unreal sensation. After a long solitary journey amid rocks and pines, the traveler suddenly finds himself in a house amid the clouds. Far below lie cities, hills, and forests, while above he encounters a curiously blended circle of strangers, by whom he is received, as is usual in such assemblies, almost like an expected companion—half inquisitively and half indifferently. I found the house full of guests, and, as becomes a wise man, I first thought of the night, and of the discomfort of sleeping on straw. With the voice of one dying I called for tea, and the Brocken landlord was reasonable enough to perceive that the sick gentleman must be provided with a decent bed. This he gave me in a narrow room, where a young merchant—a long emetic in a brown overcoat—had already established himself.

In the public room I found a full tide of bustle and animation. There were students from different universities. Some of the newly arrived were taking refreshments. Others, preparing for departure, buckled on their knapsacks, wrote their names in the album, and received Brocken bouquets from the housemaids. There was pinching of cheeks, singing, springing, trilling; questions asked, answers given, fragments of conversation such as—fine weather—footpath—*prosit*—luck be with you!—Adieu! Some of those leaving were also partly drunk, and these derived a twofold pleasure from the beautiful scenery, for a tipsy man sees double.

After recruiting my strength I ascended the observatory, and there found a little gentleman with two ladies, one of whom was young and the other elderly. The young lady was very beautiful—a superb figure, flowing locks, surmounted by a helm-like black satin *chapeau*, amid whose white plumes the wind played; fine limbs, so closely enwrapped by a black silk mantle that their exquisite form was made manifest, and great free eyes, calmly looking down into the great free world.

When a boy I thought of naught save tales of magic and wonder, and every fair lady who had ostrich feathers on her head I regarded as an elfin queen. If I observed that the train of her dress was wet I believed at once that she must be a water-fairy. Now I know better, having learned from natural history that those symbolical feathers are found on the most stupid of birds, and that the train of a lady's dress may become wet in a very natural way. But if I had, with those boyish eyes, seen the aforesaid young lady in the aforesaid position on the Brocken, I would most assuredly have thought—"that is the fairy of the mountain, and she has just uttered the charm which has caused every thing down there to appear so wonderful." Yes, at the first glance from the Brocken everything appears in a high degree marvelous. New impressions throng in on every side, and these, varied and often contradictory, unite in our soul in an as yet undefined uncomprehended sensation. If we succeed in grasping the sensation in its conception we shall comprehend the character of the mountain. This character is entirely German as regards not

only its advantages but also its defects. The Brocken is a German. With German thoroughness he points out to us—sharply and accurately defined as in a panorama—the hundreds of cities, towns, and villages which are principally situated to the north, and all the mountains, forests, rivers, and plains which extend endlessly in all directions. But for this very reason everything appears like a sharply designed and perfectly colored map, and nowhere is the eye gratified by really beautiful landscapes—just as we German compilers, owing to the honorable exactness with which we attempt to give all and everything, never appear to think of giving the details in a beautiful manner.

The mountain, in consequence, has a certain calm, German, intelligent, tolerant character, simply because he can see things so distant yet so distinctly. And when such a mountain opens his giant eyes, it may be that he sees somewhat more than we dwarfs, who with our weak eyes climb over him. Many indeed assert that the Blocksberg is very Philistian, and Claudius once sang "The Blocksberg is the lengthy Sir Philistine;" but that was an error. On account of his bald head, which he occasionally covers with a cloud-cap, the Blocksberg has indeed a somewhat Philistian aspect, but this with him, as with many other great Germans, is the result of pure irony; for it is notorious that he has his wild student and fantastic periods, as, for instance, on the first night of May. Then he casts his cloud-cap uproariously and merrily into the air, and becomes, like the rest of us, romantic mad, in real German fashion.

I soon sought to entrap the beauty into a conversation, for we begin to fully enjoy the beauties of nature only when we talk about them on the spot.

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While we conversed twilight stole, the air grew colder, the sun sank lower and lower, and the tower platform was filled with students, traveling mechanics, and a few honest citizens with their spouses and daughters, all of whom were desirous of witnessing the sunset. It is truly a sublime spectacle, which tunes the soul to prayer. For a full quarter of an hour all stood in solemn silence, gazing on the beautiful fire-ball as it gradually sank in the west; our faces were bathed in the rosy light; our hands were involuntarily folded; it seemed as if we, a silent congregation, stood in the nave of a giant cathedral, that the priest raised the body of the Lord, and the Palestrina's immortal hymns poured forth from the organ.

As I stood thus, lost in devotion, I heard some one near me exclaim, "Ah, how beautiful Nature is, as a general thing!" These words came from the sentimental heart of my room-mate, the young merchant. They brought me back to my week-day frame of mind, and I was now able to say a few neat things to the ladies about the sunset and to accompany them, as calmly as if nothing had happened, to their room. They permitted me to talk an hour longer with them. Our conversation, like the earth's

course, was about the sun. The mother declared that the sun, as it sank in the snowy clouds, seemed like a red glowing rose, which the gallant heaven had thrown upon the white outspreading bridal-veil of his loved earth. The daughter smiled, and thought that a frequent observation of such phenomena weakened their impression. The mother corrected this error by a quotation from Goethe's *Letters of Travel*, and asked me if I had read *Werther*. I believe that we also spoke of Angora cats, Etruscan vases, Turkish shawls, maccaroni, and Lord Byron, from whose poems the elder lady, daintly lisping and sighing, recited several passages about the sunset. To the younger lady, who did not understand English, and who wished to become familiar with those poems, I recommended the translation of my fair and gifted countrywoman, the Baroness Elise von Hohenhausen. On this occasion, as is my custom when talking with young ladies, I did not fail to declaim against Byron's godlessness, heartlessness, cheerlessness, and heaven knows what besides.

After this business I took a walk on the Brocken, for there it is never quite dark. The mist was not heavy, and I could see the outlines of the two hills known as the Witch's Altar and the Devil's Pulpit. I fired my pistol, but there was no echo. Suddenly, however, I heard familiar voices and found myself embraced and kissed. The newcomers were fellow-students from my own part of Germany, and had left Göttingen four days later than I. Great was their astonishment at finding me again, alone on the Blocksberg. Then came a flood tide of narrative,

of astonishment, and of appointment-making, of laughing, and of recollecting, and in the spirit we found ourselves again in our learned Siberia, where refinement is carried to such an extent that the bears are tied up in the taverns, and the sables wish the hunter good evening.[54]

In the great room we had supper. There was a long table, with two rows of hungry students. At first we indulged in the usual topic of university conversation—duels, duels, and once again duels. The company consisted principally of Halle students, and Halle formed, in consequence, the nucleus of their discourse. The window-panes of Court-Councilor Schütz were exegetically illuminated. Then it was mentioned that the King of Cyprus' last levee had been very brilliant; that the monarch had chosen a natural son; that he had married with the left hand a princess of the house of Lichtenstein; that the State-mistress had been forced to resign, and that the entire ministry, greatly moved, had wept according to rule. I need hardly explain that this all referred to certain beer dignitaries in Halle. Then the two Chinese, who two years before had been exhibited in Berlin, and who were now appointed lecturers on Chinese esthetics in Halle, were discussed. Then jokes were made. Some one supposed a case in which a live German might be exhibited for money in China, and to this end a placard was fabricated, in which the mandarins

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[54] According to that dignified and erudite work, the *Burschikoses Woerterbuch*, or Student-Slang Dictionary, "to bind a bear" signifies to contract a debt. The definition of a "sable," as given in the dictionary above cited is, "A young lady anxious to please."

Tsching-Tschang-Tschung and Hi-Ha-Ho certified that the man was a genuine Teuton, including a list of his accomplishments, which consisted principally of philosophizing, smoking, and endless patience. It concluded with the notice that visitors were prohibited from bringing any dogs with them at twelve o'clock (the hour for feeding the captive), as these animals would be sure to snap from the poor German all his titbits.

A young *Burschenschafter*, who had recently passed his period of purification in Berlin, spoke much, but very partially, of this city. He had frequented both Wisotzki and the theatre, but judged falsely of both. "For youth is ever ready with a word," etc. He spoke of the sumptuousness of the costumes, of scandals among actors and actresses, and similar matters. The youth knew not that in Berlin, where outside show exerts the greatest influence (as is abundantly evidenced by the commonness of the phrase "so people do"), this ostentation must flourish on the stage preëminently, and consequently that the special care of the management must be for "the color of the beard with which a part is played" and for the truthfulness of the costumes which are designed by sworn historians and sewed by scientifically instructed tailors. And this is indispensable. For if Maria Stuart wore an apron belonging to the time of Queen Anne, the banker, Christian Gumpel, would with justice complain that thereby all illusion was destroyed; and if Lord Burleigh in a moment of forgetfulness should don the hose of Henry the Fourth, then the War-Councilor Von Steinzopf's wife, *née* Lilienthau, would not

get the anachronism out of her head for the whole evening…. But little as this young man had comprehended the conditions of the Berlin drama, still less was he aware that the Spontini Janissary opera, with its kettledrums, elephants, trumpets, and gongs, is a heroic means of inspiring our enervated people with warlike enthusiasm—a means once shrewdly recommended by Plato and Cicero. Least of all did the youth comprehend the diplomatic significance of the ballet. It was with great trouble that I finally made him understand that there was really more political science in Hoguet's feet than in Buchholz's head, that all his *tours de danse* signified diplomatic negotiations, and that his every movement hinted at state matters; as, for instance, when he bent forward anxiously, stretching his hands out wide and grasping at the air, he meant our Cabinet; that a hundred pirouettes on one toe without quitting the spot alluded to the German Diet; that he was thinking of the lesser princes when he tripped around with his legs tied; that he described the European balance of power when he tottered hither and thither like a drunken man; that he hinted at a Congress when he twisted his bended arms together like a skein; and finally, that he sets forth our altogether too great friend in the East, when, very gradually unfolding himself, he rises on high, stands for a long time in this elevated position, and then all at once breaks out into the most terrifying leaps. The scales fell from the eyes of the young man, and he now saw how it was that dancers are better paid than great poets, and why the ballet forms in diplomatic circles

an inexhaustible subject of conversation. By Apis! how great is the number of the esoteric, and how small the array of the esoteric frequenters of the theatre! There sit the stupid audience, gaping and admiring leaps and attitudes, studying anatomy in the positions of Lemière, and applauding the *entrechats* of Röhnisch, prattling of "grace," "harmony," and "limbs"—no one remarking meanwhile that he has before him in chronological ciphers the destiny of the German Fatherland.

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The company around the table gradually became better acquainted and much noisier. Wine banished beer, punch-bowls steamed, songs were sung, and brotherhood was drunk in true student fashion. The old "Landsfather toast" and the beautiful songs of W. Müller, Rückert, Uhland, and others rang out with the exquisite airs of Methfessel. Best of all sounded our own Arndt's German words, "The Lord, who bade iron grow, wished for no slaves." And out of doors it roared as if the old mountain sang with us, and a few reeling friends even asserted that he merrily shook his bald head, which caused the great unsteadiness of the floor of our room.

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During this crazy scene, in which plates learned to dance and glasses to fly, there sat opposite me two youths, beautiful and pale as statues, one resembling Adonis, the other Apollo. The faint rosy hue which the wine spread over their cheeks was scarcely noticeable. They gazed on each other with infinite affection, as if the one could read in the eyes of the other, and in those eyes there was a light as though drops of light had fallen therein from the cup of burning love, which an angel on high bears from one star to the other. They conversed softly with earnest trembling voices, and narrated sad stories, through all of which ran a tone of strange sorrow. "Lora is dead now too!" said one, and, sighing, proceeded to tell of a maiden of Halle who had loved a student, and who, when the latter left Halle, spoke no more to any one, ate but little, wept day and night, gazing over on the canary-bird which her lover had given her. "The bird died, and Lora did not long survive it," was the conclusion, and both the youths sighed as though their hearts would break. Finally the other said, "My soul is sorrowful; come forth with me into the dark night! Let me inhale the breath of the clouds and the moon-rays. Companion of my sorrow! I love thee; thy words are musical, like the rustling of reeds and the flow of rivulets; they reëcho in my breast, but my soul is sad!"

Both of the young men arose. One threw his arm around

the neck of the other, and thus they left the noisy room. I followed, and saw them enter a dark chamber, where the one by mistake, instead of the window, threw open the door of a large wardrobe, and both, standing before it with outstretched arms, expressing poetic rapture, spoke alternately. "Ye breezes of darkening night," cried the first, "how ye cool and revive my cheeks! How sweetly ye play amid my fluttering locks! I stand on the cloudy peak of the mountain; far below me lie the sleeping cities of men, and blue waters gleam. List! far below in the valley rustle the fir-trees! Far above yonder hills sweep in misty forms the spirits of our fathers. Oh, that I could hunt with ye on your cloud-steeds through the stormy night, over the rolling sea, upwards to the stars! Alas! I am laden with grief, and my soul is sad!" Meanwhile, the other had also stretched out *his* arms toward the wardrobe, while tears fell from his eyes as he cried to a pair of yellow leather pantaloons which he mistook for the moon, "Fair art thou, daughter of heaven! Lovely and blessed is the calm of thy countenance. Thou walkest in loveliness! The stars follow thy blue path in the east! At thy glance the clouds rejoice, and their dark forms gleam with light. Who is like unto thee in heaven, thou the night-born? The stars are ashamed before thee, and turn away their sparkling eyes. Whither, ah, whither, when morning pales thy face, dost thou flee from thy path? Hast thou, like me, thy Halle? Dwellest thou amid shadows of sorrow? Have thy sisters fallen from heaven? Are they who joyfully rolled with thee through the night now no more? Yea, they have fallen down,

oh! lovely light, and thou hidest thyself often to bewail them! Yet the night must come at last when thou too will have passed away, and left thy blue path above in heaven. Then the stars, that were once ashamed in thy presence, will raise their green heads and rejoice. But now art clothed in thy beaming splendor and gazest down from the gate of heaven. Tear aside the clouds, oh! ye winds, that the night-born may shine forth and the bushy hills gleam, and that the foaming waves of the sea may roll in light!"

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I can bear a tolerable quantity—modesty forbids me to say how many bottles—and I consequently retired to my chamber in tolerably good condition. The young merchant already lay in bed, enveloped in his chalk-white night-cap and saffron yellow night-shirt of sanitary flannel. He was not asleep, and sought to enter into conversation with me. He was from Frankfurt-on-the-Main, and consequently spoke at once of the Jews, declared that they had lost all feeling for the beautiful and noble, and that they sold English goods twenty-five per cent. under manufacturers' prices. A fancy to humbug him came over me, and I told him that I was a somnambulist, and must beforehand beg his pardon should I unwittingly disturb his slumbers. This intelligence, as he confessed the following day, prevented him from sleeping a wink through the whole night, especially since the idea had entered his head that I, while in a somnambulistic state, might shoot him

with the pistol which lay near my bed. But in truth I fared no better myself, for I slept very little. Dreary and terrifying fancies swept through my brain….

From this confusion I was rescued by the landlord of the Brocken, when he awoke me to see the sun rise. On the tower I found several people already waiting, and rubbing their freezing hands; others, with sleep still in their eyes, stumbled up to us, until finally the whole silent congregation of the previous evening was reassembled, and we saw how, above the horizon, there rose a little carmine-red ball, spreading a dim, wintry light. Far around, amid the mists, rose the mountains, as if swimming in a white rolling sea, only their summits being visible, so that we could imagine ourselves standing on a little hill in the midst of an inundated plain, in which here and there rose dry clods of earth. To retain what I saw and felt, I sketched the following poem:

In the east 'tis ever brighter,
  Though the sun gleams fitfully;
Far and wide the mountain summits
  Swim above the misty sea.

Had I seven-league boots for travel,
  Like the fleeting winds I'd rove
Over valley, rock, and river,
  To the home of her I love.

From the bed where now she's sleeping

Soft the curtain I would slip;
Softly kiss her childlike forehead,
Kiss the ruby of her lip.

Yet more softly would I whisper
In the little lily ear,
"Think in dreams we still are loving,
Think I never lost thee, dear."

Meanwhile my longing for breakfast was also great, and, after paying a few compliments to my ladies, I hastened down to drink coffee in the warm public room. It was full time, for all within me was as sober and as sombre as in the St. Stephen's Church at Goslar. But with the Arabian beverage, the warm Orient thrilled through my limbs, Eastern roses breathed forth their perfumes, sweet bulbul songs resounded, the students were changed to camels, the Brocken housemaids, with their Congreverocket-glances, became *houris*, the Philistine noses, minarets, etc.

But the book which lay near me, though full of nonsense, was not the Koran. It was the so-called "Brocken-book," in which all travelers who ascend the mountain write their names—most inscribing their thoughts, or, in default thereof, their "feelings." Many even express themselves in verse. In this book one may observe the horrors which result when the great Philistine host on opportune occasions, such as this on the Brocken, becomes poetic. The palace of the Prince of Pallagonia never contained such absurdities as are to be found in this book. Those who shine

in it with especial splendor are Messrs. the excise collectors, with their moldy "high inspirations;" counter-jumpers, with their pathetic outgushings of the soul; old German revolution dilettanti with their Turner-Union phrases, and Berlin school-masters with their unsuccessful efforts at enthusiasm. Mr. Snobbs will also for once show himself as author. In one page the majestic splendor of the sunrise is described, in another complaints occur of bad weather, of disappointed hopes, and of the mists which obstruct the view. A "Caroline" writes that in climbing the mountain her feet got wet, to which a naïve "Nanny," who was impressed by this, adds, "I too, got wet while doing this thing." "Went up wet without and came down wet within," is a standing joke, repeated in the book hundreds of times. The whole volume smells of beer, tobacco and cheese; we might fancy it one of Clauren's novels.

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And now the students prepared to depart. Knapsacks were buckled, the bills, which were moderate beyond all expectation, were settled, the susceptible housemaids, upon whose countenances the traces of successful amours were plainly visible, brought, as is their custom, their Brocken-bouquets, and helped some to adjust their caps; for all of which they were duly rewarded with either kisses or coppers. Thus we all went down the mountain, albeit one party, among whom were the Swiss and Greifswalder, took the road toward Schierke, and the others,

about twenty men, among whom were my fellow "countrymen" and myself, led by a guide, went through the so-called "Snow Holes" down to Ilsenburg.

Such a head-over-heels, break-neck piece of business! Halle students travel quicker than the Austrian militia. Ere I knew where I was, the bald summit of the mountain, with groups of stones strewed over it, was behind us, and we went through the fir-wood which I had seen the day before. The sun poured down a cheerful light on the merry Burschen, in gaily colored garb, as they merrily pressed onward through the wood, disappearing here, coming to light again there, running across marshy places on trunks of trees, climbing over shelving steeps by grasping the projecting tree-roots; while they thrilled all the time in the merriest manner and received as joyous an answer from the twittering wood-birds, the invisibly plashing rivulets, and the resounding echo. When cheerful youth and beautiful nature meet, they mutually rejoice.

The lower we descend the more delightfully did subterranean waters ripple around us; only here and there they peeped out amid rocks and bushes, appearing to be reconnoitring if they might yet come to light, until at last one little spring jumped forth boldly. Then followed the usual show—the bravest one makes a beginning, and then to their own astonishment the great multitude of hesitators, suddenly inspired with courage, rush forth to join the first. Myriads of springs now leaped in haste from their ambush, united with the leader, and finally formed

quite an important brook, which, with its innumerable waterfalls and beautiful windings, ripples down the valley. This is now the Ilse—the sweet, pleasant Ilse. She flows through the blest Ilse vale, on whose sides the mountains gradually rise higher and higher, being clad even to their base with beech-trees, oaks, and the usual shrubs, the firs and other needle-covered evergreens having disappeared; for that variety of trees grows preferably upon the "Lower Harz," as the east side of the Brocken is called in contradistinction to the west side or Upper Harz. Being in reality much higher, it is therefore better adapted to the growth of evergreens.

It is impossible to describe the merriment, simplicity, and charm with which the Ilse leaps down over the fantastically shaped rocks which rise in her path, so that the water strangely whizzes or foams in one place. amid rifted rocks, and in another pours forth in perfect arches through a thousand crannies, as if from a giant watering-pot, and then, lower down, trips away again over the pebbles like a merry maiden. Yes, the old legend is true; the Ilse is a princess, who, in the full bloom of youth, runs laughing down the mountain side. How her white foam garment gleams in the sunshine! How her silvered scarf flutters in the breeze! How her diamonds flash! The high beech-trees gaze down on her like grave fathers secretly smiling at the capricious self-will of a darling child; the white birch-trees nod their heads like delighted aunts, who are, however, anxious at such bold leaps; the proud oak looks on like a not over-pleased uncle,

who must pay for all the fine weather; the birds joyfully sing their applause; the flowers on the bank whisper, "Oh, take us with thee, take us with thee, dear sister!" But the merry maiden may not be withheld, and she leaps onward and suddenly seizes the dreaming poet, and there streams over me a flower-rain of ringing gleams and flashing tones, and my senses are lost in all the beauty and splendor, and I hear only the voice, sweet pealing as a flute—

I am the Princess Ilse,
  And dwell in Ilsenstein;
Come with me to my castle,
  Thou shalt be blest—and mine!

With ever-flowing fountains
  I'll cool thy weary brow;
Thou'lt lose amid their rippling
  The cares which grieve thee now.

In my white arms reposing,
  And on my snow-white breast,
Thou'lt dream of old, old legends,
  And sing in joy to rest.

I'll kiss thee and caress thee,
  As in the ancient day
I kissed the Emperor Henry,
  Who long has passed away.

The dead are dead and silent,
  Only the living love;
And I am fair and blooming—
  Dost feel my wild heart move!

And as my heart is beating,
  My crystal castle rings,
Where many a knight and lady
  In merry measure springs.

Silk trains are softly rustling,
  Spurs ring from night to morn,
And dwarfs are gaily drumming,
  And blow the golden horn.

As round the Emperor Henry,
  My arms round thee shall fall;
I held his ears—he heard not
  The trumpet's warning call.

We feel infinite happiness when the outer world blends with the world of our own soul, and green trees, thoughts, the songs of birds, gentle melancholy, the blue of heaven, memory, and the perfume of herbs, run together in sweet arabesques. Women best understand this feeling, and this may be the cause that such a sweet incredulous smile plays around their lips when we, with scholastic pride, boast of our logical deeds—how we

have classified everything so nicely into subjective and objective; how our heads are provided, apothecary-like, with a thousand drawers, one of which contains reason, another understanding, the third wit, the fourth bad wit, and the fifth nothing at all—that is to say, the *Idea*.

As if wandering in dreams, I scarcely observed that we had left the depths of the Ilsethal and were now again climbing uphill. This was steep and difficult work, and many of us lost our breath; but, like our late lamented cousin, who now lies buried at Moelln, we thought in advance of the descent, and were all the merrier in consequence. Finally we reached the Ilsenstein.

This is an enormous granite rock, which rises boldly on high from out a glen. On three sides it is surrounded by high woody hills, but on the fourth, the north side, there is an open view, and we gazed past the Ilsenburg and the Ilse lying below us, far away into the low lands. On the towerlike summit of the rock stands a great iron cross, and in case of need there is also room here for four human feet. And as Nature, through picturesque position and form, has adorned the Ilsenstein with fantastic charms, so legend likewise has shed upon it a rosy shimmer. According to Gottschalk, "People say that there once stood here an enchanted castle, in which dwelt the rich and fair Princess Ilse, who still bathes every morning in the Ilse. He who is fortunate enough to hit upon the exact time and place will be led by her into the rock where her castle lies and receive a royal reward." Others narrate a pleasant legend of the lovers of the Lady Ilse and of the Knight

of Westenberg, which has been romantically sung by one of our most noted poets in the *Evening Journal*. Others again say that it was the Old Saxon Emperor Henry who had a royal good time with the water-nymph Ilse in her enchanted castle.

A later author, one Niemann, Esq., who has written a *Guide to the Harz* in which the height of the hills, variations of the compass, town finances, and similar matters are described with praiseworthy accuracy, asserts, however, that "what is narrated of the Princess Ilse belongs entirely to the realm of fable." Thus do all men speak to whom a beautiful princess has never appeared; but we who have been especially favored by fair ladies know better. And the Emperor Henry knew it too! It was not without cause that the Old Saxon emperors were so attached to their native Harz. Let any one only turn over the leaves of the fair *Lüneburg Chronicle,* where the good old gentlemen are represented in wondrously true-hearted woodcuts sitting in full armor on their mailed war-steeds, the holy imperial crown on their beloved heads, sceptre and sword in firm hands; and then in their dear mustachiod faces he can plainly read how they often longed for the sweet hearts of their Harz princesses, and for the familiar rustling of the Harz forests, when they sojourned in distant lands—yes, even when in Italy, so rich in oranges and poisons, whither they, with their followers, were often enticed by the desire of being called Roman emperors, a genuine German lust for title, which finally destroyed emperor and empire.

I, however, advise every one who may hereafter stand on the

summit of the Ilsenstein to think neither of emperor nor empire nor of the fair Ilse, but simply of his own feet. For as I stood there, lost in thought, I suddenly heard the subterranean music of the enchanted castle, and saw the mountains around begin to stand on their heads, while the red-tiled roofs of Ilsenburg were dancing, and green trees flew through the air, until all was green and blue before my eyes, and I, overcome by giddiness, would assuredly have fallen into the abyss, had I not, in the dire need of my soul, clung fast to the iron cross. No one who reflects on the critically ticklish situation in which I was then placed can possibly find fault with me for having done this.

* * * * *

BOYHOOD DAYS[55]

By Heinrich Heine

Translated by Charles Godfrey Leland

The town of Düsseldorf is very beautiful, and if you think of it when far away, and happen at the same time to have been born there, strange feelings come over your soul. I was born there, and feel as if I must go straight home. And when I say *home* I mean the *Bolkerstrasse* and the house in which I was born. This house will some day be a great curiosity, and I have sent word to the old lady who owns it that she must not for her life sell it. For the whole house she would now hardly get as much as the tips which the distinguished green-veiled English ladies will one day give the servant girl when she shows them the room where I was born, and the hen-house wherein my father generally imprisoned me for stealing grapes, and also the brown door on which my mother taught me to write with chalk—O Lord! Madame, should I ever become a famous author, it has cost my poor mother trouble

[55] From *Ideen: Das Buch Le Grand* (Chaps. VI-IX). Permission E.P. Dutton & Co., New York, and William Heinemann, London.

enough.

(1823-1826)

But my fame as yet slumbers in the marble quarries of Carrara; the waste-paper laurel with which they have bedecked my brow has not yet spread its perfume through the wide world, and the green-veiled English ladies, when they come to Düsseldorf as yet leave the celebrated house unvisited, and go directly to the market-place and there gaze on the colossal black equestrian statue which stands in its midst. This is supposed to represent the Prince Elector, Jan Wilhelm. He wears black armor and a long wig hanging down his back. When a boy, I heard the legend that the artist who made this statue became aware, to his horror, while it was being cast, that he had not metal enough to fill the mold, and then all the citizens of the town came running with all their silver spoons, and threw them in to make up the deficiency; and I often stood for hours before the statue wondering how many spoons were concealed in it, and how many apple-tarts the silver would buy. Apple-tarts were then my passion—now it is love, truth, liberty, and crab-soup—and not far from the statue of the Prince Elector, at the theatre corner, generally stood a curiously constructed bow-legged fellow with a white apron, and a basket girt around him full of delightfully steaming apple-tarts, whose praises he well knew how to call out in an irresistible high treble voice, "Here you are! hot apple-

tarts! just from the oven—smelling deliciously!" Truly, whenever in my later years the Evil One sought to get the better of me, he always spoke in just such an enticing high treble voice, and I should certainly have never remained twelve full hours with the Signora Giulietta, if she had not thrilled me with her sweet perfumed apple-tart tones. And, in fact, the apple-tarts would never have so sorely tempted me if the crooked Hermann had not covered them up so mysteriously with his white apron; and it is aprons, you know, which—but I wander from the subject. I was speaking of the equestrian statue which has so many silver spoons in it, and no soup, and which represents the Prince Elector, Jan Wilhelm.

He was a brave gentleman, 'tis reported, a lover of art and handy therein himself. He founded the picture-gallery in Düsseldorf; and in the observatory there, they still show us an extremely artistic piece of work, consisting of one wooden cup within another which he himself had carved in his leisure hours, of which latter he had every day four-and-twenty.

In those days princes were not the harassed creatures they now are. Their crowns grew firmly on their heads, and at night they drew nightcaps over them besides and slept in peace, and their people slumbered calmly at their feet; and when they awoke in the morning they said, "Good morning, father!" and the princes replied, "Good morning, dear children!"

But there came a sudden change over all this, for one morning when we awoke in Düsseldorf and wanted to say, "Good

morning, father!" the father had traveled away, and in the whole town there was nothing but dumb sorrow. Everywhere there was a sort of funereal atmosphere, and people crept silently through the market and read the long placard placed on the door of the City Hall. The weather was dark and lowering, yet the lean tailor Kilian stood in the nankeen jacket, which he generally wore only at home, and in his blue woolen stockings, so that his little bare legs peeped out dismally, and his thin lips quivered as he murmured the words of the placard to himself. An old invalid soldier from the Palatine read it in a somewhat louder tone, and at certain phrases a transparent tear ran down his white, honorable old mustache. I stood near him, and wept with him, and then asked why we wept; and he replied, "The Prince Elector has abdicated." Then he read further, and at the words "for the long-manifested fidelity of my subjects," "and hereby release you from your allegiance," he wept still more. It is a strange sight to see, when so old a man, in faded uniform, with a scarred veteran's face, suddenly bursts into tears. While we read, the Princely Electoral coat-of-arms was being taken down from the City Hall, and everything began to appear as oppressively desolate as though we were waiting for an eclipse of the sun. The city councilors went about at an abdicating, slow gait; even the omnipotent beadle looked as though he had had no more commands to give, and stood calmly indifferent, although the crazy Aloysius again stood upon one leg and chattered the names of French generals, with foolish grimaces, while the tipsy,

crooked Gumpertz rolled around the gutter, singing, "Ça ira! Ça ira!" But I went home, weeping and lamenting because "the Prince Elector had abdicated!" My mother tried hard to comfort me, but I would hear nothing. I knew what I knew, and went weeping to bed, and in the night dreamed that the world had come to an end—that all the fair flower gardens and green meadows were taken up from the ground and rolled away, like carpets; that a beadle climbed up on a high ladder and took down the sun, and that the tailor Kilian stood by and said to himself, "I must go home and dress myself neatly, for I am dead and am to be buried this afternoon." And it grew darker and darker—a few stars glimmered meagrely on high, and these too, at length, fell down like yellow leaves in autumn; one by one all men vanished, and I, poor child, wandered around in anguish, and finally found myself before the willow fence of a deserted farmhouse, where I saw a man digging up the earth with a spade, and near him an ugly, spiteful-looking woman, who held something in her apron like a human head—but it was the moon, and she laid it carefully in the open grave—and behind me stood the Palatine invalid, sighing, and spelling out "The Prince Elector has abdicated."

When I awoke the sun shone as usual through the window, there was a sound of drums in the street, and as I entered the sitting-room and said "good morning" to my father, who was sitting in his white dressing-gown, I heard the little light-footed barber, as he dressed his hair, narrate very minutely that allegiance would be sworn to the Grande Duke Joachim that

morning at the City Hall. I heard, too, that the new ruler was of excellent family, that he had married the sister of the Emperor Napoleon, and was really a very respectable man; that he wore his beautiful black hair in flowing locks, that he would shortly make his entrance into the town, and, in fine, that he was sure to please all the ladies. Meanwhile the drumming in the streets continued, and I went out before the house-door and looked at the French troops marching in that joyous people of glory, who, singing and playing, swept over the world, the serious and yet merry-faced grenadiers, the bear-skin shakoes, the tri-colored cockades, the glittering bayonets, the *voltigeurs*, full of vivacity and *point d'honneur*, and the omnipotent giant-like silver-laced tambour major, who could cast his *baton* with a gilded head as high as the first story, and his eyes even to the second, where also there were pretty girls sitting at the windows. I was so glad that soldiers were to be quartered in our house—in which my mother differed from me—and I hastened to the market-place. There everything looked changed, somewhat as though the world had been newly whitewashed. A new coat-of-arms was placed on the City Hall, its iron balconies were hung with embroidered velvet drapery. French grenadiers stood as sentinels; the old city councilors had put on new faces, and donned their Sunday coats, and looked at each other Frenchily, and said, "*Bonjour!*" Ladies gazed from every window, curious citizens and glittering soldiers filled the square, and I, with other boys, climbed on the great bronze horse of the Prince Elector, and thence stared down on

the motley crowd.

Our neighbors, Pitter and the tall Kunz, nearly broke their necks in accomplishing this feat, and it would have been better if they had been killed outright, for the one afterwards ran away from his parents, enlisted as a soldier, deserted, and was finally shot at Mayence; while the other, having made geographical researches in strange pockets, was on this account elected active member of a public treadmill institute. But having broken the iron bands which bound him to the latter and to his fatherland, he safely crossed the channel, and eventually died in London through wearing an all too tight neck-tie which automatically drew together, when a royal official removed a plank from beneath his feet.

Tall Kunz told us that there was no school today on account of the ceremonies connected with taking the oath of allegiance. We had to wait a long time ere these commenced. Finally, the balcony of the City Hall was filled with gaily dressed gentlemen, with flags and trumpets, and our burgomaster, in his celebrated red coat, delivered an oration, which stretched out like Indian rubber, or like a knitted nightcap into which one has thrown a stone—only that it was not the philosopher's stone—and I could distinctly understand many of his phrases—for instance, that "we are now to be made happy;" and at the last words the trumpets sounded out, the flags were waved, the drums were beaten, the people cried, Hurrah! and while I myself cried hurrah, I held fast to the old Prince Elector. And it was really necessary that I

should, for I began to grow giddy. It seemed to me as if the people were standing on their heads, because the world whizzed around, while the old Prince Elector, with his long wig, nodded and whispered, "Hold fast to me!" and not till the cannon reechoed along the wall did I become sobered, and climbed slowly down from the great bronze horse.

As I went home, I saw the crazy Aloysius again dancing on one leg, while he chattered the names of French generals, and I also beheld crooked Gumpertz rolling in the gutter and growling, "Ça ira, ça ira," and I said to my mother, "We are all to be made happy; on that account there is no school today."

II

The next day the world was again all in order, and we had school as before, and things were learned by heart as before—the Roman kings, dates, the *nomina* in *im*, the *verba irregularia*, Greek, Hebrew, geography, German, mental arithmetic—Lord! my head is still giddy with it!—all had to be learned by heart. And much of it was eventually to my advantage; for had I not learned the Roman kings by heart, it would subsequently have been a matter of perfect indifference to me whether Niebuhr had or had not proved that they never really existed. And had I not learned those dates, how could I ever, in later years, have found out any one in big Berlin, where one house is as like another as drops of water or as grenadiers, and where it is impossible to

find a friend unless you have the number of his house in your head! At that time I associated with every acquaintance some historical event, which had happened in a year corresponding to the number of his house, so that the one recalled the other, and some curious point in history always occurred to me whenever I met any one whom I visited. For instance, when I met my tailor, I at once thought of the battle of Marathon; when I saw the well-groomed banker, Christian Gumpel, I immediately remembered the destruction of Jerusalem; when I caught sight of a Portuguese friend, deeply in debt, I thought at once of the flight of Mahomet; when I met the university judge, a man whose probity is well known, I thought of the death of Haman; and as soon as I laid eyes on Wadzeck, I was at once reminded of Cleopatra. Ah, heaven! the poor creature is dead now; our tears are dry, and we may say of her with Hamlet, "Taken all in all, she was an old woman; we oft shall look upon her like again!" But, as I said, dates are necessary. I know men who had nothing in their heads but a few dates, and with their aid knew where to find the right houses in Berlin, and are now already regular professors. But oh, the trouble I had at school with the multitude of numbers; and as to actual arithmetic, that was even worse! I understood best of all subtraction, and for this there is a very practical rule: "Four can't be taken from three, therefore I must borrow one"; but I advise all in such a case to borrow a few extra groschen, for no one can tell what may happen.

But oh, the Latin! Madame, you can really have no idea of

how complicated it is. The Romans would never have found time to conquer the world if they had been obliged first to learn Latin. Lucky dogs! they already knew in their cradles which nouns have their accusative in *im*. I, on the contrary, had to learn them by heart, in the sweat of my brow, but still it is well that I know them. For if I, for example, when I publicly disputed in Latin in the College Hall of Göttingen, on the 20th of July, 1825—Madame, it was well worth while to hear it—if I on that occasion had said *sinapem* instead of *sinapim*, the blunder would have been evident to the Freshmen, and an endless shame for me. *Vis, buris, sitis, tussis, cucumis, amussis, cannabis, sinapis*—these words, which have attracted so much attention in the world, effected this, inasmuch as they belonged to a distinct class, and yet withal remained an exception; therefore I highly respect them, and the fact that I have them ready at my fingers' ends when I perhaps need them in a hurry, often affords me in life's darkened hours much internal tranquillity and consolation. But, Madame, the *verba irregularia*—they are distinguished from the *verbis regularibus* by the fact that the boys in learning them got more whippings—are terribly difficult. In the musty archways of the Franciscan cloister near our schoolroom there hung a large Christ—crucified of grey wood, a dismal image, that even yet at times rises in my dreams and gazes sorrowfully on me with fixed bleeding eyes. Before this image I often stood and prayed, "Oh, Thou poor and also tormented God, I pray Thee, if it be possible, that I may get by heart the irregular verbs!"

I will say nothing of Greek, otherwise I should vex myself too much. The monks of the Middle Ages were not so very much in the wrong when they asserted that Greek was an invention of the devil. Lord knows what I suffered through it! It went better with Hebrew, for I always had a great predilection for the Jews, although they crucify my good name up to the present hour, and yet I never could get as far in Hebrew as my watch did, which had much intimate intercourse with pawnbrokers and in consequence acquired many Jewish habits—for instance, it would not go on Saturday, and it also learned the sacred language, subsequently even studying it grammatically; for often when sleepless in the night I have, to my amazement, heard it industriously ticking away to itself: *katal, katalta, katalti, kittel, kittalta, katalti-pokat, pokadeti-pikat, pik, pik*.

Meanwhile I learned more of German than of any other tongue, though German itself is not such child's play, after all. For we poor Germans, who have already been sufficiently vexed with having soldiers quartered on us, military duties, poll-taxes, and a thousand other exactions, must needs, over and above all this, bag Mr. Adelung and torment one another with accusatives and datives. I learned much German from the old Rector Schallmeyer, a brave, clerical gentleman, whose protégé I was from childhood. But I also learned something of the kind from Professor Schramm, a man who had written a book on eternal peace, and in whose class my school-fellows quarreled and fought more than in any other.

And while I have thus been writing away without a pause and thinking about all sorts of things, I have unexpectedly chattered myself back among old school stories, and I avail myself of this opportunity to mention, Madame, that it was not my fault if I learned so little of geography that later in life I could not make my way in the world. For in those days the French displaced all boundaries; every day the countries were recolored on the world's map; those which were once blue suddenly became green, many indeed were even dyed blood-red; the old stereotyped souls of the school-books became so confused and confounded that the devil himself would never have recognized them. The products of the country were also changed; chickory and beets now grew where only hares and country gentlemen pursuing them were once to be seen; even the character of the nations changed; the Germans became pliant, the French paid compliments no longer; the English ceased making ducks and drakes of their money, and the Venetians were not subtle enough; there was promotion among princes, old kings received new uniforms, new kingdoms were cooked up and sold like hot cakes; many potentates were chased, on the other hand, from house and home, and had to find some new way of earning their bread, and some therefore went at once into trade, and manufactured, for instance, sealing wax, or—Madame, this paragraph must be brought to an end, or I shall be out of breath—in fine, in such times it is impossible to advance far in geography.

I succeeded better in natural history, for there we find fewer

changes, and we always have standard engravings of apes, kangaroos, zebras, rhinoceroses, etc., etc. And having many such pictures in my memory, it often happens that at first sight many mortals appeared to me like old acquaintances.

I also did well in mythology, and took a real delight in the mob of gods and goddesses who, so jolly and naked, governed the world. I do not believe that there was a schoolboy in ancient Rome who knew the principal points of his catechism—that is, the loves of Venus—better than I. To tell the plain truth, it seems to me that if we must learn all the heathen gods by heart, we might as well have kept them from the first; and we have not, perhaps, gained so much with our New-Roman Trinity or still less with our Jewish unity. Perhaps the old mythology was not in reality so immoral as we imagine, and it was, for example, a very decent idea of Homer to give to much-loved Venus a husband.

But I succeeded best in the French class of the Abbé d'Aulnoi, a French *émigré*, who had written a number of grammars, and wore a red wig, and jumped about very nervously when he lectured on his *Art poétique* and his *Histoire Allemande*. He was the only one in the whole gymnasium who taught German history. Still, French has its difficulties, and to learn it there must be much quartering of troops, much drumming, much *apprendre par coeur*, and, above all, no one must be a *bête allemande*. There was here, too, many a hard nut to crack; and I can remember as plainly as though it happened but yesterday that I once got into a bad scrape through *la religion*. I was asked at least six times

in succession, "Henry, what is French for 'the faith?'" And six times, with an ever increasing inclination to weep, I replied, "It is called *le crédit*." And after the seventh question the furious examinator, purple in the face, cried, "It is called *la religion*"—and there was a rain of blows and a thunder of laughter from all my schoolmates. Madame, since that day I never hear the word *religion* without having my back turn pale with terror, and my cheeks turn red with shame. And to tell the honest truth, *le crédit* has during my life stood me in the better stead than *la religion*. It occurs to me just at this instant that I still owe the landlord of The Lion in Bologna five dollars. And I pledge you my sacred word of honor that I would willingly owe him five dollars more if I could only be certain that I should never again hear that unlucky word, *la religion*, as long as I live.

Parbleu, Madame! I have succeeded tolerably well in French; for I understand not only *patois*, but even patrician, governess French. Not long ago, when in an aristocratic circle, I understood nearly one-half of the conversation of two German countesses, each of whom could count at least sixty-four years, and as many ancestors. Yes, in the *Café Royal* in Berlin, I once heard Monsieur Hans Michel Martens talking French, and could understand every word he spoke, though there was no understanding in anything he said. We must know the *spirit* of a language, and this is best learned by drumming. *Parbleu*! how much do I not owe to the French drummer who was so long quartered in our house, who looked like a devil, and yet had the good heart of an angel,

and withal drummed so divinely!

He was a little, nervous figure, with a terrible black mustache, beneath which red lips sprang forth defiantly, while his wild eyes shot fiery glances all round.

I, a young shaver, stuck to him like a burr, and helped him to clean his military buttons till they shone like mirrors, and to pipe-clay his vest—for Monsieur Le Grand liked to look well—and I followed him to the guard house, to the roll-call, to the parade-ground—in those times there was nothing but the gleam of weapons and merriment—*les jours de fête sont passés*! Monsieur Le Grand knew but a little broken German, only the three principal words, "Bread," "Kiss," "Honor"—but he could make himself very intelligible with his drum. For instance, if I knew not what the word *liberté* meant, he drummed the *Marseillaise*—and I understood him. If I did not understand the word *égalité*, he drummed the march—

> "Ça ira, ça ira, ça ira,
> Les aristocrats à la lanterne!"

and I understood him. If I did not know what Bêtise meant, he drummed the Dessauer March, which we Germans, as Goethe also declares, drummed in Champagne—and I understood him. He once wanted to explain to me the word *l'Allemagne* (or Germany), and he drummed the all too *simple* melody which on market-days is played to dancing-dogs, namely, *dum-dum-dum*!

I was vexed, but I understood him for all that!

In like manner he taught me modern history. I did not understand, it is true, the words which he spoke, but as he constantly drummed while speaking, I knew what he meant. This is, fundamentally, the best method. The history of the storming of the Bastile, of the Tuileries, and the like, cannot be correctly understood until we know how *the drumming* was done on such occasions. In our school compendiums of history we merely read: "Their Excellencies the Barons and Counts and their noble spouses, their Highnesses the Dukes and Princes and their most noble spouses were beheaded. His Majesty the King, and his most illustrious spouse, the Queen, were beheaded."—But when you hear the red march of the guillotine drummed, you understand it correctly for the first time, and with it the how and the why. Madame, that is really a wonderful march! It thrilled through marrow and bone when I first heard it, and I was glad that I forgot it. People are apt to forget things of this kind as they grow older, and a young man has nowadays so much and such a variety of knowledge to keep in his head —whist, Boston, genealogical registers, decrees of the Federal Council, dramaturgy, the liturgy, carving—and yet, I assure you that really, despite all the jogging up of my brain, I could not for a long time recall that tremendous time! And only to think, Madame! Not long ago I sat one day at table with a whole menagerie of counts, princes, princesses, chamberlains, court-marshalesses, seneschals, upper court mistresses, court keepers

of the royal plate, court hunters' wives, and whatever else these aristocratic domestics are termed, and *their* under-domestics ran about behind their chairs and shoved full plates before their mouths; but I, who was passed by and neglected, sat idle without the least occupation for my jaws, and kneaded little bread-balls, and drummed with my fingers, from boredom, and, to my astonishment, I found myself suddenly drumming the red, long-forgotten guillotine march.

"And what happened?" Madame, the good people were not in the least disturbed, nor did they know that *other* people, when they can get nothing to eat, suddenly begin to drum, and that, too, very queer marches, which people have long forgotten.

Is drumming now an inborn talent, or was it early developed in me? Enough, it lies in my limbs, in my hands, in my feet, and often involuntarily manifests itself. At Berlin, I once sat in the lecture-room of the Privy Councilor Schmaltz, a man who had saved the state by his book on the *Red and Black Coat Danger*. You remember, perhaps, Madame, that in Pausanias we are told that by the braying of an ass an equally dangerous plot was once discovered, and you also know from Livy, or from Becker's *History of the World*, that geese once saved the Capitol, and you must certainly know from Sallust that by the chattering of a loquacious *putaine*, the Lady Fulvia, the terrible conspiracy of Catiline came to light. But to return to the mutton aforesaid. I was listening to the law and rights of nations, in the lecture-room of the Herr Privy Councilor Schmaltz, and it was a lazy sleepy

summer afternoon, and I sat on the bench, and little by little I listened less and less—my head had gone to sleep—when all at once I was awakened by the noise of my own feet, which had *not* gone to sleep and had probably heard that just the contrary of the law and rights of nations was being taught and constitutional principles were being reviled, and which with the little eyes of their corns had seen better how things go in the world than the Privy Councilor with his great Juno eyes—these poor dumb feet, incapable of expressing their immeasurable meaning by words, strove to make themselves intelligible by drumming, and they drummed so loudly that I thereby came near getting into a terrible scrape.

Cursèd, unreflecting feet! They once played me a little trick, when I, on a time in Göttingen, was temporarily attending the lectures of Professor Saalfeld, and as this learned gentleman, with his angular agility, jumped about here and there in his desk, and wound himself up to curse the Emperor Napoleon in regular set style—no, my poor feet, I cannot blame you for drumming *then*—indeed, I would not have blamed you if in your dumb *naïveté* you had expressed yourselves by still more energetic movements. How dare I, the scholar of Le Grand, hear the Emperor cursed? The Emperor! the Emperor! the great Emperor!

When I think of the great Emperor, all in my memory again becomes summer-green and golden. A long avenue of lindens in bloom arises before me, and on the leafy twigs sit nightingales,

singing; the waterfall murmurs, in full round beds flowers are growing, and dreamily nodding their fair heads. I was on a footing of wondrous intimacy with them; the rouged tulips, proud as beggars, condescendingly greeted me; the nervous sick lilies nodded to me with tender melancholy, the wine-red roses laughed at me from afar; the night-violets sighed; with the myrtle and laurel I was not then acquainted, for they did not entice with a shining bloom, but the mignonette, with whom I am now on such bad terms, was my very particular friend.—I am speaking of the Court garden of Düsseldorf, where I often lay upon the grass and piously listened there when Monsieur Le Grand told of the martial feats of the great Emperor, beating meanwhile the marches which were drummed while the deeds were performed, so that I saw and heard it all vividly. I saw the passage over the Simplon—the Emperor in advance and his brave grenadiers climbing on behind him, while the scream of frightened birds of prey sounded around, and the glaciers thundered in the distance; I saw the Emperor with glove in hand on the bridge of Lodi; I saw the Emperor in his grey cloak at Marengo; I saw the Emperor on horseback in the battle of the Pyramids, naught around save powder, smoke, and Mamelukes; I saw the Emperor in the battle of Austerlitz—ha! how the bullets whistled over the smooth, icy road! I saw, I heard the battle of Jena-dum, dum, dune; I saw, I heard the battle of Eylau, of Wagram—no, I could hardly stand it! Monsieur Le Grand drummed so that my own eardrum nearly burst.

III

But what were my feelings when my very own eyes were first blessed with the sight of him, *him*—Hosannah! the Emperor.

It was precisely in the avenue of the Court garden at Düsseldorf. As I pressed through the gaping crowd, thinking of the doughty deeds and battles which Monsieur Le Grand had drummed to me, my heart beat the "general march"—yet at the same time I thought of the police regulation that no one should dare ride through the middle of the avenue under penalty of five dollars fine. And the Emperor with his *cortège* rode directly through the middle of the avenue. The trembling trees bowed toward him as he advanced, the sun-rays quivered, frightened, yet curious, through the green leaves, and in the blue heaven above there swam visibly a golden star. The Emperor wore his unpretentious-green uniform and the little world-renowned hat. He rode a white palfrey, which stepped with such calm pride, so confidently, so nobly—had I then been Crown Prince of Prussia I would have envied that horse. The Emperor sat carelessly, almost laxly, holding his rein with one hand, and with the other good-naturedly patting the neck of the horse. It was a sunny marble hand, a mighty hand—one of the pair which subdued the many headed monster of anarchy, and regulated the conflict of nations—and it good-naturedly patted the neck of the horse. Even the face had that hue which we find in the marble Greek

and Roman busts, the traits were as nobly proportioned as those of the ancients, and on that countenance was plainly written "Thou shalt have no gods before me!" A smile, which warmed and tranquilized every heart, flitted over the lips—and yet all knew that those lips needed but to whistle *et la Prusse n'existait plus*—those lips needed but to whistle and the entire clergy would have stopped their ringing and singing—those lips needed but to whistle, and the entire Holy Roman Empire would have danced. And these lips smiled, and the eye too smiled. It was an eye clear as heaven; it could read the hearts of men; it saw at a glance all things in the world at once, while we ordinary mortals see them only one by one, and then only their colored shadows. The brow was not so clear, the phantoms of future battles were nestling there, and from time to time there was a quiver which swept over this brow, and those were the creative thoughts, the great seven-league-boots thoughts, wherewith the spirit of the Emperor strode invisibly over the world; and I believe that every one of those thoughts would have furnished a German author plentiful material to write about all the days of his life.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.