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(*W. Meister's Travels; Elective Affinities*) [1885]



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Author: [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#)

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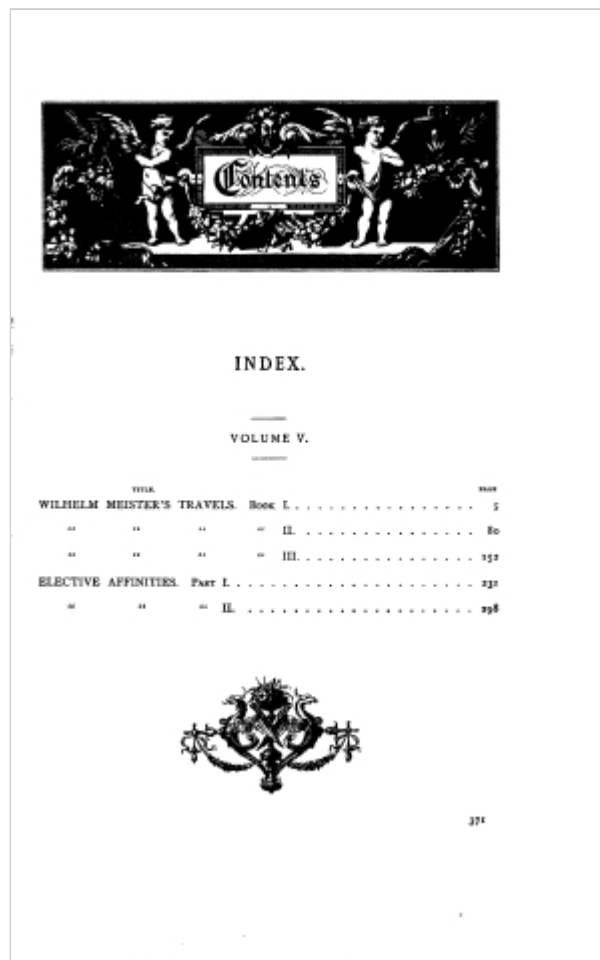


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Wilhelm Meister's Travels.

A Romance.

BOOK I.



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CHAPTER I.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

IN the shadow of a mighty rock sat Wilhelm, at a gloomy and striking spot, where the steep mountain-path turned sharply round a corner, and rapidly wound down into the chasm below. The sun was still high, and illuminated the tops of the firs in the rocky valleys at his feet. He was just entering something in his memorandum-book, when Felix, who had been clambering about, came up to him with a stone in his hand. "What do they call this stone?" said the boy.

"I do not know," replied Wilhelm.

"Is it gold that sparkles so in it?" said the former.

"Nothing of the kind!" replied the other; "and now I remember that people call it 'cats'-gold.' "*

"Cats'-gold!" said the boy, laughing; "why?"

"Probably because it is false, and because cats are thought to be false."

"I will remember that," said his son, and put the stone into his leathern wallet; but at the same time pulled out something else, and asked, "What is this?"

"A fruit," replied his father; "and to judge by its scales it ought to be akin to the fir-cones."

"It does not look like a cone; why it is round."

"Let us ask the huntsmen: they know the whole forest and all sorts of fruits; they know how to sow, to plant, and to wait; then they let the stems grow and become as big as they can."

"The hunters know everything; yesterday the postman showed me where a stag had crossed the road; he called me back and made me observe the track, as he called it. I had jumped across it, but now I saw plainly a pair of claws printed; it must have been a big stag."

"I heard how you were questioning the postman."

"He knew a great deal, and yet he is not a huntsman. But I want to be a huntsman. It is glorious to be the whole day in the forest, and to listen to the birds, to know their names and where their nests are; how to take the eggs or the young ones; how to feed them, and when to catch the old ones: all this is so splendid!"

Scarcely had this been said, when there appeared coming down the rugged path an unusual phenomenon. Two boys, beautiful as the day, in colored tunics, which one might rather have taken for small shirts girt up, sprang down one after the other; and Wilhelm found an opportunity of inspecting them more closely, as they faltered before him, and for a moment stood still. Around the head of the elder one waved an abundance of fair locks, which one must needs see first on looking at him; and next his light-blue eyes attracted the glance which lost itself with pleasure in his beautiful figure. The second, who looked more like a friend than a brother, was adorned with smooth brown hair, which hung down over his shoulders, and the reflection of which seemed to mirror itself in his eyes.

Wilhelm had not time to contemplate more closely these two extraordinary, and in such a wilderness quite unexpected beings, when he heard a manly voice shouting down in a empty yet kindly manner from behind the corner of the rock: "Why are you standing still? Do not stop the way for us!"

Wilhelm looked up; and if the children had caused him to wonder, what now met his eyes filled him with astonishment. A strong and vigorous, but not too tall, young man, lightly clad, with brown complexion and black hair, stepped firmly yet carefully down the rocky path, leading after him a donkey, which first displayed its own sleek and well-trimmed head, and then the beautiful burden which it carried. A gentle, lovable woman was sitting in a large finely-mounted saddle; within a blue mantle, which was wrapped round her, she held a lately-born infant, which she pressed to her bosom and regarded with indescribable love. The same thing occurred to the guide as to the children: he hesitated for a moment when he saw Wilhelm. The animal slackened its pace, but the descent was too steep—the passers-by could not stop, and Wilhelm with wonder saw them disappear behind the projecting wall of rock.

Nothing was more natural, than that this unwonted sight should snatch him from his meditations. He stood up in curiosity and looked down from his place into the depth to see whether they would not somewhere or other come into sight again. And he was just on the point of descending himself to greet these strange wanderers, when Felix came up and said:

"Father, may I not go with these children to their house? They want to take me with them. You must come too, the man said to me. Come! They are waiting down yonder."

"I will speak to them," answered Wilhelm.

He found them at a place where the road was less precipitous, and he devoured with his eyes the wonderful forms which had so much attracted his attention. But there were one or two other special circumstances, which before now it had not been possible for him to observe.

The young and active man had in fact an adze on his shoulder, and a long, thin, iron measuring-square.

The children carried tall bunches of bulrushes, as if they were palms; and if from this point of view they resembled angels, on the other hand they dragged along small baskets with eatables, and in this resembled the daily messengers, such as are accustomed to go to and fro across the mountain. The mother, too, when he looked at her more closely, had beneath her blue mantle a reddish delicately-tinted undergarment, so that our friend, with astonishment, was fain to find the Flight into Egypt, which he had so often seen painted, actually here before his eyes.

They greeted one another; and whilst Wilhelm, what with astonishment and absorption, could not utter a single word, the young man said:

“Our children have already made friends just now. Will you come with us, that we may see whether the grown-up people may not come to an understanding too.”

Wilhelm bethought himself a little, and then replied:

“The sight of your little family procession inspires confidence and kindness, and—I may as well confess it at once—no less curiosity, and a lively desire to know more of you. For at the first moment one might almost ask one's self whether you are real travellers, or only spirits who take a pleasure in animating this inhospitable mountain with pleasant visions.”

“Then come with us to our dwelling,” said the other.

“Come along!” shouted the children, already dragging Felix along with them.

“Come with us!” said the lady, turning her amiable kindly look from her babe towards the stranger.

Without hesitation, Wilhelm said:

“I am sorry that I cannot follow you immediately. This night at least I must pass at the frontier-house above. My wallet, papers and everything are still lying up there unpacked and unattended to. But, that I may show myself ready and willing to do justice to your kind invitation, I will hand you over my Felix as a pledge. To-morrow I shall be with you. How far is it from here?”

“Before sunset we shall reach our dwelling,” said the carpenter, “and from the frontier-house it will be only an hour and a half more for you. Your boy will augment our family for this night; to-morrow we shall expect you.”

The man and the beast set themselves in motion. Wilhelm with visible pleasure saw his Felix in such good company; he could compare him with the dear little angels, from whom he differed so markedly. For his years he was not tall, but robust, with a broad chest and strong shoulders. In his nature there was a peculiar mixture of authority and obedience; he had already laid hold of a palm-branch and a little basket, whereby he seemed to express both. The procession was already on the point of disappearing a second time round a rocky wall, when Wilhelm collected himself, and shouted after them:

“But how shall I inquire for you?”

“Only ask for St. Joseph's!” rang from the depth, and the whole vision had disappeared behind the blue walls of shadow. A solemn religious hymn, sung in parts, arose and died away in the distance, and Wilhelm thought that he distinguished the voice of his Felix.

He mounted upwards, and in so doing retarded for himself the sunset. The star of heaven which he had lost more than once, shone on him again as he ascended higher, and it was still day when he arrived at his lodging. Once more he gladdened himself with the grand mountain view, and then withdrew to his chamber, where he at once seized a pen, and spent a part of the night in writing.

Wilhelm To Natalia.

“Now at last is the summit reached—the heights of the mountain chain which will set a more effectual separation between us than the whole stretch of country so far. It is my feeling that one is still ever in the neighborhood of one's beloved ones as long as the streams flow from us to them. To-day I can still fancy to myself that the twig which I cast into the forest brook might leisurely float downwards to her—might in a few days be stranded in front of her garden; and thus our spirit sends its images, our heart its feelings, more easily downwards. But over there I fear that a partition wall is placed against imagination and feeling. Yet that is perhaps only a premature anxiety; for there, too, it will very likely not be otherwise than it is here.

“What could separate me from thee—from thee, to whom I am destined for ever, although a wondrous fate keeps me from thee, and unexpectedly shuts to me the heaven to which I was standing so near! I had time to collect myself, and yet no time would have sufficed to give me this self-possession, if I had not won it from thy mouth, from thy lips, in that decisive moment. How should I have been able to tear myself away, if the indestructible thread had not been spun, which is to unite us for time and eternity.

“Still, I ought not indeed to speak of all this. I will not transgress thy tender commands. Upon this summit let it be for the last time that I utter before thee the word, separation. My life shall become a journey. I have to discharge the traveller's special duties, and to undergo tests of a peculiar kind. How often I smile when I read through the rules which my craft has prescribed for me, and those which I myself have made! Much has been observed and much transgressed; but even at the transgression, this sheet, this witness to my last confession, my last absolution, serves me instead of an admonishing conscience, and I make a fresh start. I am on my guard, and my errors no longer rush, like mountain torrents, one upon the top of the other.

“Still, I will willingly confess to you, that I often admire those teachers and leaders of men who only impose on their disciples outward mechanical duties. They make the thing easy to themselves and to the world. For just this part of my obligations, which formerly seemed to me the most arduous and the most wonderful—this I observe most conveniently and most pleasantly.

“I must stay not more than three days under the same roof. I must leave no inn without at least removing one mile from the same. These regulations are really designed to make my years years of journeying, and to prevent the least temptation of settling down occurring to me. I have hitherto scrupulously subjected myself to this condition—nay, not once availed myself of the indulgence allowed. It is in fact here for the first time that I make a halt—that I sleep for a third night in the same bed. From here I send you many things that I have, so far, learned, observed, saved up; and then to-morrow early we descend on the other side, in the first place to a wonderful family—a holy family, I might perhaps say—about which you will find more in my diary.

“Now, farewell, and lay down this sheet with the feeling that it has only one thing to say; only one thing that it might say and repeat forever, but will not say, will not repeat, until I have the happiness to lie again at thy feet, and over thy hands to sob out all that I have had to forego.

“Morning.

“I have packed up. The postman is fastening the wallet upon his frame. The sun has not yet risen, the mists are steaming out of all the valleys, but the sky overhead is bright. We are going down into the gloomy depth, which also will soon brighten up above us. Let me send across to you my last sigh! Let my last glance towards you be still filled with an involuntary tear! I am decided and determined. You shall hear no more complaints from me; you shall only hear what happens to the wanderer. And still, whilst I wish to conclude, a thousand more thoughts, wishes, hopes, and intentions, cross one another. Fortunately they urge me away. The postman is calling, and the host is already clearing up again in my presence, as if I had gone; even as cold-hearted improvident heirs do not conceal from the departing the arrangements for putting themselves in possession.”

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CHAPTER II.

ST. JOSEPH THE SECOND.

Already had the traveller, following on foot his porter's steps, left steep rocks behind and above him; already were they traversing a less rugged intermediate range, ever hurrying forwards, through many a well-wooded forest, through many a pleasant meadow-ground, until at last they found themselves upon a declivity, and looked down into a carefully cultivated valley shut in all round by hills. A large monastic building, half in ruins, half in good repair, at once attracted their attention.

"This is St. Joseph's," said the carrier; "a great pity for the beautiful church! Only look how fresh its pillars and columns still look through the underwood and the trees, although it has been lying so many hundreds of years in ruins."

"The convent buildings, on the other hand," replied Wilhelm, "are still, I see, in good preservation."

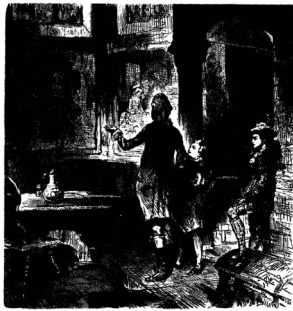
"Yes," said the other, "a steward lives on the spot, who manages the household, and collects the rents and tithes which have to be paid here from far around."

With these words they had entered, through the open gate, a spacious courtyard, which, surrounded by solemn well-preserved buildings, announced itself as the abode of a peaceful community. He at once perceived his Felix, with the angels of yesterday, busy round a big market-basket, which a strongly-built woman had placed in front of her. They were just about to buy some cherries; but in point of fact, Felix, who always carried some money about him, was beating down the price. He now played the part of host as well as guest, and was lavishing an abundance of fruit on his playmates; even to his father the refreshment was welcome amidst these barren mossy wilds, where the colored shining fruits always seemed so beautiful. "She brought them up some distance from a large garden," the fruit-woman remarked, in order to make the price satisfactory to the buyers, to whom it had seemed somewhat too high.

"Father will soon return," said the children; "in the meanwhile you must go into the hall and rest there."

Yet how astonished was Wilhelm when the children took him to the room which they called the hall. It was entered directly from the courtyard by a large door, and our traveller found himself in a very clean well-preserved chapel, which, however, as in fact he saw, had been arranged for the domestic use of daily life. On one side stood a table, a settle, several chairs and benches; on the other side a carved dresser with various-colored pottery, jugs and glasses. There were not wanting a number of chests and boxes, and, neatly ordered as everything was, there was no want of what is attractive in domestic everyday life. The light fell through high windows at the side. But what most aroused the traveller's attention were colored pictures painted on the

wall at a moderate height below the windows, extended like tapestries round three sides of the chapel, and coming down to a panelled skirting which covered the rest of the wall to the ground. The pictures represented the history of St. Joseph. Here you saw him busy with his carpenter's work; there he was meeting Mary, and a lily sprouted out of the ground between them, whilst several angels hovered watchfully about them. Here he is being betrothed; then follows the angelic salutation. There he is sitting despondent amidst unfinished work, letting his axe lie, and is thinking of leaving his wife. But presently there appears to him the angel in a dream, and his position is changed. With devotion he regards the new-born Child in the manger at Bethlehem, and adores it. Soon after follows a wonderfully beautiful picture. All kinds of carpentered wood are seen; it is on the point of being put together, and accidentally a couple of pieces form a cross. The Child has fallen asleep upon the cross; its mother is sitting close by regarding it with tender love, and the foster-father stops his work in order not to disturb its sleep. Immediately after follows the Flight into Egypt. It provoked a smile from the traveller as he looked at it, when he saw on the wall the repetition of the living picture of yesterday.



He had not been left long to his meditations when the host entered, whom he recognized immediately as the leader of the holy caravan. They saluted each other most cordially; a conversation on sundry matters followed; still Wilhelm's attention remained directed towards the picture. The host saw the interest of his guest, and commenced laughingly:

“No doubt you are wondering at the harmony of this structure with its inhabitants, whom you learned to know yesterday. But it is perhaps still more strange than might be supposed; the building has, in fact, made the inhabitants. For, if the lifeless comes to life, then it may well be able also to create a living thing.”

“Oh, yes,” rejoined Wilhelm, “it would surprise me if the spirit who centuries ago worked so powerfully amid this mountain desert, and attracted towards itself such a huge mass of buildings, possessions and rights, and thereby diffused manifold culture in the neighborhood,—it would surprise me if it did not still display its vital energy even out of these ruins upon a living human being. Still, let us not abide by the general; make me acquainted with your history, in order that I may learn how it was possible that, without trifling or pretension, the past is again represented in you, and that which is past and gone comes a second time upon the scene.”

Just as Wilhelm was expecting an instructive answer from the lips of his host, a friendly voice in the courtyard shouted the name of Joseph. The host heard it, and went to the door.

So he is called Joseph, too! said Wilhelm to himself. That is wonderful enough, and yet not quite so wonderful as that he represents his patron saint in the life. At the same time he glanced towards the door, and saw the Madonna of yesterday speaking with her husband. At last they separated; the woman went to the opposite dwelling.

“Mary!” he shouted after her, “just a word more.”

So she is called Mary, too! But a little more, and I shall feel myself transported backwards eighteen hundred years. He mused on the solemn pent-up valley in which he found himself, on the ruins and the stillness, and a strange olden-time sort of mood fell upon him. It was time that the host and children came in. The latter begged Wilhelm to come for a walk, whilst the host still discharged a few duties. They went now through the ruins of the church, with its wealth of columns: the lofty roof and walls seemed to strengthen themselves in wind and storm; whilst strong trees had, ages ago, struck root in the broad tops of the walls, and in company with a good deal of grass, flowers, and moss, represented gardens hanging boldly in the air. Grassy meadow-paths led to a rapid brook, and the traveller could now, from a certain height, look over the building and its situation with an interest which grew greater as its inhabitants became more and more remarkable to him, and, through their harmony with their surroundings, aroused his liveliest curiosity.

They returned, and found a table laid in the consecrated hall. At the upper end there stood an arm-chair, in which the housewife sat down. She had standing by her side a high basket, in which the little child was lying; next, the father on her left hand, and Wilhelm on her right. The three children occupied the lower part of the table. An old female servant brought in a well-prepared repast. The eating and drinking-vessels likewise indicated a bygone time. The children gave occasion for amusement, whilst Wilhelm could not look enough at the figure and bearing of his holy hostess.

After dinner the company separated; the host took his guest to a shady spot in the ruins, where from an elevated position one had in full view the pleasant prospect down the valley, and saw the hills of the lower land, with their fertile declivities and woody summits ranged one behind the other.

“It is fair,” said the host, “that I should satisfy your curiosity, and the rather as I feel, in your case, that you are capable of taking the marvellous seriously, if it rests upon a serious foundation. This religious institution, of which you still see the remains, was dedicated to the holy family, and in olden times, on account of many miracles, was renowned as a place of pilgrimage. The church was dedicated to the mother and the son. It was destroyed several centuries ago. The chapel, dedicated to the holy foster-father, has been preserved, as also the habitable part of the convent. The income for a great many years back has belonged to a secular prince, who keeps an agent up here, and that am I, the son of the former agent, who likewise succeeded his father in this office.

“St. Joseph, although all ecclesiastical honors had long ago ceased up here, had been so beneficent towards our family, that it is not to be wondered at, if they felt particularly well disposed towards him; and thence it came to pass, that at baptism I was called Joseph, whereby to a certain extent my manner of life was determined. I grew up, and if I became an associate of my father whilst he looked after the rents, still I clung quite as much, nay, even more affectionately, to my mother, who according to her means was fond of distributing relief, and through her kindly disposition and her good deeds was known and beloved on the whole mountain-side. She would send me, now here, and now there; at one time to fetch, at another to order, at another to look after; and I felt quite at home in this kind of charitable business.

“In general a mountain life has something more humanizing than life on the lowlands; inhabitants are closer together, or further apart, if you wish it; wants are smaller, but more pressing. Man is more thrown upon his own resources,—must learn to rely on his hands, on his feet. The laborer, postman, carrier, are all united in one and the same person; everybody also stands nearer to his neighbor, meets him oftener, and lives with him in a common sphere of activity.

“When I was still young, and my shoulders unable to carry much, it occurred to me to furnish a small donkey with baskets, and drive it before me up and down the steep footpaths. In the mountains, the ass is no such contemptible animal as in the lowlands, where the laborer who ploughs with horses thinks himself better than another who tears up the sod with oxen. And I trudged along behind my beast with all the less misgiving, that I had before noticed, in the chapel, that it had attained to the honor of carrying God and his mother. Still, this chapel was not then in the condition in which it is now. It was treated like an outbuilding, almost like a stable. Firewood, hurdles, tools, tubs and ladders, and all sorts of things, were heaped pell-mell together. It was fortunate that the paintings were situated so high, and that wainscot lasts a little while. But as a child I was especially fond of clambering here and there all about the wood, and looking at the pictures, which nobody could properly explain to me. Enough, I knew that the saint whose life was painted above was my namesake, and I congratulated myself on him, as much as if he had been my uncle. I grew up, and as it was a special condition that he who would lay claim to the profitable office of steward must exercise a trade, therefore, in accordance with the wish of my parents, who were anxious that I should one day inherit this excellent post, I was to learn a trade—and, moreover, such a one as would prove useful to the household up here.

“My father was a cooper by trade, and made everything of this sort of work that was necessary himself, whence accrued great advantage to himself and the whole family. But I could not make up my mind to follow him in this line. My inclination drew me irresistibly towards the carpenter's trade, the implements of which I had from my youth seen so circumstantially and correctly painted by the side of my saint. I declared my wish; they did not oppose it, and the less so as the carpenter was often required by us for so many different constructions, and even because, if he has some ability and love for his work, the cabinet-maker's and wood-carver's arts, especially in forest districts, are closely allied to it. And what still more strengthened me in my higher designs was that picture, which, alas! now is almost entirely obliterated. As soon as you know what it is meant to represent, you will be able to make it out, when

I take you to it presently. St. Joseph had been entrusted with nothing less than the making of a throne for King Herod. The gorgeous seat was to be placed between two specified pillars. Joseph carefully takes the measure of the breadth and height, and constructs a costly royal throne. But how astonished is he, how distracted, when he brings the chair of state: it is found to be too high and not wide enough. Now, as is well known, King Herod was not to be trifled with: the pious master-joiner is in the greatest embarrassment. The Christ-child, accustomed to accompany him everywhere, to carry his tools in childishly humble sport, sees his distress, and is immediately ready with advice and help. The wondrous Child desires his foster-father to take hold of the throne by one side. He seizes the other side of the carved work, and both begin to pull. With the greatest ease and as conveniently as if it had been of leather, the throne expands in breadth, loses proportionately in height, and fits most excellently to the place and position, to the greatest consolation of the reassured carpenter and to the perfect satisfaction of the king.*

“In my youth that throne was still quite easy to see, and from the remains of one side you will be able to observe that there was no lack of carved work, which indeed must have proved easier to the painter than it would have been to the carpenter, if it had been demanded of him.

“However, I had no misgivings in consequence, but looked upon the craft to which I had devoted myself in such a favorable light, that I could scarcely wait until they had put me into apprenticeship; which was all the more easy to effect, inasmuch as there lived in the neighborhood a master-carpenter who worked for the whole district, and who could employ several assistants and apprentices. Thus I remained near my parents, and continued to a certain extent my former life, whilst employing hours of leisure and holy-days for the charitable commissions with which my mother continued to charge me.

The Visitation.

“In this way a few years passed,” continued the narrator. “I very soon understood the advantages of the craft; and my body, developed through work, was capable of undertaking anything required for the purpose. In addition, I discharged the former duties which I rendered to my good mother, or rather to the sick and needy. I went with my beast through the mountain, distributed the load punctually, and from grocers and merchants I took back with me what we lacked up here. My master was satisfied with me, and so were my parents. Already I had on my wanderings the pleasure of seeing many a house which I had helped to erect, which I had decorated. For it was especially this last—the notching of the beams, the carving of certain simple forms, the branding of ornamental figures, the red-coloring of certain cavities, by which a wooden mountain-house offers such a cheerful aspect,—all such performances were entrusted to me especially, because I showed myself best in the matter, always bearing in mind as I did the throne of Herod and its adornments.

“Among the help-worthy persons of whom my mother took particular care, the first place was especially awarded to young wives in expectation of childbed, as I by degrees could well observe, although in such cases it was usual to keep the messages

a secret so far as I was concerned. In such cases I never had any direct commission, but everything went through the medium of a good woman who lived at no great distance down the valley, and who was called Frau Elizabeth. My mother, herself experienced in the art which rescues for life so many at the very entrance into life, was on unalterably good terms with Frau Elizabeth, and I often had to hear on all sides that many of our robust mountaineers had to thank both these women for their existence. The mystery with which Elizabeth every time received me, her reserved answers to my puzzling questions, which I myself did not understand, awoke in me a particular reverence for her and her house, which was in the highest degree clean, and seemed to me to represent a kind of little sanctuary.

“In the meanwhile, in consequence of my knowledge and skill in my trade, I had acquired a certain amount of influence in the family. As my father, in his quality of cooper, had provided for the cellar, so did I now care for house and home, and mended many injured portions of the ancient building. I particularly succeeded in restoring to domestic use certain dilapidated out-houses and coach-houses; and scarcely was this done, than I set about clearing and cleansing my beloved chapel. In a few days it had been put in order, almost as you see it; whereupon I set about restoring, in uniformity with the whole, the missing or injured parts of the panel-work. And you might perhaps take these folding-doors of the entrance to be rather old, but they are my own work. I have spent several years in carving them in hours of leisure, after I had in the first place neatly joined them into a whole by the aid of strong planks of oak. Whatever of the pictures had not up to that time been injured or obliterated, has also been preserved up to now; and I assisted the glazier at a new building on the condition that he restored the colored windows.

“If those pictures and thoughts on the life of the saint had occupied my imagination, so it all became only more deeply impressed upon me when I was able to consider the spot as once more a sanctuary, and while away the time in it, particularly in the summer, and meditate at leisure upon whatever I saw or imagined. I felt within me an irresistible inclination to imitate the saint; and, as similar circumstances cannot easily be called forth, I determined at least to begin to resemble him from below, as in fact I had already begun to do long ago by the use of the beast of burden. The little creature of which I had availed myself hitherto would not suffice me any longer. I found for myself a much finer animal, and was careful to get a well-constructed saddle, which was equally convenient for riding or for carrying goods. A pair of new baskets were procured, and a net with colored ribbons, tassels, and knots, mingled with chinking metal tags, adorned the neck of the long-eared creature, which was now soon able to vie with its prototype on the wall. It occurred to no one to mock me, when in this array I passed along the mountain; for people willingly allow benevolence a marvellous outward aspect.



JOSEPH AND MARY.

“In the meantime the war, or rather its consequences, had approached our district, whilst on several occasions dangerous bands of runaway rascals collected together, and here and there perpetrated many a violent deed and much mischief. By a good system of country militia, patrols, and continuous vigilance, the evil was certainly very soon quelled; yet people too soon fell into carelessness again, and, before they had become aware of it, fresh mischiefs broke out.

“There had long been quiet in our district, and I with my sumpter beast went peacefully trudging along the accustomed paths, until, on a certain day, I came across the newly-sown clearing in the wood, and on the edge of the sunk fence I found sitting, or rather lying, a female figure. She seemed to be asleep or in a swoon. I attended to her, and when she opened her beautiful eyes, and sat up, she exclaimed passionately, ‘Where is he? Have you seen him?’

“ ‘Whom?’ I asked.

“She answered, ‘My husband!’

“Seeing how very youthful her aspect was, this answer was not expected by me; still, I continued to assist her only the more readily, and to assure her of my sympathy. I gathered that the two travellers had left their carriage at some distance, on account of the difficult carriage-road, in order to turn into a shorter foot-path. Close by the spot they had been assailed by armed men: her husband, whilst fighting, had got to some distance off. She had not been able to follow him far, and had been lying on this spot she did not know how long. She begged me imploringly to leave her and to hurry in search of her husband. She got upon her feet, and the most beautiful, the loveliest form stood before me; yet I could easily see that she was in a condition in which she might very soon need the assistance of my mother and Frau Elizabeth. We disputed for a while, for I wished first to take her to a place of safety; she wished first of all for news of her husband. She would not go far herself from the path he had taken, and all my representations would perhaps have proved fruitless, if a troop of our militia, which had turned out upon the news of fresh outrages, had not just then arrived through the forest. They were informed of what had happened; the necessary course

was agreed upon, the place of meeting fixed, and thus the matter was so far set straight. I quickly hid my basket in a neighboring cave, which had already often served me as a storehouse, arranged my saddle into a comfortable seat, and lifted, not without a peculiar emotion, the lovely burden upon my willing beast, which was able by itself to find the familiar paths at once, and gave me an opportunity of walking along by her side.



“You may imagine, without my describing at length, in what a strange state of mind I was. What I so long had sought for I had really found. I felt as if I were dreaming, and then again, suddenly, as if I had awoke from a dream. This heavenly form, as I saw it hovering as it were in the air, and moving in front of the green trees, came before me now like some dream, which was called forth in my soul through those pictures in the chapel. Then, again, those pictures seemed to me to have been only dreams, which now resolved themselves into a beautiful reality. I questioned her on many things; she answered me gently and politely, as beseems a person of good standing, in trouble. She often begged me, when we reached some open height, to stand still, look round, and listen. She begged me with such grace, with such a deeply-imploring glance from beneath her long black eyelashes, that I had to do whatever was but possible: I actually climbed an isolated, tall, and branchless fir-tree. Never had this evidence of my dexterity been more welcome to me; never had I on holidays and at fair-times with greater satisfaction fetched down ribbons and silk handkerchiefs from similar altitudes. Yet this time I went, alas! without any prize; neither did I see or hear anything from above. At last she herself called to me to come down, and beckoned to me quite urgently with her hand; nay, when at length in sliding down I let go my hold at a considerable height and jumped down, she gave a cry, and a sweet friendliness overspread her face, when she saw me uninjured before her.

“Why should I detain you long with the hundred attentions with which I tried to make the whole way pleasant to her, in order to distract her thoughts. And how too could I?—for this is just the peculiar quality of true attentiveness, that for the moment it makes everything of nothing. To my own feeling, the flowers which I plucked for her, the distant landscapes which I showed her, the mountains, forests, which I named to her, were so many precious treasures, which I seemed to present to her in order to bring myself into relation with her, as one will try to do by the aid of gifts.

“She had already gained me for my whole life, when we arrived at our destination in front of that good woman's door, and I at once saw a painful separation before me. Once more I cast a glance over her whole form, and when my eyes had reached her feet, I stooped down, as if I had to do something to the saddlegirth, and I kissed the prettiest shoe that I had ever seen in my life, but without her perceiving it. I helped

her down, sprang up the steps and shouted into the house-door: 'Frau Elizabeth, here is a visitor for you!' The good woman came out, and I looked over her shoulders towards the house, when the lovely being, with charming sorrow and inward consciousness of pain, mounted the steps and then affectionately embraced my worthy old woman, and let her conduct her into the better room. They shut themselves within it, and I remained standing by my ass before the door, like one who has unladen costly goods, and has again become but a poor driver as before.

THE LILY-STALK.

"I was still hesitating to leave the spot, for I was irresolute as to what I should do, when Frau Elizabeth came to the door and asked me to summon my mother to her, and then to go about the neighborhood and obtain if possible some news of the husband. 'Mary begs you particularly to do this,' said she.

" 'Can I not speak to her once more?' answered I.

" 'That will not do,' said Frau Elizabeth, and we parted.

"In a short time I reached our dwelling; my mother was ready to go down the very same evening and assist the young stranger. I hurried down to the lower district and hoped to obtain the most trustworthy news at the bailiff's. But he was himself still in uncertainty, and as he knew me he invited me to spend the night with him. It seemed to me interminably long, and I constantly had the beautiful form before my eyes, as she sat rocking to and fro on the animal, and looked down at me with such a look of sorrowful friendliness. Every moment I hoped for news. I did not grudge, but wished for the preservation of the good husband, and yet could so gladly think of her as a widow. The flying detachment by degrees came together again, and after a number of varying reports the truth at last was made clear, that the carriage had been saved, but that the unfortunate husband had died of his wounds in the neighboring village. I also heard, that according to the previous arrangement some had gone to announce the sorrowful news to Frau Elizabeth. I had accordingly nothing more to do, or aid in, there, and yet a ceaseless impatience, a boundless longing, drove me back through mountain and forest to her door. It was night; the house was shut up. I saw light in the rooms, I saw shadows moving on the curtains, and so I sat down upon a bench opposite, continually on the point of knocking, and continually held back by various considerations.

"Yet why do I go on relating circumstantially what in point of fact has no interest. Enough! Even the next morning they did not let me into the house. They knew the sad occurrence, they did not want me any more; they sent me to my father, to my work; they did not answer my questions; they wanted to get rid of me.

"They had been treating me this way for a week, when at last Frau Elizabeth called me in. 'Tread gently, my friend,' she said; 'but come in with good comfort!' She led me into a cleanly apartment, where, in the corner, through the half-opened bed-curtains, I saw my fair one sitting. Frau Elizabeth went to her as if to announce me, lifted something from the bed and brought it towards me: a most beautiful boy

wrapped in the whitest of linen. Frau Elizabeth held him just between me and his mother, and upon the spot there occurred to me the lily-stalk in the picture, growing out of the earth between Mary and Joseph,* in witness of a pure relationship. From that instant my heart was relieved of all oppression; I was sure of my aim and of my happiness. I could freely walk towards her, speak to her; I could bear her heavenly look, take the boy in my arms, and press a hearty kiss upon his brow.

“ ‘How I thank you for your affection for this orphan child!’ said the mother.

“I exclaimed, thoughtlessly, and passionately: ‘It is an orphan no longer, if you are willing!’

“Frau Elizabeth, wiser than I, took the infant from me, and managed to send me away.

“The recollection of that time still serves me constantly for my happiest diversion when I am obliged to roam through our mountains and valleys. I am still able to call to mind the smallest circumstance—which, however, it is but fair that I should spare you.

“Weeks passed by: Mary had recovered and I could see her more frequently. My intercourse with her was a series of services and attentions. Her family circumstances allowed her to live where she liked. At first she stayed with Frau Elizabeth; then she visited us, to thank my mother and me for so much friendly help. She was happy with us, and I flattered myself that this came to pass partly on my account. Yet, what I should have liked so much to say, and dared not say, was finally mooted in a strange and charming fashion when I took her into the chapel, which I had already transformed into a habitable hall. I showed and explained to her the pictures one after the other, and in so doing I expatiated in such a vivid heartfelt manner upon the duties of a foster-father, that tears came into her eyes, and I could not get to the end of my description of the pictures. I thought myself sure of her affection, although I was not presumptuous enough to wish to blot out so soon the memory of her husband. The law compels widows to one year of mourning; and certainly such a period, which comprehends within it the change of all earthly things, is necessary to a sensitive heart, in order to soothe the painful impressions of a great loss. One sees the flowers fade and the leaves fall, but one also sees fruits ripen and fresh buds germinate. Life belongs to the living, and he who lives must be prepared for a change.

“I now spoke to my mother about the matter which I had most at heart. She thereupon revealed to me how painful the death of her husband had been to Mary, and how she had recovered again only at the thought that she must live for the sake of the child. My attachment had not remained unknown to the women, and Mary had already familiarized herself with the notion of living with us. She stayed some time longer in the neighborhood, then she came up here to us, and we lived for a while longer in the godliest and happiest state of betrothal. At last we were united. That first feeling which had brought us together did not disappear. The duties and joys of foster-father and father were combined; and thus our little family, as it increased, surpassed indeed its pattern in the number of its individuals, but the virtues of that example, in truth and purity of mind, were kept holy and practised by us. And hence also we maintain with

kindly habitude the outward appearance which we have accidentally acquired, and which suits so well our inward disposition; for although we are all good walkers and sturdy carriers, yet the beast of burden remains constantly in our company, in order to carry one thing or another, when business or a visit obliges us to go through these mountains and valleys. As you met us yesterday, so the whole neighborhood knows us; and we are proud of the fact that our conduct is of a kind not to shame those holy names and persons whom we profess to follow.”

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CHAPTER III.

WILHELM TO NATALIA.

“I have just ended a pleasant half wondrous story, which I have written down for thee from the lips of an excellent man. If it is not entirely in his own words—if here and there I have expressed my own feelings in the place of his, this is quite natural, in view of the relationship I have here felt with him. Is not that veneration for his wife like that which I feel for you? And has not even the meeting of these two lovers some likeness to our own? But, that he is happy enough in walking along by the side of the beast that carries its double burden of beauty; that in the evening he can, with his family following, enter through the old convent gates, and that he is inseparable from his beloved and from his children;—all this I may be allowed to envy him in secret. On the other hand, I must not complain of my own fate, since I have promised you to be silent and to suffer, as you also have undertaken to do.

“I have to pass over many beautiful features of the common life of these virtuous and happy people; for how could everything be written? A few days I have spent pleasantly, but the third already warns me to bethink me of my further travels.

“To-day I had a little dispute with Felix, for he wanted almost to compel me to transgress one of the good intentions which I have promised you to keep. Now it is just a defect, a misfortune, a fatality with me, that, before I am aware of it, the company increases around me, and I charge myself with a fresh burden, under which I afterwards have to toil and to drag myself along. Now, during my travels, we must have no third person as a constant companion. We wish and intend to be and to remain two only, and it has but just now seemed as if a new, and not exactly pleasing connection was likely to be formed.

“A poor, merry little youngster had joined the children of the house, with whom Felix had been enjoying these days in play, who allowed himself to be used or abused just as the game required, and who very soon won the favor of Felix. From various expressions I noticed already that the latter had chosen a playmate for the next journey. The boy is known here in the neighborhood; he is tolerated everywhere on account of his merriness, and occasionally receives gratuities. But he did not please me, and I begged the master of the house to send him away. This was accordingly done, but Felix was vexed about it, and there was a little scene.

“On this occasion I made a discovery which pleased me. In a corner of the chapel, or ball, there stood a box of stones, which Felix—who since our wandering through the mountain had become exceedingly fond of stones—eagerly pulled out and examined. Among them were some fine, striking specimens. Our host said that the child might pick out for himself any he liked: that these stones were what remained over from a large quantity which a stranger had sent from here a short time before. He called him Montan,* and you can fancy how glad I was to hear this name, under which one of

our best friends, to whom we owe so much, is travelling. As I inquired as to time and circumstances, I may hope soon to meet with him in my travels.”

The news that Montan was in the neighborhood had made Wilhelm thoughtful. He considered that it ought not to be left merely to chance whether he should see such a worthy friend again, and therefore he inquired of his host whether it was not known in what direction this traveller had bent his way. No one had any more exact knowledge of this, and Wilhelm had already determined to pursue his route according to the first plan, when Felix exclaimed, “If father were not so obstinate, we should soon find Montan.”



“In what manner?” asked Wilhelm.

Felix answered: “Little Fitz said yesterday that he would most likely follow up the gentleman who had the pretty stones with him, and knew so much about them too.”

After some discussion Wilhelm at last resolved to make the attempt, and in so doing to give all the more attention to the suspicious boy. He was soon found, and when he understood what was intended, he brought a mallet and iron, and a very powerful hammer, together with a bag, and, in this miner-like equipment, ran merrily in front.

The road led sideways up the mountain again. The children ran leaping together from rock to rock, over stock and stone, and brook and stream, without following any direct path. Fitz, glancing now to his right and now to his left, pushed quickly upwards. As Wilhelm, and particularly the loaded carrier, could not follow so quickly, the boys retraced the road several times forwards and backwards, singing and whistling. The forms of certain strange trees aroused the attention of Felix, who, moreover, now made for the first time the acquaintance of the larches and stone-pines, and was attracted by the wonderful gentians. And thus the difficult travelling from place to place did not lack entertainment.

Little Fitz suddenly stood still and listened. He beckoned to the others to come.

“Do you hear the knocking?” said he. “It is the sound of a hammer striking the rock.”

“We hear it,” said the others.

“It is Montan,” said he, “or someone who can give us news of him.”

As they followed the sound, which was repeated at intervals, they struck a clearing in the forest, and beheld a steep, lofty, naked rock, towering above everything, leaving even the tall forests under it. On the summit they descried a person. He stood at too great a distance to be recognized. The children at once commenced to clamber up the rugged paths. Wilhelm followed with some difficulty, nay, danger: for in ascending a rock, the first one goes more safely, because he feels his way for himself; the one that follows only sees where the former has got to, but not how. The boys soon reached the top, and Wilhelm heard a loud shout of joy.

"It is Jarno!" Felix called out to his father, and Jarno at once stepped forward to a steep place, reached his hand to his friend, and pulled him up to the top. They embraced and welcomed each other with rapture under the open canopy of heaven.

But they had scarcely let each other go when Wilhelm was seized with giddiness, not so much on his own behalf, as because he saw the children hanging over the fearful precipice. Jarno noticed it, and told them all to sit down at once.

"Nothing is more natural," said he, "than to feel giddy before any great sight, upon which we come unexpectedly, and so feel at the same time our littleness and our greatness. But then, generally speaking, there is no true enjoyment except where one must at first feel giddy."

"Are those below these the big mountains which we have crossed?" asked Felix. "How little they look! And here," he continued, loosening a little piece of stone from the top, "here is the cats'-gold again; it seems to be everywhere!"

"It is found far and wide," replied Jarno; "and since you are curious about such things, take notice that at present you are sitting upon the oldest mountain range, on the earliest form of stone, in the world."

"Was not the world made all at once, then?" asked Felix.

"Scarcely," replied Montan; "good things require time."

"Then down there there is another sort of stone," said Felix, "and then again another, and others again, forever," pointing from the nearest mountains towards the more distant ones, and so to the plains below.

It was a very fine day, and Jarno pointed out in detail the splendid view. Here and there stood several other summits like that upon which they were. A mountain in the middle distance seemed to vie with it, but still was far from reaching the same height. Farther off it was less and less mountainous; yet strangely prominent forms still showed themselves. Lastly, in the distance even the lakes and rivers became discernible, and a fertile region seemed to spread itself out like a sea. If the eye was brought back again it penetrated into fearful depths, traversed by roaring cataracts, depending one upon the other in labyrinthine confusion.

Felix was never weary of asking questions, and Jarno was accommodating enough in answering every question for him: in which, however, Wilhelm thought that he

noticed that the teacher was not altogether truthful and sincere. Therefore, when the restless boys had clambered farther away, he said to his friend:

“You have not spoken to the child about these things as you speak with yourself about them.”

“That is rather a burdensome demand,” answered Jarno; “one does not always speak even to one's self as one thinks, and it is our duty to tell others only what they can comprehend. Man understands nothing but what is proportionate to him. The best thing one can do, is to keep children in the present—to give them a name or a description. In any case they ask soon enough for the reasons.”

“They are not to be blamed for that,” answered Wilhelm. “The complicated nature of objects confuses everybody, and instead of dissecting them it is more convenient to ask quickly, Whence? and whither?”

“And yet,” continued Jarno, “as children only see objects superficially, one can only speak to them superficially about their origin and purpose.”

“Most people,” answered Wilhelm, “remain for their whole life in this condition, and do not reach that glorious epoch, in which the intelligible becomes commonplace and foolish to us.”

“One may indeed call it glorious,” replied Jarno; “for it is a middle state between desperation and deification.”

“Let us keep to the boy, who is now my chief anxiety,” said Wilhelm. “Now he has acquired an interest in minerals since we have been travelling. Can you not impart to me just enough to satisfy him at least for a time?”

“That will not do,” said Jarno; “in every new intellectual sphere one has first to commence like a child again, throw a passionate interest into the matter, and rejoice first in the outward husk before one has the happiness of reaching the kernel.”

“Then tell me,” answered Wilhelm, “how have you arrived at this knowledge and insight?—for it is still not so long since we parted from one another!”

“My friend,” replied Jarno, “we had to resign ourselves, if not for always, at least for a long time. The first thing that under such circumstances occurs to a brave man, is to commence a new life. New objects are not enough for him; these are only good as a distraction; he demands a new whole, and at once places himself in the centre of it.”

“But why,” interrupted Wilhelm, “just this passing strange, this most solitary of all prepossessions?”

“Just for this reason,” exclaimed Jarno: “because it is hermit-like! I would avoid men. We cannot help them, and they hinder us from helping ourselves. If they are happy one must leave them alone in their vanity; if they are unhappy one must save them

without injuring this vanity; and no one ever asks whether you are happy or unhappy.”

“But things are not yet quite so bad with them,” replied Wilhelm, laughing.

“I will not rob you of your happiness,” said Jarno. “Only journey onward, thou second Diogenes! Let not your little lamp be extinguished in broad daylight! Yonder, below, there lies a new world before you; but I will wager it goes on just like the old one behind us. If you cannot mate yourself and pay debts, you are of no use among them.”

“However,” replied Wilhelm, “they seem to me more amusing than those stubborn rocks of yours.”

“Not at all,” replied Jarno, “for the latter are at least incomprehensible.”

“You are trying to evade,” said Wilhelm, “for it is not in your way to deal with things which leave no hope of being comprehended. Be sincere, and tell me what you have found in this cold, stern hobby of yours?”

“That is difficult to tell of any hobby, particularly of this one.”

Then he reflected for a moment, and said:

“Letters may be fine things, and yet they are insufficient to express sounds: we cannot dispense with sounds, and yet they are a long way from sufficient to enable mind, properly so called, to be expressed aloud. In the end, we cleave to letters and to sound, and are no better off than if we had renounced them altogether: what we communicate, and what is imparted to us, is always only of the most commonplace, by no means worth the trouble.”

“You want to evade me,” said his friend; “for what has that to do with these rocks and pinnacles?”

“But suppose,” replied the other, “that I treated these very rents and fissures as if they were letters: sought to decipher them, fashion them into words, and learned to read them off-hand: would you have anything against that?”

“No, but it seems to me an extensive alphabet.”

“More limited than you think: one has only to learn it like any other one. Nature possesses only one writing, and I have no need to drag along with a number of scrawls. Here I have no occasion to fear—as may happen after I have been long and lovingly poring over a parchment—that an acute critic will come and assure me that everything is only interpolated.”

“And yet even here,” replied his friend, laughing, “your methods of reading are contested.”

“Even for that very reason,” said the other, “I do not talk with anybody about it; and with you too, just because I love you, I will no longer exchange and barter the wretched trash of empty words.”

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CHAPTER IV.

The two friends, not without care and difficulty, had descended to join the children, who had settled themselves in a shady spot below. The mineral specimens collected by Montan and Felix were unpacked almost more eagerly than the provisions. The latter had many questions to ask, and the former many names to pronounce. Felix was delighted that he could tell him the names of them all, and committed them quickly to memory. At last he produced one more stone, and said, "What is this one called?"

Montan examined it with astonishment, and said, "Where did you get it?"

Fitz answered quickly, "I found it; it comes from this country."

"It is not from this district," replied Montan.

Felix enjoyed seeing the great man somewhat preplexed.

"You shall have a ducat," said Montan, "if you take me to the place where it is found."

"It will be easy to earn," replied Fitz, "but not at once."

"Then describe to me the place exactly, so that I shall be able to find it without fail. But that is impossible, for it is a cross-stone, which comes from St. James of Compostella, and which some foreigner has lost, if indeed you have not stolen it from him, because it looks so wonderful."

"Give your ducat to your friend to take care of," said Fitz, "and I will honestly confess where I got the stone. In the ruined church at St. Joseph's there is a ruined altar as well. Among the scattered and broken stones at the top I discovered a layer of this stone, which served as a bed for the others, and I knocked down as much of it as I could get hold of. If you only lifted away upper stones, no doubt you would find a good deal more of it."

"Take your gold-piece," replied Montan; "you deserve it for this discovery. It is a pretty one. One justly rejoices when inanimate nature brings to light a semblance of what we love and venerate. She appears to us in the form of a sibyl, who sets down beforehand evidence of what has been predestined from eternity, but can only in the course of time become a reality. Upon this, as upon a miraculous, holy foundation, the priests had set their altar."

Wilhelm, who had been listening for a time, and who had noticed that many names and many descriptions came over and over again, repeated his already expressed wish that Montan would tell him so much as he had need of for the elementary instruction of the boy.

“Give that up,” replied Montan. “There is nothing more terrible than a teacher who does not know more than the scholars, at all events, ought to know. He who wants to teach others may often indeed be silent about the best that he knows, but he must not be half-instructed himself.”

“But where, then, are such perfect teachers to be found?”

“You can find them very easily,” replied Montan.

“Where, then?” said Wilhelm, with some incredulity.

“Wherever the matter which you want to master is at home,” replied Montan. “The best instruction is derived from the most complete environment. Do you not learn foreign languages best in the countries where they are at home—where only those given ones and no other strike your ear?”

“And have you then,” asked Wilhelm, “attained the knowledge of mountains in the midst of mountains?”

“Of course.”

“Without conversing with people?” asked Wilhelm.

“At least only with people,” replied the other, “who were familiar with mountains. Wheresoever the Pygmies, attracted by the metalliferous veins, bore their way through the rock to make the interior of the earth accessible, and by every means try to solve problems of the greatest difficulty, there is the place where the thinker eager for knowledge ought to take up his station. He sees business, action; let things follow their own course, and is glad at success and failure. What is useful is only a part of what is significant. To possess a subject completely, to master it, one has to study the thing for its own sake. But whilst I am speaking of the highest and the last, to which we raise ourselves only late in the day by dint of frequent and fruitful observation, I see the boys before me: to them matters sound quite differently. The child might easily grasp every species of activity, because everything looks easy that is excellently performed. *Every beginning is difficult!* That may be true in a certain sense, but more generally one can say that the beginning of everything is easy, and the last stages are ascended with most difficulty and most rarely.”

Wilhelm, who in the meantime had been thinking, said to Montan, “Have you really adopted the persuasion that the collective forms of activity have to be separated in precept as well as in practice?”

“I know no other or better plan,” replied the former. “Whatever man would achieve, must loose itself from him like a second self; and how could that be possible if his first self were not entirely penetrated therewith?”



“But yet a many-sided culture has been held to be advantageous and necessary.”

“It may be so, too, in its proper time,” answered the other. “Many-sidedness prepares, in point of fact, only the element in which the one-sided man can work, who just at this time has room enough given him. Yes, now is the time for the one-sided; well for him who comprehends it, and who works for himself and others in this mind. In certain things it is understood thoroughly and at once. Practise till you are an able violinist, and be assured that the director will have pleasure in assigning you a place in the orchestra. Make an instrument of yourself, and wait and see what sort of place humanity will kindly grant you in universal life. Let us break off. Whoso will not believe, let him follow his own path: he too will succeed sometimes; but I say it is needful everywhere to serve from the ranks upwards. To limit one’s self to a handicraft is the best. For the narrowest heads it is always a craft; for the better ones an art; and the best, when he does one thing, does everything—or, to be less paradoxical, in the one thing, which he does rightly, he beholds the semblance of everything that is rightly done.”

This conversation, which we only reproduce sketchily, lasted until sunset, which glorious as it was, yet led the company to consider where they would spend the night.

“I should not know how to bring you under cover,” said Fitz; “but if you care to sit or lie down for the night in a warm place at a good old charcoal-burner’s, you will be welcome.”

And so they all followed him through strange paths to a quiet spot, where anyone would soon have felt at home.

In the midst of a narrow clearing in the forest there lay smoking and full of heat the round-roofed charcoal kilns, on one side the hut of pine-boughs, and a bright fire close by. They sat down and made themselves comfortable; the children at once busy helping the charcoal-burner’s wife, who, with hospitable anxiety, was getting ready some slices of bread, toasted with butter so as to let them be filled and soaked with it, which afforded deliciously oily morsels to their hungry appetites.

Presently, whilst the boys were playing at hide-and-seek among the dimly-lighted pine stems, howling like wolves and barking like dogs, in such a way that even a courageous wayfarer might well have been frightened by it, the friends talked confidentially about their circumstances.

But now, to the peculiar duties of the Renunciants appertained also this, that on meeting they must speak neither of the past nor the future, but only occupy themselves with the present.

Jarno, who had his mind full of mining undertakings, and of all the knowledge and capabilities that they required, enthusiastically explained to Wilhelm, with the utmost exactitude and thoroughness, all that he promised himself in both hemispheres from such knowledge and capacities; of which, however, his friend, who always sought for the true treasure in the human heart alone, could hardly form any idea, but rather answered at last with a laugh:

“Thus you stand in contradiction with yourself, when beginning only in advanced years to meddle with what one ought to be instructed in from youth up.”

“Not at all,” replied the other; “for it is precisely this, that I was educated in my childhood at a kind uncle’s, a mining officer of consequence, that I grew up with the miner’s children, and with them used to swim little bark boats down the draining channel of the mine, that has led me back into this circle wherein I now feel myself again happy and contented. This charcoal smoke can hardly agree with you as with me, who from childhood up have been accustomed to swallow it as incense. I have essayed a great deal in the world, and always found the same: in habit lies the only satisfaction of man; even the unpleasant, to which we have accustomed ourselves, we miss with regret. I was once troubled a very long time with a wound that would not heal, and when at last I recovered, it was most unpleasant to me when the surgeon remained away and no longer dressed it, and no longer took breakfast with me.”

“But I should like, however,” replied Wilhelm, “to impart to my son a freer survey of the world than any limited handicraft can give. Circumscribe man as you will, for all that he will at last look about himself in his time, and how can he understand it all, if he does not in some degree know what has preceded him. And would he not enter every grocer’s shop with astonishment if he had no idea of the countries whence these indispensable rarities have come to him?”

“What does it matter?” replied Jarno; “let him read the newspapers like every Philistine, and drink coffee like every old woman. But still, if you cannot leave it alone, and are so bent upon perfect culture, I do not understand how you can be so blind, how you need search any longer, how you fail to see that you are in the immediate neighborhood of an excellent educational institution.”

“In the neighborhood?” said Wilhelm, shaking his head.

“Certainly,” replied the other; “what do you see here?”

“Where?”

“Here, just before your nose!” Jarno stretched out his forefinger, and exclaimed impatiently: “What is that?”

“Well then,” said Wilhelm, “a charcoal-kiln; but what has that to do with it?”

“Good, at last! a charcoal-kiln. How do they proceed to erect it?”

“They place logs one on top of the other.”

“When that is done, what happens next?”

“As it seems to me,” said Wilhelm, “you want to pay me a compliment in Socratic fashion—to make me understand, to make me acknowledge, that I am extremely absurd and thick-headed.”

“Not at all,” replied Jarno; “continue, my friend, to answer to the point. So, what happens then, when the orderly pile of wood has been arranged solidly yet lightly?”

“Why, they set fire to it.”

“And when it is thoroughly alight, when the flame bursts forth from every crevice, what happens?—do they let it burn on?”

“Not at all. They cover up the flames, which keep breaking out again and again, with turf and earth, with coal-dust, and anything else at hand.”

“To quench them?”

“Not at all: to damp them down.”

“And thus they leave it just as much air as is necessary, that all may be penetrated with the glow, so that all ferments aright. Then every crevice is shut, every outlet prevented; so that the whole by degrees is extinguished in itself, carbonized, cooled down, finally taken out separately, as marketable ware, forwarded to farrier and locksmith, to baker and cook; and when it has served sufficiently for the profit and edification of dear Christendom, is employed in the form of ashes by washerwomen and soapboilers.”

“Well,” replied Wilhelm, laughing, “what have you in view in reference to this comparison?”

“That is not difficult to say,” replied Jarno. “I look upon myself as an old basket of excellent beech charcoal; but in addition I allow myself the privilege of burning only for my own sake; whence also I appear very strange to people.”

“And me,” said Wilhelm; “how will you treat me?”

“At the present moment,” said Jarno, “I look on you as a pilgrim's staff, which has the wonderful property of sprouting in every corner in which it is put, but never taking root. Now draw out the comparison further for yourself, and learn to understand why neither forester nor gardener, neither charcoal-burner nor joiner, nor any other craftsman, knows how to make anything of you.”

Whilst they were talking thus, Wilhelm, I do not know for what purpose, drew something out of his bosom which looked half like a pocketbook and half like a case, and which was claimed by Montan as an old acquaintance. Our friend did not deny that he carried it about like a kind of fetish, from the superstition that his fate, in a certain measure, depended thereon.

But what it was we would wish at this point not to confide as yet to the reader; but we may say thus much: that it led to a conversation, the final result of which was that Wilhelm confessed how he had long ago been inclined to devote himself to a certain special profession, an art of quite peculiar usefulness, provided that Montan would use his influence with the guild-brethren, in order that the most burdensome of all conditions of their life, that of not tarrying more than three days in one spot, might be dispensed with as soon as possible, and that for the attainment of his purpose, it might be allowed him to dwell here or there as might please himself. This Montan promised to do, after the other had solemnly promised himself unceasingly to pursue the aim which he had confidentially avowed, and to hold most faithfully to the purpose which he had once taken up.

Talking seriously of all this, and continually replying to one another, they had left their night's lodgings, where a wonderfully suspicious company had by degrees gathered together, and by daybreak had got outside the wood on to an open space upon which they found some game, at which Felix particularly, who looked on delightedly, was very glad. They now prepared to separate; for here the paths led towards different points of the compass. Fitz was now questioned about the different directions, but he seemed absent, and, contrary to his usual habit, he gave confused answers.

"You are nothing but a rogue," said Jarno; "you knew all of those men, last night, who came and sat down about us. There were woodcutters and miners, they might pass; but the later ones I take to be smugglers and poachers, and the tall one, the very last, who kept writing figures in the sand, and whom the others treated with a certain respect, was surely a treasure-digger, with whom you are secretly in concert."

"They are all good people," Fitz thereupon remarked, "who live poorly, and if they sometimes do what others forbid, they are just poor devils, who must give themselves some liberty, only to live."

In point of fact, however, the little rogue, when he noticed the preparations of the friends to separate, became thoughtful. He mused quietly for a time, for he was in doubt as to which of the parties he should follow. He reckoned up his prospects: father and son were liberal with their silver, but Jarno rather with gold; he thought it the best plan not to leave him. Accordingly, he at once seized an opportunity that offered, when at parting Jarno said to him: "Now, when I come to St. Joseph's I shall see whether you are honest: I shall look for the cross-stone and the ruined altar."

"You will not find anything," said Fitz, "and all the same I shall be honest; the stone is from there, but I have taken away all the pieces, and stored them up here. It is a valuable stone; without it no treasure can be dug up. For a little piece they pay me a

great deal. You were quite right; this is how I came to be acquainted with the tall man.”

Now there were fresh deliberations. Fitz bound himself to Jarno, for an additional ducat, to get at a moderate distance a large piece of this rare mineral, on which account he advised them not to walk to the Giants' Castle; but, however, since Felix insisted on it, he admonished the guide not to take the travellers too deep into the region, for no one would ever be able to find his way out again from those caverns and abysses.

They separated, and Fitz promised to meet them again, in good time, in the halls of the Giants' Castle.

The guide walked ahead, the two others followed; the former, however, had scarcely ascended a certain distance up the mountain, when Felix observed that they were not walking on the path which Fitz had indicated.

The messenger replied, however: “I ought to know it better; for just these last few days a violent tempest has knocked down the next stretch of wood; the trees thrown one across the other obstruct this path. Follow me; I will bring you safely to the spot.”

Felix shortened the difficulty of the road by lively strides and jumps from rock to rock, and rejoiced at the knowledge he had gained, that he was actually jumping from granite to granite.

And so they went upwards, until he at last stopped short upon some black ruined columns, and all at once beheld before his eye the Giants' Castle. Pillared walls stood out upon a solitary peak. Rows of connected columns formed doors within doors, aisles beyond aisles. The guide earnestly warned them not to lose themselves in the interior; and noticing at a sunny spot, commanding a wide view, traces of ashes left by his predecessors, he busied himself in keeping up a crackling fire. He was accustomed to prepare a frugal meal at spots of this kind, and whilst Wilhelm was seeking more correct information concerning the boundless prospect, Felix had disappeared; he must have lost himself within the cavern; he did not answer their shouting and whistling, and he did not appear again.

But Wilhelm, who, as beseems a pilgrim, was prepared against various accidents, took out of his hunting-wallet a ball of string, carefully tied it fast, and confided himself to this guiding clue, by which he had already formed the intention of taking his son into the interior. Thus he advanced, and from time to time blew his whistle, but for a time in vain. But at last there resounded from the depths a shrill whistle, and soon after Felix looked out on the ground from a cleft in the black rock.

“Are you alone?” whispered the boy, cautiously.

“Quite alone,” replied the father.

“Give me some logs of wood! give me some sticks!” said the boy; and, on receiving them, disappeared, first exclaiming anxiously, “Let nobody into the cave!”

But after a time he emerged again, and asked for a still longer and stronger piece of wood. His father waited anxiously for the solution of this riddle. At last the bold fellow arose quickly from out of the cleft, and brought out a little casket not bigger than a small octavo volume, of handsome antique appearance; it seemed to be of gold, adorned with enamel.

“Hide it, father, and let no one see it!”

Thereupon he hastily told how, from a mysterious inner impulse, he had crept into the cleft, and found underneath a dimlylighted space. In it there stood, he said, a large iron chest, not indeed locked, but the lid of which he could not raise, and indeed could hardly move. It was for the sake of mastering this that he had asked for the wood, partly to place them as supports under the lid, and partly to push them as wedges between; finally, he had found the box empty, save in one corner of it the ornamented little book. About this they mutually promised profound secrecy.

Noon was past; they had partaken of some food; Fitz had not yet come as he had promised; but Felix was particularly restless, longing to get away from the spot in which the treasure seemed exposed to earthly or unearthly claim. The columns seemed to him blacker, and the caverns still deeper. A secret had been laid upon him: a possession—lawful or unlawful? safe or unsafe? Impatience drove him from the spot; he thought that he should get rid of his anxiety by changing his locality.

They entered upon the road leading to those extensive possessions of the great landowner, of whose riches and eccentricities they had been told so much. Felix no longer leaped about as in the morning, and all three for hours walked silently on. Sometimes he wished to see the little casket, but his father, pointing to the porter, bade him be quiet. Now he was full of anxiety that Fitz should come. Then again he was afraid of the rogue; now he would whistle to give a signal, then again he would repent having done it; and so his wavering continued until Fitz at last made his whistle heard in the distance. He excused his own absence from the Giants' Castle: he had been belated with Jarno; want of breath had hindered him. Then he inquired minutely how they had got on among the columns and the caves—how deep they had penetrated. Felix, half in bravado, half in embarrassment, told him one tale after another; he looked smilingly at his father, pinched him by stealth, and did all that was possible to make it clear that he had a secret, and was feigning.



WILHELM AND FELIX IN THE CAVE.



They had at last reached a carriage-road, which ought to have taken them comfortably to those domains; but Fitz declared that he knew a nearer and better road: upon which the porter would not accompany them, but continued on the straight broad beaten road before him. The two wanderers trusted the independent youth, and thought that they had done well, for now they went straight down the mountain-side, through a forest of very tall thin-stemmed larches, which became every moment more penetrable to the sight, and at last allowed them to see, in the most brilliant sunlight, the loveliest demesne that can be imagined.

A large garden, devoted entirely as it seemed to the cultivation of produce, lay open, although plentifully planted with fruit-trees, before their eyes; and, regularly arranged in a number of divisions, covered an area of ground which, while it accorded with a general plan, was varied by many diversities of hill and hollow.

Several dwelling-houses lay scattered within it, so that the space seemed to belong to several owners, but yet, as Fitz declared, was owned and tilled by one single master. Beyond the garden they beheld a boundless landscape, richly cultivated and planted. They could plainly discern various lakes and rivers.

As they walked down the mountain they had got continually nearer, and thought that they would be in the garden directly, when Wilhelm started, and Fitz did not hide his malignant glee; for a precipitous cleft at the foot of the mountain disclosed itself before them, steep enough from the outside, although from inside fully on a level with the ground. Thus a deep ditch separated them from the garden, into which they directly looked.

“We shall have to make rather a long circuit,” said Fitz, “if we want to reach the road which leads into it. Still, I also know an entrance from this side, which will be a good deal nearer for us. The tunnels through which the rain-water is regulated as it rushes into the garden when it rains are on this side; they are high and wide enough for one to get through them pretty easily.”

As soon as Felix heard about tunnels he could not dismiss his curiosity to enter in this way. Wilhelm followed the children, and they descended together the steep steps, now lying dry, of these conduit-tunnels. They found themselves alternately in light and darkness, according as the light fell through side-openings, or was intercepted by columns and walls. At last they reached a tolerably level part, and were walking slowly forwards, when suddenly close to them a report was heard, and two hidden iron gratings closed and shut them in on either side. Not indeed the whole company, but only Felix and Wilhelm were imprisoned; for Fitz, as soon as the noise was heard, sprang back at once, and the closing grating caught only his large sleeves; but he, throwing off his jacket very quickly, escaped without waiting a moment.

The two captives had scarcely time to recover from their astonishment, when they heard human voices, which seemed to approach slowly. Then presently came some people with arms and torches to the grating, looking curiously to see what sort of capture they had made. They at once asked whether they would quietly surrender.

“There can be no question of surrender here,” replied Wilhelm; “we are in your power. We rather have reason to ask whether you will spare us. I deliver unto you the only weapon that we carry with us,” and with these words he handed his hunting-knife through the grating. This was at once opened, and quite leisurely the newcomers were taken onwards, and after being led up a winding stair, they soon found themselves in a curious place. It was a neat, spacious room, lit by small windows beneath the cornices, which in spite of strong iron bars shed sufficient light. For seats, sleeping-places, and whatever else could be required in a decent lodging, provision had been made, and it seemed as if nothing was wanting to one who found himself there but his liberty.

Wilhelm on entering, at once sat down and thought over the situation. Felix, on the contrary, when he had recovered from his astonishment, broke out into an incredible rage. These high walls, those lofty windows, these barred doors, this isolation, this confinement—was altogether new to him. He looked about, he ran hither and thither, stamped his feet, wept, rattled at the doors, beat with his fists against them; nay, he was on the point of running with his forehead against them, if Wilhelm had not caught him, and forcibly held him back.

“Only keep yourself quite quiet, my son,” began his father, “for impatience and violence will not help us out of this situation. The mystery will clear itself up; but I should be very much mistaken, if we have not fallen into good hands. Look at these inscriptions: ‘Deliverance and compensation for the innocent,’ ‘Pity for the tempted,’ and ‘Retributive justice for the culprit.’ All this shows us that these arrangements are works of necessity, and not of cruelty. Man has only too much cause to protect

himself against man. Of malevolent people there are indeed many, and of evildoers not a few; and to live as it behoves, it is not enough always to do well."

Felix had collected himself, but threw himself at once upon one of the beds, without any further demonstration or reply. His father did not desist, but said further:

"Let this experience, which you are gaining so early and so innocently, remain with you as living evidence of which and of what a perfect century you have been born in. What a long road has not humanity been forced to make, before it reached the point of being gentle to the guilty, merciful to the culprit, humane to the inhuman! They certainly were men of a divine nature who first taught this, and spent their lives in making possible and hastening its practice. Men are seldom susceptible of the beautiful; more often of the good; and how highly must we then hold those who seek to promote this at the cost of great sacrifices."

These comforting, instructive words, which quite clearly expressed the purpose of the confining surroundings, Felix had not heard. He lay fast asleep, prettier and fresher than ever; for a passion, such as in general he was not easily subject to, had driven his whole inner being into his full cheeks. His father stood looking complacently at him, when a well-dressed young man entered, who, after he had looked for a while at the stranger in a friendly manner, began to ask him about the circumstances that had led him on the unusual path into this trap. Wilhelm told him about the occurrence straightforwardly, handed him certain papers which served to declare his identity, and referred him to the porter, who must soon arrive by the ordinary road from the other side. When all this was clear so far, the official begged his guest to follow him. It was impossible to arouse Felix; the servants therefore carried him upon the strong mattress, like the unconscious Ulysses of old, into the open air.

Wilhelm followed the official into a pretty garden, where refreshments were set out, which he was bidden to enjoy, whilst the other went to deliver his report at headquarters. When Felix, on awaking, beheld a little table laid out with fruit, wine and biscuits, as also the cheerful prospect through the open door, he felt quite bewildered. He runs out, he returns, he thinks he has been dreaming, and over such good fare and such pleasant surroundings has soon forgotten his previous terror and all his sorrow, like an unpleasant dream in broad daylight.

The porter had arrived, the official returned with him, and with another older and still more kindly man; and the matter was cleared up in the following manner. The master of this estate, benevolent in the higher sense, in that he aroused all about him to activity and industry, had for many years disposed of young plants from his extensive nursery-garden—to industrious and careful cultivators for nothing—to the negligent at a certain price—and likewise at a price, though a low one, to those who wished to trade with them. These two latter classes, however, demanded gratuitously what only the worthy received gratuitously, and as they were not yielded to they sought to purloin the plants. They had succeeded in doing so in various manners. This vexed the owner all the more, because not only were the nurseries plundered, but by excessive haste had also been injured. There were traces of their having entered through the water-channel, and on that account the grating with a spring-gun had been arranged,

though it was only meant to serve as a symbol. The little boy had under many pretexts allowed himself to be seen in the garden, and nothing was more natural than that, from audacity and roguery, he should wish to take the strangers by a road which he had found out earlier, with a different object in view. They had wished to make him prisoner; meanwhile, his jacket would be preserved amongst other penal objects.

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CHAPTER V.

On the road to the castle, our friend, to his astonishment, found nothing that would have resembled an older pleasure-garden or a modern park. Upon a gently sloping space he beheld, in one glance, fruit-trees planted in straight lines, vegetable beds, large plots sown with medicinal herbs, and only what could be esteemed useful in some way or other. A space, shaded round by tall lime-trees, expanded like an entrance-hall worthy of the fine building; a long alley leading out of it with trees of similar growth and beauty afforded an opportunity, at every hour of the day, of taking exercise or strolling in the open air. On entering the castle, he found the walls of the ground floor covered in a peculiar fashion: large geographical drawings of all the four quarters of the world met his eye. The walls of the stately staircase were similarly adorned with maps of particular countries; and on being admitted into the principal hall, he found himself surrounded by views of the most remarkable cities, enclosed above and below by landscape pictures of the neighborhoods in which they were situated; all depicted with such art, that the peculiarities of each distinctly met the eye, and at the same time an uninterrupted connection was perceptible throughout. The master of the house, a cheerful little man, somewhat advanced in years, welcomed his guest, and asked, without further introduction, pointing to the walls, whether by chance one of these towns were known to him; whether he had ever lived in any of them? Of many of them our friend was now able to give an account at length, and prove that he had not only seen several of the places, but also that he had not neglected to observe carefully their condition and peculiarities.

The master rang, and ordered that a room should be assigned to the two guests; and that presently they should be shown in to supper, which was accordingly done. In a large hall on the ground floor two ladies advanced towards him, one of whom said to him with great liveliness: "Here you will find little company, but good. I, the younger niece, am called Hersilia; this my elder sister is named Julietta; the two gentlemen are father and son, officials, as you know—friends of the family, who enjoy all the confidence that they deserve. Let us sit down!" The two ladies placed Wilhelm between them, the officials sat at the ends, Felix at the other side, where he at once moved himself opposite to Hersilia, and never took his eyes off her.

After some general preliminary talk, Hersilia seized an opportunity of saying: "In order that the stranger may the sooner become familiar with us, and initiated into our conversation, I must acknowledge that we read a great deal here, and that by accident, inclination, and perhaps also from a spirit of contradiction, we have divided ourselves amongst the different literatures. Our uncle has taken to the Italian; this lady, here, does not take it ill to be thought a perfect Englishwoman; but I hold to the French, in so far as they are cheerful and elegant. Papa-steward here rejoices in German antiquities, and the son is thus able, as is fitting, to devote his sympathy to the more modern and younger. You will judge of us accordingly, take part accordingly, agree or dispute; in every sense you will be welcome." And in this sense, too, the conversation grew animated.

In the meantime the direction of the handsome Felix's ardent glances had by no means escaped Hersilia; she felt surprised and flattered, and sent him the most delicate morsels, which he gladly and thankfully received. But at dessert, as he was looking towards her across a dish of apples, she fancied that in the splendid fruit she beheld so many rivals. Quick as thought she seized an apple, and reached it across the table to the enterprising youth. He, seizing it hastily, at once began to peel it; but as he looked unremittingly at his lovely opposite neighbor, he cut himself deeply in the thumb. The blood flowed quickly: Hersilia jumped up and attended to him, and when the blood had been stopped, she closed the wound with English plaster from her case. In the meantime the boy had caught hold of her and would not let her go; the interruption became general, the company rose from the table, and preparations were made to separate.

"I suppose you read before going to sleep," said Hersilia to Wilhelm; "I will send you a manuscript, a translation from the French by myself, and you shall say whether you have ever met with anything prettier. A distracted girl enters upon the scene—that perhaps might not be any particular recommendation; but if I ever should become demented, as I sometimes have a wish to be, it would be in this manner."

"THE WITLESS WANDERER".

HERR VON REVANNE, a rich private gentleman, possesses the finest estates in his province. Together with his son and sister, he inhabits a chateau that would be worthy of a prince; and, in fact, as his park, his waterworks, his farms, his manufactures, and his household, support one-half the inhabitants for six miles round, he is, by his high repute and by the good that he causes, a prince in reality.

"A few years ago he was walking along the walls of his park out towards the public road, and it pleased him to rest himself in a little plantation in which travellers are fond of stopping awhile. Tall trees rear their tops above the young dense undergrowth; provision is made against sun and wind, and a modestly-fitted fountain gives forth its water over the roots, stones, and turf.

"The pedestrian, according to his wont, carried with him a book and gun. Now and then he attempted to read, but often the song of the birds, and sometimes the steps of a traveller, pleasantly interrupted and disturbed him.



FELIX AND HERSILIA.

“A beautiful morning was fast advancing, when a youthful and amiable-looking young lady appeared walking towards him. She left the road, seeming to promise herself rest and refreshment at the cool spot where he was. This wanderer, who had the loveliest eyes in the world, and a face pleasingly animated by expression, was also distinguished to such a degree by figure and demeanor, that he involuntarily got up from his seat and looked towards the road to see if the attendants, whom he supposed to be behind her, were coming. As she bowed towards him with dignity, her figure again attracted his attention, and he respectfully answered her greeting. The beautiful wayfarer sat down on the margin of the fountain with a sigh, without uttering a word.

“ ‘Strange effect of sympathy!’ exclaimed Herr von Revanne, as he told me the event: ‘in the stillness this sigh was echoed by me. I remained standing, without knowing what I ought to say or do. My eyes did not avail me to take in all her perfections. Lying thus reclined and resting on her elbow, she was the most beautiful female form one could imagine! Her shoes gave occasion for special observation on my part: all covered with dust, they bore witness to her having walked a long distance; and still her silken stockings were as shining as if they just then had been taken from beneath the smoothing-stone. Her fastened-up dress was not rumpled; her hair seemed to have been curled that very morning; fine linen, fine lace: she was dressed as if she were going to a ball. Nothing betrayed in her the vagabond; and yet she was one, but one to be pitied and revered.

“ ‘At last I took advantage of certain glances which she cast towards me, to ask if she were travelling alone.

“ ‘ ‘Yes, sir,’ said she, ‘I am alone in the world.’”

“ ‘ ‘How, madam? Can you be without parents, without acquaintances?’”

“ ‘ ‘I should not exactly say that, sir; parents I have, and acquaintances enough, but no friends.’”

“ “That,” I continued, “cannot possibly be your own fault. You possess an outward form, and surely too a heart, to which much would be forgiven.”

“ “She felt the kind of reproof which was hidden beneath my compliment, and I formed a favorable idea of her good-breeding. She opened towards me two heavenly eyes of the most perfect and purest azure, transparent and sparkling; then she said in a dignified tone, that she could not blame a gentleman, as I seemed to be, for looking with some degree of suspicion on a young girl whom he met alone on the high road; that had often happened to her already; still, although entirely a stranger, although nobody had any right to cross-question her, she nevertheless begged him to believe that the object of her journey was consistent with the strictest decorum. Certain causes, of which she owed nobody an account, compelled her to carry her grief about in the world. She had found that the dangers that people used to fear for her sex were purely imaginary, and that the honor of a woman even among highwaymen only ran a risk through weakness of heart or of principles. Moreover, she only walked at hours and on roads where she thought herself safe; that she did not speak to everybody, and often stayed at respectable places, where she could earn her maintenance by services of any sort consistent with her education. Here she lowered her voice; she dropped her eyelids, and I saw a few tears steal down her cheek.

“ “To this I replied that I by no means doubted her gentle extraction, and still less her honorable conduct. I only regretted that any necessity should compel her to serve other people, since she seemed so worthy of having servants herself; and that notwithstanding a lively curiosity, I would not further press her; that I wished rather by knowing her better to convince myself that she was in all respects as anxious about her reputation as her virtue. These words seemed again to offend her, for she answered that she concealed her name and her country precisely on account of her reputation, which after all generally comprises less of reality than of supposition. When she offered her services she showed testimonials from the last houses in which she had served, and did not conceal that she wished not to be asked about her country or her family. To this people accommodated themselves, and left to Heaven or to her own word the innocence of her whole life, and her honesty. Expressions of this kind did not cause a suspicion of any mental derangement on the part of the beautiful adventuress.’

“Herr von Revanne, who could not well understand this determination to wander about in the world, suspected now that there had been an intention of marrying her against her inclination. Thereupon the thought occurred to him, might it not be despair from love? and wonderfully enough, though such a thing has happened before, in giving her credit for loving another, he fell in love with her himself, and feared lest she might travel further away. He could not turn his eyes away from her fair face, the beauty of which was enhanced by the green half-light. Never, if ever there were nymphs, was a fairer one seen reclining on the green sward; and the somewhat romantic nature of this meeting endued it with a charm which he was unable to resist.

“So, without considering the thing very carefully, Herr von Revanne induced the fair stranger to let him conduct her to the chateau. She makes no difficulty; she goes with him, and shows herself to be a person acquainted with the great world. Refreshments

are brought, which she accepts without affected politeness and with the most graceful acknowledgments. Whilst waiting for dinner she is shown over the house. She only remarks on what deserves special notice, whether in furniture or pictures, or in something pertaining to the convenient arrangement of the rooms. She finds a library: she knows the good books, she speaks about them with taste and modesty. No chattering, no embarrassment. At table, just the same high-bred and natural demeanor, and the most amiable style of conversation. So far, everything is rational in her speech, and her character seems as amiable as her person.

“After dinner a little trait of self-will made her seem still prettier. Turning to Fräulein Revanne with a smile, she said that it was a custom of hers to pay for her mid-day meal with some work, and whenever money failed her, to ask her hostesses for needles. ‘Allow me,’ she added, ‘to leave a flower behind on your embroidery frame, so that in future the sight of it may remind you of the poor stranger.’

“To this Fräulein Revanne replied, that she was very sorry that she had no pattern drawn, and should therefore be obliged to forego the pleasure of admiring her ability.

“The wanderer immediately turned her glance towards the piano.

“ ‘Then I shall discharge my debt in “wind-money,” ’ she said, ‘as has been the fashion of other strolling minstrels before now.’ She tried the instrument with two or three preludes that showed a well-practised hand. There was no longer any doubt but that she was a young lady of condition, endowed with all attractive accomplishments. At first her performance was lively and brilliant; then she passed into serious tones, to tones of deep melancholy, which was also visible in her eyes. They became wet with tears, her face was changed, her fingers stayed; but of a sudden she surprised every one by delivering merrily and laughingly a bantering song with the loveliest voice in the world. As there may be reason in the sequel for thinking that this burlesque ballad concerned herself more closely, I shall probably be pardoned for inserting it here:*

“O thou in cloak, so speedy, whence!
Ere scarce the day begins to break?
A pilgrimage our friend, perchance,
In this keen wind has vowed to make.
Who of his hat has him deprived?
Does he on purpose barefoot go?
How has he in the wood arrived
Across the hilly waste of snow?
“Right marvellous, from cosy nest,
Which did to better cheer invite!
And had he not this flowing vest,
How terrible would be his plight!
That rascal must have him betrayed,
And taken all he had to wear;
Our friend is piteously arrayed,
Nigh like to Adam, stark and bare.
“Why did he, then, such ways pursue,

To pluck an apple full of woe
That in the mill-plot—fair, 't is true,
As erst in Paradise—did grow.
Not soon again such sport he'll try:
Forth from the house he quickly went,
And, once beneath the open sky,
Breaks out in loud and bitter plaint:
“ ‘Amid her looks, so full of light,
I read no syllable of guile;
In me she seemed to have delight—
And planned so black a deed the while!
Could I divine, in her embrace,
How treacherously her bosom moved?
She called on Love to stay his pace,
And kind enough to us he proved.
“ ‘Such pleasure in my love to take,
Which ne'er did end the livelong night,
Then call and bid her mother wake,
Just at the dawn of morning light!



A dozen round of kith and kin
Burst in—a very human flood:
Here brothers came, and aunts peeped in;
There cousins or an uncle stood.
“ ‘What rage and madness on them came!
A very beast each seemed to be
Then wreath and garland they did claim,
With din most horrible, from me.
“Why do ye all, as if insane,
Upon a guiltless youth so press?
For such-like treasures to obtain,
One needs, I trow, much more address.
“ ‘ “And Amor sure enough takes heed
Of when to have his pretty will;
And flowers of sixteen years indeed
He leaves not standing at the mill.” ’
So did they him of clothing rob,
And tried to take his cloak and all;
How e'er did such a cursed mob
Into the narrow dwelling crawl?

“ ‘So up I sprang, and raved and swore
Through all, I wis, to force my way.
I gave the mad girl one glance more,
And ah, so lovely still she lay!
Before my wrath they all were cowed,
Yet many a wild word flew about;
And so, with voice as thunder loud,
The den at last I got without.
“ ‘You maidens, then, of rustic sort,
Like city wenches, one must flee;
Yet fooling lovers is a sport
Best left to dames of high degree;
And if to practise ye are fain,
And know no gentle faith in love,
Change lovers o’er and o’er again,
But traitors must ye never prove!’
“So sings he in this wintry tide,
When ne’er a sorry blade is green;
His dire misfortunes I deride,
For rightly is he served, I ween.
So may it hap to every wight
Who sweetheart true by day deludes,
And all too recklessly by night
Into love’s treacherous mill intrudes.

“It was indeed ominous that she could forget herself in such a fashion; and this outbreak might have served for an indication of a head that was not at all times equal to itself.

“ ‘But,’ said Herr von Revanne to me, ‘we also forgot all remarks that we might have made: I do not know how it came to pass. The unspeakable grace with which she performed these freaks must have prejudiced us. She played fantastically, but with understanding. She controlled her fingers completely, and her voice was really bewitching. When she had finished, she seemed as composed as before, and we thought that she had only wished to enliven the after-dinner interval.

“ ‘Soon after she asked for permission to resume her journey; but at a sign from me my sister said that, if she was not in a hurry, it would be a treat to us to have her with us for several days. I thought of offering her some occupation, since for once she agreed to remain. Yet this first day and the following one we only took her about the place. She never belied herself for one single moment; she was Reason endued with every grace. Her mind was subtle and striking, her memory so well stored, and her disposition so beautiful, that she repeatedly aroused our admiration, and fettered all our attention. Moreover, she knew the rules of good behavior, and practised them towards every one of us, and no less towards certain friends who visited us, so perfectly, that we found it impossible to reconcile her singularities with such a degree of education.

“ I really no longer ventured to suggest any plans for household occupation with us. My sister, who was much pleased with her, likewise thought it her duty to spare the delicate feelings of this unknown. They managed the household affairs together, and with respect to these the good child would often condescend to perform manual work, and understood how to take her part in everything which required higher arrangement and calculation.

“ In a short time she established a degree of order, such as we had hitherto certainly not felt the want of in the château. She was a very sensible housekeeper; and, as she had commenced with sitting at table with us, she did not, from false modesty, withdraw herself now, but continued to dine with us without any hesitation; but she did not touch any cards or instrument before she had brought to an end the duties which she had undertaken.

“ Now, I must freely confess that the fate of this girl began to move me most profoundly. I pitied the parents, who probably would sorely miss such a daughter; I sighed that such gentle virtues and so many endowments should be lost. She had already lived several months with us, and I hoped that the confidence with which we sought to inspire her would at last bring the secret to her lips. If it were a misfortune, we might help; if a fault, it was to be hoped that our mediation, our testimony, might be able to gain forgiveness for her for any transient error; but all our assurances of friendship, our prayers even, were in vain. If she perceived an intention of winning an explanation from her, she would shelter herself behind general moralizations, in order to justify herself, without informing us. For instance, if we spoke to her about her ill-fortune: “ Misfortune,” she would say, “ falls upon both good and evil. It is a potent medicine, which attacks the good juices along with the bad.”

“ If we tried to discover the reason of her flight from her paternal home: “ If the deer flies,” she said, laughing, “ it is not therefore guilty.” If we asked whether she had suffered persecutions: “ It is the fate of many girls of good birth to experience and endure persecutions. He who cries at an offence will meet with more.” But how could she have made up her mind to expose her life to the roughness of the multitude, or at least to owe it often to its compassion? At this she would laugh again, and say, “ The poor man who greets the rich at table does not lack sense.” Once, as the conversation turned to jest, we spoke to her of lovers, and asked whether she did not know the chilly hero of her ballad. I still remember well how this word seemed to cut through her. She opened towards me a pair of eyes, so serious, so severe, that mine could not endure such a glance; and afterwards, too, whenever love was spoken of, one was sure to see the grace of her person and the vivacity of her spirit overclouded. She immediately fell into thoughtfulness, which we took for brooding, but which probably was only grief. Still, upon the whole, she remained cheerful, but without great liveliness; highbred, without giving herself importance; frank without communicativeness, reserved without sensitiveness; rather patient than meek, and more grateful than affectionate in return for all caresses and courtesies. She was certainly a lady, educated to preside over a large household; and yet she did not seem older than one-and-twenty. So did this comprehensible young person, who had quite captivated me, show herself during the two years which it pleased her to stay with us; until she wound up with a piece of folly, which is all the more strange as her qualities

were sterling and brilliant. My son, who is younger than I, will be able to console himself, but as concerns myself, I fear that I shall be weak enough to miss her always.



Natalia

“ ‘Now I will relate this act of folly in a sensible woman, to show that folly often is nothing but reason under another exterior. It is true that one will find a strange contradiction between the noble character of the pilgrim and the comical cunning of which she availed herself; but we already know two of her inconsistencies—the pilgrimage itself and the ballad.’ ”

“It is probably clear that Herr von Revanne had fallen in love with the stranger. Now, he could not altogether rely upon his face, which was fifty years old, although he looked as fresh and robust as a man of thirty; but perhaps he hoped to please by his pure, childlike health, by the goodness, cheerfulness, gentleness, generosity of his character; perhaps also by his fortune, although he had delicacy enough to feel, that one does not buy what is priceless.

“But the son, on the other hand, amiable, tender, high-spirited, without taking more thought than his father, rushed headlong into the venture. First he tried prudently to win the unknown one who had first become really appreciated by him through the praise and the friendship of his father and aunt. He made sincere efforts to gain an amiable woman, whom his passion seemed to have raised far above her present condition. Her severity more than her merits and her beauty, inflamed his love; he ventured to speak, to undertake, to promise.

“The father, without wishing it himself, always gave to his wooing a somewhat paternal aspect. He knew himself, and when he had become aware of his rival, he could not hope to conquer him, unless he were willing to adopt means which do not beseem a man of principle. Nevertheless he pursued his course, although it was not unknown to him that kindness, nay, even fortune, are only attractions to which a young woman yields herself with caution; but which remain ineffectual as soon as love reveals itself with the charms of, and accompanied by, youth. Herr von Revanne also made other mistakes, which he repented later. In the midst of a friendship full of esteem, he spoke of ‘a lasting, secret, legal union.’ He even complained, and uttered the word ‘ingratitude.’ Surely he did not know her whom he loved, when one day he said to her, that many benefactors received back evil for good. The Unknown answered him with frankness: Many benefactors would like to acquire all the rights of

their protégés at the price of a lentil. The beautiful stranger, involved in the courtship of two rivals, induced by unknown motives, seems to have had no other intention but to spare herself and others any foolish pranks, and in these doubtful circumstances adopted a wonderful expedient. The son pressed her with the boldness of his age, and threatened, as usual, to sacrifice his life to the inexorable one. The father, somewhat less unreasonable, was still equally pressing; both were in earnest. This amiable creature might now probably have assured herself of a well-deserved position of life; for both the Herren von Revanne aver that it had been their intention to marry her.

“But from the example of this girl let woman learn that an honest soul, even if the mind should have given way to vanity or to real derangement, does not cherish the wounds of the heart which it is not willing to heal. The pilgrim felt that she was standing at a critical point, where it would not be so easy for her to defend herself long. She was in the power of two lovers, who could excuse every pressure with the purity of their motives, inasmuch as they intended to justify their boldness by a sanctified tie. So it was, and so she understood it.

“She could shelter herself behind Fräulein von Revanne; but she omitted to do so, no doubt from consideration, from esteem for her benefactors. She is not put out of countenance; she thinks out a method for preserving to each his virtue, whilst she allows her own to be suspected. She is mad with a fidelity which her lover certainly does not deserve, if he feels not all her sacrifices, even if they should remain unknown to him.

“One day, as Herr von Revanne returned somewhat too impetuously the friendship, the gratitude, which she showed towards him, she assumed on a sudden a simple manner, which struck him. ‘Your goodness, sir, alarms me; and allow me frankly to confess why. I feel indeed that only to you I owe my whole gratitude; but in fact—’

“ ‘Cruel girl!’ said Herr von Revanne. ‘I understand you; my son has touched your heart—’

“ ‘Alas! sir, it has not stopped there. I can only express by my confusion—’

“ ‘How? Mademoiselle, you would—’

“ ‘Indeed, I think so,’ said she, as she bent low down and dropped a tear—for women are never at a loss for a tear in their artifices, nor for an excuse for their evil-doing.

“Smitten with love as Herr von Revanne was, still he was forced to wonder at this new kind of innocent sincerity in such circumstances, and he found the lowly posture very much in place.

“ ‘But, mademoiselle, it is quite incomprehensible to me.’

“ ‘To me too,’ said she, and the tears flowed more abundantly. They flowed so long that at last Herr von Revanne, after a very unpleasant reverie, again broke silence with a quiet air, and said:

“ ‘This enlightens me! I see how ridiculous are my pretensions. I bestow on you no reproaches; and, as the only penalty for the grief which you cause me, I promise you so much of his inheritance as is necessary to show whether he loves you as much as I.’

“ ‘Alas, sir, have pity on my innocence, and tell him nothing about it.’

“To ask for secrecy is not the means to obtain it. After these steps, the fair Unknown now expected to see her lover before her full of anger and highly incensed. He soon appeared with a look which augured annihilating words. However, he was choked, and could bring out no more than, ‘How, mademoiselle, is it possible?’

“ ‘Well, what is it, sir?’ she said, with a laugh, which on such an occasion can provoke despair.

“ ‘How? What is it? Away! mademoiselle; you are a nice creature! But at least legitimate children are not to be disinherited; it is quite enough to accuse them. Yes, mademoiselle, I see through your conspiracy with my father. You two give me a son, and he is my brother. Of that I am certain.’

“With the same quiet cheerful countenance the lovely unwise one answered him, ‘You are certain of nothing: it is neither your son nor your brother. Boys are naughty; I have never wanted one. It is a poor little girl that I will take away, far away, quite far from men—wicked, foolish, faithless men.’

“Then, giving free vent to her heart: ‘Farewell,’ she continued, ‘farewell, dear Revanne! From nature you have an honest heart; keep to the principles of uprightiness. These are not dangerous with well-established wealth. Be kind towards the poor. He who despises the prayer of troubled innocence, will one day himself beg, and not be listened to. He who has no scruple in setting at naught the scruples of an unprotected girl, will himself become the victim of unscrupulous women. He who does not feel what a chaste girl must feel when she is being wooed, deserves not to gain her. He who, against all reason, against the intentions, against the design of his family, constructs schemes in behalf of his own passions, deserves to be deprived of the fruits of his passions, and to lose the esteem of his family. I believe indeed that you have loved me sincerely; but, my dear Revanne, the cat knows well whose beard it licks; and if you ever become the beloved of a worthy wife, then remember the mill of the unfaithful one. Learn from my example to rely on the constancy and discretion of your beloved. You know whether I am unfaithful; your father knows it also. I intended to roam through the world and to expose myself to all dangers; surely the greatest are those which threatened me in this house. But because you are young I tell it to you only and in confidence: men and women are only unfaithful of set purpose; and that I wanted to prove to the friend of the mill, who perhaps will see me again, when his heart will have become sufficiently pure to miss what he has lost.’

“Young Revanne still listened, though she had finished speaking. He stood as if struck by lightning; tears at last unclosed his eyes, and in this state of emotion he ran to his aunt, his father, to tell them that mademoiselle was going away, that mademoiselle

was an angel, or rather a demon, roaming about in the world in order to torture the hearts of everybody. But the wanderer had taken her measures so well that she was not found again; and when father and son had come to a mutual explanation, her innocence, her talents, and her insanity, were no longer doubted; and, great as were the pains that Herr von Revanne took from that time, he did not succeed in obtaining the least enlightenment in reference to this beautiful person, who had made her appearance as transiently and in as lovely a form as an angel.”

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CHAPTER VI.

After a long and thorough rest, of which the travellers might well stand in need, Felix jumped actively out of his bed, and made haste to dress himself; and, as his father thought he noticed, with more care than hitherto. Nothing fitted him neatly or smartly enough: he would have liked everything to be newer and less worn. He sprang into the garden, and only tasted on the way a little of the first meal, which the servant had brought for the guests, since the ladies would not appear in the garden for another hour.

The servant was accustomed to entertain strangers, and to show many of the things in the house; so he conducted our friends also into a gallery, in which only portraits were hung up and exhibited—all of persons who had worked in the eighteenth century—a large and glorious company; pictures and busts as well, when possible, by excellent masters.

“You will not find,” said the keeper, “in the whole castle, a single picture that points even distantly to religion, tradition, mythology, legend or fable: our master wishes that the imaginative power shall only be required to make present to itself the True. We deal enough in fiction, he is wont to say, without needing to exalt still higher this dangerous quality of our intellect by external stimulants.”

Wilhelm's question, when they might expect him down, he answered with the information that his master, according to his habit, had ridden out quite early. He was accustomed to say: “Observation is life!” “You will see this and other maxims, in which he reflects himself, written in the fields above the gates—as for instance we forthwith light upon: ‘From the Useful, through the True, to the Beautiful.’ ”

The women had already prepared the breakfast under the lime-trees; Felix frolicked about them, trying by all sorts of follies and extravagances to bring himself forward so as to get a warning or a reproof from Hersilia. The sisters now tried by frankness and communicativeness to gain the confidence of their taciturn guest, who pleased them; they told him about a favorite cousin, who had been three years absent, and was presently expected home; about a worthy aunt, who lived in her castle at no great distance, and was to be regarded as the tutelary genius of the family. In a state of bodily decay, she was described as being in blooming health of spirit, just as if the voice of a primeval sibyl no longer visible were to utter, quite simply, pure divine words on human things.

The new guest now turned his conversation and questions to the present. He wished to know the noble uncle more closely in a purely distinctive activity: he thought of the road which he had pointed out, “From the Useful, through the True, to the Beautiful,” and sought to interpret the words after his own fashion—in which, moreover, he succeeded quite well, and had the good fortune to gain Julietta's approval.

Hersilia, who up to this time had remained silently smiling, replied on the other hand: "We women are in a peculiar position. We hear the maxims of men continually repeated, nay, we have to behold them in gilt letters above our heads, and yet we girls might be able in private to say the very reverse, which would also pass current, as is precisely the case in the present instance. The Beautiful maiden finds admirers, also suitors, and probably at last a husband; then she arrives at the True, which may not prove to be the pleasantest possible, and if she is wise she will devote herself to the Useful, attend to house and children, and in this abide. At least I have often found it so. We girls have time to observe, and then we generally find what we did not look for."

A messenger from the uncle arrived with the news that the whole party was invited to dinner at a neighboring hunting-box; they could either ride or drive thither.

Hersilia chose to ride. Felix also begged urgently that they would give him a horse. It was agreed that Julietta should drive with Wilhelm, and that Felix as a page should be indebted for his first ride to the lady of his young heart.

In the meantime Julietta drove with her new friend through a series of plantations that all pointed to utility and enjoyment; nay, the innumerable fruit-trees made it doubtful whether the fruit could ever all be consumed.

"You have passed through such a wonderful ante-chamber into our society, and have found so much that is really uncommon and strange, that I may suppose that you wish to know the connection of all this. All depends on the spirit and sense of my excellent uncle. The vigorous years of this noble person's manhood fell in the time of Beccaria* and Filangieri;† the maxims of a universal humanitarianism prevailed at that time on all sides. But his striving spirit and severe character transformed this general ideal into ideas which occupied themselves with the practical. He did not conceal from us, how according to his own fashion he had transformed that liberal motto: 'The Best for the largest number,' and destined 'For the Many, the Desirable.' The most cannot find or know what is the best, still less procure it. But many are always around us: what they wish, we learn to know; what they ought to wish, we reflect on; and thus something of importance can always be effected and created. With this view," she continued, "everything that you see here has been planted, constructed and arranged; and simply for a quite close, easily-attainable purpose; all this has come to pass from love to the great neighboring mountain range.

"The excellent man, endowed with both strength and the means, said to himself: No child up yonder shall want a cherry or an apple, for which with good reason they are so greedy; the housewife shall not lack cabbage or turnips or any other vegetable for her saucepan, so that to some degree the unwholesome consumption of potatoes may be counterbalanced. To this end and in this manner he tries to achieve what his possessions give him an opportunity of doing; and thus for many years carriers, men and women, have been organized, who take the fruit for sale into the deepest clefts of the mountain rocks."

"I have enjoyed it myself like any child," replied Wilhelm; "there, where I never hoped to meet with anything of the sort, among pines and rocks, I was less surprised at finding pure simplicity of mind than new refreshing fruit! The gifts of the spirit are at home everywhere, but the gifts of nature are only sparsely distributed over the earth's surface."

"Moreover, our worthy man has brought many things from distant places nearer to the mountain; in the buildings below here you will find salt laid up, and stores of spices. For tobacco and brandy he lets others provide; these are not necessities, he says, but lusts, and consequently they have providers enough already."

Arrived at the appointed place, a roomy huntsman's house in the forest, the party found themselves assembled, and a small table ready laid out.

"Let us sit down," said Hersilia. "Here, to be sure, stands our uncle's chair, but as usual he is sure not to come. In a certain manner it gives me satisfaction, that our new guest, as I hear, is not going to stay long with us; for he might be wearied when he became acquainted with our company. The composition of it is what is everlastingly repeated in novels and plays: a wonderful uncle, one gentle and one lively niece, a sensible aunt, domestics of the well-known sort; and if our cousin were now to return, he would learn to recognize a fantastic traveller, who perhaps would bring with him a still more eccentric companion, and then the trite theatrical piece would be composed, and transformed into reality."

"The peculiarities of our uncle we must needs revere," replied Julietta; "they are not a burden to any one, but rather a convenience to everybody. He detests, as he always will, a fixed dinner-hour, but he rarely interferes with it, for indeed he maintains that one of the finest inventions of modern times is dinner *à la carte*."

Amidst much other conversation they also discussed the worthy man's taste to affect inscriptions everywhere.

"My sister," said Hersilia, "knows how to interpret them all, and she vies with the keeper in making them out; but I find they can all be reversed, and that then they are just as true, and perhaps more so."

"I do not deny," replied Wilhelm, "that there are mottoes among them which seem to neutralize themselves. Thus, for instance, I saw written up very strikingly, 'Ownership and Common-property.' Do not these two ideas exclude one another?"

Hersilia interrupted him: "Such inscriptions, it seems, our uncle has borrowed from the Orientals, who on all their walls do honor to, rather than understand, the maxims of the Koran."

Julietta, not to be put off, replied to the preceding question: "If you paraphrase the few words, their sense will at once become clear."

After some discussion, Julietta continued to explain how it was meant: "Every one should try to dignify, to keep, and to increase the possession which has been granted

to him by fate or by nature; with all his faculties he should grasp as far around him as he can reach, but should at the same time always think how he shall let others have a share in it; for people of means are only valued in so far as others enjoy through them."

When they now began to seek for instances, our friend found himself in his proper element: they vied with each other, they strained their wits, in the endeavor to prove the truth of those laconic words.

"Why," they maintained, "do people honor the prince—but because he can put in activity, can advance and bestow favors on every one, and make them, as it were, shareholders of his absolute power? Why does everybody look up to the rich? Because he himself, the most needy, on all sides wants participators in his abundance. Why do all men envy the poet? Because his nature makes communication necessary—nay, is communication itself. The musician is happier than the painter; he expends welcome gifts in person, immediately, whilst the latter only gives when the gift has been sundered from himself."

Then they further asserted generally: Man ought to retain firmly every sort of possession; he ought to make himself a central point, from which the common good can issue; he must be an egoist, in order not to become an egoist; must keep together, in order to be able to expend. What does it mean—to give possession and goods to the poor? It is more praiseworthy to behave as a steward for them. This is the sense of the words "Ownership and Common-property:" the capital no one ought to attack; the interest will none the less belong in due course to every one.

In this manner the ladies conversed about many things with their new friend, and, as their mutual confidence increased more and more, they also spoke about a cousin who was shortly expected. "We believe that his strange behavior has been arranged with our uncle. For some years he has let us hear nothing from him. He will send charming presents, figuratively intimating his place of residence, then all of a sudden he writes from somewhere quite close by, but will not come before we have given him some information about our own condition. This behavior is not natural; what lurks behind it we must discover before his return. To-night we will give you a packet of letters, from which the rest may be seen."

Hersilia added: "Yesterday I made you acquainted with a foolish wandering woman; to-day you shall hear about a crazy traveller."

"But confess," added Julietta, "that this communication is not without purpose."

Hersilia was just asking, somewhat impatiently, what had become of the dessert, when the announcement was made that the uncle expected the company to enjoy dessert with him in the large summer-house. On the way back they observed a camp-kitchen staff very busily engaged in packing up, with much clatter, their brightly-burnished saucepans, plates, and dishes. They found the old gentleman in a spacious arbor, before a large, round, freshly-spread table, upon which, as they took their seats, the finest fruits, delicious pastry, and all the best sweets, were abundantly served. On

the uncle's asking what had they met with to amuse them, Hersilia replied quickly, "Our good guest would probably have run astray over your laconic inscriptions if Julietta had not come to his assistance with a running commentary."

"You always bring in Julietta," replied the uncle; "she is a good girl, who can learn and understand something too."

"I should like to forget much of what I know; and what I do understand is not worth much either," replied Hersilia in joke.

Hereupon Wilhelm joined in, and said thoughtfully, "Pithy mottoes of every kind I know how to honor, especially if they incite me to reflect on and bring into accord what contravenes them."

"Precisely so," replied the uncle; "indeed, rational man throughout his whole life has never yet had any other occupation."

They had, as appeared in the course of the conversation, made the objection to the uncle, that his property did not bring him in what it ought. He replied thereto, "The deficiency of income I look on as an outlay, which gives me pleasure, inasmuch as I thereby render life more easy to others. I have not even the trouble of making this disbursement myself, and thus everything is made fair again."

In the meantime the table had gradually filled all round, so that at last there was scarcely a place left.

The two stewards had arrived, huntsmen, horse-breakers, gardeners, foresters, and others whose occupation one could not tell at once. Each had something of the most recent occurrence to say and to report, which the old gentleman heard good-naturedly, or perhaps even elicited by sympathizing inquiries; but at last he rose, and saluting the company, whom he would not have move, went away with the two bailiffs. All had indeed enjoyed the fruit—and the young people the pastry—although they may have looked a little unconventional. One after another rose, saluted those that stayed, and went away.

The ladies, who noticed that the guest observed what passed with some wonder, expressed themselves as follows: "You see here again the effect of the peculiarities of our excellent uncle; he affirms, that no invention of the age deserves more admiration, than that you should be able to dine at inns at small separate tables '*à la carte*;' as soon as he became aware of this, he also tried to introduce it into his family for himself and others. When he is in his best humor, he likes to paint vividly the horrors of a family table, where every member sits down occupied with extraneous thoughts, listens unwillingly, speaks absently, remains sullenly silent, and if ill-luck introduces little children, calls forth, with a sudden recourse to pedagogism, the most unreasonable bad humor.

" 'One has to bear with so many ills,' he says, 'but from this I have found out how to emancipate myself.' He seldom appears at our table, and occupies the chair that stands empty for him only for a few moments. He carries his camp-kitchen about with

him, and generally dines alone; others must take care of themselves. But if once in a way he offers breakfast, dessert, or other refreshment, then all his scattered dependants have to assemble together, and partake of what is offered, as you have seen. That gives him pleasure; but no one dares come who does not bring an appetite with him. Every one who has satisfied himself has to rise, and only thus he is certain of always being surrounded by people who enjoy themselves. 'If you want to give people a treat,' I heard him say, 'you must try to procure for them what they are seldom or never in a condition to obtain.' "

On the return journey an unexpected mishap caused some excitement among the party. Hersilia said to Felix, who was riding by her side, "Look there, what flowers are those? they cover the whole sunny side of the hill; I have never seen them before." Felix at once urged on his horse, galloped towards the place, and in returning with a whole bunch of blooming flowers, which he waved in the air at a distance, all of a sudden disappeared with the horse. He had fallen into a ditch. Immediately two horsemen detached themselves from the party and galloped towards the spot.

Wilhelm wanted to get out of the carriage, but Julietta forbade it. "He has already got help, and our law in such cases is, that only one who is giving help may stir from the spot."

Hersilia stopped her horse. "Yes, indeed," she said, "doctors one wants but seldom, but surgeons every moment."

Felix was already cantering up again, with a bandaged head, clutching the blooming booty, and holding it aloft. With complacency he reached the nosegay to his mistress. Hersilia in return gave him a light, bright-colored neckerchief.

"The white bandage does not suit you," she said; "this will look much prettier." And thus they reached home, reassured indeed, but in a sympathetic mood.

It had grown late: they separated in the friendly hope of meeting again on the morrow, but the following correspondence kept our friend awake and thoughtful for some hours.

LENARDO TO HIS AUNT.

"At last, dear aunt, you receive, after three years, my first letter, according to our arrangement, which indeed was strange enough. I wanted to see the world, and abandon myself to it, and for this period. I wished to forget my home, from which I came and to which I hoped to return again. I wanted to retain the whole impression, and that single details should not lead me, when at a distance, into misconception. In the meantime the necessary tokens of existence have been interchanged between us from time to time. I have received money, and little gifts for my nearest friends have meanwhile been handed over to you for distribution. From the sort of things sent, you could see where and how I was. In the wines my uncle has surely *tasted out* my place of residence every time; then the lace, the quodlibets, the steel-ware, have marked my way for the ladies through Brabant to Paris and on to London; thus, on your writing,

sewing, and tea-tables, your morning robes and evening dresses, I shall find many a mark on which I can hang my tales of travel. You have accompanied me, without hearing from me, and perhaps are by no means curious to know anything further. To me, on the contrary, it is in the highest degree necessary to learn, through your goodness, how the circle which I am on the point of re-entering goes on. I should like to enter actually from foreign parts like a stranger who, to be agreeable, first informs himself about what they wish or like in the house, and does not imagine to himself that they must receive him exactly according to his own liking, just for the sake of his fine hair or eyes. Write to me, therefore, about the good uncle, the dear nieces, about yourself, about our relations near and remote, and also about old and new servants.

“Enough; let your practised pen, which you have not for so long inked for your nephew, hold sway on the paper for his benefit. Your instructive letter shall be my credentials, with which I shall present myself as soon as I have received it. Thus it depends upon you to see me in your arms. One changes far less than one thinks, and circumstances remain for the most part much the same. Not what has changed, but what has remained, what has gradually increased and decreased, I wish to recognize all at once, and to look again upon myself as in a familiar mirror. Greet all our friends heartily, and believe in the strange fashion of my absence and return more warmth is contained than is often found in uninterrupted sympathy and cordial correspondence. A thousand greetings to each and all.

“POSTSCRIPT.

“Do not neglect, dearest aunt, to say a word about our men of business, how our agents and tenants are getting on. What has become of Valerina, the daughter of the tenant whom uncle shortly before my departure had ejected—rightly indeed, but still, as it seems to me, rather severely? You see that I still remember much; I still know pretty well all. You must examine me about the past, after you have communicated the present to me.”

THE AUNT TO JULIETTA.

“At last, dear children, there is a letter from the Three-years-mute. How these wonderful people are wonderful indeed! He thinks that all his articles and tokens are as good as one single good word that one friend can say or write to another. He really imagines that the balance is in his favor, and wants us on our part to do what on his own he so harshly and unkindly denied us. What ought we to do? I, for my part, would at once meet his wishes with a long letter, if my headache did not announce itself, and scarcely allow me to finish the present letter. We all wish to see him. Take the matter, my dear ones, in hand. If I have recovered before you have finished, then I shall contribute my own quota. Choose the persons and circumstances as you like best; describe them. Divide them between you. You will do it all better than I. I suppose the messenger will bring me back a line from you?”

JULIETTA TO HER AUNT.

“We have already read, reflected, and tell you through the messenger our opinion, each for herself, though we have first satisfied ourselves together, that we are not so good-naturedly disposed as our dear aunt towards her always spoiled nephew. He having for three years kept his cards hidden from us, and still keeping them hidden, we are to throw up ours, and play an open game against his concealed one. That is by no means fair, but still it may pass; for even the most subtle often deceives himself just because he makes too sure. Only as to the style and manner we are not agreed; as to what shall be sent to him, and how. To write about what you think of your own people, that is, to us at least, a strange task. As a rule one only thinks about them in this or that case, when they cause one exceptional pleasure or vexation. Otherwise every one leaves others alone. You only could do it, dear aunt, for you have penetration and impartiality at the same time. Hersilia, who, as you know, is easily excited, has hurriedly given me a funny review of the whole family upon the spur of the moment; I wish it stood on paper, so as to win a smile from you amidst your suffering; but not that it should be sent to him. My proposal, however, is to send him our correspondence of these last three years; this he may peruse himself, if he has the courage, or may come to see what he does not care to read. Your letters to me, dear aunt, are in the best order, and are at your disposal at once.

“Hersilia is not of the same opinion; she excuses herself with the confusion of her papers, etc., as she will tell you herself.”

HERSILIA TO HER AUNT.

“I must and will be very short, dear aunt, for the messenger shows himself disagreeably impatient. I consider it superfluous kindness and quite out of place to communicate our letters to Lenardo. What business has he to know what good we have said of him, what business has he to know what evil we have said of him, in order to find out from the latter still more than from the former, that we are well-disposed to him. Keep a tight hand on him, I beg you. There is something so cool and presumptuous in this demand, in this behavior, such as these gentlemen generally show when they come from foreign lands. They always consider those who stay at home as not complete. Excuse yourself with your headache. He will come fast enough; and if he does not come we will wait a little longer. Perhaps in that case it will occur to him to introduce himself amongst us in some queer secret fashion, and learn to know us unrecognized, and I don't know what all might not enter into the plans of such a clever man. That would be pretty and wonderful indeed! It might produce all kinds of complications, which could not possibly develop themselves under the diplomatic entry into the family which he now has in mind.

“The messenger! the messenger! Instruct your old people better, or send young ones. This one is not to be bribed either by flattery or wine. A thousand times farewell!

“POSTSCRIPT FOR POSTSCRIPT.

“Tell me, what does our cousin mean in his postscript about Valerina? This question has doubly occurred to me. She is the only person whom he mentions by name. We others are to him nieces, aunts, agents; no personalities, but only denominations. Valerina, the daughter of our lawyer! A fair, pretty child enough, who may have dazzled the eyes of our Herr Cousin before his departure. She is married, well and happily; that I need not tell you. But he knows as little about it as he knows in other respects about us. By no means forget to tell him, also in a postscript, that Valerina has become prettier every day, and on this very account too has made a very good match: that she is the wife of a rich landowner. The beautiful blonde is married: make that quite clear to him. But now, dear aunt, this is not yet all. How he can remember the fair beauty so well, and yet confound her with the daughter of the dissolute tenant, a wild romp of a brunette, called Nachodina, who is gone no one knows where—this is altogether incomprehensible to me, and puzzles me wonderfully, for it seems that Sir Cousin, who boasts of his good memory, mixes up names and persons in an extraordinary way. Perhaps he feels this defect, and wants to refresh again what has been forgotten by your description. Keep a tight hand on him, I beg you; but try to find out how Valerina and Nachodina are, and what Inas and Trinas and all are still preserved in his imagination, whilst the Ettas and Ilias have disappeared from it. The messenger! the confounded messenger!”

THE AUNT TO HER NIECES. (Dictated.)

“What is the good of much dissembling towards those with whom one has to spend one's life! Lenardo with all his peculiarities deserves confidence. I am sending him both your letters; from them he will learn to know you, and I trust the rest of us will unconsciously seize an opportunity as soon as possible of presenting ourselves before him in the same way. Farewell! I am in great pain.”

HERSILIA TO HER AUNT.

“What is the good of dissembling towards those with whom we spend our lives! Lenardo is a spoiled nephew. It is abominable, that you should send him our letters. He will not learn to know us from them, and I only wish for an opportunity of presenting myself as soon as possible in another way. You make others suffer a great deal, whilst you suffer and are blind. A speedy recovery from your pain. There is no remedy for your love.”



FELIX BRINGING THE BOUQUET.

THE AUNT TO HERSILIA.

“I should also have enclosed your last little note for Lenardo, if I had actually kept to the purpose which my incorrigible partiality, my illness, and considerations of convenience had suggested. Your letters are not gone.”

WILHELM TO NATALIA.

“Man is a sociable, communicative creature; his enjoyment is great when he exercises the faculties that have been given to him, even if nothing further were the outcome of it. How often is the complaint made in society, that one does not allow the other to have his say; and one can just as well say that one did not allow another to write, if writing were not usually a sort of business that one must discharge in solitude and alone. Of how much people write we have no idea at all. I do not wish to speak about so much of it as is printed, although it is quite enough. But of the amount in letters, news, stories, anecdotes, descriptions of the present condition of individual people, quietly circulating in letters and longer compositions—of this one may gain an idea by living for a time, as I do now, in a family of culture. In the sphere in which I find myself at present, one almost spends as much time in imparting information to relations and friends about what one is occupied with as one has for occupation itself. This observation, which has forced itself on my notice during the last few days, I make all the more gladly, since my new friends' facility in writing gives me the opportunity of learning to know their mutual relations quickly and from all sides. They confide in me, give me a packet of letters, a few travelling journals, the confessions of a mind not yet at one with itself, and thus in a short time I am everywhere in the house. I know the neighboring society; I know the persons whose acquaintance I am going to make, and know almost more about them than they do themselves, since they are entangled in their own circumstances, whilst I flit past them, always at your hand, discussing everything with you. It is my first condition, too, before I accept a confidence, that I shall be allowed to impart everything to you. Here accordingly are a few letters, which will introduce you to the circle within which I am at present moving, without breaking or evading my vows.”

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CHAPTER VII.

Very early in the morning our friend found himself alone in the gallery, and was enjoying himself over many a well-known form; to those unknown, a catalogue, which he found at hand, gave him the desired clue. Portraiture, like biography, has quite a peculiar interest; the distinguished man, whom one cannot think of without a surrounding, steps forward isolated, and places himself before us as before a mirror; we accordingly turn on him our special attention, we occupy ourselves with him exclusively, as he is complacently occupied with himself in the mirror. It is a general, who now represents the whole army, behind whom emperors as well as kings for whom he fights, step back into the shade. The clever courtier stands before us, even as if he were paying court to us; we do not think of the great world, for the sake of which he in fact has made himself so fascinating. Surprising, too, to our observer was the likeness of many a one long gone, to living people known to him, whom he had seen in the flesh—nay, even the likeness to himself. And why should Menæchmi-twins result only from one mother? Ought not the great mother of the gods and men also be able to bring forth the like form, at the same time or at intervals, from her fruitful lap? Finally, too, the sympathetic observer could not deny that many an attractive and many a repulsive form flitted across his vision.

In the midst of this contemplation he was surprised by the master of the house, with whom he conversed freely on these subjects, and whose favor he seemed to gain still more. For he was kindly taken into the inner room before the most precious portraits of remarkable men of the sixteenth century in complete presence just as they loved and lived, without any displaying of themselves in the mirror or to the spectator, self-reliant and self-contented, working by their own character, and not through any sort of willing or purposing.

The master of the house, satisfied that his guest should know how to value completely a past so richly brought before him, showed him the autographs of many persons, about whom they had been speaking before in the gallery; and at last some relics, which there was no doubt that the former possessors had used and touched.

“This is my kind of poetry,” said the master of the house, laughing; “my imagination must take hold of something! I can scarcely believe that anything has ever been, that is not still here. About such sacred relics of the past I try to procure the most rigid proofs, otherwise they are not admitted. Written traditions are most closely examined; for I believe, indeed, that the monk has written the chronicle, but what he bears witness to, that I seldom believe.”

At last he put a clean sheet of paper before Wilhelm with a request for a few lines but without signature; after which our guest found himself ushered through a side-door into the hall, and by his side the custodian.

“I am glad,” said the latter, “that you are valued by our master; the very fact that you have come out at this door is a proof of it. But do you know what he takes you for?”

He thinks that in you he sees a professional pedagogue; he supposes that the boy belongs to a family of rank, and has been intrusted to your guidance, in order to be initiated in the world and all its manifold conditions and principles, with right ideas in good time."

"He does me too much honor," said our friend; "still I shall not have heard this in vain."

At breakfast, at which he found his Felix already busy amongst the ladies, they expressed to him the wish that, since he could on no account be detained, he would go to their noble Aunt Makaria, and perhaps thence to the cousin, to clear up the strange delay. He would thus become as it were a member of their family; he would confer upon them a distinct service, and without any great preparation would enter into confidential relations with Lenardo.

To this he replied, however: "Whithersoever you send me, I willingly betake myself. I set out for the purpose of seeing and thinking; with you I have experienced and learned more than I dared to hope, and I am convinced that on the next path to which I am introduced I shall find out and learn more than I can expect."

"And you, pretty good-for-nothing? what are you going to learn?" asked Hersilia.

To which the boy answered very boldly: "I am learning to write, in order to be able to send you a letter; and to ride better than anyone, so that I may always be with you again immediately."



Hereupon Hersilia said thoughtfully: "I have never been able to get on perfectly well with admirers of my own years; it seems as if the following generation is going to indemnify me very quickly."

But now we feel with our friends how close at hand is the painful hour of leave-taking, and we should like to give a clear idea of the peculiarities of his excellent host, of the singularities of that extraordinary man. But, in order not to judge him falsely, we must first direct our attention to the descent and early development of this worthy person, already far advanced in years. What we were able to find out is as follows:

His grandfather lived as an active member of an embassy in England, just in the last years of William Penn.* The great benevolence, the pure aims, the unflagging activity of such a distinguished man, the conflict into which for this reason he fell with the world, the dangers and afflictions to which this noble man seemed to be subjected, aroused in the susceptible soul of the young man a decisive interest; he associated himself with the enterprise, and finally went himself to America. The father of our

squire was born in Philadelphia, and they both had the fame of having contributed to the result that a general increase of religious freedom prevailed in the colonies.

Here was deduced the maxim, that any nation isolated in itself and in harmony as regards morals and religion, ought carefully to guard itself against all foreign influence and all innovation; but that where on a new soil we wish to gather together many members from all sides, there should be granted the most unfettered activity in all pursuits, and a free scope to the universal moral and religious ideas.

The brisk, lively impetus towards America in the beginning of the eighteenth century was considerable, inasmuch as everyone on this side who felt himself in any degree uncomfortable hoped over there to emancipate himself. This impetus was encouraged by the desirable possessions which could be obtained, before population had as yet spread further westward. Whole so-called counties were still for sale on the border of the inhabited territory; and the father of our proprietor had acquired considerable possessions there.

Yet here also was shown how often in sons a contradiction to the paternal disposition manifests itself. Our squire arriving as a youth in Europe, felt himself another man. This inestimable culture, that had been called into being several thousands of years ago; which had grown, expanded, been curbed, oppressed, never entirely suppressed; breathing afresh, reviving, and afterwards as before displaying itself in infinite forms of activity—gave him quite different notions respecting the goal which humanity is able to reach. He preferred to take his share of the great, immeasurable advantages; and to lose himself as a fellow-worker amidst the great mass moving in orderly activity, rather than there beyond the seas, belated by many centuries, playing the part of an Orpheus or Lycurgus. He used to say: “Everywhere man has need of patience, must everywhere be on his guard, and I would rather settle matters with my king, that he should grant me such rights, rather accommodate myself with my neighbors, that they may allow me certain restrictions, provided that I yield to them on some other point, than be fighting with the Iroquois, in order to expel them, or deceiving them by contracts, in order to drive them out of their marshes, where one will be tortured to death by mosquitoes.”

He took possession of the family estates; he knew how to deal with them in a liberal spirit, to manage them economically, to annex prudently large and apparently useless neighboring tracts of land, and thus within the civilized world,—which, in a certain sense only, may too often be called a wilderness,—to acquire and cultivate a moderate domain, which with the limitations of circumstances is still always sufficiently utopian.

Religious liberty is therefore indigenous within this district; public worship is regarded as a free confession that we have a common ownership in life and in death; but very great care is at the same time taken that no one should separate himself.

In the several plantations are seen moderately large edifices; each of these is the room which the owner of the soil devotes to each community; here the eldest gather, in order to consult together; here the many assemble to listen to instruction and pious

exhortation. But this room is also destined for merrymaking; here the wedding dances are celebrated, and the holiday concluded amidst music.

Nature herself can lead us towards this. In ordinarily fine weather under the same lime-tree we see the elders in consultation, the community at its instruction, and the youth whirling round in dance. Upon a serious background of life, the holy thus appears beautiful; seriousness and holiness moderate enjoyment, and only by moderation do we preserve ourselves.

If the community is otherwise disposed, and sufficiently well-to-do, it is at liberty to devote different buildings to the different purposes.

But if all this has been calculated for the public and common morality, still religion itself remains as before, something inward, nay, something individual. For it has only to do with the conscience. This must be aroused or tranquillized: aroused, when blunt, inactive, and in a state of torpor; but soothed down when it threatens to embitter life by a remorseful restlessness. For it is closely allied to the pain which threatens to become sorrow, when through our own fault we have drawn down any ill upon ourselves or others.

But as we are not always disposed to considerations such as are required for this, nor even always care to be stirred, therefore the Sunday has been set apart, in which all that oppresses man must, in a religious, moral, social or economical aspect, come under discussion.

“If you would stay a little longer with us,” said Julietta, “our Sunday would not displease you either. The day after to-morrow, early, you would notice a great stillness; every one remains alone and devotes himself to a prescribed meditation. Man is a limited being: in order that we may meditate on our narrowness the Sunday is set apart. If there happen to be bodily suffering, which during the whirl of the week we set at naught; then at the beginning of the new week we must at once look out for the doctor; if our difficulty is economical or otherwise connected with business, then our bailiffs are obliged to hold their sittings; if it is something spiritual, moral, that overclouds us, then we have recourse to a friend, to a right-minded person, and ask for his advice, his influence; enough, it is the law, that no one dare to transfer to the next week any concern that may disturb or afflict him. From oppressive duties, only the most conscientious practice is able to deliver us, and what cannot be relieved at all we leave finally to God, as the all-controlling, all redeeming Being. Even our uncle himself does not omit this probation; there are even cases in which he will speak confidently to us about a difficulty, that he has not been able to overcome at the moment; but generally he consults with our noble aunt, to whom he from time to time pays a visit. On Sunday evening he is also in the habit of asking whether a clean confession and settlement of all has been made. From this you may see that we take every care not to be admitted into your order, the community of the Renunciants.”

“It is a tolerable life,” cried Hersilia; “if I resign myself once every seven days, at least I have it to my credit for three hundred and sixty-five!”

Before his departure our friend received from the younger bailiff a packet with writing enclosed—from which we extract the following passage:

“It seems to me, that in every nation there prevails a different frame of mind, which only can make it happy, and one observes this in different individuals. He who desires to have his ear filled with grand and harmoniously regulated tones, and thereby elevate spirit and soul,—will he thank me if I place before his eyes the most beautiful picture? A lover of pictures will look; but he will decline to have his imagination aroused by a poem or a novel. Who then is so endowed, that he can enjoy in many different ways?

“But you, our passing friend, have appeared to me like such an one, and if you have known how to appreciate the prettiness of a fashionable rich French aberration, then I trust you will not scorn the simple, true honesty of German ways; and pardon me if, according to my custom and manner of thinking, according to my birth and position, I find no more charming image than is shown us by the German middle class in its pure domestic life.

“Take this kindly: and remember me.”

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CHAPTER VIII.

WHO IS THE TRAITOR?

NO, no!" he exclaimed, as he burst violently and hurriedly into the bedroom assigned to him, and put down the light; "no, it is not possible! But whither shall I turn myself! For the first time I think differently—for the first time I feel and wish otherwise. Oh, my father! if you could be present invisibly, and look me through and through, you would convince yourself that I am still the same, ever the faithful, obedient and loving son. To say no—to oppose the dearest and long-cherished wish of my father! How shall I reveal it?—how shall I express it? No, I cannot marry Julia. Whilst uttering it, I am frightened. And how shall I present myself to him—reveal it to him, my kind, dear father? He looks at me astounded and silent; he shakes his head; the clearheaded, wise and learned man cannot find a single word. Woe is me! Oh, I know well to whom I should confide this pain, this embarrassment, whom I should choose as my intercessor: of all people, you, Lucinda! And to you I should like to tell first, how I love you, how I abandon myself to you, and implore you piteously, Be my representative; and if you can love me, if you will be mine, then represent both of us."

To explain this short, heartfelt, passionate soliloquy, a great many words will be required.

Professor N—, of N—, had an only son of wonderful beauty, whom, until his eighth year, he left under the care of his wife, a very worthy lady. She guided the hours and days of the child to life, to learning, and all good conduct. She died, and at the moment the father felt that he would be unable, personally, to further continue this tutorship. Hitherto all had been harmony between the parents; they worked with one object, together determined what was to be done in the time immediately at hand, and the mother knew how to carry out everything wisely. Double and threefold was now the anxiety of the widower, who saw daily before his eyes that for sons of professors at the universities themselves, only by a mere chance could a successful education be hoped for. In this perplexity he turned to his friend the high-bailiff* at R—, with whom he had already discussed earlier plans of a closer family connection. He was able to advise and to help, so that the son was received in one of the good educational institutes which then flourished in Germany, and in which all possible care was taken of the whole man—body, soul, and spirit.

The son had now been provided for, yet his father felt himself far too much alone: deprived of his wife, and strange to the lovely presence of the boy, whom, without any trouble on his own part, he had seen brought up so satisfactorily. At this point also the friendship of the high-bailiff stood him in good stead; the distance between their residences disappeared before the inclination to bestir themselves and to seek distraction. Here the widowed scholar found in a family circle, also deprived of a mother, two beautiful, and in different ways lovable, daughters, just grown up. And so

the two fathers more and more strengthened themselves in the belief, in the prospect, of seeing at some future day their houses connected in the pleasantest manner.

They lived in the prosperous dominions of a sovereign prince; the able man was certain of his position for the length of his life, and so probably was a successor of his own nomination.

In accordance with a prudent family and official arrangement, Lucidor was now to prepare himself for the important place of his future father-in-law. In this he succeeded step by step. Nothing was neglected to impart to him every kind of knowledge, to develop in him all those capabilities of which the State at all times stood in need: the study of the strict judicial law; of the more discretionary one, where wisdom and ability lend their assistance to the functionary; calculation for daily wants—without excluding higher views, but everything pertaining immediately to life as it would surely and unflinching be required for use.

To this intent Lucidor had completed his school years, and was now prepared by his father and well-wisher for the university. He displayed the finest talent for everything, and owed to nature also the rare good fortune of being willing, from love to his father, and respect for his friend, to guide his faculties just in that direction which was indicated to him, first from obedience and then from conviction. He was sent to a foreign university, and there, according both to his own epistolary accounts and to the testimonials of his teachers and tutors, he pursued the path which ought to lead him to his goal. They could only disapprove of his having in a few instances been too impetuously courageous. At this the father shook his head, and the highbailiff nodded. Who would not have wished for himself such a son!

Meantime the daughters, Julia and Lucinda, grew up—the former, who was the younger, capricious, amiable, restless, and very amusing; the latter, difficult to describe, because in rectitude and purity she represented just that which we consider as most desirable in all women. They interchanged visits, and Julia found the most inexhaustible entertainment in the professor's house.

His specialty was geography, which he knew how to enliven by topographical descriptions; and as soon as Julia had noticed but a single volume, a whole series of similar ones from the Homann publications were ready at hand. Then the towns in a body were passed in review, judged, preferred or rejected: all seaports particularly gained her favor; other towns, that would obtain her approval only in a moderate degree, had carefully to make themselves conspicuous by a multitude of towers, cupolas, and minarets.

The father left her for weeks with his trusted friend: she really improved in knowledge and understanding, and knew tolerably well the inhabited world in its general features, points, and places. She was also very observant of the costumes of foreign nations, and when her adoptive father sometimes jestingly asked her whether some one or other of the many handsome young people who were walking up and down before the window did not really please her, she would say: "Yes, certainly, if he looks quite out of the common!" Now as our young students are never wanting in this respect, she

often had occasion to take an interest in this or that one; she would recall to mind in reference to him some foreign national costume, but yet would declare at last, that a Greek at least must come by completely rigged out in his national dress, if she was to devote to him any special attention; on this account she would long to be at the Leipzig fair, where such fellows were to be seen in the streets.



After his dry and often disagreeable work our teacher knew no happier moments than those in which he playfully instructed her, and at the same time secretly congratulated himself on his task of educating such a charming and always easily amused daughter-in-law. The two fathers, moreover, had agreed that the girls should not suspect anything about their intentions; and they were concealed even from Lucidor.

Thus years passed by, as indeed years will easily pass. Lucidor presented himself, accomplished, and approved in every test to the satisfaction even of the higher powers, who wished for nothing better than to be able to fulfil, with a clear conscience, the hopes of old, worthy, favored and meritorious servants.

And thus the affair had, by regular steps, at last reached the point, that Lucidor, after behaving exemplarily in subordinate capacities, was about to obtain, according to his merit and desire, a profitable post, situated exactly midway between the university and the high-bailiff's. The father, therefore, now spoke to his son about Julia, to whom he had hitherto only alluded, as his future bride and wife, without further doubt or stipulation, extolling his fortune in having won such a living jewel. In spirit he already saw his daughter-in-law from time to time again with him, busying herself with maps, plans and views of cities. The son, on the other hand, recalled to mind the lovable and merry creature, who in childhood's time had always delighted him with her freaks as well as her friendliness. Lucidor was now to ride over to the high-bailiff's to see more nearly the developed beauty, to devote himself for a few weeks to intercourse and acquaintanceship with the whole family. If the young people, as was to be hoped, were soon at one, then it should be announced; the father would at once appear, in order that a solemn betrothal might assure for ever the hoped-for happiness.

Lucidor arrives, he is received in the most friendly fashion, he is shown to a room, arranges his dress, and appears. He finds there, besides the family circle already known to us, a half-grown up son, spoiled without doubt, but clever and good-natured, so that if one had liked to take him for the family-jester, he would not have accorded with the whole at all badly. Then there belonged to the household a very old, but hale and cheerful man, quiet, refined, wise, near the end of life, but now and then of use. Immediately after Lucidor there came another stranger, no longer young, of distinguished aspect, estimable and experienced in life, and through his familiar knowledge of the world highly entertaining. They called him Antony.

Julia received her bridegroom-designate with modesty, but complacently. Lucinda, on the contrary, did the honors of the house, as her sister those of her own person. Thus the day passed with especial pleasure for all, except only Lucidor; otherwise taciturn, he was forced from time to time, in order not to remain entirely dumb, to assume a questioning attitude, in which circumstances no one appears to advantage.

He was thoroughly distracted, for from the first moment he had felt towards Julia neither disinclination nor aversion, but estrangement; Lucinda, on the contrary, attracted him, so that he trembled when she looked at him with her full, pure, quiet eyes. In this state of affliction, on the first evening he reached his bedchamber and unburdened himself in the soliloquy with which we began. But to clear this up too, and to reconcile the passion of such a tirade with what we already know about him, a short statement will be necessary.

Lucidor was a man of deep mind, and generally had in his thoughts something besides what the present demanded, on which account he was never quite happy in entertainment and conversation; he felt this, and was taciturn, except when the conversation turned upon special subjects which he had mastered, and in which what he wanted was at all times ready at his service. In addition to this, it happened that in earlier days at school, and later at the university, he had been disappointed in certain friends, and had unhappily expended in vain the outpourings of his heart. All sociability had become a suspicious matter to him; but any suspicion does away with all sociability. To his father he was accustomed to speak only in one tone, and therefore, as soon as he was alone, his heart would vent itself in monologues.

The next morning he had somewhat collected himself, and yet he was on the point of losing his presence of mind when Julia came towards him, more friendly, more cheerful, and more unconstrained than ever. She had plenty to ask him about his journeys by land and water, how as a student with his baggage at his back he had tramped and climbed through Switzerland, nay, had even crossed the Alps. Thereupon she wanted to know a great deal about the beautiful island in the large southern lake; then, on the return, the Rhine had to be traced from its remotest source, at first through the most joyless regions, and so downwards through many varying scenes, until at last between Mainz and Coblenz it is still quite worth while to dismiss the river honorably from its last limitations into the wide world—into the ocean. Lucidor felt very much relieved by this, and continued to tell his tales with pleasure, and so well that Julia exclaimed with rapture: "One ought to see such things in company with some one else," at which Lucidor was again frightened, for in this remark he thought that he espied an allusion to their companionship through life.

However, he was soon relieved from his duty as a teller of tales, for the foreigner whom they called Antony speedily eclipsed all his mountain rills, rocky banks, rivers confined and flowing free. For now they went direct to Genoa; Leghorn lay at no great distance; and a raid was made upon all that was most interesting in the country; Naples must be seen before one died; but Constantinople was still left—this too was not to be neglected. The description that Antony gave of the wide world carried along with it the imagination of all, although he had less ardor to infuse into it. Julia, quite beside herself, was still by no means satisfied; she felt a longing for Alexandria,

Cairo, but particularly for the Pyramids, about which she had gained a tolerably complete knowledge through the instruction of her presumptive father-in-law.

Lucidor, the following evening (he had scarcely shut the door, and not yet put down the light) exclaimed: "Now, look to yourself! it is a serious matter. You have learned and thought out many serious matters; what is the good of jurisprudence if now you do not forthwith act like a jurist? Regard yourself as a plenipotentiary; forget yourself, and do what you would be bound to do for others. Matters are coming to a crisis in the most appalling manner. The foreigner is evidently there for Lucinda's sake; she shows him all the attentions of the home circle in the prettiest, most well-bred manner. The silly little one would like to roam with any one through the world, for nothing, nothing at all. Besides, she is a rogue too; her delight in towns and countries is a trick, by which she silences us. But why do I look at this matter in such a confused and limited manner. Is not the high-bailiff himself the most prudent, sensible and amiable of mediators? You will tell him what you feel and think, and he will appreciate, if not even sympathize. He can do anything with your father. And is not one his daughter as well as the other? And what, then, has this 'Antony Roamer'* to do with Lucinda, who is born for home, to be happy and to create happiness? Yoke the restless Quicksilver to the Wandering Jew: that would be a charming match!"

In the morning Lucidor went down with the firm resolve of speaking to the father, and for this purpose to approach him without delay at a time when he knew that he would be at leisure. How great was his grief, his embarrassment, when he heard that the high-bailiff had set out on business, and was only expected back the day after tomorrow. Julia seemed to-day to be having a regular travelling time: she stuck to the globe-walker, and with a few joking speeches, that related to domestic matters, left Lucidor with Lucinda. If our friend had before seen the noble girl from a certain distance, and after a general impression, and already most heartily appropriated her to himself, now, in the nearest proximity, he discovered doubly and trebly what had first attracted him in a general way.

The good old friend of the family now came forward in place of the absent father; he too had lived and loved, and after many buffets of life he was at last cheered and well cared-for at the side of the friend of his youth. He animated the conversation, and expatiated especially about mistakes in the choice of a husband, and related remarkable instances of rectifications made sooner or later. Lucinda appeared in her full glory: she admitted that in life, and in marriages as well as other things, chance of all kinds might bring about the very best result; yet that it was more beautiful, more elevating to the heart, when a man could say to himself, that his fortune was due to himself—to the quiet, unwavering conviction of his heart, to noble resolve and prompt decision. Tears stood in the eyes of Lucidor, as he gave his approval, after which the ladies soon withdrew. The old gentleman, who presided, was quite ready to indulge further in an exchange of stories, and thus the conversation was extended to amusing examples, which, however, touched our hero so closely, that only a youth so purely educated as he, could refrain from an outbreak; this, however, happened when he was alone.

“I have controlled myself,” he exclaimed; “with such embarrassment I will not annoy my good father. I have restrained myself, for in this worthy family friend I recognize the representative of both fathers: to him I will speak, to him disclose everything; he will be sure to mediate in the matter, and has already almost expressed what I wish. Could he in the particular case blame what he in general approves? Early to-morrow I will seek him out; I must gain breath for this struggle.”

At breakfast the old man was not present; it was stated that yesterday evening he had talked too much, sat too long, and drunk a few drops of wine beyond his custom. They said a great deal in his praise, and indeed spoke of his words and actions in a way that drove Lucidor to despair, at not having at once applied to him. This disagreeable sensation was only made still keener by hearing that after such attacks the good old man often did not make his appearance again for a week.

Residence in a country-house has indeed great advantages for social intercourse, particularly when the entertainers, being people of thought and feeling, have found an opportunity, after several years' experience, of aiding the natural conditions of their environment. It was fortunately so in this case. The high-bailiff, at first unmarried, then during a long and happy union, with means of his own, in a lucrative post, had—in accordance with his own taste and insight, the fancies of his wife, nay, even in compliance with the wishes and humors of his children—attended to and beautified several separate larger and smaller plots, which being by degrees connected tastefully with plantations and roads, afforded to the passer-by a most lovely, diverse and characteristic succession of scenes. The young members of the family accordingly made their guest undertake a pilgrimage of this kind; even as people like to show their surroundings to a stranger, in order that he may regard as a novelty what has become stale to themselves, and may retain the pleasant impression of it forever.

The nearer as well as the more distant portion of the estate was strictly appropriated to modest plantations, or peculiarly rural specialties. Fertile hills alternated with well-watered meadow-land, so that the whole could be seen from time to time without being level; and although land and soil were by preference devoted to utility, still the graceful and alluring had not been excluded.

To the mansion and offices were annexed pleasure-gardens, orchards, and grass lawns, out of which one lost one's self unwittingly in a little copse, through which wound up and down, in and out, a broad carriage-road. In the middle of this, on the top of the most prominent eminence, a pavilion had been constructed, with a suite of apartments. On entering at the principal door, one saw in a large mirror the most lovely prospect that the neighborhood could offer, and quickly turned round to recover one's self in the reality from the unexpected reflection, for the approach had been arranged artfully enough, and all that was designed to effect a surprise had been carefully hidden. No one entered without again and again turning with pleasure from the mirror to nature, and from nature to the mirror.

When once upon the road, on one of the finest, most genial, and longest days, they kept upon a good grass-road round and through the whole. Here was pointed out the evening resting-place of the good mother, where a splendid beech-tree had reserved

round about itself an open space. Julia soon afterwards pointed out, half teasingly, the place of Lucinda's morning devotion, in the vicinity of a tiny lake, among poplars and alders, near meadows sloping downwards, and corn-fields extending upwards. It was pretty beyond all description. One fancied that one had seen it often before, but nowhere so remarkable and so welcome in its simplicity. On the other hand, the young brother, half against Julia's wish, showed the diminutive arbors and childish garden erections which, close by a cosily-situated mill, were scarcely noticeable. They dated from the time when Julia, in about her tenth year, had taken it into her head to become a miller's wife, and after the departure of the two old people, was going to set up for herself, and look out for an honest miller youth.



“That was at a time,” exclaimed Julia, “when I still knew nothing about the towns that lie on rivers, or indeed on the sea, nothing about Genoa, and so forth. Your good father, Lucidor, has transformed me, and since that time I have not been so ready to come here.”

She sat down playfully on a little bench that scarcely sufficed to bear her weight, beneath an elder-tree that bent too deeply down. “Oh, how cramped!” she cried, jumped to her feet; and ran in front with her merry brother.

The couple that remained behind conversed together sensibly, and in such cases reason probably comes near to feeling. To roam successively through simple natural objects, and quietly to observe how the sensible, prudent man is able to turn them to account; how the comprehension of what is at hand, associating itself with the sense of his requirements, will do wonders, in first of all making the world inhabitable, then in peopling it, and at last in overpeopling it—all this could here be discussed in detail. Lucinda gave an account of everything, and howsoever modest she was, could not conceal that this convenient and pleasant connection of distant portions of the estate was her own work, under the suggestions, direction, and assistance of a revered mother.

But yet since even the longest day will at last verge towards evening, it was now needful to think of returning, and as they were thinking about some pleasant circuitous road, the merry young brother expressed a wish that they should enter upon the shorter road, although not the pleasanter, but rather the more difficult one. “For,” he exclaimed, “you have been boasting with your sites and contrivances how you have beautified and improved the country for artistic eyes and sensitive hearts, but now let me too gain credit.”

Now they had to pass across ploughed lands and rugged paths, nay, they had even to walk over stones roughly thrown across small bogs, and at some distance they soon beheld all kinds of machinery in confused piles. Seen nearer, it was a large pleasure or playground, erected not without judgment, in a certain popular style. Thus there were standing here, arranged at the proper distances, the great swing-wheel, on which those mounting and descending always remain as if sitting quietly in a horizontal position, and other swings, slack-ropes, balance-boards, bowling-greens and skittle-alleys, and all that can be imagined to occupy and amuse a number of people in different ways and to an equal extent, in an extensive pleasure-ground. "This," he exclaimed, "is my contrivance, my laying out; and although father gave the money for it, and a clever fellow the head to make it, still, without me, whom you so often call silly, neither judgment nor money would have combined together."

In this merry mood they all four reached home at sunset. Antony put in an appearance; the younger lady, however, who during all this day had not had enough exercise, had the horses put-to, and drove across the country to see a female friend, being desperate at not having seen her for two days. The four left behind felt embarrassed before they were aware of it, and it was then declared that the absence of the father began to alarm his family. The conversation began to flag, when all at once the merry lad jumped up, and soon returned with a book, offering to read aloud. Lucinda could not refrain from asking "how he had hit upon an idea which he had not had the whole year," to which he merrily replied, "Everything occurs to me at the right time—a thing you cannot boast of." He read a series of genuine fairy tales, which carry people out of themselves, flatter their wishes, and make them forget every condition by which we nevertheless remain limited even in our happiest moments.

"What shall I do now?" exclaimed Lucidor, when at last he found himself alone; "time presses; I have no confidence in Antony; he is an utter stranger—I do not know who he is, how he comes to be in the house, or what he wants: he seems to interest himself in Lucinda, and what in that case could I hope for from him? Nothing remains for me but to approach Lucinda myself; she must know it—she first. This indeed was my first feeling; why do we allow ourselves to be misled into paths of prudence? The first must now be last, and I trust to attain my end."

On Saturday morning Lucidor having dressed early, was pacing to and fro in his room, and thinking over what he must say to Lucinda, when he heard a sort of good-humored wrangling outside his door, which at the same instant was opened. Thereupon the merry youth pushed in before him a boy with coffee and biscuits for the guest; he himself carried some cold meat and wine. "You shall go first," he said, "for the guest must be served first; I am accustomed to wait upon myself. My friend, to-day I come somewhat early and noisily; let us enjoy our breakfast in peace, and then we will see what we shall set about, for we have little to hope from the company. The younger one has not yet returned from her friend; these two are obliged to pour out their hearts mutually at least once every fortnight, in case they explode. On Saturdays Lucinda is altogether useless, for she then delivers punctually her housekeeping accounts to father. I too ought to dabble in those things, but, Heaven preserve me! if I know what a thing costs, I cannot relish a mouthful. They expect

guests to-morrow; the old gentleman has not yet recovered his equilibrium. Antony is shooting; we will do the same.”

Guns, game-bags, and dogs were ready, when they descended into the courtyard, and so they set out across the fields, where eventually a leveret and a poor indifferent bird were shot. In the meantime they talked about domestic affairs and those of the present party. Antony was mentioned, and Lucidor did not fail to inquire about him. The merry youth declared, with some complacency, that however mysteriously that wonderful man behaved, he had already seen through and through him.



“He is,” he continued, “no doubt the son of a rich man of business, who failed just at the moment when he, in the flower of his youth, was thinking of taking a share vigorously and cheerfully in great business transactions, but at the same time of sharing in the great enjoyments which they abundantly offer. Hurling down from the pinnacle of his expectations, he pulled himself together, and accomplished in the service of others what he could no longer do for himself and his relations. So he wandered through the world, learned to know it thoroughly in all its multifarious intercourse, yet in so doing did not forget his own interests. Untiring activity and approved honesty brought and retained for him an unlimited confidence from many. So he everywhere gained friends and acquaintance—nay, it is easy to see that his resources are distributed in the world as widely as his acquaintance extends, and that therefore his presence also is necessary from time to time in all four parts of the world.”

The merry youth had told this quite circumstantially and simply, inserting as many comical observations as if he had the intention of spinning out his little story to the end of the world.

“How long has he not already been connected with my father! They think that I see nothing, because I trouble myself about nothing; but for this very reason I see better, because it does not concern me! He has deposited a good deal of money with my father, who has again invested it safely and profitably. Only yesterday he handed the old gentleman a jewel casket; anything simpler, more beautiful, or precious I have never seen—although only at a glance, for the matter was a secret transaction. It is probably to be devoted to the pleasure and joy, and to the future safe keeping of the bride. Antony has placed his confidence in Lucinda. But when I see them thus together, I can scarcely regard them as a well-assorted couple. The brisk one would do better for him; I think too that she likes him better than the elder one; she really looks sometimes as cheerfully and sympathetically towards the old grumbler, as if she would like to mount into the carriage with him, and be up and off.” Lucidor collected himself; he did not know what could be said in answer—all that he had heard had his private approval.

The youth continued: "Generally speaking, the girl has a perverse love for old people; I believe she would as soon have married your father as his son."

Lucidor followed his companion, as he led him over stock and stone; both forgot the sport, which any way could not have been very abundant. They put up at a farmhouse, where, being well entertained, one of the friends amused himself with eating, drinking, and chatting, but the other was absorbed in thoughts and meditations concerning the manner in which he might be able to avail himself to his own advantage of the discovery he had made. Lucidor after all these tales and confidences had acquired so much confidence in Antony, that, on entering the courtyard, he at once asked for him, and hurried into the garden, where he was told that he would find him. He traversed all the alleys of the park in the cheerful evening sun in vain. Not a soul was to be seen. At last he entered a door leading to the great saloon, and wonderfully enough, the setting sun, reflected from the mirror, dazzled him to such a degree, that he could not recognize the two persons who were sitting on the ottoman, though he could distinguish that a male person sitting by the side of a lady was passionately impressing a kiss on her hand. How great then was his horror, when on the recovery of his power of vision he beheld Lucinda and Antony before him. He would have liked to sink into the ground, but remained as if fixed to the spot, until Lucinda in an unembarrassed and most friendly way bade him welcome, made room for him, and invited him to come and sit on her right-hand side. He took the seat unconsciously, and when, addressing him, she asked how he had spent the day, and excused herself on the score of domestic affairs, he could hardly endure her voice. Antony arose, and took leave; and Lucinda, also rising, invited him, who remained, to go out for a walk. Walking along by her side he remained silent and embarrassed; she too seemed to be disturbed; and if he had only been in some degree himself, her deep breathing must have betrayed that she had to conceal some heartfelt sighs. At last she took leave of him, as they approached near to the house; but he turned, first slowly and then hurriedly, towards the open fields. The park had become too narrow for him; he hurried through the open land listening only to the voice of his heart, without any sense of the beauties of the most perfect evening. When he saw himself alone, and had vented his feelings in a soothing flood of tears, he exclaimed:



"Several times already in my life, but never so cruelly, have I experienced the grief which is now making me wretched, when the most longed for happiness comes up to us hand-in-hand, arm-in-arm, and immediately takes leave of us forever. I sat by her, walked next her, her dress touched me as it moved, and even then I had lost her! Tell it not to yourself, do not fret yourself about it; be silent, and take your resolution."

He had imposed silence on himself; he held his peace and reflected, strolling through fields, meadows and heath, not always on the smoothest paths. Only when he entered his room, at a late hour, did he cease to restrain himself, and exclaimed: "Early to-morrow I set off; a day like this I will not live again," and so he threw himself on the bed in his clothes.

Happy, healthy youth! He was already asleep; the fatiguing exercise during the day had earned for him the sweetest night's rest. From his comforting morning dreams, however, the earliest beam awoke him; it happened to be the longest day, which threatened him to be too long. If he had certainly not felt the charm of the soothing evening star, he felt the stimulating beauty of the morning one only to despair. He beheld the world as beautiful as ever;—it was still so to his eyesight, but his inner man denied it. In all this he had no more part or lot; he had lost Lucinda.

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CHAPTER IX.

The portmanteau, which he intended to leave behind him, was quickly packed; he did not write any letter with it; his absence from dinner, perhaps also during the evening, was to be excused by only a few words through the groom, whom he must wake up at once. But he found him already below in front of the stable, pacing to and fro with long strides. "You surely do not want to take a ride?" cried the otherwise good-natured man, with a touch of vexation. "I suppose I may venture to tell you: the young gentleman gets every day more unendurable. He was knocking about the country all yesterday, so that one might have thought that he would thank God to rest on a Sunday morning. But, if he does not come here before daybreak, making a disturbance in the stables! As I am jumping up, he saddles and bridles your horse, and is not to be kept back by any argument; he vaults up and cries: 'Only think of the good work I am doing! This creature always goes only at a lawyer's trot; I will see whether I can spur him into a swift gallop for life!' That is about what he said; and added other strange speeches."

Lucidor was doubly, trebly surprised: he loved his horse, as answering to his own character and mode of life; it vexed him to find the good and sagacious creature in the hands of a madcap. His plan was disturbed—his intention of seeking refuge in the present crisis with a university friend, with whom he had lived in frank and affectionate association. The old confidence had been reawakened; the miles lying between them had not been taken into account, and he already imagined himself finding advice and relief from his benevolent and sensible friend. This prospect was now cut off: and yet this was not the case, if he should venture to reach his goal on fresh walking feet, which remained at his disposal.

The first thing then was to try to find the road out of the park into the open country, that should take him to his friend. He was not quite sure of his direction, when, on the left hand, the hermitage of which they had previously made a mystery caught his eye, as it reared its head above the copse, raised upon a strange sort of wood-work, and there to his utmost surprise he beheld upon a gallery beneath the Chinese roof the old gentleman,—who for the last few days had been thought to be ill,—looking around in a cheerful manner. Lucidor declined his very friendly greeting, and pressing invitation to ascend, with excuses and hurried gestures. Only consideration for the good old man, who as he hurried down the steep staircase with infirm tread threatened to fall to the bottom, induced him to walk towards him, and to allow himself to be led up. With wonder he entered the charming little saloon; it had only three windows, looking over the country, a most beautiful prospect; the rest of the walls was adorned, or rather covered, with hundreds and hundreds of portraits, engraved in copper, and in some cases drawn, pasted on to the wall in a certain order, and separated by colored bands and spaces.

"I favor you, my friend, in a way that is not for every one; this is the sanctuary in which I contentedly spend my last days. Here I recover from all the mistakes which society makes me commit, and here I restore my dietetic errors into equilibrium."

Lucidor gave a glance at the whole, and being well read in history, he saw at once that an historical taste lay at the bottom.

“Here above in the frieze,” said the old man, “you will find the names of excellent men of the remote past; then, of the later ones still only the names, for how they looked it would be difficult to find out. But here in the chief space my own life is actually concerned, for here are men whom I heard mentioned as a boy. For about fifty years the names of distinguished men will remain in the memory of the people, but beyond that lapse of time they either disappear or become legendary. Although of German parents, I was born in Holland, and to me William of Orange, as Stadtholder and King of England, is the prototype of all ordinary men and heroes. But now you see Louis XIV. close to him, than whom—”

How willingly Lucidor would have liked to interrupt the good old man, if it had been seemly to do so—as indeed it probably beseems us, the storyteller, to do; for he was threatened with modern and the most recent history, as was easily to be gathered from the portraits of Fredrick the Great and of his generals, towards whom he was pointing.

If the kind youth honored the lively sympathy of the old man for the time immediately preceding his own as well as for the present, and if certain individual traits could not escape him as being interesting, still he had already heard modern and recent history in universities, and what one has once heard, one thinks one will always know. His mind was far away; he did not hear, he scarcely could see, and was just on the point of blundering towards the door and down the mortally long staircase, in the most awkward manner, when a violent clapping of hands was heard from below.

Whilst Lucidor drew back, the old man put his head out of the window, and from below there resounded a well-known voice: “Come down; for Heaven’s sake, come out of your historical picture gallery, old gentleman! Finish your fasting, and help me to appease our young friend, when he comes to know the matter. I have been treating Lucidor’s horse somewhat recklessly; it has cast a shoe, and I have had to leave it behind. What will he say? Oh, it is too absurd, when people are absurd!”

“Come up,” said the old man, and turning himself towards Lucidor: “Now, what do you say?”

Lucidor was silent, and the wild youth entered. The questions and replies occasioned a long scene; enough, they resolved to send the groom at once to take care of the horse.

Leaving the old man behind, the two young people hurried back to the house, whither Lucidor allowed himself to be taken, not quite unwillingly; because, come of it what might, within those walls at least was enclosed the only wish of his heart. In such a desperate case we hopelessly lose the help of our free-will, and feel ourselves relieved for a moment, if from anywhere determination or coercion lay hold of us. Still, when he entered his room, he found himself in a very strange frame of mind, very like a man who is compelled against his wish to return to the inn that he has just left, because he has broken an axletree.

The merry youth presently pounced on the portmanteau, to unpack everything in order; particularly he placed together whatever there was at hand of holiday attire, although it might be meant for travelling. He compelled Lucidor to put on shoes and stockings, arranged his closely curled brown locks of hair, and rigged him out at his best. Then stepping a few paces back, he contemplated our friend, and his handiwork, from head to feet, and cried: "Now at least, my little friend, you look like a man who has some claims on pretty maidens, and sufficiently in earnest to be looking out for a bride. Only just a moment, and you shall see how I manage to come to the front, when the hour strikes! I have learned that from officers, after whom the girls are always looking, and moreover I have enlisted myself in a kind of military corps, and now they look at me too again and again, for none of them knows what to make of me! Now, out of all this looking here and there, this admiration and attention, there often ensues something very pretty indeed, which, if it is not lasting, is still worth our while to devote a moment to. But now, my friend, come and show me the same service! When you see me slip bit by bit into my covering, you will not deny wit and a knack of invention to the careless boy!"

So he dragged his friend along with him, through the long rambling corridors of the old château. "I have made my lair," he exclaimed, "quite in the background. Without wishing to conceal myself, I like to be alone; for one cannot make it quite pleasing to the others."

They passed by the justice-room, just as a servant came out carrying an antique writing-desk, black, big, and completely filled; paper too was not forgotten.

"I know well enough what is going to be scribbled again within there," exclaimed the youth. "Go away, and leave me the key. Just give a peep into it, Lucidor. It will amuse you until I am dressed. To a man of law such a place is not as unattractive as to a stable-fellow." And so he pushed Lucidor into the magisterial hall.

The young man at once felt himself in a familiar and congenial element; the recollection of the days when, on business bent, he was sitting at such a table, listening and writing, repeated itself. Nor did he remain unaware of the fact that here a fine old domestic chapel had, at the change of religious opinions, been commuted to the service of Themis. On the shelves he found titles and deeds already known to him; he had worked at these very matters himself, in the capital. On his opening a bundle, a rescript fell into his hand which he himself had engrossed, and another which he had drafted! Handwriting and paper, the seal of the Chancellery, and the signature of the president, all recalled to his mind that season of the legitimate striving of youthful hope. And then when he looked round, and caught sight of the official chair of the high-bailiff, designed and destined for himself, so fine a position, and such a worthy sphere of activity, which he ran the risk of rejecting and renouncing: all this assailed him with a double and three-fold strength, whilst the form of Lucinda seemed at the same time to retreat away from him.

He wanted to go out into the open air, but found himself imprisoned. His wonderful friend had either heedlessly or wantonly locked the door behind him: still our friend did not remain long in this most awkward confinement, for the other came back,

excused himself, and really awoke good humor by his strange presence. A certain loudness in the colors and cut of his dress was tempered by natural taste, just as we do not deny a sort of approval even to tattooed Indians.

“To-day,” he said, “shall make compensation for the tediousness of past days; good friends, merry friends have arrived, pretty girls, lively enamored creatures; and then too my father, and, wonder upon wonder, your father too! It will be a feast. They are all already assembled in the saloon for breakfast.”

Lucidor felt at once in a mood as if he were peering into a thick fog; all who were mentioned to him, whether known or unknown, seemed to him as so many ghostly forms; still his character, in conjunction with a pure heart, kept him erect; in a few seconds he felt himself equal to anything. He now followed his hurrying friend with a firm step, firmly resolved to stay it out, happen what might, and to explain himself, be it as it would.

And yet he felt surprised at the threshold of the saloon. In a large semicircle around the windows he at once discerned his father, together with the high-bailiff, both in full dress. He looked at the sisters, at Antony, and other known and unknown people, with a glance that threatened almost to become dim. He approached his father with failing steps, who received him in a most friendly manner yet with a certain formality, which scarcely favored any confidential approach. Standing before so many people, he looked out for a convenient place for the moment; he could have placed himself near Lucinda, but Julia, in contrast with the constrained state of things, made a turn, so that he was compelled to step towards her. Antony remained near Lucinda.

At this critical moment Lucidor felt himself again as one who has been charged with a trust, and, steeled with all his juristic science, he recalled to mind in his own favor that beautiful maxim: that we ought to treat the affairs of strangers committed to our trust as our own; and why should we not treat our own in just the same spirit. As he was well exercised in business statements, he quickly ran through all he had to say. Meantime the company, placed in a formal semicircle, seemed to be too much for him. The substance of his statement he knew well enough, but he could not find the beginning. Then on a table he observed the great inkstand, with some legal officials standing by; the high-bailiff made a movement, as if to begin his address; Lucidor wanted to precede him, and at the same moment Julia pressed his hand. This took away all his presence of mind; he was convinced that it was all decided, that all was lost for him.



LUCIDOR AND LUCINDA.

Now it was no longer the time when the present collective lifelong associations or these family ties, conventionalities of society and position, should be respected; he looked before him, withdrew his hand from Julia, and was so quickly outside the door that the company lost him before they were aware of it, and he himself outside scarcely knew where he was.

Fearing the light of the sun, which shone on his head in fullest splendor, avoiding the glances of people that he met, groping along timidly, he went onwards until he reached the large summer-house. At this point his knees were about to fail him; he rushed in, and disconsolately threw himself on the ottoman beneath the looking-glass: into such confusion had he been thrown in the midst of the precise business-like company, which seemed to be surging backwards and forwards around and within him. His past existence struggled with the present: it was a terrible moment.

And thus he lay for a time, with his face buried in the cushion, upon which Lucinda's arm had yesterday been resting. Completely absorbed in his grief, feeling himself touched, without having perceived any one approach, he quickly raised himself; then he saw Lucinda, who was standing near him.

Fancying that she had been sent to fetch him, and charged to induce him with suitable sisterly words to accompany her back to the assembly, to his repugnant destiny, he exclaimed: "They ought not to have sent you, Lucinda, for it is you who drove me away from there; I shall not return! Give me, if you are capable of any pity, the opportunity and means for flight. For in order that you may bear witness how impossible it is to bring me back, then receive the key to my behavior, which to you and all must seem madness. Listen to the oath which I had sworn to myself, and which, as irretrievable, I now repeat aloud. With you only I wished to live, to use and enjoy my youth, and old age as well, in its true and honest completion. And let this be as firm and sure as anything that has ever been sworn before the altar, which I now swear, in leaving you, the most pitiable of all mankind." He made a movement to slip away from her, as she stood so close in front of him, but she caught him gently in her arms.

“What are you going to do?” he exclaimed.

“Lucidor,” she said, “not pity you, as you imagine, perhaps; you are mine, I am yours. I hold you in my arms; do not be afraid of throwing yours round me. Your father is satisfied with everything; Antony is to marry my sister.”

He drew back from her, astounded.

“Can it be true?”

Lucinda laughed, and nodded; he freed himself from her arms.

“Let me once more behold at a distance her who is to belong so nearly, so closely to me.” He seized her hands.

“Face to face, Lucinda, are you mine?”

She replied, “Yes, indeed,” with the sweetest tears in the truest of eyes. He embraced her, and threw his head behind hers; he clung there like a shipwrecked man to a rock on the shore; the floor still trembled beneath him. But now his enraptured glance, opening again, fell upon the looking-glass. Then he beheld her in his arms, himself folded in hers; he looked towards it again and again. Such feelings accompany a man all through his life; at the same time, too, he saw on the mirror's face the landscape, that but yesterday had seemed to him so gray and forbidding, now more splendid and glorious than ever: and himself in such a position on such a background!—a sufficient reward for all sufferings.

“We are not alone,” said Lucinda, and scarcely had he recovered from his rapture, when there appeared girls and boys, decked out and garlanded, carrying wreaths, filling up the entrance.

“That ought all to have been different,” exclaimed Lucinda. “How nicely it was arranged, and now it is all clumsily mixed up.” A stirring march sounded from afar, and they saw the company merrily coming in procession up the wide road. He hesitated to go to meet them, and only on her arm seemed sure of his steps. She remained at his side, awaiting from moment to moment the solemn scene of re-meeting, and of a pardon already granted.

But it had been fated differently by the mischievous gods; the merry, ringing tones of a post-horn from the opposite side seemed to throw the whole ceremony into confusion. “Who can be coming?” exclaimed Lucinda.

Lucidor shuddered at a strange presence, and the carriage too seemed quite strange. A new double-seated travelling-chaise of the latest make. She ran into the saloon. A remarkably well-dressed boy jumped down from behind, opened the door, but no one got out. The carriage was empty; the boy got in, with a few dexterous pulls he threw back the covering, and in an instant the pretty contrivance was prepared for a most pleasant drive before the eyes of all the company, who, in the meantime, had come up. Antony, hurrying in advance of the rest, handed Julia to the carriage.

“Try whether this sort of vehicle will suit you,” he said, “to drive in with me along the best roads through the world. I shall take you along no other ones; and if ever it should come to a pinch we will know how to help ourselves. Pack-horses ought to be able to carry us across the mountain and the carriage too.”

“You are a darling!” exclaimed Julia.

The boy stepped forward, and, with the dexterity of a conjuror, he showed all the conveniences, small advantages and contrivances of the whole light structure.

“On the earth I am unable to thank you,” exclaimed Julia; “only from this little movable heaven, from this cloud to which you raise me, I desire to thank you most cordially.”

She had already jumped into it, throwing a kind glance and a hand-kiss towards him.

“For the present you must not come in it with me; but there is another whom I think of taking with me on this trial drive. He has a trial still to undergo, too.”

She called to Lucidor, who, just then engaged in a diffident conversation with his father and father-in-law, gladly allowed himself to be pressed into the light vehicle, since he felt an unconquerable need of only a moment's distraction in some way or other. He sat down by her; she called to the postilion how he should go. In the twinkling of an eye they disappeared, enveloped in dust, from the sight of the astonished spectators left behind. Julia settled herself closely and comfortably in the corner.

“Now you, too, lean back here, Herr Brother-in-law, that we may conveniently look at each other.”

LUCIDOR.

“You see my confusion, my embarrassment. I am still as in a dream; help me out of it.”

JULIA.

“Look at the nice-looking village people, how civilly they greet us. During your stay here you have actually never been to the upper village: all well-to-do people, who are all partial to me. There is no one so rich that one cannot oblige him in some way or other by some important service. This road, along which we are driving so comfortably, my father laid out, and so set this good state of things on foot.”

LUCIDOR.

“I willingly believe it, and grant it; but what have these external things to do with the confusion of my mind?”

JULIA.

“Only patience, I want to show you the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof, now we are up above! How clearly the level plain lies against the mountains! All these villages owe a great deal to my father, and to mother and daughters too, I dare say. The outskirts of that little town yonder are the first boundaries.”

LUCIDOR.

“I see you are in a strange mood. You do not seem to say outright what you wished to say.”

JULIA.

“Now look down here on the left, how beautifully everything discloses itself! The church with its high lime-trees, the town-house with its poplars, behind the village mound. The gardens, too, are lying before us, and the park.”

The postilion drove faster.

JULIA.

“You recognize that pavilion up there; it looks just as pretty from here as the landscape does from there. At this tree we stop. Now, just at this spot, we are reflected up there in the large glass surface. They can see us there very well, but we cannot distinguish ourselves. Drive on! Probably it is not long since two people have reflected themselves there more closely, and, if I'm not much mistaken, with great mutual satisfaction.”

Lucidor in his vexation made no reply. They drove along for a while in silence; the pace was very swift.

“Here,” said Julia, “the bad road begins; some day you may make it a credit to you. Before we drive downwards look once more across the country: my mother's beech-tree, with its magnificent summit, towers above everything.

“You drive on,” she continued to the coachman, “along the bad road; we will take the footpath through the valley, and will arrive over there before you.”

In descending, she exclaimed: “You must confess, however, that the Wandering Jew, the restless Antony Roamer,* knows how to make his pilgrimages tolerably comfortable for himself and his companions. It is a very handsome and comfortable carriage.”

And by this time she was at the bottom of the hill. Lucidor followed thoughtfully, and found her sitting on a nicely-placed bench. It was Lucinda's favorite place. She beckoned him to her.

JULIA.

“So we are sitting here, and are nothing to one another!—and yet it was to have been so. The *little Quicksilver* would not have at all suited you. You could not love such a creature; she was repugnant to you.”

Lucidor's astonishment increased.

JULIA.

“But Lucinda, now—she is the compendium of all perfections, and the pretty sister was once for all cut out. I see it; the question is trembling on your lips—who could have informed us so correctly?”

LUCIDOR.

“A traitor lurks behind.”

JULIA.

“Yes, indeed, there is a traitor in the game.”

LUCIDOR.

“Name him.”

JULIA.

“He is soon unmasked. It is yourself! You have the praiseworthy, or blameworthy, habit of talking to yourself, and so I will confess, in the name of all of us, that we have in turns overheard you.”

LUCIDOR

(jumping up). “A nice sort of hospitality, to set a trap for the guest in this way!”

JULIA.

“Not at all. We did not think of listening to you more than to any other individual. You know that your bed stands in a recess in the wall, and on the opposite side there is another, which generally serves only as a domestic repository. There we had, a few days before, forced our old gentleman to sleep, because we were a good deal concerned about him in his distant hermitage. Now on the very first evening you entered on the affair with that passionate soliloquy, the purport of which he most opportunely disclosed to us the next morning.”

Lucidor had no heart to interrupt her. He moved away.

JULIA

(rising and following him). “And of what service this declaration was to us! For, I confess, although you were not precisely antipathic to me, still the position that awaited me was by no means so desirable. To become a ‘Madam High-bailiff,’—what a horrible position! To get a good, honest man, whose duty it is to declare the law to the people, and who by sheer weight of law can never attain to justice; who does justice neither by laws above nor below, and, what is worst, not even to himself. I know what my mother has suffered from the incorruptibility, the inflexibility, of my father. At last, unfortunately after her death, he began to display a certain tenderness. He seemed to accommodate himself to the world; to reconcile himself to it, having hitherto vainly fought against it.”

LUCIDOR

(highly displeased at the affair, and vexed at her frivolous treatment of it—stands still). “For the diversion of one evening this might pass; but to practise such a mortifying mystification for days and nights on an unsuspecting guest, is unpaionable.”

JULIA.

“We have all shared in the guilt, we have all overheard you; but I alone expiate the guilt of listening.”

LUCIDOR.

“All! So much the more unpardonable. And how could you, during the day, look, without feeling abashed, at one whom you so disgracefully and illegitimately cheated by night? Still, I now see quite clearly in a glance that all your arrangements for the day were only calculated to make a fool of me. A worthy family indeed! And what becomes of your father's love of fairness? And Lucinda—”

JULIA.

“ ‘And Lucinda,’—what a tone! You would say how deeply it grieves you to think evil of Lucinda, to throw Lucinda into the same class with all the rest of us.”

LUCIDOR.

“I do not understand Lucinda.”

JULIA.

“You mean to say, This pure soul, this quiet, composed being; goodness, benevolence personified; this woman as she ought to be, associating herself with a frivolous

company—with an inconsiderate sister, a spoiled youngster, and certain other mysterious persons—that remains incomprehensible.”

LUCIDOR.

“Yes, it is indeed incomprehensible.”

JULIA.

“Well, then, comprehend it. Lucinda's hands, like those of all of us, were tied. If you had been able to observe her embarrassment, and how she could hardly restrain herself from revealing everything to you, you would love her doubly and trebly, if every true love were not on its own account ten and hundred-fold. Besides, I assure you the joke in the end became tedious to all of us.”

LUCIDOR.

“Why did you not put an end to it?”



JULIA.

“That too must now be explained. When your first monologue had become known to our father, and he could soon observe that none of his children had any objection to such an exchange, then he determined to go over at once to your father. The importance of the business gave him some misgivings. Only a father can feel the respect that is due to a father. “He must be informed about it at the very first,” said mine, “if afterwards, when we are agreed, he is not to give a forced, reluctant consent. I know him exactly; I know how firmly he keeps to any thought, inclination or plan, and I am anxious enough about it. He has mixed up Julia, his maps and views, so closely in his thoughts, that he has already formed the plan of finally establishing everything here, when the day should come for the young couple to settle down here, and could not so easily change position and place: then he would devote to us every holiday, and whatever of kindness and goodness he had in mind. He must first know what a trick nature had played upon us, for as yet nothing has been declared, nothing decided.” Thereupon he took from us all the most solemn hand-pledge that we would watch you and, happen what might, would keep you here. How his return has been delayed, how it has cost art, labor and perseverance to obtain your father's consent, that you may hear from him yourself. Enough, the thing is settled, and Lucinda is granted to you.”

And thus the two, quickly leaving their first seat, but stopping on the road, talking continuously, and slowly walking onwards, had reached an elevation on the other side of the meadows and another well-constructed highroad.

The carriage came driving quickly towards them; in a moment she directed her companion's attention to a strange spectacle. All the machinery in which her brother took such pride was now animated and in motion; the wheels were conveying a number of people up and down, swings were oscillating, poles were being climbed, and you might see essayed all kinds of bold leaps and springs above the heads of a countless multitude.

All this the young squire had put into motion, in order to entertain the guests merrily after dinner.

"You will still drive through the lower village," exclaimed Julia; "the people like me, and they shall see how happy I am."

The village was deserted; the young men had already hastened, one and all, towards the pleasure-ground; old men and women, aroused by the post-horn, showed themselves at doors and windows; they were all greetings and blessings, and exclamations: "What a handsome couple!"

JULIA.

"There now, you hear! we should probably have suited one another in the end; you may still repent it."

LUCIDOR.

"But now, dear sister-in-law —"

JULIA.

"Just so!—'dear,' now that you have got rid of me."

LUCIDOR.

"Only a word more. There rests a heavy responsibility upon you; what was the meaning of that pressing of my hand, when you knew and must have felt my awful position? Anything so thoroughly wicked I have never yet known in this world."

JULIA.

"Thank God, if that were expiated, all would be forgiven! I did not want *you* it is true; but, that you would have nothing to do with *me*, is a thing that no girl forgives, and that pressure of the hand, you see, was for the wretch. I confess that it was more villanous than was right, and I only forgive myself in forgiving you, and so let all be forgiven and forgotten! Here is my hand."

He accepted it, and exclaimed: "Here we are back again already—already back in our park; and so you will probably soon have made the round of the wide world and perhaps back: we shall meet again."

They had already arrived before the garden saloon. It seemed empty; the company, discontented at seeing dinner-time so long delayed, had set out for a walk, but Antony and Lucinda came forward. Julia threw herself out of the carriage towards her friend, she thanked him with a cordial embrace, and did not refrain from tears of deepest joy. The cheeks of the noble man reddened, his features expanded themselves, his eye looked bedimmed, and from beneath this outward form shone forth a handsome striking youth.

And thus the two couples proceeded towards the company, with feelings that the loveliest dream could not bestow.

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CHAPTER X.

Father and son, accompanied by a groom, had reached a pleasant neighborhood, when the latter, stopping in front of a lofty wall that seemed to surround an extensive enclosure, intimated to them that they had now to approach the great gate on foot, for no horse was admitted within this enclosure. They rang the bell; the gate was opened without a human figure being visible, and they advanced towards an old building that peeped out towards them between the venerable trunks of beeches and oaks. It was wonderful to look at; for old it seemed in form, yet the bricklayers and stonemasons might but just have left it, so new and perfect and well-finished seemed the joints and elaborated decorations.

A heavy metal ring on a finely-carved door invited them to knock, which Felix from wantonness did somewhat ungently; this door too opened itself, and they found at once in the hall a maiden lady of middle age, sitting before an embroidery-frame, and occupied with a well-designed piece of work.

She at once greeted the visitors as being already expected, and began to sing a cheerful song, whereupon there forthwith stepped out of an adjacent door a woman, whom, from the appendages to her girdle, without anything else, it was easy to recognize as the custodian and acting housekeeper. She also with a friendly greeting took the strangers up a flight of stairs, and opened for them a room which impressed them in a solemn way, being spacious, lofty, and panelled all round, with a series of historical designs above. Two persons came towards them—a somewhat youthful lady, and an elderly man.

The former at once frankly bade the guests welcome. “You have,” she said, “been announced as one of our circle. But how shall I without ceremony introduce you to this gentleman? He is a family friend in the best and widest sense: by day the instructive companion, by night astronomer, and physician on every occasion.”

“And I,” added he, in friendly manner, “recommend to you this lady, as untiringly active, by day, by night when need be, ready at hand, and always the most cheerful companion to live with. Angela (for so this beauty, attractive both in figure and bearing, was called) announced forthwith Makaria's approach: a green curtain was drawn aside, and a remarkable elderly lady was pushed into the room in an easy chair by two pretty young girls, and by two other girls a round table, with an inviting breakfast. In one corner of the massive oak benches round the room cushions had been laid, upon which the three above mentioned sat down, opposite to Makaria in her easy chair. Felix ate his breakfast standing, walking about the saloon, and inspecting with curiosity the knightly pictures above.

Makaria spoke to Wilhelm as to a confidential friend. She seemed to enjoy a vivid description of her relatives; it seemed as if she looked through the outward individual mask into the inner nature of each of them. The persons whom Wilhelm knew stood

as if transfigured before his soul: the intelligent benevolence of the worthy woman threw off the outward husk, and ennobled and animated the sound kernel.

After these agreeable subjects had been exhausted with most kindly treatment, she said to her worthy companion: "You must not again find an excuse in the presence of this new friend, and once more put off the promised entertainment; he seems like one who would take a part in it himself."

But to this he replied: "You know how difficult it is to explain one's self on these subjects; for the question is of nothing less than the abuse of excellent and far-reaching expedients."

"I grant that," replied Makaria, "for one falls into a double embarrassment. If one speaks of abuse, one seems to impugn the worth of the method itself, for that is always latent in the abuse; if one speaks about the method, then one can scarcely allow that its thoroughness and value admit of any abuse. Still, as we are in private, and do not want to establish anything, or to produce any outward effect, but only to enlighten ourselves, the discussion can accordingly proceed."

"Still," replied the cautious man, "we must first of all ask whether our new friend has also a wish to take part in a to some degree abstruse matter, or whether he would not prefer to take needful repose in his apartment. Can our subject be willingly and favorably received by him apart from its connection, without any knowledge as to how we arrived at it?"

"If I were to explain by something analogous what you have said, the case seems to me to be almost as if in attacking hypocrisy one could be accused of an attack against religion."

"We may let the analogy pass," said the friend; "for the question now is of a complication of several remarkable men, of high science, of an important art, and, in short, of mathematics."

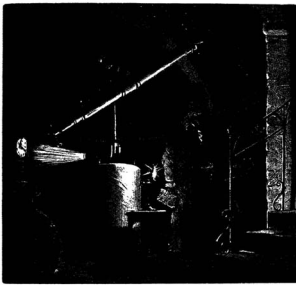
"I have always," replied Wilhelm, "even when I have heard the most unfamiliar subjects discussed, been able to appropriate something to myself; for whatever interests one man, will also find a sympathetic echo in another."

"Assuming," said the other, "that he has acquired a certain freedom of mind; and as we give you credit for this, I will not on my part at least make any objection to your presence here."

"But what shall we do with Felix?" asked Makaria, "who I see has already finished his inspection of the pictures, and shows some signs of impatience."

"May I whisper something to this young lady," said Felix, running somewhat quietly up to Angela, who went aside with him, but soon returned laughing, when the friend began to speak as follows:

“In cases in which one has to express disapproval, or blame, or even only misgiving, I do not like to take the initiative; I look out for an authority, so that I can reassure myself, in finding that some else stands by me. I praise without misgiving, for why should I be silent, if anything falls in with me. Even if it should evince my narrowness, still I have no need to be ashamed of it; but if I blame, it may happen to me that I reject something of excellence, and thereby draw on myself the disapproval of others who understand it better; I am obliged to retract, when I become enlightened. Therefore I here bring some written matter, and some translations as well; for in such things I trust my own nation as little as myself: an agreement from a distance and from foreign parts seems to afford me more security.”



After obtaining permission he began to read as follows:—but our courteous readers will probably be inclined to approve, if we do not think fit to let this worthy man read. For what has been said above about the presence of Wilhelm at this discussion, applies even more to the case in which we find ourselves. Our friends have taken into their hands a novel, and if this has here and there turned out more than reasonably didactic, we find it advisable not to try too far the patience of our well-wishers. The documents that lie before us, we are thinking of having printed in some other place, and on this occasion shall continue the narrative without delay, since we ourselves are impatient to see the existing riddle solved. But still we cannot refrain from making some further mention of what came under discussion before the separation of this noble company in the evening.

Wilhelm, after listening with great attention to this reading, remarked quite unaffectedly: “I have heard here about great natural gifts, capacities and abilities, and at the same time about considerable diffidence in the use of them; if I were to express myself briefly about it, I should exclaim: ‘Great thoughts, and a pure heart, that is what we have to pray God for!’ ”

Granting its full approval to these sensible words, the company separated: but the astronomer promised to let Wilhelm, on this clear and splendid night, have his full share in all the wonders of the starry firmament.

A few hours later the astronomer bid his guest ascend the winding staircase of the observatory, and at last step out upon the completely open platform of a lofty round tower. A most brilliant night, sparkling and glowing with all the stars of heaven, surrounded the observer, who seemed for the first time to behold the lofty firmament in all its glory. For in daily life,—irrespective of unfavorable weather, that conceals from us the splendid extent of ether,—at home we are hindered by roofs and gables, abroad by forests and by rocks, but most of all and everywhere by the inward

commotions of the mind, which flit to and fro and obscure the prospect more than all fogs or storms.

Rapt and astonished, he shut his eyes. The immense ceases to be sublime; it surpasses our faculty of comprehension, it threatens to annihilate us.

“What am I then, in comparison with the All?” he said to his own spirit. “How can I stand opposite to Him?—how can I stand in His midst?”

Yet, after a short reverie, he continued:

“The result of our evening's conference solves also the riddle of the present moment. How can man set himself against the Infinite, otherwise than by collecting in his deepest innermost soul all the spiritual energies that are scattered in every direction; but by asking himself, How durst thou even think of thyself in the midst of this eternal and living order, if there do not also reveal itself within thee a glorious moving principle circling round a pure centre? And even if it should prove difficult for thee to discover this central point within thy bosom, yet wouldst thou recognize it in this, that a benevolent and beneficent action proceeds from it, and bears witness to it. Yet, who ought, who is able to look back upon his past life, without feeling in some degree bewildered; as he will mostly find that his will has been right, but his conduct wrong; that his desires have been blameworthy, yet their attainment longed-for. How often hast thou seen these stars twinkling, and have they not always found thee different? but they are ever the same, and say ever the same thing: By our regulated march, they repeat, we indicate the day and the hour. Ask thyself also, How standest thou in reference to day and hour? And this time I can answer, Of present circumstances I need not be ashamed: my intention is to reinstate a noble family in longed-for union in all its members; the road is indicated. I shall inquire into what keeps noble souls aloof; I shall remove hindrances, of whatsoever kind they be. This thou mayest openly avow in face of these heavenly hosts: if they took any heed of thee, they would indeed laugh at thy narrowness, but they would certainly honor thine intention, and favor its fulfilment.”

With these words and thoughts he turned round to look about him; then Jupiter, the star of fortune, met his eye, as gloriously luminous as ever; he took this as a good omen, and for a time lingered gladly over the spectacle.

Presently the astronomer bade him come down, and let him look through a perfect telescope at this very star, considerably magnified and accompanied by its moons, as a celestial wonder.

After our friend had remained some time absorbed in it, he turned round and said to the star-lover: “I do not know whether I have to thank you for having brought this star so immeasurably nearer to me. As I saw it before, it stood in some relation to the innumerable others of heaven and to myself; but now it stands out in my imagination as incommensurable, and I do not know whether I ought to wish to bring out all the remaining host in like proportion. They would shut me in, oppress me.”

And so our friend went on according to his custom, and a good deal that was unpremeditated was discussed on the occasion. To some reply of the man of science, Wilhelm rejoined: "I can very well understand, that it must give you sky-searchers the greatest pleasure gradually to draw down to you all the immense universe, as I here saw, and see, this planet: but allow me to say that, in life in general and on the whole, I have found that these means, by which we come to the aid of our senses, do not exercise any morally favorable influence on man. He who looks through spectacles thinks himself wiser than he is, for his outward sense is thereby put out of balance with his inner faculty of judgment. It belongs to a higher culture, of which only excellent men are capable, to reconcile in some degree what is inwardly true, with this outward false effect. Whenever I look through a glass I become another man, and do not please myself; I see more than I ought to see; the world, seen more distinctly, does not harmonize with my inner self; and I quickly put aside my glasses, as soon as my curiosity as to how this or that distant object may be made is satisfied."

In reply to certain jocose remarks of the astronomer, Wilhelm continued: "We shall not banish these glasses from the world, any more than any piece of machinery; but to the observer of morals, it is important to inquire and to know whence many things about which complaints are made have crept into humanity. Thus, for instance, I am convinced that to the habit of wearing spectacles is chiefly due the self-conceit of our young people."



Julia.

With these discussions the night had far advanced, whereupon the astronomer, accustomed to watching, proposed to his young friend to lie down on the camp-bed, and sleep for a short time, and then with a fresher glance to contemplate and greet Venus as she anticipated the sunrise—who on this particular day promised to appear in her completed splendor.



Wilhelm, who up to this moment had felt quite brisk and cheerful, at this proposal of the kind and considerate man, felt himself really exhausted; he laid himself down, and in a moment was sunk in the deepest slumber.

When aroused by the astronomer, Wilhelm jumped up, and hurried to the window; there he remained for a moment transfixed with astonishment, and then exclaimed enthusiastically: "What splendor! what a wondrous sight!" Other words of rapture followed, but the sight still remained a wonder, a great wonder to him.

"That this lovely star, that to-day appears in a fulness and splendor quite unusual, would surprise you, I could foresee; but this I may maintain, without being reproached for being cold: I see nothing wonderful—nothing wonderful at all!"

"How could you?" replied Wilhelm, "since I bring it with me, since I carry it within me, since I do not know how it happens to me. Let me still look, dumb and astounded at it; then do you feel it."

After a pause, he continued: "I was lying in soft but deep sleep, when I felt transported into the saloon as yesterday, but alone. The green curtain went up, Makaria's chair moved forward of its own accord, like an animated being; it shone with gold, her dress seemed sacerdotal, her glance sparkled mildly; I was on the point of throwing myself down. Clouds spread forth around her feet, and ascending they bore like wings the holy form upwards: instead of her glorious countenance I beheld through the parting clouds a shining star, that was ever carried upwards, and through the opening roof united itself with the whole firmament, which seemed to be ever expanding and to embrace everything. In this moment you arouse me; heavy with sleep I rush to the window, still with the vivid image of the star in my eye, and as I look, the morning star, of equal beauty, although perhaps not of such refulgent magnificence, is really before me! This real star, hovering yonder above, replaces that of my dream, it consumes all that was glorious in that which appeared to me; but still I look and look, and you are looking also with me at what in point of fact ought to have disappeared with the haze of my sleep."

The astronomer exclaimed: "Wonderful, wonderful indeed! You do not know, yourself, what wonderful things you are saying. May this not prognosticate the decease of the glorious woman, to whom sooner or later some such apotheosis is predestined."

The next morning Wilhelm, in search of his Felix, who at an early hour had quietly stolen away, hurried into the garden, which to his astonishment he saw being tilled by a number of girls. If not all beautiful, not one was ugly, and none seemed to have reached her twentieth year. They were variously dressed, as if belonging to different localities; and were active, cheerful in greeting him, and industrious.

He was met by Angela, who was walking to and fro in order to direct and criticise the work; and to her the guest expressed his admiration at so pretty and industrious a colony.

"This," she replied, "does not die out; it alters, but remains always the same. For with their twentieth year these girls, as indeed do all the female inhabitants of our establishment, enter upon active life, generally into the state of marriage. All the young men of the neighborhood, who are anxious to obtain for themselves a robust wife, pay attention to what is going on here with us. Neither are our pupils in any way shut up in this place; they have already looked round about them—at many an annual fair have been seen, desired, and betrothed; and thus several families are already attentively waiting for another vacancy with us in order to introduce their own daughters."

After they had discussed this matter, the guest could not conceal from his new friend his desire once more to look through what had been read to them on the previous evening. "I have grasped the main drift of the conversation," he said, "but now I should like to know more correctly the details which came into question." "Fortunately I find myself in a position," she replied, "to satisfy this wish of yours at once; the familiar relations towards us, that have been granted to you so soon, justify me in telling you, that those papers are already in my hands, to be carefully kept, along with certain other documents.

"My mistress," she continued, "is profoundly convinced of the importance of impromptu conversation; things occur therein, she says, that no book contains, and yet again the best that books have ever contained. Therefore she has charged me with the duty of preserving a few good thoughts that spring from an intellectual conversation as so many grains of seed from a well-laden plant. Only if we are faithful in preserving the present, she says, can we have pleasure in tradition, in finding the best thought already spoken, the most worthy sentiment already expressed. By this process we attain to the contemplation of that agreement for which man has been born, in which he must often find himself against his own will, whilst he is only too fond of fancying that the world begins with him from the very beginning."

Angela went on to confide to the guest, that in this manner a considerable manuscript collection had grown up, from which on sleepless nights she would sometimes read aloud a sheet to Makaria; on which occasions a thousand details would in turn present themselves in a wonderful way, just as when a mass of mercury falls, and scatters itself on all sides in an innumerable multitude of globules.

To his question, how far this collection of papers was kept secret, she revealed to him that at all events only their most intimate circle had knowledge of it, that she was quite willing to be responsible for it, and, since he desired it, to lay a few sheets before him.

During this garden conversation they had arrived at the *château*, and entering the room in one of the wings, she said, smiling: "I will take this opportunity of intrusting you with another secret, for which you will be by no means prepared." Thereupon she made him peep through a curtain into a closet, where, to his great astonishment, he saw his own Felix sitting writing at a table, and was unable at once to explain to himself this unexpected diligence. But he was soon enlightened, when Angela disclosed to him that the boy had seized for this purpose the moment of his

disappearance, and had declared that writing and riding were the only things in which he had pleasure.

Our friend was then introduced into a room, where in cupboards round about he saw a number of well-arranged papers. Labels of many kinds indicated the most various contents; discrimination and orderly arrangement were everywhere conspicuous.

When Wilhelm proceeded to praise these advantages, Angela gave the credit of it to the family friend—who was capable of settling under his own supervision not only the arrangement, but also in cases of difficulty the necessary interpolation. Thereupon she found out the manuscript that had been read aloud yesterday, and allowed the eager guest to avail himself of it and all the rest, and not only take notes, but even to copy them.

Here our friend had to go to work carefully, for there was only too much that was attractive and desirable: especially did he regard certain sheets of short and scarcely connected propositions as particularly valuable. They were products which, if we did not know their origins, would seem paradoxical, but which compel us by the aid of a reversed process of seeking and finding to return backwards in order if possible to bring home to us the filiation of such thoughts from afar and from below. Neither for these, for the reasons stated above, can we grant a place. Still, at the first opportunity that presents itself, we shall not neglect, and shall be able in a proper place to put forward a selection of what was here acquired.

On the morning of the third day our friend went to Angela and stood before her not without some embarrassment. “To-day I must take leave,” he said, “and receive my last commissions from that excellent lady, whom I regret that I was not allowed to see during the whole of yesterday. Now, something is weighing on my heart, on my own innermost soul, about which I have wished to be enlightened. If it be possible, then grant me this favor.”

“I think I understand you,” said the kind woman; “yet speak on.”

“A wonderful dream,” he continued, “a few words also from the earnest astronomer, a separate locked compartment among the accessible cases, with the inscription, *The qualities of Makaria*—all these suggestions are associated with an inner voice, that tells me that this study of the heavenly bodies is not merely a scientific amusement, a striving after knowledge of the world of stars, but that we ought rather to suppose that there is hidden in it some peculiar relation of Makaria to the stars, to know which must be a matter of the highest interest to me. I am neither inquisitive nor importunate, but this forms such an important case to the student of mind and character, that I cannot refrain from asking whether, in addition to so much confidence, this extra indulgence might also be kindly granted?”

“And I have the right to grant this,” replied the amiable woman. “Your remarkable dream has remained indeed a secret to Makaria, but with our friends I have observed and considered your singular intellectual sympathy, your unexpected comprehension of the deepest secrets; and we may take courage to lead you further. Allow me in the

first instance to speak figuratively! In things difficult of comprehension one does well to help one's self in this fashion.

“As is said of the poet, the elements of the moral world are hidden in the depths of his nature, and have had to develop themselves from him little by little, so that nothing existing in the world would come to view but of what he had previously had a presentiment: even thus, it will seem, the relations of our solar system from the beginning, at first in a state of rest, then little by little developing, and afterwards becoming ever more distinctly animated, are fundamentally innate in Makaria. At first she suffered from these apparitions, then she took pleasure in them, and with her years her enjoyment increased. Yet she did not attain to the present harmony and repose until she had gained the aid of the friend whose merits you too have already learned to know sufficiently well.

“As a mathematician and philosopher, incredulous from the beginning, she was long doubtful whether this visionary power of hers was not acquired; for Makaria had to allow that, at an early age, she had enjoyed instruction in astronomy, and had studied it passionately. But at the same time, she also informed him, for many years of her life she had put together and compared the inward apparitions and the outward phenomena, but never had been able to find out any harmony between them.

“Thereupon the man of science bade her explain to him most minutely what she saw, which only from time to time was quite clear to her; he then made his calculations, and concluded hence, that she did not so much carry within herself the whole solar system, but rather that as an integral part she was spiritually moving within it. He proceeded on this supposition, and his calculations were corroborated in an incredible way by her statements.

“Thus much only do I for this time venture to confide to you, and this too I reveal only with the urgent request not to mention a word of it to anybody. For would not every man of sense and understanding, with the purest good will, still regard and declare such opinions to be mere fancies and misunderstood reminiscences of a previously acquired science? Even her family know nothing more precise about it; it is these secret revelations, these rapturous visions, that amongst her relations pass for a malady, by which she is for a time prevented from taking a part in the world and in her own interests. This, my friend, keep quietly to yourself, and also say nothing about it to Lenardo.”

Towards evening our wanderer was once more led into Makaria's presence: much that was pleasantly instructive came under discussion, from which we select the following:

“From nature we possess no defect that could not become a virtue, and no virtue that could not become a fault. These latter are just the most problematical. Our wonderful nephew has chiefly given me occasion to make this remark—the young man about whom you have heard in our family so many singular things, and whom I, according to my relatives, are said to treat more indulgently and lovingly than is due.

“From youth up there was developed in him a certain lively, technical cleverness, to which he entirely devoted himself, and in which he happily advanced to manifold knowledge and acquirements. Later, everything that he sent home from his travels was always of the most artistic, skilful, refined, and delicate handiwork, indicative of the country in which he might happen to be, and which we were expected to guess. From this it might be concluded that he was and would remain a dry, unsympathetic man, wrapped up in external things; in conversation, too, he was not disposed to agree in general ethical matters, but privately and in secret he was endowed with a wonderfully fine practical sense of good and evil, the praiseworthy and the unpraiseworthy; such that I have never seen him at fault either towards his elders or juniors, his superiors or inferiors. But this innate consciousness, unbridled as it was, in single instances transformed itself into a whimsical weakness; he would even invent for himself duties where they were not required, and sometimes quite needlessly avow himself a delinquent.

“From his whole plan of travel, but particularly from his preparations for returning, I believe that he fancies himself to have offended a certain female belonging to our circle, whose fate now causes him anxiety, from which he would feel relieved and absolved as soon as he could hear that she was well; and Angela will tell you the rest. Take this letter, and prepare a happy reunion for our family. I sincerely confess I would wish to see him once more in this world, and in taking leave of it to bless him with all my heart.”

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CHAPTER XI.

When Wilhelm had circumstantially and correctly discharged his commission, Lenardo replied, with a smile: "Much obliged as I am to you for what I hear from you, still I must add a question. Has not my aunt, in conclusion, further commissioned you to inform me of a seemingly trifling matter?"

The other reflected a moment. "Yes," he then said, "I now recollect. She mentioned a young lady whom she called Valerina. Of her I had to tell you that she is happily married, and finds herself in a very desirable position."

"You roll a stone from my heart," replied Lenardo. "Now I willingly return home, because I need not fear that the recollection of this girl will make the place and spot a reproach to me."

"It beseems me not to ask what relation you have had with her;" said Wilhelm; "enough, you may be at ease, if you should in any way sympathize with the fate of this girl."

"It is the strangest relation in the world," said Lenardo; "by no means a love affair, as one might easily fancy. I may well confide in and tell you what, in point of fact, is no story; but what will you think when I tell you that my hesitation to return, the fear of coming back to our home, those strange arrangements and questions as to how matters looked, really had the object only of finding out precisely how matters stood with this child.

"For, believe me," he continued, "I otherwise know well enough that we can leave people whom we know, for a length of time, without finding them again materially altered, and so too I expect soon to feel myself again quite at home with my relatives. It was only the question of this single person, whose situation must have been altered, and has, thank Heaven! altered itself for the better."

"You make me curious," said Wilhelm. "You make me anticipate something quite strange."

"I at least think it so," replied Lenardo, and began his story as follows:

"I had from youth up cherished the firm resolve of making the usual tour through civilized Europe in my young days, but, as will happen, I deferred its execution from time to time. The present attracted me, held me, and the distant more and more lost its charm to me, the more I read or heard told about it. Yet at last, urged by my uncle, enticed by friends, who had gone into the world before me, the resolve was made, and in fact sooner than we were all well aware of.

"My uncle, who in point of fact had to contribute the most in order to make the journey possible, had at once no other object. You know him and his peculiarity, how

he always drives only at one thing, and first sets that going whilst in the meantime everything else has to abide and be quiet, whereby he has really effected a great deal that might seem to be beyond the power of a single individual. This journey came upon him in some degree unexpectedly; but still he was able to collect himself at once. Certain buildings, that he had undertaken, nay, actually begun, were discontinued, and as he never likes to infringe on his savings, like a clever financier he looked about for some other expedients. The most convenient was to collect outstanding debts, especially rents in arrear, for this too was part of his method, that he was indulgent towards debtors, as long as he, to a certain point, was in no necessity himself. His steward received the list, and on him devolved the execution. About the details we heard nothing; only accidentally I heard that the tenant of one of our farms, with whom my uncle had long been patient, had at last been actually evicted, his caution money retained in scanty satisfaction for the deficiency, and that the land was to be leased to some one else. This man was one of the sect of the Quiet-in-the-land,"* but not, like his fellows, also prudent and active; beloved indeed for his piety and benevolence, but reproached for his weakness as a manager. On the death of his wife, a daughter, who was called simply the Nutbrown Maid, though she already promised to grow up active and determined, was far too young to take any decided measures. Enough, the man went down-hill, without my uncle's indulgence having been able to prevent his fate.

"I had my journey in mind, and must needs approve of the means for that end. All was ready; the packing and untying went on, the moments sped on. One evening I once more strolled through the park, to take leave of the familiar trees and bushes, when all of a sudden Valerina crossed my path;—for so the girl was called; the other was but a nickname occasioned by her brown complexion. She stepped towards me."

Lenardo stopped an instant, and mused. "Yet, what is the matter with me?" he said; "*was* she called Valerina? Yes, indeed," he continued; "still, the nickname was the more usual one. Enough, the brown girl stepped towards me, and begged me warmly to interpose a kind word with my uncle for her father and for herself. As I knew how the matter stood, and saw well enough that it would be difficult, nay, impossible, at that moment to do anything for them, I spoke frankly to her, and put her father's own delinquency in an unfavorable light.

"She answered me with so much clearness, and at the same time with so much daughterly indulgence and love, that she quite won my heart, and if the money had been my own, I should at once have made her happy by granting her request. But it was now a question of my uncle's income; the arrangements were his, the orders his; according to his way of thinking, there was nothing to hope for from what had already happened. Hitherto I had always kept a promise sacred. Any one who asked anything of me put me in a difficulty. I had so accustomed myself to refuse, that I did not even promise what I intended to perform. This time, too, this habit stood me in good stead. Her motives rested on an individual case and on affection; mine on those of duty and reason, and I do not deny that in the end they seemed too severe even to myself. We had already repeated the same thing several times, without convincing one another, when distress made her more eloquent, and the inevitable ruin, that she saw before herself, forced tears from her eyes. Her composed demeanor did not entirely forsake

her, but she spoke with animation, with emotion, and, whilst I still continued to feign coldness and indifference, her whole soul was revealed. I wished to end the scene, but all of a sudden she lay at my feet, had seized my hand, kissed it, and looked up at me so innocently and amiably imploring, that for the moment I forgot myself. Raising her from the ground I hurriedly said to her: 'I will do what I possibly can: be quiet, my child!' And then I turned into a side path.



“ ‘Do what is impossible!’ she called after me. I do not remember what I wanted to say, but I said, ‘I will,’ and stopped.

“ ‘Do!’ she cried suddenly, cheered with an expression of heavenly hope. I nodded to her and hurried away.

“I would not in the first instance apply to my uncle, for I knew him only too well: one must not venture to remind him of details when he was occupied with the whole. I sought the steward; he had ridden out. In the evening came guests—friends who wished to take leave. Playing and eating went on until deep into the night. They remained the following day, and the distraction blotted out the picture of the urgent petitioner. The steward returned; he was more busy and overworked than ever. Everyone was asking for him. He had no time to listen to me; still, I made an attempt to get hold of him; but scarcely had I mentioned the pious tenant to him, than he waved me off with some impatience. ‘Do not, for Heaven’s sake, say anything to your uncle about it, unless you want in the end to get into trouble yourself.’

“The day of my departure had been fixed; I had to write letters, to receive guests, to pay visits in the neighborhood. My people had up to this time sufficed for my service, but were by no means sufficiently dexterous in lightening the business of departure. Everything devolved upon myself; and yet, when the steward at last gave me an hour at night to settle our financial affairs, I once more ventured to intercede for Valerina’s father.

“ ‘Dear baron,’ said this active personage, ‘how can such a thing recur to you? I have to-day had a difficult business with your uncle; for what you require to get away from here amounts to much more than we thought. This is indeed quite natural, but yet awkward. In particular, the old gentleman has no pleasure, if a thing seems to be done, while a good deal still lags behind; yet it often happens, and the rest of us have to pay penalty for it. As regards the rigor with which outstanding debts have to be exacted, he has made a law for himself: he makes up his mind about it, and it would be difficult to induce him to give in. Don’t do it, I beg you! It would be altogether in vain.’

“I allowed myself to be deterred from my request, but not entirely. I besought him, since the execution depended upon him, to go kindly and indulgently to work. He

promised everything, after the fashion of such persons, in order to have peace for the moment. He got rid of me; the hurry, the distraction increased. I sat in the carriage, and turned my back on every sympathy that I might have at home.

“A lively impression is like any other wound; one does not feel it as one receives it. Only later it begins to pain and to fester. So it was in my case in regard to the scene in the grounds. Every time that I was alone or unoccupied the image of the imploring girl arose like a vivid picture before my soul, with all its surroundings, with every tree and bush, the place where she knelt, and the path down which I turned to get away from her. It was an indelible impression, that indeed could be overshadowed and veiled by other images and sympathies, but never be eradicated. It always arose new at every quiet hour, and the longer it lasted the more painfully I felt the guilt with which I had loaded myself against my principles, against my habit—although not expressly, but only blunderingly, for the first time involved in such a case.

“I did not fail, in my first letters, to ask our agent how the affair had turned out. He was some time in answering. Then he evaded replying on this point, then his words were equivocal; at last he was altogether silent. The distance between us increased; more objects intervened between me and my home; my attention was claimed for many observations and many sympathies; the image disappeared, and the girl, almost to her very name. The remembrance of her occurred more seldom, and my fancy not to communicate with my people through letters, but only by means of tokens, contributed much to make my former state of mind, with all its accompanying conditions, almost disappear. Now, only as I approach nearer home, when I am thinking of reimbursing my family, with interest, what they have hitherto been content to dispense with, now I am again assailed by this wonderful remorse (I must even call it wonderful), in all its force. The image of the girl is renewed with the images of my friends, and I dread nothing more than to hear that she has succumbed in the misfortune into which I plunged her; for my neglect appeared to me a help towards her ruin, a hastening of her sad fate. I have already said to myself a thousand times, that this feeling was in reality only a weakness, that, long ago, I had been impelled to make the rule never to give a promise solely from fear of repentance, and not from any more noble feeling. And now even the repentance, which I shunned, seems to take its revenge on me, laying hold of this instance instead of a thousand others to torture me. At the same time the image, the picture, that tortures me, is so pleasant, so sweet, that I willingly linger over it. And when I think about it, then the kiss, which she impressed upon my hand, seems still to burn me.”

Lenardo was silent, and Wilhelm replied quickly and cheerfully: “Then I could not have shown you any greater service than by the supplement to my message, just as the most interesting part of a letter may often be contained in the postscript. Indeed, I know but little about Valerina, for I heard her only casually mentioned; but she is certainly the wife of a well-to-do landowner, and lives happy, as your aunt assured me at parting.”

“Capital!” said Lenardo; “now, nothing holds me back: you have absolved me, and we will at once set off to my family, who, moreover, have been waiting for me longer than is right.”

Wilhelm replied to this: "Unfortunately I am not able to accompany you; for a special obligation devolves on me, never to rest longer than three days, and not to revisit the places that I leave within one year. Pardon me, if I dare not explain to you the reason of this singularity."

"I am very sorry," said Lenardo, "that we should lose you so soon, and that I am unable to assist you in anything. Still, since you have once set yourself in the way to do me good, you would make me very happy if you would go and see Valerina, inform yourself precisely about her affairs, and then, either by letter or word of mouth—for a third place of meeting can easily be found—would give me, for the sake of my peace of mind, a circumstantial report."

This scheme was further discussed; Wilhelm had been told Valerina's place of abode. He undertook to go and see her; another place was appointed, whither the baron was to come, and also bring with him Felix, who in the meantime had remained behind with the ladies.

Lenardo and Wilhelm, riding side by side, had pursued their way for some time, with varied conversation, through pleasant meadows, when they once more approached the carriage road, and overtook the baron's carriage, which was to wend its way homewards in company with its master. Here the friends decided to part, and Wilhelm in a few friendly words took leave, and once more promised the baron to write him speedy news from Valerina.

"When I consider," replied Lenardo, "that it would only be a little way round, if I accompanied you, why should I not go and see Valerina myself. Why not personally convince myself of her happy condition? You were so kind as to offer your services as a messenger; why should you not be my companion? For a companion I must have, a moral support, just as one obtains legal assistance when one does not consider one's self quite equal to the matter of law."

Wilhelm's objections, that as the long-absent one was being waited for at home it might make a singular impression if the carriage returned empty, and aught else of the same kind, could not prevail with Lenardo, and Wilhelm had at last to accept the part of a companion, with no pleasant thoughts as to the consequences that were to be feared. The servants, therefore, were instructed as to what they would have to say on arrival, and the friends presently struck the road that led to Valerina's dwelling. The neighborhood seemed rich and fruitful, and the true home of agriculture. Thus, in the ground belonging to Valerina's husband, the soil was thoroughly good, and tilled with great care.

Wilhelm had time to inspect the landscape closely, while Lenardo rode in silence by his side.

At last the latter began: "Another in my place would perhaps try to approach Valerina unknown; for it is always a painful sensation to present one's self to those whom one has offended; but I will rather endure that, and bear the reproach that I fear from her first glances, than screen myself from it by disguise and falsehood. Falsehood may put

us in as great an embarrassment as truth; and when we strike a balance of how often one or the other avails us, it will always prove worth our while once for all to resign ourselves to truth. Let us therefore go forward confidently; I shall give my name, and introduce you as my friend and companion.”

They had now reached the farmhouse, and dismounted in the yard. A fine-looking man, simply clad, whom they could have known for a farmer, came towards them and announced himself as the master of the house. Lenardo gave his name, and the farmer seemed highly delighted to see him and to make his acquaintance. “What will my wife say,” he exclaimed, “when she sees again the nephew of her benefactor! She cannot imagine or describe all that she and her father owe your uncle!”

What strange ideas forthwith crossed each other in Lenardo's mind! “Does this man, who seems so honest, conceal his bitterness behind a friendly face and smooth words? Is he able to utter his reproaches with such a pleasant outward aspect? For has not my uncle made this family unhappy? And can it have remained unknown to him? Or—as it occurred to him with quick hopefulness—did the affair turn out less badly than you think? For, after all, you have never received any precise information.” Such suppositions alternated to and fro, whilst the master of the house caused the horses to be harnessed, in order to fetch his wife, who was paying a visit in the neighborhood.

“If, in the meantime, until my wife returns, I may entertain you after my fashion, and at the same time continue my work, take a few steps into the field with me, and see how I manage my business; for surely to you, as a great landowner, nothing can be more attractive than the noble science, the noble art, of tilling the soil.”

Lenardo did not object; Wilhelm was glad to instruct himself; and the farmer kept his land and soil, which he occupied and owned without let or hindrance, in perfectly good order. Whatever he undertook was calculated for the end in view; what he sowed and planted was thoroughly in the right place; he knew how to explain so clearly all the treatment and the reasons, that anybody could understand it, and would have thought it possible to do and achieve the same—an illusion into which we easily fall when we look at a master who does everything with ease.

The strangers showed themselves highly satisfied, and could bestow nothing but praise and approval. This he took thankfully and kindly, but still added, “But now I must also show you my weak side, which indeed is always observable in anyone who devotes himself exclusively to one object.”

He took them into his yard, showed them his implements, his stock of these, as well as the stock of all imaginable appliances, and what appertained to them. “I am often blamed,” he said, “for going too far in these things; but indeed I cannot reproach myself on that account. Happy is he to whom his business also becomes his toy, who at last actually plays and enjoys himself in what his situation has made a duty.”



The two friends were not wanting in questions and inquiries. Wilhelm particularly enjoyed the general remarks, to which this man seemed addicted, and did not fail to reply to them; whilst Lenardo, more absorbed in himself, was quietly sympathizing with Valerina's happiness—which in this state of things he took for granted—yet with a feeling of uneasiness, of which he could give no account to himself.

They had already returned to the house, when the hostess's carriage drove up. They hurried towards it; but how astonished, how shocked was Lenardo, when he beheld her dismount. It was not she; it was not the Nutbrown Maid: nay, just the reverse—a fine slim figure enough, it is true, but fair, with all the advantages peculiar to fair women.

This beauty, this grace, shocked Lenardo. His eyes had sought the brown maiden; now there beamed on him quite a different one. He remembered these features, too; her address, her manner relieved him soon of every uncertainty—it was the daughter of the lawyer, who was held by the uncle in great esteem, on which account he had also done a good deal towards setting up and helping the young couple.

All this, and more too, was joyfully recounted by the young woman as an introductory greeting, and with a delight such as the surprise of recognition calls forth without restraint. They inquired whether they remembered each other; they discussed the alterations in appearance, that are perceptible enough in persons of this age. Valerina had always been charming, but was in the highest degree amiable when joy drew her out of her ordinary indifferent mood. The party became talkative, and the conversation so lively, that Lenardo could recover himself and hide his astonishment. Wilhelm, to whom his friend had soon given a hint about this strange occurrence, did his best to help him; and Valerina's little vanity, that the baron had remembered her, even before he had seen his own people, did not allow her to entertain the least suspicion, that any other intention or a misunderstanding was involved.

They remained together until late at night, although the two friends were longing for a confidential conversation, which began then and there, as soon as they were alone together in the guest-chamber.

“It seems,” said Lenardo, “that I am not to be relieved of my anxiety. An unfortunate confusion of names, as I perceive, increases it. This fair beauty I have often seen playing with the brown one, who could not be called a beauty; aye, even I myself, although much older, used to run about with them in the fields and gardens. Neither of them made the slightest impression upon me; I have only remembered the name of one of them, and bestowed it on the other. Now I find the one who does not interest

me, after her own fashion happy beyond measure, whilst the other has been cast upon the wide world, who knows whither!”

On the following morning the friends were up almost earlier than the active farm-people. The pleasure of seeing her guests had also awakened Valerina betimes. She did not apprehend in what frame of mind they came to breakfast.

Wilhelm, who saw well that Lenardo remained in a most painful state, without any information about the Nutbrown Maid, turned the conversation to pastimes, to games, to the locality, which he himself knew, to other recollections—so that Valerina at last quite naturally came to mention the Nutbrown Maid, and pronounced her name.

Scarcely had Lenardo heard the name of Nachodina, than he remembered it perfectly; but also, with the name, the image of the supplicant returned to him with such an overwhelming power, that everything else became quite unendurable as Valerina with warm sympathy related the eviction of the pious tenant, his resignation, and his departure, and how he had leaned upon his daughter, who carried a little bundle. Lenardo thought that he should faint. Unfortunately, and at the same time fortunately, Valerina expatiated upon certain circumstances, which although they wounded Lenardo's heart, still made it possible for him, with the assistance of his companion, to show some presence of mind.

They took leave amidst many and sincere requests on the part of husband and wife that they would return soon, and half-feigned assent on the part of the two guests. And as with a man who has a good opinion of himself everything turns to his advantage, so Valerina finally interpreted Lenardo's silence, his visible distraction at parting, his hurried departure, in her own favor; and although the faithful and loving wife of an excellent farmer, she still could not help feeling a certain complacency in the reawakened or newly-born inclination, as she took it to be—of her former landlord.



After this strange occurrence, Lenardo said: “With such fine hopes, to have been shipwrecked so close to the harbor! The only thing that can now in any degree cheer me up, tranquillize me for the moment, and let me present myself to my people, is the consideration that Heaven has sent you to me—you, to whom from the nature of your own peculiar mission, it is indifferent whither or to what purpose it directs your path. Do you then undertake to find Nachodina, and give me news of her. If she is happy, then I am content; if she is unhappy, then help her at my expense. Act without misgiving; spare, omit nothing.”

“But towards what quarter of the earth,” said Wilhelm, laughing, “must I direct my steps? If you yourself have no idea, how shall I be endowed therewith?”

“Look here!” answered Lenardo, “last night, when you saw me pacing restlessly to and fro, passionately upsetting both my heart and head about the matter, there came to my mind an old friend, a worthy man, who without exactly tutoring me, has had a great influence upon my youth. I should like to have had him, at least for some time, as a travelling companion, if he had not been extraordinarily bound to his home by the most beautiful rarities of art and antiquity, which he only leaves for a few moments at a time. He, I know, enjoys an extensive acquaintance with everything that in this world is bound by any worthy clue; you hasten to him, tell him all that I have said, and it remains to be hoped, that his kindly feeling will suggest to him some place, some region, where she may be found. In my trouble it occurred to me, that the father of the child belonged to the denomination of Pietists; and, at the moment, I became sufficiently pious to apply myself to the moral ordering of this world, and to pray that in the present case, it may, with miraculous grace, reveal itself for once in my own favor.”

“But there is still a difficulty,” replied Wilhelm, “that remains to be solved. What must I do with my Felix? For I should not like to take him about with me upon a so utterly uncertain mission, and yet I should not like to part with him, for it seems to me that the son nowhere develops himself better than in the presence of the father.”

“By no means!” replied Lenardo; “this is a kindly paternal error. The father always retains a kind of despotic relation towards the son, whose virtues he does not recognize, and in whose faults he takes pleasure; on which account even the ancients used to say, that the sons of heroes turned out good-for-nothings, and I have seen enough of the world to make up my mind as to that matter. Happily our old friend, to whom I will at once give you a hurried letter, will also be able to suggest the best solution of this matter. When years ago I saw him last, he told me a great deal about a certain pedagogic association which I could only consider a kind of Utopia; it seemed to me as if, under the image of reality, a series of ideas, thoughts, proposals and intentions, were meant, which were really connected, but which in the ordinary course of things would be rather difficult to meet with. But because I know him, and because he likes to realize by means of images what is possible and impossible, I approved of it, and now it will serve our purpose; he is certainly able to indicate to you the place and surroundings to which you can confidently intrust your boy, and hope the best from a wise training.”

Conversing together in this manner as they rode, they came in view of a noble villa; its construction in a pleasantly sombre style, with an open space in front, and somewhat farther, a dignified surrounding of well-grown trees. Doors and shutters, however, were everywhere closed; all was deserted, yet at the same time looked in good condition. From an elderly man, who seemed to be employed at the entrance, they learned that this was the inheritance of a young man, to whom it had been left by his father, who had died quite recently at a very advanced age.

On further inquiry, they were informed that to the heir it unfortunately seemed all too complete: nothing was left for him to do, and that to enjoy things ready at hand was by no means his fashion; that therefore he had sought out for himself a locality nearer to the mountains, where he had built log huts for himself and his companions, and

intended to found a kind of hunters' hermitage. As far as concerned their informant they gathered that he was the hereditary steward, and took the most punctilious care for the preservation and cleanliness of the premises, in order that a grandson, succeeding to the tastes and the possession of the grandfather, might find everything just as the latter had left it.

Having for some time pursued their road in silence, Lenardo commenced with the observation, that it was a peculiarity inherent in man to want to begin at the beginning; upon which his friend replied, that this was an easy thing to explain, and allow for, because in a strict sense everyone really did begin from the beginning.

"And yet," he exclaimed, "if to none are the sufferings remitted with which his ancestors were tortured, can you blame him for not wanting to have anything to do with their pleasures?"

Lenardo thereupon replied, "You encourage me to confess that in reality I do not like to work at anything but what I have myself created. I never liked a servant whom I had not educated from a child, or a horse that I had not myself broken in. In consequence of this mode of thinking, I will also willingly confess that I am irresistibly drawn towards primitive conditions; that my travels through all highly civilized lands and people have not availed to blunt these feelings; that my imagination seeks a pleasure beyond the sea, and that a hitherto neglected family possession in those young countries allows me to hope that a plan of mine, conceived in solitude and gradually maturing in accordance with my wishes, will at last be executed."

"I have nothing to object to this," Wilhelm replied; "an idea of this kind, turned towards what is new and unsettled, has something peculiar and great about it. I only beg you to reflect, that such an enterprise can only succeed for a community. You cross the sea, and there find family possessions ready, I know; my friends entertain similar plans, and have already settled there. Associate yourself with these prudent, wise, and strong people; for both sides the matter will thereby be lightened and enlarged."

With conversation of this kind the friends reached the spot where they must now really separate. They both sat down to write; Lenardo recommended his friend to the singular man above-mentioned, and Wilhelm described to his colleagues the position of his new associate, out of which naturally enough arose a letter of recommendation, in which, in conclusion, he also urged the matter that he had discussed with Jarno, and further set forth the reasons for which he wished to be freed as soon as possible from the inconvenient condition that stamped him as a wandering Jew. In reading these letters to each other, Wilhelm could not refrain from again bringing home to his friend certain other doubts.

"I consider it," he said, "in my position the most enviable duty to free you, noble-hearted man, from a state of mental anxiety, and at the same time to rescue a human creature from misery, if she happen to be therein. Such an aim one might regard as a star, by which we sail, even whilst ignorant of what may happen to us, or what we

may meet on the road. Still, I cannot hide from myself the danger to which in any case you are always exposed. If you were not a man who absolutely declines to pledge his word, I would require of you the promise never again to see this female, who will cost you so dear; to content yourself, if I inform you that she is well, in case I should be fortunate enough to ascertain that she is really happy, or am able to contribute to her happiness. But, since I neither can nor will induce you to make any promise, I implore you, by all that is dear to you and holy, for the sake of yourself and your people, and of myself, your newly-acquired friend, never to allow yourself any approach to that lost maiden on any pretext whatever; nor to ask me to indicate circumstantially, or even name the place, where I may find her, or the neighborhood where I leave her. You must only believe my word that she is well, and therewith be relieved and set at rest."

Lenardo laughed and replied: "Only do me this service, and I shall be grateful. You shall have the credit for what you can and will do, and leave me to time, to common sense, and if possible to reason."

"Pardon me," Wilhelm replied; "he who knows under what strange forms inclination insinuates itself into us, must feel concerned when he foresees that a friend may wish for that which, in his condition and in his circumstances, must necessarily bring about misfortune and confusion."

"I hope," said Lenardo, "that if I know that the girl is happy, I shall be done with her." The friends then separated, each in his own direction.

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CHAPTER XII.

By a short and pleasant road, Wilhelm had reached the town to which his letter was addressed. He found it cheerful and well built; but an appearance of newness betrayed only too clearly that it must have recently suffered from fire. The address of his letter took him to the last, small portion of the town that had escaped, to a house of an ancient, solemn style of architecture. Colored window-panes, strangely combined together, gave indication of a cheerful wealth of color within. And the interior really corresponded with the outside. In the sombre rooms were seen on all sides pieces of furniture that might have served several generations already, interspersed with but few modern ones. The master of the house received him kindly, in an apartment similarly furnished. Many an hour of birth and death had these clocks already struck, and all that stood around called to mind that the past could flow on into the present. The visitor delivered his letter, but his host laid it aside without opening it, and in a cheerful conversation essayed in a direct way to become acquainted with his guest. They soon grew confidential, and when Wilhelm, contrary to his usual habit, allowed his glances to run observantly about the room, the kind old man said: "My surroundings awaken your interest. You see here how long a thing can last. And one must, too, look on such things as the counterpoise of what changes and alters so rapidly in the world. This tea-kettle before now served my parents, and was a witness of our evening family gatherings. This copper fire-screen still continues to protect me from the fire, which this strong old poker stirs up, and so it is with everything. I have consequently been able to devote sympathy and activity to many other subjects because I have not troubled myself further about the changing of these external requirements that expend the time and strength of so many people. A loving attention to what man possesses makes him rich while he thereby amasses for himself a wealth of memories in unimportant things. I have known a young man, who, in taking leave of his sweetheart, stole from her a pin, with which he used daily to pin on his cravat, and actually brought home from a distant journey of many years' length this cherished and carefully preserved object. To us other petty human beings this may well be reckoned as a virtue."

"Many also," added Wilhelm, "perhaps bring back from a like long journey a thorn in the heart, that probably they would rather be free of."

The old man seemed to know nothing about Lenardo's circumstances, although he had in the meantime opened and read the letter, for he again returned to his former reflections.

"Attachment to what we possess," he continued, "in many instances gives us the greatest energy. To this kind of selfishness I owe the saving of my house. When the town was on fire, those too, who were with me, wanted to run away and escape. I forbade it, ordered windows and doors to be shut, and with several of my neighbors turned to deal with the flames. Our efforts were successful in saving unscathed this corner of the town. The next morning everything in my house stood as you see it, and as it has stood almost a hundred years."

“With all that,” said Wilhelm, “you will confess that man cannot resist changes that time brings about.”

“Granted,” said the old man; “but still he who has kept himself longest has also achieved something. Nay, we are even able to preserve and make sure beyond the term of our existence: we hand down knowledge, we transfer tastes just as well as property; and as it is for me chiefly a question of the latter, I have on this account for a long time been wonderfully cautious, and hit on quite peculiar expedients; but only of late have I succeeded in seeing my desire fulfilled. Usually the son scatters abroad what the father has collected, collects something different, or in different manner. But if we are able to wait for the grandson, for the new generation, then the same inclinations, the same objects come to light. And thus at last through the interest of our pedagogue-friends, I have got hold of a fine young man, who if possible is more tenacious of heirlooms than myself, and feels a strong bent for curious things. He has entirely gained my confidence through the strenuous efforts by which he succeeded in averting the fire from our house; he has doubly and trebly earned the treasure, the possession of which I think of bequeathing to him; nay, it is already handed over to him, and since that time our store has been increased in a wonderful way. Yet not all that you see here is ours; rather, just as at a pawnbroker's you behold many an alien jewel, so I can also point out to you some valuables, which under the most diverse circumstances have been deposited here for better keeping.”

Wilhelm thought of the splendid casket, which in any case he did not like to carry about with him on journeys, and he did not refrain from showing it to his friend. The old man looked at it attentively, named the time when it must have been made, and showed him something similar. Wilhelm then mooted the point whether it might be opened.

The old man thought not.

“I believe indeed,” he said, “that it could be done, without any particular damage; but, since you have obtained it by such a strange accident, you ought to try your fortune with it. For if you are born to good luck, and if this casket betokens anything, then in time the key must be found for it, and just where you expect it least.”

“There are probably such cases,” replied Wilhelm.

“I have myself experienced several,” answered the old man, “and here you see the most remarkable one before you. For thirty years I possessed the body of this ivory crucifix with head and feet all of one piece; for its subject, as well as its most exquisite art, it was carefully locked up in my most precious drawer. About ten years ago, I received the cross belonging to it, with the inscription, and I let myself be persuaded to have the arms put on, by the cleverest carver of our time; yet how far was the good man behind his predecessor! Still, it might pass, more for edifying contemplation than for admiration of the workmanship. Now, only think of my delight! A short time ago I received the original, genuine arms, as you here see them, fitted on in the loveliest accord! And in my rapture at so happy a coincidence, I

cannot refrain from recognizing in this the destinies of the Christian religion, which, often enough divided and scattered, must yet at last meet again at the cross."

Wilhelm admired the image and its strange recombination. "I shall follow your advice," he added; "let the casket remain shut, until the key has been found, even if it should lie by to the end of my life."

"He who lives long," said the old man, "sees many things gathered together, and many dispersed."

The young joint-owner just then entered, and Wilhelm declared his intention of intrusting the casket to their keeping. A large book was now brought, and the property intrusted was entered; a receipt was made out with the observance of many ceremonies and stipulations. It was, in point of fact, expressed in favor of anyone who presented it, but would be honored only on a special sign agreed upon with the receiver.

When this was all completed, the contents of the letter were considered, the reception of the good Felix being first discussed, in which matter the elderly friend, without more ado, propounded certain maxims, which ought to form the basis of education.

"All life, all activity, all art must be preceded by handiwork, that can only be acquired in a limited sphere. A correct knowledge and practice give a higher culture than half-knowledge in hundredfold. In the place that I have indicated to you all activities have been isolated; the pupils are tested at every step; thereby a man finds out whither his nature really tends, or if he is turning with confused wishes, now this way, now that. Wise men allow the boy to find at hand what suits him; they cut off the by-roads along which men will only too easily stray away from their vocation.



"In the next place," he continued, "I venture to hope that, from that grandly based centre, they will guide you upon the road to where that good girl will be found, who has made such a wonderful impression upon your friend, who by dint of moral feeling and reflection has so highly enhanced the value of an innocent, unfortunate creature that he has been compelled to make her existence the end and aim of his life. I hope that you will be able to set him at rest; for Providence possesses a thousand means of raising the fallen, and setting up those bowed down. Our destiny often looks like a fruit-tree in winter. Who would think from its pitiable aspect that those rigid boughs, those rough twigs could next spring again be green, bloom, and even bear fruit? Yet we hope it, we know it."

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BOOK II.



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CHAPTER I.

Our pilgrims had performed the journey according to programme, and prosperously reached the frontier of the province in which they were to learn so many wonderful things. On their first entry they beheld a most fertile region, the gentle slopes of which were favorable to agriculture, its higher mountains to sheep-feeding, and its broad valleys to the rearing of cattle. It was shortly before the harvest, and everything was in the greatest abundance; still, what surprised them from the outset, was that they saw neither women nor men, but only boys and youths busy getting ready for a prosperous harvest, and even making friendly preparations for a joyous harvest-home. They greeted now one, and now another, and inquired about the master, of whose whereabouts no one could give an account. The address of their letter was: *To the Master or to the Three*, and this too the boys could not explain; however, they referred the inquirers to an overseer, who was just preparing to mount his horse. They explained their object; Felix's frank bearing seemed to please him: and so they rode together along the road.

Wilhelm had soon observed that a great diversity prevailed in the cut and color of the clothing, which gave a peculiar aspect to the whole of the little community. He was just on the point of asking his companion about this when another strange sight was displayed to him: all the children, howsoever they might be occupied, stopped their work, and turned, with peculiar yet various gestures, towards the party riding past; and it was easy to infer that their object was the overseer. The youngest folded their arms crosswise on the breast, and looked cheerfully towards the sky; the intermediate ones held their arms behind them, and looked smiling upon the ground; the third sort stood erect and boldly; with arms at the side, they turned the head to the right, and placed themselves in a row, instead of remaining alone, like the others, where they were first seen.

Accordingly, when they halted and dismounted, just where several children had ranged themselves in various attitudes and were being inspected by the overseer, Wilhelm asked the meaning of these gestures.

Felix interposed, and said cheerfully: "What position have I to take, then?"

"In any case," answered the intendant, "at first the arms across the breast, and looking seriously and gladly upward, without turning your glance." He obeyed; however he soon exclaimed: "This does not please me particularly; I see nothing overhead; does it last long? But yes, indeed," he exclaimed joyfully, "I see two hawks flying from west to east; that must be a good omen!"

"It depends on how you take to it, how you behave yourself," rejoined the former; "now go and mingle with them, just as they mingle with each other."

He made a sign, the children forsook their attitudes, resumed their occupations or went on playing as before.

"Will you, and can you," Wilhelm now asked, "explain to me that which causes my wonder? I suppose that these gestures, these positions, are greetings, with which they welcome you."

"Just so," answered the other; "greetings, that tell me at once at what stage of cultivation each of these boys stands."

"But could you," Wilhelm added, "explain to me the meaning of the graduation? For that it is such, is easy to see."

"That is the part of better people than me," answered the other; "but I can assure you of this much, that they are no empty grimaces, and that, on the contrary, we impart to the children, not indeed the highest, but still a guiding and intelligible explanation; but at the same time we command each to keep and cherish for himself what we may have chosen to impart for the information of each: they may not chat about it with strangers, nor amongst themselves, and thus the teaching is modified in a hundred ways. Besides this the secrecy has very great advantages; for if we tell people immediately and perpetually the reason of everything, they think that there is nothing behind. To certain secrets, even if they may be known, we have to show deference by concealment and silence, for this tends to modesty and good morals."

"I understand you," said Wilhelm. "Why should we not also apply spiritually what is so necessary in bodily matters? But perhaps in another respect you can satisfy my curiosity. I am surprised at the great variety in the cut and color of their clothes, and yet I do not see all kinds of color, but a few only, and these in all their shades, from the brightest to the darkest. Still I observe, that in this there cannot be meant any indication of degrees of either age or merit; since the smallest and biggest boys mingled together may be alike in cut and color, whilst those who are alike in gestures do not agree with one another in dress."

"As concerns this, too," their companion replied, "I cannot explain any further; yet I shall be much mistaken if you depart hence without being enlightened about all that you may wish to know."

They were now going in search of the master, whom they thought that they had found; but now a stranger could not but be struck by the fact, that the deeper they got into the country the more they were met by a harmonious sound of singing. Whatsoever the boys set about, in whatever work they were found engaged, they were forever singing, and in fact it seemed that the songs were specially adapted to each particular occupation, and in similar cases always the same. If several children were in any place, they would accompany each other in turns. Towards evening they came upon some dancing, their steps being animated and guided by choruses. Felix from his horse chimed in with his voice, and, in truth, not badly; Wilhelm was delighted with this entertainment, which made the neighborhood so lively. "I suppose," he observed to his companion, "you devote a great deal of care to this kind of instruction, for otherwise this ability would not be so widely diffused, or so perfectly developed."

“Just so,” replied the other; “with us the art of singing forms the first step in education; everything else is subservient to it, and attained by means of it. With us the simplest enjoyment, as well as the simplest instruction, is enlivened and impressed by singing; and even what we teach in matters of religion and morals is communicated by the method of song. Other advantages for independent ends are directly allied; for, whilst we practise the children in writing down by symbols on the slate the notes which they produce, and then, according to the indication of these signs, in reproducing them in their throats, and moreover in adding the text, they exercise at the same time the hand, ear, and eye, and attain orthography and calligraphy quicker than you would believe; and, finally, since all this must be practised and copied according to pure metre and accurately fixed time, they learn to understand much sooner than in other ways the high value of measure and computation. On this account, of all imaginable means, we have chosen music as the first element of our education, for from this equally easy roads radiate in every direction.”



Wilhelm sought to inform himself further, and did not hide his astonishment at hearing no instrumental music.

“We do not neglect it,” replied the other, “but we practise it in a special place, enclosed in the most charming mountain-valley; and then again we take care that the different instruments are taught in places lying far apart. Especially are the discordant notes of beginners banished to certain solitary spots, where they can drive no one crazy; for you will yourself confess, that in well-regulated civil society scarcely any more miserable nuisance is to be endured than when the neighborhood inflicts upon us a beginner on the flute or on the violin. Our beginners, from their own laudable notion of wishing to be an annoyance to none, go voluntarily for a longer or shorter period into the wilds, and, isolated there, vie with one another in attaining the merit of being allowed to draw nearer to the inhabited world; on which account they are, from time to time, allowed to make an attempt at drawing nearer, which seldom fails, because in these, as in our other modes of education, we venture actually to develop and encourage a sense of shame and diffidence. I am sincerely glad that your son has got a good voice; the rest will be effected all the more easily.”

They had now reached a place where Felix was to remain, and make trial of his surroundings, until they were disposed to grant a formal admission. They already heard from afar a cheerful singing; it was a game, which the boys were now enjoying in their play-hour. A general chorus resounded, in which each member of a large circle joined heartily, clearly, and vigorously in his part, obeying the directions of the superintendent. The latter, however, often took the singers by surprise, by suspending with a signal the chorus-singing, and bidding some one or other single performer, by a touch of his baton, to adapt alone some suitable song to the expiring tune and the

passing idea. Most of them already showed considerable ability, a few who failed in the performance willingly paid their forfeit, without exactly being made a laughing-stock. Felix was still child enough to mix at once among them and came tolerably well out of the trial. Thereupon the first style of greeting was conceded to him: he forthwith folded his arms on his breast, looked upwards, and with such a droll expression withal, that it was quite plain that no hidden meaning in it had as yet occurred to him.

The pleasant spot, the kind reception, the merry games, all pleased the boy so well, that he did not feel particularly sad when he saw his father depart; he looked almost more wistfully at the horse as it was led away; yet he had no difficulty in understanding, when he was informed that he could not keep it in the present locality. On the other hand, they promised him that he should find, if not the same, at all events an equally lively and well-trained one when he did not expect it.

As the superior could not be found, the overseer said: "I must now leave you, to pursue my own avocations; but still I will take you to the Three who preside over holy things: your letter is also addressed to them, and together they stand in place of the superior."

Wilhelm would have liked to learn beforehand about the holy things, but the other replied: "The Three in return for the confidence with which you have left your son with us will certainly, in accordance with wisdom and justice, reveal to you all that is most necessary. The visible objects of veneration, which I have called holy things, are included within a particular boundary, are not mingled with anything, or disturbed by anything; only at certain times of the year, the pupils, according to the stages of their education, are admitted to them, in order that they may be instructed historically and through their senses; for in this way they carry off with them an impression, enough for them to feed upon for a long time in the exercise of their duty."

Wilhelm now stood at the entrance of a forest-valley, enclosed by lofty walls; on a given signal a small door was opened, and a serious, respectable-looking man received our friend. He found himself within a large and beautifully verdant enclosure, shaded with trees and bushes of every kind, so that he could scarcely see some stately walls and fine buildings through the dense and lofty natural growth; his friendly reception by the Three, who came up by-and-bye, ultimately concluded in a conversation, to which each contributed something of his own, but the substance of which we shall put together in brief.

"Since you have intrusted your son to us," they said, "it is our duty to let you see more deeply into our methods of proceeding. You have seen many external things, that do not carry their significance with them all at once; which of these do you most wish to have explained?"

"I have remarked certain seemingly yet strange gestures and obeisances, the significance of which I should like to learn; with you no doubt what is external has reference to what is within, and *vice versa*; let me understand this relation."

“Well-bred and healthy children possess a great deal; Nature has given to each everything that he needs for time and continuance: our duty is to develop this; often it is better developed by itself. But one thing no one brings into the world, and yet it is that upon which depends everything through which a man becomes a man on every side. If you can find it out yourself, speak out.”

Wilhelm bethought himself for a short time, and then shook his head. After a suitable pause, they exclaimed: “Veneration!”

Wilhelm was startled.

“Veneration,” they repeated. “It is wanting in all, and perhaps in yourself. You have seen three kinds of gestures, and we teach a threefold veneration, which when combined to form a whole, only then attains to its highest power and effect. The first is veneration for that which is above us. That gesture, the arms folded on the breast, a cheerful glance towards the sky, that is precisely what we prescribe to our untutored children, at the same time requiring witness of them that there is a God up above, who reflects and reveals Himself in our parents, tutors and superiors. The second, veneration for that which is below us. The hands folded on the back as if tied together, the lowered, smiling glance, bespeak that we have to regard the earth well and cheerfully; it gives us an opportunity to maintain ourselves; it affords unspeakable joys; but it brings disproportionate sufferings. If one hurts one's self bodily, whether faultily or innocently; if others hurt one, intentionally or accidentally; if earthly chance does one any harm, let that be well thought of, for such danger accompanies us all our life long. But from this condition we deliver our pupil as soon as possible, directly we are convinced that the teachings of this stage have made a sufficient impression upon him; but then we bid him be a man, look to his companions, and guide himself with reference to them. Now he stands erect and bold, yet not selfishly isolated; only in a union with his equals does, he present a front towards the world. We are unable to add anything further.”

“I see it all,” replied Wilhelm; “it is probably on this account that the multitude is so inured to vice, because it only takes pleasure in the element of ill-will and evil speech; he who indulges in this soon becomes indifferent to God, contemptuous towards the world, and a hater of his fellows; but the true, genuine, indispensable feeling of self-respect is ruined in conceit and presumption.”

“Allow me, nevertheless,” Wilhelm went on, “to make one objection: has it not ever been held that the fear evinced by savage nations in the presence of mighty natural phenomena, and other inexplicable foreboding events, is the germ from which a higher feeling, a purer disposition, should gradually be developed?”

To this the other replied: “Fear, no doubt, is consonant with nature, but not reverence; people fear a known or unknown powerful being: the strong one tries to grapple with it, the weak to avoid it; both wish to get rid of it, and feel happy when in a short space they have conquered it, when their nature in some measure has regained its freedom and independence. The natural man repeats this operation a million times during his life; from fear he strives after liberty, from liberty he is driven back into fear, and does

not advance one step further. To fear is easy, but unpleasant; to entertain reverence is difficult but pleasing. Man determines himself unwillingly to reverence, or rather never determines himself to it; it is a loftier sense which must be imparted to his nature, and which is self-developed only in the most exceptionally gifted ones, whom therefore from all time we have regarded as saints, as gods. In this consists the dignity, in this the function of all genuine religions, of which also there exist only three, according to the objects towards which they direct their worship."

The men paused, Wilhelm remained silent for a while in thought; as he did not feel himself equal to pointing these strange words, he begged the worthy men to continue their remarks, which too they at once consented to do.

"No religion," they said, "which is based on fear, is esteemed among us. With the reverence which a man allows himself to entertain, whilst he accords honor, he may preserve his own honor; he is not at discord with himself, as in the other case. The religion which rests on reverence for that which is above us, we call the ethnical one; it is the religion of nations, and the first happy redemption from a base fear; all so-called heathen religions are of this kind, let them have what names they will. The second religion, which is founded on that reverence which we have for what is like ourselves, we call the Philosophic; for the philosopher, who places himself in the middle, must draw downward to himself all that is higher, and upward to himself all that is lower, and only in this central position does he deserve the name of the sage. Now, whilst he penetrates his relations to his fellows, and therefore to the whole of humanity, and his relations to all other earthly surroundings, necessary or accidental, in the cosmical sense he only lives in the truth. But we must now speak of the third religion, based on reverence for that which is below us; we call it the Christian one, because this disposition of mind is chiefly revealed in it; it is the last one which humanity could and was bound to attain. Yet what was not demanded for it? not merely to leave earth below, and claim a higher origin, but to recognize as divine even humility and poverty, scorn and contempt, shame and misery, suffering and death; nay, to revere and make lovable even sin and crime, not as hindrances but as furtherances of holiness! Of this there are indeed found traces throughout all time; but a track is not a goal, and this having once been reached, humanity cannot turn backwards; and it may be maintained, that the Christian religion having once appeared, can never disappear again; having once been divinely embodied, cannot again be dissolved."

"Which of these religions do you then profess more particularly?" said Wilhelm.

"All three," answered the others, "for, in point of fact, they together present the true religion; from these three reverences outsprings the highest reverence, reverence for one's self, and the former again develop themselves from the latter, so that man attains to the highest he is capable of reaching, in order that he may consider himself the best that God and nature have produced; nay, that he may be able to remain on this height without being drawn through conceit or egoism into what is base."

“Such a profession of faith, thus developed, does not estrange me,” replied Wilhelm; “it agrees with all that one learns here and there in life, only that the very thing unites you that severs the others.”

To this the others replied: “This confession is already adhered to by a large part of the world, though unconsciously.”

“How so, and where?” asked Wilhelm.

“In the Creed!” exclaimed the others, loudly; “for the first article is ethnical, and belongs to all nations: the second is Christian, for those struggling against sufferings and glorified in sufferings; the third finally teaches a spiritual communion of saints, to wit, of those in the highest degree good and wise: ought not therefore in fairness the three divine Persons, under whose likeness and name such convictions and promises are uttered, to pass also for the highest Unity?”

“I thank you,” replied the other, “for having so clearly and coherently explained this to me—to whom, as a full-grown man, the three dispositions of mind are not new; and when I recall, that you teach the children these high truths, first through material symbols, then through a certain symbolic analogy, and finally develop in them the highest interpretation, I must needs highly approve of it.”

“Exactly so,” replied the former; “but now you must still learn something more, in order that you may be convinced that your son is in the best hands. However, let this matter rest for the morning hours; rest and refresh yourself, so that, contented and humanly complete, you may accompany us farther into the interior to-morrow.”

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CHAPTER II.

Led by the hand of the eldest, our friend now entered through a handsome portal into a room, or rather, eight-sided hall, which was so richly adorned with pictures, that it caused astonishment to the visitor. He easily understood that all that he saw must have an important meaning, though he himself was not at once able to guess it. He was just on the point of asking his conductor about it, when the latter invited him to enter a side gallery, which, open on one side, surrounded a spacious, richly planted flower-garden. The wall, however, attracted the eye more than this brilliant adornment of nature, for it was painted throughout its whole length, and the visitor could not walk far along it without remarking that the sacred books of the Israelites had furnished the subjects of these pictures.

“It is here,” said the eldest, “that we teach that religion, which for the sake of brevity, I have called the ethnical. Its internal substance is found in the history of the world, as its external envelope in the events themselves. In the re-occurrence of the destinies of entire nations it is, properly speaking, grasped.”

“You have, I see,” said Wilhelm, “conferred the honor on the Israelitish people, and made its history the foundation of this exposition, or rather you have made it the principal subject of the same.”

“Just as you see,” rejoined the old man; “for you will observe that in the plinths and friezes are represented not so much synchronistic as symphronistic* actions and events, whilst among all nations there occur traditions of similar and equal import. Thus, while in the principal field, Abraham is visited by his gods in the form of handsome youths, you see up there in the frieze, Apollo among the shepherds of Admetus; from which we may learn that when the gods appear to men, they mostly go about unrecognized among them.”

The two observers went farther. Wilhelm found for the most part well-known subjects, yet represented in a more lively and significant manner than he had been accustomed to see them before. In reference to a few matters he asked for some explanation, in doing which he could not refrain from inquiring again, why they had selected the Israelitish history before all others?

Hereupon the eldest answered: “Among all heathen religions (for such is the Israelitish also) this one has great advantages, of which I shall mention only a few. Before the ethnic tribunal, before the tribunal of the God of nations, it is not the question, whether it is the best or the most excellent nation, but only whether it still exists, whether it has maintained itself. The Israelitish nation has never been worth much, as its leaders, judges, rulers and prophets have a thousand times thrown in its teeth; it possesses few virtues, and most of the faults of other nations; but in independence, endurance, courage, and if all that were no longer of account, in toughness, it cannot find its equal. It is the most tenacious people on the face of the earth! It is, it has been, and will be to glorify the name of Jehovah through all time.

We have, therefore, set it up as a pattern, as a masterpiece, to which the others only serve as a frame.”



“It is not becoming in me to argue with you,” replied Wilhelm, “since you are in a position to teach me. Proceed, therefore, to explain to me the other advantages of this nation, or rather of its history, of its religion.”

“One principal advantage,” answered the other, “consists in the excellent collection of its sacred books. They are combined so happily, that from the most heterogeneous elements there results a deceptive unity. They are complete enough to satisfy, fragmentary enough to stimulate interest; sufficiently barbaric to excite challenge, sufficiently tender to soothe; and how many other opposing qualities might we extol in these books, in this Book!”

The series of the principal pictures, as well as the connection of the smaller ones which accompanied them above and below, gave the guest so much to think of, that he scarcely listened to the explanatory remarks by which his companion seemed rather to divert his attention from, than to fix it on the subjects.

In the meanwhile the other took occasion to say: “I must here mention one advantage of the Israelitish religion: that it does not embody its God in any given form, and therefore leaves us at liberty to give him a worthy human figure; also, on the other hand, to depict base idolatry by the forms of beasts and monsters.”

Our friend, moreover, in a short stroll through these halls, had again called to mind the history of the world: there was something new to him in regard to the circumstance. Thus, through the juxtaposition of the pictures, through the reflections of his companion, fresh ideas had dawned upon his mind; and he was glad that Felix by means of a visible representation of such merit should appropriate to himself for his whole life long, as vividly as if they had actually happened in his own time, those grand, significant, and inimitable events. He looked at these pictures at last only with the eyes of the child, and in this aspect he felt perfectly satisfied with them. And so strolling on they reached those sad, confused periods, and finally the destruction of the City and the Temple, the murder, banishment and slavery of whole multitudes of this obstinate nation. Its subsequent destinies were represented by discreet allegory, since a historic and real representation of them lies beyond the limits of the noble art.

Here the gallery, through which they had walked, terminated abruptly, and Wilhelm wondered at finding himself already at the end.

"I find," he said to his guide, "an omission in this historical walk. You have destroyed the Temple of Jerusalem, and scattered the nation, without introducing the Divine Man, who shortly before that very time taught in it, and to whom, too, shortly before they would give no hearing."

"To do this, as you demand, would have been a mistake. The life of that Divine Man, to whom you allude, stands in no connection with the world-history of his time. His was a private life, his doctrine a doctrine for individuals. What publicly concerns the masses of the people and its members belongs to the history of the world, to the religion of the world, which we regard as the first. What inwardly concerns the individual belongs to the second religion, to the religion of the wise; such was the one that Christ taught and practised as long as he went about on earth. Wherefore the external ends here, and I now open to you the internal."

A door opened, and they entered a similar gallery, where Wilhelm at once recognized the pictures of the second holy writings. They seemed to be by a different hand from the first: everything was gentler; forms, movements, surroundings, light and coloring.

"You see here," said his companion, after they had walked past a part of the pictures, "neither deeds nor events, but miracles and parables. Here is a new world; a new exterior, different from the former, and an interior, which in that is entirely lacking. By miracles and parables a new world is opened. The former make the common extraordinary, the latter make the extraordinary common."

"Have the kindness," replied Wilhelm, "to explain me these few words more circumstantially, for I do not feel equal to doing it myself."

"You possess a natural mind," replied the other, "although a deep one. Examples will open it most readily. Nothing is more common or ordinary than eating and drinking; on the other hand, it is extraordinary to ennoble a beverage, or to multiply a meal, so that it may suffice for a countless number. Nothing is commoner than illness and bodily infirmity; but to cure, to alleviate these by spiritual or spiritual-seeming means, is extraordinary: and just in this consists the marvel of the miracle—that the common and extraordinary, the possible and the impossible, become one. In the similitude, in the parable, the reverse is the case: here you have mind, insight, the idea of the sublime, the extraordinary, the unattainable. When this is embodied in a common, ordinary, intelligible image, so that it confronts us as living, present and real, so that we can appropriate, seize, retain, and converse with it as with one of our own like: that indeed becomes a second species of miracle, which is fairly associated with the first kind, nay, perhaps, is to be preferred to it. Here the living doctrine itself is pronounced, the doctrine that arouses no dispute. It is no opinion as to what is right or wrong; it is indisputably right or wrong itself."

This part of the gallery was shorter, or rather it was only the fourth part of the enclosure of the inner courtyard. But while one cared only to pass along the first, here one was glad to linger, here one liked to walk to and fro. The subjects were not so striking nor so manifold, but so much the more did they invite inquiry into their deep and quiet meaning; moreover the two wanderers turned at the end of the corridor,

whilst Wilhelm expressed a fear that in fact only the last supper, the last parting of the Master from his disciples, was reached. He asked for the remaining part of the story.

“In all teaching,” replied the elder one, “in all tradition, we are very willing to set apart only what it is possible to set apart, for only thereby can the notion of what is significant be developed in youth. Life otherwise mingles and mixes everything together; and thus we have here the life of that excellent Man completely separated from its end. During life he appears as a true philosopher—do not be scandalized at this expression—as a sage, in the highest sense. He stands firmly to his point; he pursues his own path unflinchingly, and whilst he draws up to himself what is inferior, whilst he allows the ignorant, the poor, the sick, a share in his wisdom, wealth, and power, and thereby seems to step down to their level; still, on the other hand, he does not deny his divine origin; he dares to make himself equal to God, nay, to declare himself God. In this manner, from his youth up, he astonishes those who surround him, gains one part of them over to himself, arouses the other against himself, and shows all those to whom it is a question of a certain sublimity in doctrine and life what they will have to expect from the world. And thus his life's journey for the noble part of humanity is more instructive and fruitful than his death; for to the one test every one is called, but to the other only a few. And in order that we may pass over all that follows from this, only look at the touching scene of the last supper! Here the sage, as always happens, leaves his followers behind, quite orphaned, so to say, and whilst he is taking thought for the good ones, he is at the same time feeding with them a traitor, who will bring him and the better ones to destruction.”

With these words the elder opened a door, and Wilhelm was astonished to find himself again in the first hall of entrance. In the meantime, they had made, as he could easily see, the entire circuit of the courtyard.

“I was hoping,” said Wilhelm, “that you would conduct me to the end, whilst you are taking me back to the beginning.” “This time I can show you nothing more,” said the elder; “we do not let our pupils see more, we do not explain to them more than what you have so far passed through: the external and generally mundane may be imparted to each from his youth up; the internal and specially spiritual and mental, only to those who are growing up to a certain degree of thoughtfulness; and the rest, which can be disclosed only once a year, only to those of whom we are taking leave. That last form of religion, which arises from respect for what is below us, that reverence for what is repugnant, hateful, and apt to be shunned, we impart to each only by way of outfit for the world, in order that he may know where he can find the like, if need of such should stir within him. I invite you to return after the lapse of a year to attend our general festival, and to see how far your son has progressed; at which time too you shall be initiated into the holy estate of sorrow.”

“Allow me one question,” replied Wilhelm; “have you then, besides representing the life of this Divine Man as a pattern of teaching and imitation, also exalted his sufferings, his death, as a model of sublime endurance?”

“By all means,” said the elder. “We make no secret of this; but we draw a veil over these sufferings, just because we honor them so highly. We hold it for criminal

audacity to expose that scaffold of agony, and the Saint suffering thereupon, to the gaze of the sun, that hid its face when a reckless world obtruded this sight upon it; to play, to trifle with these deep mysteries, in which the divine depth of suffering lies hidden; to decorate them, and not to rest until the most holy seems commonplace and vulgar. Thus much may suffice for this time to set you at rest respecting your boy, and convince you thoroughly that you will find him again, in one way or other, more or less developed, yet in a desirable manner, and at all events not confused, wavering or unsteady."

Wilhelm lingered, looking over the pictures in the vestibule, wishing to have their meaning explained.

"This too," said the elder, "we shall continue to owe you until the year is over. We do not admit any strangers to the instruction which we impart to the children during the interval; but in due time come and listen to what our best speakers think fit to say publicly on these subjects."

Soon after this conversation a knock was heard at the small door. The inspector of yesterday presented himself; he had led up Wilhelm's horse. And thus our friend took leave of the Three, who at parting recommended him to the inspector in the following terms: "He is now numbered among the confidants, and what you have to answer to his questions is known to you: for he surely still wishes to be enlightened about many things that he has seen and heard with us; the measure and purport are not unknown to you." Wilhelm had still in fact a few questions on his mind, which also he expressed forthwith. Wherever they rode by, the children ranged themselves as on the day before, but to-day he saw, although rarely, a boy here and there who did not salute the inspector as he rode past, did not look up from his work, and allowed him to pass by without notice. Wilhelm now inquired the cause of this, and what this exception meant.

The other replied thereto: "It is in fact exceedingly significant, for it is the severest punishment that we inflict upon our pupils; they are declared unworthy of showing reverence, and compelled to seem rude and uncultured; but they do all that is possible to rescue themselves from this position, and apply themselves as quickly as possible to every duty. Should, however, any hardened youngster show no readiness to recant, then he is sent back to his parents with a short but conclusive report. He who does not learn to adapt himself to the laws, must leave the region where they prevail."

Another sight excited to-day as yesterday the curiosity of the traveller; it was the variety of color and shape in the clothes of the pupils. In this there seemed to prevail no graduated arrangement, for some who saluted differently were dressed in uniform style, whilst those who had the same way of greeting were clad differently. Wilhelm asked for the cause of this seeming contradiction.

"It is explained thus," replied the other; "namely, that it is a means of finding out the peculiar disposition of each boy. With strictness and method in other things, in this respect we allow a certain degree of freedom to prevail. Within the scope of our stores of cloths and trimmings, the pupils are allowed to choose any favorite color, and also

within moderate limits to select both shape and cut; this we scrupulously observe, for by the color you may find out people's bent of mind, and by the cut, the style of life. Yet there is one special peculiarity of human nature which makes a more accurate judgment to some extent difficult; this is the spirit of imitation—the tendency to associate. It is very seldom that a pupil lights on anything that has not occurred before: for the most part they choose something familiar, what they see just before them. Still, this consideration does not remain unprofitable to us; by means of such external signs, they ally themselves to this or that party, join in here or there, and thus more general dispositions distinguish themselves; we learn to where each inclines, and to what example he assimilates himself. Now, cases have been seen, in which the dispositions inclined towards the general, in which one fashion would extend itself to all, and every peculiarity tend towards losing itself in the totality. In a gentle way we try to put a stop to a tendency of this kind, we allow our stores to run short; one or other kind of stuff or ornament is no more to be had. We substitute something new, something attractive; through light colors, and short close cut, we attract the cheerful ones; by sombre shades and comfortable, ample suits, the thoughtful ones, and thus gradually establish a balance. For we are altogether opposed to uniform; it hides the character, and, more than any other disguise, conceals the peculiarities of the children from the sight of their superiors.”

With such and other conversation, Wilhelm arrived at the frontier of the district, and precisely at the point where the traveller, according to his old friend's direction, ought to leave it, in order to pursue his own private ends.

On parting, the inspector first of all observed, that Wilhelm might now wait until the grand festival for all their sympathizers in various ways was announced. To this all the parents would be invited, and able pupils be dismissed to the chances of free life. After that, he was informed, he might at his leisure enter the other districts, where in accordance with peculiar principles, special instruction amidst the most perfect surroundings, was imparted and practised.

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CHAPTER III.

To flatter the taste of the worthy public, which for some time has derived pleasure in being entertained piece-meal, we had at first thought of presenting the following story in several sections. Yet, considered from the point of view of ideas, feelings and events, its internal structure required a continuous treatment. May it attain its aim, and at the same time may it in the end become clear how the personages of this seemingly isolated episode have been most intimately bound up with those whom we already know and love.

The Man Of Fifty.

DURING the entry of the major into the manor-house, his niece Hilaria stood outside on the staircase that led up to the castle, ready to receive him. He scarcely recognized her, for by this time she had grown taller and more beautiful. She rushed towards him; he pressed her to his breast with the feelings of a father, and she hurried upstairs to her mother.

To the baroness, his sister, he was equally welcome, and when Hilaria went quickly away to prepare breakfast, the major cheerfully observed:

“This time I can be brief, and say that our business is done. Our brother, the marshal, sees pretty clearly that he cannot get on with either tenants or superintendents. He makes over the estates, in his lifetime, to us and to our children. The annual income that he stipulates for himself is heavy, it is true; but we can well afford to give it to him; we still gain a good deal for the present, and in the future, all. The new arrangement will soon be in order. Though every moment I expect my retirement, I still see before me an active life, that may be of decided advantage to us and ours. We shall quietly look on whilst our children grow up, and it depends upon us, upon them, to hasten their union.”

“That would be all very well,” said the baroness, “if only I had not to reveal you a secret, of which I myself have only lately become aware. Hilaria’s heart is no longer free; from that quarter your son has little or nothing to hope.”

“What do you say?” exclaimed the major; “is it possible! Whilst we are giving ourselves every possible trouble to manage with economy, does inclination play us such a trick? Tell me, my dear, tell me quickly who is it that could captivate Hilaria’s heart; or is it already as bad as that? Is it not perhaps a transient impression, that one may hope to extinguish again?”

“You must first think and guess awhile,” replied the baroness, thereby increasing his impatience. This had already reached its climax, when Hilaria, entering together with the servants, who were bringing the breakfast, rendered an immediate solution of the riddle impossible.

The major himself fancied that he now looked upon the beautiful child with other eyes than shortly before. He almost felt jealous of the fortunate one, whose image could impress itself on so beautiful a soul. He could not enjoy his breakfast, and he paid no attention to the fact that everything had been arranged precisely as he liked it best, and as he had formerly been used to wish and require it.

Amidst this silence and reserve, Hilaria herself almost lost her cheerfulness. The baroness felt embarrassed, and drew her daughter towards the piano, but her animated playing, full of feeling, could scarcely win a little applause from the major. He was anxious to see the beautiful child and the breakfast depart, the sooner the better, and the baroness had to make up her mind to break off, and propose to her brother a walk in the garden.

They were scarcely alone, when the major urgently repeated his former question; upon which his sister after a pause, replied, laughing:

“If you wish to find the fortunate man she loves, you need not go so far, he is quite close: it is you she loves.”

The major stood thunderstruck; then he exclaimed:

“It would be a very unseasonable jest, if you wished to persuade me of what in real earnest would make me no less embarrassed than unhappy. For although I need time to recover from my astonishment, yet I foresee at a glance how much our relations must be disturbed by such an unexpected circumstance. The only thing that consoles me, is the conviction that inclinations of this kind are only apparent, that self-deception lurks in the background, and that a genuinely good soul will often recover at once from mistakes of this kind of its own accord, or at least with a little assistance from sensible persons.”

“I am not of this opinion,” said the baroness; “for, to judge by all the symptoms, it is a very serious sentiment by which Hilaria is penetrated.”

“Anything so unnatural I should not have attributed to her natural character,” replied the major.

“It is not so unnatural,” said his sister; “in my own youth I recollect a passion even for an older man than you are. You are fifty years old; that at all events is by no means too much for a German, although perhaps other more lively nations grow old earlier.”

“But how will you prove your surmise?” said the major.

“It is no surmise, it is a certainty. The details you shall learn by-and-bye.”

Hilaria joined them, and the major against his will felt changed again. Her presence seemed to him still more amiable and dearer than before; her behavior seemed to him more affectionate, and he already began to give credence to his sister's words. The sensation was in the highest degree agreeable to him, although he would neither acknowledge nor divulge it. Hilaria was indeed very amiable, whilst in her demeanor

shyness towards a lover and the easy familiarity towards an uncle were most intimately combined; for she really loved him, and with her whole heart. The garden was in its full spring glory, and the major, whilst he saw so many old trees clothing themselves with leaves, was fain to believe in the return of his own spring-time. And who would not have been tempted to do so in the presence of the most amiable of girls.

In this manner the day was spent together; all domestic incidents passed off in the greatest harmony; in the evening after dinner Hilaria again sat down to the piano. The major listened with other ears than in the morning; one melody was entwined with another, one song connected itself with the next, and midnight scarcely availed to break up the little party.

When the major reached his room, he found everything arranged in accordance with his old accustomed convenience; even certain engravings, over which he had been wont to linger, had been brought from other rooms and hung up here; and now that he had once begun to notice, he saw himself attended to and flattered in every single little detail.

This time he required only a few hours' sleep; his vital energies were awake early. But now he suddenly perceived that a new order of things would entail a good deal of inconvenience. To his old groom, who also fulfilled the duties of footmen and valet, he had never spoken an angry word for many years; for everything had gone on in its usual way with the strictest method: the horses were attended to, and the clothes ready brushed at the proper hour, but his master had risen sooner, and nothing was ready.

Another circumstance combined with this to increase the impatience and a sort of bad-humor on the part of the major. At other times everything had been correct with himself and with his servant; but now when he stepped before the looking-glass, he did not find himself as he wished to be. He could not deny a few gray hairs, and a few wrinkles also seemed to have put in an appearance. He rubbed and powdered more than usual, and yet had at last to leave things as they were. Neither was he satisfied with his dress, or with its plainness. There were always a few threads still on his coat, and a little dust on his boots. The old servant did not know what to say, and was astonished at seeing so transformed a master before him.

In spite of all these obstacles the major was early enough in the garden. Hilaria, whom he hoped to find there, he actually did find. She brought a nosegay for him, and he had not the courage, as at other times, to kiss her, and to press her to his heart. He found himself in the pleasantest embarrassment in the world, and abandoned himself to his feelings, without thinking whither they might lead him.

The baroness also was not slow in putting in an appearance, and, as she showed her brother a note that a messenger had just brought her, she exclaimed: "You cannot guess whom this letter is to announce!"

“Then only tell me quickly!” replied the major; and he was informed that an old theatrical friend happened to be travelling at no great distance from the manor, and thought of looking in for a moment.

“I am curious to see him again,” said the major; “he is no longer a boy, and yet I hear that he still continues to play youthful parts.”

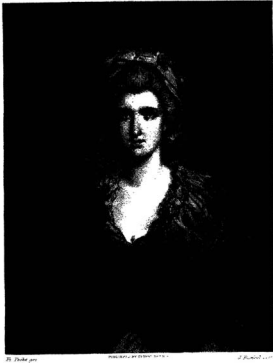
“He must be ten years older than you,” replied the baroness.

“At the very least,” replied the major, “so far as I can recollect.”



It was not long before a cheerful, well-built, pleasant man made his appearance. Both were astonished for a moment as they looked at each other again. But very soon the friends became familiar, and reminiscences of all sorts animated the conversation. From this they passed to stories, to questions, and to giving accounts of themselves; they made themselves mutually acquainted with their present positions, and they soon felt as if they had never been separated.

Secret accounts tell us that this man in early life, as a very handsome and agreeable youth, had had the fortune or misfortune to please a lady of rank; that he had thereby fallen into great difficulties and danger, out of which the major had fortunately rescued him, at the very moment when a most sad fate was threatening him. He remained eternally grateful to both brother and sister; for the latter, by a timely warning, had given an opportunity of exercising prudence. A short time before dinner the men were left alone. Not without admiration, nay, with a certain amount of astonishment, the major had observed the outward deportment of his old friend, in general and in detail. He did not seem to be changed in the least, and it was no wonder that he could still continue to appear as a youthful lover on the stage.



Lucinda

“You are looking at me more closely than is fair,” he at last said to the major; “I very much fear that you find the difference compared with past times only too great.”

“By no means,” replied the major; “on the contrary, I am full of wonder at finding your looks fresher and more youthful than my own; although I know that you were already a grown-up man when I assisted you in certain difficulties with the audacity of a foolhardy fledgling.”

“It is your own fault,” replied the other, “it is the fault of all like you; and although you ought not to be reproached for it, still you are to blame. You only think about what is necessary; you want to *be*, and not to seem. That is right enough, so long as one is something. But when at last the Being begins to take leave of the Seeming, and the Seeming is still more transient than the Being, then everyone finds out that he would not have done badly if he had not entirely neglected the external in favor of the internal.”

“You are right,” replied the major, and could hardly refrain from a sigh.

“Perhaps not quite right,” answered the old youth; “for indeed in my trade it would be absolutely inexcusable if one did not bolster up the exterior as long as is simply possible. But you people have occasion to look at other things that are more important and lasting.”

“And yet there are occasions,” said the major, “when one feels inwardly fresh, and would be only too glad to freshen up one’s exterior too.”

As the guest could not divine the major’s real frame of mind, he took this utterance in a military sense, and expatiated long upon the point, how important the exterior was to military men, and how an officer, who had to expend so much care upon his dress, might pay some attention to his skin and hair as well.

“For example, it is undeniable,” he continued, “that your temples are already gray, that wrinkles contract themselves here and there, and that your crown is threatening to become bald. Only look at an old fellow like me! See how I have preserved myself, and all without any conjuring, and with far less trouble or care than one expends daily in injuring, or at least in wearying one’s self.”

The major found too much for his own purposes in this accidental conversation to break it off so soon; still he went gently, and even, in dealing with an old acquaintance, cautiously to work.

“Unfortunately I have now got behind-hand,” he exclaimed, “and it cannot be retrieved; I must now put up with it, and you will not think worse of me on account of it.”

“It is never too late,” replied the other; “if you serious gentlemen were not so obstinate and stiff-necked, immediately declaring anyone who attends to his own exterior vain, and thereby marring for yourselves the enjoyment of being in pleasant company and pleasing others yourselves.”

“If it is not magic,” laughingly said the major, “by means of which you keep yourselves young, it is nevertheless a secret; or there are at least ‘arcana,’ such as are often extolled in the papers, but from which you know how to choose the best.”

“Whether you speak in jest or in earnest,” replied his friend, “you have hit it. Among the many things that have continually been tried to give a kind of nourishment to the exterior, which often falls off much sooner than the interior, there are to be found really invaluable specifics, simple as well as compound, which have been imparted to me by fellow-artists, or handed over for cash or in some casual way, and tested by myself. I hold and abide by these, without on that account giving up my further researches. Thus much I may tell you, and I do not exaggerate: I carry about with me a dressing-case beyond all price, a casket, the effects of which I should like to try upon yourself, if we remain only a fortnight together.”

The thought that something of this kind was possible, and that this possibility had accidentally been brought within his reach just at the right moment, cheered up the major to such a degree, that he already looked really fresher and happier, and enlivened by the hope of bringing his head and face into harmony with his heart, excited by the restless desire of soon learning to know these specifics more intimately, he seemed at dinner quite a different man, met with confidence Hilaria's graceful attentions, and looked on her with a certain trust, which in the morning had been still very foreign to him.

Now, inasmuch as the theatrical friend had managed, by all sorts of reminiscences, stories, and happy ideas, to keep alive and increase the good-humor once called forth, so much the more was the major troubled, when immediately after dinner he threatened to go away and pursue his journey. He sought by every means to facilitate the detention of his friend, at least for the night, expressly promising additional horses and relays early on the morrow. Enough, the healing toilet-case was not to depart from the house before he had been more particularly informed as to its contents and use.

The major saw well enough that there was now no time to be lost, and therefore immediately after dinner he sought to speak to his old familiar friend alone. As he had not the courage to go straight to the point, he alluded to it distantly, again taking up

their former conversation, and affirming that, as for his own person, he would willingly bestow more care upon the exterior, if only people would not immediately stigmatize as vain any one in whom they discovered an endeavor of this kind, and thereby withdraw from him, in respect to moral esteem, as much as they felt bound to allow him in respect to what was physical.

“Do not make me angry with speeches of this kind,” replied his friend; “for these are expressions to which society has accustomed itself without thinking, or, to put it more severely, by which it expresses the unkindness and ill-will of its nature. When you come to consider it closely, what is that which is so often stigmatized as vanity? Every man ought to feel pleasure in himself, and happy is he who does so. Yet, if he does, how can he refrain from betraying this pleasant feeling? How, in the midst of existence, can he conceal that he feels a pleasure in existence? If good society—for only of such is the question now—should find these utterances blamable, only when they become too lively, when the joy of a man’s pleasure in himself and in his being prevents others from feeling pleasure in themselves, and from displaying it,—even then there would be nothing in it to remember; and the reproach has probably arisen in the first place from this excess. Yet, what is the good of a strange prohibitive severity against what is unavoidable? Why shall we not find an expression admissible and endurable which we, more or less, allow ourselves from time to time, nay, without which no good society could exist; for the pleasure in ourselves, the desire of communicating this individual feeling to others, makes us pleasant, the sense of our own charm makes us charming. Would to God that all men were vain! yet at the same time with consciousness, with moderation, and in the right sense; then we in the world of culture would be the happiest of people. Women, it is said, are vain from the beginning; yet it becomes them, and they please us all the more. How can a young man form himself who is not vain? An empty, hollow nature will at least know how to give itself an outward show, and the able man will soon form himself from the outward to the inward. As for myself, I have reason on this score to consider myself the happiest of men, because my trade justifies me in being vain, and because the more I am so, the greater pleasure I give people. I am praised where another is blamed, and it is just in this path that I have the right and the good fortune to delight and charm the public at an age at which others are compelled to withdraw from the stage, or only linger upon it with disgrace.”

The major was not pleased to hear the tendency of these observations. The little word vanity, when he used it, had only been meant to serve as a medium by which to bring his wish before his friend in a discreet manner; now he feared that in a lengthened conversation he would see his end still further set aside, and he therefore hastened directly to the point.

“For myself,” he said, “I should not be at all disinclined to swear fealty to your standard, since you do not think it too late, and believe that I could in some measure make up for lost time. Reveal to me something about your tinctures, pomades, and balsams, and I will make an attempt.”

“Revelations,” said the other, “are more difficult than one thinks. In this case, for instance, it is not only the question whether I pour out for you something from my

bottles, or leave you a half of the best ingredients of my dressing-case; the greatest difficulty is the application. One cannot straightway make what is handed to us one's own; how this or that may serve, under what circumstances, in what order the things are to be used, demands practice and reflection; nay, even these will hardly bear fruit, if one has not an inborn talent for the subject in question."

"Now," replied the major, "it seems to me you want to back out of it again. You are making difficulties in order to save the credit of your rather fabulous statements. You have no inclination to give me a pretext, an opportunity of putting your words to the test of fact."

"By these sarcasms, my friend," replied the other, "you would never induce me to acquiesce in your request if I did not myself harbor such kind intentions towards you, insomuch that as I in fact made you the offer in the first place. At the same time bear in mind, my friend, that man possesses a quite peculiar desire of making proselytes, of bringing what he values in himself into demonstration beyond himself, in others; in letting them enjoy what he himself enjoys, in finding and reflecting himself again in them. In truth, if this too is egoism, it is at all events of the most amiable and praiseworthy sort, such as makes us human, and keeps us human. From this too, irrespective of the friendship I entertain for you, I derive the pleasure of making a pupil of you in the art of rejuvenation. But, as one must expect from the master, that he should make no bunglers, I am at a loss as to how to set to work. I have already said that neither cosmetics nor any prescription is sufficient; the application cannot be taught in a general way. For love of you, and the desire of propagating my doctrine, I am prepared for any sacrifice. The greatest I can make for the moment I will at once offer you. I will leave you here my servant, a kind of valet and jack-of-all-trades, who, although he may not know how to prepare everything, or be initiated into all the secrets, yet understands very well the whole treatment, and at the beginning will be of great use to you, until you so work your way into the matter, that I may at length be able also to reveal to you the higher secrets."

"How!" exclaimed the major, "you have also stages and degrees in your art of rejuvenation? You have secrets too for the initiated."

"To be sure," replied the former. "That would indeed be a wretched art which allowed itself to be grasped at once, the last results of which would be viewed at once by him who enters for the first time."

There was no great hesitation; the valet was intrusted to the major, who promised to treat him well. The baroness had to furnish small boxes, pots and glasses, she did not know for what purpose; the partition took place; they remained together in good spirits and witty mood till far into the night. When the moon rose late the guest departed, promising to return in a short time.

The major went somewhat tired to his room. He had arisen early, had not spared himself during the day, and hoped at last to get speedily to bed. But instead of one servant he now found two. The old groom, according to old style and custom, undressed him quickly; but now the new one came forward, and bid him observe, that

night was just the proper time for applying beautifying and rejuvenating remedies, in order that during a peaceful slumber they might take effect so much the more surely. So the major had to submit to having his head anointed, his face rubbed, his eyebrows marked, and his lips touched, besides which, several other ceremonies were required: thus the nightcap was not to be put on immediately, but before that a net, or at all events a fine leather cap, was drawn over his head.

The major lay down in bed, with a kind of unpleasant sensation, which, however, he had no time to make clear to himself, inasmuch as he soon fell asleep. Yet, if we were to speak his mind, he felt himself somewhat akin to a mummy, something between a sick man and an embalmed corpse. Only the sweet image of Hilaria, surrounded by the brightest hopes, lulled him soon into a refreshing sleep.

In the morning, at the appointed time, the groom was at hand. Everything appertaining to the dress of the master lay in its accustomed order on the chairs, and the major was just on the point of leaving the bed, when the new valet entered, and protested energetically against such premature haste. One must be quiet, one must wait, if the undertaking was to succeed, if from so much care and painstaking enjoyment was to be reaped. The gentleman accordingly was informed that he would have to rise in a short time, partake of a light breakfast, and then enter a bath, which was already prepared. There was no escape from this procedure; it must be carried out, and a few hours passed in these operations.



The major cut short the time of rest after the bath, thinking to throw on his clothes quickly, for by nature he was quick, and besides this he wished to meet Hilaria soon; but here also the new valet intervened, and made him understand that one must completely disaccustom one's self from wishing to be done. All that one did must be completed slowly and leisurely, but the time of dressing especially must be regarded as a pleasant hour of communion with one's own self.

The valet's mode of treatment was perfectly in harmony with his words. But in return for all this, even the major thought that he really was better dressed than he had ever been before, when he stepped before the looking-glass, and saw himself dressed up to the highest point. Without much question, the valet had even given to the uniform a modern cut, having employed the night in this transformation. A rejuvenation, so quickly visible, imparted to the major a particularly cheerful disposition, so that both inwardly and outwardly he felt refreshed, and hurried to meet his friends with impatient longing.

He found his sister standing before their genealogical tree, which she had hung up, because on the preceding evening there had been some talk amongst them about

certain collateral relations, who, being some unmarried, some living in distant lands, some quite lost sight of, gave the brother and sister or their children more or less hope of rich legacies. They conversed for some time about it, without mentioning the circumstance that hitherto all their family anxieties and endeavors had centred only on their children. Through Hilaria's inclination, this whole prospect had in fact been completely changed, and yet neither the major nor his sister liked to think more about the matter at this moment.

The baroness went away, the major remained alone before the laconic family-picture: Hilaria came in to him, leaned childishly on his arm, looked at the pedigree, and asked whom among all these he had known, and who were still living?

The major began his description of the eldest, whom he now only vaguely remembered from the time of his youth. Then he went on to describe the characters of various fathers, the likeness or unlikeness of the children to them, observed that the grandfather often reappeared in his grandson, spoke generally about the influence of women, who, marrying into the stock from strange families, often change the character of the whole race. He praised the virtue of many an ancestor and collateral relation, and did not conceal their faults. He passed over in silence those of whom they had had reason to feel ashamed. At last he came to the latest generations. Among these were now found his brother the Obermarschall, himself, and his sister, and below them his son and Hilaria.

"These look one another straight enough in the face," said the major, and did not add what he had in his mind.

After a pause, Hilaria modestly added, in a low voice and almost with a sigh, "And yet no one will blame one who looks upwards." At the same time she looked up towards him with her two eyes, which expressed her entire affection.

"Do I understand you aright?" said the major, turning round towards her.

"I can say nothing," answered Hilaria, laughing, "that you do not already know."

"You make me the happiest man under the sun!" exclaimed he, and fell at her feet. "Will you be mine?"

"For Heaven's sake, arise! I am yours forever."

The baroness entered. Without being surprised, she was startled. "If it should be a misfortune," said the major, "sister, the fault is yours; if it is good fortune, we shall always have to thank you for it."

The baroness, from her youth up, had loved her brother in such a manner, that she set him before all other men, and perhaps the very inclination of Hilaria, if it had not actually sprung from this partiality of her mother's, had certainly been nourished by it.

All three were henceforth united in *one* love, and one happiness, and so the happiest of hours were spent by them. Yet at last, too, they became aware again of the world around them, and this but seldom stands in harmony with such sentiments.

Now, too, they thought again about the son. For him Hilaria had been destined, as he knew very well. Directly after the termination of the business with the Obermarschall, the major was to have visited his son in garrison, to discuss everything with him, and bring these matters to a happy termination. But now, through an unexpected event, the whole arrangement was upset; the relations, which otherwise hung together in a friendly way, seemed henceforth to be in conflict, and it was difficult to foresee what turn things would take, and what sort of harmony would take possession of their minds.

In the meantime the major had to make up his mind to visit his son, with whom he had already appointed a meeting. Not without repugnance, not without a peculiar foreboding, not without pain at having to leave Hilaria for only a short time, he started, after a good deal of delay, and leaving groom and horses behind, he travelled with his rejuvenating valet, whom he could no longer dispense with, towards the city where his son was living.

The two greeted and embraced one another in the heartiest manner after so long a separation. They had much to say to one another, and yet did not immediately express what each had most at heart. The son expatiated upon his hopes of speedy promotion, in return for which the father gave him exact information as to what had been done and determined on between the elder members of the family respecting their fortune in general, and their landed property in particular.

The conversation was already beginning rather to drag, when the son took courage, and said, laughing, to his father, "You treat me very tenderly, father dear, and I thank you for it. You tell me about possessions and fortune, and do not mention the condition under which, at least partly, they will become mine; you refrain from mentioning the name of Hilaria; you wait for me to pronounce it myself, that I should reveal my desire of being soon united to the amiable child."

The major, at these words of his son, found himself in great embarrassment; yet, as it was consonant partly with his nature and partly with an old habit of his, to explore the minds of those he had to deal with, he remained silent, and glanced at his son with a doubtful smile.

"You do not guess, father, what I have to say," continued the lieutenant, "and I only wish to speak it out quickly once for all. I can rely upon your kindness, which, amidst so much solicitude in my behalf, has surely also thought about my true happiness. It will have to be said some time, and so let it be said at once: Hilaria cannot make me happy! I think of Hilaria as an amiable relation, with whom I would wish to remain all my life on the friendliest footing, but another has aroused my passion, fettered my inclination. This inclination is irresistible; you do not want to make me unhappy."

Only with difficulty did the major hide the delight that would have spread over his countenance, and he asked his son in a gently serious way, "who the person was that had been able to conquer him so entirely?"

"You must see this person, father, for she is as indescribable as she is incomprehensible. I only fear that you will yourself be carried away by her, as everybody is who comes near her. By Heaven! I shall live to see you become the rival of your son."

"Who is she, then?" asked the major. "If you are not able to describe her personally, tell me at least about her circumstances; for these perhaps ought to be mentioned first."

"Well, father," replied the son; "and yet these outward circumstances too would be different in another woman, and act differently upon another person. She is a young widow, the heir of an old and wealthy husband, only recently deceased; independent, and in the highest degree worthy of being so, surrounded by many friends, beloved by just as many, and wooed by them all, yet, if I am not greatly mistaken, attached to me with all her heart."

As the father remained silent, and betrayed no sign of disapproval, the son continued complacently to describe the conduct of the pretty widow towards him, to extol in detail that irresistible grace and those tender demonstrations of favor, in which, however, the father could only recognize the easy civility of a universally adored woman, who among many may perhaps prefer one, without altogether deciding in favor of him especially. Under any other circumstances, he would certainly have tried to call the attention of a son, or only of a friend, to the self-deception that would be likely to prevail in the matter; but on this occasion his own interest was so great in the fact that his son was not deceiving himself, and that the widow was really in love with him, and should decide as quickly as possible in his favor, that either he had no misgiving, or repelled such a doubt from himself, or perhaps only concealed it.

"You put me in great embarrassment," began the father, after a short pause. "The whole agreement between the remaining members of our family rests on the supposition that you marry Hilaria. If she marries a stranger, then the whole of the beautifully arranged concentration of a handsome fortune will be demolished again, and you especially will not be playing your cards to the best advantage. Still there would remain an expedient, which, however, sounds a little strange, and by which you too would not gain much. I, old as I am, should have to marry Hilaria, yet by doing this I should scarcely give you any great pleasure."

"The greatest in the world!" exclaimed the lieutenant; "for who can feel any true affection, who can enjoy or hope for the happiness of love without wishing this highest happiness for every friend, for every one who is worthy of it? You are not old, father; and is not Hilaria so amiable? And the mere passing thought of offering her your hand bears witness to a youthful heart and fresh vigor. Let us deliberate on and think out this idea, this plan, upon the spot. For I should only be really happy when I knew that you were happy. I should only be really glad when you yourself were so

beautifully and richly repaid for the care which you have bestowed upon my destiny. Now, at last, I can take you with courage, confidence, and a really open heart, to my fair one. You will approve of my sentiment, because you yourself can feel. You will place no obstacle in the way of your son's happiness, because you are going in the direction of your own."

With these and other urgent words, the son gave his father no opportunity for the many doubts he would have insinuated, but hurried him off to the beautiful widow, whom they found in a large, well-appointed house, surrounded by a perhaps not numerous, but select party, engaged in lively conversation. She was one of those women from whom no man can escape. With incredible tact she managed to make the major the hero of the evening. The rest of the company seemed to be her own family, the major alone the guest. She knew his circumstances quite well, and yet she knew how to inquire about them, as if her wish was to hear everything from himself for the first time; and thus too the whole of the company was obliged to show some sort of sympathy with the new visitor. One must have known his brother, another his property, and a third something no matter what, so that throughout a lively conversation the major always felt himself to be the central point. He was seated, too, next to the beauty; her eyes were upon him, her smiles were directed towards him; enough, he found himself so comfortable, that he almost forgot the cause of his coming. And she too, scarcely said a single word about his son, although the young man joined in the conversation with vivacity; to her he seemed like all the rest, to be there to-day only for his father's sake.

Ladies' work carried on in company, and to all appearance continued with indifference, often by help of cleverness and grace acquires a great significance. If pursued without preoccupation and diligently, such employments give a beautiful woman an air of complete inattention to surrounding company, and arouse in the latter a secret dissatisfaction. But then again, as if waking up, a word, a glance, places the absent one again in the midst of the company, she seems as if newly welcomed; but if she lays down her work in her lap, pays attention to a story, to an instructive dissertation, in which gentlemen are so fond of indulging, this becomes in the highest degree flattering to whomsoever she may favor in this manner.

Our fair widow was working in this fashion at a splendid as well as tasteful letter-case, which, moreover, was remarkable for its large dimensions. This was just now being discussed by the company; it was taken up by her next neighbor, and amidst much praise handed all around the circle, whilst the fair arist herself was discussing some serious subject with the major. An old family friend praised the almost finished work with some exaggeration, yet, when it reached the major, she seemed to be about to take it from him as not worthy of his attention, whilst he, on the contrary, did not fail to acknowledge the merit of the work in the most obliging manner, and the family friend, in the meantime, fancied that he saw in it the magical handiwork of a Penelope.

The company walked to and fro in the rooms, and formed themselves into accidental groups. The lieutenant stepped up to the beauty, and asked, "What do you say to my father?"

She answered, laughingly, "It seems to me that you might well take him for a pattern. Only look how neatly he is dressed! Does he not bear himself and behave himself better than his dear son?"

So she went on to cry up and praise the father at the expense of the son, and to provoke in the young man's heart a very mixed feeling of content and jealousy. It was not long before the son joined his father, and repeated it all again to him minutely. The father behaved with all the more friendliness towards the widow, who already adopted towards him a more lively and confidential tone. In short, it may be said that when the time for parting came, the major already belonged to her and to her circle as much as all the others.

A heavy rain which was falling prevented the company from returning home in the manner in which they had come. A few carriages drove up, into which the pedestrians were distributed; only the lieutenant, under the pretext that they were already too full, allowed his father to drive off, and remained behind.

The major, when he entered his room, felt really in a whirl of uncertainty respecting himself, as happens to those who pass quickly from one condition into an opposite one. The earth seems to move to him who disembarks from on board ship, and light still trembles before the eye of him who suddenly enters into darkness. So the major still felt himself surrounded by the presence of that beautiful being. He wished still to be seeing her, to be listening to her,—to see her again, to listen to her again; and, after some reflection, he excused his son, nay, he extolled his happiness, in that he could make some claims to possess so many attractions. From these reflections he was torn by his son, who in a passionate ecstasy rushed in at the door, embraced his father, and exclaimed, "I am the happiest man in the world!"

After these and like exclamations the two at last came to an explanation. The father observed, that the beauty in her conversation with him had not spoken a syllable about his son.

"That is just the delicate, reserved, half-silent, half-significant manner, by which one learns her wishes, and still for all that cannot quite refrain from doubt. Thus it is that she has hitherto been towards me, but your presence, father, has done wonders. I willingly confess that I remained behind in order to see her another moment. I found her pacing to and fro in her lighted rooms, for I well know that this is her usual habit; when the company has left, not a single light may be extinguished. She walks up and down alone in her enchanted halls, when the spirits whom she has convoked have departed. She allowed the pretext to pass under cover of which I had returned. She spoke gracefully, yet on common topics. We walked backwards and forwards through the open doors of the whole suite of apartments. Several times already we had reached the end, the small retreat, which is lighted only by a dim lamp. If she was beautiful when she moved beneath the lustres, she was infinitely more so when illumined by the soft radiance of the lamp. We had reached it again, and, on turning round, we stopped silent for a moment. I do not know what impelled me to the boldness, I do not know how I could venture, in the midst of the most indifferent talk, suddenly to seize her hand, to kiss that delicate hand, and to press it to my heart. It was not drawn away.

'Heavenly being!' I exclaimed, 'do not hide yourself longer from me! If in this beautiful heart there is harbored any affection for the fortunate one who stands before you, do not conceal it longer, reveal it, confess it! This is the fairest and the best hour. Banish me, or take me to your arms!' I do not know all that I said, I do not know how I behaved. But she did not withdraw, she did not resist, she did not answer. I ventured to clasp her in my arms, to ask her whether she would be mine. I kissed her wildly; she pushed me away. 'Yes, then yes,' or something like that she said half-aloud, and as if confused. I withdrew, exclaiming, 'I will send my father, he shall speak for me!'

" 'Not a word to him about it!' she replied, whilst she followed me a few steps. 'Go away, forget what has happened.' "

What the major thought we shall not disclose. However, he said to his son: "What do you think ought to be done now? The matter, in my opinion, has been sufficiently well introduced on the spur of the moment to enable us now to set to work somewhat more formally, and to make it, perhaps, very proper that I should call to-morrow and intercede for you."

"For God's sake, father!" he exclaimed, "that would be to spoil the whole thing. That bearing, that tone, must not be disturbed or untuned by any kind of formality; it is enough, father, that your presence will accelerate this union, without your uttering a word. Yes, it is you to whom I owe my good fortune. The esteem of my beloved one for you has conquered every doubt, and the son would never have found so happy a moment if the father had not paved the way for it."

They remained engaged in conversation of this kind until late in the night. They agreed mutually as to their plans. The major, only for form's sake, wished to pay a farewell visit to the beautiful widow, and then to take steps towards his union with Hilaria; the son was to forward and expedite his as might be possible.

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CHAPTER IV.

Our major paid a morning visit to the pretty widow to take leave, and if possible with becoming decency to further his son's intentions. He found her in the most elegant morning toilet, in the company of an elderly lady, who at once captivated him by her highly refined and amiable presence. The grace of the younger, the dignity of the elder one, placed the two in a most admirably balanced relation; their mutual behavior also, throughout, seemed to suggest that they belonged to one another.

The younger lady seemed to have just finished a diligently-worked letter-case, already familiar to us, from yesterday; for, after the ordinary greetings and reassuring words of welcome, she turned to her friend, and handed her the work of art, as if again taking up an interrupted conversation. "So you see that I have finished it after all, though with so much delay and putting off, it scarcely looked likely that I would."

"You come just in time, Herr Major," said the elder lady, "to decide our dispute, or at least to declare yourself for one side or the other. I maintain that one never undertakes such a long-drawn work without thinking of some person for whom it is destined; one does not finish it without some such thought. Look yourself at this work of art, for so I can fairly call it; can anything of the kind ever be undertaken without an object?"

Our major had indeed to bestow all his approbation on the work. Partly worked, and partly embroidered, it aroused not only admiration, but also a desire to know how it was made. Colored silks predominated, but gold too was not dispensed with; one did not know whether splendor or taste was the more to be admired.

"And yet there is still something to be done to it," replied the beauty, again untying the knot of the string that fastened it around, and busying herself with the interior. "I will not wrangle," she continued, "but I will tell you how I am disposed towards work of this kind. As young girls, we grow accustomed to plying our fingers, and to wandering with our thoughts; both habits remain, whilst we learn by degrees to accomplish the most difficult and elegant kinds of work; and I do not deny that with every piece of work of this kind I have always associated the thoughts of persons and circumstances, and joy and sorrow. And thus what I had undertaken became valuable to me, and what I had finished, I may well say, became precious to me. As such, then, I was able to regard even the most trifling thing as something, the lightest work gained a value, and the most difficult, too, only on this account—that the recollections in this case were richer and more complete. I therefore always thought of being able to offer such kinds of work to friends and to those I loved—to worthy and distinguished persons; they, too, recognized the fact, and knew that I was offering them something of my very own, which, whilst constituting in many and indescribable ways, yet at all events, somehow or other, an acceptable gift, was always accepted graciously as a friendly compliment."



THE LIEUTENANT DECLARES TO THE FAIR WIDOW.

To such an amiable confession a reply was indeed scarcely possible; yet her lady friend had the fact to add a few civil words in return. But the major, accustomed from of old to appreciate the graceful wisdom of the Roman writers and poets, and to imprint on his memory their luminous expressions, recollected a few apposite verses,^{*} but, lest he should appear as a pedant, took care not to utter them, or even to mention them. However, in order not to seem stupid and devoid of wit, he attempted an impromptu paraphrase in prose, which, however, did not quite succeed, so that the conversation nearly came to a standstill.

The elder lady therefore seized a book that had been laid down on our friend's entrance; it was a selection of poetry, which just before had been occupying the attention of the friends. This afforded an opportunity of speaking about poetry in general, and yet the conversation did not remain long on the general subject, for soon the ladies candidly confessed that they had been informed of the major's poetical talent. The son, who did not hide his own claims to the honorary title of poet, had told them beforehand about his father's poetry, and even recited some of it; in reality in order to flatter himself with a poetical descent, and, as is the case with youth, to be able to announce himself, in a modest way, as a progressive son who carried to a higher pitch his father's capabilities. But the major, who sought to withdraw, since he only wished to pass for a man of letters and an amateur, tried, when no escape remained, at least to back out, maintaining that the kind of poetry which he certainly had practised was regarded as only a subordinate and an almost spurious sort; he could not deny having made a few attempts in the kind which is called descriptive, and, in a certain sense, didactic.

The ladies, especially the younger, were fond of this kind of poetry; she said, "When one wants to live rationally and quietly, which, in fine, is the wish and intention of every human being, what is the good of the sensational kind, that wantonly allures us without giving us anything, that unsettles us, and yet in the end abandons us to ourselves again? Yet since I cannot willingly dispense with poetry of one sort or another, infinitely more pleasant to me is that kind which transports me into cheerful regions, where I seem to recognize myself again; which brings home to my mind the sterling worth of the simply rural, carries me through leafy shades into the forest,

unexpectedly commanding from a height the view of an inland lake, opposite to which perhaps cultivated hills, and then wood-crowned heights arise, whilst the blue mountains in the background form a soothing picture. If this is offered me in plain rhythm and rhyme, then on my sofa I am thankful to the poet for having evolved in my fancy a picture, in which I can enjoy more at my ease than if I saw it before my eyes after fatiguing travel, and perhaps under other unfavorable circumstances."

The major, who in point of fact looked on the present conversation only as a means of furthering his ends, tried to turn again to the lyrical style of poetry, in which his son had really achieved something praiseworthy. They did not gainsay him directly, but they tried jokingly to get him out of the path on which he had entered, particularly as he seemed to allude to passionate pieces, in which the son, not without force and ability, had tried to bring before the incomparable lady the decided inclination of his heart.

"Lovers' lays," said the lady, "I care neither to have said nor sung to me; happy lovers one envies before one is aware of it, and unhappy ones we always find tedious."

Hereupon the elder lady, turning to her charming friend, struck in and said, "Why are we proceeding so indirectly and losing time in ceremonies towards a man whom we love and honor? Ought we not to confide to him that we have already the pleasure of knowing in part his charming poem, in which he describes the sturdy passion of the chase in all its details; and ought we not to beg him now to withhold longer from us the whole of it? Your son," she continued, "has repeated to us with vivacity a few passages from memory, and made us curious to see it as a connected whole."

But when the father was a second time about to revert to and extol the talents of his son, the ladies would not allow this to pass, denouncing it as an evident evasion for the purpose of declining indirectly to fulfil their wishes. He was not allowed to get off until he had unconditionally promised to send the poem; but after that the conversation took a turn, which prevented him from saying anything more in favor of his son, especially as the latter had dissuaded him from all importunity.

As it now seemed to be the time to take leave, and the friend too had already made some movement to that end, the beauty said, with a sort of embarrassment, which only made her still more beautiful, at the same time carefully arranging the knot of the letter-case, which had been newly tied: "Poets and amateurs have unfortunately been long in such sort of repute, that one ought not to rely too much upon their promises and agreements; pardon me, therefore, if I venture to call in doubt the word of an honorable man, and on that account purpose, not to ask, but to give a pledge, a token of faith. Take this letter-case; it has some resemblance to your hunting-poem: many recollections are attached to it, a long time has been spent in the work, at last it is finished; avail yourself of it as a messenger, in which to bring us your pleasing work."

The major really felt struck at such an unexpected offer; the elegant splendor of this gift had so little relation to what habitually surrounded him, to everything else that he made use of, that although offered to him, he scarcely ventured to accept it; still, he collected himself, and as some treasure of traditional lore was never lacking to his

memory, a classical passage immediately occurred to his mind. However, it would have been pedantic to quote it, and yet it suggested in him a bright thought, so that then and there he was able in a neat paraphrase to tender a friendly acknowledgment, and an elegant compliment in return. And thus the scene was closed in a satisfactory manner to all the interlocutors.

So, finally, he found himself, not without embarrassment, entangled in a pleasant connection: he had promised, had pledged himself to send, to write; and if the occasion in some measure seemed unsatisfactory, still he had to esteem as a piece of good fortune the fact that he was to remain in pleasant relations with the lady who, with all her great attractions, was to be so nearly allied to him. So he took his departure, not without a certain inward satisfaction; for how should the poet not feel such an encouragement as this, when his faithful and diligent work, that had so long lain unheeded, was now quite unexpectedly receiving amiable recognition?

Immediately after his return to his quarters, the major sat down to write, to inform his good sister of everything, and then nothing was more natural than that his whole style should betray a certain exultation, such as he himself felt, and which, by the remarks of his son interrupting him from time to time, was raised to a still higher degree.

Upon the baroness this letter made a very mingled impression; for although the circumstance—through which the union of her brother with Hilaria was likely to be facilitated and hastened—was in itself calculated to satisfy her completely, still the beautiful widow somehow failed to please her, though she would not have thought of taking herself to task on that account. We will take this opportunity of making the following observation:

An enthusiasm for any one woman, ought never to be confided to another; they know each other too well to believe themselves worthy of any such exclusive homage. Men appear to them as customers in a shop, where the tradesman, who knows his wares, has the best of it, and can also avail himself of the opportunity of displaying them in the best lights; whilst, on the other hand, the buyer always enters with a kind of innocence; he stands in need of the article, desires to have it, and but very rarely understands how to look at it with the eyes of an expert. The one knows very well what he is giving, the other does not always know what he is receiving. Yet once for all this cannot be changed in human life and converse—nay, it is even as legitimate as necessary; for all coveting and wooing, all buying and bartering, depends upon it.



In consequence of this sentiment, rather than reflection, the baroness could not be entirely satisfied either with the passion of the son or with the favorable description of the father; she found herself surprised by the fortunate turn of affairs, and yet she could not banish a foreboding, on account of the double disparity of age. Hilaria seems to her too young for her brother, the widow not young enough for the son; in the meanwhile the affair has taken a course which is not likely to be checked. A pious wish that all might end well arose with a subdued sigh. To relieve her heart, she seized a pen, and wrote to that friend of hers so well acquainted with mankind,* and after a prefatory narrative, she thus continued:

“The method of this seductive widow is not unknown to me: she seems to decline all female company, and only to endure near her a woman who in no way prejudices her, who flatters her, and if her silent advantages are not sufficiently obvious, manages by words and an adroit treatment to recommend her to observation. Spectators, if sympathizers in such a performance, must be men; hence arises the necessity of enticing them and retaining them. I think no evil of the beautiful woman; she seems proper and discreet enough, but such a hankering vanity must doubtless sacrifice something to circumstances, and—what I regard as the worst—it is not all so considered and designed: a certain happy natural disposition guides and protects her, and nothing is more dangerous in a born coquette like her than an *abandon* resulting from innocence.”

The major, now at length arrived at his country house, devoted the day and hour to inspection and examination. He found himself in a situation to observe that a straightforward and well-grasped leading idea is in its execution subjected to manifold hindrances, and to the traversing of so many chances, to such a degree that the first idea almost vanishes, and for the moment seems to be utterly and completely lost, until in the midst of all the confusion the mind again perceives the possibility of success, when we see Time, the best ally of invincible endurance, offering us a hand.

And so too, here, there would have been the melancholy spectacle of fair and wide yet neglected possessions brought into a hopeless condition through the clever remarks of keen-witted economists, had it not at the same time been foreseen that a term of years, used with common-sense and honesty, are sufficient to reanimate what is dead, to bring into circulation what is stagnant, and so, by method and industry, to attain at last one's end.

The good-natured Obermarschall had arrived, and with him, in fact, a grave lawyer; yet the latter caused the major less anxiety than the former, who was one of those people who have no fixed object, or, if they see one before them, decline the means of attaining it. Daily and hourly pleasure was the indispensable requirement of his life. After long hesitation, he had at last resolved in earnest to rid himself of his creditors, to shake off the burdens on his property, to put order into the confusion of his household, to enjoy without further anxieties a respectable and certain income; yet, for all that, not to discontinue even the smallest item of his previous habits.

On the whole he agreed to everything as to what his brother and sister were to pay for the undisturbed possession of the estate, and especially of the principal property; yet

he would not completely forego his claims to a certain adjacent villa, to which every year on his birthday he invited his oldest friends and most recent acquaintances, nor to the ornamental gardens attached thereto that connected it with the principal building. The furniture was all to remain in the villa, the engravings on the walls; and, moreover, the fruit upon the espaliers was reserved to him. Peaches and strawberries of the most exquisite kind, pears and apples large and well-flavored, but particularly a certain kind of small gray apples, which he had been accustomed for many years to offer to the princess-dowager, were faithfully to be handed over to him. To this were added other conditions less important, but to the owner, the tenants, the overseers, and the gardeners, uncommonly burdensome.

For the rest the Obermarschall was in the best humor; for he did not relinquish the thought that all would ultimately be arranged according to his wishes, and as his sanguine temperament had anticipated; he therefore only troubled himself about a good dinner, and in an easy ride of a few hours obtained the requisite exercise, related story after story, and showed throughout a most cheerful countenance. In the same manner, too, he took his departure, thanked the major most handsomely for having treated him in such a brotherly manner, borrowed a little money, had the store of small gray apples, which this year had succeeded particularly well, carefully packed up, and with this treasure, which he intended to offer as a welcome compliment to the princess, he drove away to the dowager's residence, where in due course he was received in a gracious and friendly manner.

The major, for his part, remained behind with totally opposite feelings, and would have been almost driven to despair at the restrictions that he found before him, if he had not been aided by that feeling which cheers and revives an active man when he has the hope of unravelling what is confused, and enjoying what has been unravelled.

Fortunately the lawyer happened to be an honest man, who, as he had a good deal else to do, soon settled the question. It was equally fortunate that a valet of the Obermarschall's threw himself into it, and, on reasonable conditions, promised to co-operate in the affair, whereby a successful result might be hoped for. Satisfactory as this was, however, still the major, as a man of rectitude, felt, in the shifting pros and cons of this business, that satisfaction was only to be got through much that was unsatisfactory. But just as to women, the moment at which their hitherto uncontested beauty will become doubtful is in the highest degree painful, so also to men of a certain age, though still in the fulness of vigor, the faintest sense of insufficient power is extremely disagreeable, nay, in some degree painful.

Another circumstance, however, that occurred, which ought to have disturbed him, put him into the best humor. His cosmetrical valet, who had not left him even during this country excursion, for some time back seemed to have struck into a fresh path, to which the major's early rising, his daily rides and excursions, as also the admittance of many busy people—or even, during the Obermarschall's presence, of many idle ones—seemed to compel him. For some time past he had excused the major all the small trifles, that only had a claim to engage the attention of an actor, but so much the more strictly did he hold fast to certain principal points, which hitherto had been obscured by a less important hocuspocus. He re-enforced everything which not only

aimed at the appearance of health, but also was seriously supposed to maintain health itself, but particularly moderation in everything, and variety according to circumstances; attention likewise to the skin and hair, to eyebrows and teeth, to hands and nails, the most elegant form and neatest length of which this expert had long made his care. At the same time he stringently prescribed, over and over again, moderation in everything that is wont to throw a man off his balance; after which this professor of the art of beautification asked leave to go, because he could be of no further use to his master. At the same time one can imagine that he may well have wished himself back with his former patron, in order to be able to devote himself once more to the varied pleasures of a theatrical life.

And it really did the major a great deal of good to be again his own master. The sensible man needs only to keep himself under control, and he is happy. He could again freely indulge in his old exercise of riding, hunting, and of all pertaining thereto. The image of Hilaria in such solitary moments again came pleasantly forward, and he adapted himself to the condition of an engaged man—perhaps the most charming one that is allotted to us within the sphere of civilized life.

During a pause in the business that left him some liberty, he hurried to his estate, where, recollecting the promise given to the beautiful widow, which he had never forgotten, he rummaged among his poems, that were lying put away in excellent order; at the same time he put his hand on many note and memorandum-books, containing extracts from ancient and modern authors which he had read. Owing to his partiality for Horace and the Roman poets, most of them belonged to these, and it struck him that the passages chiefly expressed regrets for past time, and for a vanished state of things and feelings. Instead of many, we shall insert only the following passage:

Heu!
Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit?
Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ?*

Translation.

To-day how full I am of glee,
Content in heart and clear in thought;
But when my boyish blood flowed free,
How gloomy was I and distraught!
Yet, when I feel the years behind,
However joyous I may be,
Those ruddy cheeks I call to mind,
And wish they still remained to me.

Our friend having very soon found the hunting-poem among his well-arranged papers, he congratulated himself on the careful calligraphy, as years ago he had written it down in most elegant style, with Roman characters, in large octavo. The precious letter-case, being of considerable size, would contain the poem quite conveniently, and not often has an author seen himself so magnificently bound. A few lines on the

subject were absolutely necessary; but prose was scarcely admissible. That Ovidian passage again occurred to him, and he thought he would best manage the matter by a poetical transcription, as he had on the other occasion by a prose one. It ran as follows:

Nec factas solum vestes spectare juvabat,
Tum quoque, dum fierent: tantus decor adfuit arti†

Translation.

I watch'd it when in hands well skill'd—
(How I recall that season sweet!)—
It grew and grew, until fulfill'd
In splendor never so complete;
And, true enough, 't is now my own,
Yet, to myself alone I tell,
I wish it still were not quite done—
I loved its making all too well!

With this transposition our friend did not long remain satisfied; he regretted the conversion of the beautifully inflected verb *fierent* into a sorry abstract substantive, and he was vexed that, in spite of all reflection, he was unable to mend the passage. Now all at once his partiality for the ancient languages awoke again, and the splendor of the German Parnassus, the heights of which, however, he was privately striving to ascend, seemed to grow dim before him.

But at last, finding that this pleasant compliment, apart from the original text, was good enough, and venturing to believe that a lady would accept it quite in good part, there arose a second source of misgiving, namely, that if one cannot be *galant* in verse without seeming to be in love, he would in that case, as a father-in-law about to be, be playing a strange part. The worst, however, occurred to him last. The Ovidian verses were uttered by Arachne, a lady spinner no less clever than beautiful and attractive. Now, if she through the envy of Minerva was turned into a spider, then it would be dangerous to compare even remotely a beautiful woman with a spider, and see her hovering at the centre of an outspread net. Among all the witty company which surrounded our lady, could one imagine any scholar who would have blundered into a comparison of this kind? How our friend extricated himself from such a dilemma has remained unknown to us, and we must number this case among those over which the muses slyly make bold to throw a veil. Enough, the hunting-poem itself was despatched; but about this we have to add a few words.

The reader of it is supposed to revel in a determined love of sport, and of everything that contributes to it; delightful is the succession of the seasons, which in different ways occasion and promote it. The peculiarities of all the creatures that are pursued and that one seeks to kill, the different characters of the sportsmen who devote themselves to this pleasure, to this toil, the accidents that favor or hinder it—all, especially whatever related to the winged tribe, was set forth in the best of moods, and treated with great originality. From the breeding of the grouse to the second flight of

the woodcock, and from that to the building of the crow, nothing was neglected; all was well observed, clearly conceived, passionately pursued, and was lightly, playfully, and often ironically set forth.

The elegiac strain, however, sounded throughout the whole; it was treated rather as a farewell to these pleasures of life, whereby it indeed gained a pathetic touch as of a merry life spent, and had a very beneficial effect, but yet in the end, as in the case of those mottoes above cited, allowed a certain emptiness after enjoyment to be felt. Whether it was due to turning over these papers, or to a momentary indisposition, the major did not feel in a happy mood. At the diverging point at which he found himself, he seemed all at once to feel keenly that the years at first bring us one pleasant gift after the other, and then by degrees withdraw them again. A holiday put off, a summer gone without enjoyment, want of continual, habitual exercise—all caused him to feel certain bodily ailments, which he took for real evils, and showed more impatience thereat than there might seem occasion for.

The various members of the family had now been for several months without any special news of one another; the major was busy in the capital finally negotiating certain grants and confirmations appertaining to his affairs; the baroness and Hilaria bestowed their energies upon securing the gayest and richest outfit; the son, passionately devoting himself to his fair one, seemed to forget everything in that. The winter had set in, and enveloped all rural habitations in dismal rain-storms and premature gloom.

Anyone who at this time might have lost his way on a dark November night in the neighborhood of the noble castle, and seen by the feeble light of the half-veiled moon cornfields, meadows, clumps of trees, hills and underwood lying gloomily before him, and then all at once at a sharp turning round a corner have beheld in front of him the whole range of windows of an extensive edifice lit up, might well have thought that he had there fallen in with a company in festive array. Yet how would he have been astonished, when ushered up the illuminated staircase by a few servants, to see only three women—the baroness, Hilaria, and the ladies'-maid, in the lighted apartments within those bright walls, among hospitable domestic surroundings, thoroughly warm and comfortable.

Yet, since we suppose that we are surprising the baroness in a festive array, it is necessary to observe, that this splendid illumination is in this case not to be regarded as anything extraordinary, but that it is one of the peculiarities that the lady had brought with her from her earlier life. As the daughter of a lady-in-waiting, educated at court, she was wont to prefer the winter to all other seasons, and to make the display of a grand illumination the chief element of all her enjoyments. In fact there was no stint of wax candles, but one of her oldest servants had such a great delight in artificial illumination, that it was not easy for a new kind of lamp to be invented without his taking pains to introduce it into the castle, whereby surely enough the illumination gained considerably, but it also occasionally happened that here and there partial darkness was the result.

By her marriage with a distinguished landowner and eminent cultivator, the baroness, from affection and on due consideration, had changed her condition of a lady at court, and her sensible husband, when at first a country life failed to suit her, had, with the consent of his neighbors, nay, even at the injunction of the government, so much improved the roads for many miles round, that the intercommunication of the neighborhood had never been found anywhere in such a good condition; yet in this laudable improvement the principal object had really been that the lady, especially in favorable weather, might be able to drive everywhere; but in winter, on the other hand, she might remain at home with him, whilst he managed, by means of artificial light, to make night like day. After her husband's death, her passionate solicitude for her daughter afforded her sufficient occupation, her brother's frequent visits gratified her affection, and the habitual brightness of her surroundings gave a degree of comfort which had all the appearance of real contentment.

To-day, however, this illumination was altogether in place, for in one of the rooms we see displayed a kind of Christmas-show, attractive and resplendent to the sight. The cunning ladies'-maid had prevailed on the butler to increase the illumination, and at the same time had collected and spread out all that had been prepared beforehand for Hilaria's marriage outfit—in point of fact with the sly purpose rather of bringing under discussion what was still wanting, than of showing off what had already been provided. All the needful things were there, made, moreover, of the finest material, and with the most elegant handiwork; neither was there any lack of fancy articles; and yet Ananetta was clever enough still to make a gap visible everywhere, where one could just as easily have found the most beautiful continuity. Whilst all sorts of under-clothing, handsomely set out, dazzled the eyes, linen, muslin, and all delicate fabrics of the kind, whatever their names might be, casting light enough around, yet all the colored silk-stuffs were missing, for the purchase of those had been wisely deferred, because, considering the very changeable fashions, it was intended to add whatever was most recent as a climax and conclusion.

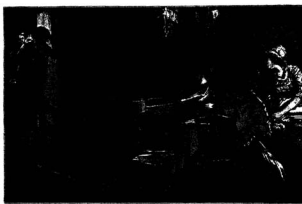
After this most merry inspection, they betook themselves again to their customary but varied evening entertainment. The baroness, who knew well what makes a young lady endowed with a pleasant exterior attractive also from within, and her presence desirable wheresoever fate might lead her, had managed to introduce into these rural surroundings so many varied and instructive means of amusement, that Hilaria, young as she was, seemed at home everywhere, was not at a loss in any conversation, and yet showed herself withal quite on a level with her years. To show step by step how this had been possible, would be too long a task; enough to say, this evening also was a sample of the kind of life they had hitherto led Intellectual reading, a graceful piano recital, pretty songs, went on for some hours, pleasantly and in due order as heretofore, and yet not without a certain significance; they had in mind a third person, a beloved and honored man, to welcome whom in the heartiest manner they were practising this and much besides. It was a bridal feeling that animated Hilaria, and not her alone, with the sweetest sensations; the mother, with delicate sentiment, felt an unalloyed sympathy therein, and even Ananetta, in general only scheming and busy, was fain to abandon herself to certain distant hopes, which pictured to her fancy an absent friend as returning and present. In this manner the feelings of all three women,

each of them amiable in her own way, were in harmony with the surrounding brightness, with the cheering warmth, and with the most comfortable circumstances.

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CHAPTER V.

A violent knocking and shouting at the outermost gate—an interchange of threatening and peremptory voices—lamp and torch-light in the courtyard—interrupted the gentle singing. Yet the noise had subsided before they had learned the cause of it, but quiet there was not: on the staircase the trample and quick discussing of men ascending. The door sprang open without any announcement; the ladies were terrified. Flavio rushed in in the most forlorn condition, with disordered head, on which the hair was partly ruffled up and partly hanging down drenched with rain; with tattered clothes, like one who has been rushing through thorns and bushes, dreadfully soiled, as if he had been wading through a mire and marsh.



“My father!” he exclaimed, “Where is my father?”

The ladies were out of their wits; the old huntsman, his earliest servant and favorite attendant, entering along with him, called out to him, “Your father is not here; calm yourself; here is your aunt, here is your cousin, see here!”

“Not here! then let me go away and find him. He alone shall hear it, and then I will die! Let me get away from the lamps, from the light of day. It dazzles me, it annihilates me.”

The house physician came in, seized his hand cautiously, feeling his pulse; several servants were standing anxiously around.

“What am I doing on these carpets? I am spoiling them, I am ruining them; my wretchedness drips down upon them, my abject destiny defiles them!”

He rushed towards the door; they took advantage of this effort to lead him away, and take him to the distant guest-chamber that his father usually occupied. Mother and daughter stood aghast; they had seen an Orestes chased by furies, not ennobled by art, but in a horrible repugnant reality, which in contrast with the comfort of a splendid dwelling in the brightest glow of waxen lights seemed only the more fearful. Terror-stricken, the women looked at one another, and each believed that she saw in the eyes of the other the picture of horror that had impressed itself so deeply on her own.

Only half herself, the baroness sent one servant after another to get information. It was some consolation to hear that he was being undressed, dried, and taken care of; that half consciously, half unwittingly, he allowed all this to be done. On repeating their inquiries, they were counselled to have patience.

At last the anxious ladies were informed that he had been bled, and in other respects every possible soothing remedy employed; he had been brought to a quiet condition, and sleep was hoped for.

Midnight arrived; the baroness asked to see him if he was asleep; the physician opposed—the physician yielded; Hilaria pressed in with her mother. The room was dimly lighted, only one candle glistened behind the green screen, there was little to be seen, nothing to be heard; the mother approached the bed, Hilaria with eager longing seized the candle and threw the light upon the sleeper. There he lay, turned away from them, but a very well-formed ear, a rounded cheek, now somewhat pale, peeped forth most gracefully among the locks that by this time curled again; a hand lying quietly, with its long, delicate, yet strong fingers, attracted the wandering glance. Hilaria, breathing gently, thought that she even perceived his gentle breathing; she brought the light nearer, like Psyche, at the risk of disturbing this most wholesome rest. The physician took the candle away and lighted the ladies to their rooms.

How these kind persons, so worthy of all sympathy, spent the hours of night, has remained a secret from us; but early the next morning they both showed themselves very impatient. There was no end to their questioning, to their desire to see the patient, proffered diffidently yet urgently; only towards midday the physician allowed a short visit.

The baroness stepped forward; Flavio extended his hand.

“Pardon, dearest aunt; only a little patience, perhaps not for long.”

Hilaria came forward; to her, too, he gave his right hand. “Welcome, dear sister.”

This went through her heart: he did not leave hold; they looked at one another, the most beautiful pair, a contrast in the finest sense. The youth's black, flashing eyes harmonized with the dark tangled locks; she, on the other hand, stood, to all appearance divine in peace, and yet with the agitating past was now associated the present full of foreboding. That name, *sister!*—her inmost heart was stirred.

The baroness spoke: “How are you, dear nephew?”

“Pretty well, but they treat me badly.”

“How so?”



“They have bled me; it is cruel; they have carried it away, it was audacious; it does not belong to me, it is all—all hers.”

With these words his face seemed to change, but with hot tears he hid his face in the pillow.

Hilaria's countenance betrayed to her mother a terrible expression; it was as if the dear child saw the gates of hell open before her, and for the first time looked on a monster, and forever. Swiftly, passionately, she hurried through the saloon, threw herself in the last chamber upon the sofa; her mother followed, and asked what, alas! she already perceived.

Hilaria, looking up in a strange way, cried, "The blood, the blood! it all belongs to her—all to her, and she is not worthy of it. Unhappy man! poor man!"

With these words, the bitterest storm of tears relieved the agonized heart.

Who is there that would undertake to reveal the situation that was developing itself from the foregoing scene—to bring to light the inward mischief for the women growing from this first meeting? To the patient, too, it was in the highest degree hurtful; so at least affirmed the physician, who came, it is true, often enough to impart news and to give consolation, but who felt himself in duty bound to forbid all further visiting. In this also he found a willing obedience; the daughter did not venture to ask what her mother would not have allowed, and so the order of the sensible gentleman was obeyed. But, on the other hand, he brought the welcome tidings that Flavio had asked for writing materials, and written down something, but had forthwith hidden it close by him in the bed. Curiosity was now added to their remaining restlessness and impatience; those were painful hours. After some time, however, he brought a scrap, written in a fine free hand, although hastily; it contained the following lines:

A marvel comes poor Man into the world,
In marvels lost Man to and fro is hurl'd.
With steps uncertain, hard it is to tell
To what dark gate he wends his pathless way;
For in heaven's living light and midmost ray
I see, I feel but night, and death, and hell.

So here once again could the noble art of poetry display its healing power. Intimately associated with music, she heals all sorrows of the soul from its very depths, whilst powerfully arousing, evoking, and putting them to flight with liberating pangs. The physician had convinced himself that the youth would soon be well; sound in body, he would soon feel cheerful again, if the passion weighing upon his mind could be removed or mitigated. Hilaria meditated upon a reply; she sat down to the piano, and tried to accompany the lines of the patient with a melody. She did not succeed; nothing in her soul responded to such deep grief; yet, at this attempt, rhythm and rhyme accommodated themselves to such a degree to her ideas, that she responded to the poem with soothing cheerfulness, and taking her time, composed and worked up the following strophe:

Though still in very depths of woe and pain,
Thou 'rt destined for the joys of youth again.

Arise and man thyself for health's quick pace!
To friendship's clear and heavenly light be led;
Midst good and true ones find a resting-place—
So may life's joyous dew be o'er thee shed!

The medical friend of the family took charge of the missive; it succeeded, the youth already replied in a moderate tone; Hilaria continued soothingly, and thus, little by little, they seemed to gain daylight and open ground once more, and perhaps we may be allowed, when occasion serves, to describe the whole course of this pleasing treatment. Enough, some time was spent most pleasantly in this sort of occupation; a quiet interview was being arranged beforehand, and the physician no longer thought it necessary to defer it.

In the meantime the baroness had busied herself in sorting and arranging old papers, and this occupation, which so completely accorded with present circumstances, acted wonderfully upon her excited spirit. She passed in review many years of her own life; deep, threatening sorrows had gone by, the reconsideration of which strengthened her courage for the present moment; particularly was she moved by the recollection of her beautiful friendship with Makaria, and indeed under trying circumstances. The excellence of that unique woman was again brought to her mind, and she at once formed the resolution of applying to her on this occasion also; * for to whom else could she express her present feelings, to whom else candidly avow her fears and hopes?

But in the midst of her researches she found amongst other things her brother's miniature portrait, and was forced with a smile to sigh at its likeness to the son. Hilaria surprised her at this moment, possessed herself of the portrait, and she too was strangely struck with the resemblance.



Some time passed thus; at last, with the assent of the physician, and attended by him, Flavio, after having been announced, came in to breakfast. The women had been afraid of this first appearance; but as it very often happens in important, nay, in terrible moments, that something amusing, or even ridiculous, will take place, so it happened here. The son came in dressed completely in his father's clothes; for nothing of his own suit was wearable; they had availed themselves of the major's country and home wardrobe, which he had left in his sister's keeping in readiness for shooting or house wear. The baroness laughed, and recovered herself; Hilaria was startled, she knew not why; at all events she turned her face away, and at this moment would give the youth neither a cordial word nor a phrase of greeting. However, in order to help the whole party out of their embarrassment, the doctor began a comparison of the two figures. The father was somewhat taller, he said, and for that reason the coat was a little too long; the son was slightly broader, and the coat therefore was too tight across the shoulders. Both differences of proportion gave a

comical appearance to this disguise; yet, with these trifles, they escaped the momentary difficulty. To Hilaria, however, the likeness between the juvenile effigy of the father and the fresh living presence of the son remained discomforting—nay, oppressive.

But now we might well have wished to see the next interval of time circumstantially described by a woman's delicate hand, since in our own style and manner we venture to occupy ourselves only with the general. For here the discourse must again be of the influence of poetic art.

Our Flavio must be credited with a certain amount of talent; but it needed only too much a passionate, sensual impulse, if it was to have any striking success; and it was on that account that almost all the poems dedicated to that irresistible woman seemed in the highest degree impressive and praiseworthy, and now, when read aloud with enthusiastic delivery in the presence of a most amiable beauty, must needs produce no little effect.

A young lady, who sees that another is loved passionately, willingly accommodates herself to the *rôle* of a confidante; she nourishes a secret, scarcely conscious feeling, that it would certainly not be unpleasant to see herself gently elevated to the place of the adored one. The conversation also became more and more significant. Responsive poems, such as a lover likes to compose, because, though but diffidently, he can half-and-half reply to himself, as from his fair one, what he himself wishes, and what he could hardly expect to hear from her own beautiful lips. Such poems, too, were read alternately with Hilaria, and in fact, as it could only be from the one manuscript, into which both had to look to strike in at the right time, and to this end both had to hold the little volume, it so came to pass that, sitting close together, little by little body and hand drew ever nearer, and at last, quite naturally, the contact was secretly maintained.

But amidst these sweet relations, in spite of the charming delight which they caused, Flavio felt a painful anxiety, which he concealed but ill, and longing continually for his father's arrival, made it evident that he had to confide the most important thing to him. This secret, meanwhile, it would not have been difficult to guess with a little reflection. The charming woman, in a moment of excitement, provoked by the youth's importunities, may have peremptorily dismissed the unhappy one, and have banished and destroyed the hope which he had hitherto obstinately cherished. We have not ventured to depict the scene in which this may have passed, from fear that the fire of youth might fail us here. In short, he had been so beside himself, that he had left the garrison in haste without leave, and in order to find his father, he had attempted in despair to reach his aunt's country house through night, storm, and rain,—where, too, we lately saw him arrive. On the return of sober reflection, the consequences of such a step occurred vividly to him, and, as his father still remained absent, and he would have to dispense with the only possible mediation, he was unable either to compose or help himself.

How surprised and struck he therefore felt when a letter from his colonel was handed to him, the well-known seal of which he broke with hesitation and anxiety, but which,

after the most friendly words, ended to the effect that the leave allowed him would be prolonged for another month.

Inexplicable as this favor seemed to him, still he felt freed thereby from a burden which began to weigh upon his mind almost more painfully than even his rejected love. He now thoroughly felt the happiness of being so well received by his amiable relations; he dared to rejoice in Hilaria's presence, and, after a short time, recovered all the agreeable social qualities which for a time had rendered him necessary to the beautiful widow herself as well as to her circle, and which had been overclouded only by his peremptory claim to her hand forever.

In this frame of mind he could wait well enough for his father to come, and they were stimulated into an active way of life by natural events that intervened. The continuous rain, that up to this time had kept them together in the castle, pouring down in torrents, had caused the rivers everywhere to rise one after the other; dams had burst, and the region below the castle lay like a smooth lake, out of which the villages, farms, and country houses, big and little, being situated upon hills, looked for all the world like so many islands.

For such emergencies—rare enough, yet possible—people were prepared: the housewife gave her orders, the servants carried them out. After the first universal rendering of assistance, bread was baked, oxen were slaughtered, fishing-boats rowed to and fro extending help and provisions in all directions. Everything was carried out pleasantly and well, what was kindly given was gladly and thankfully received; only at one place the distributing officials of the commune were not trusted. Flavio undertook the duty, and with a well-laden boat rowed quickly and safely to the place. Transacting the simple business in a simple manner, he succeeded completely; moreover, rowing further, our youth discharged a commission which Hilaria had given him at parting. Just in the midst of these calamitous days the confinement of a woman, in whom the good child was especially interested, had taken place. Flavio found the patient, and took back home the thanks of all, and hers in particular. Amidst all this there could be no lack of things to talk of. If not one had perished, yet there was much to tell of wonderful rescues, of strange, of amusing, nay, even of ludicrous occurrences; many trying circumstances were described in an interesting manner. In short, Hilaria felt all at once an irresistible desire to make an expedition too, to congratulate the sick woman, to distribute gifts, and to spend a few pleasant hours.



FLAVIO AND HILARIA SKATING.

After a little opposition on the part of her good mother, Hilaria's lively determination to try the adventure at last prevailed, and we willingly admit that in the course of these events, as they became known to us, we were to some degree concerned, lest some danger might be hovering here, such as shipwreck, capsizing of the boat, or mortal peril to the fair one, and, on the youth's part, a bold rescue, drawing still tighter the loosely-knotted bond. But of all this there was no question; the expedition went off successfully; the invalid was visited and received a present; the doctor's company was not without a good effect; and if here or there a little obstacle was met with, if the appearance of a critical moment seemed to alarm the rowers, it nevertheless all ended in a sly joke to the effect that one said he had noticed in another an anxious air, increased embarrassment, or a timid gesture. In the meantime the mutual confidence had considerably increased; the habit of seeing each other, and of being together under all conditions, had been strengthened, and the dangerous situation—when relationship and inclination alternately assume a right to approach and take possession—became more and more critical.

And yet they were to be gracefully enticed still further and further along this path of love. The sky cleared up, and, agreeably with the season, a hard frost set in; the waters froze before they could flow away. Then to the eyes of all the aspect of the world was all at once changed; what had just been separated by the flood was now again connected by a hardened floor, and forthwith there appeared, as a desirable coadjutor, that beautiful art, which was invented in the far North, to glorify the first speedy winter days, and to give new life to the frozen. The lumber-room was opened, each sought his own marked skates, anxious, even at some risk, to be the first to cross the pure smooth expanse. Among the household there were many who were practised to the highest degree of activity; for almost every year they had this enjoyment on the neighboring lakes and connecting canals; but this time it was on a far more extensive surface.

Flavio only now felt thoroughly well, and Hilaria, who had had her uncle's instruction from her earliest years, showed herself no less charming than energetic upon the newly-made floor. They sped about merrily, and yet more merrily, sometimes together, sometimes separately, sometimes apart, and sometimes hand-in-hand.

Separation and avoidance, which in general weigh so heavily on the heart, became in this instance but small and laughable evils; they fled each other only to meet again the next moment.

Yet in the midst of this joy and gladness there moved also a world of necessity. Certain places still remained only half provided for; swiftly now did the most necessary articles speed to and fro upon bravely-drawn sledges, and, what was of still more advantage to the district, from many places that lay too far from the nearest high-road they could now quickly transport the products of farming and husbandry to the nearest depots of the towns and small boroughs, and from there bring back wares of all kinds. Thus, all at once, an ill-fated district, suffering the bitterest want, was once more rescued, once more cared for, connected as it was by a smooth surface open to the skilful and the bold.

Neither did the young couple omit, in the midst of the ruling pastime, to call to mind many duties due to kindly associations. The new mother was visited and supplied with every necessary. Others, too, were visited; old people, about whose health they were anxious; clergymen, with whom they had laudably been accustomed to keep up an edifying intercourse, and whom in this present trial they found still more worthy of esteem; small farmers, who in past times had settled down boldly enough in dangerous low-lying ground, but who this time being protected by well-built dams had remained unharmed, and after incessant alarms were doubly delighted with their escape. Every farm, every house, every family, nay, every single individual, had his story to tell; he had become to himself, and often to others also, an important personage; and so it happened that one narrator easily fell into the groove of another. Every one hurried in speaking, doing, coming and going, for there was always the danger that a sudden thaw might destroy the whole beautiful round of happy intercourse, threatening the householders, and cutting off the guests from their homes.

If the day was thus occupied in swift movement, and in the keenest interest, the evening afforded also in quite another way the pleasantest of hours; for skating has this advantage over all other bodily exercises, that in it effort does not overheat, nor long continuance fatigue. The limbs all seem to become more pliant, and every expenditure of strength to generate fresh strength, so at last a blissful, mobile state of rest comes over us, in which we are tempted to lull ourselves forever.

And so to-day our young couple could not tear themselves away from the smooth floor; each turn towards the lighted castle, where a large company was already assembled, was suddenly counter-turned, and a retreat into the distance preferred; they did not like to keep apart, for fear of losing each other; they held each other's hand, to be sure of each being there. But sweetest of all seemed the motion when arms lay crosswise on shoulders, and dainty fingers played unconsciously in each other's locks.



The full moon rose in the star-bespangled firmament, and completed the magic of the surroundings. They again saw each other distinctly, and mutually sought, as ever, for a response in the shaded eyes; but it seemed to be elsewhere. From the depths of their hearts a light seemed to beam forth, and betray what the mouth wisely forbore to utter; they both felt themselves in a mood of quiet joy.

All the high-growing willows and alders by the ditches, each lowly shrub on the heights and hills, had become distant; the stars glowed, the cold had increased—they felt nothing of it, and glided along the moon's reflection, leading far into the distance straight towards the heavenly globe itself. Then they looked up, and saw in the flickering reflection a man's form gliding to and fro, who seemed to be following his shadow, and dark himself, but surrounded by light, to be striding towards them; involuntarily they turned away; to encounter anyone would be unpleasant. They avoided the figure, that continued to move hither and thither, and seemed not to be observed. They pursued their direct path towards the castle; yet all at once their quiet composure forsook them, for the figure more than once circled round the startled couple. By chance they had reached the side in shadow; the stranger, illuminated by the full splendor of the moon, made straight towards them; he stood close in front of them—it was impossible not to recognize the father.

Hilaria, stopping short, in her surprise lost her balance and fell to the ground; Flavio at the same time dropped on one knee, and caught her head up to his breast; she hid her face, she did not know what had happened to her.

“I will fetch a sledge, there is one just passing below there; here I shall look for you again, close by these three tall alders!”

So spoke the father, and was already far off. Hilaria gathered herself up against the youth.

“Let us fly!” she exclaimed, “for this I cannot bear!”

She sped hastily towards the other side of the castle, so that Flavio was only able to overtake her with an effort; he spoke to her in the tenderest words.

It is impossible to paint the inward state of the three confused wanderers in the moonlight, now benighted on the smooth surface. Enough, they arrived at the castle late, the young couple singly, not daring to touch or approach one another, the father with the empty sledge, which, eager to assist her, he had driven fruitlessly far and wide around. Music and dancing were already proceeding: Hilaria, under the pretext of painful results from a bad fall, hid herself in her room; Flavio willingly left the first dance and the arrangement to certain young fellows, who in his absence had already taken them into their hands; the major did not put in an appearance, and thought it strange, although he was not unexpected, to find his room as if inhabited; his own clothes, linen, and articles lying about, only not in such good order as he was accustomed to. The lady of the house discharged all her duties with dignified restraint, and how glad was she when, all the guests being properly provided for, she at last had leisure for an explanation with her brother. It was soon over; but it needed time for

him to recover from his surprise, to comprehend what was so unexpected, to remove doubts, to overcome anxiety. A solution of the riddle, relief to the mind, was not to be thought of at once.

Our readers are probably convinced, that from this point onward in relating our story, we must no longer proceed by depicting, but by narrating and reflecting, if we desire to penetrate the respective moods of the actors, upon which everything now depends, and render them present to our minds.

We announce therefore, in the first place, that the major, since we lost sight of him, had been devoting his time continuously to the family business, but in this, in spite of the beautiful simplicity in which it lay before him, he still met with unexpected hindrances in many details. For, in general, it is not so easy to unravel a confused condition of long standing, and to wind all the many tangled threads into one ball. As he had accordingly often to change his locality, in order to push on his business in different places and with different persons, his sister's letters only reached him slowly and irregularly. He first heard of his son's distracted mental condition and his illness; then he heard about a leave of absence, which he did not understand. That Hilaria's affection was on the point of changing remained unknown to him, for how could his sister have informed him of that? Upon the news of the floods he hastened his journey, but only after the frost had set in did he arrive at the ice-fields, when he procured skates, sent servants and horses by a side-road to the castle, and setting off at a rapid pace towards it, he arrived, in a night as clear as day, just as he saw the lighted windows in the distance, in time to behold a most joyless sight, and thus had fallen into the most unpleasant complication with himself.

The transition from inner truth to outward reality is, in the contrast, always painful; and ought not love and constancy to have just the same privileges as parting and forsaking? And yet, when one person leaves another, an awful chasm is created in the soul, in which many a heart has before now perished. Indeed the illusion, so long as it lasts, has an unconquerable truth, and only manly, active spirits become elevated and strengthened by the recognition of an error. A discovery of this kind raises them above themselves; they stand elevated beyond themselves, and seeing the old road barred, look quickly round about for a new one, which they forthwith cheerfully and bravely enter on. Innumerable are the difficulties in which a man in such moments finds himself involved; innumerable also the remedies which an inventive nature is able to discover within its own powers, or, where these do not suffice, to indicate, in kindly mood, outside its own domain.

Fortunately, however, the major, without any wish or endeavor of his own, was already half-consciously in his inmost heart prepared for an event of this kind. Since he had dispensed with his cosmetic valet, to abandon himself to his natural way of life, and had ceased to make any claims in the matter of appearance, he found himself, as it were, curtailed in respect to physical enjoyment. He felt the inconvenience of a transition from a first lover to a tender father; and yet this latter part would continually press itself more and more upon him. Anxiety as to Hilaria's fate and that of his own family was always foremost in his thoughts, whilst the feeling of love, of attachment, the desire of a still nearer presence, were only disclosed later. And when

he thought of Hilaria in his arms, it was her happiness that he cherished, that he longed to procure, rather than the bliss of possessing her. Nay, if he wished purely and simple to enjoy the thought of her, he had first to remember the divinely expressed affection, he had first to think of that moment in which she had so unexpectedly devoted herself to him.

But now having, on the brightest of nights, seen before him a young couple in close conjunction, the most charming of beings swooning in the arms of the youth, neither of them heeding his promise of returning with assistance, nor waiting for him at the place which he so precisely indicated, but vanishing in the darkness, whilst he himself was left in the most dismal state of mind: who could feel all this and not in his heart despair?

The family, so accustomed to harmony, and hoping for a still closer union, kept aloof from one another in dismay. Hilaria obstinately kept her room; the major braced himself to learn from his son the previous events. The misfortune had been occasioned by a feminine caprice on the part of the beautiful widow. In order not to surrender her hitherto passionate adorer Flavio to another amiable woman, who betrayed designs upon him, she bestows on him more obvious favor than is legitimate. Excited and encouraged by this, he passionately attempts to pursue his aim to an unreasonable extent, whence at first arises opposition and disagreement; and at last a decisive rupture irrevocably puts an end to the whole connection.

To paternal indulgence nothing remains but to pity, and if possible to retrieve the errors of their children, when they have tragic consequences; but if they pass off more smoothly than was to be hoped, to pardon and to forget. After a little reflection and persuasion, then, Flavio set out for the newly-acquired possessions, to attend, instead of his father, to a number of matters, and there he was to remain until the expiration of his leave of absence, when he would again have to join his regiment, which in the meantime had been transferred to another garrison.

To the major it was a business of several days to open all the letters and packets that had accumulated at his sister's house during his long absence. Among the rest he found a letter from his cosmical friend, the well-preserved actor. He having been informed by the transferred valet about the major's situation, and his intention of marrying, submitted to him, in the best of humors, the considerations that one ought to keep in sight in such undertakings; he treated the matter after his own fashion, and gave as his opinion that, for a man at a certain time of life, the surest cosmetic was to abstain from the fair sex, and to enjoy a laudable and convenient state of freedom. So the major, smiling, handed the note to his sister, jokingly, it is true, yet at the same time hinting seriously enough at the importance of its contents. Meanwhile, too, a poem had occurred to him on this occasion, the rhythmic expression of which does not immediately concern us, but of which the contents were marked by happy metaphors and elegant phraseology:

“The belated moon, still beaming chastely through the night, pales before the rising sun; the love-dream of age vanishes in the presence of passionate youth; the fir, that in

the winter seems fresh and vigorous, in spring looks brown and discolored by the side of the bright-green shoots of the birch.”

However, we do not wish to give any special recommendation here either to philosophy or poetry as the decisive helpmates to a final resolution; for as a trifling circumstance may have the weightiest consequences, so also it often decides when wavering thoughts prevail, by inclining the balance to one side or the other. The major, a short time before, had lost one of his front teeth, and he was afraid of losing the other. In his present frame of mind an obvious artificial reparation was not to be thought of, and, with this defect, to woo a young sweetheart began to seem altogether humiliating to him, especially now when he found himself under the same roof with her. Earlier or later a circumstance of this kind would have had little effect, but such an accident happening just at this moment must needs be in the highest degree repugnant to any man accustomed to a sound state of health. He feels as if the keystone of his organic being were removed, and the rest of the arch were also threatening little by little to fall in by degrees.

However this might be, the major very soon spoke prudently and sensibly to his sister about a situation that seemed so confused: they had both to confess that, in point of fact, they had reached only by a roundabout way a goal quite near to that from which they had by accident, through external instigation—misled by the error of an inexperienced child—unwittingly diverged; they determined that nothing was more natural than to remain in this path, to bring about the union of the two children, and then to devote to them faithfully and constantly every paternal care that it was within their power to provide. Completely agreeing with her brother, the baroness went to Hilaria in the room. She was sitting at the piano, singing to an accompaniment of her own, and immediately, with a cheerful glance and a bow, invited the visitor, who greeted her, to listen. It was a pleasant, soothing song, which expressed in the singer a mood that could not have been wished better.

After she had finished she stood up, and before the elder lady, who was thinking, could begin her harangue, she began to speak: “Dearest mother! it was well that we were so long silent about this most important affair; I thank you for not having up to this time touched this chord; but now perhaps it is time to come to an explanation, if it so pleases you. What do you think about the matter?”

The baroness, highly delighted at the quietness and gentleness to which she found her daughter disposed, began at once a sensible retrospect of the past time, of her brother's personal qualities and merits; she granted the impression, which the only man of worth—who had ever been so familiarly acquainted with a young girl—must necessarily make upon a free heart, and out of this feeling, instead of childlike reverence and confidence, could develop an inclination which manifested itself as love and passion. Hilaria listened attentively, and by looks and gestures of assent testified her complete agreement. The mother passed on to the son, and the girl now cast down her long eyelashes; and although the speaker did not find such praiseworthy arguments in favor of the younger man as she had managed to bring forward for the father, yet she dwelt chiefly on the similarity of the two, on the advantage that youth gave him, who, if chosen as a fully espoused companion for life,

doubtless promised in time, as was reasonable, to become a complete development of his father's character. In this, too, Hilaria seemed to think in the same way, although a somewhat more serious glance and an eye frequently downcast betrayed an emotion in this case very natural. Hereupon the conversation turned on the external, happy, and in some measure controlling, circumstances. The effected reconciliation, the handsome profit accruing for the present, the prospects that enlarged themselves in many directions, all were truthfully presented to the mind's eye, and finally she could not fail to hint how Hilaria herself must remember that she had at an earlier time been betrothed, even if it were only in fun, to her half-grown-up cousin. From all this her mother now drew the self-evident conclusion, that with her own and the uncle's consent, the union of the young people might now take place without delay.

Hilaria, looking and speaking calmly, replied, that she could not allow this inference to pass forthwith, and brought forward, admirably and gracefully, on the other side all that a delicate mind is sure to feel in common with her, and which we do not undertake to express in words.

Rational people, when they have devised any sensible plan as to how this or that embarrassment may be overcome, how this or that end may be attained, and for this purpose have elucidated and arranged all imaginable arguments, will feel most disagreeably surprised when those who ought to co-operate towards their own happiness are found to be of an entirely different mind, and, from motives lying deep in their hearts, oppose themselves to that which is as commendable as it is necessary. They interchanged arguments without convincing one another: the rational would not penetrate the purely sentimental, and feeling would not accommodate itself to the useful, the necessary; the conversation grew warm, the sharp edge of reason smote the already wounded heart, which now no longer in moderation but passionately revealed its own condition, so that at last the mother herself withdrew dumbfounded before the high-mindedness and dignity of the young girl, as she put forward, with energy and truth, the indecency, nay, the criminality, of such a union.

One can imagine in what a state of confusion the baroness returned to her brother, and can probably sympathize, though, it may be, not completely, with what the major—who, flattered in his innermost soul by this decided refusal, stood before his sister satisfied and yet hopeless—gained from this defeat, and thus felt that he justified with his conscience a situation which had become to him a matter of the most delicate honor. For the moment, however, he concealed this state of mind from his sister, and hid his painful satisfaction behind the remark, in this case perfectly natural, that one must not be in too much of a hurry, but that time must be left to the poor child to enter of her own free will upon the path which had now in a certain manner become a self-evident one.

But we can yet scarcely encourage our readers to pass from these engrossing inner conditions to the external ones, upon which, however, so much now depended. Whilst the baroness allowed her daughter every opportunity of passing her time pleasantly with music and singing, with drawing and embroidery, and to read alone or amuse herself and her mother by reading aloud, the major at the commencement of spring occupied himself in setting the family affairs in order; the son, who looked upon

himself as in the future a rich landowner, and—he did not in the least doubt—as the happy husband of Hilaria, now began to feel a military aspiration for renown and rank, should the threatened war break out. And so they trusted that, set at rest for the moment, they could anticipate as a certainty that this riddle—which seemed only to be implicated in one single misgiving—would soon be cleared up and resolved.

Unfortunately, however, in this seeming quietude no real satisfaction was to be found. The baroness waited day after day, but in vain, for a change in her daughter's disposition; who modestly indeed, and but seldom, yet still, on every decisive occasion, resolutely gave them to understand that she would abide as firmly by her conviction as only one can do who has been inwardly convinced of a truth, whether it is in harmony with the surrounding world or not. The major felt a conflict within himself; he should feel himself forever injured if Hilaria should really decide for his son; yet should she decide in his own favor, he was equally convinced that he must decline her hand.

Let us pity the good man, around whom all these cares and troubles were flitting continuously like a moving cloud, sometimes as a background against which arose all the realities and occupations of the busy day, and sometimes drawing nearer, and overcasting all the present. Such a sort of wavering and reeling moved before his mind's eyes; and though daytime peremptorily summoned him to vigorous and strenuous activity, it was in the night-watches that all these repugnant shapes, changing and changing again, danced round and round their dismal circle in his mind. These ever-returning irrepressible phantoms brought him into a condition which we might almost call despair—since action and creation, that otherwise afford the surest remedy in such circumstances, had here scarcely any mitigating, much less any healing, effect.

In this situation our friend received from an unknown hand a note, with an invitation to go to the post-office of a small neighboring town, where a traveller, passing through in haste, wished anxiously to speak to him. He, accustomed in his many business and social relations to such matters, acquiesced all the less reluctantly, inasmuch as the free, flowing handwriting seemed in some degree familiar. Quiet and collected, as was his wont, he betook himself to the indicated place, when, in the homely and almost rustic upper-room, the beautiful widow stepped towards him, prettier and more charming than he had left her. Whether it be that our imagination is not capable of retaining what is most excellent, or of realizing it again completely, or that a state of excitement had in reality given her a greater charm, it is enough to say, he actually required a double measure of self-control to hide his astonishment and confusion under the show of common politeness; he greeted her with restraint and embarrassed coldness.

“Not thus, my dearest friend!” she exclaimed. “It is by no means for this that I have summoned you to a meeting between these whitewashed walls, amidst these most ignoble surroundings; a house so meanly appointed as this does not demand such a courtly style of address. I relieve my breast of a heavy burden when I say, when I admit, that I have caused a great deal of mischief in your house.”

The major faltered and stepped back.

"I know all," she continued, "we need no explanation; you and Hilaria, Hilaria and Flavio, your kind sister—I pity all of you."

Speech seemed to fail her; the most lovely eyelashes could not hold back the tears that gushed forth; her cheeks reddened, she was more beautiful than ever. The worthy man stood before her in the utmost confusion; he was penetrated by an unknown emotion.

"Let us sit down," said this most amiable creature, drying her eyes. "Forgive me, pity me! You see how I am punished." She again held her embroidered kerchief to her eyes, and concealed how bitterly she wept.

"But, explain, gracious madam!" he said with haste.

"No more of *gracious!*" she replied, with a heavenly smile; "call me your friend—you have not a more faithful one; and so, my friend, I know all—I know exactly the position of the whole family, I am aware of the inclinations and sorrows of them all."

"Who could have informed you to this extent?"

"Personal confessions. This hand cannot be strange to you." She showed him several unfolded letters.

"My sister's hand! Letters, several, and, to judge by the careless writing, confidential ones! Have you ever had any relations with her?"

"Not directly; but indirectly, for some time. Look here at the address. To"

"Another riddle! To Makaria, the most discreet of women."

"But on that account, too, the confidante, the confessor of all oppressed souls, of all who have lost themselves, who wish to find themselves again, and do not know where."

"Thank God!" he exclaimed, "that such a remedy has been found. It would not have befitted me to beg her intercession: I bless my sister for having done it; for I too know of instances in which this excellent woman, by holding up a moral magic mirror, has shown to some unfortunate or other his pure, fair inner being through the confused outward form, and, reconciling him first with himself, summoned him to a new existence."

"This benefit she also conferred on me," replied the beauty.

And at this moment our friend felt, and even if it was not quite clear to him, felt distinctly that from this remarkable person, otherwise wrapped up in her individual exclusiveness, there shone forth a morally beautiful, sympathizing, and consoling personality.

"I was not unhappy, but ill at ease," she continued; "I no longer belonged properly to myself, and that, after all, is equivalent to not being happy. I no longer pleased myself; pose myself as I would before the lookingglass, it always seemed to me as if I were dressing-up for a masquerade; but since she held up the mirror before me, since I became aware how one can adorn one's self from within, I am again well satisfied with my looks." This she said between smiling and weeping, and was, it must be admitted, more than amiable. She seemed worthy of esteem, and worthy of a lasting, faithful attachment.

"And now, my friend, let us be brief: here are the letters; to read them, and read them again, to reflect, to prepare yourself, you would need at all events an hour—longer if you wish; then our respective positions can be determined with few words."

She left him, to walk up and down in the garden; he now unfolded a correspondence between the baroness and Makaria, the contents of which we indicate summarily. The former complained of the beautiful widow. It is evident how one woman looks on and severely judges another. In point of fact the question is only about outward matters and about expressions, there is no reference to what is within. Then on Makaria's part a milder judgment; the description of such a being from within outwards. The outward form appears as a result of contingencies hardly to be blamed, perhaps to be excused. Now the baroness describes the raving and madness of the son, the growing attachment of the young couple, tells of the arrival of the father, Hilaria's determined non-compliance. Everywhere Makaria's replies are pure impartiality, derived from the well-founded conviction, that out of all this moral improvement must ensue. Finally, she despatches the whole correspondence to the beautiful woman, whose mind, fair as heaven, is now revealed, and begins to glorify her outward being. The whole concludes with a grateful reply to Makaria.



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CHAPTER VI.

Wilhelm To Lenardo.

“At last, dearest friend, I can say she is found, and, for your peace of mind, I may add, in a position in which nothing further remains to be wished for for her well-being. Let me speak in a general way: I am still writing from the place and spot where I have before my eyes everything of which I have to give an account.

“A domestic condition, grounded in piety, inspired and maintained by industry and order, not too narrow, not too wide, but in the happiest proportion to her capacities and powers. Around her is busy a circle of handworkers, in the purest, most primitive sense; here reign limitation and far-reaching effect, caution and moderation, innocence and activity. I have not often found myself in a pleasanter situation, over which a brighter prospect for the morrow and for the future impends. This, regarded as a whole, might well be sufficient to set every sympathizer at rest.

“I may, therefore, in remembrance of all that has been discussed between us, most urgently beg that my friend will be satisfied with general description, and at all events fill it up in his thoughts; while, on the other hand, he renounces all further inquiry, and devotes himself as energetically as possible to the great business of life, into which by this time he will probably be perfectly initiated.

“I send a duplicate of this letter to Hersilia, and the other to the Abbé,* who I presume knows most certainly where you are to be found. To this tried friend, in matters secret or open always equally to be relied on, I write something further, which he will tell you; I beg you particularly, as far as I am myself concerned, to look upon me with sympathy, and further my undertaking with pious and true good-will.”

Wilhelm To The Abbé.

“If I am not altogether mistaken, our most estimable Lenardo is at present in your midst, and I therefore send the duplicate of a letter, in order that it may be more certain to reach him. May this excellent young man, within your circle, be drawn into an uninterrupted, efficient activity, now that, as I hope, his inner being is tranquillized.

“As to myself, after a protracted and active self-effected test, I am now able to repeat still more earnestly my request, proffered through Montan long ago; the wish to complete my travel-years with more composure and steadiness becomes more and more urgent. In the confident hope that they would give heed to my representations, I have completely prepared myself, and made my plans. After the completion of the business to the advantage of my worthy friend, I may probably now be permitted to enter with fresh courage upon my further career, under the conditions already stated. As soon as I have completed one more pious pilgrimage, I intend to arrive at —. At

this place I hope to find your letters, and in accordance with my inward impulse to begin afresh.”

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CHAPTER VII.

[In the earlier edition of the "Wanderjahre" (ch. xii.) occurs a letter, which is necessary for the due understanding of what follows. In it Hersilia informs Wilhelm that the beautiful widow and Hilana—whose story, under the title of the Man of Fifty, she at the same time transmits to him—are at present travelling, and recommends him to seek them out. She continues, "To show you the way how this amiable pair may be met with on your wandering, I adopt a singular expedient. You herewith receive a little clipping of a map: when you lay this in its place on the full map of the country, the magnetic needle painted here will point with its barb to the spot whither the Desirable are moving. . . . This arrow-shaft, on the little patch of map, Hilaria herself was at the pains to draw, and to decorate with such dainty plumage: the sharp point, however, was the fair widow's work. Have a care that it do not scratch, or perhaps pierce you. Our bargain is, that whenever you meet, be this where it may, you are forthwith to present the small shred of paper, and so be the sooner and more heartily admitted into trust."

In the next chapter (ch. xiii.) we read, "The wanderer now tried on a large map the little fragment which had been sent him; and stood surprised, amazed, affrighted, as he saw the needle pointing straight to Mignon's native place, to the houses where she had lived. What his peculiar feelings were, we do not find declared; but whoever can bring back to memory the end of the 'Apprenticeship,' will in his own heart and mind, without difficulty, call forth the like."* —Ed.]



THE VISIT OF THE MYSTERIOUS LADY.

After our friend had despatched the above letters, he went wandering on through many a neighboring mountain-range, farther and farther, until the glorious lowland opened out before him, where, ere the beginning of a new life, he purposed to bring so much to completion. He here fell in unexpectedly with a young and lively travelling companion, who was destined to prove in many ways conducive to his aims and his enjoyment. He finds himself in the company of a painter, who, like many of the same

sort in the real world, and many more who pervade and haunt novels and dramas, this time turned out to be an excellent artist. The two soon suit each other, and mutually confide their inclinations, aims and plans; and it now comes out that the clever artist, who was skilled in executing water-color landscapes with finely-conceived, well-drawn, and well-finished figures, was passionately interested in the fate, form, and character of Mignon. He had already represented her often, and was now undertaking a journey to draw from nature the surroundings amidst which she had lived, and to represent here the amiable child in her happy and unhappy surroundings and moods, and thus to summon her image, which lives in all tender hearts, before the sense of sight as well.

The friends soon arrived at the great lake.* Wilhelm endeavors to find out, one by one, the places which had been indicated to him. Splendid villas, extensive monasteries, ferries, creeks, capes, and landing-places were sought out, and the habitations of the bold and good-humored fishermen were no more neglected than the cheerful little towns built on the shore, and the castles on the neighboring hills. All this the artist is able to grasp and harmonize through light and color with the mental mood which their story in every case evoked, so that Wilhelm spent his days and hours in absorbing emotion.

On several sheets Mignon was represented in the foreground as she loved and lived, whilst Wilhelm was able to assist the happy imagination of his friend by exact description, and to reduce the more general idea into the narrower limits of individuality. And thus one beheld the boy-girl presented in all manner of positions and meanings. She stood beneath the lofty portico of the splendid villa, thoughtfully contemplating the statues in the hall. Here she was rocking herself and splashing in the boat fastened to the bank, there she was climbing the mast, and showing herself a bold sailor.

Yet one painting there was that excelled all the others, which the artist on his journey hither, before he met Wilhelm, had conceived with every characteristic lineament. In the midst of a rude mountain-tract the graceful feigned-boy shines forth, surrounded by precipitous rocks, besprinkled by waterfalls, amongst a troop of people difficult to describe. Never, perhaps, has an overawing and rugged primeval mountain-chasm been represented in a more charming or more impressive manner. The motley, gypsy-like company, rude and fantastic at the same time, strange and mean, too extravagant to inspire fear, too uncommon to awaken confidence. Strong pack-horses, now along winding-paths, now down steps hewn in the rock, slowly bring down a motley and miscellaneous assortment of baggage, among which a whole collection of instruments of noisy music, dangling and clattering about from time to time, molest the ear with discordant tones. In the midst of all this the amiable child, absorbed in herself, without disdain—unwilling, yet unresisting—taken, yet not forced away. Who would not have been pleased with so remarkable and complete a picture? The grim proximity of these rocky masses, the black chasms cutting through all, was powerfully characteristic, towering together, and threatening to prevent all exit, had not a bold bridge pointed to the possibility of effecting communication with the outer world. The artist, too, with a truly poetical sense of reality, had made discernible a cave, that

might have been taken for nature's own factory of mighty crystals, or the abode of a fabulous and terrible dragon's brood.

Not without a holy shudder did the friends visit the palace of the marquis; the old man had not as yet returned from his journey; but in this locality also—since they knew how to ingratiate themselves with the spiritual and civil authorities—they were received and treated kindly. Wilhelm, however, found the absence of the master of the house very agreeable; for although he would have liked to see the worthy man again, and heartily greet him, still he felt afraid of his grateful liberality, and indeed of any compulsory acknowledgment of that true and loving service for which he had already received the most delicate return.



And thus in graceful skiffs the friends were drifted from shore to shore, crossing the lake in every direction. In this, the fairest season of the year, neither sunrise nor sunset escaped them, nor any of those thousand hues with which the heavenly light lavishly overspreads its firmament, and lake and earth therefrom, and only fully glorifies itself in its own reflection.

A luxuriant vegetation, sown broadcast by nature, tended and fostered by art, surrounded them on every side. The first chestnut forests had already bidden them welcome, and now they could not refrain from a melancholy smile, when, resting beneath cypresses, they beheld the laurel growing, the pomegranate reddening, oranges and lemons unfolding their buds, whilst fruit at the same time glowed forth from the dusky foliage.

By the help of his cheerful companion there arose even a fresh delight for Wilhelm. Nature had not given our old acquaintance a painter's eye. Susceptible to visible beauty only in human form, he suddenly found that, through a friend of like disposition, but framed for quite other enjoyments and activities, the world around was opened up to him.

In verbal remarks on the changing glories of the country, but still more by a concentrated imitation, his eyes were opened, and he was relieved from all the doubts that he had hitherto obstinately cherished. The representations of Italian landscapes had always seemed suspicious to him; the sky seemed to him too blue, the violet tints of enchanting distances surpassingly lovely, it might be, yet untrue; and the many shades of bright green too variegated; but now, from his inmost mind, he identified himself with his new friend, and, susceptible as he was, learned to look at the world

with his eyes, and whilst nature disclosed the open secret of her beauty, he was fain to feel an unconquerable longing after art as her most worthy exponent.

But quite unexpectedly his friend the painter showed himself to him from a different side: he had many a time struck up a merry song, and thereby enlivened and solaced the quiet hours of their lake-voyages far and wide; but now it happened that, in one of the palaces, he found a peculiar kind of stringed instrument, a lute, of small dimensions, strong, of good tone, convenient and portable; he was able to tune the instrument at once, and to handle it so happily and agreeably, and to amuse his hearers so well, that, like another Orpheus, he softened the otherwise severe and dry custodian of the castle, and compelled him in a kindly way to intrust the instrument to the singer for a time, on condition that he would faithfully return the same before his departure, and also in the interval would come now and then on a Sunday or holiday and entertain the family.

Lake and shore were now enlivened in quite a different way. Boats and skiffs would court their neighborhood, even freight and market-boats lingered near them, rows of people gathered on the shore. On landing, they saw themselves at once surrounded by a merry crowd; when they put off, everybody blessed them, contented, yet with a sense of longing.

Now a third person, observing the friends, could easily have seen that the mission of both was in point of fact at an end; all the scenes and localities relating to Mignon had been drawn, some put in in light shade and color, and some faithfully copied in the hot hours of the day. To accomplish this, they had in a peculiar fashion been moving from place to place, for Wilhelm's vow was often a hindrance to them; yet they occasionally managed to avoid it by the excuse that it only held good on land, and was not applicable on the water.

Wilhelm, too, felt himself that their real intention had been attained, but he could not deny to himself that the wish to see Hilaria and the beautiful widow had still to be satisfied, if he was to leave this region with his mind at ease. His friend, to whom he had confided the story, was not less curious, and already congratulated himself in remembering a splendid position still vacant and unassigned in one of his drawings, which he proposed to fill up artistically with the forms of such charming persons.

They now set out on expeditions here and there and everywhere, watching the points at which a stranger is accustomed to enter this paradise. They had acquainted their boatmen with their hope of seeing friends here, and it was no long time before they saw gliding towards them a finely ornamented stateboat, to which they gave chase, and did not refrain from ardently capturing at once. The ladies, somewhat astonished, recovered at once, when Wilhelm showed them the small piece of paper, and both without hesitation recognized the arrow that had been drawn by themselves on the top. The friends were soon confidently invited to mount into the ladies' boat, which was quickly done.

And now let anyone picture to himself the four as they sit opposite to one another, in the loveliest retreat, in a world of bliss, fanned by soft air-breath, rocked to and fro on

shining waves. Let us fancy to ourselves the two ladies, as we have seen them but recently described; the two men, with whom for weeks we have been leading a common life of travel: and we see them, after brief consideration, together in the most charming although most dangerous situation. For the three who already, willingly or unwillingly, have numbered themselves amongst the Renunciants, we need not fear the worst; the fourth, however, might only too soon see himself received into that order.

After they had several times crossed the lake, and pointed out the most interesting localities both of the shore and of the islands, the ladies were taken towards the place where they were to pass the night, and where an able guide, who had been engaged for this tour, managed to provide all desirable comforts. Under these circumstances, Wilhelm's vow became a suitable albeit an inconvenient kind of master of the ceremonies; for at this very station the friends had recently spent three days, and exhausted everything noteworthy in the neighborhood. The artist, who was not hampered by any pledge, was about to beg permission to accompany the ladies on shore, but they declined it, for which reason they parted company at a little distance from the landing-place.

Hardly had the minstrel sprung into his boat and put off hastily from the shore, when he seized his lute, and began charmingly to sing that strangely plaintive song that the Venetian gondoliers are wont to make resound from shore to lagoon, from lagoon to shore. Sufficiently practised in such exercise, in which on this occasion he succeeded with singular tenderness and expression, he proportionately strengthened his tone with the increasing distance, so that on the shore one fancied that the departing singer was heard continuously from the same distance. At last he laid down the lute, trusting to his voice alone, and had the pleasure of observing that the ladies, instead of withdrawing into the house, preferred to linger on the shore. He felt so inspired that he could not leave off, even when night and distance at last veiled the sight of every object; until at last his calmer friend made him observe, that even if darkness favored the sound, yet the boat had long passed the circle within which it could have any effect. According to appointment, the next day they again met on the open lake. As they glided along they familiarized themselves with the beautiful series of remarkably situated prospects sometimes to be seen in one row, sometimes hiding one another, which, doubling themselves, as it were, in the water, afford to the passers on the bank the most varied kind of pleasure. At the same time the artistic imitations allowed one to suspect and suppose on the paper, what during the day's voyage one had failed to see immediately. For all this the quiet Hilaria seemed to possess a ready and beautiful appreciation.

But now towards noon the marvellous appeared again; the ladies landed alone, the men cruised in front of the harbor. The singer now attempted to adapt his delivery to such a degree of proximity, that some sort of happy effect might be hoped for, not simply from a tender and quickly modulated ordinary tone of longing, but from cheerful alluring importunity. Thus it happened that oftentimes one or other of those songs, for which we are indebted to the beloved persons of the Apprenticeship, would hover about the strings and lips; still, he restrained himself from a well-meant sense of forbearance, of which he himself stood in need, and revelled rather in foreign images

and feelings, to the advantage of his performance, which thereby became all the more winning. The two friends, blockading the port in this manner, would probably not have thought of eating or drinking, if their thoughtful lady-friends had not sent over a few dainty dishes, which, with a draught of choice wine that accompanied them, were relished to the utmost.

Every separation, every limitation which obstructs our germinating passions, sharpens instead of subduing them; and this time too, it may be supposed, that the short absence only awakened a similar longing on both sides. At all events, the ladies in their dazzlingly gay gondola were very soon seen to approach again. The term gondola, however, must not here be taken in its melancholy Venetian sense; here it denotes a joyous, convenient, pleasant bark, that, had our small circle been doubled, would still have proved sufficiently capacious.

In this peculiar way, between meeting and parting, separating and remaining together, several days were spent; in the enjoyment of the most cheerful society, separation and renunciation hovered ever before the agitated soul.

In the presence of the new friends the older ones were recalled to mind: if the new ones were missed, it must be confessed that they too had succeeded in establishing strong claims to remembrance. Only a self-possessed, tried spirit like our beautiful widow could, at such a juncture, fully maintain her balance of mind. Hilaria's heart was too deeply wounded for it to have been capable of receiving a fresh and pure impression; but when the charm of a glorious country soothingly surrounds us, when the tenderness of sympathetic friends works upon us, then does something quite singular come over our mind and sense, which, as in a dream, recalls to us the past, the absent, and spirits away the present, as if it were but a phantom. And so, rocked alternately backwards and forwards, attracted and sundered, brought nearer together and farther apart, they ebbed and flowed for several days.

Without scrutinizing these relations more closely, the clever and experienced guide thought that he observed some alteration in the hitherto restful demeanor of his heroines; and when at last the whim-fostering condition of affairs was evident to him, he was able to remedy it in the pleasantest possible way. For just as the ladies were about to be taken back again to the spot where their meal would be made ready for them, they were encountered by another gayly-decked vessel, which, coming alongside theirs, invitingly displayed a well-spread table, with all the luxuries of a festive meal. They could now outwait together the lapse of several hours, and night only decreed the inevitable parting.

Fortunately the two male friends on their earlier expeditions had, from a certain natural whim, neglected to visit the very island that was the most beautiful of all, and had not even now thought of showing their lady friends the treasures preserved there—which were by no means in the best condition—until the glorious world of beauty had been completely exhausted. But at last a different light dawned upon them. The guide was taken into their confidence. He managed to expedite this excursion at once, and they looked forward to it as a most blissful one. Now might they hope and

expect, after so many interrupted pleasures, to spend three whole heavenly days, brought together in one secluded domain.

Here we must give special commendation to the guide: he was one of those active, industrious experts, who in conducting different parties of gentlefolk often traverse the same roads: perfectly well acquainted with all comforts and discomforts, they know how to avail themselves of the former and how to avoid the latter, and without neglect of their own interests are capable of guiding their patrons through the country more cheaply and satisfactorily than would be the case if the latter depended on themselves.

At the same time a lively company of female attendants on the ladies came for the first time effectively and industriously to the front, so that the beautiful widow could now make it a condition that the two friends should remain as her guests, and content themselves with modest entertainment. In this matter, too, everything turned out most favorably; for their clever manager had on this occasion, as on others before, managed to make such a discreet use of their letters of recommendation and credit, that, in the owner's absence, castle and garden, and kitchen no less, were open for use at their discretion, and even some prospect of the cellar was left. Everything fell together so harmoniously, that from the first moment they must fain feel as much at home as the native lords of this paradise.

The collective baggage of all our travellers was forthwith brought to the island—a source of great comfort to the party—but the greatest advantage thereby attained was that, all the portfolios of our excellent artist being for the first time collected together, he had an opportunity of making present to the fair ladies in unbroken sequence the route that he had taken. They took up his work with delight—not as amateurs and artists mutually eulogize each other; in this case an excellent man received the most sympathetic, the most appreciative applause. But, that we may not incur the suspicion of only wishing, in general phrases, to palm off on credulous readers what we cannot lay before them, let us set down here the verdict of an expert, who several years later lingered admiringly over the works in question, as well as others of equal and similar merit.

“He succeeds in representing the cheerful repose of calm lake-prospects, where habitations in friendly nearness, mirrored in the clear flood, appear as it were to bathe within it; shores girt with green-clad hills, behind which mountains of forest and icy glacier-peaks rear themselves. The color-tone of such scenes is cheerful, joyously clear; the distances, as it were, diffused with mellowing vapor, which mounts in gray and enwrapping mist from torrents in chasm and valley, and indicates their winding courses. No less is the master's art to be praised in views from valleys lying nearer to the mountain heights, where luxuriously clothed hill-sides slope down, and fresh streams rush swiftly on at the foot of the rocks.

“He is exceedingly clever at indicating satisfactorily, in the wide-spreading trees of the foreground, the differing character of the various sorts, as much in the form of the whole as in the lay of the branches and the several portions of the leaves; not less in

the fresh many-shaded foliage in which soft breezes seem to fan with gentle breath, and the flickering lights to be moved thereby.

“In the middle distance the fresh green tone fades gradually away, and mingles itself in the pale violet of distant mountain heights with the blue of the sky. But above all our artist succeeds in representations of higher Alpine regions; the simple grandeur and repose of their character, the pastures spread out on the slope of the mountains, clad with the freshest green, where dark solitary firs stand out from the turfy carpet, and foaming torrents hurl themselves from the lofty rocky walls. Whether he peoples the pastures with grazing kine, or the narrow mountain-path that winds around the rocks with laden baggage-horses and mules, he indicates all with equal truth and talent; always introduced in the proper place and in not too great a number, they heighten and enliven these pictures, without destroying or even lessening their peaceful loneliness. The execution bears witness to the boldness of a master-hand—easy, with a few confident strokes, and yet complete. Later he was accustomed to employ brilliant English permanent colors on paper, consequently these pictures are especially bright in color, cheerful, but at the same time strong and solid.

“His pictures of deep rocky ravines, where, all around, naught but dead stone confronts us, and the wild torrent, boldly o'er-spanned by bridges, hurls itself into the chasm, do not, it is true, please us like the preceding, yet their truthfulness takes hold upon us; we marvel at the grand effect of the whole, brought out at the least expenditure, by a few significant touches, and masses of local color.

“He knows how to represent no less characteristically the high mountain districts, where neither tree nor shrub is any longer found, but only sunny patches, covered with tender grass, between rocky crags and snow-covered summits. But beautifully in their hazy green, and invitingly as he has colored these spots, yet he has rightly omitted to people them with pasturing flocks, for such tracts afford only fodder to the chamois and a dangerous booty to the wild-haymen.”

We shall not go beyond the object of bringing the condition of such wild districts as near to our readers as possible if we briefly explain the expression, “wild-haymen,” of which we have just made use. By it are indicated the poorer dwellers in the uplands, who make it their business to make hay upon the grassy slopes which are utterly inaccessible to cattle. For this purpose they climb, with clamps on their feet, the steepest and most perilous cliffs, or, when it is necessary, let themselves down with ropes from rocky heights to the grassy plots described. When they have cut the grass, and it is dried into hay, they cast it from the mountain heights into the deep valley below, where it is again collected and sold to the owners of cattle, who willingly buy it on account of its excellent quality.

These pictures, which must indeed have pleased and attracted everyone, were regarded by Hilaria especially with great attention. Her remarks showed that she was herself no stranger to this pursuit; and from the artist least of all did this remain concealed, for by no one had he seen himself better appreciated than by this most charming of all people. Her elder friend, therefore, was no longer silent, but blamed Hilaria for hesitating now as always to come forward with her own accomplishment.

It was not a question now of being praised or blamed, but of learning; a more favorable opportunity would perhaps never be found again.

Now, for the first time, when she was compelled to produce her sketches, it became manifest what talent lay hidden behind this quiet, most attractive personality. Her capacity was inborn, fostered by diligent practice. She possessed a true eye, and a delicate hand, such as fits women in their ordinary ornamental and fancy-work for higher kinds of art. A certain unsteadiness in the strokes was indeed noticeable, and consequently a not sufficiently-marked character in the subjects; but one was quite enough surprised at the great industry shown in the execution, although the whole was not grasped in the most advantageous manner, nor quite artistically composed. It seemed as if she were afraid of desecrating the subject, unless she kept quite faithfully to it; consequently she is strained, and loses herself in detail.

Now, however, by the help of the great unfettered talent, the bold hand of the artist, she feels herself aroused, and whatever perception and taste was truly slumbering within her awakened. She perceives that she has only to take courage, and follow earnestly and literally certain axioms which the artist had commended to her, at the same time urging them thoroughly and in a kindly manner. Sureness of stroke is acquired; she gradually pays less attention to the parts than to the whole, and thus the fairest capacity develops unwittingly into ability; as a rosebud which in the evening we heedlessly pass by, on the morrow bursts forth with the sunrise before our eyes, so that we imagine that we can see with our very eyes the living tremulousness that the glorious apparition gives forth towards the light.

Such æsthetic cultivation, too, did not rest without moral result; for a perception of the deepest gratitude towards anyone to whom we are indebted for any decided instruction makes a magical impression on a pure soul. On this occasion it was the first joyous feeling that had arisen in Hilaria's heart for a considerable time. To see the glorious world before her the first time for so many days, and now to feel the gift of more perfectly representing it suddenly acquired! What delight to approach in lines and colors more near to the inexpressible! She felt herself surprised with new youth, and could not withhold a special kindness from the man to whom she owed this happiness.



So they were sitting by one another: it would have been difficult to say whether he were the quicker in imparting artistic gains or she in grasping and exercising them. The happiest rivalry, such as is seldom kindled between scholar and master, arose. Many a time the friend seemed to wish to modify her drawing with some decisive

stroke, but she, gently declining, hastened to do at once what he wanted or what was necessary, and always in such a way as to astonish him.

The lovely widow in the meanwhile was walking with Wilhelm beneath cypresses and pines along terraces trellised now with vines, now with orange-trees, and at length could not refrain from satisfying the gently expressed wish of her new friend. She was fain to declare to him the wonderful straits through which two friends, severed from former ties, and closely drawn towards each other, had been sent out into the world.

Wilhelm, who was not wanting in the gift of taking accurate note of things, afterwards wrote out the melancholy story, and we purpose presently to impart it to our readers as he compiled it, and sent it to Natalia through Hersilia.

The last evening was now come, and a brilliantly clear full-moon made imperceptible the transition from day to night. The party had seated themselves together upon one of the highest terraces in order to look completely and clearly across the breadth of the quiet lake, with the shining lights on all sides again reflected from it, though its full length was in part concealed.

Whatever in such circumstances might be talked of, it was impossible not to notice what has been noticed hundreds of times; once more to tell the beauties of this sky, this water, this world, under the influence of a powerful sun, a gentle moon—nay, to recognize them in an exclusive and lyric sense.

But what was not confessed, what they would scarce acknowledge to themselves, was that deeply painful feeling that thrilled in each bosom; more or less strongly it may be, yet alike true and tender in all. The foreboding of separation spread over the whole party; a gradually increasing silence was becoming almost painful.

Then did the singer man himself, and make up his mind; as he preluded powerfully upon his instrument, he was unmindful of the forbearance previously so well observed. Before him hovered the image of Mignon, with the first tender song of the sweet child. Borne beyond limits in his emotion, and awaking the tuneful strings with passionate touch, he began to chant,

“Know'st thou the land where the fair citron blows?”*

Hilaria suddenly moved, stood up, and moved away, veiling her brow; our lovely widow moved one hand warningly towards the singer, whilst she grasped Wilhelm's arm with the other. The youth, really distracted, followed Hilaria; her more self-possessed friend drew Wilhelm quietly behind the two. And now, as all four stood opposite each other in full moonlight, the general emotion could no longer be hidden. The ladies threw themselves into each others' arms, the men embraced each other, and Luna was witness to the noblest and chastest tears. At last some composure slowly returned. They disengaged themselves in silence, with strange feelings and wishes, from which, however, hope was already dissevered. And now our artist, whom his friend drew away with him, beneath the high heavens in the solemn kindly hours of night, felt himself initiated in all the pains of the first grade of the

Renunciants, which those friends had already passed, though they now saw themselves in danger of being again put painfully to the proof.

It was late when the young men betook themselves to rest, and awaking betimes in the early morning, they took heart, believing themselves strong enough for a farewell to this Paradise; and devising many plans as to how they might at all events make it possible, without violation of duty, to linger in this pleasant neighborhood.

They were thinking of bringing their projects to this end into effect, when they were astonished by the news that the ladies had already departed at the first appearance of daylight. A letter in the handwriting of our Queen of Hearts told them the rest. It was doubtful whether common-sense or goodness, affection or friendship, recognition of merit or gentle, bashful partiality was most expressed therein. Unhappily the conclusion contained the hard condition, that they should neither follow the two friends, nor seek them out anywhere—nay, if they should meet accidentally, that they should faithfully avoid each other.

Now was this Paradise converted, as if by a stroke of magic, into a complete desert for the two friends; and assuredly they would have laughed themselves, if it had been clear to them at the moment, how wrongly and thanklessly they were, all at once, disposed towards such beautiful and remarkable surroundings. No self-seeking hypochondriac would so keenly and enviously have resented and abused the ruin of the buildings, the dilapidation of the walls, the storm-beaten towers, the grassy growth on the walks, the decay of the trees, the mossy mouldering of the artificial grottoes, and aught else of the same sort that was noticeable. Meanwhile they recovered themselves as well as was possible; our artist carefully packed up his work, and the two got on board their boat. Wilhelm accompanied him to the upper portion of the lake, whence the other, according to previous arrangement, started on his way to Natalia, to transport her, by the aid of his beautiful landscapes, into regions which probably she would not soon visit. At the same time he was authorized to narrate, in confessing the unexpected incident, how he had come into a position to be received most cordially by the guild-brethren of Renunciation, and by kindly treatment to be, if not healed, at any rate comforted.



THE MEETING OF THE TWO BOATS.

Lenardo To Wilhelm.

“Your letter, my dearest friend, found me in a state of activity, which I might call confusion if the end were not so great, and its attainment so sure. The association with your friends is of more importance than either side could imagine. I dare not begin to write about it, because it is at once obvious how unfathomable the whole is, how unspeakable the union. Doing, without talking, must now be our watchword. A thousand thanks for showing me, half-veiled in the distance, so charming a secret. I congratulate the good creature on a situation of such simple happiness, whilst a whirlpool of complications, though not without a guiding star, will drive me round and round. The abbé undertakes to tell you the rest. I must think only of what presses: longing vanishes in doing and effecting. You have—but no more now, where there is enough to do, there remains no room for reflection.”

The Abbé To Wilhelm

“A little more, and your well-meant letter—quite in opposition to your intention—would have been highly detrimental to us. The picture of the refound one is so genial and charming, that our wonderful friend would probably have thrown up everything in order to seek her out at once, if our now concerted plans had not been so great and far-reaching. But he has now withstood the trial, and it is well assured that he is fully penetrated by the importance of the matter, and feels himself drawn away from everything else, and to this end alone.

“In this our new relationship, for the introduction of which we have to thank you, have appeared, on closer inquiry, far greater advantages for him, as well as for us, than one would have thought. For it happens that through a region less favored by nature, where a part of the property which his uncle cedes to him is situate, a canal has been recently projected, which will also pass through our property, the value of which, if we are associated together, is inestimably increased.

“In this he can very conveniently develop his chief desire, to begin quite at the beginning. On both sides of this canal plenty of untilled and uninhabited land will be found. There spinners and weavers may settle, masons, carpenters, and blacksmiths may erect modest workshops for them and for themselves; all may be done at first-hand, whilst we others undertake to solve complicated problems and manage to further the round of industry.

“This, then, is our friend's first task. From the mountains, complaints after complaints reach us of the want of means of subsistence that prevails there: these districts are also said to be over-peopled. There he will look round about, judge of people and of circumstances, and the really active ones, those useful to themselves and to others, he will take away in our train.

“Further, I have to report of Lothario, that he is preparing the complete consummation. He has undertaken a journey to the Pedagogues, to ask for skilled artisans, though only a very few. The arts are the salt of the earth; as this substance is

to food, so are they related to technical work. We borrow nothing more from art, but the result that handiwork shall not be insipid.

“A permanent connection with this training institution will, on the whole, be very useful and necessary to us. We must be doing, and cannot think about forming, but to draw the ready-formed to us in our highest duty.

“Thousands of considerations here suggest themselves: allow me, after our old fashion, only one more general remark, occasioned by a passage in your letter to Lenardo. We do not wish to deprive domestic piety of its due commendation; upon it is founded the security of the individual, upon which fortitude and dignity may ultimately repose. But it extends no further; we must grasp the notion of a universal piety, send forth to the world our honestly human dispositions, in a practical shape, and not only help our neighbors, but at the same time take up the whole of humanity.

“And now, to refer at last to your request, I say thus much: Montan has duly reported it to us. The strange man would not on any account declare what you actually had in view; yet he pledged the word of a friend that it was reasonable, and if it should succeed, would be highly advantageous to the society. And so you are forgiven for likewise making a secret of it in your letter. In short, you are freed from all restrictions, as you should already have been informed, if your address had been known to us. Therefore, in the name of all, I repeat: your object, although undeclared, is approved, in confidence in Montan and you. Travel, stop, move about, or linger; whatever answers your purpose will be right. May you make yourself the most necessary link of our chain!

“I enclose at the end a little table, from which you will discover the movable centre of our communications. You will find therein displayed before your eyes, whither at each season you have to send your letters. We should like best to have them sent by trustworthy messengers, who are indicated to you sufficiently at several places. In the same way you will find it shown by symbols where you have to seek out one or the other of our friends.”



INTERCALATION.

But at this point we find occasion to announce a pause to the reader, and one in fact of several years, on which account we should have liked, had it been reconcilable with typographical arrangements, to conclude a volume at this place.

Yet the space between two chapters will amply suffice for us to carry ourselves across the measure of time mentioned, as we have long been accustomed to allow of, between the falling and rising of the curtain in our own presence.

In this second book we have seen the circumstances of our old friends advanced in a remarkable manner, and at the same time we have gained fresh acquaintances; the prospects are such, that it is to be hoped that each and all, if they know how to take their place in life, will completely gain their wishes. Let us then expect soon to find them again, one after the other, interweaving and disengaging themselves upon trodden and untrodden paths.

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CHAPTER IX.

If we now seek out our friend again—for some time left to his own resources, we shall find him as he comes hither from the side of the level country into the Pedagogic province. He comes across pastures and meadows, skirts on the dry down many a small lake, looks on bushy rather than wooded hills; on all sides a free prospect over a land but little tilled. On such tracks it did not long remain doubtful that he was in the horse-breeding district, and he noticed here and there smaller and larger herds of these noble beasts of different sex and age. But all at once the horizon is covered with a fearful dust-cloud, which rapidly looming nearer and nearer, completely conceals the whole breadth of the space, but at last parted by a keen side-wind is forced to disclose the tumult inside it.

A large body of the said noble beasts rushes forward in full gallop; they are guided and kept together by keepers on horseback. The tremendous hurly-burly rushes past the traveller; a fine boy, amongst the keepers in charge, looks at him in astonishment, pulls up, jumps off, and embraces his father.



Now questioning and explanation ensue. The son relates that he had had to put up with a good deal during the first probation time; dispensing with his horse, and going about on foot over ploughed lands and meadows, and, as he had declared beforehand, had not shown himself to advantage in the quiet toilsome country life. The harvest-feast had pleased him well enough; but the tillage afterwards, the ploughing, digging, and waiting, not at all. He had certainly occupied himself with the necessary and useful domestic animals, but always lazily and discontentedly until he was at last promoted to the more lively business of riding. The occupation of looking after the mares and foals was tedious enough; meanwhile, if one sees before one a lively little beast, that in three or four years' time will perhaps carry one about, it is quite a different sort of thing from troubling one's self about calves and sucking pigs, of which the end and aim is to be well fed and fattened, and then sold.

With the growth of his boy, who was now really reaching youth's estate, with his healthy condition, and a certain merry freedom, not to say cleverness, in his talk, his father had good reason to be content. The two now proceeded to follow quickly on horseback the speeding convoy, past remote-lying and extensive farms to the village or country town where the great market was held. There incredible confusion was in full career, and it was impossible to distinguish whether the wares or the merchants raised the more dust. From all countries would-be purchasers here meet together in order to acquire animals of fine breed and careful rearing; and one might think that

one heard all the tongues of the earth. In the midst of it all, too, sounds the lively music of the most powerful wind instruments, and everything indicates movement, vigor, and life.

Our traveller now again meets the overseer already known to him of old, and falls in company with other clever men, who manage quietly and no less unnoticeably to maintain discipline and order. Wilhelm believing that here again he sees an instance of exclusive occupation, and in spite of its seeming breadth, of a narrow course of life, is anxious to ascertain by what other means they are accustomed to train the pupils, in order to prevent the youth—in such a wild, and in some degree savage, occupation of rearing and training beasts—from becoming a wild beast himself. And thus it was very gratifying to him to learn that with this same violent and rough-seeming vocation was united the most delicate in the world, the practice and the learning of languages.

At this moment the father missed his son from his side; he saw him through the interstices of the crowd eagerly bargaining and arguing with a young pedlar over some trifles. In a short time he altogether lost him. On the overseer's inquiring the reason of a certain embarrassment and abstraction, and hearing in reply that it was on his son's account, "Never mind that," he said, to reassure the father, "he is not lost. But to show you how we keep our charges together—" and thereupon he blew shrilly on a whistle that hung at his breast. In a moment it was answered by dozens from all sides. The man went on: "I will let this serve for the present, it is only a signal that the overseer is in the neighborhood, and happens to want to know how many hear him. On a second signal they keep quiet, but make themselves ready; on the third they answer and come rushing up. Moreover, these signals are multiplied in very many ways and for special uses." A more open space had suddenly cleared itself round about them; they were able to speak more freely whilst walking towards the adjoining heights.

"We were led to this practice of languages," proceeded the overseer, "by the fact that we find here youths from all parts of the world. Now it was to prevent the people of one country from clanning together, as usually happens abroad, and forming parties asunder from the other nations, that we try, by free communion of speech, to bring them nearer to one another. But a universal knowledge of language is most necessary, inasmuch as at this fair every foreigner is glad to find a sufficient means of intercourse in his own sounds and expressions, and at the same time all possible convenience in bargaining and dealing. Yet in order that no Babylonish confusion, no corruption of speech shall ensue, one language only is spoken in common, month by month throughout the year, in accordance with the principle that one should learn nothing that has to be made compulsory except the rudiments.

"We look upon our scholars," said the overseer, "as so many swimmers, who in the element that threatens to swallow them feel themselves with wonder to be lighter, and are borne up and carried forward by it—and so it is with everything that man undertakes. Yet if one of our pupils shows a special inclination for this or that language, provision is made even in the midst of this tumultuous-seeming life, which affords withal very many quiet, idle, and lonely, nay, tedious hours for true and thorough instruction. You would have some difficulty in picking out our equestrian

grammarians, amongst whom there are verily a few pedants, from amidst these bearded and beardless centaurs. Your Felix has set himself to Italian, and since melodious singing, as you know already, pervades everything in our institutions, you might hear him, in the monotony of a herdsman's life, bring out many a ditty with taste and feeling. Activity and practical ability are far more reconcilable with efficient instruction than one thinks."

As every district has its own peculiar festival, the guest was led to the domain of instrumental music. Bordering on the plains, it at once exhibited pleasantly and gracefully diversified valleys, little narrow copses, gentle brooks by the banks of which a moss-grown rock slyly peeped out here and there amidst the turf. Scattered habitations, surrounded by bushes, were to be seen upon the hills; in gentle dales the houses clustered nearer to each other. These cottages, set gracefully apart, were so far from each other, that no musical sound either true or false could be heard from one to the other.

They now approached a wide space, built and covered round about, where men standing shoulder to shoulder seemed on the tiptoe of attention and expectation. Just as the guest entered, a powerful symphony on all the instruments commenced, the full-toned strength and tenderness of which he could not but admire.

By the side of this roomily-constructed orchestra stood a smaller one, which attracted special attention; upon it were younger and older scholars. Each held his instrument in readiness, without playing on it. These were they who as yet were not able or did not venture to join in with the whole. One noticed with interest how they were standing as it were at the spring, and heard it declared that such a festival seldom passed by without a genius in some one or other being suddenly developed.

When vocal music also was brought forward in the intervals of the instrumental, there was no longer room to doubt that this too was in favor. Upon his inquiry, moreover, as to what further sort of education was joined in friendly union with this, the traveller learned that it was the art of poetry, and withal of the lyric sort. Their whole aim in this was that the two arts, each for and from itself, but at the same time in contrast to and in conjunction with each other should be developed. The pupils learn to know one as well as the other in their special limitations: then they are taught how they mutually limit, and again mutually emancipate one another.

To the rhythm of poetry the tone-artist opposes the division and movement of time. But here the sway of music over poetry soon manifests itself—for if the latter, as is proper and necessary, always keeps its quantities as clearly as possible in view, yet for the musician few syllables are definitely long or short; he destroys at pleasure the most conscientious proceedings of the dealer in rhythm—nay, actually converts prose into song; whence ensue the most wonderful possibilities, and the poet would very soon feel himself annihilated, were he not able, on his own part, to inspire the musician with reverence by means of lyric tenderness and boldness, and to call forth new feelings, at one time in the most delicate gradation, at another by the most abrupt transitions.

The singers one finds here are for the most part themselves poets. Dancing, too, is taught in its rudiments; so that all these accomplishments may diffuse themselves methodically throughout the whole of these regions.

When the guest was conducted across the next boundary he suddenly beheld quite a different style of building. The houses were no longer scattered, and no more of the cottage-sort; they rather appeared to be set together with regularity—solid and handsome from without, roomy, convenient, and elegant within. Here one perceived an unconfined and well-built town, adapted to its situation. Here plastic art and its kindred crafts are at home, and a stillness quite peculiar prevails in these places.

The plastic artist, it is true, always considers himself in relation to whatever lives and moves amidst mankind; but his occupation is a solitary one, and, by the strangest contradiction, no other, perhaps, so decidedly calls for a living environment. Here, then, does each one create in silence what is soon to occupy the eyes of men forever. A Sabbath stillness reigns over the whole place, and if one did not notice here and there the chipping of the stone-mason, or the measured blows of carpenters, just now busily employed in finishing a splendid building, not a sound would disturb the air.

Our traveller was struck with the seriousness, the wonderful strictness, with which beginners, as well as the more advanced, were treated; it seemed as if no one essayed anything by his own strength and power, but as if a hidden spirit animated all throughout, guiding them to one single great end. Neither draft nor sketch was anywhere to be seen; every stroke was drawn with care. And when the traveller asked the guide for an explanation of the whole process, the latter remarked, "The imagination is of itself a vague inconstant faculty, whilst the whole merit of the plastic artist consists in this, namely, in learning ever more and more to define and grasp it firmly, nay, even at last to elevate it to the level of the present."

He was reminded of the necessity in other arts of more certain principles. "Would the musician allow a pupil to strike wildly at the strings, or to invent intervals according to his own caprice and pleasure? Here it is remarkable that nothing is to be left to the learner's discretion. The element in which he is to work is given definitely, the tool that he has to handle is placed in his hand, the very style and method by which he is to avail himself of them (I mean the fingering) he finds prescribed, by which one member gets out of the way of another, and gets the proper road ready for its successor, by which orderly co-operation alone the impossible becomes possible at last. But what mostly justifies us in strict demands and definite laws, is that it is precisely genius, the inborn talent, that grasps them first, and yields them the most willing obedience. Only mediocrity would fain substitute its limited specialty for the unlimited whole, and glorify its false ideas under the pretence of an incontrollable originality and independence. This, however, we do not let pass, but we protect our pupils against all false steps, whereby a great part of life, nay, often the whole life, is confused and broken up. With the genius we love best to deal, for he is specially inspired with the good spirit of recognizing quickly what is useful to him. He sees that Art is called Art, precisely because it is not Nature; he accommodates himself to the proper respect even for that which might be called conventional, for what else is this but that the best men have agreed to regard the necessary, the inevitable, as the best?"

And is it not successful in every case? To the great assistance of the teachers, the three reverences and their symbols are introduced and inculcated here too, as everywhere with us, with some variation in conformity with the nature of the business that prevails.”

As the traveller was led further around, he was constrained to wonder at the fact, that the city seemed to extend itself forever, streets growing out of streets, and affording numberless fine views. The exterior of the buildings expressed their object unambiguously: they were substantial and imposing, less showy than beautiful. After the nobler and more solemn one in the middle of the town, came those of more cheerful aspect, until at last charming suburbs, of a graceful character, spread away towards the open country, dwindling away finally in the shape of country villas.

The traveller could not avoid remarking here that the habitations of the musicians in the preceding region were, in respect to beauty and size, in no way to be compared with the present ones in which painters, sculptors and architects dwelt. The answer given to him was that this lay in the nature of things. The musician must always be absorbed within himself, to shape out his inmost thought and to bring it forth. He has not to flatter the sense of sight; the eye very easily supplants the ear, and tempts outward the spirit from within. The plastic artist, on the contrary, must live in the outer world, and make his inner nature manifest, as it were unconsciously, on and in the external world. Plastic artists must live like kings and gods; how otherwise would they build and adorn for kings and gods? They must at last raise themselves above the ordinary so far that the whole community may feel honored in and by their works.

Our friend then desired the explanation of another paradox—why is it that just on these festivals, which in other regions are such lively and tumultuously excited days, here the greatest quiet prevails, and work is not even exhibited.

“A plastic artist,” he said, “requires no festival; to him the whole year is a festival. When he has accomplished anything excellent, it stands afterwards, as it did before, in his sight and in the sight of the whole world. In this no repetition is needed, no new effort, no fresh success, such as the musician is forever tormented by: who for that reason is not to be grudged the most splendid festival amidst the most numerous audience.”

“But yet,” replied Wilhelm, “on days like this one would be glad to see an exhibition in which the three years’ progress of the best pupils might be examined and criticised with pleasure.”

“In other places,” he was told, “an exhibition may be necessary; with us it is not; our whole end and aim is exhibition. Look here at the buildings of every sort, all carried out by pupils; after plans, discussed and revised, it is true, a hundred times; for one who builds must not potter about and make experiments. What has to remain standing, must stand well, and suffice, if not for eternity, at any rate for a considerable time. We may commit ever so many faults, but we must not build any. With sculptors we deal a little more leniently, most leniently of all with painters; they may experiment, here and there, each in his own style. It is open to them to choose in the

inside or outside spaces of buildings, in the open squares, a spot which they will decorate. They make their ideas public, and, if one is in any degree worthy of approbation, the execution is agreed to; but in one of two ways—either with the privilege of taking the work away, sooner or later, should it cease to please the artist himself, or with the condition of leaving the work, when once set up, irremovably in its place. The most choose the former, and reserve the privilege for themselves, in which they are always well advised. The second case seldom occurs; and it is observable that the artists then rely less upon themselves, hold long conferences with their comrades and critics, and by that means manage to produce works really worthy of being valued and made permanent.”

After all this, Wilhelm did not neglect to inquire what other instruction was given besides, and he was informed that this consisted of poetry, and in fact of epic poetry.

Yet it must needs appear strange to our friend when they added that the pupils are not allowed to read or to recite the completed poems of ancient and modern poets. “Merely a series of myths, traditions and legends is briefly imparted to them. Thus we soon recognize by pictorial or poetic expression, the special productive power of the genius devoted to one or the other art. Poets and artists both occupy themselves at the same well-spring, and each one tries to guide the stream towards his own side for his own advantage, so as to attain his end according to his requirements; at which he succeeds much better than if he set about making over again what has been made already.”

The traveller had an opportunity of seeing the process himself. Several painters were busy in one room; a lively young companion was telling a quite simple story very circumstantially, so that he employed almost as many words as they did pencil-strokes to complete his exposition in the most rounded style possible.

They assured Wilhelm that in their joint work the friends entertained themselves very pleasantly, and that in this way improvisators were often developed who were able to arouse great enthusiasm in the twofold representation.

Our friend now turned his inquiries again to plastic art. “You have,” he said, “no exhibition, and, consequently, I suppose, no award of prizes.”

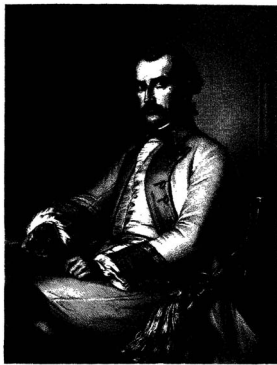
“We have not in point of fact,” replied the other; “but quite close by here, we can let you see what we regard as more useful.”

They turned into a large hall, lighted with good effect from above. A large circle of busy artists was first seen, from the midst of whom a colossal group, favorably placed, reared itself. Vigorous male and female forms, in powerful poses, reminded one of that splendid fight between youthful heroes and Amazons, in which hate and animosity at last resolve themselves into mutual and faithful alliance. This remarkably involved piece of art-work was seen to equal advantage from any point around it. Artists were sitting and standing in a large circle, each occupied after his own fashion: the painter at his easel, the draughtsman at his drawing-board, some modelling in the round, some in bas-relief; architects were even making drawings for the pedestal,

upon which a similar work of art was afterwards to be placed. Every one taking part in it adopted his own method in copying. Painters and draughtsmen developed the group in the flat, carefully, indeed, so as not to spoil it, but to give as much as possible. The work in bas-relief was treated in precisely the same manner. Only one had reproduced the whole group on a smaller scale, and, in certain movements and arrangement of members, he really seemed to have surpassed the model.

It now appeared that this was the designer of the model, who, before its execution in marble, was now submitting it not to a critical but to a practical test; and who, by taking accurate note of everything that each of his fellow-workers, according to his own method and way of thinking, saw, preserved, or altered in it, was enabled to turn it to his own advantage; with this object, that ultimately, when the perfect work should come forth chiselled in marble, though undertaken, designed, and executed by only one, yet still it might seem to belong to all.

In this room, too, the greatest silence reigned; but the director raised his voice and cried, "Who is there here, who, in the presence of this motionless work, can so move the imagination with the excellence of his words that all that we can see transfixed here, shall again become resolved without losing its character, so that we may convince ourselves that what the artist has here laid hold of is indeed the worthiest."



Major Jarno



Expressly called on by them all, a beautiful youth left his work, and began by delivering a quiet discourse, in which he seemed merely to describe the present work, but soon he threw himself into the peculiar region of poetry, plunged into the midst of the action, and controlled this element to a marvel. Little by little his rendering was

elevated by brilliant declamation, to such a height that the rigid group seemed to turn upon its axis, and the number of the figures seemed thereby doubled and trebled. Wilhelm stood enraptured, and at last cried, "Who can longer refrain from passing on into actual song and rhythmic verse?"

"This I would beg to refuse," replied the overseer; "for if our excellent sculptor will speak sincerely, he will confess that our poet hardly pleases him, and simply because the two artists stand as far as possible from one another: on the other hand, I would wager that here and there a painter has appropriated from him certain living traits. Yet there is a gentle kindly song that I might allow our friend to hear, one that you deliver with such sweet seriousness: it relates to art as a whole, and does me good myself whenever I hear it."

After a pause, in which they beckoned to each other, and made arrangements by signs, the following fine heart and spirit-stirring song resounded from all sides:—

"To invent and bring to ending,
Artist, bide thou oft alone:
Joy to reap from toilsome spending,
Gayly to thy friends begone!
See them as a whole compacted,
And discern thine own career;
Deeds in many a year enacted
In thy neighbor will be clear.
"First conceiving, then presenting,
Ranging shapes in order wise,
Each of them the rest accenting
Till at last they all suffice.
Well invented, render'd neatly,
Feelingly and thoroughly done,
Thus the artist hath discreetly
Power from everlasting won.
"As the thousand forms of Nature
Of one God alone do tell,
So does one enduring feature
In Art's wide domain prevail.
This, the sense of Truth Eternal,
Beauty dons as her array,
And unharmed by light supernal
Gazes on the brightest day.
"As the speaker, as the singer
Blithely fare in rhyme or prose,
Fresh beneath the painter's finger
Must bloom forth Life's joyous rose.
With her sisters round her closing,
With the fruits that autumn brings,
Thus the mysteries disclosing
Of Life's deeply hidden springs.

“Form from form do thou dis sever,
Fair, in shapes a thousand fold;
Of man's image glad forever
That a God it did enfold.
Stand in brotherhood united,
Whatsoe'er your work may be;
And like sacred incense lighted
Rise on high in melody.”

Wilhelm might well have let all this pass, although it must have seemed to him very paradoxical, and, had he not seen it with his eyes, actually impossible. But when they proceeded, in beautiful sequence, to declare and make it all clear to him openly and frankly, he hardly needed to ask a single question for further information; yet he did not forbear, at last, to address his conductor as follows:

“I see that here everything desirable in life has been provided for very wisely, but tell me, besides, which region can manifest a similar solicitude for dramatic poetry, and where might I gain information on that subject. I have looked round amongst all your edifices, and find none that could be destined for such an object.”

“In reply to this question we cannot deny that there is nothing of the sort to be met with in the whole of our province, for the theatre presupposes an idle crowd, perhaps even a rabble, the like of which is not to be found amongst us; for such people, if they do not go away disgusted, of their own accord, are conveyed across the frontier. Be assured, however, that in our universally active institution so important a point as this has been well considered; but no region could be found for it; some weighty objection occurred in every case. Who is there amongst our pupils who would have easily made up his mind to awaken in this mass, with feigned merriment or hypocritical sorrow, an unreal emotion inconsistent with the time, and thereby produce in alterations an ever-dubious pleasure? Such foolishness we considered altogether dangerous, and could not connect it with our serious aim.”

“And yet it is said,” replied Wilhelm, “that this widely-encompassing art requires all the others together.”

“Not at all,” was the reply; “she makes use of the others, but spoils them. I do not blame the actor when he associates himself with the painter, but still the painter, in such a partnership, is lost. The actor, without any conscience, will, for his own momentary ends, and with no small profit, use up all that art and life offer him; the painter, on the other hand, who would reap some advantage again from the theatre, will always find himself at a disadvantage, and the musician will be in the same case. The arts seem to me like so many sisters, of whom the greater number have been disposed to economy, but one of trivial disposition has had a mind to appropriate the possessions and property of the whole family. The theatre is in this situation: it has an ambiguous origin, which, whether as art or handicraft or dilettanteism, it can never wholly disguise.”

Wilhelm looked down with a deep sigh, for all the enjoyment and the sorrow that he had had from and on the stage, was suddenly present to him. He blessed the good men who were wise enough to spare their pupils such pain, who, from conviction and principle, banished these perils from their circle.

His conductor, however, did not leave him long to these meditations, but proceeded: "As it is our highest and holiest principle to misdirect no disposition or talent, we cannot hide from ourselves the fact, that amongst so great a number a natural mimetic gift may very likely be decisively displayed. This, however, shows itself in an irrepressible desire to ape the characters, figures, motion and speech of others. This we do not encourage, it is true, but we observe the pupil carefully, and if he remains throughout true to his nature, we have put ourselves in connection with the large theatres of all nations, and thither we send anyone of tried capacity, in order that, like the duck upon the pond, he may with all speed be guided on the stage to the future waddling and quacking of his life."

Wilhelm listened to this with patience, yet only with partial conviction, and perhaps with some annoyance; for so wonderfully is man minded, that whilst he is really persuaded of the worthlessness of some favorite subject or other, and will turn away from, and even execrate himself, yet still he will not bear to have it treated in the same way by anyone else, and probably the spirit of contradiction which dwells in all mankind is never more vigorously and effectively excited than in such a case.

The editor of these papers may even confess that he allows this wonderful passage to pass with some reluctance. Has he not, too, in many senses devoted more than a due share of life and strength to the theatre? and would it be easy to convince him that this has been an inexcusable error, a fruitless exertion?

However, we have not time to apply ourselves ill-humoredly to such recollections and underlying feelings, for our friend finds himself agreeably surprised on seeing before him, once more, one of the Three, and one especially sympathetic. A communicative gentleness, telling of the purest peace of soul, imparted itself most revivingly: the Wanderer could approach him trustfully, and feel that his trust was returned.

He now learned that the Superior was at present in the sanctuary, and was there instructing, teaching and blessing, whilst the Three arranged severally to visit all the regions, and in every place—after obtaining the most minute information, and arranging with the subordinate overseers to carry forward what had been begun—to establish what had been newly determined, and thus faithfully fulfil their high duty.

This excellent man it was, who gave him a more general view of their internal economy, and external connections, as well as a knowledge of the reciprocal effect of all the different regions; nor did he fail to make clear how a pupil could be transferred from one to the other after a longer or shorter period. Enough, everything fully harmonized with what he already knew. At the same time, the account given of his son was a source of great satisfaction, and the plan on which they intended to proceed with him must needs obtain his entire approbation.

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CHAPTER X.

Thereupon Wilhelm was invited by assistants and overseers to a mountain-festival which was on the point of being celebrated. They ascended the mountain with some difficulty, and Wilhelm fancied he noticed that towards evening the guide walked more slowly, as if the darkness would not oppose still further hindrance to their progress. But as soon as deep night surrounded them the riddle was solved for him: he saw, from numerous ravines and valleys, small flames glimmering unsteadily, stretching out into lines, and rolling towards them across the mountain heights. Much friendlier than when a volcano opens out, and its belching din threatens whole districts with destruction, did this spectacle appear; and yet, by-and-bye, it glowed much stronger, broader, and more concentrated, sparkling like a stream of stars, gentle and kindly it is true, but yet spreading itself boldly over the whole scene.

After enjoying some time the astonishment of the guest (for they could actually see each other well, their faces and forms seemed illuminated by the light in the distance, as well as their path), his companion began to speak:

“You see here a wonderful sight indeed: those lights, which glow and work, day and night, throughout the whole year, aiding the acquisition of hidden and scarcely attainable subterranean treasures, it is they that at the present moment are welling and gushing forth from their caverns and cheer the outer darkness. Hardly ever has a finer sight been seen, where the most useful industry, dispersed beneath the ground, withdrawn from sight, discloses itself to us in full completeness, bringing a vast secret combination to view.”



Amid such conversation and reflections, they had reached the spot where the rivulets of fire merged themselves into the sea of flame surrounding a brightly lighted insular space. The wanderer now stood in the blinding circle, where glancing lights by the thousand formed a weird contrast to the black background of the rows of miners. Forthwith the liveliest music was heard, with appropriate singing. Hollow masses of rock came away by the aid of machinery, and soon discovered a brilliant interior to the eye of the delighted spectator. Mimetic representations, and aught else that can add a charm to such a moment for the crowd, combined to excite and at the same time to satisfy a cheerful attention.

But with what astonishment was our friend filled, when he saw himself presented to the chief people, and amongst them, in solemn attire of state, beheld friend Jarno.

“Not without reason,” exclaimed the latter, “have I exchanged my earlier name for the more significant Montan. You find me here, consecrated to mountain and cavern, and happier in this limited situation below and upon the earth than can be imagined.”

“Then,” replied the wanderer, “you will thus, as a thorough expert, now be more liberal with explanation and instruction than you showed yourself towards me on those rocky mountain crags yonder.”

“Not at all,” rejoined Montan; “mountains are dumb teachers, and make silent scholars.”

After this festal celebration they supped at numerous tables. All the guests who, invited or uninvited, were present, belonged to the craft; consequently, even at the table at which Montan and his friend sat down, a conversation suited to the place at once commenced. The talk was all of mountains, lodes, and strata, of the veins and metals of the district in detail. But presently the conversation was merged into general subjects, and then the question turned on nothing less than the creation and origin of the world. But hereupon the discussion was no longer amicable, but rather involved itself speedily in a lively dispute.

Several of them would derive the formation of our earth from a watery covering sinking and diminishing itself little by little. They adduced in their support the remains of organic dwellers in the sea, on the highest mountains, as well as on the low hills. Others, on the contrary, averred more positively that it was first glowing and molten, that fire also prevailed throughout, which after it had had sufficient effect upon the outer surface, was finally withdrawn into the very depths, and was henceforward in constant activity through volcanoes raging violently in the sea as well as on the earth, and thus by successive eruptions, and lava likewise streaming over time after time, formed the highest mountains. They also especially reminded those who thought otherwise, that, in fact, without fire nothing could become hot, and that an active fire always presupposed a hearth. However reconcilable with experience this might seem, many were not contented with it. They affirmed that mighty forms which had already become fully perfected within the bosom of the earth, were driven by the agency of irresistible elastic forces through the earth's crust and out into the heights, and in this tumult many portions of them were at the same time scattered and splintered far over the contiguous and distant tracts; they appealed to many facts which were not to be explained without some such assumption. A fourth, though perhaps not a numerous party, laughed at these futile attempts, and affirmed that indeed many circumstances of the surface of this earth would never be capable of explanation if we did not allow that larger and smaller mountain ranges had fallen down from the atmosphere, and tracts of land had been covered far and wide by them. They called to witness larger and smaller masses of rock which are found lying scattered about in many countries, and even in our days are collected as having been hurled down from above.

At last, two or three quiet guests essayed to call in the assistance of a period of severe cold, and from the highest mountain ridges would look in spirit upon glaciers sloping down far into the land, sliding-planes so to speak, provided for heavy masses of

primitive rock, which were thus pushed farther and farther down upon the slippery path. These, on the advent of the period of thaw, must needs sink down, to remain lying forever on foreign soil. Thus, also, the transport of enormous blocks of stone hither from the north by means of floating drift-ice would become possible.* These good folks, however, could not make any impression with their somewhat calm views. It was held to be far more in accordance with nature to allow the creation of a world to proceed with gigantic bursting and upheaving, with tumultuous roaring and fiery jaculation; and when, moreover, the heat of wine had contributed its potent effect, the sumptuous feast had almost been broken up in murderous doings.

Utterly confused and befogged was our friend's mind, who, in quiet thought, still cherished from of old the Spirit that had moved upon the face of the waters, and the deep flood which had stood fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, and to whom, amid this strange talk, the world, well-ordered, developed, and animated as it was, seemed to fall, before his imagination, into a chaotic heap.

The next morning he did not omit to question the grave Montan on this subject, exclaiming, "I could not understand you yesterday, for amongst all the extraordinary things and speeches, I was hoping to hear at last your opinion, and your decision; instead of which, you were sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other, and always tried to confirm the opinion of him who happened to be speaking. But now tell me seriously what you think of it all, what you know about it."

To this Montan replied, "I know as much as they, and would rather not think at all about it."

"But here," replied Wilhelm, "are so many contradictory opinions; and it is said, forsooth, that truth lies in the middle."

"Not at all," rejoined Montan; "the problem lies in the middle, insoluble perhaps, perhaps also accessible if it is taken in hand."

So after somewhat more had been said to like effect by one and the other, Montan continued confidentially: "You blame me for supporting each one in his opinion, insomuch that a further argument can always be found for everything; I thereby increased the confusion, it is true, but, in point of fact, I cannot, with this breed, take the matter more seriously. I have thoroughly convinced myself that what each holds dearest—and these, in fact, are our convictions—he must, in deepest seriousness, keep to himself. Each one knows what he does know only for himself; and that he must keep secret; when he utters it, contradiction is excited forthwith, and when he ventures into conflict, he loses the equilibrium in himself, and what is best in him, if not annihilated, is at any rate disturbed."

Prompted by some counter-arguments of Wilhelm's, Montan further declared, "If one once knows on what everything depends, one ceases to be argumentative."

"But what does everything depend on then?" replied Wilhelm impatiently.

“That is soon said,” answered the other. “Thinking and Doing, Doing and Thinking, from all time admitted, from all time practised, but not discerned by everyone. Like expiration and inhalation, the two must forever be pulsating backwards and forwards in life; like question and answer, the one cannot exist without the other. Whoever makes for himself a law—which the genius of human understanding secretly whispers into the ear of every new-born child—to test Doing by Thinking, Thinking by Doing, he cannot go astray; and if he does go astray, he will soon find himself on the right way again.”

Montan now proceeded to conduct his friend methodically round the mining district; they were greeted everywhere with a gruff “Good-luck!” which they cheerfully returned.

“I often feel inclined,” said Montan, “to call out to them, ‘Good sense!’ for sense is more than luck; yet the people always have sense enough, if their superiors have any. Since I am here, if not to command, at any rate to advise, I have taken some trouble to learn the peculiarities of the mountain. They are striving most vigorously after the metals that it contains. I have been trying to make clear to myself where these occur, and I have succeeded. It is not done by luck alone, but by sense, which calls in the aid of luck in order to regulate it. How these mountains have come to be here I know not, and what is more I do not care to know; but I daily endeavor to win away from them their property. The lead and silver that they bear in their bosom is greedily sought after; how they have it, I keep to myself, and provide an opportunity of finding what is wished for. At my advice an experimental attempt is made, it succeeds, and is lucky for me. What I know, I know to myself; in what I succeed, I succeed for the benefit of others, and no one imagines that in the same way he might have succeeded just as well. I am under the suspicion of possessing a magic wand; but they do not remark that they contradict me whenever I bring forward anything in the way of reasoning, and that they thereby cut off from themselves the way to the tree of knowledge where these divining rods may be plucked.”

Reassured by this conversation, persuaded that he, too, having hitherto prospered in his Doing and Thinking, had in general adapted himself, in a widely different department, to his friend's requirements, he now proceeded to give account of the employment of his time, since he had obtained the favor of distributing and using the prescribed term of travel, not by days and hours, but in accordance with the true aim of a complete culture.

In this there was now, as it happened, no need of many words, for a circumstance of some moment gave our friend an opportunity of turning his acquired talent skilfully and favorably to account, and of proving himself truly useful to human society.

But of what sort this was, we must not at the moment disclose, though the reader shall soon, before the end of this book, be sufficiently informed of it.*

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CHAPTER XI.

Hersilia To Wilhelm.

“Everyone has for many years upbraided me with being a strange whimsical girl. If it is the case, I am so without any fault of my own. People have had to be patient with me; and now I need to have patience with myself, and with my imagination, which brings father and son sometimes together, sometimes alternately backwards and forwards before my eyes. I seem to myself like an innocent Alkmene, who is perpetually haunted by two beings who personate each other.

“I have much to say to you, and yet I write to you, it seems, only when I have an adventure to relate; all the rest, too, is adventure-like, it is true, but not an adventure. So now for that of to-day.

“I am sitting under the tall lime-trees, and am just finishing a letter-case, a very pretty one, without knowing for certain who is to have it—father or son—but certainly one of the two. A young pedlar comes up to me with small baskets and boxes; he modestly legitimates himself by a permit from the bailiff allowing him to hawk goods upon the estate. I examine his small wares down to the endless trifles that nobody wants, and everybody buys from a childish impulse to possess and to spend. The boy seems to look at me attentively. Fine black, somewhat cunning eyes, well-marked eyebrows, profuse locks, sparkling rows of teeth—enough, you understand me, something of the oriental.



“He makes a great many inquiries in reference to the persons composing the family, to whom he would at any rate venture to offer something; by all sorts of manœuvres he manages to get me to name myself to him. ‘Hersilia,’ he says shyly, ‘will Hersilia excuse me if I discharge a commission?’ I looked at him in astonishment. He draws forth the smallest little slate enclosed in a white frame, such as are made in the mountains for the first childish attempts at writing. I take it, see that it is written upon, and read the inscription, neatly cut in with a sharp pencil: *Felix loves Hersilia. The equerry is coming soon.*

“I am dumfounded, I ponder in astonishment on what I hold in my hand, see before my eyes; and chiefly on this, that destiny will prove itself almost more extraordinary than I am myself. ‘What does this mean?’ I say to myself, and the little rogue is more than ever present to me; nay, it seems as if his image would drill itself into my eyes.

“Then I begin to ask questions, and receive strange, unsatisfactory answers. I examine, and arrive at nothing. I think, and cannot properly collect my thoughts. At length, from talking and counter-talking, I gather thus much, that the young dealer had also passed through the Pedagogic province, and acquired the confidence of my young adorer, who having bought a slate had written the inscription upon it, and promised him the best recompenses for a word or two in reply. He then handed me a similar slate, several of which he disclosed in his pack, and likewise a pencil, and at the same time insisted and begged in so friendly a manner, that I took both, thought, thought again, and not being able to excogitate anything, wrote, *Hersilia greets Felix, and hopes the equerry is well.*

“I considered what I had written, and felt vexed at its clumsy expression. Neither tenderness, nor inspiration, nor wit; mere embarrassment: and why? I was standing before a boy, and writing to a boy: ought that to deprive me of my composure? I verily believe that I sighed, and was just on the point of wiping out what I had written, but he took it so gracefully out of my hand, asked me for something or other with which to cover it carefully; and so it happened that I—though I know not how it happened—put the little slate into the letter-case, wound the string round it, and handed it, fastened up, to the boy, who took it gracefully, and bowing deeply, lingered a moment, so that I just had time to press my purse into his hand, and blamed myself for not having given him enough. He ran off at a pretty good pace, and when I looked after him had already disappeared, I do not rightly understand how.

“Now it is past, I am already back on the ordinary, everyday level, and scarcely believe in the apparition. Do I not hold the slate in my hand? It is only too charming, the writing quite beautifully and carefully traced; I believe I should have kissed it if I had not been afraid of obliterating the writing.

“I have taken a little time after writing the above; but whatever I think about this, too, will always avail nothing. Most certainly there was something mysterious about the figure, the like of which are now-a-days indispensable in fiction; must they then encounter us in real life too? Agreeable and suspicious, foreign-looking, yet inspiring confidence; why did he go away too before the puzzle was solved? Why had I not sufficient presence of mind civilly to detain him?

“After a pause I again take pen in hand to pursue my confessions. The decided, constant affection of a boy ripening into youth might be flattering to me, but then it occurred to me that, at this age, it is nothing uncommon to be attached to older women. Indeed there is a mysterious inclination in younger men for older women. At another time, when it did not concern myself, I would have laughed over it, and maliciously declared it to be a reminiscence of the tender age of nursing and sucking-babyhood from which they were scarcely emancipated. Now it vexes me to think of the matter like this; I reduce the good Felix to infancy, and yet I do not find myself in an advantageous position either. Alas! what a difference it makes whether one is judging one's self or other people!”

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CHAPTER XII.

Wilhelm To Natalia.

“I have been walking about for days, and cannot make up my mind to set pen to paper, there are so many things to tell: in speaking, perhaps, one thing would connect itself with another; one thing, too, would easily develop itself out of the other. Let me then, the absent one, begin only with what is most general; it will yet lead me at last to the strange matter that I have to impart.

“You have heard of the youth who, walking on the seashore, found a rudder-pin; the interest that he felt in it impelled him to procure a rudder as necessarily belonging to it. But this too was of no further use to him. He earnestly desired to get a boat, and succeeded in doing so. Yet boat, rudder, and rudder-pin were of no particular use; he provided himself with masts and sails, and so, piece by piece, with whatever is requisite for speed and convenience in navigation. By efforts adapted to his ends he attained to greater aptitude and dexterity; fortune favors him, he sees himself at last master and owner of a larger vessel, and so success increases; he wins wealth, respect, and a good name amongst the seafarers.*

“In causing you to read this pretty story again, I must confess that it is appropriate here only in the widest sense, yet it gives me an opening for expressing that which I have to say. Meanwhile, I must run through something still more remote.

“The capabilities that lie in men can be divided into general and special; the general are to be regarded as activities in a state of balanced repose, which are aroused by circumstances, and directed accidentally to this or that end. Man's faculty of imitation is general: he will make or form in imitation of what he sees, even without the slightest inward and outward means to that end. It is always natural, therefore, that he should wish to do what he sees to be done: the most natural thing, however, would be that the son should embrace the occupation of his father. In this case it is all in one, a decided activity in an original direction, with probably an inborn faculty for a special end; then a resultant and gradually progressive exercise and a developed talent, that would have compelled us to proceed upon the beaten path, even if other impulses are developed within us, and a free choice might have led us to an occupation for which nature has given us neither capacity nor perseverance. On the average, therefore, those men are the happiest who find an opportunity of cultivating an inborn, family talent in the domestic circle. We have seen painter-pedigrees of this sort; amongst them there have been feeble talents, it is true, but in the meantime, they have brought to light something useful, and perhaps better than they would have achieved with moderate powers in any other department of their own choice.

“But as this, too, is not what I wanted to say, I must try to approach my subject from some other side.

“This is the pity of friends being far apart, that the intermediate and auxiliary members of our thoughts, which in mutual presence are reciprocally developed and interwoven as swiftly as lightning, cannot be produced and expressed in momentary connection and association. Here then, in the first place, is one of the earliest of children's tales.

“We children, brought up in an ancient and sober city, had acquired the ideas of streets, squares, and walls, and soon, also, of ramparts, of the glacis, and of the adjoining walled gardens. But our parents, in order to take us, or rather themselves, once into the open country, had for a long time arranged, though it was continually deferred, a party, with some friends in the country. At last, one Whitsuntide, the invitation and proposal came more pressingly, and was agreed to, but only on the condition that everything should be so arranged that we might be home again by night-time; for to sleep out of one's long-accustomed bed seemed to be an impossibility. To concentrate the pleasures of the day into so narrow a space was certainly difficult; two friends had to be visited, and their claims to so infrequent an entertainment satisfied; however, with great punctuality, there were hopes of carrying it all out.

“On the third day of the holidays all were standing, at the earliest hour, cheerful and ready. The carriage drew up at the appointed time. We had left all confinements of streets, gates, bridges, and town-ditches behind us; an open far-extending world spread itself before our inexperienced eyes. The green of cornfields and meadows lately refreshed by rain in the night, the tint more or less bright of buds on hedges and trees just bursting forth, the dazzling whiteness of the tree-blossoms diffusing itself on all sides, everything gave us a foretaste of happy Eden-like hours.

“We arrived in due time at the first halting-place, the house of a worthy clergyman. Our cordial reception soon assured us that the ecclesiastical feast now concluded was no detriment to spirits seeking rest and refreshment. I regarded the rural household for the first time with pleased interest—plough and harrow, wagon and cart, betrayed their immediate use; even the repulsive-looking manure seemed the most indispensable in the whole circuit, for it was carefully collected, and, to a certain degree, neatly stored up. Yet this first glance, directed to what was new and yet intelligible, was soon riveted by a treat: appetizing cakes, new milk, and many other country dainties were greedily regarded by us. Then the children, forsaking the little garden-plot and the hospitable arbor, quickly busied themselves in performing, in the adjoining spinney, a task which an old, kindly-disposed aunt had given them. That was to gather as many cowslips as possible, and carefully take them back to town with them, for the thrifty goodwife was in the habit of making all sorts of wholesome beverages of them.

“Whilst thus employed in the meadows, we were running backwards and forwards along banks and hedges, several of the village-children joined us, and the sweet scent of the gathered spring-flowers seemed to grow more and more refreshing and balmy. We had by this time collected such a mass of stalks and flowers that we did not know what to do with them. Now we began to pick off the yellow coronals, for it was really

only with these that we had to do; each tried to fill his little hat or cap as full as possible.

“However, the eldest of these boys, the fisherman's son, who was a little older than myself, a boy who had at once especially attracted me by his serious demeanor, did not seem to enjoy this trifling over flowers, and he invited me to walk with him to the river, which, already of considerable breadth, flowed by at a short distance. We sat down, with a couple of fishing-rods, in a shady place, where in the deep, clear, calm water many little fishes were darting hither and thither. He good-naturedly showed me what to do, and how the bait was to be fastened on the hook, and several times I was successful in whisking into the air, against their will, the smallest of these delicate creatures. As we were thus sitting quietly leaning against each other, he seemed to get tired of it, and made me observe a flat, pebbly bank which projected into the stream from our side, and that there was a most beautiful opportunity for a bathe. ‘He could not help trying it,’ he cried at last, springing up, and before I was aware, he was down, undressed, and in the water.



“As he swam very well, he soon left the shallow place, abandoned himself to the stream, and soon came up to me in the deeper water. Quite a strange feeling came over me: grasshoppers were dancing about me, ants were crawling towards me, colored beetles were clinging to the twigs, and gold-gleaming ‘sun-maidens,’ as he had called them, were hovering and flitting spirit-like at my feet, just as he, pulling out a great cray-fish from between some roots, held it up merrily, and then cleverly concealed it again at the old place with what we had caught before. It was so warm and sultry all around, one yearned to be out of the sun and in the shade, out of the cool shade in the still cooler water below. So it was easy for him to entice me down; I found an invitation, not often repeated, irresistible, and what with fear of my parents, and timidity about the unfamiliar element in addition, I was quite strangely excited. But soon undressed upon the gravel, I ventured gently into the water, but not deeper than was due to the gradually sloping bottom. Here he let me linger, went to some distance in the sustaining element, came back, and when he got out and stood up to dry himself in the fuller sunshine, my eyes seemed to be dazzled by a triple sun; so fair was the human form, of which I had never had any idea. He seemed to look at me with equal attention. Though quickly dressed, we still seemed to stand unclothed before each other; our spirits drew together, and amidst the most ardent kisses we swore eternal friendship.

“But then swiftly, swiftly, we betook ourselves home, just at the right moment, as the party were setting out on the most delightful footpath, for about an hour and a half, through bush and wood, to the bailiff's dwelling. My friend accompanied me; we already seemed inseparable; but when, about half-way there, I asked permission to

take him into the bailiff's house, the pastor's wife refused, with a quiet hint about the impropriety; on the other hand, she gave him a strict injunction to tell his father when he came in, that she must be sure on her return home to find some fine crayfish, that she wished to give her guests to take back to the city as a rarity. The boy went off, but pledged himself with hand and lips to wait for me in the evening at this corner of the wood.

“The party soon reached the bailiff's, where we also found a rural household, but of a higher style. A dinner delayed in consequence of the housewife's being over-busy, did not make me impatient; for a stroll in a well-kept pleasure-garden, in which the daughter, who was somewhat younger than I, accompanied me to show me the way, was very agreeable to me. Spring-flowers of every kind grew in tastefully laid-out plots, filling them or decking their edges. My companion was beautiful, fair-haired, and gentle; we walked confidentially together, soon held each other by the hand, and seemed to wish for nothing better. Thus we walked past tulip-beds, past narcissuses and jonquils in rows; she showed me several places where the most splendid hyacinth-bells had already just gone off. On the other hand, provision had been made for the coming seasons too; the plants of future ranunculuses and anemones were already green; the care bestowed upon numerous carnation slips promised the most abundant bloom; but the hope of many-flowered lily-stems, very wisely distributed among roses, was already budding more nearly. And how many were the bowers that promised presently both the beauty and the shade of honeysuckle, jasmine, and vine-like and creeping kinds of growth!

“When I look back, after so many years, at my situation on that occasion, it seems to me really enviable. Unexpectedly, at the same moment, the premonition of friendship and love seized me: for when I unwillingly took leave of the beautiful child, I comforted myself with the thought of disclosing these feelings to my young friend, of confiding in him, and of enjoying his sympathy together with these fresh sentiments.

“And if I add one more remark here, I may perhaps confess that in the course of life that first out-blooming of the exterior world has appeared to me as the real original nature, in comparison with which all else that later appeals to our senses seem to be but copies, which at every comparison with the former are deficient in that peculiarly original spirit and sense.

“How we must have despaired at seeing so cold, so lifeless an outward life, had not something revealed itself in our heart that glorifies nature in quite another way, whilst manifesting a creative power, to beautify ourselves in her.

“It was already dusk when we again approached the corner of the wood, where my young friend had promised to wait for me. I strained my eyesight to its utmost extent to descry his presence; and when I was unsuccessful in this, I impatiently hurried in front of the party, who walked leisurely, running to and fro amongst the bushes. I called out, I worried myself; he was not to be seen, nor did he answer; for the first time I experienced, in double and manifold degree, a passionate grief.

“The unmeasured demands of confidential affection had already developed themselves in me, there was already an irresistible need to unburden my soul, by talking, of the image of that fair-haired one, to relieve my heart of the emotions which she had awakened in me. It was full, the lips already muttered, to overflowing. I blamed the good boy aloud for violated friendship, for broken faith.

“But heavier trials were soon in store for me. From out of the first houses of the village rushed shrieking women, followed by screaming children; no one gave information or answer. Round the corner house on one side we saw a sad procession approach: it moved slowly along the street; it seemed like a funeral, but of more complicated character; there was no end to the bearing and carrying along. The shrieking continued, increased, the crowd thickened: ‘They are drowned—all drowned together!’ ‘He! who? which?’ The mothers who saw their children about them seemed consoled. But a serious-looking man came up, and said to the pastor’s wife, ‘Unhappily, I stayed out too long; Adolphus has been drowned with four others; he wished to keep his promise and mine.’ The man—it was the fisherman himself—walked on after the procession; we stood shocked and astounded. Then a little boy came up, holding out a bag: ‘Here are the crayfish, madam!’ and held the token high in the air. All were horrified at it, as at a thing of most evil omen: they questioned, inquired, and heard thus much: this last child had remained on the bank and picked up the crayfish that they threw to him from below. But then, after much questioning and cross-questioning, they found out that Adolphus and two sensible boys had gone down to and into the water; two others, younger, had joined them unasked, and could not be kept back by any scolding and threats. The first two had almost got across a rocky and dangerous place; the other two slipped, seized hold of and kept pulling each other underneath. The same thing occurred at last to the foremost two also, and they all sank in the deep water. Adolphus, being a good swimmer, would have saved himself, but in their terror they all hung on to him, and he was dragged down. This little one had then run screaming into the village, holding his bag of crayfish tight in his hands. The fisherman, accidentally late on his way home, ran off with others who were alarmed; they had dragged them out one after the other, found that they were dead, and were now bringing them in.



“The pastor, together with the father, walked sadly towards the town-house; the full moon had risen, and shone on the path of death. I followed in passionate grief; they would not let me in, I was in a terrible condition. I walked round and round the house without resting; at last I saw my opportunity, and sprang in at the open window.

“In the large room, where meetings of all kinds are held, lay the unfortunates, stretched naked upon straw, dazzling white corpses, shining also in the dim lamplight. I threw myself upon the tallest—my friend. I had no words to express my condition; I wept bitterly, and deluged his broad breast with unceasing tears. I had heard something of rubbing, which in such a case was said to be of use. I rubbed in my tears, and cheated myself with the warmth that I excited. Amidst my confusion, I thought of breathing breath into him, but the pearly rows of his teeth were fast locked; the lips, on which the parting kiss still seemed to remain, refused even the slightest symptom of response. Despairing of human aid, I had recourse to prayer: I implored, I prayed. It seemed to me as if at this moment I must perform a miracle to call forth the still indwelling soul, to lure it in again if still hovering near. I was torn away, weeping, sobbing. I sat in the carriage, and scarcely understood what my parents were saying. Our mother, as I afterwards heard so often repeated, had resigned herself to God's will. In the meanwhile I had fallen asleep, and awoke gloomily, late next morning, in a doubtful and confused condition.

“But when I went to breakfast I found my mother, my aunt, and the cook in weighty consultation. The crayfish were not to be boiled nor brought to table; my father would not endure such a direct reminiscence of the calamity that had so lately occurred. The aunt seemed to wish most eagerly to possess herself of these uncommon creatures, but at the same time blamed me for our having forgotten to bring the cowslips with us. However, she soon seemed to be pacified about this, when those misshapen creatures crawling alive over each other were handed over to her free disposal, whereupon she took counsel with the cook as to their further treatment.

“But to make the significance of this scene clear, I must say something more of the character and personality of this woman. The peculiarities by which she was governed one could not by any means praise from a moral point of view; and yet from a civic and political point of view they produced many a good result. She was, in the proper sense of the word, miserly; for she regretted every mere penny that she had to spend, and for her requirements she looked about everywhere for substitutes that could be got for nothing, by exchange, or in any sort of fashion. Thus the cowslips were intended for tea, which she maintained to be more wholesome than any Chinese sort. God had given every land what was necessary, whether for food, for relish, or for medicine; on that account one need not have recourse to foreign countries. So in a little garden she cultivated everything that, after her notions, would make food palatable, or would be useful to the sick. She never visited another person's garden without taking away with her something of the sort.

“This disposition and whatever resulted from it could well be pardoned, since her diligently-hoarded cash would after all be for the benefit of the family. In this matter, too, our father and mother managed to give in completely to her and be accommodating.

“Another propensity, however, one of activity, and indefatigably asserting itself, was a pride in being regarded as an important and influential person. And, in truth, she had deserved and attained this reputation, for she was clever enough to turn to her own advantage the useless, and often indeed mischievous, gossip current among women.

Everything that went on in the town, and consequently even the private affairs of families, was accurately known to her, and it was not often that any matter of dispute arose without her having contrived to mix herself up in it, in which she was the more successful inasmuch as she always tried to be of some use, but managed thereby to increase her reputation and good name. Many a match had she made with which one side at least probably remained satisfied. But what she gave her attention to most was the furthering and assisting of such persons as were seeking an office or appointment, whereby she really gained a large number of clients, of whose influence she was able to avail herself in return.

“The widow of an official of some importance, an upright and strict man, she yet had learned how those whom one cannot get at by any considerable overtures are gained over by trifles.

“However, to keep on the beaten path without further digression, be it said at once that she had contrived to gain great influence over a man who occupied an important office. He was miserly like her, and, to his own misfortune, equally gluttonous and fond of dainties; so to set on the table before him, on any pretext, a tasty dish, was always her chief anxiety. His conscience was not one of the most sensitive; but his courage and audacity had also to be called into request, whenever in dubious cases he had to overcome the opposition of his colleagues and stifle the voice of duty which they brought to bear against him.

“It was precisely this case now—that she was favoring an unworthy individual: she had done all she could to push him in, the matter had taken a favorable turn for her, and now the crayfish, of which the like were indeed rarely seen, luckily came to her assistance. They were to be carefully fed up, and served up at intervals on the table of her distinguished patron, who commonly dined alone very sparingly.

“As to other matters, the unfortunate calamity gave occasion to a good deal of talk and social excitement. My father was one of the first who on this occasion was impelled by a spirit of general benevolence to extend his consideration and care beyond the limits of his family and of the town. He was interested, in conjunction with certain intelligent physicians, and those connected with the police, in overcoming the great obstacles which at first opposed inoculation for smallpox. Greater carefulness in the hospital, more humane treatment of prisoners, and other kindred objects, were the end and aim of his life, or at any rate of his reading and thinking; and, as he used to give utterance to his convictions on all occasions, he thus effected a great deal of good.

“He looked upon the association of citizens, to whatever form of government it might be subjected, as a natural condition which had its good and its bad side—its ordinary courses, its years of plenty and scarcity alternately, and hailstorms, floods, and fires, no less accidentally and irregularly: the good to be seized and used, the bad to be avoided or endured. But nothing, he considered, was more desirable than the diffusion of universal goodwill, independently of every other consideration.

“As a natural consequence of such a disposition he must now needs be determined to bring again under discussion a matter of benevolence that had already been mooted before: this was the resuscitation of such as were thought to be dead, in whatever way, moreover, the outward signs of life might have been lost. During conversations of this sort I now learned that in the case of these children the reverse of what was right had been tried and applied, nay, that, in a certain sense, they had been killed. It was furthermore maintained that by opening a vein they might perhaps all have been saved. In my youthful ardor, I therefore determined in silence that I would spare no opportunity of learning everything that might be needful in such a case, especially blood-letting, and whatever else there might be of like sort.

“But how soon did daily routine carry me away! The need for friendship and love had been awakened; I looked round about me everywhere to satisfy it. Meanwhile sensibility, imagination, and intellect were occupied beyond measure by the theatre: how far I was here led, and misled, I must not repeat.

“But if after this circumstantial narrative I have still to confess that I am as far as ever from the goal of my intention, and that I can only hope to arrive at it by a circuitous route, what am I to say? How can I excuse myself? In any case I should have to bring forward what follows. If it is allowable to the humorist to mix up his matter in minutest confusion, when he impudently leaves it to his reader to find out at last in half-meanings what—if anything—is to be got out of it, should it not be permitted to the intelligent and rational man to work in a strange-seeming way towards many points, so that one may at last see them reflected and concentrated in one focus, and may learn to understand how the most varied influences surrounding a man drive him to a conclusion which he would have been able to attain in no other way, either through inward impulse or outward motive?

“From the many things which still remain for me to say, I have the choice as to which I shall take first; but this too, is a matter of indifference. You must just possess your soul in patience, read and read on; for at last there will suddenly dawn upon you, and seem quite natural, that which spoken in one word would have struck you as exceedingly strange, and in fact to such a degree, that you would hardly have cared afterwards to give a moment to these introductions in the form of explanations.

“But that I may now in some sort get in the right direction, I will take a glance back at that rudder-pin again, and call to mind a conversation that I was accidentally led to hold with our tried friend Jarno—whom I met in the mountains under the name of Montan—and which awakened certain feelings of my own in a very special way. The circumstances of our life have a mysterious course which cannot be calculated. You remember, doubtless, that case which your skilful surgeon brought out when you came to help me as I lay prostrate and wounded in the forest? It flashed in my eyes at that time with such effect, and made so deep an impression, that I was quite delighted when I found it again, years after, in the hands of a younger man. He attached no particular value to it; instruments altogether had been improved in more recent times, and were better adapted to their purpose, and I obtained it all the more easily as the acquisition of a new set was thereby facilitated. From that time I always carried it about with me, not to make any use of it, it is true; but in order to be surer of

comforting recollections; it was a witness to the moment when my good fortune began, at which I was to arrive only after a long circuit.

“By chance Jarno saw it when we spent the night at the charcoal-burner's; and he recognized it at once, and in reply to my explanation said:

“ ‘I have nothing to object to a man's setting up such a fetish in memory of many an unlooked-for benefit, or of important results from some ordinary circumstance; it elevates us as something that points to an Incomprehensible, stimulates us in difficulties, and encourages our hopes; but it would be a finer thing if you had let yourself be enticed, through those tools, to understand their use also, and to accomplish what they mutely demand of you.’

“ ‘Let me confess,’ I replied thereto, ‘that this has occurred to me a hundred times; an inner voice stirred within me, bidding me recognize in this my peculiar vocation.’

“I thereupon told him the story of the drowned boys, and how I had heard then that they might have been saved, if they had been bled. ‘I intended to learn how to do it; but every hour made the intention weaker.’

“ ‘Then seize it now!’ replied he. ‘I have for long seen you occupied with matters that concern and bear upon the human spirit, disposition, heart, and whatever you call it all. But what have you thereby gained for yourself and others? Sorrows of the mind into which we have fallen by misfortune or our own faults; to heal these intellect can do nothing, reason little, time much; resolute activity, on the other hand, everything. In this every one works with and for himself; that you have experienced in yourself and others.’

“He attacked me with angry and bitter words, as is his wont, and said many hard things that I do not care to repeat. ‘There is nothing,’ he concluded at last, ‘better worth the trouble of learning and doing than to assist the healthy man when he is injured by some accident or other; with prudent treatment, nature easily restores itself: the sick must be left to the physician; but no one needs a surgeon more than the sound and healthy man. In the quietude of country life, in the narrowest family circle, he is just as welcome as in and after the turmoil of battle; in the sweetest moments, as in the bitterest and most terrible; evil fate prevails everywhere, more dreadful than death itself, and not a whit less ruthless, nay, after a fashion, yet more noxious, more destructive to pleasure and to life.’

“You know him, and can imagine without effort that he spared me as little as the world. But he inclined most strongly to the argument which he directed against me in the name of the society at large.

“ ‘Your universal culture,’ said he, ‘and all institutions for that end, are foolishness. The thing is, that a man should understand something quite definitely, do it with an excellence which scarce anyone else in the immediate neighborhood could attain; and in our association particularly this is a self-evident matter. You are just of an age when a man forms any plan with intelligence, judges what lies before him with

discernment, grapples with it from the right side, and directs his capacities and abilities to the right end.'

"Why, then, need I proceed to express what is a self-understood matter? He made it clear to me that I could obtain a dispensation from the restless life so strangely enjoined, though it might be difficult for me to obtain it. 'You are one of that sort of men,' he said, 'who easily grow accustomed to a place, but not to an occupation. To all such a restless state of life is prescribed, in order, perhaps, that they may attain to a surer manner of life. If you will devote yourself in earnest to the most divine of all employments, to heal without miracles, and to perform miracles without words, I will use my influence in your favor.' So he spoke hurriedly, adding all such cogent reasons as his eloquence was able to muster.

"Here then, I am disposed to make an end: but you shall very soon learn circumstantially how I have made use of the permission to remain a longer time at certain places; how I have succeeded in applying myself to the profession for which I have always had a secret liking, and of thoroughly training myself therein. Enough, in the great undertaking for which you are preparing yourself, I shall prove myself a useful, a necessary member of the society, and I shall fall into your paths with a certain assurance—with some amount of pride; for to be worthy of you is a laudable pride."

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BOOK III.



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CHAPTER I.

After all this, and whatever followed upon it, Wilhelm's first anxiety was to come into contact again with the guild-brethren, and to meet with some portion or other of them, wherever it might be. He therefore consulted his little diagram, and took the road which promised to bring him sooner than the others to his goal. But since, in order to reach the most favorable point, it was necessary for him to go across country, he found himself obliged to make the journey on foot, and to have his baggage carried after him. However, at every step he was richly rewarded for his walk, for he encountered unexpectedly the most lovely scenery. It was such as the last mountainous tracts form as they merge into the plains—wooded hills, gentle declivities used for husbandry, all the surfaces green, and nowhere aught that was rugged, unfruitful, or untilled to be seen. He now arrived at the main valley, into which the tributary streams poured themselves; this, too, was carefully tilled, and pleasant to behold: slender trees marked the bends of the river that flowed through it, and of the streams that poured into it; and when he took up the map that was his guide, he saw, to his astonishment, that the line drawn upon it cut right through this valley, and that thus he was at any rate upon the right path.

An old castle, in a good state of preservation, having been renovated at various periods, was conspicuous upon a woody hill; spreading outward from its foot lay a cheerful-looking village, in which an inn that stood out prominently caught the eye. He walked up to the latter, and was received in a very friendly manner by the host, but with the excuse that he could not take him in without the permission of a party who had hired the whole house for a time, on which account he was obliged to refer all guests to the older hostelry, that lay farther up.

After a short parley, the man seemed to think better of it, and said, "As a matter of fact, there is no one as yet in the house; but it happens to be Saturday, and it cannot be long before the bailiff, who settles the accounts every week and gives his orders for the next, arrives. In truth there is a nice regularity amongst these people, and it is a pleasure to deal with them, although they are rather close. For if there certainly is no great profit, it is a sure one." Therewith he bade the new guest remain patiently in the large upper hall, and await what further might occur.

Here he found, on entering, a spacious and neat apartment, quite empty but for benches and tables; so much the more did he wonder on seeing a large tablet placed above a door, upon which, in letters of gold, were to be read the words *Ubi homines sunt, modi sunt*, which we interpret to the effect that wherever men meet together in social life, there the way and fashion in which they can exist and remain together are evolved. This motto gave our wanderer food for thought; he took it as a good omen, that here he found confirmed what he had often in the course of his life recognized as reasonable and helpful. It was not long before the bailiff made his appearance, who, having been instructed beforehand, admitted him, after a short conversation and no particular investigation, on the following conditions: that he should stay three days, should quietly take part in all that went on, and, whatever might happen, should not

inquire the reason, and still less should not, on his departure, ask for the reckoning. All this the traveller was forced to agree to, since the deputy, as such, could not give in in any point.

The bailiff was just about to depart, when a song resounded up the stairs: two beautiful young men approached singing, whom the bailiff by a simple sign gave to understand that the guest was accepted. Without interrupting their song, they greeted him kindly, gracefully singing a duet, and it was easy to see that they were in perfect practice, and masters of their craft. As Wilhelm showed the most attentive appreciation, they stopped and asked him whether in his travels on foot he too had not often hit upon some song that he thus sang aloud to himself.

“A good voice,” answered Wilhelm, “has in fact been denied me by nature, but a hidden genius within me often seems to inspire me with something rhythmic, so that in walking I move constantly in time, and at the same time seem to perceive soft tones by which some song is accompanied, that in one way or another pleasantly presents itself to me.”

“If you remember any one of the sort, write it down for us,” said he; “we should like to see whether we are able to accompany your singing *daimon*.”

Hereupon he took a leaf from his notebook and handed them the following stanza:

“From the mountain heights descending,
Down the slopes, the vale along,
Hark! a wing-like flutter, blending
With a movement as of song.
And on unrestricted roving
Joy attends and prudent heed:
Let thy striving be with loving,
Let thy life consist in deed.”

After a short time for thought there forthwith sounded a lively duet, timed to marching pace, which, with all repetition and abridgment, went constantly forward and carried away the hearers with it; he was in doubt whether this was his own melody, his former theme, or whether it was only now so adapted to it that no other movement was conceivable. In this way the singers had proceeded pleasantly for some time, when two sturdy fellows entered, whom one recognized at once by their attributes as masons; but two who followed them, one must needs regard as carpenters. These four, gently laying down their tools, listened to the song, and presently joined in with sureness and decision, so that one had the sensation of a whole company of travellers marching onward over mountain and valley, and Wilhelm thought that he had never heard anything so graceful and so elevating to heart and mind. This enjoyment, however, was to be further increased and heightened to the last degree, when a gigantic figure mounted the steps, and with the best intentions was scarcely able to moderate his powerful, heavy tread. He proceeded to stand a heavily-packed porter's frame in the corner, but sat himself down upon a bench, which began to crack—at which the others laughed, yet without falling out of

the song. But very much astonished was Wilhelm when this son of Anak immediately began to join in with a tremendous bass voice. The hall trembled, and it was noticeable that he, in his part, at once altered the refrain, and sang it, in fact, in this shape:

“Day by day be not unmoving,
Let thy life be deed on deed.”

Moreover, one could very soon see that he brought down the time to a slower pace, and obliged the others to adapt themselves to him. When at length they had come to an end, and had fully satisfied themselves, the others upbraided him as if he had tried to mislead them.

“Not at all,” he exclaimed; “it is you who tried to mislead me: you were for throwing me out of my step, which must be measured and sure when I trudge with my burden up hill and down dale, and yet must at last come at the appointed hour and satisfy you.”

One after the other now went in to the bailiff, and Wilhelm could easily see that the business was about settling accounts, as to which he did not venture to make further inquiry. In the meantime there came a couple of lively, handsome boys, who laid a table in haste, providing it moderately with eatables and wine, to which the bailiff, who came out of his room, now invited all to sit down with him. The boys waited upon them, but they did not forget to look after themselves too, and ate their share standing. Wilhelm called to mind similar scenes when he still dwelt amongst the actors; but the present party seemed to him much more earnest, intent not on amusement in representation, but on important aims in life.



The conversation between the craftsmen and the bailiff gave the guest the clearest knowledge on this point. The four sturdy young fellows were employed in the neighborhood, where a destructive fire had laid a most beautiful country-town in ashes; nor did he fail to hear that the honest bailiff was engaged in procuring timber and other building materials. This seemed the more inexplicable to the guest, inasmuch as the men, one and all, were not natives of the place, but in every other respect were evidently passing travellers. At the end of the meal St. Christopher, for so they named the giant, fetched from one side a good glass of wine, by way of a sleeping-draught, and a lively song held the party together for a time, for the ear, when for the eye they had already dispersed. Wilhelm, thereupon, was conducted to a chamber of most pleasant aspect. The full-moon, illuminating a luxuriant plain, was already up, and awakened in the breast of our wanderer recollections of similar and equally beautiful scenes. The spirits of all his dear friends passed in procession before

him; but Lenardo's figure especially was so life-like to him, that he fancied he saw him standing actually before him. All this was giving him an inward disposition for his nightly rest, when he was almost frightened by a most extraordinary noise. It sounded from the distance, and yet seemed to be in the house itself, for the house frequently shook, and the timbers groaned when the sound mounted to its highest strength. Wilhelm, who in general had a delicate ear to distinguish all sounds, could make nothing of it; he compared it with the droning of a large organ-pipe, that from sheer size is unable to give out any definite tone. Whether this night-terror ceased towards morning, or whether Wilhelm, by degrees accustomed to it, was no longer sensible of it, is difficult to ascertain; * in fine, he fell asleep, and was pleasantly aroused by the rising sun.

Scarcely had one of the waiting-boys brought him breakfast, when a figure entered whom he had noticed at supper, without being clear as to his peculiar qualities. He was a well-built, broad-shouldered, and active man withal, who by his implements exhibited to view announced himself as a barber, and made himself ready to render to Wilhelm this so requisite service. At the same time he remained silent, and the business was accomplished with a very light hand, without his having emitted a single sound.

Wilhelm therefore began, and said, "You are a master-hand at your business, and I do not know that I have ever felt a gentler blade upon my cheeks; but at the same time you seem to pay strict observance to the laws of the society."

With a sly smile, and laying his finger on his lips, he slipped mutely out of the door.

"In very truth," called Wilhelm after him, "you must be 'Redcloak,' † or, if not himself, at least a descendant of his. It is fortunate for you that you do not require a return of your service from me. You would have come off badly."

Scarcely had this extraordinary man departed when our friend the bailiff entered, proffering an invitation to dinner that midday, which also ran somewhat strangely. The Bond—so the inviter expressly stated—bade the friend welcome, invited him to the mid-day meal, and flattered itself with the hope of coming into nearer relations with him. It further inquired after the guest's well-being, and how he was satisfied with the accommodation, to which he could only reply with praise of everything that he had encountered. It is true that he would have liked to inquire of this man, as of the mute barber before, about the horrible noise which had disturbed, if not distressed him in the night; yet, mindful of his promise, he refrained from every question, and hoped, without being importunate, to be enlightened in accordance with his wishes, either through the complaisance of the society or by some chance.

When our friend found himself alone, he at last began to think about the strange person who had sent him the invitation, and he did not know what to make of it. To designate one or more leaders by means of a neuter substantive, seemed to him rather dubious. For the rest, all was so quiet about him here that he thought he had never spent a quieter Sunday. He went out of doors; but hearing the sound of bells, he walked towards the little town. Mass was just over, and amongst the townfolk and

the peasants who were thronging out he saw the three acquaintances of yesterday, a journeyman carpenter, a mason, and a boy. Later he noticed amongst the Protestant worshippers the three others. What form of worship the others professed remained unknown to him: thus much, however, he was confident in concluding, that in this society a very decided freedom in religion prevailed.

At noon the bailiff came to meet him at the castle-door, to conduct him through various halls into a large vestibule, where he bade him sit down. A good many people kept walking past into an adjoining saloon. Those he knew already were to be seen amongst them; even St. Christopher went by. They all greeted the bailiff and the visitor. What struck our friend here most, was that he seemed to see none but artisans; all clad in their ordinary dress, but with extreme neatness; there were few whom, at best, he would have taken to be of the scrivener class.

As soon as no new guests continued to press in, the bailiff led our friend through the stately portal into a spacious hall. There an interminably long table was spread, from the lower end of which he was conducted to the top, across which he saw three persons standing. But with what astonishment was he seized, when he came near, and Lenardo, hardly yet recognized, fell upon his neck. He had scarcely recovered from this surprise, when another person embraced Wilhelm no less ardently and vigorously, and proclaimed himself to be Natalia's brother, the wonderful Friedrich. The delight of the friends infected the whole assembly: words of congratulation and blessing re-echoed along the whole table. But of a sudden, when they were seated, all was still, and the repast was served up, and eaten with a certain solemnity.

Towards the end of the meal Lenardo gave a signal. Two singers stood up, and Wilhelm was much surprised to hear repeated his song of yesterday, which we find it necessary, on account of what immediately follows, to insert once more:

“From the mountain heights descending,
Down the slopes, the vale along,
Hark! a wing-like flutter, blending
With a movement as of song.
And on unrestricted roving
Joy attends and prudent heed:
Let thy striving be with loving,
Let thy life consist in deed”

Hardly had this duet, accompanied by a chorus of agreeable strength, approached its end, when two other singers impetuously rose opposite to each other, and with serious emphasis paraphrased rather than continued the song; and to the astonishment of the guest expressed themselves thus:

“For the ties are rent asunder,
Confidence is aye foreclosed,
Can I tell, or duly ponder
On the haps, to which exposed,
I must now my way be making,

Filled with all a widow's woe,
Leaving one, another taking,
Onward, onward still to go?"

The chorus striking into this strophe became more and more numerous, more and more powerful, and yet the voice of St. Christopher could soon be distinguished from the lower end of the table. The dirge swelled till at last it was almost terrible; a weird mood, by dint of skill on the part of the singers, introduced something fugue-like into the whole, so that our friend felt as if he should shudder. They all really seemed as if they were completely of one mind, and were lamenting their own destiny just before their separation. The strangest repetitions, the frequent revival of an almost expiring song, seemed at last dangerous to the band itself. Lenardo stood up, and all, breaking off the hymn, immediately sat down.

He began, with kindly words: "In truth I cannot blame you for making ever present to yourselves the fate that confronts us all, so that you may be prepared for it at any hour. Yet if men weary of life, and full of years, have cried to their brethren, 'Think of dying!'^{*} so ought we, we younger men full of life, to be ever encouraging each other, and admonish ourselves with the cheering words 'Think of wandering!' But it were well, withal, to mention with caution and cheerfulness, whatever we either undertake voluntarily, or think that we are constrained to do. You know best what amongst us is fixed, and what is movable; allow us to enjoy this too in glad encouraging strains, to which for this time let this parting glass be drunk!"

Thereupon he emptied his goblet and sat down: the four singers thereupon stood up, and began in flowing self-connecting tones—

"Stay not fettered in inaction,
Venture briskly, briskly roam!
Head and arm, in glad connection,
Everywhere will be at home.
Where beneath the sun we revel
Care with us will ne'er abide;
Space there is for all to travel,
Therefore is the world so wide."

On the repetition of the chorus Lenardo stood up, and all the rest with him; a signal from him set the whole table in motion in time with the singing: those at the lower end, headed by St. Christopher, marched out of the hall in pairs, and the harmonious wanderers' song grew more and more joyous and free: but it sounded especially well when the party, assembled in the terraced castle-garden, looked over the spacious valley in the luxuriance and beauty of which one might well have wished to lose one's self. Whilst they were dispersing themselves on this side or that at their pleasure, Wilhelm was made acquainted with the third superior. He was the bailiff, who, in addition to many other advantages, had been able to procure for this society, as long as they found it convenient to stay here, the use of the count's castle, which lay amidst several noblemen's manors: but on the other hand, being a clever man, had managed to turn the presence of such unwonted guests to good account. For whilst for a

moderate payment he opened his nurseries, and was able to provide aught else that was helpful for support of life or in time of need, he took the same opportunity of having long-neglected roofs changed, rafters replaced, walls propped, planks set straight, and other defects repaired, to such a degree, that a property belonging to an expiring family, long neglected and falling into decay, preserved the cheerful aspect of a dwelling used for living in, and bore witness that life creates life, and that he who is useful to others, also puts them under the necessity of being of use to him.

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CHAPTER II.

Hersilia To Wilhelm.

“My situation appears to me like a tragedy by Alfieri; when the confidants altogether fail it must all, at last, be carried on in monologue. And in truth a correspondence with you is exactly like a monologue: for as a matter of fact your answers merely superficially take up our syllables for the purpose of causing them to die gradually away. Have you in only a single instance made any reply to which one could say anything in return? Your letters are all parrying and evasion; when I stand up to go and meet you, you motion me back again to my seat.

“The above was written some days ago: a fresh necessity and occasion now occurs for conveying these present to Lenardo: there they find you, or it is known where you are to be found. But wherever they may reach you my remarks come to this, that if, on reading this letter, you do not immediately jump up from your seat, and like a pious Wanderer do not speedily present yourself before me, I declare you to be the most manlike of all men: that is to say, one in whom the most lovable of all the characteristics of our sex is totally wanting: whereby I signify curiosity, which at this very moment most unmistakably torments me.

“In short, the little key of your ornamental casket has been found; but this no one but you and I must know. How it has come into my hands learn now.

“A few days ago our agent receives a despatch from a foreign authority, in which the inquiry is made whether at such and such a time in this neighborhood a boy has not been stopping, who was expert in all sorts of tricks, and who at last forfeited his jacket in some audacious enterprise. According to the description of this rascal, no doubt remains that it is that Fitz of whom Felix had so much to tell, and whom he so often wished to have for a playfellow again.



“Now this note made a request for the aforesaid garment, if it were still in existence, because the boy on being subjected to examination had appealed to it. Our agent accordingly takes an opportunity of mentioning this presumption, and submits the little jacket to us before he sends it away.

“A good or evil spirit impels me to feel in the breast-pocket; a tiny little angular something comes into my hand: I, who am in general so apprehensive, nervous and timid, shut my hand, keep it, say nothing, and the coat is sent away. The strangest of all sensations immediately seizes me. At the first stolen peep I see, I guess that it is

the key to your casket. Now came strange conscientious doubts; all sorts of scruples arose within me. To make the discovery public, to surrender it, was impossible for me. Of what interest was it to those magistrates, when it might be so useful to our friend? Then many considerations of right and duty again arose, which, however, could not convince me.

“So you see now in what a situation friendship involves me. A famous faculty suddenly develops itself for your sake: what a wonderful occurrence. May it be nothing more than friendship that holds the balance for my conscience to such purpose. What between guilt and curiosity I am marvellously discomposed. I fancy a hundred whims and stories which may follow on it. Law and justice are not to be trifled with. Hersilia the careless and occasionally domineering creature involved in a criminal prosecution! for that is what it may come to. And what else can I do but think of the friend, for whose sake I endure all this? I have thought of you on other accounts, too, but at intervals; but now it is without ceasing. Now when my heart throbs, and I think of the eighth commandment, I must turn to you as to the saint who has occasioned the trespass, and can presumably also absolve me again. And so only the opening of the casket will pacify me. My curiosity is doubly strong. Come as soon as you can, and bring the casket with you! To what judgment-seat the secret properly belongs, we will make out between us. Till then it remains between us. Let no one know of it, be it who it will!

“There! But, my friend, now to conclude, what do you say to this picture of the puzzle? Does it not remind one of an arrow with barbs? God be gracious to us! But the casket must first stand unopened between me and you; and then when opened, enjoin the rest itself. I should be glad if nothing at all were found inside: and what else and all do I not wish; and what else could I not tell you?—yet let this be withheld from you, so that you may the more quickly get on your way.



“And now, girl-like enough, one more postscript! What, in point of fact, have I and you to do with the casket? It belongs to Felix; he found it, and intrusted it to me: we must fetch him here: out of his presence, we ought not to open it.

“And what conditions are these again! The matter shifts and shifts itself again.

“Why are you roaming about so in the world? Come here; bring with you the dear boy. I should like to see him once more.

“And so there they go again,—father and son. Do what you can, but come both of you!”

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CHAPTER III.

The preceding extraordinary letter had been written, in truth, long before, and carried to and fro, until now at last it could be delivered in accordance with its address. Wilhelm decided to answer in a friendly manner—but declining—by the first messenger, who was about to depart. Hersilia seemed not to take the distance into account, and he was at present too seriously occupied for even the slightest curiosity as to what might be found in the casket to be able to attract him.

Certain mishaps too which had befallen the boldest members of this brave company, gave him an opportunity of showing himself a master in the art that he had adopted. And as one word suggests another, so still more happily does one deed follow on another, and if finally occasion is again given thereby for words, they are so much the more fruitful and elevating to the mind. Their conversations were therefore as instructive as they were enjoyable, for the friends reciprocally rendered account of the progress of their learning and doing hitherto; whence had ensued such an amount of culture, to their mutual astonishment, that between themselves they must needs learn to know each other anew.

One evening then Wilhelm began his story:—"I forthwith essayed to pursue my surgical studies at a large institution in the largest town, in which alone they are possible: to anatomy, as the fundamental study, I at once applied myself with zeal.

"By a peculiar method which no one would guess, I had already made good progress in knowledge of the human frame: and this was during my theatrical career. When all is properly looked to, the physical man after all plays the principal part there—a fine man, a fine woman! If the manager is lucky enough to have got hold of these, comedy and tragedy writers are assured. The freer footing upon which such society lives makes their associates more familiar with the peculiar beauty of the uncovered limbs than any other relationship: different costumes even oblige them to make visible what otherwise is generally concealed. On this point I might have much to say, as also of physical defects which the sensible actor must recognize in himself or others, in order if not to correct, at least to hide them. In this way I was sufficiently prepared to give consistency to the anatomical course which taught me to know the outer parts more accurately, whilst the inner parts too were not strange to me, inasmuch as a certain preconception of them had always been present to me. A disagreeable hindrance to this study was the continually repeated complaint of the want of subjects, of the inadequate number of dead bodies which we desired, for such high ends, to subject to the knife. To provide these, if not adequately, at any rate in as large a number as possible, strict laws had been promulgated: not only criminals, who in every sense had forfeited their individual existence, but others too, neglected in body or mind, were laid claim to.

"In proportion to the need, the severity increased, and therewith the repugnance of the people who in a moral and religious sense cannot give up their personality, nor that of persons beloved by them. But the evil increased more and more, whilst a distracting

anxiety arose that there was occasion to fear for the peaceful graves of beloved ones departed. No age, no rank,—neither high nor low,—was any longer secure in its resting-place; the mound which had been decked with flowers, the inscriptions with which they had sought to preserve a memory,—nothing could give protection from the profitable depredation; the painfulest separation seemed disturbed in the most horrible way, and even whilst one turned away from the grave a fear was felt lest the decently clad and composed limbs of the beloved ones should be known to have been severed, misplaced and dishonored.

“But all this was repeatedly talked of, and discussed over and over again without anyone having thought about a remedy, or having been able to think of one; and the complaints became continually more universal when young men who had listened to the course of lectures with attention were desirous of convincing themselves also with hand and eye of what they had hitherto seen and heard, and of transferring such necessary knowledge more deeply and vividly to the imagination. At such times there arises a sort of unnatural scientific famine, which awakens a craving after the most repulsive sort of satisfaction, as if it were the most pleasant and necessary.

“Such deferring and delaying had for some time occupied and interested those who were keen for knowledge and action, when at last one morning an occurrence, over which the whole town was set astir, for some hours passionately evoked all the *pros* and *cons*. An exceedingly beautiful girl, distracted by an unhappy love, had sought and found her death in the water. The anatomical school got possession of her: all in vain were the efforts of the parents, the relatives, nay, of the lover himself, who had been the object of only a false suspicion: the higher authorities, who had just made the law more stringent, could assent to no exception, and they even hastened to avail themselves of the prize as quickly as possible, and to distribute it for use.”

Wilhelm,* who as the first candidate was summoned forthwith, found in front of the seat indicated to him, up on a plain board neatly covered, a critical task; for when he took off the covering, there lay exposed to view the most beautiful female arm that probably had ever wound itself round a youth's neck. He held his instrument-case in his hand and did not trust himself to open it; he stood up, not venturing to sit down. Repugnance to still further deforming this glorious product of nature contended with the demand which the eager man of science had to make upon himself, and which all who sat around him took care to satisfy.



At this moment there came up to him a man of good appearance, whom he had noticed—though but seldom—yet always as a very attentive listener and observer, and about whom he had already inquired. No one however had been able to give more exact information: that he was a sculptor, all were agreed, but he was also held to be

an alchemist, who lived in a large old house, the first floor of which was alone accessible to visitors or to those who were employed by him, whilst all the other rooms were shut up. This man had at various times approached Wilhelm, and had gone away from lecture with him, but yet he seemed to shun any further connection or explanation.

On this occasion, however, he spoke with a certain frankness: "I see that you hesitate, you are amazed at the beautiful form, and are unable to destroy it: put yourself above professional feeling, and follow me." Thereupon he covered up the arm again, made a sign to the servitor, and the two left the place. They walked side by side in silence, until the half-known one stopped before a large gateway, the wicket of which he opened, and obliged our friend to enter. There he found himself upon a stage, large and spacious, such as we see in old business-houses where the cases and bales arriving are at once shipped away. Here were standing plaster-casts of statues and busts, as well as boarded receptacles, packed and empty.

"It looks business-like here," said the man; "the means of carriage by water possible from here are invaluable to me."

Now, all this agreed quite well with the trade of a sculptor; nor could Wilhelm think otherwise when the friendly host took him up a few steps into a large room adorned round about with plaques in high and low relief, with large and small figures, with busts and separate members of the most lovely figures. Our friend regarded all this with pleasure, and gladly listened to his host's instructive words, although he must needs be conscious of a wide gulf between these artistic labors and the scientific aspirations from which they had come away.

At last the owner of the house said with some seriousness: "My reason for bringing you here, you will soon see. This door," he continued, as he turned towards one side, "is nearer to the door of the hall from which we have come than you may think." Wilhelm entered, and in truth had occasion for surprise, when, instead of seeing as before the imitation of living forms, he here found the walls covered throughout with anatomical dissections, made it might be of wax or of some other material; enough, they had throughout the fresh-colored appearance of preparations that had just been made.

"Here, my friend," said the artist, "here you see the inestimable substitutes for those subjects which we, with the disapprobation of the world, at unseasonable moments, with disgust and with great anxiety prepare for destruction or for a repulsive preservation. I am obliged to carry on this business in the greatest secrecy; for you must before now have heard men of the faculty speak of it with depreciation. I do not let myself be put out, and I am preparing something which in the long run will assuredly have great effect. The surgeon especially, if he elevates himself to the plastic idea, will certainly be able in every case of injury to come to the aid of nature, ever reconstructing with the best effect; even the physician would be elevated in his functions by such a conception. Yet let us not waste many words! You shall learn, in brief, that building-up teaches more than pulling in pieces, joining together more than separating, animating what is dead more than killing over again what is killed: in

short, then, will you be my pupil?" And on his assenting, the expert laid the skeleton of a woman's arm in front of his guest in the same position in which they had seen one before them a short time before.

"I have had occasion to notice," continued the master, "how you have given thorough attention to the subject of the ligaments, and very properly, for with them the lifeless heap of bones first begins to live again for us. Ezekiel had first to see his field of bones join and unite themselves in this fashion before the limbs could move, the arms feel about and the feet stand up. Here is pliable material, small rods, and aught else that may be required; now try your luck!"

The new pupil collected his thoughts, and when he began to examine the portions of bone more closely, he saw that they were carved artificially from wood.

"I have," remarked the teacher, "an expert man, whose art was going in quest of bread, when the saints and martyrs whom he had been accustomed to carve no longer found a sale. I therefore induced him to master the art of skeleton-making, and to practise in life-size and on a smaller scale after nature."

Our friend now did his best, and earned the approbation of his adviser. It was a pleasure to him to test how strong or weak his recollection was, and he found to his satisfaction and astonishment that it was called up again by action. He conceived a passion for this work, and begged of the master to be admitted into his house. Here he worked incessantly; and the bones, large and small, of the arm, were very quickly united. But from here were to proceed the sinews and muscles, and it seemed a complete impossibility to readjust in this way the whole body similarly in all its parts. But on this point the teacher consoled him by showing him the process of multiplication by casting, since otherwise the imitation, and the perfection of the models, required a fresh effort again and fresh attention.

Everything to which man applies himself in earnest is a constant toil; it is only by emulous industry that he contrives to make head against it. Wilhelm too soon got over the condition of feeling his inability, which is always a kind of despair, and felt himself at home in the work.

"I am glad," said the master, "that you are able to adapt yourself to this mode of proceeding, and that you give me evidence of how fruitful such a method is, even if it is not recognized by the masters of the faculty. A school there must be, and this will chiefly occupy itself with tradition: what has taken place heretofore must continue to take place in the future: this is good, and must and shall be. But the point where the school stops short must be marked and understood; what is living must be grasped and made use of, but quietly, or otherwise one is hindered, and hinders others. You have felt in a living way, and show it practically. Joining is more than separating, imitation more than inspection."

Wilhelm now learned that such models were, privately, already widely distributed, but to his greatest astonishment he heard that the stock in hand was to be packed up to go abroad. This sterling artist had already established relations with Lothario and those

friends of his: the establishment of such a school in those self-developing provinces was considered to be especially fitting, nay, necessary in the highest degree, especially amongst naturally moral and right-thinking people, for whom actual dissection has always something cannibal-like.

“If you grant that the greater number of physicians and surgeons retain in their minds, and believe that they will get on with, only a general impression of the dissected human body, then such models will assuredly avail to revive in their minds the gradually vanishing forms, and to keep alive in them just what is necessary. Nay, if it comes to inclination for and love of the subject, the most delicate results of the science of dissection may be imitated. Pencil, brush and graver already accomplish this.”

Here he opened a side cupboard, and displayed to view the facial nerves, imitated in the most wonderful manner. “This, alas,” he said, “is the last achievement of a young assistant who died, who inspired me with the best hopes of carrying out my ideas, and usefully promoting my aims.”

A great deal was said between the two on the influence of this mode of treatment in many directions: its relations, too, towards plastic art were the subject of noteworthy discussion. A strikingly beautiful example of how to work forwards and backwards in this way was supplied by this conversation. The master had cast, in a shapely mass, a beautiful torso of an antique youth, and was now skilfully trying to divest the ideal form of the epidermis, to change the beautiful shapes of life into a veritable preparation of muscular tissue.

“Here, too, means and end are too close together, and I am free to confess that for the sake of the means I have neglected the end, yet not altogether through my own fault. Properly speaking, man is man without covering: the sculptor stands directly at the side of the Elohim, when they changed the shapeless repulsive clay into the most glorious of forms: such divine thoughts must he cherish. To the pure all things are pure; why not the direct design of God in nature? But one cannot ask this from this age; fig-leaves and skins of beasts cannot be dispensed with, and this is still much too little. I had scarcely learned anything when worthy men in dressing-gowns and wide sleeves and innumerable folds were required of me. So I withdrew, and since I dared not apply what I knew to the expression of the beautiful, I chose to be useful; and this too is a matter of importance. If my wish is fulfilled, if it is recognized as practicable that, as in so many other things, imitating and the imitation assist imagination and memory in those cases where the human mind loses a certain freshness: then assuredly many a plastic artist will turn round as I have done, and rather join you in working than carry on a repulsive trade against conviction and feeling.”

And on this followed the observation that it was beautiful to observe how art and handicraft were always, as it were, in equilibrium, and so closely connected and always related to each other, that art cannot sink without passing into praiseworthy handiwork, nor handiwork elevate itself without becoming artistic.

These two persons adapted and accustomed themselves to each other so completely, that they parted with regret only when it was necessary to pursue their own several important aims.

“But that it may not be thought,” said the master, “that we shut ourselves out from nature, and propose to deny her, we are developing fresh views. Across the sea there, where certain humane theories are ever on the increase, it is at length found necessary, on the abolition of capital punishment, to build extensive castles, walled enclosures, to protect the peaceful citizen against crime, and to prevent crime from prevailing and doing its work with impunity. There, my friend, in these melancholy precincts, let us reserve a chapel for Æsculapius. There, isolated as the punishment itself, our knowledge of such subjects will be continually refreshed; for the dissection of them does not injure our human feeling, nor does the sight of them—as happened to you with that beautiful and innocent arm—stay the knife in the hand whilst all eagerness for knowledge is extinguished in the feeling of humanity.”

“This,” said Wilhelm, “was our last conversation. I saw the well-filled cases sail down the river, wishing them a prosperous journey, and ourselves a happy meeting at their unpacking.”

Our friend had ended this narrative as he had related it, with spirit and enthusiasm, and particularly with a certain vivacity of voice and speech that he had not been prone to of late. But when at the end of his tale he thought he noticed that Lenardo, preoccupied and absent, did not seem to follow his remarks, while on the other hand Friedrich had smiled, and sometimes almost shaken his head, such scanty sympathy with a matter that seemed to him so important so struck this sensitive scrutinizer of gestures that he could not refrain from taxing his friends with it.

Friedrich explained himself quite simply and straightforwardly: he could allow that the scheme was praiseworthy and good, but could by no means consider it so important; and least of all as practicable. This opinion he tried to support with reasons of a sort that always strike a person who is taken up with a subject, and counts, perhaps more than one may think, on carrying it through, as offensive; consequently then our plastic anatomist, after seeming to listen patiently for a time, answered with vivacity:

“You have advantages, my good Friedrich, which no one will deny—I least of any; but now you talk like ordinary people in an ordinary way. In what is new we see only the strangeness, but to discern at once in the strangeness what is important, needs something more. For you, everything must first come to pass in deed; it must happen in order to be possible; must come before the eyes to be real: and then you let it pass like anything else. What you bring forward I already hear beforehand as repeated by the initiated and by laymen; by the former from prejudice and indolence, by the latter from indifference. A scheme like the above-mentioned can, perhaps, only be carried out in a new world, where the mind must gather courage to seek out new remedies for an inevitable need, for of available ones there is a total absence. To that end is invention awakened, to that end intrepidity and steadfastness combine with necessity.

“Every medical man, whether he goes to work with medicines or with his hand, is nothing without the most precise knowledge of the outward and the inner members of man; and it by no means suffices to have acquired a transitory knowledge of this in schools, and to have got a superficial idea of the shape, position and connection of the innumerable portions of his inscrutable organism. Day by day, the physician who is in earnest ought to practise himself in the repetition of this knowledge, of this contemplation; to seek all opportunities constantly to renew to his mind and eye the interdependence of this living miracle. If he knew his own interest, he would, if he lacked time for such labors, take an anatomist into his pay, who under his instructions, quietly working for him in the presence as it were of all the intricacies of the most complicated life, would at once be able to answer the most difficult questions.

“The more one gets to see this, the more vividly, energetically and passionately will the study of dissection be pursued. But the means will diminish in just the same proportion; the subjects, the bodies on which such studies must be based, will fail, and become scarcer and dearer, and there will arise a veritable conflict between living and dead.

“In the old world it is all routine, where they will always want to treat the new after the old fashion, and what is growing in a method that is rigid. This conflict which I proclaim between the dead and living will be for life and death; there will be panic, there will be investigation, making of laws and nothing effected. Foresight and prohibition in such cases are of no avail—one must begin from the beginning. And this it is that my master and I in the new circumstances hope to achieve: nothing new indeed, for there it is already: but what is now art must become handicraft; what happens in special cases must become possible in general, and nothing can be diffused abroad that is not recognized. Our doing and achieving must be recognized as the only remedy in a definite crisis which especially threatens large towns. I will quote the words of my master, but pay attention! He said one day in the greatest confidence:

“ ‘The newspaper-reader finds the article interesting and almost amusing when he reads about ‘Resurrection-men.’* At first they stole the bodies in profound secrecy; watchers were placed to provide against this: they came in an armed band in order to gain possession of their prey by force. And the worst will ensue from what is bad: I dare not speak it aloud; or I should be implicated, not, it is true, as an accomplice, but still as one accidentally cognizant in an investigation of the greatest danger, in which in any case I must be punished for not having reported the crime to the authorities as soon as I had discovered it. I confess to you, my friend, that murder has been committed in this town in order to supply the importunate highly-paying anatomist with a subject. The soulless corpse lay before us—I dare not depict the scene: he detected the crime, but so did I: we looked at one another, and both were silent; we looked straight before us, said nothing, and went to work. And it is this, my friend, that has confined me between wax and plaster; this it is that assuredly will keep you, too, steadfast to the art that sooner or later will be prized above all others.’ ”

Friedrich sprang up, clapped his hands, and would not leave off shouting his applause, so that Wilhelm at last was angry in earnest.

“Bravo!” he cried; “now I recognize you again; it is the first time for a long while that you have spoken like one who really has something at heart, the first time that the flow of speech has again carried you away; you have shown yourself as one who is in a position to do something, and to estimate it properly.”

Lenardo hereupon struck in, and adjusted this little misunderstanding completely.

“I seemed to be absent,” he said, “but only because I was more than present; that is to say, I was thinking of the large museum of this sort that I had seen on my travels, and which interested me to such a degree that the custodian, who, in order to get done according to custom, began to offer his mechanically learned jabber, very soon—for he himself was the artificer—forgot his part, and proved himself to be a highly-informed demonstrator.

“The extraordinary contrast, to see before one in the height of summer, in cool rooms with sultry heat outside, the same objects which one scarcely trusts one's self to approach in the severest winter! Here everything conveniently served the craving for knowledge. With the greatest composure, and in the fairest order, he showed me the marvels of the human frame, and was glad to be able to convince me that for the first commencement, and for after assistance to memory, an institution of this sort was fully sufficient; while it remained free to everyone to have recourse to nature during the middle period, and at convenient opportunities to educate himself in this or that special department. He begged me to recommend him, for he had made a similar collection for only one large foreign museum, but the universities were thoroughly opposed to the scheme, because the masters of the science were able to educate proficients in dissection well enough, but not teachers of the constructive method.

“After this I regarded this able man as the only one in the world, and now we hear that there is another occupied in the same way: who can tell whereabouts even a third and a fourth may come to light? We wish on our part to give an impulse to this subject. The recommendation must come from without, and in our new relations this useful enterprise must certainly be furthered.”

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CHAPTER IV.

The next morning Friedrich came betimes into Wilhelm's room, with a pamphlet in his hand, and handing it to him he said, "Yesterday evening, what with all your virtues—which you were circumstantial enough in recounting—I had no opportunity of speaking of myself and my good qualities, of which I have good enough cause to boast, and which stamp me as a worthy member of this neat caravan. Look here at this book, and you will recognize a masterpiece."

Wilhelm ran over the sheets with hasty glances, and saw written, in an agreeably legible though hurried style, the yesterday's narrative of his anatomical studies, almost word for word as he had given it, so that he could not conceal his astonishment.

"You know," replied Friedrich, "the fundamental law of our association: each must be perfect in some one department or other, if he wish to claim membership. Well, I cudgelled my brains as to how I could manage this, and could not hit upon anything, though I knew well enough that no one surpassed me in memory, nor in a swift, easy and legible handwriting. You will recollect these agreeable accomplishments from the days of our theatrical career, when we shot away our powder upon sparrows, without reflecting that a shot prudently utilized would perhaps procure a hare for the kitchen. How often have I prompted without a book, how often have I, after a few hours, written out my part from memory! It was a matter of course to you at that time: you thought it must needs be so: so did I, and it never occurred to me how much it might avail me. The abbé made the discovery first: he found that it brought grist to his mill: he tried exercising me, and I was glad to do what was so easy for me, and gave pleasure to an earnest man. And now *I*, when there is need, am a whole office in myself; besides we thus carry with us a two-legged calculating machine, and no prince, however numerous his officials, is better provided than our superiors."

A lively discussion about occupations of this sort led their minds to other members of the society.

"Would you have thought," said Friedrich, "that the most useless creature in the world, as it seemed, my Philina, would become the most useful member of the long chain? Give her a bit of cloth; set men, set women before her: without taking a measurement she cuts out for the whole lot, and contrives to use up all the patches and gores in such a way, that a great saving is the result—and all without any paper-pattern. A happy inspired glance informs her of everything; she looks at the man, and cuts; he may go where he likes; she cuts away, and makes him a coat that seems to be moulded upon his body. Yet this would not be possible if she had not got a seamstress to aid her, Montan's Lydia, who has at last become quiet, and remains quiet, but sews too like no one else, stitch after stitch just like pearls, like embroidery. That is what people may come to! In point of fact a great deal that is useless hangs about us from habit, liking, carelessness, or wilfulness—a bundled-up cloak of rags. What nature has

intended us for, the best of what she has stored within us, we consequently can neither discover nor make use of."

General reflections on the advantages of the social club which had so fortunately found itself assembled together, gave an opening for the fairest expectations.

When Lenardo, presently, joined them, he was requested by Wilhelm to speak of himself too: of the life he had hitherto led, and kindly to give them information on the way in which he had helped on himself and others.

"You no doubt remember, my good friend," replied Lenardo, "in what an extraordinarily excited condition you found me at the first moment of our new acquaintanceship. I was sunk, absorbed in the most wonderful desire, in an irresistible longing: the question then could only be of the ensuing hour, of the deep suffering that was awaiting me, which I showed myself so active in making keener. I could not make known to you the earlier circumstances of my youth, as I now must do in order to take you along the way which has brought me hither.



"Amongst the earliest of my capacities which were gradually developed by surrounding circumstances, a certain impulse towards technical knowledge became prominent, which was every day fed by the impatience that one feels in the country, when in large buildings, but particularly in small alterations, plans and whims, one is obliged to forego one sort of work for another, and chooses rather to fall-to at once in a clumsy bungling manner than be delayed for the sake of skilful work. By good luck, there was roving up and down in our neighborhood a 'jack-of-all-trades,' who, as he found that I suited his purpose, preferred to help me rather than any of the neighbors: he set me up a turning-lathe, which at every visit he managed to use more for his own benefit than for my instruction. In the same way, too, I procured carpenter's tools, and my liking for such things was increased and enlivened by the conviction, at that time loudly expressed, that no one should venture out into life unless, in case of need, he was qualified to earn his living by a trade. My zeal was approved of by my instructors in accordance with their own principles. I can scarcely recollect that I ever played, for all my leisure hours were employed in doing or making something. Yes, I may boast that even when still a boy I advanced a clever smith, through my representations, to be lock-maker, file-cutter, and watchmaker.

"To accomplish all this, tools, indeed, must first be procured, and we suffered to no small degree from the disease of those practitioners who transpose the means to the end, and rather spend time in preparations and plans than apply themselves right seriously to carrying them out. Where, however, we showed ourselves practically industrious was in forwarding the laying-out of parks, with which no landowner could

now dispense. Numerous summer-houses of moss and bark, rustic bridges and benches, testified to the activity with which we indefatigably occupied ourselves in exemplifying a primitive architecture in all its rudeness, in the midst of the civilized world.

“This impulse led me, with increasing years, to take more serious interest in all that is so useful, and in its present condition so indispensable to the world, and gave a peculiar interest to my tour of several years' length.

“But since man is commonly wont to wander on along the road which has brought him so far, I was less favorably disposed towards machinery than to direct handwork, in which we practise strength and feeling in combination; on this account I was glad to confine myself especially to those narrow circles in which, according to circumstances, this or that work had its natural sphere. A condition of this sort gives to every association a special individuality, and to every family, or to a small community consisting of several families, the most definite character: one lives in the purest feeling of a living whole.

“At the same time I had accustomed myself to note down everything, to set it forth in figures, and thus, not without a view to future use, to employ my time profitably and pleasantly.

“This natural taste, this talent, improved by cultivation, I used to the best advantage in the important task which the society had imposed upon me—of investigating the condition of the mountain-people, and enlisting in our ranks such as were available and adapted for travel. Would you like to employ this beautiful evening, in which manifold matters of business press upon me, in the perusal of a part of my diary? I will not affirm that it is exactly agreeable reading; to me it has always seemed amusing, and to a certain degree instructive. Still, we always reflect ourselves in everything that we produce.”

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CHAPTER V.

Lenardo'S Diary.

“Monday, 15th September.

“Late at night, after a difficult ascent halfway up the mountain, I had lighted upon a decent inn, and at daybreak was awakened, to my great annoyance, from a refreshing sleep by a ceaseless tinkling and ringing of bells. A long train of packhorses passed by, before I had been able to dress and to hurry on in front of them. I now found, too, as I followed my path, how disagreeable and annoying such society is—the monotonous ringing deafens one's ears. The packs, which extend on both sides far beyond the beasts (on this occasion they were carrying big bales of cotton), are pretty sure to graze the rocks on one side; and if the beast, to prevent this, draws off towards the other side, the load hangs over the precipice, and awakens anxiety and giddiness in the spectator, whilst—which is worst of all—he is in either case hindered from slipping past them, and going on in advance.

“At last I got alongside of them, upon an unoccupied rock, where St. Christopher, who had stoutly carried my luggage so far, greeted a man who was standing quietly and seemed to be passing the procession in review as it filed by. He was in reality their conductor; not only did a considerable number of the beasts of burden belong to him (he had hired the others with their drivers), but he was also the owner of a smaller proportion of the goods. For the most part, however, his business consisted in faithfully superintending for larger merchants the transport of theirs. In conversation I found out from him, that this was cotton that came from Macedonia and Cyprus by way of Trieste, and was brought from the mountain-foot to these heights upon mules and packhorses, and even farther to the other side of the mountain, where spinners and weavers innumerable throughout the vales and ravines were busy with the preliminaries of an extensive traffic with foreign countries in goods that were in request. The bales, for the sake of convenience of carriage, were some of one and a half, and some of three hundredweight, which latter made a full load for a beast. The man praised the quality of the cotton that came by this route, and compared it with that from the East and West Indies, particularly with that from Cayenne, as being the best known: he seemed very well informed in his business; and as it was not altogether strange to myself also, it gave us an agreeable and profitable subject of conversation. In the meantime the whole procession had gone on in front of us, and I looked with nothing but repugnance at the endless train of these laden creatures, on the rocky path that twined snakelike up the heights, behind whom we should have to creep on, and be baked between rocks under the advancing sun. Whilst I was grumbling about this to my porter, there came up with us a thick-set lively man, who appeared to be carrying on a tolerably large frame a proportionately easy burden. A greeting passed, and it very soon appeared from the lusty shaking of hands that St. Christopher and this new-comer were well acquainted: whereupon I speedily learned about him what follows.

“For the more remote tracts of the mountain-range, where it would be too far for every single workman to go to market, there is a sort of subordinate merchant or collector, who is called a *yarn-man*. He trudges, in fact, through all the valleys and nooks, visits house after house, takes cotton for the spinners in small quantities, takes in exchange or buys spun yarn, of whatever quality it may be, and hands it over with a certain profit in the lump to the manufacturers settled in the lower district.



“As the inconvenience of creeping along behind the mules was again mentioned, the man at once invited me to descend with him a side-valley that branched just at this spot from the principal valley so as to draw off the waters into another district. The decision was soon made, and when with some effort we had surmounted a somewhat steep mountainridge we saw before us the declivities on the other side, at first sight a most uninviting view. The rock was of a different sort, and assumed a slaty form; no vegetation enlivened the crag and boulders, and an abrupt descent seemed to be threatened: springs gushed from several points at once, and we passed a small tarn surrounded by rugged rocks. At last there appeared singly, and afterwards more closely together, pine trees, larches and birches; then, in between them, scattered rustic habitations, but certainly of the meanest sort, every one put together by the inmates themselves, with crossed balks of timber, with the great black slabs on the roof weighted with stones to prevent the wind carrying them away. In spite of this melancholy exterior aspect, the narrow space inside was still not uncomfortable; warm and dry and neatly kept, it suited well with the cheerful appearance of the inmates with whom one at once felt one's self at home in country fashion.

“The messenger was not unexpected; they had even been looking for him out of the little window, for it was his custom to come, if possible, on the same day of the week. He made his bargain for the yarn, and distributed fresh wool; then we quickly descended to where, a little way off, several more horses were standing near each other. We were no sooner seen than the inhabitants ran together to greet us. Children joined the throng, and were highly delighted with a sponge-cake or seed-biscuit. The pleasure everywhere was great, and was increased when it appeared that St. Christopher had a supply of these, and thus at once had the pleasure of earning the gratitude of all the children; all the more pleasant to him because, like his comrade, he knew very well how to get on with the little folk.

“The elders, on the other hand, were ready with all sorts of questions: everyone wanted to know something about the war, which happily was being waged at a considerable distance, and even if nearer would hardly have been dangerous for such districts. However, they rejoiced at the peace, although they were concerned about another danger that threatened, for it was not to be denied that machinery was continually on the increase in the country, and was little by little threatening the working hands with inactivity; still various grounds for consolation and hope suggested themselves.

“Our friend’s advice, in the meantime, was asked on many ordinary matters; nay, he must needs prove himself not only a family friend, but also a family doctor: magic-drops, salts, and ointments were things that he always carried with him.

“Entering the various houses, I found an opportunity of indulging my old hobby, and informing myself about the spinners’ art. I paid attention to the children, who busied themselves carefully and diligently in pulling the wool-flocks asunder, and taking out the seeds, the chips of the shells of the pods and other impurities; this they call *picking* it. I asked whether that was the task of the children only, but learned that in the winter evenings it was also done by the men and youths.

“Buxom spinsters then, as was but proper, attracted my attention. The preparing is done in this wise: the picked or cleansed cotton is equally distributed on the *cards*, which in Germany are called *krämpel*, and carded, so that the dust is got rid of, and the fibres of the cotton take one direction; then it is taken off, twisted into skeins, and so prepared for spinning on the wheel.

“I was then shown the difference between left-spun and right-spun yarn: the former is generally finer, which is effected by the thread which turns the spindle being confined round about the ring, as is shown in the accompanying drawing (which, like the rest, we have unfortunately not been able to give).

“The spinner sits facing the wheel, not too high. Several of them kept it steady with their feet one upon the other; others only with the right, putting the left behind. With the right hand she turns the wheel, and stretches out as far and as high as she can reach, whereby beautiful movements come into play, and a slim figure, by graceful turns of the body and the rounded fulness of the arms, shows itself to very great advantage: the position, especially in the last species of spinning, gives a very picturesque contrast, so that our finest ladies would have no need to fear a loss of real attractiveness and grace, if they would for once take to the spinning-wheel instead of the guitar.



LENARDO MEETING THE PACK-MULES.

“Amidst such surroundings new and peculiar sensations forced themselves upon me: the whirring wheels have a certain eloquence: the girls sing psalms, and also, though less often, other songs; siskins and goldfinches, suspended in cages, twitter amidst it all, and it would not be easy to find a picture of more active life than in a room where several spinners are at work.

“To the above described ‘wheel-yarn,’ however, the ‘paper-yarn’ is to be preferred. For this the best cotton, which has longer fibres than the rest, is used. When it has been picked clean, it is taken, instead of being carded, to combs, which consist of simple rows of long steel needles, and is combed. Then the longer and finer part of it is abstracted in the shape of bands (the technical word is a ‘cutting’) with a blunt knife, mixed up together, and done up in a paper cornet, which is then fastened to the distaff. From such a cornet it is spun with the spindle by hand; on which account it is called ‘spinning from the paper,’ and the resulting yarn is called ‘paper-yarn.’

“This occupation, which is only pursued by quiet thoughtful people, gives the spinner a gentler aspect than that at the wheel. If the latter shows off a tall slim figure to the greatest advantage, a quiet gentle form is very much favored by the latter. Of such diverse characters, occupied in divers tasks, I saw more than one in a room, and at last I could not rightly tell whether I must give my attention to the work or to the workers.

“But, at all events, I could not deny that the ladies of the mountain, excited by the unusual guests, showed themselves in a kindly and agreeable light. They were especially pleased that I made such particular inquiries about everything, noted what they told me, made drawings of their implements and simple mechanism, and hastily sketched their pretty limbs with gracefulness, as ought to be seen here annexed. Moreover, when evening came on, the finished work was displayed, the full spindles were laid aside in the little boxes made for the purpose, and the whole day's work was carefully taken away. By this time we had got better acquainted, yet the work sped on its course: they busied themselves now with the reel, and already much more freely exhibited, some the machine, some the method of manipulating, whilst I carefully wrote it down.

“The reel has a wheel and ratchet, so that by every turn a spring is worked, which runs down as often as a hundred revolutions have been made by the reel. The tale of one thousand revolutions is called a ‘schneller,’* according to the weight of which the varying fineness of the yarn is estimated.

“Of *right-spun* yarn there are twenty-five to thirty to the pound; if *left-spun*, sixty to eighty, perhaps even ninety. The revolution of the reel comes to about seven quarter-ells, or something more, and the slender industrious spinner declared that she spun four and even five *schnellers*, which would be five thousand revolutions, and therefore eight to nine thousand ells of yarn every day at the wheel; she offered to make a bet about it if we would stay one day longer.

“The quiet and modest paper-spinner, however, could not let the matter rest here, and assured us that she spun one hundred and twenty *schnellers* from the pound in a proportionate time. For paper-spinning is slower than spinning at the wheel, and at the

same time is better paid; perhaps double the amount is spun with the wheel. She had just completed the full number of revolutions at the reel, and showed me how the end of the thread is twisted round a couple of times and knotted. She took the *schneller* off, turned it round, so that it was wrapped within itself, drew one end of it through the other, and could thus display with innocent complacency the task of the practised spinner concluded.

“As there was now nothing further to be noted here, the mother stood up and said that, as the young gentleman wanted to see everything, she would now show him the dry-weaving. She explained to me, with the same good-nature, as she set herself down at the loom, how they only practised this sort, because in point of fact it was only good for coarse cottons, in which the weft was inserted dry, and was not woven very close: she then showed me dry goods of the kind; these are always smooth, without stripes or squares or any other rich pattern, and only from five to five and a half quarter-ells in breadth.

“The moon was shining in the heavens, and our yarn-man insisted on a further pilgrimage, since he must keep to his day and hour, and arrive punctually at every place. The paths were good and distinct, especially with such a nocturnal torch as this. We, on our side, cheered the parting with silk ribands and neckerchiefs, of which sort of articles St. Christopher carried with him a considerable package. The gift was handed to the mother, that she might distribute it amongst her family.

“*Tuesday, 16th, early morning.*

“Our walk through a splendidly clear night was full of beauty and enjoyment. We reached a somewhat large assemblage of chalets, which might perhaps have been called a village; at some distance from it, upon an open hill, stood a chapel, and the outlook began already to be more habitable and civilized. We passed by enclosures which gave indications not, it is true, of gardens, but still of scanty and carefully protected meadow growth.

“We had reached a place where, in addition to spinning, weaving was more seriously pursued. Our journey of yesterday, prolonged into the night, had exhausted our robust and youthful powers: the yarn-man climbed up into the hayloft, and I was on the point of following him, when St. Christopher commended his frame to me, and went up to the door. I understood his kindly intention, and let him have his way.

“The first thing, however, next morning, the family assembled together, and the children were strictly forbidden to go out of doors, since a terrible bear or some other monster must be haunting the neighborhood, for all through the night there had been such a growling and grumbling from the chapel, that rocks and houses over here might well have been shaken, and they advised us to be well on our guard in our further travels to-day. We tried to reassure the good people as much as possible, which, however, in this solitary waste seemed difficult to do.

“The yarn-man now declared that he would finish his business as quickly as possible, and then come and fetch us away; for we should have to-day a long and difficult road

before us, as we should not only continue to clamber down the valley, but would have a troublesome climb across a spur of the mountain that barred our way. I therefore determined to employ the time as well as possible, and get myself introduced by our good entertainers of yesterday into the preliminaries of weaving.

“They were both elderly people, who had yet been blessed in their latter days with two or three children; one very soon became aware, in their surroundings, conduct, and speech, of religious feeling and superstitious ideas. I came just at the beginning of such a piece of work, the transition from spinning to weaving, and as I found no occasion for further discursiveness, I had the process, as it was just then in operation, dictated forthwith into my note-book.

“The first task, of sizing the yarn, had been done yesterday. It is boiled in a thin solution of size, consisting of starch and a little carpenter's glue, whereby the thread acquires more toughness. The skeins of yarn were dry by early morning, and they made ready to ‘spool’—that is to say, to wind the yarn with the wheel upon reed-bobbins. The old grandfather, sitting at the stove, performed this easy task; a grandchild stood by him, and seemed eager to turn the bobbin-wheel himself. In the meanwhile the father stuck the spools for the warp upon a frame divided by cross staves, so that they moved freely about strong wires standing vertically, and let the thread run off. They are arranged in the proper order with coarser and finer yarn, as the pattern, or rather the stripes in the web require. An appliance—the ‘brittli,’ shaped almost like a sistrum,* has holes on both sides, through which the threads are drawn; this is held in the right hand of the warper; with the left he grasps the threads all together, and lays them, walking backwards and forwards, upon the warping-frame. From the top to the bottom, and from the bottom to the top, is called a course, and so many courses are made according to the thickness and breadth of the cloth. The length amounts to either sixty-four or thirty-two ells. At the beginning of each course one or two threads are always laid above, with the fingers of the left hand, and the same number below; and this is called the *lease*. Then the crossed threads are laid over the two nails that are put on the top of the warp-frame. This is done so that the weaver can receive the threads in properly even order. As soon as the warp is ready, the leases are tied below, and thereby every course is kept separate, so that there can be no confusion. Then, on the last course, marks are made with dissolved verdigris, so that the weaver may get the proper measure again; finally, it is taken off, and the whole rolled up in the form of a large coil, which is called the warp.



“*Wednesday, 17th.*

“We had set out early before daybreak, and had enjoyed the glorious light of a belated moon. The dawning day, the rising sun, allowed us to see a better populated and

cultivated country. While higher up, when crossing streams, we had met with stepping-stones or sometimes a narrow plank, provided only on one side with a rail, here were already stone bridges thrown across the ever widening waters: the attractive would little by little ally itself with the savage, and an enjoyable impression was experienced by all the travellers.

“Hither over the mountain from another river-region came trudging a tall black-haired man, who cried when still at a distance, as one who has good eyes and a powerful voice, ‘God greet you, gossip yarn-man!’

“The latter allowed him to get nearer, then he too exclaimed with astonishment, ‘God bless me, gossip loom-fitter! * where in the world do you come from? What an unexpected meeting!’

“The other answered, as he came up, ‘For the last two months I have been tramping about the mountain mending their gear for all good folk, and setting their benches to rights so that they can work away again untroubled for a long time.’

“Thereupon the yarn-man, turning to me, said, ‘As you, young gentleman, show so much pleasure and liking for the craft, and interest yourself in it so anxiously, this man comes at the very time, whilst I have been silently wishing for your sake that he were here during the last few days: he would have explained everything better for you than the girls, with all their good-will: he is master of his trade, and all that belongs to spinning, weaving and the like; he understands perfectly how to contrive, apply, preserve and repair, as need demands and anybody may just happen to want.’

“I addressed myself to him, and found him a very sensible man, in a certain sense educated, and perfectly at home in his business; whilst I repeated him something of what I had learned in these few days, and asked him to clear up some doubts. I also told him what I had seen of the first processes of weaving yesterday.

“He joyously exclaimed in reply, ‘That is a good wish indeed! then I have come just in the nick of time to give such a worthy kind gentleman the needful information about the most ancient and glorious art that, in point of fact, distinguishes the man from the brute. We have this very day arrived amongst worthy and clever people, and call me no loom-fitter if you don’t presently understand the craft as well as I do myself.’

“I returned him friendly thanks, the conversation was continued on all sorts of topics, and after a short halt and breakfast, we reached a group of houses which, whilst certainly somewhat irregular, were at all events better built. He showed us up to the best of them; and the yarn-man, as we arranged, went in first with me and St. Christopher. Then, after the first greetings and some joking, the loom-fitter followed, and it was astonishing what a joyful surprise his entrance created in the family. Father, mother, daughters and children gathered round him: the shuttle stopped in the hand of a finely grown girl sitting at the loom, as it was on the point of travelling through the warp: at the same moment she stayed the treadle, stood up, and presently came, with slow embarrassment, to give him her hand.

“Both of them, the yarn-man as well as the loom-fitter, soon put themselves, with jokes and tales, on the old footing due to family friends; and after spending some time in refreshing themselves, the excellent fellow turned to me and said, ‘We must not neglect you, dear sir, amidst these rejoicings at meeting again; we could go on gossiping with one another for days: you must be off to-morrow. Let the gentleman see the mystery of our craft: sizing and warping he knows; we must show him the rest. The young ladies there will help, I dare say. At this stool, I see, you are winding on.’

“This was the work of the younger one, to whom we turned. The elder sat down again at her loom, and, with a quiet amiable demeanor, pursued her lively task.

“I now carefully watched the winding on. For this purpose the courses of the work are allowed to run in their order through a big comb, of just the same breadth as the yarn-beam on which the winding is to be done. This is provided with a groove in which lies a thin round rod, which is inserted through the end of the warp and made tight in the groove. A little boy or girl sits under the loom and holds the string of the warp tight, whilst the weaver turns the yarn-beam round powerfully with a lever, at the same time taking care that everything is lying in proper order. When it is all wound on, one round and two flat rods (*Schiene*) are pushed through the ‘lease’ so as to hold it; and now the *drawing* begins.

“Of the old web there is still about a quarter of an ell left on the second yarn-beam, and from this the threads run for a length of about three quarter-ells through the reed in the batten as well as through the leaves of the heddles. On to these the weaver now carefully twists the threads of the new warp, one on to another, and when he has done the whole of what is twisted on is drawn through in one, so that the new threads reach to the still empty front yarn-beam: the broken threads are knotted together, the weft is wound upon small reels so that they fit into the little shuttle, and the last preparation for the weaving, namely, the *dressing*, is made.

“Throughout the length of the loom the warp is damped through and through with a size made of glove leather, by aid of a brush dipped into it; then the before-mentioned rods which hold the leases are drawn back, all the threads are laid most exactly in order, and it is all fanned with a goosewing fastened to a stick until it is dry; and now the weaving can begin, to go on until it is again necessary to dress.

“The dressing and fanning are commonly left to young people who are familiarized with the weaving trade; but in the leisure of the winter evenings a brother, or a lover, performs this office for the comely weaver, or at the least they prepare the little reels of weft-yarn.

“Fine muslins are woven wet, that is to say, the thread of the weft-yarn is dipped in size, wound whilst still damp upon the little reels, and worked forthwith, by which means the web can be more evenly worked and looks cleaner.

“*Thursday, 18th.*

“In general I found something busy, indescribably animated, homely and peaceful in the whole condition of a weaving-room like this: several looms were in activity; spinning and spooling wheels were going; and at the stove sat the old people, with friends and neighbors who had looked in, engaged in confidential talk. Between whiles singing would perhaps be heard, generally Ambrosius Lobwasser's psalms in four parts; more seldom ordinary songs; then perhaps there breaks out a merry peal of laughter from the girls, when cousin Jacob has made a witty remark.

“A really smart and at the same time diligent weaver, if she has help, can, at most, in the course of a week finish a piece of not too fine muslin, thirty-two ells in length; but this is very unusual, and in some working households this is commonly the work of a fortnight.

“The beauty of the web depends upon the even action of the heddles, on the even motion of the batten, and also upon whether the weft is wet or dry. A perfectly equal and at the same time strong tension also contributes, to secure which the weaver of fine cotton cloths hangs a heavy stone on the pin of the front beam. If the web during the work is strongly strained (the technical word is *dämmen*) it is perceptibly lengthened—in thirty-two ells by three-quarters of an ell, and in sixty-four by about one and a half. This overplus belongs to the weaver; she is paid extra for it, or keeps it for neckerchiefs, aprons, etc.

“On the brightest, tenderest of moonlit nights, such as prevail only in the high mountain regions, sat the family with their guest, at the house door, in the most animated talk, Lenardo deep in thought. Amidst all the life and employment, and so much thought devoted to manufacturing processes, his friend Wilhelm's letter written to reassure him again came to his recollection. The words that he had read so often, the lines he had several times conned, again presented themselves to his inner sense. And as a favorite tune suddenly becomes, before we are aware of it, gently present to our deeper sense of hearing, so did that tender missive repeat itself in the quiet and self-absorbed soul.

“ ‘A domestic condition grounded in piety, inspired and maintained by industry and order, not too narrow, not too wide, but in the happiest proportion to her capacities and powers. Around her is busy a circle of handworkers, in the purest, most primitive sense; here reign limitation, and far-reaching effect, caution and moderation, innocence and activity.’

“But on this occasion reminiscence was more exacting than soothing. ‘And yet,’ said he to himself, ‘this general laconic description accords completely with the circumstances that surround me here. Is there not here peace, piety, and unintermittent activity? It is only the far-reaching effect that fails to seem equally obvious to me. May it be that the good creature animates a like circle, but a wider and a better one. May she find herself as happily situate as these—perhaps still more happily—and look round about her with more joy and freedom.’

“But now, aroused by a lively and increasing flow of talk on the part of the others, and paying more heed to what was passing, an idea which he had been cherishing all

this time became perfectly vivid to him. 'Might not this selfsame man, this man who deals with tools and apparatus in so masterly a manner, be able to make the most useful of members for our society?' He pondered on this and everything—how the advantages of this expert workman had already powerfully struck him. He therefore turned the conversation in that direction; and as if in jest, it is true, but for that reason all the more unconstrainedly, he made the proposal whether he would not join an association of some importance, and make a trial of emigrating over the sea.

“The other excused himself, declaring, with equal good-humor, that he was getting on very well here, and expected to do better too; that he was born in this part of the country, accustomed to it, known far and wide and received with confidence everywhere. In general there would be found no liking for emigration in these valleys; they had no want to trouble them, and a mountain country has a firm hold on its people.

“ ‘For that reason,’ said the yarn-man, ‘I am surprised to hear it said that Frau Susanna is going to marry the manager, sell her property, and go with a fair sum of money over the sea.’

“On inquiry, our friend found that this was a young widow who was in easy circumstances and carried on a lucrative trade in the products of the mountain-side; of which the travelling tourist could satisfy himself the first thing on the morrow, for they would come across her in good time on the road they were following.

“ ‘I have already heard her mentioned in various ways,’ replied Lenardo, ‘as exercising activity and benevolence in this valley, and have been intending to inquire about her.’

“ ‘But let us retire to rest,’ said the yarnman, ‘so as to avail ourselves of the approaching day, which promises to be a merry one, betimes.’ ”

Here the manuscript ended, and when Wilhelm asked for the continuation, he was told that it was not at present in the friends' hands. It had been sent, they said, to Makaria, who by aid of wit and good-will was to smooth over certain difficulties which were referred to in it and solve various unpropitious complications. Our friend had to make the best of this interruption, and make up his mind to be satisfied with a social evening spent in lively conversation.

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CHAPTER VI.

When evening came, and the friends were sitting in an arbor from which there was a wide prospect all round, there appeared on the threshold a notable figure, whom our friend recognized at once as the barber of the morning before.



To a deep and silent obeisance on the man's part, Lenardo replied, "You come, as ever, very opportunely, and you will not delay to gratify us with your gift.

"I may perhaps tell you," he went on, turning to Wilhelm, "something about the association of which I may boast myself to be the Bond. No one enters our circle but he who has given evidence of certain talents which would contribute to the profit or pleasure of every society. This man is a thorough surgeon, who, in precarious cases, in which decision and physical strength are requisite, is ready to assist his master cleverly. To what he achieves as a beard-artist you can yourself bear witness in his favor; on this account he is equally necessary and welcome to us. But as this occupation commonly brings with it a great and often burdensome loquacity, he has, for the sake of his own culture, let himself be placed under a condition: as indeed everyone who wishes to live amongst us must restrain himself on one particular side, though greater freedom is accorded to him on another. This man accordingly has renounced the use of speech in so far as anything commonplace or casual is expressed by it; but from this another kind of speaking-talent has developed itself in him, which produces its effect designedly, cleverly and pleasantly: namely, the gift of narration.

"His life is rich in strange experiences, which at one time he used to splinter up by chattering in undue season, but which now, constrained by silence, he repeats and arranges in the quiet of his mind. With this, too, is associated the power of imagination adding life and movement to the occurrence. He knows how to tell real legends and legendary histories with peculiar art and address, by the help of which he often delights us at suitable times when his tongue is loosened by me. This then I do at the present moment; and, at the same time, give him credit for having, during the considerable time that I have known him, not once repeated himself. I hope now that, for love and honor of our dear guest, he will specially distinguish himself on this occasion too."

A merry look, full of intelligence, overspread Redcloak's face, and without delay he began to speak as follows.

The New Melusina.

HONORED SIR: As I am aware that you do not particularly care for preliminary speeches and introductions, I will assure you without more ado that this time I hope to acquit myself exceedingly well. Without doubt many true stories have already gone forth from me to the high satisfaction of all; but to-day, I dare maintain, that I have one to tell which far surpasses all that have gone before, and which, though it happened to me several years ago, still disquiets me whenever I recollect it, nay, even still makes me hope for an explanation in the end. You would have difficulty in finding the like of it.

First I must confess that I have not always ordered my plan of life so as to be quite sure of the time that was shortly coming on, even of the next day. In my youth I was not a good manager, and often found myself in divers perplexities. Once I undertook a journey which should have brought me in a good profit; but I cut my cloth a little too big, and after beginning it with extra-post, and then proceeding for a time by diligence, I at last found myself obliged to face the end of it on foot.

As a lively young fellow, I had always made a practice of looking about for the landlady, or even for the cook, as soon as I entered an inn, and, by expending a little flattery on them, my reckoning was generally diminished.

One evening, as I was entering the post-house of a small town, and was just going to set to work in this customary manner, a handsome two-seated carriage, with four horses, rattled up to the door close behind me. I turned round and saw a young lady all alone, without maid and without attendants. I at once hastened to open the door for her, and inquire whether I could do anything for her. As she got out a beautiful figure became evident, and her amiable face, when one looked at it more nearly, was adorned with a slight trace of sadness. I asked once more whether I could serve her in any way.

“Oh, yes,” she said, “if you will carefully lift out the little box that lies on the seat, and carry it up for me; but I beg you earnestly to carry it quite steadily, and not to swing or shake it in the least!”

I took up the box carefully, whilst she shut the carriage-door. We went up the stairs together, and she told the servants that she would stay here for the night.

We were now alone in the room. She bade me set the box upon the table that stood by the wall, and on noticing from some of her movements that she wished to be alone, I took my leave, and respectfully but warmly kissed her hand.

“Order supper for both of us,” she then said; and it may be imagined with what satisfaction I fulfilled this commission, whilst, in self-conceit, I scarcely threw a side-glance at the hostess and servants. I awaited with impatience the moment which was at last to take me again to her. It was served up, and we sat down opposite one another. For the first time for a long while I refreshed myself with a good meal, and at

the same time with a sight so enviable; nay, it seemed to me as if she became more beautiful every minute.

Her conversation was agreeable, yet she made a point of repudiating everything that related to regard or affection. The table was cleared. I lingered; I tried all sorts of artifices to get near her, but in vain; she kept me back with a certain dignity that I could not withstand. Nay, I was obliged, against my will, to leave her in rather good time.

After a night for the best part of which I lay awake or dreamed restlessly, I got up early. I inquired whether she had ordered horses; I was told "No," and walked into the garden. I saw her standing at the window dressed, and ran up to her. As she stepped towards me, as beautiful as, nay, more beautiful than yesterday, love, impudence and audacity were all at once set astir within me: I rushed towards her and clasped her in my arms. "Angelic, irresistible being," I exclaimed, "forgive me, but it is impossible —"

With incredible address she freed herself from my arms, and I was not able to imprint a single kiss upon her cheeks.

"Keep back such outbreaks of sudden, passionate affection, if you do not wish to forfeit a piece of good fortune that lies close to you, but which can only be grasped after certain trials."

"Demand what thou wilt, angelic spirit," I exclaimed, "but do not drive me to despair!"

She answered with a smile, "If you are willing to devote yourself to my service, hear the conditions. I have come to this place to visit a female friend, with whom I expect to pass a few days: meanwhile I wish my carriage and this case to be taken farther on. Are you willing to take charge of it? You will have nothing to do but to lift the box carefully into and out of the carriage, to sit down by it, and to take every care of it. When you come to an inn it is placed on a table in a room by itself, in which you must neither sit nor sleep. You always lock the door with this key, which opens and closes any lock, and gives the lock the special property that no one is able to open it otherwise."

I looked at her, and a strange feeling came over me. I promised to do everything, if I might hope to see her soon again, and if she would seal this hope to me with a kiss. This she did, and from that moment I had become completely her body-slave. I was now, she said, to order the horses. We settled the road that I was to take, the places where I should stop and should wait for her. Lastly she pressed a purse of gold into my hand, and I my lips to her hands. She seemed moved at parting, and already I knew not what I did or was about to do.

When I came back after giving my orders I found the room-door locked; I immediately tried my master-key, and it stood its test perfectly. The door sprang

open: I found the room empty: there was only the box standing upon the table where I had set it down.

The carriage had driven up. I took the box carefully down and set it beside me.

The hostess asked, "Where is the lady, then?"

A child answered, "She is gone into the town."

I nodded to the people and drove away in triumph from the door, at which yesterday evening I had arrived with dusty spatterdashes. That I now, at complete leisure, turned this occurrence over and over in my mind, that I counted the gold, made all sorts of schemes, and continued to look occasionally at the box, you can easily imagine. I drove straight forward, did not alight for several stations, and did not rest until I arrived at a considerable town where she had appointed to meet me. Her commands were carefully obeyed, the box was placed in a room by itself, and a few wax candles were lighted near it, as she had also ordered. I locked up the room, settled myself in mine, and made myself comfortable.

For awhile I was able to occupy myself with thinking of her: but soon the time began to seem long. I was not accustomed to be without company; this I soon found at the inn-tables and in public places in accordance with my taste. In this way my money began to melt away, and one evening, when I imprudently abandoned myself to a passionate fit of gaming, it vanished absolutely from my purse. When I reached my room I was beside myself. Bereft of money, with the appearance of a wealthy man, expecting a heavy reckoning, uncertain whether and when my fair one would again make her appearance, I was in the greatest embarrassment. Doubly did I long for her, and was certain that without her and her money I was now quite unable to live.

After supper, for which I had had no sort of relish, since this time I had been obliged to eat it alone, I walked rapidly up and down the room, talked aloud to myself, cursed myself, threw myself on the floor, tore my hair, and behaved like an utter madman. Suddenly in the locked-up room adjoining, I hear a gentle movement, and shortly afterwards a knocking at the well-secured door. I collect myself, and seize hold of the master-key; but the folding-doors fly open of themselves, and in the glow of the lighted wax-candles my fair one comes towards me. I throw myself at her feet, kiss her skirt, her hands: she raises me, I do not venture to embrace her, scarcely to look at her; yet frankly and penitently I confess to her my fault.

"It may be pardoned," said she; "only unfortunately you delay your good fortune and mine. You must now once more make an expedition into the world before we meet again. Here is more gold," said she, "and quite enough if you are willing to be at all careful; but if wine and play have got you into trouble this time, be on your guard now against wine and women, and let me hope for a more joyous meeting."

She retired through her doorway; the folding-doors closed. I knocked, I implored, but nothing more was to be heard.

When I called for the reckoning the next morning, the waiter laughed and said, "So we know why you lock your doors in such a scientific and incomprehensible way that no master-key is able to open them. We assumed that you had a great deal of money and jewels; but now we have seen your treasure going down-stairs, and it seemed on all accounts worthy of being well guarded."

I said nothing in reply, but paid my reckoning and got into the carriage with my box. I now drove again into the wide world, with the most fixed intention to pay heed for the future to my mysterious friend's warning. Yet scarce had I again arrived at a large town, when I presently got acquainted with some amiable young ladies, from whom I absolutely could not tear myself away. They seemed disposed to make me pay dearly for their favor, for, whilst they continued to keep me at a certain distance, they led me on to one expense after another, and, as all that I cared for was to further their enjoyment, I never thought twice about my purse, but paid and spent away just as occasion occurred. How great then was my astonishment and delight, when, at the end of some weeks, I noticed that the fulness of my purse showed as yet no diminution, but that it was still as round and bulky as at first. I would fain assure myself more exactly of this pretty quality, and set to work to reckon up. I noticed the sum precisely, and now began to live merrily with my companions as before. There was no stint of country and river-excursions, of dancing, singing, and other enjoyments; but now it required no great attention to perceive that the purse really was diminishing, just as if I, by my confounded counting, had taken away from it the virtue of being uncountable. However the life of pleasure was once for all in full swing: I could not draw back, and yet I was soon at the end of my cash. I cursed my situation, blamed my fair friend who had thus led me into temptation, took it ill of her that she did not come on the scene again; repudiated in my anger all duties towards her, and proposed to myself to open the box, in case perchance some help might be found in it; for, though it was not heavy enough to contain gold, yet there might be jewels in it, and these would have been very welcome to me. I was on the point of carrying out my intention; however I put it off till night-time, in order to carry out the operation quite quietly, and I hastened to a banquet, which was just about to take place. Here again the fun was speeding fast, and we were highly excited with wine and trumpet-tones, when by ill-luck it befell me that, at supper-time, an earlier friend of my favorite fair one, returning from a journey, came in unexpectedly, sat down by her side, and without much ceremony sought to assert his old privileges. Hence arose ill-humor, anger and strife; we drew, and I was taken home half dead with sundry wounds.

The surgeon had bandaged me and gone away; it was already deep in the night, and my attendant had fallen asleep; the door of the side-room opened, my mysterious friend entered, and sat down by my bedside. She asked how I was; I did not answer, for I was faint and sullen. She went on speaking with much sympathy, rubbed my temples with a certain balsam, so that I felt rapidly and distinctly strengthened—so strengthened that I was able to grow angry and upbraid her. In hasty words I laid all the blame of my ill-fortune upon her, on the passion with which she had inspired me, on her appearance, her disappearance, on the tedium, on the yearning that I had felt. I became more and more violent, as if a fever were attacking me, and at last I swore to her that if she would not be mine—would not this time belong to and unite herself with me, I cared no longer to live; and thereto I demanded a decisive answer. When

she hesitated and held back with an explanation, I got quite beside myself, and tore the double and threefold bandage from the wounds, with the indubitable intention of letting myself bleed to death. But how astounded was I when I found my wounds all healed, my body sleek and shining, and her in my arms!

Now were we the happiest couple in the world. We alternately asked pardon of each other, though we ourselves knew not rightly wherefore. She now promised to travel on with me, and we were soon sitting by one another in the carriage, with the box opposite to us, in the third person's place. I had never made any mention of it to her: and even now it did not occur to me to speak of it, although it was standing before our eyes, and we both by a tacit agreement took it in charge as occasion might require: except that I always lifted it in and out of the carriage, and, as before, attended to the locking of the doors.

As long as there was anything left in my purse I had always paid: when my cash came to an end, I gave her notice of the fact. "That is easily remedied," she said, pointing to a couple of little pockets, attached to the top of the carriage at the sides, which I certainly had noticed before, but had not used. She felt in one and took out a few gold pieces, and out of the other a few silver coins, and showed me thus the possibility of continuing any sort of expenditure we liked.

Thus we journeyed from town to town, from country to country, pleased with ourselves and other people; and I never thought that she could again leave me; all the less so, inasmuch as for some time she had decidedly had expectations through which our happiness and love would be only further increased. But one morning I found, alas, that she was no longer there, and as remaining without her was burdensome to me, I started again on my travels with my little box, tested the power of the two pockets, and found that it was still maintained.

The journey sped well; and if, so far, I had had no further thoughts about my adventure, inasmuch as I was expecting a perfectly natural explanation of these strange occurrences, yet there presently happened something which threw me into astonishment, into anxiety, nay, even into fear. In order to get far away from the place I was accustomed to travel night and day, and thus it happened that I often drove in the dark, and if the lamps by chance went out, it was pitch dark in my carriage. Once in a night thus dark I had fallen asleep, and when I awoke I noticed the reflection of a light on the roof of my carriage. I examined it, and found that it issued from the box, in which there seemed to be a chink, as if it had sprung by reason of the hot and dry weather of the advancing summer season. My fancies about the jewels were again set astir; I supposed that a carbuncle was lying in the box, and I was anxious to make certain of it. I put myself in position, as well as I could, so that my eye was in close contact with the chink. But how great was my astonishment, when I found myself looking in at a room brilliantly illuminated with candles, and furnished with much taste, nay, even magnificence, exactly as if I had been looking down into a royal saloon through an opening in the ceiling. It is true I could see only a part of the room, from which I could infer the rest. An open fire seemed to be burning, near which stood an arm-chair. I held my breath and continued to observe. In the meantime, from the other side of the saloon, came a young lady with a book in her hand, whom I at

once recognized as my wife, although her figure was diminished in the minutest proportion. The beautiful creature sat down on the seat by the fireplace to read, and as she arranged the embers with the daintiest pair of tongs, I could plainly observe that this most lovable little being was on the point of becoming a mother. But now I found myself obliged in some measure to change my inconvenient position, and directly afterwards, when I was again going to look in, and convince myself that it had not been a dream, the light vanished, and I looked on empty darkness.

How amazed, how terrified I was, may be imagined. I formed a thousand ideas as to this discovery, and yet could really imagine nothing. Doing this I fell asleep, and when I awoke I fancied that I had just been only dreaming. Yet I felt somewhat estranged from my fair one, and whilst I handled the box only so much the more carefully, I knew not whether I must desire or dread her reappearance in perfect human size.

After some little time, my fair one really did come to me about eventide, clad in white, and as the room was just getting dark, she seemed taller to me than she was wont at other times to appear and I recollected to have heard that all the race of nixies and elves are noticeably increased in height as night approaches. She rushed as usual into my arms, but I could not with a right glad heart press her to my burdened breast.

“My darling,” she said, “I feel too well by your reception, what, alas! I know already. You have seen me in the interval: you are informed of the situation in which I find myself at certain periods. Your happiness and mine is thereby interrupted, nay, is on the point of being utterly annihilated. I must leave you, and know not whether I shall ever see you again.”

Her presence, the grace with which she spoke, immediately banished almost every remembrance of that vision that even before had only hovered over me like a dream. I caught her quickly in my arms, convinced her of my passion, assured her of my innocence, told her the accidental occasion of my discovery; enough, I did enough to make her seem pacified, and try to pacify me.

“Put yourself to a strict proof,” said she, “as to whether this discovery has not been injurious to your love, whether you can forget that I live with you in a twofold form, whether the diminution of my person will not also diminish your affection.”

I looked at her; she was fairer than ever; and I thought to myself, “Is it then so great a misfortune to own a wife who from time to time becomes a dwarf, so that she can be carried about in a case? Would it not be much worse if she became a giantess, and put her husband into the box?” My cheerfulness had come back; I would not have let her go away for everything in the world.

“Sweetheart,” I replied, “let us abide and be as we have been! Could we two be better off? Consult your own convenience, and I promise you to carry the case but so much the more carefully. How should the prettiest thing that I have seen in my whole life make a bad impression upon me? How happy would lovers be could they but possess

such miniature pictures! And, after all, it was only such a picture, a little deception of conjuring. You are testing and teasing me; but you shall see how I will behave.”

“The matter is more serious than you think,” said the fair one; “meanwhile I am right well content that you make light of it; for it may still have the happiest consequences for both of us. I will rely upon you, and for my part do what is possible; only promise me never to think of this discovery reproachfully. To this I add most earnestly one more request, beware of wine and of anger more than ever!”

I promised what she begged. I would have gone on promising anything and everything; yet she herself changed the conversation, and all went on smoothly as before. We had no reason to alter our place of residence; the town was large, and the society of many sorts; the time of year gave occasion for many rural and garden entertainments.

In all such amusements my wife was very much in request; nay, eagerly sought after by men and by women. A kindly and engaging manner, combined with a certain dignity, gained her the love and respect of everyone. In addition to this she played splendidly on the lute, and sang to it as well, and all social evenings must needs be made complete by the aid of her talent.

I desire but to confess that I have never been able to make much of music; nay, it rather had an unpleasant effect upon me. My fair one, who had soon noticed this in me, consequently never sought, when we were alone, to divert me in this way. On that account she seemed to indemnify herself in society, where she generally found a crowd of admirers.

And now, why should I deny it? Our last conversation, in spite of my very good intentions, had yet not been sufficient to dismiss the matter entirely. Rather had it attuned most strangely my whole mode of feeling, without my having been perfectly conscious of it. So one evening, at a large party, my smothered ill-humor broke loose, and therefrom ensued for me the most disadvantageous consequences.

When I think over it properly, I loved my fair one much less after the discovery, and now—what had never occurred to me before—I was getting jealous about her. This evening, at the supper-table, where we were sitting diametrically opposite to each other at a considerable distance, I found myself very well off with my two neighbors, a couple of ladies, who had appeared very charming to me for some time. Amid jesting and sentimental talk the wine was not spared. In the meanwhile, on the other side, a pair of musical amateurs had prevailed on my wife, and contrived to encourage and lead on the company to singing both solo and in chorus. This put me in an ill-humor. The two amateurs seem importunate; the singing made me irritable, and when a verse in solo was demanded from me as well, I became really indignant, emptied my glass, and set it roughly down.



My neighbors' tact soon made me feel soothed again, but it is a bad case for anger if it has once made a start. It simmered away in secret, although everything ought to have disposed me to pleasure and to complaisance. On the contrary, I only grew still more ill-tempered when a lute was brought, and my fair one accompanied her song, to the astonishment of everyone else. As ill-luck would have it, a general silence was requested. So I was not to be allowed to talk any more; and the sounds set my teeth on edge. Was it wonderful, then, that the smallest spark at last set light to the mine?

The songsters had just ended a song amidst the greatest approval, when she looked across towards me, and in truth with a right loving look. Unhappily the glance did not penetrate within me. She noticed that I gulped down a cup of wine, and filled up another. With her right-hand forefinger she made a sign of affectionate threatening.

"Remember that it is wine," she said, only loud enough for me to hear it.

"Water is for nixies!" I exclaimed.

"Ladies," said she to my neighbors, "crown the cup with every grace, that it be not so often empty."

"You surely will not let yourself be domineered over?" said one of them to me.

"What ails the imp?" I exclaimed, gesticulating more wildly, and thereby upsetting the cup.

"It is not little that is overthrown," cried the wondrous beauty, striking the strings as if to attract the attention of the company from this interruption to herself again. In this she actually succeeded; the more so, as she stood up, but only as if she wished to play with more convenience to herself, and continued her prelude.

As soon as I saw the red wine streaming over the tablecloth I came to my senses. I saw how great a fault I had committed, and was cut to the very heart. For the first time the music spoke to me. The first stanza that she sang was a kindly farewell to the company, whilst as yet they could still feel that they were together. With the next stanza the party seemed as it were to be scattered asunder; each individual felt himself solitary, separated; no one imagined himself to be any longer present. But what should I say of the last stanza? It was addressed to me alone: the voice of injured love bidding farewell to ill-temper and presumption.

Mutely I led her home, expecting naught pleasant to myself. Yet scarcely had we reached our room than she proved to be in the highest degree kind and amiable, nay, even roguish, making me the happiest of men.

The next morning, being completely consoled and full of affection, I said, "You have so often sung, when challenged to it by good company, for instance, that touching farewell-song yesterday evening: sing now, too, for love of me, only this once, a pretty, lively welcome at this morning hour, so that we may be as if we were learning to know each other for the first time!"

"That I may not do, my friend," she replied, with seriousness; "the song of yesterday evening referred to our parting, which must now take place forthwith; for I can tell you only that the violence done to your word and oath has the vilest consequences for us both: you scoff away a great gift of fortune, and I, too, must forego my dearest wishes."

When, hereupon, I was urgent with her, and begged that she would explain herself more clearly, she replied, "That, alas, I can easily do, for at all events there is an end of my remaining with you. Hear, then, what I would rather have concealed from you to the last moments! The form in which you beheld me in the box is in reality innate and natural to me, for I am of the race of King Eckwald, the mighty prince of the dwarfs, of whom authentic history tells so much. Our people are still, as of old, active and industrious, and for that reason also easy to govern. But you must not suppose that the dwarfs have remained behindhand in their labors. Else would swords, which followed the enemy when they were thrown after him, invisible and secretly binding fetters, impenetrable shields and the like, be their most famous productions; but now they busy themselves especially with articles of convenience and of adornment, and surpass therein all other people of the earth. You would be astonished if you were to walk through our workshops and warehouses. This would be—this would all be well now, were it not that, with the whole nation in general, but chiefly with the royal family, a special circumstance came into play."

As she remained silent for a moment, I entreated her for further disclosure of these marvellous secrets, which she forthwith conceded to me.

"It is well known," she said, "that God, as soon as He had created the world, and the whole earth was dry, and mountains stood there mighty and glorious—God, I say, forthwith created, before anything else, the dwarfs, in order that there might also be rational beings, who in their burrows and clefts might marvel at and adore his wonders in the inner parts of the earth. Furthermore, it is known that this little race later became lifted up, and aspired to gain for themselves the dominion of the earth, wherefore God then created dragons in order to drive the dwarfs back into their mountains. But since the dragons themselves were wont to make their nests in the great holes and caverns, and there to live, many of them, too, spitting fire, and working much other devastation, the dwarfs were thus reduced to great straits and distress, so much so, that no longer knowing where to come or go, they therefore very humbly and imploringly turned themselves to God the Lord, and called to Him in prayer that He would bring to naught again this unclean breed of dragons. But

although in his wisdom He could not determine to destroy his own creatures, yet the dire need of the poor dwarfs so went to his heart, that He immediately created the giants, who were to fight the dragons, and, if not root them out, at least diminish their number.

“But no sooner had the giants pretty well done with the dragons, than pride and arrogance arose forthwith within them, and in consequence they perpetrated much evil, especially towards the poor dwarfs, who in their distress turned themselves again to the Lord: He thereupon in the power of his might created knights who were to fight the giants and dragons and live on good terms with the dwarfs. With this the work of creation was completed in this direction, and it has come to pass that henceforth giants and dragons as well as knights and dwarfs have always managed to co-exist. Whereby you may see, my friend, that we belong to the oldest race in the world, which is certainly to our honor, but which also carries with it great disadvantages.

“For since nothing can last forever in the world, but everything that has once been great must become small and decrease, we, too, are in this case, that since the creation of the world we have always been decreasing and getting smaller, and above all the others the royal family, which, on account of the purity of its blood, is the first to be subjected to this destiny. On this account our wise instructors have many years ago devised this expedient, that from time to time a princess of the royal house is sent out into the world to wed herself with some honorable knight, in order that the race of dwarfs may be again invigorated, and saved from total ruin.”

Whilst my fair one uttered these words with thorough simplicity, I looked at her with misgiving, for it seemed as if she had a wish to impose upon me. As far as her pretty pedigree was concerned I had no further doubt, but that she had got hold of me in place of a knight, this caused me some mistrust, inasmuch as I know myself too well to think of supposing that my forefathers were created directly by God.

I concealed my wonder and doubt, and asked her kindly, “But tell me, my dear child, how do you attain to this tall and shapely form? for I know few women that can be compared with you in fineness of figure.”

“That you shall hear,” replied my fair one. “It has been handed down for ages in the council of the dwarf-king that we should beware of taking this extraordinary step as long as possible—which indeed I find quite natural and proper. There would probably have still been much hesitation about sending out a princess into the world again, if my younger brother had not been brought into the world so small, that the nurses actually lost him out of his swaddling clothes and no one knows whither he has gone. At this occurrence, altogether unknown in the annals of the dwarf realm, the wise men were assembled, and without further parley the resolution was taken to send me out to look for a husband.”

“The resolution!” I exclaimed; “this is all very fine: you may take a resolution, you may come to a determination; but to give a dwarf this form divine, how did your wise men bring that about?”

“This was already provided for by our ancestors,” she said. “In the royal treasury lay an immense gold finger-ring. I speak of it now as it appeared to me when it was formerly shown to me as a child, in its place; for it is the same that I have here on my finger. And now the following process was gone through.

“I was informed of all that awaited me, and was instructed as to what I was to do and not to do. A magnificent palace, after the pattern of my parents' favorite summer-residence, was made ready—a main building, side-wings, and everything that one can but wish for. It stood at the entrance of a great rocky ravine, which it adorned to the utmost. On the appointed day the court withdrew thither, with me and my parents. The army was reviewed, and four and twenty priests, not without difficulty, bore the wondrous ring upon a costly barrow. It was laid upon the threshold of the building just inside where one would step. Many ceremonies were gone through, and after a heartfelt farewell, I advanced to the work. I stepped up to it, laid my hand upon the ring, and forthwith began visibly to increase. In a few moments I had reached my present stature, whereupon I straightway put the ring upon my finger. Then, on the instant, windows, door and gates closed up, the side-wings drew back into the main building: in place of the palace, stood a small box beside me, which I at once lifted up, and carried with me, not without a pleasant feeling in being so large and so strong, though still, it is true, a dwarf compared with trees and mountains, with streams and tracts of land, but yet to all intents a giant compared with grass and herbs, but especially with the ants, with whom we dwarfs are not always on good terms, and by whom consequently we are often annoyed.



“How I fared on my pilgrimage, before I met you—of this I might have a good deal to tell. Enough, I tried many, but no one else but you seemed to me worthy to renovate and perpetuate the line of the princely Eckwald.”

During all these communications my head kept wagging, though I did not actually shake it. I put various questions, to which however I obtained no particular answer; but rather learned, to my very great sorrow, that after what had happened she must of necessity return to her parents. She hoped, indeed, to come back to me, but at present she must inevitably present herself, since otherwise all would be lost for her as well as for me. The purses would soon leave off paying, and all sorts of other consequences would ensue therefrom.

When I heard that our money might run out, I inquired no further what else might happen. I shrugged my shoulders and said nothing, and she seemed to understand me.

We packed up together and took our seats in the carriage, with the box opposite to us, in which however I could not yet see anything like a palace. And so we went on for several stages. Post-money and drink-money were readily and liberally paid from the pockets on the right hand and left, till we came at last to a hilly district, and we had scarcely alighted than my fair one walked on in front and I followed at her bidding with the box. She led me along a tolerably steep path to a narrow plot of meadowland, through which a clear brook partly rushed down and partly meandered at a quiet pace. There she pointed out to me a raised level plot, bade me set down the box and said "Farewell, you will easily find the way back. Think of me; I hope to see you again."

At this moment I felt as if I could not leave her. She was just then in one of her good days again, or if you will, her good hours. To be with so lovable a being on the verdant carpet amidst grass and flowers, concealed by rocks, lulled by the rill, what heart could have remained unmoved? I could have seized her hand, clasped her in my arms, but she pressed me back, and threatened me, though still lovingly enough, with great peril if I did not straightway withdraw.

"Is there then no possibility," I exclaimed, "of my staying with you, of your being able to keep me with you?"

I accompanied these words with gestures and tones so full of sorrow that she seemed touched, and after a little thought admitted to me that a continuance of our union was not utterly impossible. Who was happier than I? My importunity, which grew more and more urgent, at last obliged her to say the word, and disclose to me, that if I would make up my mind to become, together with her, as small as I had already seen her, I could even now stay with her, and enter with her into her dwelling, her kingdom, and her family. This plan did not altogether please me. Yet I could not all at this moment tear myself away from her, and having now for a long time been accustomed to the marvellous, and being bound to a speedy resolution, I agreed, and said that she might do what she liked with me.

I had forthwith to hold out the little finger of my right hand; she set her own against it, with her left hand drew the gold ring quite gently off, and let it slide on to my finger. This was scarcely done than I felt a severe pain in the finger: the ring contracted and tortured me horribly. I gave a loud scream, and involuntarily gazed around me for my beautiful one, who, however, had disappeared. What my state of mind was in the meantime I could find no words to express, nor does aught remain for me to say but that I very soon found myself in diminutive form, close by my fair one in a forest of grass-blades. The delight of meeting again after a short and yet so strange a separation, or if you will, a reunion without separation, transcends all conception. I fell upon her neck: she returned my caresses, and the little couple felt as happy as the big one.

With some trouble we now proceeded to climb up a hill, for the sward had become for us an almost impenetrable forest. Yet at last we reached a clear space, and how astounded was I to see there a large barred and bolted pile, which, however, I was soon forced to recognize as the box in the condition in which I had set it down.

“Go, dear friend, and only knock with the ring. You will see wonders,” said my beloved.

I went up to it, and had hardly knocked when I really witnessed the greatest marvel. Two side-wings came forward, and at the same time, like scales and chips, down fell sundry portions, whereupon doors, windows, arcades and all that pertains to a complete palace, came all at once to view.

Anyone who has seen one of Röntgens' ingenious writing-tables, in which, by one pull, a number of catches and strings come into play, and desk, writing materials, letter-drawers, and money-drawers are brought out all at once or soon after each other, will be able to form some idea of the unfolding of this palace into which my sweet conductress now introduced me. In the principal saloon I at once recognized the chimney that I had formerly seen from above, and the seat upon which she sat. And when I looked above my head I fancied that I actually still saw something of the rift in the dome through which I had looked in. I spare you a description of the rest: enough, all was spacious, costly and tasteful. I had scarcely recovered from my astonishment, when I heard in the distance a military band. My lovely half jumped for joy, and informed me with delight of the approach of her royal father. We stepped out to the entrance and looked as a brilliant procession defiled out of a beautiful rocky chasm. Soldiers, servants, household officials, and a brilliant array of courtiers followed one behind the other. Finally we beheld a gilded crowd and in it the king himself. When the whole procession was drawn up in front of the palace the king came forward with his most select retinue. His loving daughter ran to meet him, dragging me with her; we threw ourselves at his feet; he raised me very graciously, and only when I came to stand in front of him did I notice that in this miniature world I was actually the most considerable in stature. We walked together towards the palace, when the king, in the presence of his whole court, and in a studied speech, in which he expressed his astonishment at finding us here, was pleased to bid me welcome, acknowledged me as his son-in-law, and fixed the nuptial ceremony for the next day.

In what a terrible state of mind was I, when I heard marriage spoken of! for I had hitherto dreaded this, almost more than music itself, which otherwise seemed to me the most hateful thing upon earth. People that make music, I was accustomed to say, at least fancy that they are at one with each other, and working in unison, for when they have been tuning-up, and rending our ears with all sorts of discords long enough, they fancy, safely and surely, that the matter is now simplified, and that one instrument accords exactly with another. Even the director is under this happy delusion, and now they set off merrily, whilst for the rest of us our ears keep on tingling. In the wedded state, on the other hand, even this is not the case: for although it is only a duet, and one would think that two voices, nay, two instruments, must be able to be brought into some sort of tune, yet this seldom happens: for if the husband emits one note, the wife immediately takes a higher one, and the husband a higher again; then it passes from the chamber-pitch to the choral, and so on, higher and higher, so that at last even wind instruments cannot keep up with it, and thus, seeing that harmonic music continues hateful to me, it is still less to be supposed that I should endure the unharmonic.



Friedrich.

Of all the festivities in which the day was spent I need not and cannot say anything, for I took little heed of them. The sumptuous food, the delicious wine, everything was distasteful to me: I was thinking and considering what I should do. And yet there was not much to be thought of. When night came, I made up my mind, without more ado, to get up and go away and hide myself somewhere or other. Accordingly I got safely to a crevice in the rock into which I squeezed and concealed myself as well as possible. My first anxiety after this was to get the unlucky ring from off my finger, but in this I was by no means successful; rather I was compelled to feel that it always got tighter as soon as I attempted to draw it off, causing me to endure acute pains, which, however, abated as soon as I desisted from my intention.

Early in the morning I woke up—for my little body had slept very well—and was just going to look a little further about me, when it began to rain, as it almost seemed, upon me. For something fell down in large quantities like sand or grit, through grass, leaves and flowers; but how horrified I was, when the whole place round about me seemed to be alive, and an innumerable host of ants rushed down upon me. No sooner did they perceive me than they attacked me on all sides, and although I defended myself vigorously and bravely enough, they at last so overwhelmed, pinched and pricked me, that I was glad when I heard a demand that I should surrender. I, in fact, did surrender on the spot, whereupon an ant of remarkable size approached me with politeness, nay, with reverence, and even recommended himself to my favor. I learned that the ants were allies of my father-in-law, and that he had summoned them to his aid in the present emergency, and enjoined them to fetch me back. Little as I was, I was now in the hands of creatures still less. I had now to look forward to the wedding, and must needs thank God if my father-in-law were not enraged, and my fair one become vexed.

Let me pass over in silence all the ceremonies: enough, we were married; yet, merrily and gayly as the time passed with us, there were nevertheless some lonely hours, when one is led to reflection; and something happened to me which had never happened before. What it was and how it happened you shall hear.

Everything about me was completely proportioned to my present shape and to my requirements; the bottles and glasses were well adapted to a small drinker, nay, if you will, in accordance with a better standard than ours. To my small gums the dainty

mouthfuls had an excellent flavor; a kiss from the little mouth of my wife was the most enchanting thing in the world, and I do not deny that novelty made all these circumstances in the highest degree pleasing. Yet at the same time I had unhappily not forgotten my former state of existence. I felt within me a measure of former greatness, which made me restless and unhappy. Now for the first time I saw what the philosophers mean with their ideals, wherewith mankind are said to be so plagued. I had an ideal of myself, and often appeared to myself in dreams as a giant. Enough; the wife, the ring, the diminutive form, and so many other bonds, made me thoroughly and completely miserable, so that I began to think seriously of my deliverance.

As I was persuaded that the whole magic lay in the ring, I determined to file it off. Accordingly I borrowed some files from the court jeweller. Fortunately I was left-handed, and had never in my life done anything in a right-handed way. I kept bravely at the work, which was no trifle, for the golden circle, thin as it appeared, had grown thicker, in proportion, as it had contracted from its former size. All leisure hours I devoted, unobserved, to this task, and was wise enough, when the metal was nearly filed through, to step outside the door. This was well advised, for all at once the golden hoop sprang forcibly from my finger, and my figure shot upwards with such violence, that I fancied I really struck the sky, and in any case would have broken through the dome of our summer palace, nay, would have destroyed the entire pavilion with my rude clumsiness.

So there I stood again, certainly so much the bigger, but, as I considered, also much more foolish and helpless. And when I recovered from my stupefaction, I saw lying near me the case, which I found tolerably heavy when I lifted it up, and took the footpath downwards to the post-house, where I immediately ordered horses and set forth. On the way, I presently made trial of the pockets on both sides. Instead of money, which seemed to be exhausted, I found a little key: it belonged to the box, in which I found a moderate reserve fund. As long as this held out, I made use of the carriage, then this was sold to allow of my going on by the diligence; at length I cast away the box, for I kept thinking that it ought to fill itself once more; and so finally, though by a considerable circuit, I came back to the chimney-corner and the cook, where you first made my acquaintance.

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CHAPTER VII.

Hersilia To Wilhelm.

Acquaintanceships, even if they commence as ordinary ones, have often the most important results: and this is certainly the case with yours, which from the very beginning was not an ordinary one. The wonderful key came into my hands as a strange pledge; now I possess the casket as well. Key and casket! What say you to that? What should be said to it? Listen how it happened.

A young man of refined manners calls upon my uncle, and informs him that the skilful dealer in antiquities who had been for some time connected with you had died a short time before, and bequeathed to him the whole of his extraordinary residue, but at the same time had imposed upon him the duty of immediately restoring all alien property, which was, in fact, only on deposit. "No one need be troubled about property of his own, for its loss he alone has to bear; but only in special cases had he allowed himself to take charge of other people's property. He did not wish him to be burdened with this responsibility, nay, in all fatherly love and authority, he forbade him to meddle therewith." And hereupon he drew forth the casket, which, though I was already familiar with it by description, still struck me most particularly.

My uncle, after looking at it from every side, gave it back and said that he, too, made a principle of acting in the same way, and burdened himself with no antique object, however beautiful and wonderful it might be, unless he knew to whom it had formerly belonged, and what historical interest might be associated with it. Now this casket exhibited neither letters nor ciphers, neither date nor any other indication, from which the former owner or artist could be guessed; thus to him it was utterly useless and uninteresting.

The youth stood in considerable embarrassment, and after some reflection asked if he would not allow him to leave it with his men of business. My uncle laughed, and turning to me said, "This would be nice matter for you, Hersilia. You have all sorts of other ornaments and pretty trinkets: put this amongst them! for I would lay a wager that our friend, who is still not indifferent to you, will come again, by-and-bye, and take it away."

This I must write to you, if I am to tell my story truly, and then I must confess that I looked at the casket with envious eyes, and a certain covetousness took possession of me. It was repugnant to me to think of this lordly treasure-casket, assigned by fate to the sweet Felix, in the ancient and rusty iron strong box of the office. Like a magic wand, my hand drew towards it; my little grain of sense held it back. I had the key, verily; that I dared not disclose; how should I inflict on myself the martyrdom of leaving the lock unopened, or allow myself the unwarrantable boldness of unlocking it? But, I know not whether it was longing or presentiment, I imagined that you were coming soon, would be there already when I went to my room: in short, I felt so

strange, so queer, so confused, as is always the case when I am forced out of my even-tempered cheerfulness. I say no more, neither by way of description nor apology. Enough; here the casket lies before me in my jewel-case, the key beside it, and if you have any sort of heart or kindness, think what a state I am in, how many passions contend within me, how I wish for you, and Felix too, that there may be an end of it, at least that some hint may be given of what is the meaning of this marvellous finding, refinding, separating, and re-uniting. And even if I am not to be rescued from all perplexity, at least I wish most earnestly that this may be cleared up and ended, even though something worse, as I fear, should befall me.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Amongst the papers which lie before us for editing, we find a conceit, which we insert here without further preliminary, because our affairs are getting more and more urgent, and we may not be able to find a place for such irregularities further on.

On the whole this story may not be displeasing to the reader, as it was told by St. Christopher in the merry evening hours to a circle of jovial comrades assembled:—

The Hazardous Wager.

It is a well-known fact that people, as soon as they are in any degree getting on well and after their desires, are straightway at a loss to know what, in their pride of heart, they shall lay their hand to. And thus also mettlesome students were accustomed during the vacations to roam in flocks through the country, playing the fool after their kind, which, in fact, was not always followed by the best results. They were of very different sorts, such as student-life brings together and unites: unequal in birth, wealth, intellect and education, but all of them good company, leading and egging-on one another in merry mood. But they would often select me for a companion; for if I carried heavier burdens than any one of them, yet they must needs give me the honorary title of a great jester; and chiefly for this reason, that I played my pranks more seldom but so much the more effectually—to which the following story may bear witness.

We had arrived in our wanderings at a pleasant mountain village, which with an isolated situation had the advantage of a posting station, and a few pretty girls in great solitude, as inhabitants. Our object was to rest, kill time, flirt, live more cheaply for a while, and by that means waste more money.

It was just after dinner, when some were in an elevated, others in a depressed condition; some were lying sleeping away their over-indulgence, others would rather give it vent in some unrestrained way or other. We had a couple of large rooms in a side-wing towards the courtyard. A fine carriage which rattled in with four horses attracted us to the window. The servants jumped down from the box and helped out a gentleman of dignified and distinguished appearance, who notwithstanding his years still walked up vigorously enough.

His large and finely formed nose first caught my eye, and I know not what evil spirit was prompting me that in a moment I hit on the maddest scheme, and without further thought immediately began to put it in practice.

“What is your opinion of this gentleman?” I asked of the company.

“He looks,” said one, “as if he would not stand a joke.”

"Aye, aye," said another, "he has quite the look of a distinguished 'Meddle-not-with-me.'"

"And nevertheless," said I quite confidently, "what do you bet that I will not tweak him by the nose without getting any harm from it myself! Nay, I will even get him to be a good patron to myself by doing it."

"If you accomplish that," said Swagger, "we'll each give you a louis-d'or."

"Pay in the money for me," I exclaimed; "I rely upon you."

"I had rather pluck a hair from a lion's muzzle," said the little one.

"I have no time to lose," replied I, and rushed down-stairs.

On my first glance at the stranger I had noticed that he had a very strong beard, so I guessed that none of his attendants could shave. I now met the waiter, and asked, "Has not the stranger gentleman asked for a barber?"

"Indeed he has," replied the waiter, "and with very good reason. The gentleman's valet stopped behind two days ago. The gentleman wants to be rid absolutely of his beard; and our only barber—who can tell whereabouts in the neighborhood he has gone!"



"Then mention me," replied I. "Only introduce me as a barber to the gentleman, and you will gain honor together with me."

I took the shaving-tools that I found in the house, and followed the waiter. The old gentleman received me with great solemnity, and looked at me from top to toe, as if wanting to search out my dexterity from my physiognomy.

"Do you understand your trade?" he said to me.

"I am looking for my equal," replied I, "without boasting of myself."

I was also sure of my qualification, for I had at an early age practised the noble art, and was especially noted on this account, that I shaved with the left hand.

The room in which the gentleman made his toilet extended to the courtyard, and was situated exactly in such a manner that our friends could conveniently look in, especially when the windows were open. To the usual preparations nothing more was wanting: my patron had sat down and had had the towel put on.

I stepped very respectfully in front of him, and said: "Your excellency, in the practice of my art I have particularly noticed that I have always shaved common people better and more satisfactorily than the gentry. I have thought over this for a long time, and have tried to find the reason, now in this way, now in that, and at last I have discovered that I work much better in the open air than in closed rooms. Will your excellency allow me, therefore, to open the window, when you will soon experience the effect to your own satisfaction."

He gave his consent: I opened the window, gave my friends a nod, and fell to lathering the bristly beard with much grace. No less nimbly and lightly I mowed away the stubble from the field, and in doing so did not hesitate, when I came to the upper lip, to grasp my patron by the nose, and palpably bend it up and down, at the same time contriving to put myself in such positions that the wagerers, to their great delight, must needs see and confess that their side had lost.

With great dignity the old gentleman stepped up to the looking-glass: one could see that he looked at himself with some complacency, and in reality he was a very handsome man. Then he turned to me with a dark flashing but kindly look, and said: "You deserve, my friend, to be praised above many of your like, for I notice in you much less clumsiness than in others: you do not travel two or three times over the same place, but do it in one stroke, nor do you wipe the razor as so many do in the open hand, and flourish the wipings under the person's nose. But your cleverness with your left hand is especially remarkable. Here is something for your trouble," he resumed, handing me a florin; "only remember one thing—that people of quality are not taken hold of by the nose. If you will avoid this boorish custom for the future, you may yet make your fortune in the world."

I bowed low, promised to do all I could, begged him, if he should chance to return, to honor me again, and ran as fast as I could to our youngsters, who at the last had caused me a good deal of anxiety. For they raised such roars of laughter and yells, leaped about like maniacs in the room, clapped their hands and shouted, woke the people who were asleep, and kept describing the affair with ever fresh laughter and madness, that I myself, as soon as I got into the room, shut the window at once, and begged them for God's sake to be quiet; but at last I was forced to laugh with them at the look of an absurd affair that I had carried through with so much gravity.

When, after a time, the raging waves of laughter were somewhat subsided, I considered myself lucky: I had the gold pieces in my pocket, and the well-earned florin into the bargain, and looked upon myself as well provided, which was all the more satisfactory, as the party had decided to separate the next day. But we were not destined to part company with propriety and good order. The story was too taking for them to have been able to keep it to themselves, though I had begged and prayed them only to hold their tongues till the departure of the old gentleman. One of us, called Go-ahead, had a love affair with the daughter of the house. They met, and Heaven knows whether it was that he did not know how to amuse her better, at any rate he told her the joke, and they almost died with laughing together over it. That was not the end of it, for the girl laughingly repeated the story, and so at last, a little before bed-time, it reached the old gentleman.

We were sitting more quietly than usual, for there had been uproar enough all day, when all at once the little waiter, who was very much devoted to us, rushed in, crying, "Save yourselves!—you'll be beaten to death!"

We jumped to our feet, and would have known more about it, but he was already out of the door again. I sprang up, and pushed to the bolt, but already we heard a knocking and banging at the door, nay, we thought we heard it being split with an axe. We mechanically retreated into the second room, all struck dumb. "We are betrayed," I exclaimed; "the devil has us by the nose!"

Swagger grasped at his sword; I however at this point showed my giant strength, and without assistance pushed a heavy chest of drawers before the door, which fortunately opened inwards; yet already we heard the hubbub in the other room, and the most violent blows at our door.

The baron seemed determined to defend himself; but I repeatedly called out to him and the others, "Save yourselves: you have not only blows to fear here, but disgrace, which is worse for noblemen."

The girl rushed in, the same who had betrayed us, now desperate to find her lover in mortal peril.

"Away, away!" she cried, and seized hold of him; "away, away! I will take you through lofts, barns and passages. Come, all of you; the last must draw the ladder after him."

They all rushed to the back-door and out of it. I just lifted a box upon the chest, in order to force back and keep firm the already broken lining of the besieged door, but my courage and daring had nearly been my ruin.

When I ran to join the others, I found that the ladder was already drawn up, and saw that all hope of saving myself was completely cut off. There stand I, the actual transgressor, having already resigned the hope of escaping with a whole skin and unbroken bones; and who knows—yet leave me standing there with my thoughts, since after all I am here to tell you the tale. Only hear still how this rash jest was lost in ill consequences.

The old gentleman, deeply hurt by this unavenged indignity, took it to heart, and it is said that this circumstance contributed to, if it did not immediately cause, his death. His son, trying to trace the perpetrators, unfortunately found out the baron's participation, though only clearly after many years, called him out, and a wound by which the handsome man was disfigured troubled him for his whole life. For his adversary, too, this affair spoiled several fair years, through events accidentally connected with it.

Since every fable should, properly, teach something, what the present one is intended to teach is doubtless perfectly clear and evident to all.

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CHAPTER IX.

The day of utmost importance had dawned; to-day were to be taken the first steps towards the general migration, to-day was it to be determined who would actually set forth into the world, or who would rather stay on this side and try his fortune on the undivided surface of the Old World.

A merry burden resounded in all the streets of the cheerful country town. Groups of people gathered together, the individual members of each craft combined, and, singing in unison, filed in an order determined by lot into the hall.

The authorities, as we will designate Lenardo, Friedrich and the Bailiff, were on the point of following them and taking the places due to their position, when a man of attractive appearance came up to them and asked their permission to be able to take part in the meeting. It would have been impossible to refuse him anything, so orderly, prepossessing and amiable was his demeanor, by the aid of which an imposing carriage, which pointed to the army as well as the court and good society, showed itself to the highest advantage. He went in with the others, and a place of honor was accorded to him. All the rest having sat down, Lenardo remained standing, and began to speak as follows:

“If we consider, my friends, the most populous provinces and kingdoms of the Continent, we find all over, wherever available soil occurs, that it is tilled, planted, kept in order and made beautiful, and in like measure sought after, taken possession of, fortified and defended. Thus, accordingly, do we convince ourselves of the high value of landed possession, and are forced to look upon it as the first, the best thing that can be man's. When we find then on closer inspection the love of parents and children, the close clanship of fellow-countrymen and fellow-townsmen, as well as the general patriotic sentiment based immediately upon the soil, then does this acquisition and retention of area in large or small amount seem ever more important and worthy of respect. Yes, thus has Nature willed it! A man born upon the sod comes by custom to belong to it. The two grow with one another, and forthwith knit for themselves the most pleasing bonds. Who is there then that would lay hostile hands on the groundwork of all existence, or deny worth and dignity to so fair a gift of heaven.

“And yet one might say: If what man possesses is of great worth, to what he does and achieves a still greater must be ascribed. We may therefore, in a complete review, regard land-ownership as a smaller part of the goods that have been granted to us; but the most and the highest of them consist really in what is movable, and that which is gained in a life of movement.

“For such are we younger men especially bound to look round about us; for even if we had a desire to stay and plod on with our fathers' inheritance, yet do we find ourselves summoned a thousand times by no means to shut our eyes to a wider prospect outwards and round about. Let us therefore hasten quickly to the sea-shore,

and convince ourselves in one look what immeasurable spaces stand open for activity, and let us confess that at the mere thought we find ourselves quite differently aroused.

“Yet we will not lose ourselves in such boundless expanses, but turn our attention to the solid, wide, broad soil of so many countries and kingdoms. There we see large tracts of the country overrun by nomads whose towns are removable, whose living, supporting possession of herds should everywhere be introduced. We see them in the midst of the desert, in a large green meadow-plot, lying, as it were, at anchor in a longed-for haven. Such motion, such wandering, becomes a habit to them, a necessity; at last they look upon the surface of the earth as if it were not hemmed-in by mountains, nor penetrated by rivers. Still have we seen the north-east move towards the south-west; one people driving another before it—domination and ownership completely altered.

“From over-peopled countries will the same thing happen again in the great cycle of the earth. What we have to expect from other nations it would be difficult to say; but it is wonderful how, through our own over-population, we cramp each other from within: and without waiting to be driven out, we drive ourselves out; pronouncing of our own accord the sentence of banishment against one another.

“This then is the time and place for giving play, without vexation or downheartedness in our souls, to a certain restlessness, not suppressing the impatient longing which urges us to change our position and place. Yet let not whatsoever we intend and purpose come to pass from hasty feeling, nor from any other sort of compulsion, but from conviction corresponding to the best advice.

“It has been said and repeated, ‘Where I am well off, there is my fatherland;’ yet this comforting proverb would be better expressed if it ran, ‘Where I am useful, there is my fatherland.’ At home a man can be useless, without its being noticed at once: out in the world uselessness is soon evident. If then I say, ‘Let each one try to be useful to himself and others everywhere,’ this is no doctrine or piece of advice, but the declaration of life itself.



“Now let us look at the globe, and for the present leave the sea unregarded. See that you are not carried away by the swarms of ships, but fix your glance upon the mainland, and marvel how it is overspread by a teeming, intercrossing ant-race. This has the Lord God himself allowed, whilst He prevented the building of the tower of Babel, and scattered the human race over all the world. Let us therefor praise Him, for this blessing has gone out upon all generations.

“Observe with pleasure how all youth hastens to set itself in motion. Since instruction is offered to it neither in the house nor at the doors, it forthwith speeds to countries and cities, whither the renown of knowledge and wisdom entices it. After receiving a

swift and moderate education it feels itself presently driven to take a further look round in the world to see whether it can thus or anywhere find out and snatch up any useful experience helpful to its ends. May it accordingly light on good luck! But we are thinking of those accomplished and distinguished men, those noble inquirers into nature, who willingly encounter every difficulty, every danger, in order to open out the world to the world, and through the most trackless wastes make a path and road.

“But mark you, too, up the level highways, cloud upon cloud of dust, indicating the track of commodious high-packed vehicles, in which the noble, the rich, and so many others roll along, whose varying way of thought and object Yorick has so gracefully contrasted for us.

“But the sturdy craftsman on foot may look after them reassured; for on him the fatherland has imposed the duty of making foreign ability his own, and of not returning to the native hearth until he has succeeded in this. But more generally we meet upon our road market-folk and pedlers; a small tradesman even dares not omit to leave his stall from time to time, to visit fairs and markets, to visit the wholesale dealer, and augment his scanty profit by the example and participation of the unlimited. But yet more unrestingly, in the shape of individuals on horseback, swarms in all the main and side streets the crowd of those whose occupation it is to make a claim on our purse, even against our will. Samples of all kinds, price-lists pursue us in town and country houses, and, wherever we may flee for refuge, industriously astonish us, offering opportunities which it would never occur to anyone in his senses to seek out for himself. But what shall I say now of the people which before all others appropriates for itself the blessing of eternal wandering, and by its restless activity contrives to outwit those who stand still and outstrip its fellow-wanderers? We need speak neither well nor ill of it. Nothing good, because our association keeps them aloof; nothing evil, because the traveller—mindful of reciprocal advantage—is bound to deal civilly with everyone he meets.

“But, now, before all things we have to think with sympathy of all artists; for they are throughout interconnected in the movement of the world. Does not the painter wander with easel and palette from face to face? and are not his brethren in art summoned, now here, now there—for there is building and modelling to be done everywhere? But more briskly does the musician step onward; for it is he especially who affords new surprise to a new ear—fresh astonishment for a fresh mind. Then the players, though they despise the cart of Thespis, yet still travel about in smaller companies, and their movable world is erected in every spot nimbly enough. Thus, individually, foregoing serious and profitable engagements, they like to change one place for another where their augmented talent with similarly augmented requirements affords opportunity and pretext. Thereby they generally so train themselves beforehand that they leave no important stage in their country untrodden.

“Next are we presently reminded to glance at the teaching class. This likewise you find in perpetual activity; one professional chair after the other is occupied and left in order to scatter richly—yes, in every direction—the seeds of quick culture. But more industrious, and of wider scope, are those pious souls who disperse themselves through all quarters of the world to bring salvation to the nations. Others, again, go as

pilgrims to get salvation for themselves; whole hosts of them march to sanctified miraculous places, there to seek and to gain what their souls could not obtain at home.

“If all these, now, do not set us wondering, inasmuch as their doings and abstainings would for the most part be not conceivable without wandering, yet those who devote their industry to the soil we might at least regard as bound to it. By no means! Utilization can be imagined even without possession, and we see the keen cultivator forsaking a plot which has yielded him as a tenant-farmer profit and pleasure for a number of years; he seeks impatiently for the same, or greater profits, be it near or far. Nay, the owner himself leaves his newly-cleared tillage, as soon as he has made it, by his working, acceptable to a less expert settler. Anew he penetrates into the desert, a second time makes for himself a place in the forests; in compensation for his former toil, a double and a threefold larger space—upon which, perhaps, too, he thinks of not remaining.

“Let us leave him there, at war with bears and other beasts, and come back to the civilized world, where we find things in no sense more at rest. Look at any great well-ordered kingdom, where the most apt must suppose himself to be the most easy to move: at the nod of a prince, at the order of the state council, the useful man is conveyed from one place to the other. To him, too, our exhortation applies—‘Try to be of use everywhere, everywhere are you at home.’” But let us look at important statesmen, leaving, though unwillingly, their high positions; so have we reason to pity them, since we must require them neither as emigrators nor as travellers; not as emigrators, because they renounce a desirable position without any prospect of a better situation being opened out for them even in appearance only; not as travellers, because to be useful to other places in any way is seldom conceded to them.

“The soldier, however, is called to a peculiarly wandering life: even in peace now one post, now another, is assigned to him. To fight for the fatherland near or far he must always keep himself ready to move, and not only for immediate safety, but also for the purposes of people and rulers, he wends his way to all parts of the world, and to settle in this place or that is granted only to a few. Now, whilst courage always stands out as the first quality in the soldier, yet it is always supposed to be combined with fidelity, on which account we see certain nations, renowned for their trustworthiness, called away from their native lands to serve as bodyguards for secular and spiritual princes.

“One more class, exceedingly migratory, and indispensable to the State, we see in those functionaries who, sent from court to court, encompass ministers and princes, and inweave the whole habitable globe with invisible threads. Not one of these, too, is sure of his position and locality for even one moment only. In time of peace the cleverest are sent from one part of the world to another; in war-time, following the victorious host, making ready the roads for it when fugitive, they are always prepared to exchange one place for another, on which account they always carry with them a large supply of farewell cards.

“If we have hitherto contrived to do ourselves honor at every step in claiming the most distinguished bodies of effective men as our comrades and colleagues in destiny,

yet still, dear friends, there stands before you, as a conclusion, the highest honor, in finding yourselves affiliated with emperors, kings and princes. First let us remember, with benedictions, that noble imperial wanderer Hadrian, who marched on foot at the head of his host through the civilized world, made subject to him, thereby first completely taking possession of it. With horror let us remember the conquerors, those armed wanderers, against whom no resistance availed, nor wall and bulwark could protect inoffensive nations. Finally, let us accompany with honest pity those hapless exiled princes, who, falling from the summit of greatness, cannot even be received in the humble guild of effective wanderers.

“Since we have now made all this present and clear to one another, no petty despondency, no murkiness bred of passion, will prevail over us. The time is past when people rushed adventurously into the wide world. Thanks to scientific travellers writing with wisdom, copying artistically, we are everywhere sufficiently well-instructed to know tolerably what we have to expect.

“Yet the individual cannot attain to perfect knowledge. But our association is based on this, that each shall be instructed in his degree according to his aims. If anyone has a land in mind towards which his wishes are directed, we try to make known to him in detail what has floated before his imagination as a whole: to give ourselves, one to the other, a survey of the inhabited and habitable globe is the most agreeable, the most profitable of diversions.

“In such a sense, then, we can look upon ourselves as banded in a world-wide association. Simply grand the idea—easy its realization by reason and strength. Unity is all-powerful; no division, therefore, no strife amongst us. So far as we have principles, they are common to all of us. Let man, we say, learn to think of himself as being without any enduring external relation; let him seek for consistency not in his surroundings but in himself: there he will find it; cherish and foster it with love; he will form and educate himself so as to be everywhere at home. He who devotes himself to what is most necessary, goes everywhere most surely to his goal. Others, on the contrary, seeking what is higher, more subtle, have, even in the choice of their road, to be more circumspect.

“Yet, whatever man lays hold of and deals with, the individual is not enough. Society remains the highest need of any honest man. All useful people ought to stand in relation to each other, as the builder has to look after the architects, and they after masons and carpenters. And thus it is known to all, how and in what manner our association has been fixed and founded. We see no one amongst us who could not, according to his aims, use his effective faculty at any moment; who does not feel assured that everywhere, where chance, inclination, even passion might lead him, he would find himself well recommended, received, and aided on his way, nay, even as far as possible indemnified for accidents.

“Two obligations, moreover, we have most strictly taken upon us: to hold in honor every form of the worship of God; for they are all more or less comprised in the Creed: secondly, to allow all forms of government equally to hold good, since they all demand and promote a systematic activity—to employ ourselves in each, wherever

and however long it may be, according to its will and pleasure. In conclusion, we hold it a duty to practise good morals, without pedantry and stringency; even as reverence for ourselves demands, which springs from the three reverences which we profess; all of us having the good fortune, some from youth up, to be initiated in this higher universal wisdom. All this have we, in the solemn hour of parting, once more brought to mind, explained, heard, and acknowledged, and will also seal with a trusting Farewell.

“Stay not fettered in inaction—
Venture briskly, briskly roam!
Head and arm, in glad connection,
Everywhere will be at home.
Where beneath the sun we revel
Care with us will ne'er abide;
Space there is for all to travel,
Therefore is the world so wide.”

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CHAPTER X.

During the concluding song a large part of those present arose quickly, and amid the far-resounding din marched in order two by two out of the hall. Lenardo sitting down, asked the guest whether he intended publicly to bring forward his business here, or wished for a special sitting. The stranger stood up, bowed to the company, and began the following speech:—

“It is here especially, in such an assembly, that I wish first to explain myself without further delay. They who have quietly remained here, by their aspect all true men, have already given evidence by such lingering of a plain wish and intention of continuing, for the future, to belong to their native land and soil. I greet them all with friendship, for I venture to affirm that I am in a position to offer them, one and all, as they now present themselves, an adequate daily task for several years. I would desire, however, but only after a brief interval, one more meeting, since it is before all things necessary to reveal my business confidentially to the worthy principals who have hitherto kept these honest people together, and to convince them of the genuineness of my mission. Moreover, it will be fitting that I should speak individually with those who have remained, that I may know with what efforts they propose to respond to my handsome offers.”

Hereupon Lenardo demanded an adjournment, to provide for the most needful business of the moment, and when this was settled, the whole mass of those who were left stood up in an orderly manner, and left the hall, also two by two, with a moderate sort of social glee.

Odoard then imparted to the two leaders, who stayed behind, his designs and proposals, and got his authority made valid. But now, in further conversation with such distinguished men, he could not give an account of the affair without referring to the human foundation upon which the whole veritably rests. Mutual explanations and confessions of deep matters of the heart were disclosed therefrom in the prolonged conversation. They remained together till deep into the night, and involved themselves more and more inextricably in the labyrinth of human theories and destinies. Thus then Odoard found himself led to give a fragmentary account of the conditions of his mind and heart; whereby only an imperfect and unsatisfactory knowledge of this conversation has actually come to us. Yet we must thank, too, Friedrich's happy talent of seizing and retaining the presentment of various scenes, as well as some explanation of the career of a remarkable man, which begins to interest us, even though it were only indications of what, perhaps, in the sequel must be told more explicitly and in a connected way.

Don'T Go Too Far!

EVERYTHING was accordingly ready at the appointed hour as the clock at night struck ten; in the flower-bedecked room an ample and neat table laid for four people, with its dessert and confectionery disposed amidst twinkling lights and flowers. How

delighted the children were at this dessert!—for they were to come in for it. Meanwhile they were prowling about in their finery and masks; and as children cannot be disfigured, they looked like the prettiest of twin-genii. The father called them to him, and with little help they repeated the festal verses composed for their mother's birthday very cleverly.

Time wore on: from quarter to quarter the good old lady forbore not to increase her friend's impatience. Some of the lamps, she said, on the stairs were on the point of going out; favorite dishes of the fêted one would be over-done, it was to be feared. The children were just beginning to be naughty from weariness, and they would get unbearable with impatience. The father composed himself, and yet his wonted composure would not remain at call: he listened anxiously to the carriages; several rattled by without stopping; a certain ill-humor was about to arise. To pass the time he bade the children once more repeat their verses. They, in their ill-temper, inattentive, absent and careless, said it badly, their gesticulation was no longer correct, they over-did it, like actors, without feeling. The good man's annoyance increased every moment; it was more than half-past ten. We leave it to himself to describe the rest.

“The clock struck eleven; my impatience was increased to desperation; I no longer hoped, I feared. I was now afraid that she might come in, make her passing excuses with her usual airy grace, declare that she was very tired, and behave as if she were reproaching me for diminishing her pleasure. Within me everything was in a whirl, and much, very much, that I had put up with for years returned and weighed upon my mind. I began to hate her; I could devise no demeanor wherewith to meet her. The good children, dressed out like little angels, were sleeping peacefully upon the sofa. The ground burned under my feet, I could not realize nor collect myself, and nothing remained for me but to retreat until the ensuing minutes were only got over. I ran, lightly and festally clad as I was, to the house-door. I know not what sort of excuse I stammered out to the good old woman. She made me put on an overcoat, and I found myself in the street in a state of mind which I had not experienced for years back. Like the veriest passionate youth, who knows not what to do with himself, I raced up and down the streets. I should have reached the open country, but a cold damp wind blew keenly and repellently enough to put some bounds to my rage.”

We have usurped, as is strikingly noticeable in this scene, the privileges of the epic poet, and have carried the well-disposed reader only too quickly into the midst of passionate representation. We see an important man in domestic confusion, without our having learned anything further from him. On this account, therefore, in order to clear up the situation only in some degree, we join company with the good old woman, listening to what, at all events, in her distress and confusion, she may quietly mutter, or complain of aloud to herself.

“I have expected this a long time, I said it would be so: I have not spared my good lady; I have often warned her, but it is too much for her. If the master tires himself out at the office in town with business, in the country in the evening he finds an empty house, or company which does not suit him. He cannot help it. If she does not continually see people, men, round about her, if she does not drive about hither and thither, and cannot dress and re-dress herself, it is like being without air to breathe.

To-day, on her birthday, she sets out early for a drive into the country; good. Meanwhile we arrange everything here: she solemnly promises to be at home at nine o'clock. We are ready: the master hears the children a pretty poem they have learned by heart; they are dressed up; lamps and candles; boiled and roast, not a thing wanting—but she does not come. The master has a great control over himself, he hides his impatience; it bursts forth. He leaves the house, late as it is; why is plain, but where to? I have often threatened her honestly and sincerely with rivals. So far I have seen nothing on the master's part. A fair one has long had her eye on him, and put herself to trouble about him. Who knows what struggles he has had hitherto? Now it breaks out; at last despair at seeing his good intentions unrecognized drives him out of the house at nighttime. So I give up all for lost. More than once have I said to her she ought not to carry it too far!"

Now let us find out our friend again and hear himself.

"In the most respectable inn I saw lights downstairs, and, knocking at the window, I asked the waiter who looked out, in my usual voice, whether some strangers had not arrived or sent word. He had already opened the door, and saying No to both questions he asked me to come in. I found that it suited my situation, and to continue the adventure I asked him for a room, which he at once gave me on the second story. The first he supposed should be kept for the expected guests. He hurried away to make some arrangements. I made no objection, and pledged myself for the reckoning. Thus much was done; but I relapsed into my low-spirits, recalled each and everything to my mind, waxed wrathful, and relented, blamed myself, and tried to compose and pacify myself. To-morrow morning at any rate I would let everything be reinstated; I already pictured to myself the day, again in its accustomed routine; but then anger again broke forth uncontrollably: I had never thought that I could be so unhappy."

Our readers have certainly already begun to sympathize so far with the worthy man whom we see here so unexpectedly in passionate emotion about an occurrence apparently trifling, as to wish to receive more detailed information as to his circumstances. We will turn to account the interval which occurs in this nocturnal adventure whilst speechless and angry he continues to pace up and down the room.

We learn to recognize in Odoard the scion of an ancient house to which for a number of generations the noblest qualities had been bequeathed. Trained in the military academy, he had acquired an accomplished manner which, in conjunction with the most praiseworthy capacities, gave a special grace to his demeanor. A short service at court gave him a good insight into the relations of high personages; and when after this he was attached, through the favor that he had speedily gained for himself, to a diplomatic mission, and had an opportunity of seeing the world and making the acquaintance of foreign courts, he at once gave most decided evidence of his clearness of apprehension, and happy powers of memory for past occurrences, but more particularly of good disposition in undertakings of every sort. His facility of expression in many languages, with a frank but not dictatorial manner, brought him on from one step to another. He obtained success in every diplomatic commission, because he won people's good-will and thereby put himself in an advantageous

position for smoothing misunderstandings; and especially he contrived to satisfy opposing interests by a just balancing of the arguments brought forward.

It was the object of the first minister to secure the services of so distinguished a man; he married him to his daughter, a young lady of the most brilliant beauty and trained in all the higher social virtues. But as in the current of human happiness there is ever some barrier opposed which holds it back in one place or another, so was it also here the case. At the court of the sovereign-prince was being brought up, as a ward, the Princess Sophronia, the last scion of her stock. Her fortune and expectations, though lands and people went back to an uncle, were still considerable enough; on which account, to avoid protracted debates, it was proposed to marry her—though he was doubtless much younger—to the crown-prince.

Odoard was suspected of a sentiment for her; it was found that he had sung her praises in a poem, under the name of Aurora, with too much feeling: to this was added an imprudence on her side; for with singular independence she had met certain rallyings of her companions by saying defiantly that “she must have no eyes if she was to be blind to such advantages.” By her marriage now any such suspicion was hushed up; but yet it was quietly cherished by secret adversaries, and again stirred up when opportunity occurred.

Questions relating to the state and succession, though people endeavored to interfere with them as little as possible, came, however, often under discussion. The prince no less than his wise counsellors considered it altogether advantageous to let the matter rest for a time, whilst the secret adherents of the princess would have liked to see them settled, and the noble lady thereby placed in greater freedom, especially since the old king of the adjoining countries, who was related to and well disposed towards Sophronia, was still alive, and had shown himself ready on occasion to exert a fatherly influence.

Odoard came under the suspicion, on the occasion of a purely formal mission to that court, of having again brought into activity the affair that it was desired to put off; the opponents availed themselves of this incident, and the father-in-law, whom he had convinced of his innocence, had to bring all his influence to bear in order to obtain for him a sort of governorship in a distant province. He found himself happy there. He could bring all his forces into play. There were things needful, useful, good, beautiful and great to be done. He could achieve something lasting without sacrificing himself; whilst, in such circumstances as he was in before, a man occupies himself against his convictions with transient matters and occasionally ruins himself.



ODOARD UNEXPECTEDLY MEETS AURORA.

Not so did his wife find it: she had her being only in larger circles, and only followed him later when forced to do so. He behaved as considerately as possible towards her, and approved of all substitutes for her former enjoyment; in summer, country parties in the neighborhood, in winter an amateur theatre, balls, and whatever else she liked to set on foot: nay, he even put up with an admirer, a stranger who had insinuated himself some time before, though he was by no means pleased with him, believing, with his clear insight into men, that he detected a certain insincerity all through him.

From all that we have said, it may be that in the present anxious moment somewhat of gloom and obscurity, somewhat also that was clear and distinct, passed across his mind. Enough if, after this confidential explanation, for which Friedrich's good memory has furnished the material, we again turn to him, we find him again pacing excitedly up and down the room, by gestures and frequent exclamations giving evidence of an inner struggle.

“With such thoughts I had been walking hastily up and down the room. The waiter had brought me a bowl of broth, of which I was much in need; for in my careful preparations for the benefit of the birthday treat. I had taken nothing myself, and a luxurious supper was standing untasted at home. At that moment we heard a posthorn sounding very pleasantly up the street. ‘There comes some one from the mountain,’ said the waiter. We went to the window, and by the light of two brilliant carriage-lamps, saw a four-horsed well-loaded gentleman's carriage drive up. The servants jumped from the box. ‘There they are!’ cried the waiter, and ran to the door. I caught hold of him tightly to impress upon him that he should say nothing of my being there, nor betray the fact that any orders had been given; he promised, and sprang away.

“Meanwhile I had hesitated to see who had got out, and a new impatience took possession of me. I thought that the waiter was delaying too long in bringing me news. At last I was informed by him that the guests were ladies: an elderly lady of dignified aspect, a middle-aged one of incredible beauty, and a ladies'-maid, such as anyone might wish for.

“ ‘She began,’ he said, ‘by giving orders, went on with flattery, and when I did what she liked, fell into a merry saucy mood, that was very likely the most natural to her. I very soon noticed,’ he went on, ‘all the general astonishment at finding me so alert, and the house well prepared for their arrival, the room lighted, the fire burning. They made themselves at home; in the saloon they found a cold supper. I offered some broth, and it seemed welcome to them.’ ”

“The ladies now sat down to table; the elder one scarcely ate anything: the dear beauty nothing at all, the maid, whom they called Lucy, made a good meal, and meanwhile sang the praises of the inn; was delighted with the bright wax-candles, the fine table-linen, the porcelain, and all the appointments. She had previously warmed herself at the blazing hearth, and now she asked the waiter when he came in again, whether they were here always so well prepared to entertain guests arriving at every hour of the day and night. The clever young rogue was at this juncture in the same state as children, who certainly say nothing about the secret, but cannot hide the fact that something secret has been intrusted to them. First he answered ambiguously, then more approximately, and at last, driven into a corner by the quick-wittedness of the girl, and by continual talking on one side and the other, he confessed that there had been a servant, that a gentleman had come, had gone away, and come back again; and finally it escaped him that the gentleman was actually up-stairs, and was walking restlessly up and down. The young lady jumped up; the others did the same. It must be an old gentleman, they hurriedly assumed; the waiter assured them that, on the contrary, he was young. Now they were in doubt again; he maintained the truth of what he had said. The confusion, the excitement increased. It must be her uncle, said the beauty. It was not his way, said the elder lady. No one but he could have known that she would arrive at this hour, replied the other persistently. But the waiter declared again and again it was a young handsome vigorous man. Lucy swore, on the other hand, that it must be the uncle; the rogue of a waiter was not to be trusted: he had contradicted himself in the last half-hour.

“After all this, the waiter had to go upstairs and urgently beg the gentleman to be so good as to come downstairs, and at the same time threaten that the ladies would come up and thank him themselves.

“ ‘It is an endless muddle,’ said the waiter: ‘I do not understand why you hesitate to show yourself; they take you for an old uncle, whom they passionately long to embrace once more. Go down, I beg. Are not these the people that you expected? Don’t wantonly despise a most charming adventure! The young beauty is worth seeing and hearing; they are most respectable people. Run down, else they will really forcibly carry you out of the room.’ ”

Passion begets passion; excited as he was, he longed for something different, something strange. He went down in the hope of introducing himself and giving explanations to the new-comers in a cheerful conversation, of hearing foreign news and giving himself some distraction: and yet he felt as if he were going to some already known and precarious situation. He now stood before the door; the ladies, who thought that they heard the uncle’s step, ran out to meet him. He entered. What a meeting! what a recognition! The beauty gave a cry, and threw herself round the neck

of the elder lady: our friend recognized them both, he shrank backwards, then he started forwards, he lay at her feet and touched her hand, which he immediately let go again with the most deferential kiss: the syllables Au-ro-ra died upon his lips.

If we now take a look at our friend's house, we find it in a very strange condition. The good old lady knew not what to do, or not do: she kept the lamps in the hall and staircase burning, and had the food taken off the fire—some of it being irretrievably spoiled. The maid had remained with the sleeping children, and had kept up the numerous lights in the room as quietly and patiently as the other had been angrily pacing up and down.

At last the carriage rolled up to the door: the lady got out and was informed that her husband had been called away some hours before—ascending the stairs she appeared to take no notice of the festal illumination. The elder woman now learned from a servant that an accident had happened on the way, the carriage having been upset in a ditch, and all else that had taken place afterwards.

The lady entered the room. "What is this masquerade about?" she said, pointing to the children.

"It would have given you a good deal of pleasure if you had come some hours sooner," said the maiden lady.

The children, aroused from sleep, jumped up, and as soon as they saw their mother they began their got-off address. With embarrassment on both sides it went on for a while, then in the absence of encouragement and help it began to limp; at last it broke down completely, and the good children were sent with some caresses to bed. The lady found herself alone, threw herself upon the sofa, and burst out into bitter tears.

At this point, however, it becomes necessary to give some more detailed account of the lady herself and of the country party which had ended, as it seems, so badly. Albertina was one of those ladies to whom one would have had nothing to say *tête-à-tête*, but whom one is very glad to meet in a large party. Then they appear as real adornments of the whole, and as stimulants at every torpid moment. Their charm is of such a kind, that to express itself, to be in its element, it requires a certain amount of space; its operations demand a larger public, they require an element that supports them, that compels them to be charming: towards individuals they scarcely know how to conduct themselves.

Her friend and admirer gained her favor, and maintained himself in it, merely because he was expert at setting on foot one enjoyment after another, at keeping, if not a large circle, at any rate a lively one, continually on the move. In distributing parts, he used to select for himself the tender fathers, and managed by a respectable and sagacious demeanor to give himself an advantage over the younger, first, second and third lovers.

Florina, the owner of an important manorial estate in the neighborhood, and in winter a resident in town, was indebted to Odoard, whose economical management had

accidentally though fortunately been of great advantage to her property and gave a prospect ultimately of a largely increased revenue from it. In summer she visited her estate, and made it the theatre of numerous agreeable diversions. Birthdays especially were never neglected, and all sorts of festivities were arranged.

Florina was a lively coquettish creature; attached as it seemed to no one, and neither claiming nor desiring any attachment. A passionate dancer, she only esteemed men in so far as they moved in good time. An everactive woman of society, she considered the man unendurable who even but one moment looked down and seemed to reflect; but in general displaying herself very gracefully as a lively lover such as are necessary in every play or opera—whence it happened that between her and Albertina, who played the dignified parts, no question of precedence ever arose.



To keep the coming birthday in good company, the best society from the town and from the country round about was invited. A dance, begun after breakfast, was continued after dinner; the gathering was protracted to great length; they drove away late, and, overtaken sooner than they expected by night on a bad road, which was doubly bad because it was being mended, the coachman mistook the way and threw them into a ditch. Our beauty with Florina and the gentleman friend felt themselves in a dreadful plight. The latter managed to extricate himself quickly; then stooping down over the carriage, he called. “Florina, where art thou?” Albertina thought she must be dreaming: he grasped something inside, and drew forth Florina, who lay on the top, in a swoon. He attended to her and at last carried her on his strong arm along the recovered road. Albertina was still wedged in the carriage. Coachman and servant helped her out, and supported by the latter she tried to go on. The road was bad, unsuited for dancing shoes; although held up by the boy she stumbled every moment. But within, the prospect was still wilder and more forlorn: how it came to pass she neither knew nor understood.

“But when she entered the inn, and in the little room saw Florina on the bed, with the hostess and Lelio busy about her, she was certain of her unhappiness. A secret understanding between the faithless friend and the treacherous companion was all at once made clear with the speed of lightning. She was forced to see how the latter, opening her eyes, threw herself on her admirer’s neck with the joy of newly awaking most tender affection: how the dark eyes again shone, a fresh color suddenly decked with charms the pale cheeks again: she really looked rejuvenated, charming and most lovely.

Albertina stood there, looking down, lonely and hardly noticed. The other two recovered and composed themselves; but the mischief was done. However, they were obliged to seat themselves again in the carriage, and in hell itself antithetic souls—betrayed and betrayers—could not have been so closely crowded together.

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CHAPTER XI.

Lenardo and Odoard also were for some days very busily occupied, the former in providing the emigrants with everything necessary, the latter in making the acquaintance of those who remained at home, and in judging of their capacities, in order to give them adequate information as to his own aims. In the meantime for Friedrich and our friend there was left opportunity and leisure for quiet discourse. Wilhelm got him to describe the plan in general, and when he had been made sufficiently familiar with the country and surroundings, and the hope had been expressed that they should see a large number of inhabitants dispersed in a widely extended domain, the conversation at last turned, as was natural, upon that which in point of fact holds men together—namely, religion and morality. Of this the lively Friedrich was able to give a sufficient account; and we should perhaps earn gratitude if we could give the progress of the conversation, which, by question and answer, objections and corrections, meandered on in a really commendable way, and with sundry deviations made its way pleasantly to the special end in view. In the meantime we must not linger so long, and we give its results at once rather than be obliged to let them come to view only little by little in our readers' minds. The following was the essence of what was dealt with:—

That man should accommodate himself to the inevitable, all religions require: each one in its fashion attempts to solve this problem. The Christian religion contributes most pleasingly to this by means of faith, love and hope: therefrom ensues patience, a sweet feeling of what a priceless gift existence still is, even though, in place of the desired enjoyment, the most hateful sorrows are laid upon it. To this religion we firmly hold, but in a peculiar way: we teach our children, from youth upwards, the great advantages that it has brought us; on the other hand we ultimately impart knowledge as to its origin and progress; only then does its Founder become dear and precious to us, and all information that relates to Him becomes holy. In this sense, which perhaps may be called pedantic, but yet must be recognized as logical, we endure no Jew amongst us: for how are we to allow him participation in the highest culture, the fountain-head and origin of which he denies?

From this our moral theory is entirely apart: it is purely a matter of deeds, and is comprised in the few commandments—Moderation in what is arbitrary, diligence in what is necessary. Now, everyone in the course of his life may assist himself of these laconic precepts after his own fashion, and he has a fruitful text for unlimited application.

The greatest reverence is impressed on all for Time, as the highest gift of God and Nature, and the most assiduous handmaid of existence. Clocks have been multiplied amongst us, and one and all indicate the quarters with hand and stroke: and in order to multiply such signals to the utmost, telegraphs are created in our country which if they are not deranged give, and truly by a very ingenious contrivance, the course of the hours by day and night.

Our moral theory, which is also quite practical, aims mainly at thoughtfulness; and this is furthered in the highest degree by division of time and attention to every hour. Something must be done at every moment, and how could this be effected if attention were not paid to the work as well as to the time.

Considering that we are only beginning, we lay great stress upon the family circle. On fathers and mothers of families we intend to impose great responsibilities: with us education becomes all the easier, as everyone must provide men and maids, men-servants and women-servants for himself.

It is true that certain things must be taught with a certain uniform sameness. To read, write, and reckon with facility, the abbé undertakes to teach the masses: his method is suggestive of mutual instruction, yet it is more intelligent: but, in fact, it all depends on educating teachers and scholars at the same time.

But there is another form of mutual instruction that I will mention: the practice of attack and self-defence. Here Lothario is in his element. His manœuvres have some similarity to those of our skirmishers, yet he cannot be otherwise than original.

Here I remark that in our civil life we have no bells, in military no drums: in one as in the other the human voice combined with wind instruments suffices. All this has for some time existed and still exists; but its proper application is left to the mind that would probably in any case have originated it.

The first requirement of a State is that of a courageous magistracy, and in that ours is not to be deficient; we are all impatient to approach the business, cheerful and convinced that one must begin simply. So we do not think about justice, but about police. Its fundamental principle is vigorously expressed. No one shall annoy another. Whoever makes himself a nuisance is kept apart, until he understands how a man must conduct himself in order to be endured. If there is anything lifeless, unreasoning, in point, this in like manner is put away.

In every district* there are three directors of police, who change with each other every eight hours, shift-wise as in mining, which also must never stand still, and one of our men will especially at night-time be ready.

They have the right to admonish, to blame, to scold and to reconcile. If they find it necessary they call together a larger or smaller number of the confraternity. If the votes are equal the president does not decide, but lots are drawn, because we are convinced that when opinions are directly opposed to each other, it is always a matter of indifference which will be followed. As for the majority we have altogether peculiar opinions: we let it hold good, it is true, in the necessary course of affairs; but in the higher sense we have not much confidence in it. However I must not expatiate further on this point.

If you ask about the higher authority that guides everything, it is never found in one place. It is continually moving about in order to maintain uniformity in the main thing, and in things permissible to grant everyone his will. This is a thing that has

already been done once in the course of history: the German emperors travelled about; and this institution is in the closest conformity with the idea of free States. We are afraid of a chief-town, although we already see the point in our possessions where the greatest number of people will collect together. But this we keep to ourselves: this will happen by degrees and will still be soon enough.

These are, in the most general way, the points about which we are for the most part agreed: yet whenever members come together in larger or smaller numbers they are always talked over again anew. But the main thing will be, when shall we find ourselves at the place and spot? The new state of things, which is however to last, is in fact expressed by the law. Our penalties are mild, admonition is allowed to everyone who has a certain age behind him: only the recognized elders may disapprove and blame, only a number convened can punish.*

It is noticed that severe laws are very soon blunted, and little by little become laxer, since Nature always asserts her rights. We have indulgent laws, so as to be able to get gradually more severe: our penalties consist first and foremost of a separation from civil society, milder or more vigorous, shorter or longer, as found necessary. If the property of the burgher citizen grows, little by little, something is nipped off here too, less or more as they deserve, so that they may suffer something from this point also.

Information on these points is given to all the members of the association, and in an examination that has been instituted it has been found that they all make the most appropriate application of the main points to themselves. The main thing always is only this, that we retain with ourselves the advantages of culture, and leave behind its disadvantages. Dram-drinking and circulating libraries are not allowed with us, but how we demean ourselves towards bottles and books, I would rather not disclose. Suchlike things will have to be done, if we are to criticise them.

And in just the same sense the collector and editor of these papers keeps back other regulations, which still circulate among the Society itself, as problems which perhaps it is not prudent to attempt at the present time and place; and so much the less approval could one anticipate if one ventured to mention such things circumstantially.

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CHAPTER XII.

The hour appointed for Odoard's address had come, and when all had been assembled, and were waiting quietly, he began to speak as follows:—

“The important work, in which I have invited this assembly of trusty men to take a part, is not quite new to you; for I have already talked with you in a general way about it. It is clear from my explanations that in the old world as well as in the new there are spaces which need better cultivation than has hitherto been bestowed upon them. In the latter, Nature has spread out vast and wide expanses, where she reposes untouched and uncivilized, so that one hardly ventures to attack her or challenge her to a contest. And yet to the resolute it is easy to win the waste places from her, bit by bit, and to make one's self safe of a part-ownership. In the old world the reverse is the case. Here a part-possession has been established everywhere already; the title thereto, more or less, consecrated from time out of mind; and whilst in the new world the illimitable appears as an insuperable obstacle, here the simply limited opposes hindrance almost more difficult still to be overcome. Nature is to be constrained by the activity of mankind, by force, or by persuasion.

“If individual ownership is regarded as sacred by the whole of society, by the owner himself it is still more so. Custom, youthful impressions, respect for ancestors, liking for one's neighbor, and a hundred other things, make the owner rigid and disinclined against every alteration. The older such a state of things is, the more complicated and subdivided, so much the more difficult is it to carry out a general plan which, while it took somewhat from individuals, would be of unlooked-for advantage to the whole, and even, by reaction and co-operation, to the individual again.

“For several years I have governed in the name of my sovereign a province that, being divided from his territories, has not been turned to as much account as would be possible. This very exclusion, or seclusion if you will, has hitherto prevented the establishment of any means which would have given the inhabitants opportunity of distributing abroad what they have and of receiving from abroad what they need.

“I governed this country with absolute authority; there was much good to be effected, but still always of a limited sort. Everywhere bars were imposed upon improvement, and what was most desirable seemed to be in another world.

“I had no other obligation but to be economical. What is easier than that! No less easy is it to put down abuses, to avail one's self of human capabilities, to help, to assist those who aspire. All this could be achieved quite easily with common-sense and authority. All this, in a measure, effected itself. But the direction in which my attention, my anxiety, was especially bestowed, was on the neighbors who, with no similar disposition and with by no means the same conviction, ruled their lands or caused them to be ruled.

“I had almost resigned myself, and kept as well as possible within my own domain, using the traditional state of things as well as might be; but I all at once observed that the age was coming to my assistance. Younger officials were installed in the neighborhood; they cherished similar intentions, though animated, it is true, only with a desire for the general good; and little by little they adopted my schemes for a universal combination, all the more readily because it fell to my lot to make the greater sacrifices, without any of them particularly noticing that the greater advantage also inclined to my side.

“So there are now three of us allied in governing considerable tracts of land; our princes and ministers are convinced of the honesty and utility of our plans; for certainly more is required to view one's advantage in the whole rather than in detail. In the latter, necessity always indicates to us what to do and what to leave undone, and thus it is quite enough if we apply this standard to existing circumstances; but in the other case we have to create a future; and even if a penetrating mind discover a plan for this, how can it hope to find others concurring in it?

“Nor would the individual succeed in this; time, which emancipates minds, at the same time gives them a wider outlook, and in the wider expanse the greater is more easily recognized, and one of the most powerful obstacles to human enterprises becomes more easily removed. This consists, to wit, in the fact that men may perhaps agree in their objects, but much more rarely in the means whereby they are to be attained. For the truly great raises us above ourselves, and shines before us like a star; but the choice of means calls us back within ourselves, and then the individual becomes just as he was, and feels himself just as isolated as if he had not previously been in accord as to the whole.

“Here then we must repeat—the age must help us; time must take the place of reason, and in a more expanded soul the higher interest must banish the more sordid one.

“Let this be enough; and should it be too much for the moment, I will afterwards recall it to the mind of every participator. Exact measurements have been taken; roads indicated, the positions determined in which inns, and ultimately perhaps villages, will be met with. For all sorts of structures opportunity, nay, necessity exists. First-rate architects and skilled workmen are making everything ready: drawings and plans are prepared. The intention is to settle large and small questions, and thus with strict control to lay out to the astonishment of the mother-country the sums of money lying ready: for we live in the best hope that a united activity will be developed from now onwards on all sides.

“But the point to which I have to draw the attention of all participators, since it may perhaps have an influence upon their decision, is the arrangement, the form in which we associate all the co-operators, and purpose to create for them a worthy position amongst themselves and in relation to the rest of the civic world.

“As soon as we enter the indicated territory the various handicrafts will forthwith be declared to be arts, and definitely divided and set apart, by the denomination *strict arts*, from those that are *free*. Here, at present, we can only speak of such occupations

as make building their object; all the men here present, young and old, rank themselves in this class.

“Let us here recount in order, how they raise the edifice on high, and step by step make it habitable. First of all name the stone-masons who work into completeness the foundation and corner-stone, which with the help of the masons they settle in the proper place and with the most exact measurement. Then follow the masons, who on the rigidly tested foundation make good assurance of the present and the future. Sooner or later the carpenter brings his contributions, made ready beforehand, and so the intended building gradually mounts on high. We summon the roofer as soon as possible: inside we require the joiner, the glazier, the locksmith, and if I name the whitewasher last it is because he can interpose, with his task, at the most varying season, and give the whole, inside and outside throughout, a pleasing appearance. Many coadjutors I do not mention, following only the principal plan.

“The grades of apprentice, craftsman, and master, must be most strictly observed: also in these there could be many graduations, but tests could not be too carefully imposed. Whosoever comes forward knows that he is devoting himself to strict art, and that he can look for no remissible claims from her. A single link breaking in a long chain spoils the whole: in great undertakings, as in great dangers, triviality must be banished.

“It is in this very aspect that the strict art must serve as a pattern to the free, and try to put her to shame. If we look at these so-called free arts, which yet in point of fact are only to be so taken and named in a higher sense, we find that it is utterly indifferent whether they are pursued well or ill. The worst statue stands on its feet, like the best, a painted figure steps forward briskly enough on its falsely drawn feet, its misshapen arms hold powerfully enough: the figures do not stand in the proper plane, but the ground does not on that account fall in. With music it is still more striking: the shrieking fiddle of a village tavern sets the sturdy limbs astir most potently; and we have listened to the most inept church music by which the faithful man has been edified. But would you wish to reckon poetry also among the free arts, you would verily see that this one hardly knows where it ought to find a limit. And yet every art has its inner laws, the disregard of which, however, inflicts no harm upon humanity; on the other hand, the strict arts can allow themselves no license. The free artist one can praise, and can find pleasure in his merits, even if his work on closer inspection will not hold its own.

“But if we regard the two, the free as well as the strict arts, in their most perfect conditions, the latter must beware of pedantry and prejudice, the former of carelessness and bungling. He who has to guide them will call attention to this. Misapplications and deficiencies will thereby be avoided.

“I do not repeat (for our whole life will be a repetition of what has been said)—I make only the following remark: He who takes to a strict art must devote himself to it for his whole life. Hitherto they have been called handiwork, quite appropriately and correctly: the experts ought to work with the hand, and the hand, if it is to do it, must

be animated by a life of its own; it must be a nature for itself, having its own thoughts, its own will, and this cannot be the case in several different ways.”

After the speaker had concluded with some additional good words, those present, one and all, arose; and the operatives, instead of withdrawing, formed an orderly circle in front of the table of the recognized leaders. Odoard handed round to all a printed sheet, from which, with modest liveliness, they sang a cheering song to a well-known melody:—

“Going, staying: staying, going,
Little recks the ready mind;
Wheresoe'er good work is doing
Richest realm he there shall find.
Following thee is little pain,
Whoso hearkens will attain:
Show us an abiding land!
Speed the Leader! Speed the Band!
“Strength and burden thou dost measure,
Weighing each with strictest truth,
Honor to the old, and leisure,
Task and helpmate to the youth,
Faith in others, help compelling,
Will upraise a decent dwelling;
On good neighbors 'twill depend
Yard and garden to defend.
“Where upon the trodden road
New-built hostels rest allow,
Where wide acres are bestowed,
Tribute to the stranger's plough,
There a home in common make we.
Hasten, hasten, hence betake ye
To the settled fatherland:
Speed our Leader! Speed our Band!”

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CHAPTER XIII.

A perfect rest succeeded all the busy movement of the past day. The three friends remained alone standing facing one another, and it was soon obvious that two of them, Lenardo and Friedrich, were moved by a strange unrest. Neither of them concealed that they were impatient to see themselves hindered from taking their share in the departure from this place; they were expecting a messenger, it appeared, and in the meantime nothing sensible or determinate was discussed.

At last the messenger comes, bringing an important packet, upon which Friedrich at once seizes in order to open it. Lenardo prevents him, and says, "Leave it untouched; lay it down on the table in front of us; we will look at it, think, and guess what it may contain. For our destiny is nearer to its decision, and if we are not ourselves masters of it, if it depends upon the understanding, the feelings of others, whether a *yes* or *no*, a *thus* or *thus*, is to be awaited, then it behoves us to stand calmly, to contain ourselves, to ask ourselves whether we could endure it—as if it were a so-called judgment of God—in whatever way we are enjoined to make a captive of reason."

"You are not so cool as you wish to appear," replied Friedrich; "so remain alone with your secrets, and dispose of them as you like; in any case they do not affect me. But meanwhile let me reveal the contents to this old and tried friend, and explain the ambiguous circumstances which we have so long concealed from him."

With these words he carried off our friend with him, and even on the way exclaimed, "She is found!—found long ago! and the question only is, what is to be done with her."

"I have found out that already," said Wilhelm, "for friends disclose to each other most clearly, exactly what they do not mention to each other; the last passage of the diary, where Lenardo, in the very midst of the mountains, remembers the letter that I wrote to him, summoned up in my imagination that good creature in complete communion of soul and feeling; I saw him the very next morning approach her, recognize her, and all else that would ensue. But then I will frankly confess that no curiosity, but honest sympathy, which I have devoted to her, disquieted me on account of your silence and reserve."



"And chiefly from this point of view," cried Friedrich, "you have a joint-interest in this very packet that has arrived. The continuation of the diary was sent to Makaria, and we did not wish to spoil for you, by an account of it, the seriously gratifying

incident. Now you shall have it, and at once. Lenardo, in the meantime, has surely opened it, and he does not need it for his enlightenment.”

Friedrich hereupon rushed away, after his old fashion, rushed in again, bringing with him the promised book.

“But now I must also find out what is to become of us.”

Hereupon he was off again, and Wilhelm read—

Lenardo'S Diary—*Continued.*

As there must needs be no diary to-day, in order to reach Frau Susanna's early, I breakfasted hurriedly with the whole family, returned thanks, with private good wishes, and left with the loomfitter, who remained behind, the presents intended for the young women, somewhat richer and more bridal-like than those of the day before yesterday, handing them over secretly to him, at which the good man seemed to be highly delighted.

This time the road was soon got over: after a few hours we saw, in a peaceful, not too broad and level valley, one rocky side of which was lightly washed by the waves of a most limpid lake in which it was reflected, some respectable well-built houses, round about which a better and carefully tended plot of soil, with a sunny aspect, was favorable to a certain amount of gardening. On being conducted by the yarn-man to the principal house, and introduced to Frau Susanna, I had a quite peculiar feeling, as she spoke to us in a friendly fashion, and assured us that she was very glad that we came on Friday, the quietest day in the week, for on Thursday evening the goods that were ready were taken to the lake, and to the town.

To the yarn-man, who interposed, saying, “I suppose Daniel always takes them down,” she replied, “To be sure; he looks after the business as well and faithfully as if it were his own.”

“However, there is no such great difference either.” answered the other; and having undertaken some commissions from the friendly hostess, he hastened off to finish his business in the side-valleys, promising to come back in a few days and fetch me away.

Meanwhile I felt in quite a strange state of mind. At my first entrance a strange presentiment had come over me that she was the much-desired one: on a longer inspection it was not she again, and could not be, and yet at a side view or when she turned round, it was she again: just as in a dream memory and fancy contend with one another.

Some spinning-girls who were behindhand with their work brought it in: the mistress, with the most kindly warning to be industrious, was bargaining with them, but in order to entertain her guest, she left the matter to two girls whom she called Gretchen and Lieschen, and whom I observed all the more attentively, as I wished to discover

in any case how they answered to the description of the loomfitter. These two forms led me quite astray, and destroyed all likeness between the object of my search and the housewife.

But I observed the latter all the more attentively, and in every way she seemed to me the worthiest, most amiable being of all that I had seen in my mountain travels. By this time I was sufficiently well instructed in the trade to be able to talk to her about the business, which she understood well, with knowledge: my intuitive sympathy delighted her, and when I asked her whence she got her supply of cotton, the wholesale transport of which across the mountains I had seen a few days before, she replied that this very consignment had included a considerable supply for her. The situation of her dwelling was also on this account fortunate, because the high road leading down to the lake ran at a distance of only about a quarter of an hour lower down her valley, where she either in person, or through an agent, received the bales which were consigned and addressed to her from Trieste; as had actually been the case the day before yesterday.

She now allowed her new friend to look into a large airy cellar, where the supply is stored, in order that the cotton may not get too dry, lose weight and become less pliable. Here too I found, for the most part, collected together what I had already seen in detail. She pointed out this thing and that, one after another, whilst I showed an intelligent interest. Meanwhile she became less talkative: by her questions I could guess that I was supposed to be connected with the trade. For she said that as the cotton had just arrived she was shortly expecting a clerk or partner from the Trieste firm, who after a discreet inspection of her circumstances would take back with him the sum of money due: that this was lying ready for any one who could show his credentials.

Somewhat embarrassed, I tried to turn it off, and looked after her as she just then walked across the room to arrange something. She seemed to me like Penelope among the maids. She returns, and I fancy that something has struck her.

“Then you are not a business man?” she said; “I do not know whence the confidence comes, and how I venture to inquire about your affairs. I certainly do not wish to be inquisitive, but let me know what your purpose is.”

Therewith a strange face looked at me with such familiar, recognizing eyes that I felt completely penetrated, and hardly managed to control myself. My knees, my thoughts, were on the point of failing me, when fortunately some one called her away very hurriedly. I was able to recover myself, to confirm my intention, and keep it as long as possible to myself. For I had a foreboding as if an unfortunate connection were again threatening me.

Gretchen, a really amiable child, led me off in order to show me the artistic fabrics; she did it sensibly and quietly. In order to show her my attention, I wrote down what she said to me in my pocket-book, where it still stands in witness of a purely mechanical process; for I had something quite different in my mind. It runs as follows:—

“The weft of piled as well as of drawn fabric is made, accordingly as the pattern requires, with white loosely spun so-called *muggenyarn*, at the same time also colored with Turkey-red, of the same kind as the blue yarn which is also used for stripes and flowers. On being clipped the web is wound on cylinders which form a table-shaped frame, round which several persons sit and work.”

Lieschen, who has been sitting amongst the clippers, stands up, joins us, and is eager to put in her word, and in fact in such a way as only to put the other one out by contradiction; and, when in spite of her, I gave more attention to Gretchen, Lieschen fussed about to fetch or take something, and in doing so she twice very distinctly grazed my arm with her soft elbow, without being forced to do so by the smallness of the room,—which did not particularly please me.

The good fair one (she deserves to be so called in a general way, but particularly when compared with the others) took me out into the garden to enjoy the evening sun, before it hid itself behind the mountain. A smile was hovering round her lips, as is often seen when one is hesitating to say something amusing; and in this hesitation I, too, seemed to feel a pleasure. We were walking side by side. I did not venture to give her my hand, glad as I would have been to do so. We both of us seemed to dread words and gestures through which the happy discovery might too soon become mutually evident. She showed me some flower-clusters, in which I at once recognized budding cotton-plants:—



“This is how we rear and foster the seeds that in our occupation are useless, not to say objectionable, and which come to us from such a long distance with the cotton. It is an act of gratitude, and there is a singular pleasure in seeing the living form whose lifeless remains animate our being. Here you see the beginning—the middle you know,—and this evening, if fortune favors, you shall see a joyful conclusion.

“We, the actual manufacturers, or an agent, on Thursday evening take the goods which have come in during the week to the market-boat, and thus, in company with others who pursue the same trade, we arrive at the earliest hour on Friday morning at the town. Here every one takes his goods to the merchants who deal in wholesale and try to dispose of them as well as possible, and perhaps also take ultimately, instead of payment, as much raw wool as is needed.

“But not only do the market-people in the town take away as much raw material as they require for manufacture, together with the profit in cash—they also provide themselves with many other things for their needs or enjoyment. Wherever one out of

the family has gone marketing to the town, there expectations, hopes, wishes, nay, often even anxiety and fear, are rife. Storm or thunder may come on, and there is anxiety lest the boat should come to harm! Those who are eager for profit loiter about, and long to hear how the sale of the goods has turned out, and already reckon in advance the amount of clear profit. The inquisitive wait for news from the town; those fond of dress look for articles of dress or fashions, which the traveller was commissioned to bring back with him; and lastly, the sweet-toothed, and especially the children, look for the eatables, even if they should be only seed-cakes.

“The departure from the town is generally delayed until towards evening; then the lake becomes all alive, and the boats, sailing or propelled by the strength of the rowers, glide across its surface. Everything is eager to outstrip the rest, and those who are successful jokingly banter those whom they see forced to lag behind.

“It is a joyous and pretty spectacle at the embarkation on the lake, when its surface, with the surrounding mountains illuminated by the evening glow, is warmly and more and more deeply shaded, when the stars become visible, the curfew bells are to be heard, candles are lighted in the villages on the bank, shining again in the water; then the moon rises, and scatters its light over the nigh motionless surface; the rich landscape flies by, village after village, homestead after homestead, are left behind. Arriving at last in the neighborhood of home a horn is blown, and lights are immediately seen shining here and there in the mountain, and moving down towards the shore. Every household that has a relative in the boat sends some one to help to carry the parcel. We are situated higher up; but every one of us has often enough taken part in this excursion, and so far as business is concerned we are all similarly interested.”

I had listened to her with astonishment to hear how well and beautifully she told it all, and could not refrain from remarking aloud: How could she, in this wild district with so mechanical an occupation, have attained to so much culture.

She answered, looking down with a most amiable, almost roguish smile, “I was born in a fairer and more kindly neighborhood, where clever men rule and dwell, and although as a child I was wild and unruly, yet the influence of highly gifted landowners in their surroundings was unmistakable; the greatest effect, however, upon a youthful being was due to a pious bringing up, which developed in me a certain sense of the just and proper, as derived from the omnipresence of divine love.

“We emigrated,” she continued—and the pretty smile forsook her lips; a suppressed tear filled her eye—“we wandered far, far, from one neighborhood to another, guided by religious indications and recommendations: at last we came hither to this most active region. The house in which you find me was occupied by people of like mind; they received us with confidence: my father spoke the same language in the same sense: we soon seemed to belong to the family.

“In all the business of the house and handicraft I took a vigorous part: and all of which you now see me the manager, I gradually learned, practised, and became proficient in. The son of the house, a few years my elder, well-made and handsome in

face, fell in love with me, and made me his confidential friend. He was of a strong and at the same time refined nature; piety as it was practised in the house found no acceptance with him: it did not satisfy him. He secretly read books which he managed to buy for himself in the town, of the sort which impart a more general, a freer tenor to the mind, and when he observed in me a similar tendency and a similar disposition, he took pains gradually to impart to me that which so earnestly occupied him. At last, when I entered into it all, he no longer abstained from disclosing to me his whole secret. And we really were a thoroughly wonderful couple, conversing in our lonely walks only on such principles as make people independent, whilst our actual terms of attachment seemed to consist only in mutually confirming one another in ideas of the kind by which people generally become completely alienated from each other.”

Although I did not look closely at her, but only glanced up from time to time as if by accident, yet I observed with astonishment and sympathy that her features immediately and entirely expressed the sense of her words. After a momentary silence her face brightened.

“I must make a confession,” she said, “with regard to your principal question, in order that you may be better able to account for my readiness of speech, which may often seem not quite natural.

“Unfortunately we were obliged to dissemble before the others, and although were closely on our guard against lying, and being deceitful in the vulgar sense, yet we actually were so in a more refined sense, inasmuch as we could not find any excuse for not attending the well-frequented meetings of brethren and sisters. But while we were forced to hear there a good deal against our convictions, still he soon made me see and understand that it did not all come freely from the heart, but that a good deal of verbiage, images, comparisons, traditional forms of speech, and a repetition of similar lines, were forever revolving round as if on a general axis. I now paid better attention, and picked up the language so closely, that I could have delivered a sermon as well, at any rate, as any superintendent. At first the good man was delighted at this: at last he grew impatient from satiety, so that to pacify him I adopted the opposite course, listened to him all the more attentively, and was able a week afterwards to repeat to him his cordially true sermon, with at least approximating freedom, and no very dissimilar spiritual character.

“Thus our connection grew into the most intimate bond, and a passion for any recognizable form of truth and goodness, as well as any practicable exercise of the same, was what actually united us.

“In thinking what it was that occasioned you to ask me for such a narrative as this, I recollect it was my lively description of a happily spent market-day. Do not wonder at this; for indeed it was a joyous, heartfelt contemplation of charming and sublime natural scenery that gave me and my bridegroom in peaceful and unoccupied hours our most charming converse. Excellent national poets had awakened and fostered the feeling in us. Haller's ‘Alps,’ Gesner's ‘Idylls,’ Kleist's ‘Spring,’ were often repeated by us, and we regarded the world that surrounded us, sometimes from its graceful, sometimes from its elevated side.

"I still like to remember how we two, keen and far-sighted, tried to vie, and often hastily, in making each other observe the phenomena in the earth and sky, endeavoring to surpass and overbid each other. This was the finest recreation, not only from the daily task, but also from those serious conversations which often plunged us only too deeply within ourselves, and threatened in that respect to disturb our peace.

"About this time a traveller, probably under a fictitious name, called at our house. We don't intrude further on him, since his character at once inspires our confidence; he behaves in everything with the greatest propriety, and is becomingly attentive in our assemblies. On being conducted about the mountain-side by my friend, he proved himself serious, observant and full of knowledge. I, too, take part in their moral discussions, in which everything that can be important to a thoughtful man comes by degrees under debate. Here he very soon remarks something uncertain in our mode of thought in reference to things divine. Religious expressions had become trite to us: the kernel which they should have contained had escaped us. So he made us observe the danger of our position, how precarious must be our divergence from the tradition with which, from our youth up, so much had been associated: it was in the highest degree dangerous, particularly in the state of imperfection of our own minds. It was true that religion, practised every day and every hour, at last became only a pastime and acted as a sort of police upon the outward demeanor, but no longer on the depths of the understanding: the only remedy for that was to call forth from our own hearts thoughts equally valid, equally effective, and equally soothing in a moral sense.

"Our parents had silently anticipated our union, and I know not how it was, but the presence of our new friend hastened the betrothal. It seemed to be his wish to celebrate this confirmation of our happiness in our quiet circle, and then too he must needs hear how the superintendent took the opportunity of reminding us of the Bishop of Laodicea, and of the great danger of lukewarmness which they thought that they had observed in us. We spoke of these subjects yet a few times; and he left behind for us a paper relating thereto, which I afterwards often had reason to look at again.

"He then left us, and it seemed as if every good spirit had gone away with him. It is not a new remark how the appearance of a great man in any circle makes an epoch, and on his departure there appears a gap in which a casual misfortune will often penetrate. And now let me cast a veil over what followed: through an accident the precious life of my betrothed, his noble form, was suddenly destroyed. He steadfastly devoted his last hours to seeing himself joined to me, inconsolable as I was, and securing me in the right to his inheritance. But what made this blow still more painful to the parents was that shortly before they had lost a daughter, and thus saw themselves in a most special sense bereaved; whereby their tender souls were so stricken that their lives were not long spared. They soon followed their dear ones; and yet another misfortune overtook me; for my father, struck with apoplexy, has still preserved, it is true, his bodily consciousness of the world, but neither spiritual nor physical activity in it. And thus I really had need of that self-dependence in the greatest stress and isolation, in which I had formerly practised myself when looking forward to a happy union and pleasant companionship in life, and in which but shortly

before I had singularly confirmed myself by help of the pure, encouraging precepts of the mysterious traveller.

“Yet I ought not to be ungrateful, since in these circumstances I have still a trusty helper left, who as my agent looks after everything that in such businesses seems to fall to the lot of manly activity. If he comes back from the town this evening and you have been able to make his acquaintance, you will see my wonderful dependence upon him.”

I had said a good deal in the meantime, and by approving and confidential sympathy tried to open out her heart more and more, and keep up the flow of her speech. I did not avoid touching quite closely what as yet had not been fully outspoken: she too was always drawing nearer to it, and we had got so far that on the slightest pretext the open secret would have come forth in words.

She stood up and said, “Let us go to my father.” She hastened on, and I followed slowly. I shook my head over the strange situation in which I found myself. She showed me into a very neat back room, where the good old man sat motionless in the arm-chair. He was little altered. I went up to him: he at first looked at me with a rigid stare, then with more animated eyes; his features grew bright, he tried to move his lips, and when I stretched out my hand to take his as it lay, he grasped mine of his own accord, pressed it, and jumped to his feet, stretching out his arms towards me. “O God!” he exclaimed, “Squire Lenardo! it is he, it is he himself!”

I could not refrain from pressing him to my heart; he sank back into the chair, his daughter ran forward to help him; she too exclaimed, “It is he! It is you, Lenardo!”

The younger niece had come in; they led the father, who all at once was able to walk again, to his bedroom, and turning towards me he said quite distinctly, “How happy! happy! we shall meet again soon!”

I stood still, looking straight before me and thinking; Mariechen came back, and handed me a paper with the information that it was the one referred to. I at once recognized Wilhelm's hand, even as before his person had occurred to me from the description. Many strange faces crowded round about me; there was a peculiar excitement in the entrance. And what a repelling sensation it is, from the enthusiasm of a genuine recognition, from the assurance of a grateful recollection, the appreciation of a wonderful event in life, and whatever else ardent and beautiful that may arise in us therewith—to be brought back all at once to the uncouth reality of a distracted every-day dulness.

This time Friday evening was not so generally cheerful and merry as it otherwise might have been. The agent had not returned from the town in the market-boat. He would come by another opportunity, and bring with him all that had been ordered and promised. The neighbors, young and old, who as usual had gathered together in expectation, pulled long faces: Lieschen especially, who had gone to meet him, seemed in a very bad humor.

I had taken refuge in my room, keeping the papers in my hand without looking into them: for it had already given me some private vexation to find from her narrative that Wilhelm had accelerated the betrothal. "Thus are all friends, they are all diplomatists: instead of responding honestly to our confidence, they pursue their own plans, thwart our wishes, and lead our destiny astray!" Thus I exclaimed: however, I soon recovered from my injustice, allowed that my friend was right, especially in view of the present situation, and no longer forbore to read what follows.

"Every human being, from the earliest moment of his life, is first unconscious, then half-conscious, and at last wholly so: he finds himself forever controlled, limited in his position; but as no one knows the end and aim of his existence, or rather, as its secret is withheld by the hand of the Most High, he therefore only gropes about, grasps at, leaves hold, stands still, moves, lingers and worries, and so on in so manifold ways, as all the errors which confuse us arise.



"Even the wisest is compelled in daily life to be wise for the moment, and by that means attains no enlightenment in the universal. Seldom does he know for certain whither he has to turn in the future, and what he really has to do and to leave undone.

"Happily all these, and yet a hundred other wondrous questions are answered by your incessantly active course of life. Persevere in direct observance of the day's duty, and thereby test the purity of your heart, and the safety of your soul. If thus in unoccupied hours you aspire, and find opportunity to elevate yourself, you will so gain a right attitude towards the sublime, to which we must in every way reverently surrender ourselves, regard every occurrence with veneration, and acknowledge therein a higher guidance."

Saturday, 20th.

Absorbed in thoughts in whose wondrous mazes a feeling soul will gladly accompany me with sympathy, I had with daybreak walked to and from the lake. The housewife (I was glad to be unable to think of her as a widow) showed herself just when she was wanted, first at the window, then at the door: she told me that her father had slept well, had woke up in good spirits, and had declared in distinct words that he desired to remain in bed, and to see me, not to-day, but to-morrow after service, when he would certainly feel well strengthened. She then said to me that to-day she intended to leave me a good deal alone: for her it was a very busy day; she came down-stairs and gave me an account of it.

I listened to her, only for the sake of hearing her; at the same time I satisfied myself that she seemed to be thoroughly penetrated by the business, invested with it, as traditional duty, and was busy by her own consent.

She continued: "It is usual and understood that the web be ready towards the end of the week, and on Saturday afternoon be taken to the contractor, who looks through it, measures and weighs it, in order to ascertain that the work is properly done and free from blemish, and whether the proper amount in weight and measure has been delivered to him; and if all is found to be correct, he then pays the wages agreed upon. He is careful, on his own part, to free the woven piece from all manner of threads and knots that may be attached to it, to lay it down in the neatest way, keeping the side that is finest and most free from blemish upwards to the sight, and thus to make the goods acceptable in the highest degree."

In the meantime a number of weaving girls were coming in from the mountain, bringing their wares to the house, amongst whom, too, I noticed her who employed our loomfitter. She thanked me very kindly for the present I had left behind me, and prettily told me that the loomfitter was with them, and was working to-day at their loom, and had assured her as she left that what he was doing to it would be seen directly by Frau Susanna in the work. Thereupon she went like the rest into the house, and I could not refrain from asking the dear good-wife, "For Heaven's sake, how did you come by this extraordinary name?"

"It is the third," she said, "that they have imposed upon me: I willingly assented, for my father- and mother-in-law wished it. It was the name of their lost daughter, whose place they wished me to take, and the name is ever the best and most living substitute for the person."

To this I answered, "A fourth has been found already. I would name you Fair-good-one if it depended on me."

She made a very pretty humble curtsey, and managed to combine and set-off her delight at the recovery of her father with her pleasure at seeing me again, in such a way that I thought I had never heard and felt anything more flattering and delightful in all my life.

The Fair-good-one, summoned twice or thrice into the house, handed me over to a sensible well-informed man, who was told to show me the curiosities of the mountain. We went together, under the finest sky, through richly varied tracts. But it may be taken for granted that neither rock nor wood nor waterfall, still less mills and smithies, or even families who worked cleverly enough in wood, could gain any attention from me. However, the excursion was arranged for the whole day; the porter carried a fine breakfast in his knapsack; at midday we found a good meal in the counting-house of a mine where no one could quite make me out; for to active people nothing is more objectionable than an empty indifference simulating interest.

But least of all did the guide understand me; the yarn-man had recommended me to him with great praise of my fine technical knowledge and special interest in such

things. That good man had also told him of my copious writing down and noting, for which his fellow-mountaineer had likewise prepared himself. My guide waited a long time for me to pull out my note-book, which at last he somewhat impatiently inquired after.

Sunday, 21st.

Midday had almost come before I could see my dear friend again. The family service, at which she did not want me to be present, was held in the meantime; the father had taken part in it, and uttering words most edifying, distinctly and intelligently, he had moved her and all who were present to the most heartfelt tears.

“They were,” she said, “familiar proverbs, rhymes, expressions and turns that I had heard a hundred times and been vexed at as hollow sounds: but now they flowed forth so heartily molten together, quietly glowing, and free from slag, just as we see the molten metal flow out into the mould. I was afraid and anxious that he would exhaust himself in these outpourings: however, he let himself be taken quite cheerfully to bed: he wished quietly to collect himself, and to have the guest summoned to him as soon as he felt strong enough.”

After dinner our talk became more animated and confidential: but for this very reason I could the better feel and perceive that she was keeping something back, that she was struggling with disquieting thoughts, so that she did not quite succeed in brightening up her face. After I had tried one way and another to get her to speak out, I frankly said that I fancied I saw in her a certain dulness, an expression of anxiety: whether they were domestic or business troubles, she ought to confide in me. I was rich enough to pay her an old debt in any way.



She denied with a smile that this was the case. “I thought,” she continued, “when you first came, that you were one of the firm who give me credit in Trieste, and I was well pleased that I had my money ready at hand, whether they wanted the whole sum or a part of it. What troubles me is, nevertheless, a business anxiety, unfortunately not for the moment, no! for the whole future. The machinery that is getting the upper-hand frightens me and makes me anxious: it comes rolling on like a thunderstorm, slowly, slowly, but it has taken its direction; it will come, and strike. My husband was penetrated even by this melancholy conviction. People think about it, talk of it, and neither thinking nor talking can be of any use; and who would like to realize such horrors! Only think that there are many valleys winding through the mountain, like that through which you came down; that comely joyous life still flits before you, as you have seen it there during these past days, whereof the gayly dressed crowd thronging from all directions yesterday gave the happiest evidence, bethink you, how

this will little by little collapse, die out, and the desert animated and peopled for centuries will again fall back into its primeval solitude.

“There remain only two roads to choose from; one as sad as the other—either to take to the new state of things one's self and hasten on ruin, or to break up, take the best and worthiest along with us, and seek a better destiny beyond the sea. One as well as the other has its dangers, but who is there to help us to weigh the reasons which should decide us? I know very well that people are going about in the neighborhood with the idea of setting up machines, and taking the bread out of the mouths of the common people. I cannot blame any one for thinking of himself first. But I should think myself despicable if I were to plunder these poor people, and see them go away at last poor and helpless: and go away they must, sooner or later. They forbode it, they know it, they say it, and no one decides to take any saving step. And yet where is the resolution to come from? is it not as difficult to every one as to me?

“My betrothed had made up his mind to emigrate with me: he often communed with himself about the means and ways of getting himself free from here. He looked about for the better men, whom one could gather round one's self, with whom one could make common cause; whom one could draw to one and take away with one; we longed, with perhaps too youthful hopefulness, for lands where that might count for duty and right that here would be a crime. Now the case is just the opposite. The honest helper, who remained to me after my husband's death, excellent in every sense, attached to me by friendship and love, is of a quite contrary opinion.

“I must speak of him before you have seen him: I would rather have done it afterwards, because personal presence clears up many a riddle. About the same age as my husband, he attached himself as a poor little boy to his well-to-do, kindly-disposed playmate; to the family, the house, and the business. They grew up together, and held together, and the pair were of quite different natures: the one frank and communicative, the other oppressed in early youth, reserved, holding firmly to the least acquired possession, of pious disposition it is true, but thinking more of himself than of others.

“I know very well that from the first he had turned his eyes towards me (he might well do so, for I was poorer than he), yet he kept himself in the background as soon as he noticed his friend's attachment to me. By steady industry, energy and trustworthiness, he soon made himself a partner in the business. My husband secretly entertained the thought of settling him here when we emigrated, and intrusting him with everything that was left. Soon after our excellent one's death he approached me, and before long he did not conceal the fact that he was a suitor for my hand. But now came the doubly wonderful circumstance that he steadfastly declared himself against emigration, and, on the contrary, eagerly urged that we should even set up machines. His reasons are certainly cogent, for on our mountain there lives a man, who, if he liked to abandon our simpler appliances, and construct more complicated ones for himself, could easily bring us to ruin. This—in his own department a very skilful man (we call him the loomfitter)—is a dependent of a well-to-do family in the neighborhood, and one might well believe that he intended to make use of this rising discovery for the benefit of himself and his patrons. There is nothing to be said

against my assistant's arguments, for too much time has in a way been already wasted, and if they get the start, we must, even at a loss, take the same course. This is what frightens me and makes me anxious; it is this, my dearest friend, that makes you seem to me like a guardian angel."

I had little that was consoling to say in reply; I must needs find the case complicated enough to demand time for me to think over it.

"However," she continued, "I have still much to disclose, which will make my situation seem yet more wonderful to you. The young man, to whom personally I am not averse, but who would by no means supply the place of my husband, nor win my special affection" (she sighed as she said this), "has lately become decidedly more urgent; his representations are as amiable as they are sensible. The necessity of giving him my hand, the imprudence of thinking of emigration, and thus neglecting the only real means of self-preservation, are not to be denied; and my opposition, my whim of emigrating, seems to him to agree so little with the rest of my disposition to good management, that at our last somewhat hasty conversation I could detect the supposition that my affections must be placed elsewhere."

She brought out this last sentence with hesitation, and looked down before her. What passed through my soul at these words let anyone imagine, and yet as reflection followed with the speed of lightning, I could not but feel that every word would increase the complication; and yet, at once, as I stood thus before her, I was most distinctly conscious that I had got to love her most profoundly, and I had to employ all that was left me of rational intelligent strength to refrain from offering her my hand forthwith. "Yet she could leave everything behind her," I thought, "if she follows me." However, the sorrows of past years held me back. "Shouldst thou cherish a false hope, to repent of it your life long?"

We had both stood for some time in silence, when Lieschen, whom I had not seen enter, surprised us by coming up and asking permission to spend this evening at the neighboring forge. It was granted with hesitation.

I had in the meantime collected myself, and began to tell, in a general way, how in my travels I had long seen all this coming on—how the impulse and necessity for emigration was growing stronger every day; and yet this always involved the greatest risk. To hurry away unprepared brought an unhappy return. No other undertaking demanded so much foresight and guidance as this.

This view was not new to her; she had thought a great deal about all contingencies; but at last she said, with a deep sigh, "During these days of your stay here I have been continually hoping to gain comfort by confidential communication, but I feel in a worse position than before; I feel most deeply how unhappy I am."

She looked up to me, but to hide the tears welling out of her good and beautiful eyes, turned round and went a few paces apart.

I will not excuse myself; but the wish to distract at least, if not to comfort this noble soul, gave me the idea of speaking to her of the wonderful reunion of several wanderers and parted friends in which I had had a share some time ago. I had unwittingly so far expiated that I should scarcely have been able to restrain myself, when I became aware of how imprudent my confidence might have been. She calmed herself, wondered, brightened up, disclosed her whole being, and questioned me with such fondness and cleverness, that I was no longer able to avoid confessing everything to her.

Gretchen came in, and said that we might go to her father. The girl seemed very thoughtful and vexed as she went out. Fair-good-one said to her, "Lieschen has leave to go out this evening; you will look after the business."

"You should not have given it," replied Gretchen; "she is after no good. You indulge the mischievous thing more than is right, and trust her more than you ought. I have just found out that she wrote a letter to him yesterday evening: she listened to your conversation: now she is going to meet him."

A child who had in the meantime remained with the father begged me to make haste: the good man was restless. We went in: cheerful, nay, strangely beautiful he was, sitting up in bed.

"Children," said he, "I have spent these hours in continual prayer; not one of all David's Psalms of thankfulness and praise has been passed over by me; and to them I add from my own mind, with confirmed faith: Wherefore hopeth man only when near at hand? Then he must act, and help himself; from afar should he hope and trust in God."

He grasped Lenardo's hand, and then the hand of his daughter, and laying them one in the other he said, "This must not be an earthly, it must be a heavenly bond: as brother and sister love, trust, serve and help one another, as unselfishly as may God help you;" as he said this he sank back with a heavenly smile, and was gone home. The daughter threw herself down by the bed, Lenardo close by her: their cheeks touched, their tears flowed together upon his hand.

The assistant at this moment runs in, and is transfixed at the scene. With a wild look, shaking his black locks, the handsome young man cries, "He is dead, at the moment when I was about to appeal urgently to his restored speech to decide my fate and his daughter's—the being whom next to God I love the most, for whom I desired a sound heart, a heart that could feel the worth of my affection! For me she is lost, she kneels near another! Has he given you his blessing? Say only that it is so!"

The noble creature had meanwhile risen to her feet: Lenardo had got up and recovered himself. She said, "I recognize you no longer, the gentle, pious, and all at once so distracted man: yet do you not know how grateful I am to you, what I think of you?"

"It is not a question of thanking and thinking," replied the other, quieted, "it is a matter of happiness or unhappiness for all my life. This strange man troubles me: as I

look at him, I do not trust myself to outweigh him: to push out former rights, to loosen former ties I cannot pretend.”

“As soon as you can come back to yourself,” said my kind one, more beautiful than ever, “when it is possible to talk to you as at other times and always, then I will tell you, will swear to you by the earthly remains of my glorified father, that I have no other relation to this gentleman and friend, than you can recognize, approve and share, and for which you must be glad.”

Lenardo quailed to the depths of his heart: they all three stood for awhile, quite silent and thoughtful. The young man was the first to break the silence: and said, “The moment is one of too great significance to be aught but decisive. It is not upon the spur of the moment that I speak. I have had time to think; do you then listen! Your reason for refusing me your hand was my refusal to follow you, if from necessity or caprice you were to emigrate. Here then I solemnly declare before this competent witness that I will place no obstacle in the way of your departure, rather will I further it, and follow you everywhere. But in return for this declaration, which has not been forced from me, but only accelerated by these strange circumstances, I this moment ask you for your hand.”

He stretched forth his own, and stood there calm and confident. The two others, overcome with surprise, shrank back involuntarily.

“It is decreed,” said the youth, with a certain pious exultation. “It is to happen; it is to the interest of us all: God has willed it! But that you may not think that it is hastiness and caprice, at least learn that for love of you I had renounced mountains and rocks, and have even now been arranging everything, in the town, in order to live according to your wishes. But now I go alone; you will not deny me the means to do so. You would still have enough left to lose here, as you dread, and as you have reason to dread. For I have at last convinced myself also that that skilful, industrious rascal has betaken himself to the upper valley, and is there setting up machinery. You will soon see him drawing to himself all means of support: perhaps you will call back—only too soon—a true friend whom you drove away.”

Three people have seldom stood in a more painful position towards one another: all at the same time in dread of losing one another: and at the moment ignorant of how they should reciprocally retain each other.

The youth with passionate determination rushed out of the door. The Fair-good-one had laid her hand upon her father's chilled breast. “From near at hand one must not hope,” she exclaimed, “but from afar: that was his last blessing. Let us trust in God: each one in himself and in the other, and so it will be well!”

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CHAPTER XIV.

Our friend read what was put before him with great interest, but at the same time he must needs confess that at the end of the preceding portion he had already suspected, nay, supposed, that the good creature had been discovered. The description of the rugged mountain-country had first inspired him with this idea; but he had been especially set upon the track by Lenardo's presentiment on that moonlight night, as well as by the repetition of the words of his own letter. Friedrich, to whom he told all this circumstantially, quite agreed with his view.

But here the duty of communicating, describing, setting forth and condensing becomes more and more difficult. Who does not feel that we are now approaching the end, where the fear of lingering over details, with the wish to leave nothing incompletely cleared up, places us in a dilemma. It is true that by the despatch just arrived we have been enlightened about a good deal; however, the letters, and the many enclosures, contain various things which are not of general interest. We have accordingly resolved to combine what we then knew and found out, and that too which came to our knowledge later, and with this intent conclude with confidence the serious task that we have taken in hand of a faithful referee.

Before all else then we have to announce that Lothario with Theresa his wife, and Natalia, who did not wish to be parted from her brother, in company with the abbé, were actually already gone to sea. They started under favorable auspices, and it is to be hoped that a favorable wind fills their sails. The only unpleasant sentiment, a real moral grief, that they take with them, is that they were not able first to pay their visit to Makaria. The circuit was too great, the undertaking too important. They already had some delay to blame themselves for, and must sacrifice even a pious duty to necessity.

We, however, on our part as relator and describer, ought not let these beloved persons, who in times past won so much of our affection, depart to so great a distance, without having imparted some more particular information as to their intentions and doings hitherto, especially as it is so long since we have heard anything explicit about them. Nevertheless, we shall omit to do so, because their task hitherto has only referred, as a preparation, to the great undertaking upon which we see them embarking. We live, however, in the hope of satisfactorily meeting them again at some future day in full methodical activity, making manifest the real worth of their several characters.

Julietta, the sensible good one, whom we may still recollect, had married a man after her uncle's heart, working thoroughly with sympathy and energy in his own direction. Julietta was latterly a good deal with the aunt, where many of those upon whom she had exercised a beneficial influence met together, not only such as remain devoted to the mainland, but those also who intend to go across the sea. Lenardo, on the other hand, had already taken leave of Friedrich. The communication through messengers between them was so much the more active.



LENARDO AND GRETCHEN KNEELING.

If then those worthy people above-mentioned were absent from the catalogue of the guests, still there were to be found amongst them many important persons already intimately known to us. Hilaria came with her husband, who now appeared as a captain and indubitably rich landowner. She, with her great grace and amiability, gained here as always an easy pardon for her too great readiness to change in passing from one source of interest to another, of which in the course of this narrative we have found her guilty. The men especially did not tax her severely for it: a fault of this kind, if it is one, they do not consider objectionable, since each one may wish and hope that he too may have a turn.

Flavio, her husband, vigorous, cheerful and amiable enough, seemed to rivet her affection completely: she might well have forgiven herself for the past; even Makaria found no occasion to refer to it. He, the always passionate poet, begged on parting to be allowed to recite a poem that he had composed in honor of her and her surrounding friends during the few days of his stay here. He had often been seen walking up and down in the open air, after a short pause again walking forwards with excited gestures, writing at the desk, then thinking and writing again. But now he seemed to regard it as finished when he made his wish known through Angela.

The good lady, though unwillingly, gave her consent, and at all events it might be listened to, although one learned nothing more from it than one knew already, felt nothing but what one had already felt. Meanwhile, however, the delivery was easy and pleasing, treatment and rhymes partly new, though on the whole one might have wished it somewhat shorter. At last, he handed it over, very beautifully written on wide-bordered paper, and they separated with perfect mutual satisfaction.

This couple had returned from a notable, well-employed tour to the south in order to release their father, the major, from the house: who with the Irresistible one, who had now become his wife, also wished to inhale a little of the air of Eden for some measure of refreshment.

Thus these two also come in their turn, and so with Makaria as everywhere the Wonderful one found special favor, which was especially shown in this that the lady

was received in the inner room and alone, which favor was afterwards accorded to the major also. He proved himself thereupon to be a cultivated military man, a good manager of house and land, a friend of literature, even worthy of praise as a didactic poet; and he experienced a good reception from the astronomer and other intimates of the house.

He was especially distinguished also by our old friend the worthy uncle, who, living at some distance, at this time came over oftener than he was otherwise wont to do, though it were only for a few hours at a time; but he could not be persuaded to stay for a single night, though the best accommodation was offered to him.

Yet at such short meetings his presence was in the highest degree gratifying, for he was then willing as a man of the world and of the court to appear in an indulgent and intermediary character, in which accordingly a trace of aristocratic pedantry was not found unpleasant. Moreover, his good-humor now proceeded from his heart; he was happy, as we all feel when we have to deal with matters of importance with sensible rational people. The comprehensive business was in full course; it went on continuously with carefully fostered collaboration.

To this he gave only his principal moments. He is a landowner, by inheritance from his ancestors, beyond the seas. What that implies, he who understands the position of affairs there may explain more in detail to his friends, for it will of necessity take us too far now. These important possessions had hitherto been let on lease, and under various drawbacks brought in little. The association with which we are sufficiently acquainted is now authorized to take possession there, in the midst of the most perfect civil institutions, from which as an influential link of the State it can look for advantage to itself, and spread itself still further in the uncultivated waste. Here then will Friedrich with Lenardo come especially to the front to show how one can in point of fact begin from the beginning and strike out a natural path.

Hardly had those we have named departed, satisfied in the highest degree with their stay, when there were announced some guests of a very different sort, and yet welcome ones too. We should scarcely have expected to see Philina and Lydia make their appearance in a place of such sanctity, and yet they arrived. Montan, who was still lingering in the mountains, was presently to fetch them, and take them by the nearest road to the lake. Both were very well received by the housekeepers, stewardesses, and other women who had situations or dwelt in the house. Philina brought with her a pair of most lovable children, and while simply and very attractively dressed she distinguished herself by an extraordinary habit. From her flower-embroidered belt she carried, hanging from a long silver chain, a moderately large pair of English scissors, with which she would often snip and snap in the air, just as if she wanted to give emphasis to her conversation, and by doing this she aroused the merriment of all present, whereupon also the question soon followed whether it could be that, in so large a family, there was no cloth to cut. And then it was discovered very fortunately for such energy, that a couple of brides were to be fitted out. Hereupon she looks at the costume of the country, and bids the girls walk up and down before her, whilst she cuts away; in doing which she proceeded with spirit and taste, and, without in any way detracting from the character of such a costume, she

managed to soften down its peculiar stiff barbarousness with so soft a grace that the two thus clothed pleased themselves and others better, and overcame their anxiety lest they might have deviated from what was traditional.

Now came Lydia, who was skilful in sewing readily, neatly and swiftly, to their complete assistance, and one might venture to hope to see the brides, with the aid of the rest of the womankind, dressed out more quietly than one would have thought, and in the meantime these girls dared not go far away. Philina busied herself with them down to the minutest details, and treated them as if they were dolls or stage-dummies. Heaps of ribands and other festive array usual in the neighborhood were fittingly distributed, and at last the result was attained that these buxom bodies and neat figures, generally decked out with barbarous formality, now became somewhat conspicuous, but in such a way that all vulgarity seemed in every point toned down into a sort of gracefulness.

But over-busy people, in circumstances restricted by uniform rules, become wearisome. Philina with her voracious scissors had got into the rooms where the stores for the clothing of the large household lay at hand in materials of various kinds. There she experienced, in the prospect of cutting it all up, the greatest delight: it was necessary actually to take her out, and lock the door fast; for she knew neither bounds nor measure. Angela, on this account, really would not be treated as a bride; for she dreaded such a slasher; in general the relations between the two were by no means happily brought out. This however, can only be enlarged on later.

Montan put off coming longer than had been anticipated, and Philina insisted on being presented to Makaria. This was done, for then they hoped that they would get rid of her all the sooner, and it was a sufficiently remarkable sight to see the two sinners at the feet of the Saint. They lay at her knees on either side, Philina between her two children, whom she urged down with demonstrative gracefulness. With her wonted geniality she said—"I love my husband, my children. I gladly work for them, for others too: forgive the rest." Makaria saluted and blessed her; she withdrew with a becoming bow.

Lydia lay to the left side of the saintly woman with her face on her breast, weeping bitterly and unable to utter a word. Makaria, interpreting her tears, tapped her on the shoulder as if she would soothe her. Then with pious intent she fervently and repeatedly kissed her head between the parted tresses, as it lay in front of her. Lydia raised herself, first to her knees, then to her feet, and regarded her benefactress with pure joy.

"What has happened to me!" she said; "how do I feel! The heavy painful burden, which deprived me, if not of all consciousness, at least of all reflection, is suddenly lifted from off my head: I can now look upwards freely, direct my thoughts on high, and," she added after drawing her breath deeply, "I believe my heart will follow."

At this moment the door opened, and as frequently one too long awaited will suddenly and unexpectedly appear, Montan came in. Lydia stepped gleefully up to him,

embraced him joyfully, and as she led him to Makaria, she exclaimed, "He shall know how he is indebted to this divine one, and gratefully kneel down with me."

Montan, surprised, and contrary to his usual custom somewhat embarrassed, said with a graceful bow towards the worthy lady, "It seems to be a great deal; for I become your debtor. It is the first time that you have come frankly and lovingly to me, the first time that you have pressed me to your heart, although I have long deserved it."

We must now confidentially disclose that Montan had loved Lydia from her early youth, that the more engaging Lothario had enticed her from him, but that he had remained faithful to her and to his friend, and at last, probably to the no small surprise of our earlier readers, had gained her for his wife.

All these three, who would not have been able to feel quite at ease in European society, scarcely placed limits to the expression of their joy when the expected settlement abroad was spoken of. Philina's scissors were already snipping; for she was thinking of securing the monopoly of providing this new colony with articles of apparel. Philina described very prettily the large store of cloth and linen, and snipped in the air, "already beholding," she said, "the harvest for scythe and sickle before her."

Lydia, on the other hand, only now by that happy blessing awakened again to sympathetic love, saw already in spirit her scholars increasing a hundredfold, and a whole population of housewives led on and stirred up to exactitude and elegance. The earnest Montan too has all the mineral wealth of those regions in lead, copper, iron and coal before his eyes, to such an extent that he is often ready to declare all his knowledge and ability as mere painful groping experiment towards the rich remunerative harvest that he there should first boldly gather in.

That Montan would soon be on good terms with our astronomer was to be foreseen. The discussions which they carried on in Makaria's presence were attractive in the highest degree. However, we find but little of them to write down, Angela having been for some time less attentive in listening and more careless in writing them out. Much of it too might seem to her too general, and not sufficiently comprehensible for a young lady. We therefore insert in passing only a few of the utterances of those days which have come to us—in no case in her handwriting.

In the study of the sciences, particularly those that deal with nature, it is as necessary as it is difficult to inquire whether that which has been handed down to us from the past, and regarded as valid by our ancestors, is really to be relied on to such a degree that we may continue to build upon it safely in the future; or whether traditional knowledge has become only stationary, and hence occasions inertia rather than progress. There is one characteristic that furthers this inquiry—whether, namely, the received results are being, and have been, and remain influential in and promotive of active endeavor.

The testing of the new stands in the opposite case—when one has to ask whether what is received is real profit or only fashionable conformity. For an opinion emanating

from energetic men spreads like contagion throughout the crowd, and then it is said to be prevalent—an assumption that to the true inquirer expresses no idea. Church and State may at any rate have reasons to declare themselves dominant; for they have to do with the recalcitrant multitude, and if only order is kept, it is all the same by what means; but in the sciences absolute freedom is necessary; for then one is working not for to-day and to-morrow, but for an endlessly progressive succession of years.

But, moreover, if in science the false gets the upper hand, yet there will always remain a minority for the true; and if it should contract into one single spirit it would not matter: he will work his way in silence, in secret, and a time will come when people will inquire about him and his convictions, or when with the general diffusion of enlightenment they will venture to present themselves again.

But a subject less general, though incomprehensible and extraordinary, that came under discussion, was Montan's casual disclosure that in his mountain and mining investigations he was assisted by a being who displayed the most wonderful qualities, and a quite peculiar relation to everything that one might call stone, mineral—even in general, an element. This being felt not only a great effect from waters flowing underground, from metalliferous layers and veins, as well as coal measures, and aught else of the sort that lay together in masses, but, what was more wonderful, it felt different and again different as soon as it merely changed its soil. The different sorts of mountains exercised a special influence upon it, about which since he had managed to produce a language which was strange enough, but at the same time sufficient, he was able to arrive at a clear understanding with it and test it in details, when it stood the test in a remarkable way, being able as it was to distinguish chemical as well as physical elements by the feeling, nay, even distinguishing by look alone the heavier from the lighter substances. This being, about whose sex he would not disclose himself more plainly, he has sent forward with the departing friends, and he hoped a good deal from it in furtherance of his aims in the unexplored districts.

This confidence on the part of Montan opened the stern heart of the astronomer, who accordingly, with Makaria's consent, revealed to him in return her relation to the planetary system. By the aid of later communications by the astronomer we are in a position to impart, if not adequately, at any rate the chief point of their conversations on such important subjects.

Let us, in the meanwhile, admire the similarity of the cases here occurring, together with the greatest diversity. One friend, in order not to become a Timon, had plunged himself into the deepest caverns of the earth; and even there he was aware that in human nature there is something analogous to what is most rigid and uncouth. To the other, on the contrary, Makaria's spirit gave an instance of the fact that as in the former case, tarrying, so in this case distant removal, is the attribute of gifted natures; and that it is necessary neither to penetrate to the centre of the earth, nor to remove beyond the limits of our solar system, but that they are already sufficiently occupied, and in particular made attentive to action and summoned to it. Upon and in the soil is found matter for the highest earthly requirements, a world full of material, handed over to the manipulation of man's highest faculties; but upon that spiritual road sympathy, love and orderly free activity are always found. To reconcile these two

worlds with one another, to make manifest their double-sided peculiarities in the passing phenomenon of life, is the highest form to which man can develop himself.

Hereupon the two friends made a contract, and undertook in any case not to conceal their experiences; for he who could smile at them as tales well suited for a romance, might still continue to regard them as a symbol of all that was most worthy to be desired.

The departure of Montan and his ladies soon followed, and if he and Lydia had been very welcome, yet the too-restless Philina was tiresome to a number of young ladies accustomed to repose and order, but particularly to the noble-minded Angela; moreover, several other circumstances combined to increase the discomfort.

We have already had occasion to remark that Angela did not fulfil as before the duty of attending and taking notes, but seemed to be otherwise occupied. To explain this anomaly in a person so given to order, and moving in the most refined of circles, we are compelled, late as it is, to introduce a new actor in this comprehensive drama.

Our old and tried merchant-friend Werner was compelled, with the growth, nay, with the so-to-say unlimited increase of his business, to look around for other assistants, whom, not without special previous testing, he attached more nearly to himself. Such a one he now sends to Makaria, to treat about the payment of important sums of money which this lady out of her large means determined and promised to devote to the new undertaking, with especial reference to her favorite Lenardo. The above-mentioned young man, now Werner's assistant and partner, a lively natural youth, and a perfect phenomenon, recommends himself by a singular talent, an unlimited readiness at calculation in every case, and especially with the undertakers as they are now working together, when they must needs occupy themselves closely with calculations in the manifold senses of a business reckoning and ascertain their balance.

Even in daily society where, in discussion about matters of the world, the conversation is of numbers, sums, and balances, such a man must be in the highest degree welcome as a colleague. Moreover, he played the piano very gracefully—in which calculation, united and combined with an amiable natural disposition, is extremely helpful. The tones flow lightly and harmoniously together, but he often hints that he would also be at home in deeper regions; and thus he becomes most highly attractive whilst he says little, and scarcely a symptom of feelings transpires through his conversation. In any case he is younger than his years; something childlike might almost be attributed to him. And whatever else may be said of him, he has gained Angela's favor, and she his, to Makaria's great content, for she had long wished to see the noble girl married.

The latter, however, always thoughtful, and feeling how difficult it would be to fill her place, had already declined an offer of love from some one or other, and perhaps even done violence to a secret affection; but since a successor had been contemplated, nay, to some extent already appointed, she seems to have been taken unawares by a favorable impression, and to have resigned herself even passionately to it.

But we now reach the point of disclosing the most important thing, since all that has so long been our theme has little by little been shaped, resolved, and put into form again. Accordingly, it has been determined for the future that the Fair-good-one, otherwise called the Nut-brown Maid, shall attach herself to Makaria. The plan, submitted in a general sense to Lenardo, and also approved by him, is quite near to its execution: all the parties to it are agreed: the Fair-good-one: hands over all her property to her factotum. He marries the second daughter in the industrious family, and becomes the loomfitter's brother-in-law. By this means the complete establishment of a factory with the aid of local and co-operative effort becomes possible, and the inhabitants of the labor-loving valley are busied in another and more lively fashion. Thus the amiable woman is made free; she comes to Makaria in Angela's place, who is already betrothed to the young man above mentioned. Thus, for the moment, all is set straight; what cannot be decided remains in suspense.

But now the Fair-good-one desires that Wilhelm shall fetch her away; certain circumstances have still to be adjusted; and she sets a great value simply on this, that that which he in point of fact began, he shall complete. He first found her out, and a wonderful destiny set Lenardo upon his track; and now he—so she wishes—must lighten her departure, and so experience the pleasure, the satisfaction of having himself gathered up and knotted the ravelled threads of fate.

But now, in order to bring the spiritual, the moral, to a sort of completion, we must also reveal something more secret—in fact what follows: Lenardo had never made the slightest utterance about a closer connection with the Fair-good-one; but in the course of the negotiations, during the many messages to and fro, some inquiry had in a delicate way been made of her, as to how she would regard such a connection, and what, at any rate, if it should come to words, she would be inclined to do. From her reply could be gathered thus much, that she did not feel herself worthy to respond to such affection as that of her noble-minded friend by the bestowal of her divided self; kindness of such sort deserved a woman's whole soul, all her faculties; but that she could not offer. The recollection of her lover, her husband, and the reciprocal union of both, was still so vivid within her, still occupied her whole being so completely, that no space for love and passion was conceivable, and that only the purest good-will, and on this occasion the most perfect gratitude, remained for her. With this they remained content, and as Lenardo had had no hand in the incident, it was not even necessary to give any explanation or answer about it.

A few general considerations will, it may be hoped, be in place here. The relation of all the foregoing personages to Makaria was confidential and reverent. They all felt the presence of a higher being, and yet in this presence every one retained the freedom of appearing quite in his own nature. Every one shows himself as he is, more than ever before parents and friends, with a certain confidence; for he has been enticed and prompted to bring to light only the good, the best that is in him; hence arose an almost general satisfaction.

But we cannot refrain from saying that, throughout these in some measure distracting circumstances, Makaria remained occupied with Lenardo's position. She expressed herself on the subject to her intimates, to Angela and the astronomer. She believed

that she plainly saw Lenardo's mind before her. For the moment he is satisfied: the object of his solicitude is in the highest degree fortunate; Makaria had provided for the future in any circumstances. He had now to enter boldly upon and begin the great business, and leave the rest to the future and to fate. And here it might be supposed that he was chiefly fortified in this undertaking by the thought of summoning her over, if not even fetching her himself, as soon as ever he had established his footing.

Some general remarks cannot be withheld here. The strange case which here arose—passion developed from conscientiousness—was more closely observed. At the same time other instances of the wonderful transformation of impressions once received, the mysterious development of innate inclination and longing, were recalled: that in such cases there was little to be done was regretted, but it would be found in the highest degree advisable to keep as clear as possible, and not yield unconditionally to this or that connection.

But, this point reached, we cannot resist the temptation to communicate from our archives a paper which concerns Makaria and the special property which was bestowed on her mind. Unfortunately this memorandum was written from memory only some time after it was communicated, and is not, as would be desirable in so remarkable a case, to be looked upon as authentic. Be that as it may, however, so much is imparted here as will arouse reflection and recommend attention as to whether something similar or approximate has not been, somewhere or other, noted and recorded.

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CHAPTER XV.

Makaria is found to be in a relation to our solar system which one may hardly venture to express. In the spirit, the soul, the imagination, she cherishes it; she not only contemplates it, but forms as it were a part of it. She sees herself drawn onward in those heavenly orbits, but in a manner quite peculiar; she has revolved round the sun since her childhood, and in fact, as is now discerned, in a spiral continually receding from the central point and circling towards the outer regions.

If it may be assumed that beings in so far as they are corporeal tend towards the centre, in so far as they are spiritual towards the circumference, then our friend belongs to the most spiritual; she seems born only to disengage herself from the earthly, to penetrate to the nearest and most distant spaces of existence. This peculiar quality, glorious as it is, was laid on her, from her earliest years, as a weighty responsibility. From childhood she remembers her innermost self, as penetrated by luminous beings, irradiated by a light with which the brightest sunshine has nothing in common. She often saw two suns, an inward one, and one without in the heavens; two moons, of which the external one retained its size in all its phases, whilst the inner one diminished ever more and more.

This gift drew her sympathy away from common things; but her excellent parents availed themselves of all means of culture for her. All capabilities were active in her, all modes of activities effective; so that she was able to satisfy all external relations; and whilst her heart, her mind was entirely filled with super-mundane vision, her actions and conduct still remained ever conformable to the noblest morality. As she grew up, helpful everywhere, unremitting in great and small services, she moved like an angel of God upon earth, whilst her spiritual whole moved it is true around the natural sun, but with respect to the supernatural one in ever-widening circles.

The excessive plenitude of this condition was in some degree relieved by the fact that there also seemed to be an alternation of day and night in her; for when the inner light was diminished she strove to fulfil her outer duties most faithfully, and on a fresh refulgence within resigned herself to the most blissful repose. Nay, she has remarked that a sort of clouds have from time to time hovered round her, and shared for a period the aspect of her heavenly companions—an epoch which she has always contrived to employ for the benefit or pleasure of her friends.

As long as she kept her visions secret, it was no small matter to support them. What she revealed of them was not acknowledged or was misinterpreted: she therefore allowed it to pass to the outer world as a malady: and it is still always so spoken of in the family. But at last good fortune brought to her the man whom you see with us, equally estimable as physician, mathematician and astronomer, a thoroughly noble man who yet at first really found his way to her from curiosity. But as she gained confidence in him to gradually describe her condition to him, when she had joined the present with the past, and introduced a continuity into the circumstances, he was so

possessed by the phenomenon that he could no longer separate from her, but every day tried to penetrate more deeply into the secret.

At first, as he not indistinctly hinted, he held it to be an illusion: for she did not deny that from earliest youth she had diligently occupied herself with the science of stars and sky, that she had become well-informed in that respect, and never lost an opportunity of making, by the aid of instruments and books, the structure of the universe clearer to her senses. He was therefore not to be dissuaded but that it was acquired; the effect of a highly disciplined imagination, the influence of memory, was to be suspected, with the co-operation of discriminating power, but especially of a hidden method of calculation.

He is a mathematician and therefore obstinate; a clear mind and therefore incredulous: he remained long on his guard, noticing accurately, however, what she alleged; tried to anticipate the result of several years, attended particularly to the most recent utterances coinciding with the opposition of the heavenly luminaries, and at last exclaimed, "Now, why should not God and Nature create and arrange a living armillary sphere, a spiritual clockwork, such that it should be able to follow, as our clocks do day by day and hour by hour, the course of the stars of its own accord and in its own way."

But here we do not venture to go further; for the incredible loses its value if we seek to inspect it in closer detail. Yet thus much we do say: what served as the basis of the calculations to be applied was as follows—

To her, the seeress, our sun seemed in her vision much smaller than she saw it by day: moreover an unusual position of this higher luminary in the zodiac gave occasion to some deductions.

On the other hand doubt and bewilderment arose, because the observer indicated one star or another as likewise appearing in the zodiac, but of which nothing could be perceived in the sky. It might be the small planets at that time still undiscovered: for from other utterances it could be gathered that, having long ago crossed the orbit of Mars she was nearing that of Jupiter. She had manifestly for a long time been contemplating with astonishment, it would be hard to say at what distance, this planet in its tremendous glory, and had beheld the motion of its moons about it, but had afterwards seen him in the strangest guise as a waning moon, and in fact reversed, as the waxing moon appears to us. From this it was concluded that she saw him from the side, and was actually on the point of crossing his orbit, and striving towards Saturn in the illimitable space. Thither no imagination follows her: but we hope that such an *entelecheia** will not altogether abandon our solar system, but on reaching its boundaries will long to return to influence again the life and well-being of the earth for the benefit of our descendants.

Whilst we herewith conclude, in the hope of pardon, this ethereal poem, let us turn back to that terrestrial fable of which we have given a passing indication above.

Montan had given out with the greatest appearance of truth that that extraordinary person who was able to indicate so well by feeling the differences of the material of the earth, had already gone abroad with the first of the emigrants; a statement, however, which to the thoughtful must have seemed altogether unlikely. For how could Montan and others of his sort have let so handy a divining-rod go from his side? Moreover, soon after his departure, by the aid of gossip and special tales of the under house-servants on the subject, a general suspicion arose. For Philina and Lydia had brought with them a third person under the pretence that she was a servant, for which however she did not seem to be in the least adapted: and besides she was never wanted when the ladies dressed or undressed. Her simple costume clothed the compact, well-knit body very neatly, but like the whole of her person gave an indication of rusticity. Her behavior without being rough showed none of the culture of society, of which ladies'-maids generally offer a caricature. Moreover she soon found her place amongst the servants; she associated herself with the garden and field-servants, laid hold of the spade and worked like two or three. If she got hold of the rake, it flew in the nimblest way over the upturned earth, and the widest space resembled a well-levelled flower-bed. In other respects she kept herself quiet and very soon won universal good-will. They would talk to each other about her, and say that she had often been seen to lay down her implement and run across the fields over stock and stone to a hidden spring where she could quench her thirst. This practice she had repeated daily, contriving, from any point at which she happened to be standing, always to find out some pure running water or other, whenever she had need of it.

And thus a witness to Montan's statement had remained behind. He, probably in order to avoid troublesome trials and inadequate testings, determined to conceal the presence of so remarkable a person from his noble hosts, who would otherwise have well deserved such confidence. We, however, have wished to communicate, even incompletely as it lies before us, what has come to our knowledge, with the friendly intention of directing the observation of men of research to similar cases, which present themselves, by some sort of indication, perhaps more often than one would think.

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CHAPTER XVI.

The steward of the castle which but a short time since we saw enlivened by our travellers, active and dexterous by nature, always keeping before his eyes his employers' interest and his own, was now sitting contentedly making up accounts and reports, in which he was at pains to bring out and to display separately with some complacency the great advantages that had accrued to his district during the presence of these guests. But this, according to his own persuasion, was only the least: he had remarked what great results emanate from active, able, liberal-minded, and bold men. Some had taken their leave, to settle beyond the seas; others to gain their livelihood upon the mainland: he was now aware of yet a third secret relation, which he at once resolved to turn to account.

At their departure it became evident (as could have been foreseen and known) that many of the stalwart young men had become more or less friendly with the pretty girls of the village and the neighborhood—only a few showed courage enough, when Odoard went away with his followers, to declare definitely that they would remain. Of Lenardo's emigrants not one stayed, but of these latter several declared that in a short time they would return and settle down, if they could be provided in some measure with a sufficient subsistence, and security for the future.

The steward, who was perfectly well acquainted with every individual and the domestic circumstances of the little population that was subject to him, laughed quietly like a true egoist, at the circumstance that such great preparations and expenses should be incurred for the purpose of showing themselves free and active beyond seas and inland, and yet should thereby bring him, who had sat quite still on his acres, just the greatest advantages to house and home, and give him an opportunity of keeping back and collecting round himself some of the best. His thoughts, enlarged by present circumstances, found nothing more natural than that liberality well applied would have worthy and profitable consequences. He immediately formed the resolution of undertaking something like it in his own little district. Fortunately some well-to-do inhabitants were now as it were compelled to resign their daughters legally to the too premature husbands. The steward made such a social mishap comprehensible to them as a fortunate occurrence: and since it was really fortunate that this lot had fallen upon the artisans who would with this intent be most useful, it was not difficult to make a beginning with a furniture-factory, which needs no wide space or great surroundings, but only requires dexterity and sufficient material. The last the steward promised: wives, space and custom the inhabitants provided, and the immigrants brought dexterity with them.

All this the clever man of business had already well thought over in private during the stay and in the turmoil of the crowd: and therefore, as soon as there was quiet around him, he could immediately proceed to work.

Peace, in truth a sort of death-like peace, had fallen on the village streets, on the castle courtyard, after the rush of this flood, when a horseman galloping in upon our

calculating and scheming man of business, called out to him and roused him from his peaceful frame of mind. It is true that the horses' hoofs did not clatter, for it was not shod, but the rider, who sprang from the saddle-cloth (he rode without saddle and stirrups, and controlled the horse only by a halter) called loudly and impatiently for the inmates, the guests, and was passionately astonished at finding everything so still and dead.

The steward's servant knew not what to make of this stranger. When a discussion arose the steward himself came forth, and he too was able to say nothing more than that they had all gone away.

"Whither?" was the question of the vivacious young stranger. With composure, the steward indicated the road of Lenardo and Odoard, and of a third problematical person whom they had partly called Wilhelm, partly Meister. He had embarked upon the river at a few miles distance: he was going down, first to visit his son, and then to follow out further some important business.

The youth already had vaulted again upon the horse, and received information as to the nearest road to the river, when he galloped out of the gateway again and sped away so quickly that the steward, who was looking out of his window overhead, scarcely detected by a flying cloud of dust that the mad rider had taken the right track.

The last cloud of dust had just disappeared in the distance, and our steward was about to sit down again to his business, when a messenger on foot came rushing in at the same gate and asked likewise for the party, to whom he had been sent off in haste to deliver something of importance. He had for them a rather large packet, but in addition to this also a single letter addressed to Wilhelm, called Meister, which had been specially commended to the care of the messenger by a young lady; and the speedy delivery of which had been most stringently urged. Unfortunately he too could receive no other answer than that he found the nest empty, and must therefore proceed on his way with all speed to such place where he might hope to light upon them all together or to obtain some further information.



PHILINA, LYDIA AND MAKARIA.



But the letter itself, which also we have found amongst the many papers intrusted to us, being of the greatest importance, we must not withhold. It was from Hersilia, a young lady as wonderful as she was amiable, who appears only seldom in our communications, but who at every appearance must certainly have attracted irresistibly every one of intellect and refinement. The fate, too, that befalls her, is perhaps the most extraordinary that can befall a tender spirit.

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CHAPTER XVII.

Hersilia To Wilhelm.

I was sitting thinking, and could not say what I was thinking about. A thoughtful unthinking, however, often comes over me; it is a sort of conscious indifference. A horse gallops into the courtyard, and rouses me from my repose: the door flies open, and Felix enters in all the splendor of youth, like a little idol. He hastens up to me, and is about to embrace me. I sign him back. He seems indifferent, remains at some distance, and with undisturbed cheerfulness begins to praise the horse that brought him here, and to tell me circumstantially and confidentially about his habits and his pleasures. The recollection of former stories brings us upon the ornamental casket; he knows that I have it, and wishes to see it: I acquiesce, it was impossible to refuse. He looks at it, tells circumstantially how he discovered it. I get confused, and betray the fact that I have the key. Now his curiosity rises to the highest pitch; that too he wishes to see, only at a distance. One could never see anyone beg more urgently and lovingly: he begs and prays, kneels and begs with such fiery, winning eyes, such sweet insinuating words, that I was again over-persuaded. I held up the wondrous secret at a distance, but he quickly caught hold of my hand and snatched it away, springing playfully aside, round a table.

"I have nothing to do with the casket, or the key," he exclaimed. "It was your heart I wished to open, that it should disclose itself to me, come to me, press itself to me, give me leave to press it to my breast."

He was infinitely beautiful and lovable, and as I was about to run after him, he kept pushing the casket before him on the table: the key was already in the lock: he threatened to turn it, and turned it really; the key broke off, the outer end fell upon the table.

I was more distracted than can be imagined. He takes advantage of my inattention, leaves the casket lying, rushes at me and seizes me in his arms. I struggled in vain; his eyes approached mine; and it is something lovely to see one's own form in a loving eye. I saw it for the first time, as he pressed his lips passionately on mine. I must confess it, I gave him his kisses back; it is so lovely to make a person happy. I tore myself away; the gulf that separates us appeared only too plainly to me. Instead of collecting myself, I overshot the mark; I pushed him angrily away; my confusion gave me courage and wit; I threatened, scolded, ordered him never to appear before me again; he believed in the genuineness of my expressions.

"Very well," said he, "then I will ride out into the world until I perish."

He threw himself on his horse and galloped away. Still half-dreaming I go to take charge of the casket: the half of the key lay broken off. I found myself in double, triple embarrassment.

O men, O mankind, will you never plant out reason? Had we not enough of the father, who was the cause of so much mischief; did we need the son also, to confuse us irretrievably?

These impressions were lying by me a long time; now a strange circumstance intervenes which I must mention: it clears up and obliterates the foregoing.

An old goldsmith and jeweller, esteemed by my uncle, comes in and exhibits some strange antique treasures. I am instigated to bring out the casket; he looks at the broken key and points out what had hitherto been overlooked, that the fracture was not rough, but smooth. By contact the two ends adhere to one another. He pulls out the key entire; they are magnetically united, hold firmly to each other, but lock only for one who is initiated. The man goes a short distance off; the casket flies open, but he shuts it down again at once: such secrets, he opines, it is not good to meddle with.

My inexplicable condition, thank Heaven, you certainly do not realize; for how should one appreciate the embarrassment, whilst outside the embarrassment. The important casket stands before me; the key which turns not I hold in my hand: the former I would willingly leave unopened, if only the latter would unlock for me the future at hand.

Do not trouble yourself about me for awhile: but I pressingly beg, implore, urgently enjoin, inquire after Felix! I have sent round about in vain, to find out the traces of his path. I know not whether I should bless or dread the day which will bring us together again.

At last, at last, the messenger demands his dismissal; he has been kept here long enough: he is to overtake the wanderers with important despatches. In their company he will doubtless find you too, or they will direct him aright. I, in the meantime, shall not be pacified.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

Now was the bark gliding down the river, shone on by the hot noonday sun; gentle breezes cooled the heated ether; soft banks on both sides afforded a very simple yet pleasing prospect. The corn-land was not far from the stream, and a rich soil lay so close to it that the rushing water, at any part where it was precipitated against it, had dealt forcibly with the loose earth, and carrying it off, had formed rugged precipices of considerable height.



Right above, on the most broken edge of such a precipice, where in other circumstances the towing-path would have run, our friend saw a young man, well built, of powerful form, approaching at a trot. But scarcely was he about to take a sharper look at him than the overhanging turf broke loose and the unlucky one is precipitately hurled, horse above, rider beneath, into the water. It was no time to think how and wherefore: the sailors rowed, swift as an arrow, to the surging pool, and in a moment had grasped the beautiful prize. To all appearance lifeless, the beautiful youth lay in the boat, and after a short consultation the expert men rowed to a pebbly osier-ground that had formed itself in mid-stream. To land, to lift the body on to the bank, to strip and dry it, was the work of a moment, but as yet no sign of life was to be seen; the fair flower lay prostrate in their arms!

Wilhelm got hold of the lancet at once to open the vein of the arm: the blood gushed out copiously, and mingling with the winding, glancing waves, it followed the rippling stream. Life returned. The loving surgeon had scarcely time to fix the bandages, when the youth had already boldly raised himself upon his feet, and looking keenly at Wilhelm, cried, "If I am to live let it be with thee!"

With these words he fell on the neck of his recognizing and recognized preserver, and wept bitterly. So they stood in close embrace, like Castor and Pollux: brothers meeting at the turning-point between Orkus and Day.

They begged him to quiet himself. The sturdy men had already prepared a comfortable couch, half in the sun, half in shade, amongst light bushes and twigs: here he was now lying, stretched upon his father's cloak, the comeliest among youths: brown locks, quickly dried, already curled again; he smiled quietly and fell asleep. Our friend as he covered him over looked down at him with pleasure.

"Art thou then ever reproduced, glorious image of God!" he exclaimed, "and art forthwith disfigured again, injured from within or from without."

The cloak fell over him: a tempered sun-glow gently and deeply warmed his limbs throughout: his cheeks reddened healthily, he seemed already completely restored.

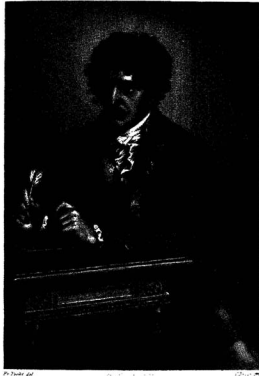
The active men, rejoicing in a good action well sped, and anticipating the liberal recompense that was to be expected, had already as good as dried the youth's clothing on the hot shingle, so that as soon as he awoke they might reinstate him in the most becoming condition for society.



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Elective Affinities

Part One.



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CHAPTER I.

Edward—so we shall call a wealthy nobleman in the prime of life—had been spending several hours of a fine April morning in his nursery-garden, budding the stems of some young trees with cuttings which had been recently sent to him. He had finished what he was about, and having laid his tools together in their box, was complacently surveying his work, when the gardener came up and complimented his master on his industry.

“Have you seen my wife anywhere?” inquired Edward, as he moved to go away.

“My lady is alone yonder in the new grounds,” said the man; “the summer-house which she has been making on the rock over against the castle is finished to-day, and really it is beautiful. It cannot fail to please your grace. The view from it is perfect:—the village at your feet; a little to your right the church, with its tower, which you can just see over; and directly opposite you, the castle and the garden.”

“Quite true,” replied Edward; “I can see the people at work a few steps from where I am standing.”

“And then, to the right of the church again,” continued the gardener, “is the opening of the valley; and you look along over a range of wood and meadow far into the distance. The steps up the rock, too, are excellently arranged. My gracious lady understands these things; it is a pleasure to work under her.”

“Go to her,” said Edward, “and desire her to be so good as to wait for me there. Tell her I wish to see this new creation of hers, and enjoy it with her.”

The gardener went rapidly off, and Edward soon followed. Descending the terrace, and stopping as he passed to look into the hot-houses and the forcing-pits, he came presently to the stream, and thence, over a narrow bridge, to a place where the walk leading to the summer-house branched off in two directions. One path led across the churchyard, immediately up the face of the rock. The other, into which he struck, wound away to the left, with a more gradual ascent, through a pretty shrubbery. Where the two paths joined again, a seat had been made, where he stopped a few moments to rest; and then, following the now single road, he found himself, after scrambling along among steps and slopes of all sorts and kinds, conducted at last through a narrow more or less steep outlet to the summer-house.

Charlotte was standing at the door to receive her husband. She made him sit down where, without moving, he could command a view of the different landscapes through the door and window—these serving as frames, in which they were set like pictures. Spring was coming on; a rich, beautiful life would soon everywhere be bursting; and Edward spoke of it with delight.

"There is only one thing which I should observe," he added, "the summer-house itself is rather small."

"It is large enough for you and me, at any rate," answered Charlotte.

"Certainly," said Edward; "there is room for a third, too, easily."

"Of course; and for a fourth also," replied Charlotte. "For larger parties we can contrive other places."

"Now that we are here by ourselves, with no one to disturb us, and in such a pleasant mood," said Edward, "it is a good opportunity for me to tell you that I have for some time had something on my mind, about which I have wished to speak to you, but have never been able to muster up my courage."

"I have observed that there has been something of the sort," said Charlotte.

"And even now," Edward went on, "if it were not for a letter which the post brought me this morning, and which obliges me to come to some resolution to-day, I should very likely have still kept it to myself."

"What is it, then?" asked Charlotte, turning affectionately towards him.

"It concerns our friend the captain," answered Edward; "you know the unfortunate position in which he, like many others, is placed. It is through no fault of his own; but you may imagine how painful it must be for a person with his knowledge and talents and accomplishments, to find himself without employment. I—I will not hesitate any longer with what I am wishing for him. I should like to have him here with us for a time."

"We must think about that," replied Charlotte; "it should be considered on more sides than one."

"I am quite ready to tell you what I have in view," returned Edward. "Through his last letters there is a prevailing tone of despondency; not that he is really in any want. He knows thoroughly well how to limit his expenses; and I have taken care for everything absolutely necessary. It is no distress to him to accept obligations from me; all our lives we have been in the habit of borrowing from and lending to each other; and we could not tell, if we would, how our debtor and creditor account stands. It is being without occupation which is really fretting him. The many accomplishments which he has cultivated in himself, it is his only pleasure—indeed, it is his passion—to be daily and hourly exercising for the benefit of others. And now, to sit still, with his arms folded; or to go on studying, acquiring and acquiring, when he can make no use of what he already possesses;—my dear creature, it is a painful situation; and alone as he is, he feels it doubly and trebly."

"But I thought," said Charlotte, "that he had had offers from many different quarters. I myself wrote to numbers of my own friends, male and female, for him; and, as I have reason to believe, not without effect."

“It is true,” replied Edward; “but these very offers—these various proposals—have only caused him fresh embarrassment. Not one of them is at all suitable to such a person as he is. He would have nothing to do; he would have to sacrifice himself, his time, his purposes, his whole method of life; and to that he cannot bring himself. The more I think of it all, the more I feel about it, and the more anxious I am to see him here with us.”

“It is very beautiful and amiable in you,” answered Charlotte, “to enter with so much sympathy into your friend’s position; only you must allow me to ask you to think of yourself and of me, as well.”

“I have done that,” replied Edward. “For ourselves, we can have nothing to expect from his presence with us, except pleasure and advantage. I will say nothing of the expense. In any case, if he came to us, it would be but small; and you know he will be of no inconvenience to us at all. He can have his own rooms in the right wing of the castle, and everything else can be arranged as simply as possible. What shall we not be thus doing for him! and how agreeable and how profitable may not his society prove to us! I have long been wishing for a plan of the property and the grounds. He will see to it, and get it made. You intend yourself to take the management of the estate, as soon as our present steward’s term is expired; and that, you know, is a serious thing. His various information will be of immense benefit to us; I feel only too acutely how much I require a person of this kind. The country people have knowledge enough, but their way of imparting it is confused, and not always honest. The students from the towns and universities are sufficiently clever and orderly, but they are deficient in personal experience. From my friend, I can promise myself both knowledge and method, and hundreds of other circumstances I can easily conceive arising, affecting you as well as me, and from which I can foresee innumerable advantages. Thank you for so patiently listening to me. Now, do you say what you think, and say it out freely and fully; I will not interrupt you.”



“Very well,” replied Charlotte; “I will begin at once with a general observation. Men think most of the immediate—the present; and rightly, their calling being to do and to work. Women, on the other hand, more of how things hang together in life; and that rightly too, because their destiny—the destiny of their families—is bound up in this interdependence, and it is exactly this which it is their mission to promote. So now let us cast a glance at our present and our past life; and you will acknowledge that the invitation of the captain does not fall in so entirely with our purposes, our plans, and our arrangements. I will go back to those happy days of our earliest intercourse. We loved each other, young as we then were, with all our hearts. We were parted: you from me—your father, from an insatiable desire of wealth, choosing to marry you to an elderly and rich lady; I from you, having to give my hand, without any especial

motive, to an excellent man, whom I respected, if I did not love. We became again free—you first, your poor mother at the same time leaving you in possession of your large fortune; I later, just at the time when you returned from abroad. So we met once more. We spoke of the past; we could enjoy and love the recollection of it; we might have been contented, in each other's society, to leave things as they were. You were urgent for our marriage. I at first hesitated. We were about the same age; but I as a woman had grown older than you as a man. At last I could not refuse you what you seemed to think the one thing you cared for. All the discomfort which you had ever experienced, at court, in the army, or in travelling, you were to recover from at my side; you would settle down and enjoy life; but only with me for your companion. I settled my daughter at a school, where she could be more completely educated than would be possible in the retirement of the country; and I placed my niece Otilie there with her as well, who, perhaps, would have grown up better at home with me, under my own care. This was done with your consent, merely that we might have our own lives to ourselves—merely that we might enjoy undisturbed our so-long-wished-for, so-long-delayed happiness. We came here and settled ourselves. I undertook the domestic part of the ménage, you the out-of-doors, and the general control. My own principle has been to meet your wishes in everything, to live only for you. At least, let us give ourselves a fair trial how far in this way we can be enough for one another.”

“Since the interdependence of things, as you call it, is your especial element,” replied Edward, “one should either never listen to any of your trains of reasoning, or make up one's mind to allow you to be in the right; and, indeed, you have been in the right up to the present day. The foundation which we have hitherto been laying for ourselves, is of the true, sound sort; only, are we to build nothing upon it? is nothing to be developed out of it? All the work we have done—I in the garden, you in the park—is it all only for a pair of hermits?”

“Well, well,” replied Charlotte, “very well. What we have to look to is, that we introduce no alien element, nothing which shall cross or obstruct us. Remember, our plans, even those which only concern our amusements, depend mainly on our being together. You were to read to me, in consecutive order, the journal which you made when you were abroad. You were to take the opportunity of arranging it, putting all the loose matter connected with it in its place; and with me to work with you and help you, out of these invaluable but chaotic leaves and sheets to put together a complete thing, which should give pleasure to ourselves and to others. I promised to assist you in transcribing; and we thought it would be so pleasant, so delightful, so charming, to travel over in recollection the world which we were unable to see together. The beginning is already made. Then, in the evenings, you have taken up your flute again, accompanying me on the piano, while of visits backwards and forwards among the neighborhood, there is abundance. For my part, I have been promising myself out of all this the first really happy summer I have ever thought to spend in my life.”

“Only I cannot see,” replied Edward, rubbing his forehead, “how, through every bit of this which you have been so sweetly and so sensibly laying before me, the captain's presence can be any interruption; I should rather have thought it would give it all fresh zest and life. He was my companion during a part of my travels. He made many

observations from a different point of view from mine. We can put it all altogether, and so make a charmingly complete work of it.”

“Well, then, I will acknowledge openly,” answered Charlotte, with some impatience, “my feeling is against this plan. I have an instinct which tells me no good will come of it.”

“You women are invincible in this way,” replied Edward. “You are so sensible, that there is no answering you, then so affectionate, that one is glad to give way to you; full of feelings, which one cannot wound, and full of forebodings, which terrify one.”

“I am not superstitious,” said Charlotte; “and I care nothing for these dim sensations, merely as such; but in general they are the result of unconscious recollections of happy or unhappy consequences, which we have experienced as following on our own or others’ actions. Nothing is of greater moment, in any state of things, than the intervention of a third person. I have seen friends, brothers and sisters, lovers, husbands and wives, whose relation to each other, through the accidental or intentional introduction of a third person, has been altogether changed—whose whole moral condition has been inverted by it.”

“That may very well be,” replied Edward, “with people who live on without looking where they are going; but not, surely, with persons whom experience has taught to understand themselves.”

“That understanding ourselves, my dearest husband,” insisted Charlotte, “is no such certain weapon. It is very often a most dangerous one for the person who bears it. And out of all this, at least so much seems to arise, that we should not be in too great a hurry. Let me have a few days to think; don’t decide.”

“As the matter stands,” returned Edward, “wait as many days as we will, we shall still be in too great a hurry. The arguments for and against are all before us; all we want is the conclusion, and, as things are, I think the best thing we can do is to draw lots.”

“I know,” said Charlotte, “that in doubtful cases it is your way to leave them to chance. To me, in such a serious matter, this seems almost a crime.”

“Then what am I to write to the captain?” cried Edward; “for write I must at once.”

“Write him a kind, sensible, sympathizing letter,” answered Charlotte.

“That is as good as none at all,” replied Edward.

“And there are many cases,” answered she, “in which we are obliged, and in which it is the real kindness, rather to write nothing than not to write.”

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CHAPTER II.

Edward was alone in his room. The repetition of the incidents of his life from Charlotte's lips; the representation of their mutual situation, their mutual purposes; had worked him, sensitive as he was, into a very pleasant state of mind. While close to her—while in her presence—he had felt so happy, that he had thought out a warm, kind, but quiet and indefinite epistle which he would send to the captain. When, however, he had settled himself at his writing-table, and taken up his friend's letter to read it over once more, the sad condition of this excellent man rose again vividly before him. The feelings which had been all day distressing him again awoke, and it appeared impossible to him to leave one whom he called his friend in such painful embarrassment.

Edward was unaccustomed to deny himself anything. The only child, and consequently the spoiled child, of wealthy parents, who had persuaded him into a singular, but highly advantageous marriage with a lady far older than himself; and again by her petted and indulged in every possible way, she seeking to reward his kindness to her by the utmost liberality; after her early death his own master, travelling independently of every one, equal to all contingencies and all changes, with desires never excessive, but multiple and various—free-hearted, generous, brave, at times even noble—what was there in the world to cross or thwart him?



Hitherto, everything had gone as he desired! Charlotte had become his; he had won her at last, with an obstinate, a romantic fidelity; and now he felt himself, for the first time, contradicted, crossed in his wishes, when those wishes were to invite to his home the friend of his youth—just as he was longing, as it were, to throw open his whole heart to him. He felt annoyed, impatient; he took up his pen again and again, and as often threw it down again, because he could not make up his mind what to write. Against his wife's wishes he would not go; against her expressed desire he could not. Ill at ease as he was, it would have been impossible for him, even if he had wished, to write a quiet, easy letter. The most natural thing to do was to put it off. In a few words he begged his friend to forgive him for having left his letter unanswered; that day he was unable to write circumstantially; but shortly, he hoped to be able to tell him what he felt at greater length.

The next day, as they were walking to the same spot, Charlotte took the opportunity of bringing back the conversation to the subject, perhaps because she knew that there is no surer way of rooting out any plan or purpose, than by often talking it over.

It was what Edward was wishing. He expressed himself in his own way, kindly and sweetly. For although, sensitive as he was, he flamed up readily—although the vehemence with which he desired anything made him pressing, and his obstinacy made him impatient—his words were so softened by his wish to spare the feelings of those to whom he was speaking, that it was impossible not to be charmed, even when one most disagreed, with him.

This morning, he first contrived to bring Charlotte into the happiest humor, and then so disarmed her with the graceful turn which he gave to the conversation, that she cried out at last:

“You are determined that what I refused to the husband you will make me grant to the lover. At least, my dearest,” she continued, “I will acknowledge that your wishes, and the warmth and sweetness with which you express them, have not left me untouched, have not left me unmoved. You drive me to make a confession;—till now, I too have had a concealment from you; I am in exactly the same position with you, and I have hitherto been putting the same restraint on my inclination which I have been exhorting you to put on yours.”

“Glad am I to hear that,” said Edward. “In the married state, a difference of opinion now and then, I see, is no bad thing; we learn something of one another by it.”

“You are to learn at present, then,” said Charlotte, “that it is with me about Otilie as it is with you about the captain. The dear child is most uncomfortable at the school, and I am thoroughly uneasy about her. Luciana, my daughter, born as she is for the world, is there training hourly for the world; languages, history, everything that is taught there, she acquires with so much ease that, as it were, she learns them off at sight. She has quick natural gifts, and an excellent memory, one may almost say she forgets everything, and in a moment calls it all back again. She distinguishes herself above every one at the school with the freedom of her carriage, the grace of her movement, and the elegance of her address, and with the inborn royalty of nature makes herself the queen of the little circle there. The superior of the establishment regards her as a little divinity, who, under her hands, is shaping into excellence, and who will do her honor, gain her reputation, and bring her a large increase of pupils; the first pages of this good lady's letters, and her monthly notices of progress, are forever hymns about the excellence of such a child, which I have to translate into my own prose; while her concluding sentences about Otilie are nothing but excuse after excuse—attempts at explaining how it can be that a girl in other respects growing up so lovely seems coming to nothing, and shows neither capacity nor accomplishment. This, and the little she has to say besides, is no riddle to me, because I can see in this dear child the same character as that of her mother, who was my own dearest friend; who grew up with myself, and whose daughter, I am certain, if I had the care of her education, would form into an exquisite creature.

“This, however, has not fallen in with our plan, and as one ought not to be picking and pulling, or forever introducing new elements among the conditions of our life, I think it better to bear, and to conquer as I can, even the unpleasant impression that my daughter, who knows very well that poor Otilie is entirely dependent upon us, does

not refrain from flourishing her own successes in her face, and so, to a certain extent, destroys the little good which we have done for her. Who are well trained enough never to wound others by a parade of their own advantages? and who stands so high as not at times to suffer under such a slight? In trials like these, Otilie's character is growing in strength, but since I have clearly known the painfulness of her situation, I have been thinking over all possible ways to make some other arrangement. Every hour I am expecting an answer to my own last letter, and then I do not mean to hesitate any more. So, my dear Edward, it is with me. We have both, you see, the same sorrows to bear, touching both our hearts in the same point. Let us bear them together, since we neither of us can press our own against the other."

"We are strange creatures," said Edward, smiling. "If we can only put out of sight anything which troubles us, we fancy at once we have got rid of it. We can give up much in the large and general; but to make sacrifices in little things is a demand to which we are rarely equal. So it was with my mother,—as long as I lived with her, while a boy and a young man, she could not bear to let me be a moment out of her sight. If I was out later than usual in my ride, some misfortune must have happened to me. If I got wet through in a shower, a fever was inevitable. I travelled; I was absent from her altogether; and, at once, I scarcely seemed to belong to her. If we look at it closer," he continued, "we are both acting very foolishly, very culpably. Two very noble natures, both of which have the closest claims on our affection, we are leaving exposed to pain and distress, merely to avoid exposing ourselves to a chance of danger. If this is not to be called selfish, what is? You take Otilie. Let me have the captain; and, for a short period, at least, let the trial be made."

"We might venture it," said Charlotte, thoughtfully, "if the danger were only to ourselves. But do you think it prudent to bring Otilie and the captain into a situation where they must necessarily be so closely intimate; the captain, a man no older than yourself, of an age (I am not saying this to flatter you) when a man becomes first capable of love and first deserving of it, and a girl of Otilie's attractiveness?"

"I cannot conceive how you can rate Otilie so high," replied Edward. "I can only explain it to myself by supposing her to have inherited your affection for her mother. Pretty she is, no doubt. I remember the captain observing it to me, when we came back last year, and met her at your aunt's. Attractive she is,—she has particularly pretty eyes; but I do not know that she made the slightest impression upon me."

"That was quite proper in you," said Charlotte, "seeing that I was there; and, although she is much younger than I, the presence of your old friend had so many charms for you, that you overlooked the promise of the opening beauty. It is one of your ways; and that is one reason why it is so pleasant to live with you."

Charlotte, openly as she appeared to be speaking, was keeping back something, nevertheless; which was that at the time when Edward came first back from abroad, she had purposely thrown Otilie in his way, to secure, if possible, so desirable a match for her protégée. For of herself, at that time, in connection with Edward, she never thought at all. The captain, also, had a hint given to him to draw Edward's attention to her; but the latter, who was clinging determinately to his early affection

for Charlotte, looked neither right nor left, and was only happy in the feeling that it was at last within his power to obtain for himself the one happiness which he so earnestly desired; and which a series of incidents had appeared to have placed forever beyond his reach.

They were on the point of descending the new grounds, in order to return to the castle, when a servant came hastily to meet them, and, with a laugh on his face, called up from below, "Will your grace be pleased to come quickly to the castle? The Herr Mittler has just galloped into the court. He shouted to us, to go all of us in search of you, and we were to ask whether there was need, 'whether there is need,' he cried after us, 'do you hear? but be quick, be quick.' "

"The odd fellow," exclaimed Edward. "But has he not come at the right time, Charlotte? Tell him, there is need,—grievous need. He must alight. See his horse taken care of. Take him into the saloon, and let him have some luncheon. We shall be with him immediately."

"Let us take the nearest way," he said to his wife, and struck into the path across the churchyard, which he usually avoided. He was not a little surprised to find here, too, traces of Charlotte's delicate hand. Sparing, as far as possible, the old monuments, she had contrived to level it, and lay it carefully out, so as to make it appear a pleasant spot on which the eye and the imagination could equally repose with pleasure. The oldest stones had each their special honor assigned them. They were ranged according to their dates along the wall, either leaning against it, or let into it, or however it could be contrived; and the string-course of the church was thus variously ornamented.

Edward was singularly affected as he came in upon it through the little wicket: he pressed Charlotte's hand, and tears started into his eyes. But these were very soon put to flight by the appearance of their singular visitor. This gentleman had declined sitting down in the castle; he had ridden straight through the village to the churchyard gate; and then, halting, he called out to his friends, "Are you not making a fool of me? Is there need, really? If there is, I can stay till midday. But don't keep me. I have a great deal to do before night."



"Since you have taken the trouble to come so far," cried Edward to him, in answer, "you had better come through the gate. We meet at a solemn spot. Come and see the variety which Charlotte has thrown over its sadness."

"Inside there," called out the rider, "come I neither on horseback, nor in carriage, nor on foot. These here rest in peace: with them I have nothing to do. One day I shall be carried in feet foremost. I must bear that as I can. Is it serious, I want to know?"

“Indeed it is,” cried Charlotte, “right serious. For the first time in our married lives we are in a strait and difficulty, from which we do not know how to extricate ourselves.”

“You do not look as if it were so,” answered he. “But I will believe you. If you are deceiving me, for the future you shall help yourselves. Follow me quickly, my horse will be none the worse for a rest.”

The three speedily found themselves in the saloon together. Luncheon was brought in, and Mittler told them what that day he had done, and was going to do. This eccentric person had in early life been a clergyman, and had distinguished himself in his office by the never-resting activity with which he contrived to make up and put an end to quarrels; quarrels in families, and quarrels between neighbors; first among the individuals immediately about him, and afterwards among whole congregations, and among the country gentlemen round. While he was in the ministry, no married couple were allowed to separate; and the district courts were untroubled with either cause or process. A knowledge of the law, he was well aware, was necessary to him. He gave himself with all his might to the study of it, and very soon felt himself a match for the best trained advocate. His circle of activity extended wonderfully, and people were on the point of inducing him to move to the residence, where he would find opportunities of exercising in the higher circles what he had begun in the lowest, when he won a considerable sum of money in a lottery. With this, he bought himself a small property. He let the ground to a tenant, and made it the centre of his operations, with the fixed determination, or rather in accordance with his old customs and inclinations, never to enter a house when there was no dispute to make up, and no help to be given. People who were superstitious about names, and about what they imported, maintained that it was his being called Mittler which drove him to take upon himself this strange employment.

Luncheon was laid on the table, and the stranger then solemnly pressed his host not to wait any longer with the disclosure which he had to make. Immediately after refreshing himself he would be obliged to leave them.

Husband and wife made a circumstantial confession; but scarcely had he caught the substance of the matter, when he started angrily up from the table, rushed out of the saloon, and ordered his horse to be saddled instantly.

“Either you do not know me, you do not understand me,” he cried, “or you are sorely mischievous. Do you call this a quarrel? Is there any want of help here? Do you suppose that I am in the world to give *advice*? Of all occupations which man can pursue, that is the most foolish. Every man must be his own counsellor, and do what he cannot let alone. If all go well, let him be happy, let him enjoy his wisdom and his fortune; if it go ill, I am at hand to do what I can for him. The man who desires to be rid of an evil knows what he wants; but the man who desires something better than he has got is stone blind. Yes, yes, laugh as you will, he is playing blindman's-buff; perhaps he gets hold of something, but the question is what he has got hold of. Do as you will, it is all one. Invite your friends to you, or let them be, it is all the same. The most prudent plans I have seen miscarry, and the most foolish succeed. Don't split your brains about it; and if, one way or the other, evil comes of what you settle, don't

fret; send for me, and you shall be helped. Till which time, I am your humble servant.”

So saying, he sprang on his horse, without waiting the arrival of the coffee.

“Here you see,” said Charlotte, “the small service a third person can be, when things are off their balance between two persons closely connected; we are left, if possible, more confused and more uncertain than we were.”

They would both, probably, have continued hesitating some time longer, had not a letter arrived from the captain, in reply to Edward's last. He had made up his mind to accept one of the situations which had been offered him, although it was not in the least up to his mark. He was to share the ennui of certain wealthy persons of rank, who depended on his ability to dissipate it.

Edward's keen glance saw into the whole thing, and he picture it out in just, sharp lines.

“Can we endure to think of our friend in such a position?” he cried; “you cannot be so cruel, Charlotte.”

“That strange Mittler is right after all,” replied Charlotte; “all such undertakings are ventures; what will come of them it is impossible to foresee. New elements introduced among us may be fruitful in fortune or in misfortune, without our having to take credit to ourselves for one or the other. I do not feel myself firm enough to oppose you further. Let us make the experiment; only one thing I will entreat of you—that it be only for a short time. You must allow me to exert myself more than ever, to use all my influence among all my connections, to find him some position which will satisfy him in his own way.”

Edward poured out the warmest expressions of gratitude. He hastened, with a light, happy heart, to write off his proposals to his friend. Charlotte, in a postscript, was to signify her approbation with her own hand, and unite her own kind entreaties with his. She wrote, with a rapid pen, pleasantly and affectionately, but yet with a sort of haste which was not usual with her; and, most unlike herself, she disfigured the paper at last with a blot of ink, which put her out of temper, and which she only made worse with her attempts to wipe it away.

Edward laughed at her about it, and, as there was still room, added a second postscript, that his friend was to see from this symptom the impatience with which he was expected, and measure the speed at which he came to them by the haste in which the letter was written.

The messenger was gone; and Edward thought he could not give a more convincing evidence of his gratitude than by insisting again and again that Charlotte should at once send for Otilie from the school. She said she would think about it; and, for that evening, induced Edward to join with her in the enjoyment of a little music. Charlotte played exceedingly well on the piano, Edward not quite so well on the flute. He had taken a great deal of pains with it at times; but he was without the patience, without

the perseverance, which are requisite for the completely successful cultivation of such a talent; consequently, his part was done unequally, some pieces well, only perhaps too quickly—while with others he hesitated, not being quite familiar with them; so that, for anyone else, it would have been difficult to have gone through a duet with him. But Charlotte knew how to manage it. She held in, or let herself be run away with, and fulfilled in this way the double part of a skilful conductor and a prudent housewife, who are able always to keep right on the whole, although particular passages will now and then fall out of order.

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CHAPTER III.

The captain came, having previously written a most sensible letter, which had entirely quieted Charlotte's apprehensions. So much clearness about himself, so just an understanding of his own position and the position of his friends, promised everything which was best and happiest.

The conversation of the first few hours, as is generally the case with friends who have not met for a long time, was eager, lively, almost exhausting. Towards evening, Charlotte proposed a walk to the new grounds. The captain was delighted with the spot, and observed every beauty which had been first brought into sight and made enjoyable by the new walks. He had a practised eye, and at the same time one easily satisfied; and although he knew very well what was really valuable, he never, as so many persons do, made people who were showing him things of their own uncomfortable, by requiring more than the circumstances admitted of, or by mentioning anything more perfect, which he remembered having seen elsewhere.

When they arrived at the summer-house, they found it dressed out for a holiday, only, indeed, with artificial flowers and evergreens, but with some pretty bunches of natural cornears among them, and other field and garden fruit, so as to do credit to the taste which had arranged them.

"Although my husband does not like in general to have his birthday or christening-day kept," Charlotte said, "he will not object to-day to these few ornaments being expended on a treble festival."

"Treble?" cried Edward.

"Yes, indeed," she replied. "Our friend's arrival here we are bound to keep as a festival; and have you never thought, either of you, that this is the day on which you were both christened? Are you not both named Otto?"

The two friends shook hands across the little table.

"You bring back to my mind," Edward said, "this little link of our boyish affection. As children, we were both called so; but when we came to be at school together it was the cause of much confusion, and I readily made over to him all my right to the pretty laconic name."

"Wherein you were not altogether so very high-minded," said the captain; "for I well remember that the name of Edward had then begun to please you better, from its attractive sound when spoken by certain pretty lips."

They were now sitting all three round the same table where Charlotte had spoken so vehemently against their guest's coming to them. Edward, happy as he was, did not wish to remind his wife of that time; but he could not help saying,

“There is good room here for one more person.”

At this moment the notes of a bugle were heard across from the castle. Full of happy thoughts and feelings as the friends all were together, the sound fell in among them with a strong force of answering harmony. They listened silently, each for the moment withdrawing into himself, and feeling doubly happy in the fair circle of which he formed a part. The pause was first broken by Edward, who started up and walked out in front of the summer-house.

“Our friend must not think,” he said to Charlotte, “that this narrow little valley forms the whole of our domain and possessions. Let us take him up to the top of the hill, where he can see farther and breathe more freely.”

“For this once, then,” answered Charlotte, “we must climb up the old footpath, which is not too easy. By the next time, I hope my walks and steps will have been carried right up.”

And so, among rocks, and shrubs, and bushes, they made their way to the summit, where they found themselves, not on a level flat, but on a sloping grassy terrace, running along the ridge of the hill. The village, with the castle behind it, was out of sight. At the bottom of the valley, sheets of water were seen spreading out right and left, with wooded hills rising immediately from their opposite margin, and, at the end of the upper water, a wall of sharp, precipitous rocks directly overhanging it, their huge forms reflected in its level surface. In the hollow of the ravine, where a considerable brook ran into the lake, lay a mill, half hidden among the trees, a sweetly retired spot, most beautifully surrounded; and through the entire semicircle over which the view extended ran an endless variety of hills and valleys, copse and forest, the early green of which promised the near approach of a luxuriant clothing of foliage. In many places particular groups of trees caught the eye; and especially a cluster of planes and poplars directly at the spectator's feet, close to the edge of the centre lake. They were at their full growth, and they stood there, spreading out their boughs all around them, in fresh and luxuriant strength.



To these Edward called his friend's attention.

“I myself planted them,” he cried, “when I was a boy. They were small trees which I rescued when my father was laying out the new part of the great castle garden, and in the middle of one summer had rooted them out. This year you will no doubt see them show their gratitude in a fresh set of shoots.”

They returned to the castle in high spirits, and mutually pleased with each other. To the guest was allotted an agreeable and roomy set of apartments in the right wing of the castle; and here he rapidly got his books and papers and instruments in order, to go on with his usual occupation. But Edward, for the first few days, gave him no rest. He took him about everywhere, now on foot, now on horseback, making him acquainted with the country and with the estate; and he embraced the opportunity of imparting to him the wishes which he had been long entertaining, of getting at some better acquaintance with it, and learning to manage it more profitably.

“The first thing we have to do,” said the captain, “is to make a magnetic survey of the property. That is a pleasant and easy matter; and if it does not admit of entire exactness, it will be always useful, and will do, at any rate, for an agreeable beginning. It can be made, too, without any great staff of assistants, and one can be sure of getting it completed. If by-and-by you come to require anything more exact, it will be easy then to find some plan to have it made.”

The captain was exceedingly skilful at work of this kind. He had brought with him whatever instruments he required, and commenced immediately. Edward provided him with a number of foresters and peasants, who, with his instruction, were able to render him all necessary assistance. The weather was favorable. The evenings and the early mornings were devoted to the designing and drawing, and in a short time it was all filled in and colored. Edward saw his possessions grow out like a new creation upon the paper; and it seemed as if now for the first time he knew what they were, as if they now first were properly his own.

Thus there came occasion to speak of the park, and of the ways of laying it out; a far better disposition of things being made possible after a survey of this kind, than could be arrived at by experimenting on nature, on partial and accidental impressions.

“We must make my wife understand this,” said Edward.

“We must do nothing of the kind,” replied the captain, who did not like bringing his own notions in collision with those of others. He had learned by experience that the motives and purposes by which men are influenced are far too various to be made to coalesce upon a single point, even on the most solid representations. “We must not do it,” he cried; “she will be only confused. With her, as with all people who employ themselves on such matters merely as amateurs, the important thing is, rather that she shall do something, than that something shall be done. Such persons feel their way with nature. They have fancies for this plan or that; they do not venture on removing obstacles. They are not bold enough to make a sacrifice. They do not know beforehand in what their work is to result. They try an experiment—it succeeds—it fails; they alter it; they alter, perhaps, what they ought to leave alone, and leave what they ought to alter; and so, at last, there always remains but a patchwork, which pleases and amuses, but never satisfies.”

“Acknowledge candidly,” said Edward, “that you do not like this new work of hers.”

“The idea is excellent,” he replied; “if the execution were equal to it there would be no fault to find. But she has tormented herself to find her way up that rock; and she now torments everyone, if you must have it, that she takes up after her. You cannot walk together—you cannot walk behind one another with any freedom. Every moment your step is interrupted one way or another. There is no end to the mistakes which she has made.”

“Would it have been easy to have done it otherwise?” asked Edward.

“Perfectly,” replied the captain. “She had only to break away a corner of the rock, which is now but an unsightly object, made up as it is of little pieces, and she would at once have a sweep for her walk and stone in abundance for the rough masonry work, to widen it in the bad places, and make it smooth. But this I tell you in strictest confidence. Her it would only confuse and annoy. What is done must remain as it is. If any more money and labor is to be spent there, there is abundance to do above the summer-house on the hill, which we can settle our own way.”

If the two friends found in their occupation abundance of present employment, there was no lack either of entertaining reminiscences of early times, in which Charlotte took her part as well. They determined, moreover, that as soon as their immediate labors were finished, they would go to work upon the journal, and in this way, too, reproduce the past.

For the rest, when Edward and Charlotte were alone, there were fewer matters of private interest between them than formerly. This was especially the case since the fault-finding about the grounds, which Edward thought so just, and which he felt to the quick. He held his tongue about what the captain had said for a long time; but at last, when he saw his wife again preparing to go to work above the summer-house, with her paths and steps, he could not contain himself any longer, but, after a few circumlocutions, came out with his new views.

Charlotte was thoroughly disturbed. She was sensible enough to perceive at once that they were right, but there was the difficulty with what was already done,—and what was made was made. She had liked it; even what was wrong had become dear to her in its details. She fought against her convictions; she defended her little creations; she railed at men who were forever going to the broad and the great. They could not let a pastime, they could not let an amusement alone, she said, but they must go and make a work out of it, never thinking of the expense which their larger plans involved. She was provoked, annoyed and angry. Her old plans she could not give up, the new she would not quite throw from her; but, divided as she was, for the present she put a stop to the work, and gave herself time to think the thing over, and let it ripen by itself.

At the same time that she lost this source of active amusement, the others were more and more together over their own business. They took to occupying themselves, moreover, with the flower-garden and the hot-houses; and as they filled up the intervals with the ordinary gentlemen's amusements, hunting, riding, buying, selling, breaking horses, and such matters, she was every day left more and more to herself. She devoted herself more assiduously than ever to her correspondence on account of

the captain; and yet she had many lonely hours; so that the information which she now received from the school became of more agreeable interest.

To a long-drawn letter of the superior of the establishment, filled with the usual expressions of delight at her daughter's progress, a brief postscript was attached, with a second from the hand of a gentleman in employment there as an assistant, both of which we here communicate.

POSTSCRIPT OF THE SUPERIOR.

“Of Otilie, I can only repeat to your ladyship what I have already stated in my former letters. I do not know how to find fault with her, yet I cannot say that I am satisfied. She is always unassuming, always ready to oblige others; but it is not pleasing to see her so timid, so almost servile.

“Your ladyship lately sent her some money, with several little matters for her wardrobe. The money she has never touched, the dresses lay unworn in their place. She keeps her things very nice and very clean; but this is all she seems to care about. Again, I cannot praise her excessive abstemiousness in eating and drinking. There is no extravagance at our table, but there is nothing that I like better than to see the children eat enough of good, wholesome food. What is carefully provided and set before them ought to be taken; and to this I never can succeed in bringing Otilie. She is always making herself some occupation or other, always finding something which she must do, something which the servants have neglected, to escape the second course or the dessert; and now it has to be considered (which I cannot help connecting with all this) that she frequently suffers, I have lately learned, from pain in the left side of her head. It is only at times, but it is distressing, and may be of importance. So much upon this otherwise sweet and lovely girl.”

SECOND POSTSCRIPT, BY THE ASSISTANT.

“Our excellent superior commonly permits me to read the letters in which she communicates her observations upon her pupils to their parents and friends. Such of them as are addressed to your ladyship I ever read with twofold attention and pleasure. We have to congratulate you upon a daughter who unites in herself every brilliant quality with which people distinguish themselves in the world; and I at least think you no less fortunate in having had bestowed upon you, in your step-daughter, a child who has been born for the good and happiness of others, and assuredly also for her own. Otilie is almost our only pupil about whom there is a difference of opinion between myself and our reverend superior. I do not complain of the very natural desire in that good lady to see outward and definite fruits arising from her labors. But there are also fruits which are not outward, which are of the true germinal sort, and which develop themselves sooner or later in a beautiful life. And this I am certain is the case with your protégée. So long as she has been under my care, I have watched her moving with an even step, slowly, steadily forward—never back. As with a child it is necessary to begin everything at the beginning, so it is with her. She can comprehend nothing which does not follow from what precedes it; let a thing be as simple and easy as possible, she can make nothing of it if it is not in a recognizable

connection; but find the intermediate links, and make them clear to her, and then nothing is too difficult for her.

“Progressing with such slow steps, she remains behind her companions, who, with capacities of quite a different kind, hurry on and on, learn everything readily, connected or unconnected, recollect it with ease, and apply it with correctness. And again, some of the lessons here are given by excellent, but somewhat hasty and impatient teachers, who pass from result to result, cutting short the process by which they are arrived at; and these are not of the slightest service to her; she learns nothing from them. There is a complaint of her handwriting. They say she will not, or cannot, understand how to form her letters. I have examined closely into this. It is true she writes slowly, stiffly, if you like; but the hand is neither timid nor without character. The French language is not my department, but I have taught her something of it, in the step-by-step fashion; and this she understands easily. Indeed, it is singular that she knows a great deal, and knows it well, too; and yet when she is asked a question, it seems as if she knew nothing.

“To conclude generally, I should say she learns nothing like a person who is being educated, but she learns like one who is to educate—not like a pupil, but like a future teacher. Your ladyship may think it strange that I, as an educator and a teacher, can find no higher praise to give to any one than by a comparison with myself. I may leave it to your own good sense, to your deep knowledge of the world and of mankind, to make the best of my most inadequate, but well-intended expressions. You may satisfy yourself that you have much happiness to promise yourself from this child. I commend myself to your ladyship, and I beseech you to permit me to write to you again as soon as I see reason to believe that I have anything important or agreeable to communicate.”

This letter gave Charlotte great pleasure. The contents of it coincided very closely with the notions which she had herself conceived of Ottilie. At the same time, she could not help smiling at the excessive interest of the assistant, which seemed greater than the insight into a pupil's excellence usually calls forth. In her quiet, unprejudiced way of looking at things, this relation, among others, she was contented to permit to lie before her as a possibility; she could value the interest of so sensible a man in Ottilie, having learned, among the lessons of her life, to see how highly true regard is to be prized, in a world where indifference or dislike are the common natural residents.

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CHAPTER IV.

The topographical chart of the property and its environs was completed. It was executed on a considerable scale; the character of the particular localities was made intelligible by various colors; and by means of a trigonometrical survey, the captain had been able to arrive at a very fair exactness of measurement. He had been rapid in his work. There was scarcely ever any one who could do with less sleep than this most laborious man; and, as his day was always devoted to an immediate purpose, every evening something had been done.



“Let us now,” he said to his friend, “go on to what remains for us, to the statistics of the estate. We shall have a good deal of work to get through at the beginning, and afterwards we shall come to the farm estimates, and much else which will naturally arise out of them. Only we must have one thing distinctly settled and adhered to. Everything which is properly *business* we must keep carefully separate from *life*. Business requires earnestness and method; life must have a freer handling. Business demands the utmost stringency and sequence; in life, inconsecutiveness is frequently necessary, indeed, is charming and graceful. If you are firm in the first, you can afford yourself more liberty in the second; while if you mix them, you will find the free interfering with and breaking in upon the fixed.”

In these sentiments Edward felt a slight reflection upon himself. Though not naturally disorderly, he could never bring himself to arrange his papers in their proper places. What he had to do in connection with others was not kept separate from what only depended on himself. Business got mixed up with amusement, and serious work with recreation. Now, however, it was easy for him, with the help of a friend, who would take the trouble upon himself; and a second “I” worked out the separation, to which the single “I” was always unequal.

In the captain’s wing, they contrived a depository for what concerned the present, and an archive for the past. Here they brought all the documents, papers, and notes from their various hiding-places, rooms, drawers, and boxes, with the utmost speed. Harmony and order were introduced into the wilderness, and the different packets were marked and registered in their several pigeon-holes. They found all they wanted in greater completeness even than they had expected; and here an old clerk was found of no slight service, who for the whole day and part of the night never left his desk, and with whom, till then, Edward had been always dissatisfied.

"I should not know him again," he said to his friend, "the man is so handy and useful."

"That," replied the captain, "is because we give him nothing fresh to do till he has finished, at his convenience, what he has already; and so, as you perceive, he gets through a great deal. If you disturb him, he becomes useless at once."

Spending their days together in this way, in the evenings they never neglected their regular visits to Charlotte. If there was no party from the neighborhood, as was often the case, they read and talked, principally on subjects connected with the improvement of the condition and comfort of social life.

Charlotte, always accustomed to make the most of opportunities, not only saw her husband pleased, but found personal advantages for herself. Various domestic arrangements, which she had long wished to make, but which she did not know exactly how to set about, were managed for her through the contrivance of the captain. Her domestic medicine-chest, hitherto but poorly furnished, was enlarged and enriched, and Charlotte herself, with the help of good books and personal instruction, was put in the way of being able to exercise her disposition to be of practical assistance more frequently and more efficiently than before.

In providing against accidents, which, though common, yet only too often find us unprepared, they thought it especially necessary to have at hand whatever is required for the recovery of drowning men—accidents of this kind, from the number of canals, reservoirs, and waterworks in the neighborhood, being of frequent occurrence. This department the captain took expressly into his own hands; and the observation escaped Edward, that a case of this kind had made a very singular epoch in the life of his friend. The latter made no reply, but seemed to be trying to escape from a painful recollection. Edward immediately stopped; and Charlotte, who, as well as he, had a general knowledge of the story, took no notice of the expression.

"These preparations are all exceedingly valuable," said the captain, one evening. "Now, however, we have not got the one thing which is most essential—a sensible man who understands how to manage it all. I know an army surgeon, whom I could exactly recommend for the place. You might get him at this moment, on easy terms. He is highly distinguished in his profession, and has frequently done more for me, in the treatment even of violent inward disorders, than celebrated physicians. Help upon the spot, is the thing you often most want in the country."

He was written for at once; and Edward and Charlotte were rejoiced to have found so good and necessary an object, on which to expend so much of the money which they set apart for such accidental demands upon them.

Thus Charlotte, too, found means of making use, for her purposes, of the captain's knowledge and practical skill; and she began to be quite reconciled to his presence, and to feel easy about any consequences which might ensue. She commonly prepared questions to ask him; among other things, it was one of her anxieties to provide against whatever was prejudicial to health and comfort, against poisons and such like.

The lead-glazing on the china, the verdigris which formed about her copper and bronze vessels, etc., had long been a trouble to her. She got him to tell her about these, and, naturally, they often had to fall back on the first elements of medicine and chemistry.

An accidental, but welcome occasion for entertainment of this kind, was given by an inclination of Edward to read aloud. He had a particularly clear, deep voice, and earlier in life had earned himself a pleasant reputation for his feeling and lively recitations of works of poetry and oratory. At this time he was occupied with other subjects, and the books which, for some time past, he had been reading, were either chemical, or on some other branch of natural or technical science.

One of his especial peculiarities—which, by-the-by, he very likely shares with a number of his fellow-creatures—was, that he could not bear to have anyone looking over him when he was reading. In early life, when he used to read poems, plays or stories, this had been the natural consequence of the desire which the reader feels, like the poet, or the actor, or the story-teller, to make surprises, to pause, to excite expectation; and this sort of effect was naturally defeated when a third person's eyes could run on before him, and see what was coming. On such occasions, therefore, he was accustomed to place himself in such a position that no one could get behind him. With a party of only three, this was unnecessary; and as with the present subject there was no opportunity for exciting feelings or giving the imagination a surprise, he did not take any particular pains to protect himself.

One evening he had placed himself carelessly, and Charlotte happened by accident to cast her eyes upon the page. His old impatience was aroused; he turned to her, and said, almost unkindly,

“I do wish, once for all, you would leave off doing a thing so out of taste and so disagreeable. When I read aloud to a person, is it not the same as if I was telling him something by word of mouth? The written, the printed word, is in the place of my own thoughts, of my own heart. If a window were broken into my brain or into my heart, and if the man to whom I am counting out my thoughts, or delivering my sentiments, one by one, knew already beforehand exactly what was to come out of me, should I take the trouble to put them into words? When anybody looks over my book, I always feel as if I were being torn in two.”

Charlotte's tact, in whatever circle she might be, large or small, was remarkable, and she was able to set aside disagreeable or excited expressions without appearing to notice them. When a conversation grew tedious, she knew how to interrupt it; when it halted, she could set it going. And this time her good gift did not forsake her.

“I am sure you will forgive me my fault,” she said, “when I tell you what it was this moment which came over me. I heard you reading something about Affinities, and I thought directly of some relations of mine, two of whom are just now occupying me a great deal. Then my attention went back to the book. I found it was not about living things at all, and I looked over to get the thread of it right again.”

"It was the comparison which led you wrong and confused you," said Edward. "The subject is nothing but earths and minerals. But man is a true Narcissus; he delights to see his own image everywhere; and he spreads himself underneath the universe, like the amalgam behind the glass."

"Quite true," continued the captain. "That is the way in which he treats everything external to himself. His wisdom and his folly, his will and his caprice, he attributes alike to the animal, the plant, the elements, and the gods."

"Would you," said Charlotte, "if it is not taking you away too much from the immediate subject, tell me briefly what is meant here by Affinities?"

"I shall be very glad indeed," replied the captain, to whom Charlotte had addressed herself. "That is, I will tell you as well as I can. My ideas on the subject date ten years back; whether the scientific world continues to think the same about it, I cannot tell."

"It is most disagreeable," cried Edward, "that one cannot now-a-days learn a thing once for all, and have done with it. Our forefathers could keep to what they were taught when they were young; but we have, every five years, to make revolutions with them, if we do not wish to drop altogether out of fashion."

"We women need not be so particular," said Charlotte; "and, to speak the truth, I only want to know the meaning of the word. There is nothing more ridiculous in society than to misuse a strange technical word; and I only wish you to tell me in what sense the expression is made use of in connection with these things. What its scientific application is, I am quite contented to leave to the learned; who, by-the-by, as far as I have been able to observe, do not find it easy to agree among themselves."

"Whereabouts shall we begin," said Edward, after a pause, to the captain, "to come most quickly to the point?"

The latter, after thinking a little while, replied shortly,

"You must let me make what will seem a wide sweep; we shall be on our subject almost immediately."

Charlotte settled her work at her side, promising the fullest attention.

The captain began:

"In all natural objects with which we are acquainted, we observe immediately that they have a certain relation to themselves. It may sound ridiculous to be asserting what is obvious to every one; but it is only by coming to a clear understanding together about what we know, that we can advance to what we do not know."

"I think," interrupted Edward, "we can make the thing more clear to her, and to ourselves, with examples; conceive water, or oil, or quicksilver; among these you will see a certain oneness, a certain connection of their parts; and this oneness is never

lost, except through force or some other determining cause. Let the cause cease to operate, and at once the parts unite again.”

“Unquestionably,” said Charlotte, “that is plain; rain-drops readily unite and form streams; and when we were children it was our delight to play with quicksilver, and wonder at the little globules splitting and parting and running into one another.”

“And here,” said the captain, “let me just cursorily mention one remarkable thing, I mean that the full, complete correlation of parts which the fluid state makes possible, shows itself distinctly and universally in the globular form. The falling water-drop is round; you yourself spoke of the globules of quicksilver; and a drop of melted lead let fall, if it has time to harden before it reaches the ground, is found at the bottom in the shape of a ball.”

“Let me try and see,” said Charlotte, “whether I can understand where you are bringing me. As everything has a reference to itself, so it must have some relation to others.”

“And that,” interrupted Edward, “will be different according to the natural differences of the things themselves. Sometimes they will meet like friends and old acquaintances; they will come rapidly together, and unite without either having to alter itself at all—as wine mixes with water. Others, again, will remain as strangers side by side, and no amount of mechanical mixing or forcing will succeed in combining them. Oil and water may be shaken up together, and the next moment they are separate again, each by itself.”

“One can almost fancy,” said Charlotte, “that in these simple forms one sees people that one is acquainted with; one has met with just such things in the societies amongst which one has lived; and the strangest likenesses of all with these soulless creatures, are in the masses in which men stand divided one against the other, in their classes and professions; the nobility and the third estate, for instance, or soldiers and civilians.”

“Then again,” replied Edward, “as these are united together under common laws and customs, so there are intermediate members in our chemical world which will combine elements that are mutually repulsive.”

“Oil, for instance,” said the captain, “we make combine with water with the help of alkalies—”

“Do not go on too fast with your lesson,” said Charlotte. “Let me see that I keep step with you. Are we not here arrived among the affinities?”

“Exactly,” replied the captain; “we are on the point of apprehending them in all their power and distinctness; such natures as, when they come in contact, at once lay hold of each other, and mutually affect one another, we speak of as having an affinity one for the other. With the alkalies and acids, for instance, the affinities are strikingly marked. They are of opposite natures; very likely their being of opposite natures is the secret of their effect on one another—they seek one another eagerly out, lay hold of

each other, modify each other's character, and form in connection an entirely new substance. There is lime, you remember, which shows the strongest inclination for all sorts of acids—a distinct desire of combining with them. As soon as our chemical chest arrives, we can show you a number of entertaining experiments, which will give you a clearer idea than words, and names, and technical expressions.”

“It appears to me,” said Charlotte, “that if you choose to call these strange creatures of yours related, the relationship is not so much a relationship of blood, as of soul or of spirit. It is the way in which we see all really deep friendships arise among men; opposite peculiarities of disposition being what best makes internal union possible. But I will wait to see what you can really show me of these mysterious proceedings; and for the present,” she added, turning to Edward, “I will promise not to disturb you any more in your reading. You have taught me enough of what it is about to enable me to attend to it.”

“No, no,” replied Edward, “now that you have once stirred the thing, you shall not get off so easily. It is just the most complicated cases which are the most interesting. In these you come first to see the degrees of the affinities, to watch them as their power of attraction is weaker or stronger, nearer or more remote. Affinities only begin really to interest when they bring about separations.”

“What!” cried Charlotte, “is that miserable word, which unhappily we hear so often now-a-days in the world, is that to be found in nature's lessons too?”

“Most certainly,” answered Edward; “the title with which chemists were supposed to be most honorably distinguished was, artists of separation.”

“It is not so any more,” replied Charlotte; “and it is well that it is not. It is a higher art, and it is a higher merit, to unite. An artist of union, is what we should welcome in every province of the universe. However, as we are on the subject again, give me an instance or two of what you mean.”

“We had better keep,” said the captain, “to the same instances of which we have already been speaking. Thus, what we call limestone is a more or less pure calcareous earth in combination with a delicate acid, which is familiar to us in the form of a gas. Now, if we place a piece of this stone in diluted sulphuric acid, this will take possession of the lime, and appear with it in the form of gypsum, the gaseous acid at the same time going off in vapor. Here is a case of separation; a combination arises, and we believe ourselves now justified in applying to it the words, ‘Elective Affinity;’ it really looks as if one relation had been deliberately chosen in preference to another.”

“Forgive me,” said Charlotte, “as I forgive the natural philosopher. I cannot see any choice in this; I see a natural necessity rather, and scarcely that. After all, it is perhaps merely a case of opportunity. Opportunity makes relations as it makes thieves, and as long as the talk is only of natural substances, the choice to me appears to be altogether in the hands of the chemist who brings the creatures together. Once, however, let them be brought together, and then God have mercy on them. In the present case, I

cannot help being sorry for the poor acid gas, which is driven out up and down infinity again.”

“The acid’s business,” answered the captain, “is now to get connected with water, and so serve as a mineral fountain for the refreshing of sound or disordered mankind.”

“That is very well for the gypsum to say,” said Charlotte. “The gypsum is all right, is a body, is provided for. The other poor, desolate creature may have trouble enough to go through before it can find a second home for itself.”

“I am much mistaken,” said Edward, smiling, “if there be not some little *arrière pensée* behind this. Confess your wickedness! You mean me by your lime; the lime is laid hold of by the captain, in the form of sulphuric acid, torn away from your agreeable society, and metamorphosed into a refractory gypsum.”

“If your conscience prompts you to make such a reflection,” replied Charlotte, “I certainly need not distress myself. These comparisons are pleasant and entertaining; and who is there that does not like playing with analogies? But man is raised very many steps above these elements; and if he has been somewhat liberal with such fine words as Election and Elective Affinities, he will do well to turn back again into himself, and take the opportunity of considering carefully the value and meaning of such expressions. Unhappily, we know cases enough where a connection apparently indissoluble between two persons, has, by the accidental introduction of a third, been utterly destroyed, and one or the other of the once happily united pair been driven out into the wilderness.”

“Then you see how much more gallant the chemists are,” said Edward. “They at once add a fourth, that neither may go away empty.”



CHARLOTTE GLANCING OVER EDWARD’S BOOK.

“Quite so,” replied the captain. “And those are the cases which are really most important and remarkable—cases where this attraction, this affinity, this separating and combining, can be exhibited, the two pairs severally crossing each other; where four creatures, connected previously, as two and two, are brought into contact, and at

once forsake their first combination to form into a second. In this forsaking and embracing, this seeking and flying, we believe that we are indeed observing the effects of some higher determination; we attribute a sort of will and choice to such creatures, and feel really justified in using technical words, and speaking of 'Elective Affinities.' ”

“Give me an instance of this,” said Charlotte.

“One should not spoil such things with words,” replied the captain. “As I said before, as soon as I can show you the experiment, I can make it all intelligible and pleasant for you. For the present, I can give you nothing but horrible scientific expressions, which at the same time will give you no idea about the matter. You ought yourself to see these creatures, which seem so dead, and which are yet so full of inward energy and force, at work before your eyes. You should observe them with a real personal interest. Now they seek each other out, attract each other, seize, crush, devour, destroy each other, and then suddenly reappear again out of their combinations, and come forward in fresh, renovated, unexpected form; thus you will comprehend how we attribute to them a sort of immortality—how we speak of them as having sense and understanding; because we feel our own senses to be insufficient to observe them adequately, and our reason too weak to follow them.”

“I quite agree,” said Edward, “that the strange scientific nomenclature, to persons who have not been reconciled to it by a direct acquaintance with or understanding of its object, must seem unpleasant, even ridiculous; but we can easily, just for once, contrive with symbols to illustrate what we are speaking of.”

“If you do not think it looks pedantic,” answered the captain, “I can put my meaning together with letters. Suppose an A connected so closely with a B, that all sorts of means, even violence, have been made use of to separate them, without effect. Then suppose a C in exactly the same position with respect to D. Bring the two pairs into contact; A will fling himself on D, C on B, without its being possible to say which had first left its first connection, or made the first move towards the second.”

“Now then,” interposed Edward, “till we see all this with our eyes, we will look upon the formula as an analogy, out of which we can devise a lesson for immediate use. You stand for A, Charlotte, and I am your B; really and truly I cling to you, I depend on you, and follow you, just as B does with A. C is obviously the captain, who at present is in some degree withdrawing me from you. So now it is only just that if you are not to be left to solitude, a D should be found for you, and that is unquestionably the amiable little lady, Ottilie. You will not hesitate any longer to send and fetch her.”

“Good,” replied Charlotte; “although the example does not, in my opinion, exactly fit our case. However, we have been fortunate, at any rate, in to-day for once having met all together; and these natural or elective affinities have served to unite us more intimately. I will tell you, that since this afternoon I have made up my mind to send for Ottilie. My faithful housekeeper, on whom I have hitherto depended for everything, is going to leave me shortly, to be married. (It was done at my own suggestion, I believe, to please me.) What it is which has decided me about Ottilie,

you shall read to me. I will not look over the pages again. Indeed, the contents of them are already known to me. Only read, read!"

With these words, she produced a letter, and handed it to Edward.

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CHAPTER V.

LETTER OF THE LADY SUPERIOR.

“Your ladyship will forgive the brevity of my present letter. The public examinations are but just concluded, and I have to communicate to all the parents and guardians the progress which our pupils have made during the past year. To you I may well be brief, having to say much in few words. Your ladyship's daughter has proved herself first in every sense of the word. The testimonials which I inclose, and her own letter, in which she will detail to you the prizes which she has won, and the happiness which she feels in her success, will surely please, and I hope delight you. For myself, it is the less necessary that I should say much, because I see that there will soon be no more occasion to keep with us a young lady so far advanced. I send my respects to your ladyship, and in a short time I shall take the liberty of offering you my opinion as to what in future may be of most advantage to her.

“My good assistant will tell you about Otilie.”

LETTER OF THE ASSISTANT.

“Our reverend superior leaves it to me to write to you of Otilie, partly because, with her ways of thinking about it, it would be painful to her to say what has to be said; partly, because she herself requires some excusing, which she would rather have done for her by me.

“Knowing, as I did too well, how little able the good Otilie was to show out what lies in her, and what she is capable of, I was all along afraid of this public examination. I was the more uneasy, as it was to be of a kind which does not admit of any especial preparation; and even if it had been conducted as usual, Otilie never can be prepared to make a display. The result has only too entirely justified my anxiety. She has gained no prize; she is not even amongst those whose names have been mentioned with approbation. I need not go into details. In writing, the letters of the other girls were not so well formed, but their strokes were far more free. In arithmetic, they were all quicker than she; and in the more difficult problems, which she does the best, there was no examination. In French, she was outshone and out-talked by many; and in history she was not ready with her names and dates. In geography, there was a want of attention to the political divisions; and for what she could do in music there was neither time nor quiet enough for her few modest melodies to gain attention. In drawing she certainly would have gained the prize; her outlines were clear, and the execution most careful and full of spirit; unhappily, she had chosen too large a subject, and it was incomplete.

“After the pupils were dismissed, the examiners consulted together, and we teachers were partially admitted into the council. I very soon observed that of Otilie either nothing would be said at all, or if her name was mentioned, it would be with

indifference, if not absolute disapproval. I hoped to obtain some favor for her by a candid description of what she was, and I ventured it with the greater earnestness, partly because I was only speaking my real convictions, and partly because I remembered in my own younger years finding myself in the same unfortunate case. I was listened to with attention, but as soon as I had ended, the presiding examiner said to me very kindly but laconically, 'We presume capabilities: they are to be converted into accomplishments. This is the aim of all education. It is what is distinctly intended by all who have the care of children, and silently and indistinctly by the children themselves. This also is the object of examinations, where teachers and pupils are alike standing their trial. From what we learn of you, we may entertain good hopes of the young lady, and it is to your own credit also that you have paid so much attention to your pupil's capabilities. If in the coming year you can develop these into accomplishments, neither yourself nor your pupil shall fail to receive your due praise.'

"I had made up my mind to what must follow upon all this; but there was something worse that I had not anticipated, which had soon to be added to it. Our good superior, who like a trusty shepherdess could not bear to have one of her flock lost, or, as was the case here, to see it undistinguished, after the examiners were gone could not contain her displeasure, and said to Otilie, who was standing quite quietly by the window, while the others were exulting over their prizes, 'Tell me, for heaven's sake, how can a person look so stupid if she is not so?' Otilie replied, quite calmly, 'Forgive me, my dear mother, I have my headache again to-day, and it is very painful.' Kind and sympathizing as she generally is, the superior this time answered, 'No one can believe that,' and turned angrily away.

"Now it is true,—no one can believe it,—for Otilie never alters the expression of her countenance. I have never even seen her move her hand to her head when she has been asleep.

"Nor was this all. Your ladyship's daughter, who is at all times sufficiently lively and impetuous, after her triumph to-day was overflowing with the violence of her spirits. She ran from room to room with her prizes and testimonials, and shook them in Otilie's face. 'You have come badly off this morning,' she cried. Otilie replied in her calm, quiet way, 'This is not the last day of trial.' 'But you will always remain the last,' cried the other, and ran away.

"No one except myself saw that Otilie was disturbed. She has a way when she experiences any sharp unpleasant emotion which she wishes to resist, of showing it in the unequal color of her face; the left cheek becomes for a moment flushed, while the right turns pale. I perceived this symptom, and I could not prevent myself from saying something. I took our superior aside, and spoke seriously to her about it. The excellent lady acknowledged that she had been wrong. We considered the whole affair; we talked it over at great length together, and not to weary your ladyship, I will tell you at once the desire with which we concluded, namely, that you will for a while have Otilie with yourself. Our reasons you will yourself readily perceive. If you consent, I will say more to you on the manner in which I think she should be treated. The young lady your daughter we may expect will soon leave us, and we shall then with pleasure welcome Otilie back to us.

“One thing more, which another time I might forget to mention: I have never seen Ottilie eager for anything, or at least ask pressingly for anything. But there have been occasions, however rare, when on the other hand she has wished to decline things which have been pressed upon her, and she does it with a gesture which to those who have caught its meaning is irresistible. She raises her hands, presses the palms together, and draws them against her breast, leaning her body a little forward at the same time, and turns such a look upon the person who is urging her, that he will be glad enough to cease to ask or wish for anything of her. If your ladyship ever sees this attitude, as with your treatment of her it is not likely that you will, think of me, and spare Ottilie.”

Edward read these letters aloud, not without smiles and shakes of the head. Naturally, too, there were observations made on the persons and on the position of the affair.

“Enough!” Edward cried at last, “it is decided. She comes. You, my love, are provided for, and now we can get forward with our work. It is becoming highly necessary for me to move over to the right wing to the captain; evenings and mornings are the time for us best to work together, and then you, on your side, will have admirable room for yourself and Ottilie.”

Charlotte made no objection, and Edward sketched out the method in which they should live. Among other things, he cried, “It is really very polite in this niece to be subject to a slight pain on the left side of her head. I have it frequently on the right. If we happen to be afflicted together, and sit opposite one another,—I leaning on my right elbow, and she on her left, and our heads on the opposite sides, resting on our hands,—what a pretty pair of pictures we shall make.”



The captain thought that might be dangerous. “No, no!” cried out Edward. “Only do you, my dear friend, take care of the D, for what will become of B if poor C is taken away from it?”

“That, I should have thought, would have been evident enough,” replied Charlotte.



“And it is, indeed,” cried Edward; “he would turn back to his A, to his Alpha and Omega;” and he sprung up and taking Charlotte in his arms, pressed her to his breast.

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CHAPTER VI.

The carriage which brought Otilie drove up to the door. Charlotte went out to receive her. The dear girl ran to meet her, threw herself at her feet, and embraced her knees.

“Why such humility?” said Charlotte, a little embarrassed, and endeavoring to raise her from the ground.

“It is not meant for humility,” Otilie answered, without moving from the position in which she had placed herself; “I am only thinking of the time when I could not reach higher than to your knees, and when I had just learned to know how you loved me.”

She stood up, and Charlotte embraced her warmly. She was introduced to the gentlemen, and was at once treated with especial courtesy as a visitor. Beauty is a welcome guest everywhere. She appeared attentive to the conversation, without taking a part in it.

The next morning Edward said to Charlotte, “What an agreeable, entertaining girl she is!”

“Entertaining!” answered Charlotte, with a smile; “why, she has not opened her lips yet!”

“Indeed!” said Edward, as he seemed to bethink himself; “that is very strange.”

Charlotte had to give the new-comer but a very few hints on the management of the household. Otilie saw rapidly all the arrangements, and what was more, she felt them. She comprehended easily what was to be provided for the whole party, and what for each particular member of it. Everything was done with the utmost punctuality; she knew how to direct, without appearing to be giving orders, and when anyone had left anything undone, she at once set it right herself.

As soon as she had found how much time she would have to spare, she begged Charlotte to divide her hours for her, and to these she adhered exactly. She worked at what was set before her in the way which the assistant had described to Charlotte. They let her alone. It was but seldom that Charlotte interfered. Sometimes she changed her pens for others which had been written with, to teach her to make bolder strokes in her handwriting, but these, she found, would be soon cut sharp and fine again.

The ladies had agreed with one another when they were alone to speak nothing but French, and Charlotte persisted in it the more, as she found Otilie more ready to talk in a foreign language, when she was told it was her duty to exercise herself in it. In this way she often said more than she seemed to intend. Charlotte was particularly pleased with a description, most complete, but at the same time most charming and amiable, which she gave her one day, by accident, of the school. She soon felt her to

be a delightful companion, and before long she hoped to find in her an attached friend.

At the same time she looked over again the more early accounts which had been sent her of Otilie, to refresh her recollection with the opinion which the superior and the assistant had formed about her, and compare them with her in her own person. For Charlotte was of opinion that we cannot too quickly become acquainted with the character of those with whom we have to live, that we may know what to expect of them; where we may hope to do anything in the way of improvement with them, and what we must make up our minds, once for all, to tolerate and let alone.

This examination led her to nothing new, indeed; but much which she already knew became of greater meaning and importance. Otilie's moderation in eating and drinking, for instance, became a real distress to her.

The next thing on which the ladies were employed was Otilie's toilet. Charlotte wished her to appear in clothes of a richer and more *recherché* sort, and at once the clever active girl herself cut out the stuff which had been previously sent to her, and with a very little assistance from others was able, in a short time, to dress herself out most tastefully. The new fashionable dresses set off her figure. An agreeable person, it is true, will show through all disguises; but we always fancy it looks fresher and more graceful when its peculiarities appear under some new drapery. And thus, from the moment of her first appearance, she became more and more a delight to the eyes of all who beheld her. As the emerald refreshes the sight with its beautiful hues, and exerts, it is said, a beneficent influence on that noble sense, so does human beauty work with a far larger potency on the outward and on the inward sense; whoever looks upon it is charmed against the breath of evil, and feels in harmony with himself and with the world.

In many ways, therefore, the party had gained by Otilie's arrival. The captain and Edward kept regularly to the hours, even to the minutes, for their general meeting together. They never kept the others waiting for them either for dinner or tea, or for their walks; and they were in less haste, especially in the evenings, to leave the table. This did not escape Charlotte's observation; she watched them both, to see whether one more than the other was the occasion of it. But she could not perceive any difference. They had both become more companionable. In their conversation they seemed to consider what was best adapted to interest Otilie, what was most on a level with her capacities and her general knowledge. If she left the room when they were reading or telling stories, they would wait till she returned. They had grown softer and altogether more united.

In return for this, Otilie's anxiety to be of use increased every day; the more she came to understand the house, its inmates, and their circumstances, the more eagerly she entered into everything, caught every look and every motion; half a word, a sound, was enough for her. With her calm attentiveness, and her easy, unexcited activity, she was always the same. Sitting, rising up, going, coming, fetching, carrying, returning to her place again, it was all in the most perfect repose; a constant

change, a constant agreeable movement; while, at the same time, she went about so lightly that her step was almost inaudible.

This cheerful obligingness in Ottilie gave Charlotte the greatest pleasure. There was one thing, however, which she did not exactly like, of which she had to speak to her. "It is very polite in you," she said one day to her, "when people let anything fall from their hand, to be so quick in stooping and picking it up for them; at the same time, it is a sort of confession that they have a right to require such attention, and in the world we are expected to be careful to whom we pay it. Towards women, I will not prescribe any rule as to how you should conduct yourself. You are young. To those above you, and older than you, services of this sort are a duty; towards your equals they are polite; to those younger than yourself and your inferiors you may show yourself kind and good-natured by such things,—only it is not becoming in a young lady to do them for men."

"I will try to forget the habit," replied Ottilie; "I think, however, you will in the meantime forgive me for my want of manners, when I tell you how I came by it. We were taught history at school; I have not gained as much out of it as I ought, for I never knew what use I was to make of it; a few little things, however, made a deep impression upon me, among which was the following:—When Charles the First of England was standing before his so-called judges, the gold top came off the stick which he had in his hand, and fell down. Accustomed as he had been on such occasions to have everything done for him, he seemed to look round and expect that this time too some one would do him this little service. No one stirred, and he stooped down for it himself. It struck me as so piteous, that from that moment I have never been able to see any one let a thing fall, without myself picking it up. But, of course, as it is not always proper, and as I cannot," she continued, smiling, "tell my story every time I do it, in future I will try and contain myself."

In the meantime the fine arrangements which the two friends had been led to make for themselves, went uninterruptedly forward. Every day they found something new to think about and undertake.

One day as they were walking together through the village, they had to remark with dissatisfaction how far behindhand it was in order and cleanliness, compared to villages where the inhabitants were compelled by the expense of building-ground to be careful about such things.

"You remember a wish we once expressed when we were travelling in Switzerland together," said the captain, "that we might have the laying out some country park, and how beautiful we would make it by introducing into some village situated like this, not the Swiss style of building, but the Swiss order and neatness which so much improve it."

"And how well it would answer here! The hill on which the castle stands, slopes down to that projecting angle. The village, you see, is built in a semicircle, regularly enough, just opposite to it. The brook runs between. It is liable to floods; and do observe the way the people set about protecting themselves from them; one with

stones, another with stakes; the next puts up a boarding, and a fourth tries beams and planks; no one, of course, doing any good to another with his arrangement, but only hurting himself and the rest too. And then there is the road going along just in the clumsiest way possible,—up hill and down, through the water, and over the stones. If the people would only lay their hands to the business together, it would cost them nothing but a little labor to run a semicircular wall along here, take the road in behind it, raising it to the level of the houses, and so give themselves a fair open space in front, making the whole place clean, and getting rid, once for all, in one good general work, of all their little trifling ineffectual makeshifts.”

“Let us try it,” said the captain, as he ran his eyes over the lay of the ground, and saw quickly what was to be done.

“I can undertake nothing in company with peasants and shopkeepers,” replied Edward, “unless I may have unrestricted authority over them.”

“You are not so wrong in that,” returned the captain; “I have experienced too much trouble myself in life in matters of that kind. How difficult it is to prevail on a man to venture boldly on making a sacrifice for an after-advantage! How hard to get him to desire an end, and not hesitate at the means! So many people confuse means with ends; they keep hanging over the first, without having the other before their eyes. Every evil is to be cured at the place where it comes to the surface, and they will not trouble themselves to look for the cause which produces it, or the remote effect which results from it. This is why it is so difficult to get advice listened to, especially among the many: they can see clearly enough from day to day, but their scope seldom reaches beyond the morrow; and if it comes to a point where with some general arrangement one person will gain while another will lose, there is no prevailing on them to strike a balance. Works of public advantage can only be carried through by an uncontrolled absolute authority.”

While they were standing and talking, a man came up and begged of them. He looked more impudent than really in want, and Edward, who was annoyed at being interrupted, after two or three fruitless attempts to get rid of him by a gentler refusal, spoke sharply to him. The fellow began to grumble and mutter abusively; he went off with short steps, talking about the right of beggars. It was all very well to refuse them an alms, but that was no reason why they should be insulted. A beggar, and everybody else too, was as much under God's protection as a lord. It put Edward out of all patience.

The captain, to pacify him, said, “Let us make use of this as an occasion for extending our rural police arrangements to such cases. We are bound to give away money, but we do better in not giving it in person, especially at home. We should be moderate and uniform in everything, in our charities as in all else; too great liberality attracts beggars instead of helping them on their way. At the same time there is no harm when one is on a journey, or passing through a strange place, in appearing to a poor man in the street in the form of a chance deity of fortune, and making him some present which shall surprise him. The position of the village and of the castle makes it easy for us to put our charities here on a proper footing. I have thought about it before. The

public-house is at one end of the village, a respectable old couple live at the other. At each of these places deposit a small sum of money, and let every beggar, not as he comes in, but as he goes out, receive something. Both houses lie on the roads which lead to the castle, so that any one who goes there can be referred to one or the other."

"Come," said Edward, "we will settle that on the spot. The exact sum can be made up another time."

They went to the innkeeper, and to the old couple, and the thing was done.

"I know very well," Edward said, as they were walking up the hill to the castle together, "that everything in this world depends on distinctness of idea and firmness of purpose. Your judgment of what my wife has been doing in the park was entirely right; and you have already given me a hint how it might be improved. I will not deny that I told her of it."

"So I have been led to suspect," replied the captain; "and I could not approve of your having done so. You have perplexed her. She has left off doing anything; and on this one subject she is vexed with us. She avoids speaking of it. She has never since invited us to go with her to the summer-house, although at odd hours she goes up there with Otilie."

"We must not allow ourselves to be deterred by that," answered Edward. "If I am once convinced about anything good, which could and should be done, I can never rest till I see it done. We are clever enough at other times in introducing what we want into the general conversation; suppose we have out some descriptions of English parks, with copper-plates, for our evening's amusement. Then we can follow with your plan. We will treat it first problematically, and as if we were only in jest. There will be no difficulty in passing into earnest."

The scheme was concerted, and the books were opened. In each group of designs they first saw a ground-plan of the spot, with the general character of the landscape, drawn in its rude, natural state. Then followed others, showing the changes which had been produced by art, to employ and set off the natural advantages of the locality. From these to their own property and their own grounds, the transition was easy.

Everybody was pleased. The chart which the captain had sketched was brought and spread out. The only difficulty was, that they could not entirely free themselves of the plan in which Charlotte had begun. However, an easier way up the hill was found; a lodge was suggested to be built on the height at the edge of the cliff, which was to have an especial reference to the castle. It was to form a conspicuous object from the castle windows, and from it the spectator was to be able to overlook both the castle and the garden.

The captain had thought it all carefully over, and taken his measurements; and now he brought up again the village road and the wall by the brook, and the ground which was to be raised behind it.

“Here you see,” said he, “while I make this charming walk up the height, I gain exactly the quantity of stone which I require for that wall. Let one piece of work help the other, and both will be carried out most satisfactorily and most rapidly.”

“But now,” said Charlotte, “comes my side of the business. A certain definite outlay of money will have to be made. We ought to know how much will be wanted for such a purpose, and then we can apportion it out—so much work, and so much money, if not by weeks, at least by months. The cash-box is under my charge. I pay the bills, and I keep the accounts.”

“You do not appear to have overmuch confidence in us,” said Edward.

“I have not much in arbitrary matters,” Charlotte answered. “Where it is a case of inclination, we women know better how to control ourselves than you.”

It was settled; the dispositions were made, and the work was begun at once.

The captain being always on the spot, Charlotte was almost daily a witness to the strength and clearness of his understanding. He, too, learned to know her better; and it became easy for them both to work together, and thus bring something to completeness. It is with work as with dancing; persons who keep the same step must grow indispensable to one another. Out of this a mutual kindly feeling will necessarily arise; and that Charlotte had a real kind feeling towards the captain, after she came to know him better, was sufficiently proved by her allowing him to destroy her pretty seat, which in her first plans she had taken such pains in ornamenting, because it was in the way of his own, without experiencing the slightest feeling about the matter.

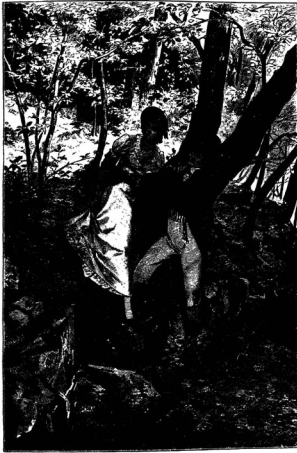
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CHAPTER VII.

It was a natural consequence now that Charlotte was occupied with the captain, that Edward should attach himself more to Otilie. Independently of this, indeed, for some time past he had begun to feel a silent kind of attraction towards her. Obliging and attentive she was to everyone, but his self-love whispered that towards him she was particularly so. She had observed his little fancies about his food. She knew exactly what things he liked, and the way in which he liked them to be prepared; the quantity of sugar which he liked in his tea; and so on. Moreover, she was particularly careful to prevent draughts, about which he was excessively sensitive, and, indeed, about which, with his wife, who could never have air enough, he was often at variance. So, too, she had come to know about fruit-gardens and flower-gardens; whatever he liked, it was her constant effort to procure for him, and to keep away whatever annoyed him; so that very soon she grew indispensable to him—she became like his guardian angel, and he felt it keenly whenever she was absent. Besides all this, too, she appeared to grow more open and conversible as soon as they were alone together.

Edward, as he advanced in life, had retained something childish about himself, which corresponded singularly well with the youthfulness of Otilie. They liked talking of early times, when they had first seen each other; and these reminiscences led them up to the first epoch of Edward's affection for Charlotte. Otilie declared that she remembered them both as the handsomest pair about the court; and when Edward would question the possibility of this, when she must have been so exceedingly young, she insisted that she recollected one particular incident as clearly as possible. He had come into the room where her aunt was, and she had hid her face in Charlotte's lap—not from fear, but from a childish surprise. She might have added, because he had made so strong an impression upon her—because she had liked him so much.

While they were occupied in this way, much of the business which the two friends had undertaken together had come to a standstill; so that they found it necessary to inspect how things were going on—to work up a few designs and get letters written. For this purpose, they betook themselves to their office, where they found their old copyist at his desk. They set themselves to their work, and soon gave the old man enough to do, without observing that they were laying many things on his shoulders which at other times they had always done for themselves. At the same time, the first design the captain tried would not answer, and Edward was as unsuccessful with his first letter. They fretted for a while, planning and erasing, till at last Edward, who was getting on the worst, asked what o'clock it was. And then it appeared that the captain had forgotten, for the first time for many years, to wind up his chronometer; and they seemed, if not to feel, at least to have a dim perception, that time was beginning to be indifferent to them.



EDWARD ASSISTING OTTILIE.

In the meanwhile, as the gentlemen were thus rather slackening in their energy, the activity of the ladies increased all the more. The every-day life of a family, which is composed of given persons, and is shaped out of necessary circumstances, may easily receive into itself an extraordinary affection, an incipient passion—may receive it into itself as into a vessel; and a long time may elapse before the new ingredient produces a visible effervescence, and runs foaming over the edge.

With our friends, the feelings which were mutually arising had the most agreeable effects. Their dispositions opened out, and a general goodwill arose out of the several individual affections. Every member of the party was happy; and they each shared their happiness with the rest.

Such a temper elevates the spirit, while it enlarges the heart, and everything which, under the influence of it, people do and undertake, has a tendency towards the illimitable. The friends could not remain any more shut up at home; their walks extended themselves farther and farther. Edward would hurry on before with Otilie, to choose the path or pioneer the way; and the captain and Charlotte would follow quietly on the track of their more hasty precursors, talking on some grave subject, or delighting themselves with some spot they had newly discovered, or some unexpected natural beauty.

One day their walk led them down from the gate at the right wing of the castle, in the direction of the hotel, and thence over the bridge towards the ponds, along the sides of which they proceeded as far as it was generally thought possible to follow the water; thickly wooded hills sloping directly up from the edge, and beyond these a wall of steep rocks, making further progress difficult, if not impossible. But Edward, whose hunting experience had made him thoroughly familiar with the spot, pushed forward along an overgrown path with Otilie, knowing well that the old mill could not be far off, which was somewhere in the middle of the rocks there. The path was so little frequented, that they soon lost it; and for a short time they were wandering among mossy stones and thickets; it was not for long, however: the noise of the water-wheel speedily telling them that the place which they were looking for was close at hand. Stepping forward on a point of rock, they saw the strange old, dark wooden building

in the hollow before them, quite shadowed over with precipitous crags and huge trees. They determined directly to climb down amidst the moss and the blocks of stone. Edward led the way; and when he looked back and saw Otilie following, stepping lightly, without fear or nervousness, from stone to stone, so beautifully balancing herself, he fancied he was looking at some celestial creature floating above him; while if, as she often did, she caught the hand which in some difficult spot he would offer her, or if she supported herself on his shoulder, then he was left in no doubt that it was a very exquisite human creature who touched him. He almost wished that she might slip or stumble, that he might catch her in his arms and press her to his heart. This, however, he would under no circumstances have done, for more than one reason. He was afraid to wound her, and he was afraid to do her some bodily injury.

What the meaning of this could be, we shall immediately learn. When they had got down, and were seated opposite each other at a table under the trees, and when the miller's wife had gone for milk, and the miller, who had come out to them, was sent to meet Charlotte and the captain, Edward, with a little embarrassment, began to speak:

“I have a request to make, dear Otilie; you will forgive me for asking it, if you will not grant it. You make no secret (I am sure you need not make any), that you wear a miniature under your dress against your breast. It is the picture of your noble father. You could hardly have known him; but in every sense he deserves a place by your heart. Only, forgive me, the picture is exceedingly large, and the metal frame and the glass, if you take up a child in your arms, if you are carrying anything, if the carriage swings violently, if we are pushing through bushes, or just now, as we were coming down these rocks,—cause me a thousand anxieties for you. Any unforeseen blow, a fall, a touch, may be fatally injurious to you; and I am terrified at the possibility of it. For my sake do this: put away the picture, not out of your affections, not out of your room; let it have the brightest, the holiest place which you can give it; only do not wear upon your breast a thing, the presence of which seems to me, perhaps from an extravagant anxiety, so dangerous.”

Otilie said nothing, and while he was speaking she kept her eyes fixed straight before her; then, without hesitation and without haste, with a look turned more towards heaven than on Edward, she unclasped the chain, drew out the picture, and pressed it against her forehead, and then reached it over to her friend, with the words:

“Do you keep it for me till we come home; I cannot give you a better proof how deeply I thank you for your affectionate care.”

He did not venture to press the picture to his lips; but he caught her hand and raised it to his eyes. They were, perhaps, two of the most beautiful hands which had ever been clasped together. He felt as if a stone had fallen from his heart, as if a partition-wall had been thrown down between him and Otilie.

Under the miller's guidance, Charlotte and the captain came down by an easier path, and now joined them. There was the meeting, and a happy talk, and then they took some refreshments. They would not return by the same way as they came; and

Edward struck into a rocky path on the other side of the stream, from which the ponds were again to be seen. They made their way along it, with some effort, and then had to cross a variety of wood and copse—getting glimpses, on the land side, of a number of villages and manor-houses, with their green lawns and fruit-gardens; while very near them, and sweetly situated on a rising ground, a farm lay in the middle of the wood. From a gentle ascent, they had a view, before and behind, which showed them the richness of the country to the greatest advantage; and then, entering a grove of trees, they found themselves, on again emerging from it, on the rock opposite the castle.

They came upon it rather unexpectedly, and were of course delighted. They had made the circuit of a little world; they were standing on the spot where the new building was to be erected, and were looking again at the windows of their own home.

They went down to the summer-house, and sat all four in it for the first time together; nothing was more natural than that with one voice it should be proposed to have the way they had been that day, and which, as it was, had taken them much time and trouble, properly laid out and gravelled, so that people might loiter along it at their leisure. They each said what they thought; and they reckoned up that the circuit, over which they had taken many hours, might be travelled easily with a good road all the way round to the castle, in a single one.

Already a plan was being suggested for making the distance shorter, and adding a fresh beauty to the landscape, by throwing a bridge across the stream, below the mill, where it ran into the lake; when Charlotte brought their inventive imagination somewhat to a stand-still, by putting them in mind of the expense which such an undertaking would involve.

“There are ways of meeting that too,” replied Edward; “we have only to dispose of that farm in the forest which is so pleasantly situated, and which brings in so little in the way of rent: the sum which will be set free will more than cover what we shall require, and thus, having gained an invaluable walk, we shall receive the interest of well-expended capital in substantial enjoyment—instead of, as now, in the summing up at the end of the year, vexing and fretting ourselves over the pitiful little income which is returned for it.”

Even Charlotte, with all her prudence, had little to urge against this. There had been, indeed, a previous intention of selling the farm. The captain was ready immediately with a plan for breaking up the ground into small portions among the peasantry of the forest. Edward, however, had a simpler and shorter way of managing it. His present steward had already proposed to take it off his hands—he was to pay for it by instalments—and so, gradually, as the money came in, they would get their work forward from point to point.

So reasonable and prudent a scheme was sure of universal approbation, and already, in prospect, they began to see their new walk winding along its way, and to imagine the many beautiful views and charming spots which they hoped to discover in its neighborhood.

To bring it all before themselves with greater fulness of detail, in the evening they produced the new chart. With the help of this they went over again the way that they had come, and found various places where the walk might take a rather different direction with advantage. Their other scheme was now once more talked through, and connected with the fresh design. The site for the new house in the park, opposite the castle, was a second time examined into and approved, and fixed upon for the termination of the intended circuit.

Otilie had said nothing all this time. At length Edward pushed the chart, which had hitherto been lying before Charlotte, across to her, begging her to give her opinion; she still hesitated for a moment. Edward in his gentlest way again pressed her to let them know what she thought—nothing had as yet been settled—it was all as yet in embryo.

“I would have the house built here,” she said, as she pointed with her finger to the highest point of the slope on the hill. “It is true you cannot see the castle from thence, for it is hidden by the wood; but for that very reason you find yourselves in another quite new world; you lose village and houses and all at the same time. The view of the ponds with the mill, and the hills and mountains in the distance, is singularly beautiful—I have often observed it when I have been there.”

“She is right,” Edward cried; “how could we have overlooked it. This is what you mean, Otilie, is it not?” He took a lead pencil, and drew a great black rectangular figure on the summit of the hill.

It went through the captain's soul to see his carefully and clearly-drawn chart disfigured in such a way. He collected himself, however, after a slight expression of his disapproval, and went into the idea. “Otilie is right,” he said; “we are ready enough to walk any distance to drink tea or eat fish, because they would not have tasted as well at home—we require change of scene and change of objects. Your ancestors showed their judgment in the spot which they chose for the castle; for it is sheltered from the wind, with the conveniences of life close at hand. A place, on the contrary, which is more for pleasure parties than for a regular residence, may be very well yonder there, and in the fair time of year the most agreeable hours may be spent there.”

The more they talked it over, the more conclusive was their judgment in favor of Otilie; and Edward could not conceal his triumph that the thought had been hers. He was as proud as if he had hit upon it himself.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Early the following morning the captain examined the spot: he first threw off a sketch of what should be done, and afterwards, when the thing had been more completely decided on, he made a complete design, with accurate calculations and measurements. It cost him a good deal of labor, and the business connected with the sale of the farm had to be gone into, so that both the gentlemen now found a fresh impulse to activity.

The captain made Edward observe that it would be proper, indeed that it would be a kind of duty, to celebrate Charlotte's birthday with laying the foundation-stone. Not much was wanted to overcome Edward's disinclination for such festivities—for he quickly recollected that a little later Otilie's birthday would follow, and that he could have a magnificent celebration for that.

Charlotte, to whom all this work and what it would involve was a subject for much serious and almost anxious thought, busied herself in carefully going through the time and outlay which it was calculated would be expended on it. During the day they rarely saw each other, so that the evening meeting was looked forward to with all the more anxiety.

Otilie meantime was complete mistress of the household—and how could it be otherwise, with her quick methodical ways of working? Indeed, her whole mode of thought was suited better to home-life than to the world, and to a more free existence. Edward soon observed that she only walked about with them out of a desire to please; that when she stayed out late with them in the evening it was because she thought it a sort of social duty, and that she would often find a pretext in some household matter for going in again—consequently he soon managed so to arrange the walks which they took together, that they should be at home before sunset; and he began again, what he had long left off, to read aloud poetry—particularly such as had for its subject the expression of a pure but passionate love.

They ordinarily sat in the evening in the same places round a small table—Charlotte on the sofa, Otilie on a chair opposite to her, and the gentlemen on each side. Otilie's place was on Edward's right, the side where he put the candle when he was reading—at such times she would draw her chair a little nearer to look over him, for Otilie also trusted her own eyes better than another person's lips, and Edward would then always make a move towards her, that it might be as easy as possible for her—indeed he would frequently make longer stops than necessary, that he might not turn over before she had got to the bottom of the page.

Charlotte and the captain observed this, and exchanged many a quiet smile at it; but they were both taken by surprise at another symptom, in which Otilie's latent feeling accidentally displayed itself.



One evening, which had been partly spoiled for them by a tedious visit, Edward proposed that they should not separate so early—he felt inclined for music—he would take his flute, which he had not done for many days past. Charlotte looked for the sonatas which they generally played together, and they were not to be found. Otilie, with some hesitation, said that they were in her room—she had taken them there to copy them.

“And you can, you will, accompany me on the piano?” cried Edward, his eyes sparkling with pleasure. “I think perhaps I can,” Otilie answered. She brought the music and sat down to the instrument. The others listened, and were sufficiently surprised to hear how perfectly Otilie had taught herself the piece—but far more surprised were they at the way in which she contrived to adopt herself to Edward’s style of playing. Adapt herself, is not the right expression—Charlotte’s skill and power enabled her, in order to please her husband, to keep up with him when he went too fast, and hold in for him if he hesitated; but Otilie, who had several times heard them play the sonata together, seemed to have learned it according to the idea in which they accompanied each other—she had so completely made his defects her own, that a kind of living whole resulted from it, which did not move indeed according to exact rule, but the effect of which was in the highest degree pleasant and delightful. The composer himself would have been pleased to hear his work disfigured in a manner so charming.

Charlotte and the captain watched this strange unexpected occurrence in silence, with the kind of feeling with which we often observe the actions of children—unable exactly to approve of them, from the serious consequences which may follow, and yet without being able to find fault, perhaps with a kind of envy. For, indeed, the regard of these two for one another was growing also, as well as that of the others—and it was perhaps only the more perilous because they were both stronger, more certain of themselves, and better able to restrain themselves.

The captain had already begun to feel that a habit which he could not resist was threatening to bind him to Charlotte. He forced himself to stay away at the hour when she commonly used to be at the works; by getting up very early in the morning he contrived to finish there whatever he had to do, and went back to the castle to his work in his own room. The first day or two Charlotte thought it was an accident—she looked for him in every place where she thought he could possibly be. Then she thought she understood him—and admired him all the more.

Avoiding, as the captain now did, being alone with Charlotte, the more industriously did he labor to hurry forward the preparations for keeping her rapidly-approaching

birthday with all splendor. While he was bringing up the new road from below behind the village, he made the men, under pretence that he wanted stones, begin working at the top as well, and work down, to meet the others; and he had calculated his arrangements so that the two should exactly meet on the eve of the day. The excavations for the new house were already done; the rock was blown away with gunpowder; and a fair foundation-stone had been hewn, with a hollow chamber, and a flat slab adjusted to cover it.

This outward activity, these little mysterious purposes of friendship, prompted by feelings which more or less they were obliged to repress, rather prevented the little party when together from being as lively as usual. Edward, who felt that there was a sort of void, one evening called upon the captain to fetch his violin—Charlotte should play the piano, and he should accompany her. The captain was unable to refuse the general request, and they executed together one of the most difficult pieces of music with an ease and freedom and feeling, which could not but afford themselves, and the two who were listening to them, the greatest delight. They promised themselves a frequent repetition of it, as well as further practice together. “They do it better than we, Ottilie,” said Edward; “we will admire them—but we can enjoy ourselves together too.”

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CHAPTER IX.

The birthday was come, and everything was ready. The wall was all complete which protected the raised village road against the water, and so was the walk; passing the church, for short time it followed the path which had been laid out by Charlotte, and then winding upwards among the rocks, inclined first under the summer-house to the right, and then, after a wide sweep, passed back above it to the right again, and so by degrees out on to the summit.

A large party had assembled for the occasion. They went first to church, where they found the whole congregation collected together in their holiday dresses. After service, they filed out in order; first the boys, then the young men, then the old: after them came the party from the castle, with their visitors and retinue; and the village maidens, young girls and women, brought up the rear.

At the turn of the walk, a raised stone seat had been contrived, where the captain made Charlotte and the visitors stop and rest. From here they could see over the whole distance from the beginning to the end—the troops of men who had gone up before them, the file of women following, and now drawing up to where they were. It was lovely weather, and the whole effect was singularly beautiful. Charlotte was taken by surprise, she was touched, and she pressed the captain's hand warmly.

They followed the crowd who had slowly ascended, and were now forming a circle round the spot where the future house was to stand. The lord of the castle, his family and the principal strangers were now invited to descend into the vault, where the foundation-stone, supported on one side, lay ready to be let down. A well-dressed mason, a trowel in one hand and a hammer in the other, came forward, and with much grace spoke an address in verse, of which in prose we can give but an imperfect rendering.

“Three things,” he began, “are to be looked to in a building—that it stand on the right spot; that it be securely founded; that it be successfully executed. The first is the business of the master of the house—his and his only. As in the city the prince and the council alone determine where a building shall be, so in the country it is the right of the lord of the soil that he shall say, ‘Here my dwelling shall stand; here, and nowhere else.’ ”

Edward and Ottilie were standing opposite one another, as these words were spoken; but they did not venture to look up and exchange glances.

“To the third, the execution, there is neither art nor handicraft which must not in some way contribute. But the second, the founding, is the province of the mason; and, boldly to speak it out, it is the head and front of all the undertaking—a solemn thing it is—and our bidding you descend hither is full of meaning. You are celebrating your festival in the deep of the earth. Here within this small hollow spot, you show us the honor of appearing as witnesses of our mysterious craft. Presently we shall lower

down this carefully-hewn stone into its place; and soon these earth-walls, now ornamented with fair and worthy persons, will be no more accessible—but will be closed in forever!

“This foundation-stone, which with its angles typifies the just angles of the building, with the sharpness of its moulding, the regularity of it, and with the truth of its lines to the horizontal and perpendicular, the uprightness and equal height of all the walls, we might now without more ado let down—it would rest in its place with its own weight. But even here there shall not fail of lime and means to bind it. For as human beings who may be well inclined to each other by nature, yet hold more firmly together when the law cements them, so are stones also, whose forms may already fit together, united far better by these binding forces. It is not seemly to be idle among the working, and here you will not refuse to be our fellow-laborer,”—with these words he reached the trowel to Charlotte, who threw mortar with it under the stone—several of the others were then desired to do the same, and then it was at once let fall. Upon which the hammer was placed next in Charlotte's, and then in the others' hands, to strike three times with it, and conclude, in this expression, the wedlock of the stone with the earth.

“The work of the mason,” went on the speaker, “now under the free sky as we are, if it be not done in concealment, yet must pass into concealment—the soil will be laid smoothly in, and thrown over this stone, and with the walls which we rear into the daylight we in the end are seldom remembered. The works of the stone-cutter and the carver remain under the eyes; but for us it is not to complain when the plasterer blots out the last trace of our hands, and appropriates our work to himself; when he overlays it, and smooths it, and colors it.

“Not from regard for the opinion of others, but from respect for himself, the mason will be faithful in his calling. There is none who has more need to feel in himself the consciousness of what he is. When the house is finished, when the soil is smoothed, and the surface plastered over, and the outside all overwrought with ornament, he can even see in yet through all disguises, and still recognize those exact and careful adjustments, to which the whole is indebted for its being and for its persistence.

“But as the man who commits some evil deed has to fear, that, notwithstanding all precautions, it will one day come to light—so too must he expect who has done some good thing in secret, that it also, in spite of himself, will appear in the day; and therefore we make this foundation-stone at the same time a stone of memorial. Here, in these various hollows which have been hewn into it, many things are now to be buried, as a witness to some far-off world—these metal cases hermetically sealed contain documents in writing; matters of various note are engraved on these plates; in these fair glass bottles we bury the best old wine, with a note of the year of its vintage. We have coins too of many kinds, from the mint of the current year. All this we have received through the liberality of him for whom we build. There is space yet remaining, if guest or spectator desires to offer anything to the after-world!”

After a slight pause the speaker looked round; but, as is commonly the case on such occasions, no one was prepared; they were all taken by surprise. At last, a merry-

looking young officer set the example, and said, "If I am to contribute anything which as yet is not to be found in this treasure-chamber, it shall be a pair of buttons from my uniform—I don't see why they do not deserve to go down to posterity!" No sooner said than done, and then a number of persons found something of the same sort which they could do; the young ladies did not hesitate to throw in some of their side hair combs—smelling bottles and other trinkets were not spared. Only Otilie hung back; till a kind word from Edward roused her from the abstraction in which she was watching the various things being heaped in. Then she unclasped from her neck the gold chain on which her father's picture had hung, and with a light gentle hand laid it down on the other jewels. Edward rather disarranged the proceedings, by at once, in some haste, having the cover let fall, and fastened down.

The young mason who had been most active through all this again took his place as orator, and went on, "We lay down this stone forever, for the establishing the present and the future possessors of this house. But in that we bury this treasure together with it, we do it in the remembrance—in this most enduring of works—of the perishableness of all human things. We remember that a time may come when this cover so fast sealed shall again be lifted: and that can only be when all shall again be destroyed which as yet we have not brought into being.



"But now—now that at once it may begin to be, back with our thoughts out of the future—back into the present. At once, after the feast which we have this day kept together, let us on with our labor; let no one of all those trades which are to work on our foundation, through us keep unwilling holiday. Let the building rise swiftly to its height, and out of the windows, which as yet have no existence, may the master of the house, with his family and with his guests, look forth with a glad heart over his broad lands. To him and to all here present herewith be health and happiness."

With these words he drained a richly cut tumbler at a draught, and flung it into the air, thereby to signify the excess of pleasure by destroying the vessel which had served for such a solemn occasion. This time, however, it fell out otherwise. The glass did not fall back to the earth, and indeed without a miracle.

In order to get forward with the buildings, they had already thrown out the whole of the soil at the opposite corner; indeed, they had begun to raise the wall, and for this purpose had reared a scaffold as high as was absolutely necessary. On the occasion of the festival, boards had been laid along the top of this, and a number of spectators were allowed to stand there. It had been meant principally for the advantage of the workmen themselves. The glass had flown up there, and had been caught by one of

them, who took it as a sign of good luck for himself. He waved it round without letting it out of his hand, and the letters E and O were to be seen very richly cut upon it, running one into the other. It was one of the glasses which had been executed for Edward when he was a boy.

The scaffoldings were again deserted, and the most active among the party climbed up to look round them, and could not speak enough in praise of the beauty of the prospect on all sides. How many new discoveries does not a person make when on some high point he ascends but a single story higher. Inland many fresh villages came in sight. The line of the river could be traced like a thread of silver; indeed, one of the party thought that he distinguished the spires of the capital. On the other side, behind the wooded hill, the blue peaks of the far-off mountains were seen rising, and the country immediately about them was spread out like a map.

"If the three ponds," cried some one, "were but thrown together to make a single sheet of water, there would be everything here which is noblest and most excellent."

"That might easily be effected," the captain said. "In early times they must have formed all one lake among the hills here."

"Only I must beseech you to spare my clump of planes and poplars that stand so prettily by the centre pond," said Edward. "See,"—he turned to Otilie, bringing her a few steps forward, and pointing down,—"those trees I planted myself."

"How long have they been standing there?" asked Otilie.

"Just about as long as you have been in the world," replied Edward. "Yes, my dear child, I planted them when you were still lying in your cradle."

The party now betook themselves back to the castle. After dinner was over they were invited to walk through the village to take a glance at what had been done there as well. At a hint from the captain, the inhabitants had collected in front of the houses. They were not standing in rows, but formed in natural family groups, partly occupied at their evening work, part out enjoying themselves on the new benches. They had determined, as an agreeable duty which they imposed upon themselves, to have everything in its present order and cleanliness, at least every Sunday and holiday.

A little party, held together by such feelings as had grown up among our friends, is always unpleasantly interrupted by a large concourse of people. All four were delighted to find themselves again alone in the large drawing-room, but this sense of home was a little disturbed by a letter which was brought to Edward, giving notice of fresh guests who were to arrive the following day.

"It is as we supposed," Edward cried to Charlotte. "The count will not stay away; he is coming to-morrow."

"Then the baroness, too, is not far off," answered Charlotte.

"Doubtless not," said Edward. "She is coming, too, to-morrow, from another place. They only beg to be allowed to stay for a night; the next day they will go on together."

"We must prepare for them in time, Otilie," said Charlotte.

"What arrangement shall I desire to be made?" Otilie asked.

Charlotte gave a general direction, and Otilie left the room.

The captain inquired into the relation in which these two persons stood towards one another, and with which he was only very generally acquainted. They had some time before, both being already married, fallen violently in love with one another; a double marriage was not to be interfered with without attracting attention. A divorce was proposed. On the baroness' side it could be effected, on that of the count it could not. They were obliged seemingly to separate, but their position towards one another remained unchanged, and though in the winter at the residence they were unable to be together, they indemnified themselves in the summer, while making tours and staying at watering-places.

They were both slightly older than Edward and Charlotte, and had been intimate with them from early times at court. The connection had never been absolutely broken off, although it was impossible to approve of their proceedings. On the present occasion their coming was most unwelcome to Charlotte; and if she had looked closely into her reasons for feeling it so, she would have found it was on account of Otilie. The poor innocent girl should not have been brought so early in contact with such an example.

"It would have been more convenient if they had not come till a couple of days later," Edward was saying, as Otilie re-entered; "till we had finished with this business of the farm. The deed of sale is complete. One copy of it I have here, but we want a second, and our old clerk has fallen ill." The captain offered his services, and so did Charlotte, but there was something or other to object to both of them.

"Give it to me," cried Otilie, a little hastily.



Charlotte

"You will never be able to finish it," said Charlotte.

“And really I must have it early the day after to-morrow, and it is long,” Edward added.

“It shall be ready,” Otilie cried; and the paper was already in her hands.

The next morning, as they were looking out from their highest windows for their visitors, whom they intended to go some way and meet, Edward said, “Who is that yonder, riding slowly along the road?”

The captain described accurately the figure of the horseman.



“Then it is he,” said Edward; “the particulars, which you can see better than I, agree very well with the general figure, which I can see too. It is Mittler; but what is he doing, coming riding at such a pace as that?”

The figure came nearer, and Mittler it veritably was. They received him with warm greetings as he came slowly up the steps.

“Why did you not come yesterday?” Edward cried, as he approached.

“I do not like your grand festivities,” answered he; “but I am come to-day to keep my friend’s birthday with you quietly.”

“How are you able to find time enough?” asked Edward, with a laugh.

“My visit, if you can value it, you owe to an observation which I made yesterday. I was spending a right happy afternoon in a house where I had established peace, and then I heard that a birthday was being kept here. Now this is what I call selfish, after all, said I to myself: you will only enjoy yourself with those whose broken peace you have mended. Why cannot you for once go and be happy with friends who keep the peace for themselves? No sooner said than done. Here I am, as I determined with myself that I would be.”

“Yesterday you would have met a large party here; to-day you will find but a small one,” said Charlotte; “you will meet the count and the baroness, with whom you have had enough to do already, I believe.”

Out of the middle of the party, who had all four come down to welcome him, the strange man dashed in the keenest disgust, seizing at the same time his hat and whip. “Some unlucky star is always over me,” he cried, “directly I try to rest and enjoy myself. What business have I going out of my proper character? I ought never to have come, and now I am persecuted away. Under one roof with those two I will not

remain, and you take care of yourselves. They bring nothing but mischief; their nature is like leaven, and propagates its own contagion.”

They tried to pacify him, but it was in vain. “Whoever strikes at marriage,” he cried;—“whoever, either by word or act, undermines this, the foundation of all moral society, that man has to settle with me, and if I cannot become his master, I take care to settle myself out of his way. Marriage is the beginning and the end of all culture. It makes the savage mild; and the most cultivated has no better opportunity for displaying his gentleness. Indissoluble it must be, because it brings so much happiness that what small exceptional unhappiness it may bring counts for nothing in the balance. And what do men mean by talking of unhappiness? Impatience it is which from time to time comes over them, and then they fancy themselves unhappy. Let them wait till the moment is gone by, and then they will bless their good fortune that what has stood so long continues standing. There never can be any adequate ground for separation. The condition of man is pitched so high, in its joys and in its sorrows, that the sum which two married people owe to one another defies calculation. It is an infinite debt, which can only be discharged through all eternity.

“Its annoyances marriage may often have; I can well believe that, and it is as it should be. We are all married to our consciences, and there are times when we should be glad to be divorced from them; mine gives me more annoyance than ever a man or a woman can give.”

All this he poured out with the greatest vehemence: he would very likely have gone on speaking longer, had not the sound of the postilions' horns given notice of the arrival of the visitors, who, as if on a concerted arrangement, drove into the castle-court from opposite sides at the same moment. Mittler slipped away as their host hastened to receive them, and desiring that his horse might be brought out immediately, rode angrily off.

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CHAPTER X.

The visitors were welcomed and brought in. They were delighted to find themselves again in the same house and in the same rooms where in early times they had passed many happy days, but which they had not seen for a long time. Their friends too were very glad to see them. The count and the baroness had both those tall fine figures which please in middle life almost better than in youth. If something of the first bloom had faded off them, yet there was an air in their appearance which was always irresistibly attractive. Their manners too were thoroughly charming. Their free way of taking hold of life and dealing with it, their happy humor, and apparent easy unembarrassment, communicated itself at once to the rest; and a lighter atmosphere hung about the whole party, without their having observed it stealing on them.

The effect made itself felt immediately on the entrance of the new-comers. They were fresh from the fashionable world, as was to be seen at once, in their dress, in their equipment, and in everything about them; and they formed a contrast not a little striking with our friends, their country style, and the vehement feelings which were at work underneath among them. This, however, very soon disappeared in the stream of past recollection and present interests, and a rapid, lively conversation soon united them all. After a short time they again separated. The ladies withdrew to their own apartments, and there found amusement enough in the many things which they had to tell each other, and in setting to work at the same time to examine the new fashions, the spring dresses, bonnets, and such like; while the gentlemen were employing themselves looking at the new travelling chariots, trotting out the horses, and beginning at once to bargain and exchange.

They did not meet again till dinner; in the meantime they had changed their dress. And here, too, the newly-arrived pair showed to all advantage. Everything they wore was new, and in a style which their friends at the castle had never seen, and yet, being accustomed to it themselves, it appeared perfectly natural and graceful.

The conversation was brilliant and well sustained, as, indeed in the company of such persons everything and nothing appears to interest. They spoke in French that the attendants might not understand what they said, and swept in happiest humor over all that was passing in the great or the middle world. On one particular subject they remained, however, longer than was desirable. It was occasioned by Charlotte asking after one of her early friends, of whom she had to learn, with some distress, that she was on the point of being separated from her husband.

“It is a melancholy thing,” Charlotte said, “when we fancy our absent friends are finally settled, when we believe persons very dear to us to be provided for for life, suddenly to hear that their fortunes are cast loose once more; that they have to strike into a fresh path of life, and very likely a most insecure one.”

“Indeed, my dear friend,” the count answered, “it is our own fault if we allow ourselves to be surprised at such things. We please ourselves with imagining matters

of this earth, and particularly matrimonial connections, as very enduring; and as concerns this last point, the plays which we see over and over again help to mislead us; being, as they are, so untrue to the course of the world. In a comedy we see a marriage as the last aim of a desire which is hindered and crossed through a number of acts, and at the instant when it is reached the curtain falls, and the momentary satisfaction continues to ring on in our ears. But in the world it is very different. The play goes on still behind the scenes, and when the curtain rises again we may see and hear, perhaps, little enough of the marriage.”

“It cannot be so very bad, however,” said Charlotte, smiling. “We see people who have gone off the boards of the theatre, ready enough to undertake a part upon them again.”

“There is nothing to say against that,” said the count. “In a new character a man may readily venture on a second trial; and when we know the world we see clearly that it is only this positive eternal duration of marriage in a world where everything is in motion, which has anything unbecoming about it. A certain friend of mine, whose humor displays itself principally in suggestions for new laws, maintained that every marriage should be concluded only for five years. Five, he said, was a sacred number—pretty and uneven. Such a period would be long enough for people to learn one another’s character, bring a child or two into the world, quarrel, separate, and what was best, get reconciled again. He would often exclaim, ‘How happily the first part of the time would pass away!’ Two or three years, at least, would be perfect bliss. On one side or other there would not fail to be a wish to have the relation continue longer, and the amiability would increase the nearer they got to the parting time. The indifferent, even the dissatisfied party, would be softened and gained over by such behavior; they would forget, as in pleasant company the hours pass always unobserved, how the time went by, and they would be delightfully surprised when, after the term had run out, they first observed that they had unknowingly prolonged it.”



Charming and pleasant as all this sounded, and deep (Charlotte felt it to her soul) as was the moral significance which lay below it, expressions of this kind, on Otilie’s account, were most distasteful to her. She knew very well that nothing was more dangerous than the licentious conversation which treats culpable or semi-culpable actions as if they were common, ordinary, and even laudable, and of such undesirable kind assuredly were all which touched on the sacredness of marriage. She endeavored, therefore, in her skilful way, to give the conversation another turn, and when she found that she could not, it vexed her that Otilie had managed everything so well that

there was no occasion for her to leave the table. In her quiet observant way a nod or a look was enough for her to signify to the head-servant whatever was to be done, and everything went off perfectly, although there were a couple of strange men in livery in the way, who were rather a trouble than a convenience. And so the count, without feeling Charlotte's hints, went on giving his opinions on the same subject. Generally, he was little enough apt to be tedious in conversation; but this was a thing which weighed so heavily on his heart, and the difficulties which he found in getting separated from his wife were so great that it had made him bitter against everything which concerned the marriage bond,—that very bond which, notwithstanding, he was so anxiously desiring between himself and the baroness.

“The same friend,” he went on, “has another law which he proposes. A marriage shall only be held indissoluble when either both parties, or at least one or the other, enter into it for the third time. Such persons must be supposed to acknowledge beyond a doubt that they find marriage indispensable for themselves; they have had opportunities of thoroughly knowing themselves; of knowing how they conducted themselves in their earlier unions; whether they have any peculiarities of temper, which are a more frequent cause of separation than bad dispositions. People would then observe one another more closely; they would pay as much attention to the married as to the unmarried, no one being able to tell how things may turn out.”

“That would add no little to the interest of society,” said Edward. “As things are now, when a man is married nobody cares any more either for his virtues or for his vices.”

“Under this arrangement,” the baroness struck in, laughing, “our good hosts have passed successfully over their two steps, and may make themselves ready for their third.”

“Things have gone happily with them,” said the count. “In their case death has done with a good will what in others the consistorial courts do with a very bad one.”

“Let the dead rest,” said Charlotte, with a half serious look.

“Why so,” persevered the count, “when we can remember them with honor? They were generous enough to content themselves with less than their number of years for the sake of the larger good which they could leave behind them.”

“Alas! that in such cases,” said the baroness, with a suppressed sigh, “happiness is only bought with the sacrifice of our fairest years.”

“Indeed, yes,” answered the count; “and it might drive us to despair, if it were not the same with everything in this world. Nothing goes as we hope. Children do not fulfil what they promise; young people very seldom;—and if they keep their word, the world does not keep its word with them.”

Charlotte, who was delighted that the conversation had taken a turn at last, replied cheerfully,

“Well, then, we must content ourselves with enjoying what good we are to have in fragments and pieces, as we can get it; and the sooner we can accustom ourselves to this the better.”

“Certainly,” the count answered, “you two have had the enjoyment of very happy times. When I look back upon the years when you and Edward were the loveliest couple at the court, I see nothing now to be compared with those brilliant times, and such magnificent figures. When you two used to dance together, all eyes were turned upon you, fastened upon you, while you saw nothing but each other.”

“So much has changed since those days,” said Charlotte, “that we can listen to such pretty things about ourselves without our modesty being shocked at them.”

“I often privately found fault with Edward,” said the count, “for not being more firm. Those singular parents of his would certainly have given way at last; and ten fair years is no trifle to gain.”

“I must take Edward's part,” struck in the baroness. “Charlotte was not altogether without fault—not altogether free from what we must call prudential considerations; and although she had a real, hearty love for Edward, and did in her secret soul intend to marry him, I can bear witness how sorely she often tried him; and it was through this that he was at last unluckily prevailed upon to leave her and go abroad, and try to forget her.”

Edward bowed to the baroness, and seemed grateful for her advocacy.

“And then I must add this,” she continued, “in excuse for Charlotte. The man who was at that time suing for her, had for a long time given proofs of his constant attachment to her; and, when one came to know him well, was a far more lovable person than the rest of you may like to acknowledge.”

“My dear friend,” the count replied, a little pointedly, “confess, now, that he was not altogether indifferent to yourself, and that Charlotte had more to fear from you than from any other rival. I find it one of the highest traits in women, that they continue so long in their regard for a man, and that absence of no duration will serve to disturb or remove it.”

“This fine feature, men possess, perhaps, even more,” answered the baroness. “At any rate, I have observed with you, my dear count, that no one has more influence over you than a lady to whom you were once attached. I have seen you take more trouble to do things when a certain person has asked you, than the friend of this moment would have obtained of you, if she had tried.”

“Such a charge as that one must bear the best way one can,” replied the count. “But as to what concerns Charlotte's first husband, I could not endure him, because he parted so sweet a pair from one another—a really predestined pair, who, once brought together, have no reason to fear the five years, or be thinking of a second or third marriage.”

“We must try,” Charlotte said, “to make up for what we then allowed to slip from us.”

“Aye, and you must keep to that,” said the count; “your first marriages,” he continued, with some vehemence, “were exactly marriages of the true detestable sort. And, unhappily, marriages generally, even the best, have (forgive me for using a strong expression) something awkward about them. They destroy the delicacy of the relation; everything is made to rest on the broad certainty out of which one side or other, at least, is too apt to make their own advantage. It is all a matter of course; and they seem only to have got themselves tied together, that one or the other, or both, may go their own way the more easily.”

At this moment, Charlotte, who was determined once for all that she would put an end to the conversation, made a bold effort at turning it, and succeeded. It then became more general. She and her husband and the captain were able to take a part in it. Even Ottilie had to give her opinion; and the dessert was enjoyed in the happiest humor. It was particularly beautiful, being composed almost entirely of the rich summer fruits in elegant baskets, with epergnes of lovely flowers arranged in exquisite taste.

The new laying-out of the park came to be spoken of; and immediately after dinner they went to look at what was going on. Ottilie withdrew, under pretence of having household matters to look to; in reality, it was to set to work again at the transcribing. The count fell into conversation with the captain, and Charlotte afterwards joined them. When they were at the summit of the height, the captain good-naturedly ran back to fetch the plan, and in his absence the count said to Charlotte,

“He is an exceedingly pleasing person. He is very well informed, and his knowledge is always ready. His practical power, too, seems methodical and vigorous. What he is doing here would be of great importance in some higher sphere.”

Charlotte listened to the captain's praises with an inward delight. She collected herself, however, and composedly and clearly confirmed what the count had said. But she was not a little startled when he continued:

“This acquaintance falls most opportunely for me. I know of a situation for which he is perfectly suited, and I shall be doing the greatest favor to a friend of mine, a man of high rank, by recommending to him a person who is so exactly everything which he desires.”

Charlotte felt as if a thunderstroke had fallen on her. The count did not observe it: women, being accustomed at all times to hold themselves in restraint, are always able, even in the most extraordinary cases, to maintain an apparent composure; but she heard not a word more of what the count said, though he went on speaking.

“When I have made up my mind upon a thing,” he added, “I am quick about it. I have put my letter together already in my head, and I shall write it immediately. You can find me some messenger, who can ride off with it this evening.”



Charlotte was suffering agonies. Startled with the proposal, and shocked at herself, she was unable to utter a word. Happily, the count continued talking of his plans for the captain, the desirableness of which was only too apparent to Charlotte.

It was time that the captain returned. He came up and unrolled his design before the count. But with what changed eyes Charlotte now looked at the friend whom she was to lose. In her necessity, she bowed and turned away, and hurried down to the summer-house. Before she was half way there the tears were streaming from her eyes, and she flung herself into the narrow room in the little hermitage, and gave herself up to an agony, a passion, a despair, of the possibility of which, but a few moments before, she had not had the slightest conception.

Edward had gone with the baroness in the other direction towards the ponds. This ready-witted lady, who liked to be in the secret about everything, soon observed, in a few conversational feelers which she threw out, that Edward was very fluent and free-spoken in praise of Otilie. She contrived in the most natural way to lead him out by degrees so completely, that at last she had not a doubt remaining that here was not merely an incipient fancy, but a veritable, full-grown passion.

Married women, if they have no particular love for one another, yet are silently in league together, especially against young girls. The consequences of such an inclination presented themselves only too quickly to her world-experienced spirit. Added to this, she had been already, in the course of the day, talking to Charlotte about Otilie; she had disapproved of her remaining in the country, particularly being a girl of so retiring a character; and she had proposed to take Otilie with her to the residence of a friend, who was just then bestowing great expense on the education of an only daughter, and who was only looking about to find some well-disposed companion for her,—to put her in the place of a second child, and let her share in every advantage. Charlotte had taken time to consider. But now this glimpse of the baroness into Edward's heart changed what had been but a suggestion at once into a settled determination; and the more rapidly she made up her mind about it, the more she outwardly seemed to flatter Edward's wishes. Never was there anyone more self-possessed than this lady; and to have mastered ourselves in extraordinary cases disposes us to treat even a common case with dissimulation—it makes us inclined, as we have had to do so much violence to ourselves, to extend our control over others, and hold ourselves in a degree compensated in what we outwardly gain for what we inwardly have been obliged to sacrifice. To this feeling there is often joined a kind of secret, spiteful pleasure in the blind, unconscious ignorance with which the victim walks on into the snare. It is not the immediately doing as we please which we enjoy,

but the thought of the surprise and exposure which is to follow. And thus was the baroness malicious enough to invite Edward to come with Charlotte and pay her a visit at the grape-gathering; and, to his question whether they might bring Otilie with them, to frame an answer which, if he pleased, he might interpret to his wishes.

Edward had already begun to pour out his delight at the beautiful scenery, the broad river, the hills, the rocks, the vineyard, the old castles, the water-parties, and the jubilee at the grape-gathering, the wine-pressing, etc., in all of which, in the innocence of his heart, he was only exuberating in the anticipation of the impression which these scenes were to make on the fresh spirit of Otilie. At this moment they saw her approaching, and the baroness said quickly to Edward, that he had better say nothing to her of this intended autumn expedition—things which we set our hearts upon so long before, so often failing to come to pass. Edward gave his promise; but he obliged his companion to move more quickly to meet her; and at last, when they came very close, he ran on several steps in advance. A heartfelt happiness expressed itself in his whole being. He kissed her hand as he pressed into it a nosegay of wild flowers, which he had gathered on his way.

The baroness felt bitter to her heart at the sight of it. At the same time that she was able to disapprove of what was really objectionable in this affection, she could not bear to see what was sweet and beautiful in it thrown away on such a poor paltry girl.

When they had collected again at the supper-table, an entirely different temper was spread over the party. The count, who had in the meantime written his letter and dispatched a messenger with it, occupied himself with the captain, whom he had been drawing out more and more—spending the whole evening at his side, talking of serious matters. The baroness, who sat on the count's right, found but small amusement in this; nor did Edward find any more. The latter, first because he was thirsty, and then because he was excited, did not spare the wine, and attached himself entirely to Otilie, whom he had made sit by him. On the other side, next to the captain, sat Charlotte; for her it was hard, it was almost impossible, to conceal the emotion under which she was suffering.

The baroness had sufficient time to make her observations at leisure. She perceived Charlotte's uneasiness, and occupied as she was with Edward's passion for Otilie, she easily satisfied herself that her abstraction and distress were owing to her husband's behavior; and she set herself to consider in what way she could best compass her ends.

Supper was over, and the party remained divided. The count, whose object was to probe the captain to the bottom, had to try many turns before he could arrive at what he wished with so quiet, so little vain, but so exceedingly laconic a person. They walked up and down together on one side of the saloon, while Edward, excited with wine and hope, was laughing with Otilie at a window, and Charlotte and the baroness were walking backwards and forwards, without speaking, on the other side. Their being so silent, and their standing about in this uneasy, listless way, had its effect at last in breaking up the rest of the party. The ladies withdrew to their rooms, the gentlemen to the other wing of the castle; and so this day appeared to be concluded.

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CHAPTER XI.

Edward went with the count to his room. They continued talking, and he was easily prevailed upon to stay a little time longer there. The count lost himself in old times, spoke eagerly of Charlotte's beauty, which, as a critic, he dwelt upon with much warmth.

"A pretty foot is a great gift of nature," he said. "It is a grace which never perishes. I observed it to-day, as she was walking. I should almost have liked to have kissed her shoe, and repeat that somewhat barbarous but significant practice of the Sarmatians, who know no better way of showing reverence for any one they love or respect, than by using his shoe to drink his health out of."



The point of the foot did not remain the only subject of praise between two old acquaintances; they went from the person back upon old stories and adventures, and came on the hindrances which at that time people had thrown in the way of the lovers' meetings—what trouble they had taken, what arts they had been obliged to devise, only to be able to tell each other that they loved.

"Do you remember," continued the count, "an adventure in which I most unselfishly stood your friend when their high mightinesses were on a visit to your uncle, and were all together in that great, straggling castle. The day went in festivities and glitter of all sorts; and a part of the night at least in pleasant conversation."

"And you, in the meantime, had observed the back-way which led to the court ladies' quarter," said Edward, "and so managed to effect an interview for me with my beloved."

"And she," replied the count, "thinking more of propriety than of my enjoyment, had kept a frightful old duenna with her. So that, while you two, between looks and words, got on extremely well together, my lot, in the meanwhile, was far from pleasant."

"It was only yesterday," answered Edward, "when we heard that you were coming, that I was talking over the story with my wife, and describing our adventure on returning. We missed the road, and got into the entrance-hall from the garden. Knowing our way from thence so well as we did, we supposed we could get along easily enough. But you remember our surprise on opening the door. The floor was covered over with mattresses, on which the giants lay in rows stretched out and

sleeping. The single sentinel at his post looked wonderingly at us; but we, in the cool way young men do things, strode quietly on over the outstretched boots, without disturbing a single one of the snoring children of Anak."

"I had the strongest inclination to stumble," the count said, "that there might be an alarm given. What a resurrection we should have witnessed."

At this moment the castle clock struck twelve.

"It is deep midnight," the count added, laughing, "and just the proper time; I must ask you, my dear baron, to show me a kindness. Do you guide me to-night, as I guided you then. I promised the baroness that I would see her before going to bed. We have had no opportunity of any private talk together the whole day. We have not seen each other for a long time, and it is only natural that we should wish for a confidential hour. If you will show me the way there, I will manage to get back again; and in any case, there will be no boots for me to stumble over."

"I shall be very glad to show you such a piece of hospitality," answered Edward; "only the three ladies are together in the same wing. Who knows whether we shall not find them still with one another, or make some other mistake, which may have a strange appearance?"

"Do not be afraid," said the count; "the baroness expects me. She is sure by this time to be in her own room, and alone."

"Well, then, the thing is easy enough," Edward answered.

He took a candle, and lighted the count down a private staircase leading into a long gallery. At the end of this he opened a small door. They mounted a winding flight of stairs, which brought them out upon a narrow landing-place; and then, putting the candle in the count's hand, he pointed to a tapestried door on the right, which opened readily at the first trial, and admitted the count, leaving Edward outside in the dark.

Another door on the left led into Charlotte's sleeping-room. He heard her voice, and listened. She was speaking to her maid. "Is Otilie in bed?" she asked. "No," was the answer; "she is sitting writing in the room below." "You may light the night-lamp," said Charlotte; "I shall not want you any more. It is late. I can put out the candle, and do whatever I may want else myself."

It was a delight to Edward to hear that Otilie was writing still. She is working for me, he thought triumphantly. Through the darkness, he fancied he could see her sitting all alone at her desk. He thought he would go to her, and see her; and how she would turn to receive him. He felt a longing, which he could not resist, to be near her once more. But, from where he was, there was no way to the apartments which she occupied. He now found himself immediately at his wife's door. A singular change of feeling came over him. He tried the handle, but the bolts were shot. He knocked gently. Charlotte did not hear him. She was walking rapidly up and down in the large dressing-room adjoining. She was repeating over and over what, since the count's unexpected proposal, she had often enough had to say to herself. The captain seemed to stand

before her. At home, and everywhere, he had become her all in all. And now he was to go; and it was all to be desolate again. She repeated whatever wise things one can say to one's self; she even anticipated, as people so often do, the wretched comfort, that time would come at last to her relief; and then she cursed the time which would have to pass before it could lighten her sufferings—she cursed the dead, cold time when they would be lightened. At last she burst into tears; they were the more welcome, since tears with her were rare. She flung herself on the sofa, and gave herself up unreservedly to her sufferings. Edward, meanwhile, could not take himself from the door. He knocked again; and a third time rather louder; so that Charlotte, in the stillness of the night, distinctly heard it, and started up in fright. Her first thought was,—it can only be, it must be the captain; her second, that it was impossible. She thought she must have been deceived. But surely she had heard it; and she wished, and she feared to have heard it. She went into her sleeping-room, and walked lightly up to the bolted tapestry-door. She blamed herself for her fears. “Possibly it may be the baroness wanting something,” she said to herself; and she called out quietly and calmly, “Is anybody there?” A light voice answered, “It is I.” “Who?” returned Charlotte, not being able to make out the voice. She thought she saw the captain's figure standing at the door. In a rather louder tone, she heard the word “Edward!” She drew back the bolt, and her husband stood before her. He greeted her with some light jest. She was unable to reply in the same tone. He complicated the mysterious visit by his mysterious explanation of it.

“Well, then,” he said at last, “I will confess, the real reason why I am come is, that I have made a vow to kiss your shoe this evening.”

“It is long since you thought of such a thing as that,” said Charlotte.

“So much the worse,” he answered; “and so much the better.”

She had thrown herself back in an armchair, to prevent him from seeing the slightness of her dress. He flung himself down before her, and she could not prevent him from giving her shoe a kiss. And when the shoe came off in his hand, he caught her foot and pressed it tenderly against his breast.



Charlotte was one of those women who, being of a naturally calm temperament, continue in marriage, without any purpose or any effort, the air and character of lovers. She was never expressive towards her husband; generally, indeed, she rather shrank from any warm demonstration on his part. It was not that she was cold, or at all hard and repulsive, but she remained always like a loving bride, who draws back with a kind of shyness even from what is permitted. And so Edward found her this evening, in a double sense. How sorely did she not long that her husband would go;

the figure of his friend seemed to hover in the air and reproach her. But what should have had the effect of driving Edward away only attracted him the more. There were visible traces of emotion about her. She had been crying; and tears, which with weak persons detract from their graces, add immeasurably to the attractiveness of those whom we know commonly as strong and self-possessed.

Edward was so agreeable, so gentle, so pressing; he begged to be allowed to stay with her. He did not demand it, but half in fun, half in earnest, he tried to persuade her; he never thought of his rights. At last, as if in mischief, he blew out the candle.

In the dim lamplight, the inward affection, the imagination, maintained their rights over the real;—it was Otilie that was resting in Edward's arms; and the captain, now faintly, now clearly, hovered before Charlotte's soul. And so, strangely intermingled, the absent and the present flowed in a sweet enchantment one into the other.

And yet the present would not let itself be robbed of its own unlovely right. They spent a part of the night talking and laughing at all sorts of things, the more freely, as the heart had no part in it. But when Edward awoke in the morning, on his wife's breast, the day seemed to stare in with a sad, awful look, and the sun to be shining in upon a crime. He stole lightly from her side; and she found herself, with strange enough feelings, when she awoke, alone.

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CHAPTER XII.

When the party assembled again at breakfast, an attentive observer might have read in the behavior of its various members the different things which were passing in their inner thoughts and feelings. The count and the baroness met with the air of happiness which a pair of lovers feel, who, after having been forced to endure a long separation, have mutually assured each other of their unaltered affection. On the other hand, Charlotte and Edward equally came into the presence of the captain and Otilie with a sense of shame and remorse. For such is the nature of love that it believes in no rights except its own, and all other rights vanish away before it. Otilie was in child-like spirits. For her—she was almost what might be called open. The captain appeared serious. His conversation with the count, which had roused in him feelings that for some time past had been at rest and dormant, had made him only too keenly conscious that here he was not fulfilling his work, and at bottom was but squandering himself in a half-activity of idleness.

Hardly had their guests departed, when fresh visitors were announced—to Charlotte most welcomingly, all she wished for being to be taken out of herself, and to have her attention dissipated. They annoyed Edward, who was longing to devote himself to Otilie; and Otilie did not like them either; the copy which had to be finished the next morning early being still incomplete. They stayed a long time, and immediately that they were gone she hurried off to her room.

It was now evening. Edward, Charlotte, and the captain had accompanied the strangers some little way on foot, before the latter got into their carriage, and previous to returning home they agreed to take a walk along the water-side.

A boat had come, which Edward had had fetched from a distance, at no little expense; and they decided that they would try whether it was easy to manage. It was made fast on the bank of the middle pond, not far from some old ash trees, on which they calculated to make an effect in their future improvements. There was to be a landing-place made there, and under the trees a seat was to be raised, with some wonderful architecture about it: it was to be the point for which people were to make when they went across the water.

“And where had we better have the landing-place on the other side?” said Edward. “I should think under my plane trees.”

“They stand a little too far to the right,” said the captain. “You are nearer the castle if you land further down. However, we must think about it.”

The captain was already standing in the stern of the boat, and had taken up an oar. Charlotte got in, and Edward with her—he took the other oar; but as he was on the point of pushing off, he thought of Otilie—he recollected that this water-party would keep him out late; who could tell when he would get back? He made up his mind

shortly and promptly; sprang back to the bank, and reaching the other oar to the captain, hurried home—making excuses to himself as he ran.

Arriving there he learned that Otilie had shut herself up—she was writing. In spite of the agreeable feeling that she was doing something for him, it was the keenest mortification to him not to be able to see her. His impatience increased every moment. He walked up and down the large drawing-room; he tried a thousand things, and could not fix his attention upon any. He was longing to see her alone, before Charlotte came back with the captain. It was dark by this time, and the candles were lighted.

At last she came in beaming with loveliness: the sense that she had done something for her friend had lifted all her being above itself. She put down the original and her transcript on the table before Edward.

“Shall we collate them?” she said, with a smile.

Edward did not know what to answer. He looked at her—he looked at the transcript. The first few sheets were written with the greatest carefulness in a delicate woman's hand—then the strokes appeared to alter, to become more light and free—but who can describe his surprise as he ran his eyes over the concluding page? “For heaven's sake,” he cried, “what is this? this is my hand?” He looked at Otilie, and again at the paper; the conclusion, especially, was exactly as if he had written it himself. Otilie said nothing, but she looked at him with her eyes full of the warmest delight. Edward stretched out his arms. “You love me!” he cried: “Otilie, you love me!” They fell on each other's breast—which had been the first to catch the other it would have been impossible to distinguish.

From that moment the world was all changed for Edward. He was no longer what he had been, and the world was no longer what it had been. They parted—he held her hands; they gazed in each other's eyes. They were on the point of embracing each other again.

Charlotte entered with the captain. Edward inwardly smiled at their excuses for having stayed out so long. Oh! how far too soon you have returned, he said to himself.

They sat down to supper. They talked about the people who had been there that day. Edward, full of love and ecstasy, spoke well of every one—always sparing, often approving. Charlotte, who was not altogether of his opinion, remarked this temper in him, and jested with him about it—he who had always the sharpest thing to say on departed visitors, was this evening so gentle and tolerant.

With fervor and heartfelt conviction Edward cried, “One has only to love a single creature with all one's heart, and the whole world at once looks lovely!”

Otilie dropped her eyes on the ground, and Charlotte looked straight before her.

The captain took up the word, and said, “It is the same with deep feelings of respect and reverence: we first learn to recognize what there is that is to be valued in the

world, when we find occasion to entertain such sentiments towards a particular object.”

Charlotte made an excuse to retire early to her room, where she could give herself up to thinking over what had passed in the course of the evening between herself and the captain.

When Edward sprang on shore, and, pushing off the boat, had himself committed his wife and his friend to the uncertain element, Charlotte found herself face to face with the man on whose account she had been already secretly suffering so bitterly, sitting in the twilight before her, and sweeping along the boat with the sculls in easy motion. She felt a depth of sadness, very rare with her, weighing on her spirits. The undulating movement of the boat, the splash of the oars, the faint breeze playing over the watery mirror, the sighing of the reeds, the long flight of the birds, the fitful twinkling of the first stars—there was something spectral about it all in the universal stillness. She fancied her friend was bearing her away to set her on some far-off shore, and leave her there alone; strange emotions were passing through her, and she could not give way to them and weep.

The captain was describing to her the manner in which, in his opinion, the improvements should be continued. He praised the construction of the boat; it was so convenient, he said, because one person could so easily manage it with a pair of oars. She should herself learn how to do this; there was often a delicious feeling in floating along alone upon the water, one's own ferryman and steersman.

The parting which was impending, sank on Charlotte's heart as he was speaking. Is he saying this on purpose? she thought to herself. Does he know it yet? Does he suspect it? or is it only accident; and is he unconsciously foretelling me my fate?

A weary, impatient heaviness took hold of her; she begged him to make for land as soon as possible, and return with her to the castle.

It was the first time that the captain had been upon the water, and, though generally he had acquainted himself with its depth, he did not know accurately the particular spots. Dusk was coming on; he directed his course to a place where he thought it would be easy to get on shore, and from which he knew the footpath which led to the castle was not far distant. Charlotte, however, repeated her wish to get to land quickly, and the place which he thought of being at a short distance, he gave it up, and exerting himself as much as he possibly could, made straight for the bank. Unhappily the water was shallow, and he ran aground some way off from it. From the rate at which he was going the boat was fixed fast, and all his efforts to move it were in vain. What was to be done? There was no alternative but to get into the water and carry his companion ashore.

It was done without difficulty or danger. He was strong enough not to totter with her, or give her any cause for anxiety; but in her agitation she had thrown her arms about his neck. He held her fast, and pressed her to himself—and at last laid her down upon a grassy bank, not without emotion and confusion . . . she still lay upon his neck . . .

he caught her up once more in his arms, and pressed a warm kiss upon her lips. The next moment he was at her feet: he took her hand, and held it to his mouth, and cried,

“Charlotte, will you forgive me?”

The kiss which he had ventured to give, and which she had all but returned to him, brought Charlotte to herself again—she pressed his hand—but she did not attempt to raise him up. She bent down over him, and laid her hand upon his shoulder, and said,

“We cannot now prevent this moment from forming an epoch in our lives; but it depends on us to bear ourselves in a manner which shall be worthy of us. You must go away, my dear friend; and you are going. The count has plans for you, to give you better prospects—I am glad, and I am sorry. I did not mean to speak of it till it was certain: but this moment obliges me to tell you my secret . . . Since it does not depend on ourselves to alter our feelings, I can only forgive you, I can only forgive myself, if we have the courage to alter our situation.” She raised him up, took his arm to support herself, and they walked back to the castle without speaking.



THE CAPTAIN CARRYING CHARLOTTE.

But now she was standing in her own room, where she had to feel and to know that she was Edward's wife. Her strength and the various discipline in which through life she had trained herself, came to her assistance in the conflict. Accustomed as she had always been to look steadily into herself and to control herself, she did not now find it difficult, with an earnest effort, to come to the resolution which she desired. She could almost smile when she remembered the strange visit of the night before. Suddenly she was seized with a wonderful instinctive feeling, a thrill of fearful delight which changed into holy hope and longing. She knelt earnestly down, and repeated the oath which she had taken to Edward before the altar.

Friendship, affection, renunciation, floated in glad, happy images before her. She felt restored to health and to herself. A sweet weariness came over her. She lay down, and sunk into a calm, quiet sleep.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Edward, on his part, was in a very different temper. So little he thought of sleeping that it did not once occur to him even to undress himself. A thousand times he kissed the transcript of the document, but it was the beginning of it, in Otilie's childish, timid hand; the end he scarcely dared to kiss, for he thought it was his own hand which he saw. Oh, that it were another document! he whispered to himself; and, as it was, he felt it was the sweetest assurance that his highest wish would be fulfilled. Thus it remained in his hands, thus he continued to press it to his heart, although disfigured by a third name subscribed to it. The waning moon rose up over the wood. The warmth of the night drew Edward out into the free air. He wandered this way and that way; he was at once the most restless and the happiest of mortals. He strayed through the gardens—they seemed too narrow for him; he hurried out into the park, and it was too wide. He was drawn back toward the castle; he stood under Otilie's window. He threw himself down on the steps of the terrace below. "Walls and bolts," he said to himself, "may still divide us, but our hearts are not divided. If she were here before me, into my arms she would fall, and I into hers; and what can one desire but that sweet certainty!" All was stillness round him; not a breath was moving;—so still it was, that he could hear the unresting creatures underground at their work, to whom day or night are alike. He abandoned himself to his delicious dreams; at last he fell asleep, and did not wake till the sun with his royal beams was mounting up in the sky and scattering the early mists.

He found himself the first person awake on his domain. The laborers seemed to be staying away too long: they came, he thought they were too few, and the work set out for the day too slight for his desires. He inquired for more workmen; they were promised, and in the course of the day they came. But these, too, were not enough for him to carry his plans out as rapidly as he wished. To do the work gave him no pleasure any longer; it should all be done. And for whom? The paths should be gravelled that Otilie might walk pleasantly upon them; seats should be made at every spot and corner that Otilie might rest on them. The new park-house was hurried forward. It should be finished for Otilie's birthday. In all he thought and all he did, there was no more moderation. The sense of loving and of being loved, urged him out into the unlimited. How changed was now to him the look of all the rooms, their furniture, and their decorations! He did not feel as if he was in his own house any more. Otilie's presence absorbed everything. He was utterly lost in her; no other thought ever rose before him; no conscience disturbed him; every restraint which had been laid upon his nature burst loose. His whole being centred upon Otilie. This impetuosity of passion did not escape the captain, who longed, if he could, to prevent its evil consequences. All those plans which were now being hurried on with this immoderate speed, had been drawn out and calculated for a long, quiet, easy execution. The sale of the farm had been completed; the first instalment had been paid. Charlotte, according to the arrangement, had taken possession of it. But the very first week after, she found it more than usually necessary to exercise patience and resolution, and to keep her eye on what was being done. In the present hasty style of proceeding, the money which had been set apart for the purpose would not go far.

Much had been begun, and much yet remained to be done. How could the captain leave Charlotte in such a situation? They consulted together, and agreed that it would be better that they themselves should hurry on the works, and for this purpose employ money which could be made good again at the period fixed for the discharge of the second instalment of what was to be paid for the farm. It could be done almost without loss. They would have a freer hand. Everything would progress simultaneously. There were laborers enough at hand, and they could get more accomplished at once, and arrive swiftly and surely at their aim. Edward gladly gave his consent to a plan which so entirely coincided with his own views.

During this time Charlotte persisted with all her heart in what she had determined for herself, and her friend stood by her with a like purpose, manfully. This very circumstance, however, produced a greater intimacy between them. They spoke openly to one another of Edward's passion, and consulted what had better be done. Charlotte kept Otilie more about herself, watching her narrowly; and the more she understood her own heart, the deeper she was able to penetrate into the heart of the poor girl. She saw no help for it, except in sending her away.

It now appeared a happy thing to her that Luciana had gained such high honors at the school; for her great aunt, as soon as she heard of it, desired to take her entirely to herself, to keep her with her, and bring her out into the world. Otilie could, therefore, return thither. The captain would leave them well provided for, and everything would be as it had been a few months before; indeed, in many respects better. Her own position in Edward's affection, Charlotte thought she could soon recover; and she settled it all, and laid it all out before herself so sensibly that she only strengthened herself more completely in her delusion, as if it were possible for them to return within their old limits,—as if a bond which had been violently broken could again be joined together as before.

In the meantime Edward felt very deeply the hindrances which were thrown in his way. He soon observed that they were keeping him and Otilie separate; that they made it difficult for him to speak with her alone, or even to approach her, except in the presence of others. And while he was angry about this, he was angry at many things besides. If he caught an opportunity for a few hasty words with Otilie, it was not only to assure her of his love, but to complain of his wife and of the captain. He never felt that with his own irrational haste he was on the way to exhaust the cash-box. He found bitter fault with them, because in the execution of the work they were not keeping to the first agreement, and yet he had been himself a consenting party to the second; indeed, it was he who had occasioned it and made it necessary.

Hatred is a partisan, but love is even more so. Otilie also estranged herself from Charlotte and the captain. As Edward was complaining one day to Otilie of the latter, saying that he was not treating her like a friend, or, under the circumstances, acting quite uprightly, she answered unthinkingly, "I have once or twice had a painful feeling that he was not quite honest with you. I heard him say once to Charlotte, 'I Edward would but spare us that eternal flute of his! He can make nothing of it, and it is too disagreeable to listen to him.' You may imagine how it hurt me, when I like accompanying you so much."

She had scarcely uttered the words when her conscience whispered to her that she had much better have been silent. However, the thing was said. Edward's features worked violently. Never had anything stung him more. He was touched on his tenderest point. It was his amusement; he followed it like a child. He never made the slightest pretensions; what gave him pleasure should be treated with forbearance by his friends. He never thought how intolerable it is for a third person to have his ears lacerated by an unsuccessful talent. He was indignant; he was hurt in a way which he could not forgive. He felt himself discharged from all obligations.

The necessity of being with Otilie, of seeing her, whispering to her, exchanging his confidence with her, increased with every day. He determined to write to her, and ask her to carry on a secret correspondence with him. The strip of paper on which he had, laconically enough, made his request, lay on his writing-table, and was swept off by a draught of wind as his valet entered to dress his hair. The latter was in the habit of trying the heat of the iron by picking up any scraps of paper which might be lying about. This time his hand fell on the billet; he twisted it up hastily, and it was burnt. Edward observing the mistake snatched it out of his hand. After the man was gone, he sat himself down to write it over again. The second time it would not run so readily off his pen. It gave him a little uneasiness; he hesitated, but he got over it. He squeezed the paper into Otilie's hand the first moment he was able to approach her. Otilie answered him immediately. He put the note unread in his waistcoat pocket, which, being made short in the fashion of the time, was shallow, and did not hold it as it ought. It worked out, and fell without his observing it on the ground, Charlotte saw it, picked it up, and after giving a hasty glance at it, reached it to him.

"Here is something in your handwriting," she said, "which you may be sorry to lose."

He was confounded. Is she dissembling? he thought to himself. Does she know what is in the note, or is she deceived by the resemblance of the hand? He hoped, he believed the latter. He was warned—doubly warned; but those strange accidents, through which a higher intelligence seems to be speaking to us, his passion was not able to interpret. Rather, as he went further and further on, he felt the restraint under which his friend and his wife seemed to be holding him the more intolerable. His pleasure in their society was gone. His heart was closed against them, and though he was obliged to endure their society, he could not succeed in rediscovering or in reanimating within his heart anything of his old affection for them. The silent reproaches which he was forced to make to himself about it were disagreeable to him. He tried to help himself with a kind of humor which, however, being without love, was also without its usual grace.



Over all such trials, Charlotte found assistance to rise in her own inward feelings. She knew her own determination. Her own affection, fair and noble as it was, she would utterly renounce.

And sorely she longed to go to the assistance of the other two. Separation, she knew well, would not alone suffice to heal so deep a wound. She resolved that she would speak openly about it to Otilie herself. But she could not do it. The recollection of her own weakness stood in her way. She thought she could talk generally to her about the sort of thing. But general expressions about "the sort of thing," fitted her own case equally well, and she could not bear to touch it. Every hint which she would give Otilie, recoiled back on her own heart. She would warn, and she was obliged to feel that she might herself still be in need of warning.

She contented herself, therefore, with silently keeping the lovers more apart, and by this gained nothing. The slight hints which frequently escaped her had no effect upon Otilie; for Otilie had been assured by Edward that Charlotte was devoted to the captain, that Charlotte herself wished for a separation, and that he was at this moment considering the readiest means by which it could be brought about.

Otilie, led by the sense of her own innocence along the road to the happiness for which she longed, only lived for Edward. Strengthened by her love for him in all good, more light and happy in her work for his sake, and more frank and open towards others, she found herself in a heaven upon earth.

So all together, each in his or her own fashion, reflecting or unreflecting, they continued on the routine of their lives. All seemed to go its ordinary way, as, in monstrous cases, when everything is at stake, men will still live on, as if it were all nothing.

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CHAPTER XIV.

In the meantime a letter came from the count to the captain—two, indeed—one which he might produce, holding out fair, excellent prospects in the distance; the other containing a distinct offer of an immediate situation, a place of high importance and responsibility at the court, his rank as major, a very considerable salary, and other advantages. A number of circumstances, however, made it desirable that for the moment he should not speak of it, and consequently he only informed his friends of his distant expectations, and concealed what was so nearly impending.

He went warmly on, at the same time, with his present occupation, and quietly made arrangements to secure the works being all continued without interruption after his departure. He was now himself desirous that as much as possible should be finished off at once, and was ready to hasten things forward to prepare for Otilie's birthday. And so, though without having come to any express understanding, the two friends worked side by side together Edward was now well pleased that the cash-box was filled by their having taken up money. The whole affair went forward at fullest speed.

The captain had done his best to oppose the plan of throwing the three ponds together into a single sheet of water. The lower embankment would have to be made much stronger, the two intermediate embankments to be taken away, and altogether, in more than one sense, it seemed a very questionable proceeding. However, both these schemes had been already undertaken; the soil which was removed above, being carried at once down to where it was wanted. And here there came opportunely on the scene a young architect, an old pupil of the captain, who partly by introducing workmen who understood work of this nature, and partly by himself, whenever it was possible, contracting for the work itself, advanced things not a little, while at the same time they could feel more confidence in their being securely and lastingly executed. In secret this was a great pleasure to the captain. He could now be confident that his absence would not be so severely felt. It was one of the points on which he was most resolute with himself, never to leave anything which he had taken in hand uncompleted, unless he could see his place satisfactorily supplied. And he could not but hold in small respect, persons who introduce confusion around themselves only to make their absence felt, and are ready to disturb in wanton selfishness what they will not be at hand to restore.

So they labored on, straining every nerve to make Otilie's birthday splendid, without any open acknowledgment that this was what they were aiming at, or, indeed, without their directly acknowledging it to themselves. Charlotte, wholly free from jealousy as she was, could not think it right to keep it as a real festival. Otilie's youth, the circumstances of her fortune, and her relationship to their family, were not at all such as made it fit that she should appear as the queen of the day; and Edward would not have it talked about, because everything was to spring out, as it were, of itself, with a natural and delightful surprise.

They, therefore, came all of them to a sort of tacit understanding that on this day, without further circumstance, the new house in the park was to be opened, and they might take the occasion to invite the neighborhood and give a holiday to their own people. Edward's passion, however, knew no bounds. Longing as he did to give himself to Ottilie, his presents and his promises must be infinite. The birthday gifts which on the great occasion he was to offer to her seemed, as Charlotte had arranged them, far too insignificant. He spoke to his valet, who had the care of his wardrobe, and who consequently had extensive acquaintance among the tailors and mercers and fashionable milliners; and he, who not only understood himself what valuable presents were, but also the most graceful way in which they should be offered, immediately ordered an elegant box, covered with red morocco and studded with steel nails, to be filled with presents worthy of such a shell. Another thing, too, he suggested to Edward. Among the stores at the castle was a small show of fireworks which had never been let off. It would be easy to get some more, and have something really fine. Edward caught the idea, and his servant promised to see to its being executed. This matter was to remain a secret.

While this was going on, the captain, as the day drew nearer, had been making arrangements for a body of police to be present—a precaution which he always thought desirable when large numbers of men are to be brought together. And, indeed, against beggars, and against all other inconveniences by which the pleasure of a festival can be disturbed, he had made effectual provision.

Edward and his confidant, on the contrary, were mainly occupied with their fireworks. They were to be let off on the side of the middle water in front of the great ash tree. The party were to be collected on the opposite side, under the planes, that at a sufficient distance from the scene, in ease and safety, they might see them to the best effect, with the reflections on the water, the water-rockets, and floating-lights, and all the other designs.

Under some other pretext, Edward had the ground underneath the plane trees cleared of bushes and grass and moss. And now first could be seen the beauty of their forms, together with their full height and spread, right up from the earth. He was delighted with them. It was just this very time of the year that he had planted them. How long ago could it have been? he said to himself. As soon as he got home, he turned over the old diary books, which his father, especially when in the country, was very careful in keeping. He might not find an entry of this particular planting, but another important domestic matter, which Edward well remembered, and which had occurred on the same day, would surely be mentioned. He turned over a few volumes. The circumstance he was looking for was there. How amazed, how overjoyed he was, when he discovered the strangest coincidence! The day and the year on which he had planted those trees was the very day, the very year, when Ottilie was born.

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CHAPTER XV.

The long-wished-for morning dawned at last on Edward; and very soon a number of guests arrived. They had sent out a large number of invitations, and many who had missed the laying of the foundation-stone, which was reported to have been so charming, were the more careful not to be absent on the second festivity.

Before dinner the carpenter's people appeared, with music, in the court of the castle. They bore an immense garland of flowers, composed of a number of single wreaths, winding in and out, one above the other; saluting the company, they made request, according to custom, for silk handkerchiefs and ribands, at the hands of the fair sex, with which to dress themselves out. When the castle party went into the dining-hall, they marched off singing and shouting, and after amusing themselves a while in the village, and coaxing many a riband out of the women there, old and young, they came at last, with crowds behind them and crowds expecting them, out upon the height where the park-house was now standing. After dinner, Charlotte rather held back her guests. She did not wish that there should be any solemn or formal procession, and they found their way in little parties, broken up, as they pleased, without rule or order, to the scene of action. Charlotte stayed behind with Otilie, and did not improve matters by doing so. For Otilie being really the last that appeared, it seemed as if the trumpets and the clarionets had only been waiting for her, and as if the gayeties had been ordered to commence directly on her arrival.

To take off the rough appearance of the house, it had been hung with green boughs and flowers. They had dressed it out in an architectural fashion, according to a design of the captain's; only that, without his knowledge, Edward had desired the architect to work in the date upon the cornice in flowers, and this was necessarily permitted to remain. The captain had only arrived on the scene in time to prevent Otilie's name from figuring in splendor on the gable. The beginning, which had been made for this, he contrived to turn skilfully to some other use, and to get rid of such of the letters as had been already finished.

The garland was set up, and was to be seen far and wide about the country. The flags and the ribands fluttered gayly in the air; and a short oration was, the greater part of it, dispersed by the wind. The solemnity was at an end. There was now to be a dance on the smooth lawn in front of the building, which had been inclosed with boughs and branches. A gayly-dressed working mason took Edward up to a smart-looking girl of the village, and called himself upon Otilie, who stood out with him. These two couples speedily found others to follow them, and Edward contrived pretty soon to change partners, catching Otilie, and making the round with her. The younger part of the company joined merrily in the dance with the people, while the elder among them stood and looked on.

Then, before they broke up and walked about, an order was given that they should all collect again at sunset under the plane trees. Edward was the first upon the spot, ordering everything, and making his arrangements with his valet, who was to be on

the other side, in company with the firework-maker, managing his exhibition of the spectacle.

The captain was far from satisfied at some of the preparations which he saw made; and he endeavored to get a word with Edward about the crush of spectators which was to be expected. But the latter, somewhat hastily, begged that he might be allowed to manage this part of the day's amusements himself.

The upper end of the embankment having been recently raised, was still far from compact. It had been staked, but there was no grass upon it, and the earth was uneven and insecure. The crowd pressed on, however, in great numbers. The sun went down, and the castle party was served with refreshments under the plane trees, to pass the time till it should have become sufficiently dark. The place was approved of beyond measure, and they looked forward to frequently enjoying the view over so lovely a sheet of water, on future occasions.

A calm evening, a perfect absence of wind, promised everything in favor of the spectacle, when suddenly loud and violent shrieks were heard. Large masses of the earth had given way on the edge of the embankment, and a number of people were precipitated into the water. The pressure from the throng had gone on increasing till at last it had become more than the newly-laid soil would bear, and the bank had fallen in. Everybody wanted to obtain the best place, and now there was no getting either backwards or forwards.

People ran this and that way, more to see what was going on than to render assistance. What could be done when no one could reach the place?

The captain, with a few determined persons, hurried down and drove the crowd off the embankment back upon the shore; in order that those who were really of service might have free room to move. One way or another they contrived to seize hold of such as were sinking; and with or without assistance all who had been in the water were got out safe upon the bank, with the exception of one boy, whose struggles in his fright, instead of bringing him nearer to the embankment, had only carried him further from it. His strength seemed to be failing—now only a hand was seen above the surface, and now a foot. By an unlucky chance the boat was on the opposite shore filled with fireworks—it was a long business to unload it, and help was slow in coming. The captain's resolution was taken; he flung off his coat; all eyes were directed towards him, and his sturdy vigorous figure gave everyone hope and confidence: but a cry of surprise rose out of the crowd as they saw him fling himself into the water—every eye watched him as the strong swimmer swiftly reached the boy, and bore him, although to appearance dead, to the embankment.



Now came up the boat. The captain stepped in and examined whether there were any still missing, or whether they were all safe. The surgeon was speedily on the spot, and took charge of the inanimate boy. Charlotte joined them, and entreated the captain to go now and take care of himself, to hurry back to the castle and change his clothes. He would not go, however, till persons on whose sense he could rely, who had been close to the spot at the time of the accident, and who had assisted in saving those who had fallen in, assured him that all were safe.

Charlotte saw him on his way to the house, and then she remembered that the wine and the tea, and everything else which he could want, had been locked up, for fear any of the servants should take advantage of the disorder of the holiday, as on such occasions they are too apt to do. She hurried through the scattered groups of her company, which were loitering about the plane trees. Edward was there, talking to every one—beseeching every one to stay. He would give the signal directly, and the fireworks should begin. Charlotte went up to him, and entreated him to put off an amusement which was no longer in place, and which at the present moment no one could enjoy. She reminded him of what ought to be done for the boy who had been saved, and for his preserver.

“The surgeon will do whatever is right, no doubt,” replied Edward. “He is provided with everything which he can want, and we should only be in the way if we crowded about him with our anxieties.”

Charlotte persisted in her opinion, and made a sign to Otilie, who at once prepared to retire with her. Edward seized her hand, and cried, “We will not end this day in a lazaretto. She is too good for a sister of mercy. Without us, I should think, the half-dead may wake, and the living dry themselves.”

Charlotte did not answer, but went. Some followed her—others followed these: in the end, no one wished to be the last, and all followed. Edward and Otilie found themselves alone under the plane trees. He insisted that stay he would, earnestly, passionately, as she entreated him to go back with her to the castle. “No, Otilie!” he cried; “the extraordinary is not brought to pass in the smooth common way—the wonderful accident of this evening brings us more speedily together. You are mine—I have often said it to you, and sworn it to you. We will not say it and swear it any more—we will make it be.”

The boat came over from the other side. The valet was in it—he asked, with some embarrassment, what his master wished to have done with the fireworks?

“Let them off!” Edward cried to him: “let them off!—It was only for you that they were provided, Otilie, and you shall be the only one to see them! Let me sit beside you, and enjoy them with you.” Tenderly, timidly, he sat down at her side, without touching her.

Rockets went hissing up—cannon thundered—Roman candles shot out their blazing balls—squibs flashed and darted—wheels spun round, first singly, then in pairs, then all at once, faster and faster, one after the other, and more and more together. Edward, whose bosom was on fire, watched the blazing spectacle with eyes gleaming with delight; but Otilie, with her delicate and nervous feelings, in all this noise and fitful blazing and flashing, found more to distress her than to please. She leaned shrinking against Edward, and he, as she drew to him and clung to him, felt the delightful sense that she belonged entirely to him.

The night had scarcely reassumed its rights, when the moon rose and lighted their path as they walked back. A figure, with his hat in his hand, stepped across their way, and begged an alms of them—in the general holiday he said that he had been forgotten. The moon shone upon his face, and Edward recognized the features of the importunate beggar; but, happy as he then was, it was impossible for him to be angry with anyone. He could not recollect that, especially for that particular day, begging had been forbidden under the heaviest penalties—he thrust his hand into his pocket, took the first coin which he found, and gave the fellow a piece of gold. His own happiness was so unbounded that he would have liked to have shared it with everyone.

In the meantime all had gone well at the castle. The skill of the surgeon, everything which was required being ready at hand, Charlotte's assistance—all had worked together, and the boy was brought to life again. The guests dispersed, wishing to catch a glimpse or two of what was to be seen of the fireworks from the distance; and, after a scene of such confusion, were glad to get back to their own quiet homes.

The captain also, after having rapidly changed his dress, had taken an active part in what required to be done. It was now all quiet again, and he found himself alone with Charlotte—gently and affectionately he now told her that his time for leaving them approached. She had gone through so much that evening, that this discovery made but a slight impression upon her—she had seen how her friend could sacrifice himself; how he had saved another, and had himself been saved. These strange incidents seemed to foretell an important future to her—but not an unhappy one.

Edward, who now entered with Otilie, was informed at once of the impending departure of the captain. He suspected that Charlotte had known longer how near it was; but he was far too much occupied with himself, and with his own plans, to take it amiss, or care about it.

On the contrary, he listened attentively, and with signs of pleasure, to the account of the excellent and honorable position in which the captain was to be placed. The course of the future was hurried impetuously forward by his own secret wishes. Already he saw the captain married to Charlotte, and himself married to Otilie. It

would have been the richest present which anyone could have made him, on the occasion of the day's festival!



But how surprised was Otilie, when, on going to her room, she found upon the table the beautiful box! Instantly she opened it; inside, all the things were so nicely packed and arranged, that she did not venture to take them out, she scarcely even ventured to lift them. There were muslin, cambric, silk, shawls and lace, all rivalling each other in delicacy, beauty and costliness—nor were ornaments forgotten. The intention had been, as she saw well, to furnish her with more than one complete suit of clothes: but it was all so costly, so little like what she had been accustomed to, that she scarcely dared, even in thought, to believe it could be really for her.

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CHAPTER XVI.

The next morning the captain had disappeared, having left a grateful, feeling letter addressed to his friends upon his table. He and Charlotte had already taken a half leave of each other the evening before—she felt that the parting was forever, and she resigned herself to it; for in the count's second letter, which the captain had at last shown to her, there was a hint of a prospect of an advantageous marriage, and, although he had paid no attention to it at all, she accepted it for as good as certain, and gave him up firmly and fully.

Now, therefore, she thought that she had a right to require of others the same control over themselves which she had exercised herself: it had not been impossible to her, and it ought not to be impossible to them. With this feeling she began the conversation with her husband; and she entered upon it the more openly and easily, from a sense that the question must now, once for all, be decisively set at rest.

“Our friend has left us,” she said; “we are now once more together as we were—and it depends upon ourselves whether we choose to return altogether into our old position.”

Edward, who heard nothing except what flattered his own passion, believed that Charlotte, in these words, was alluding to her previous widowed state, and, in a roundabout way, was making a suggestion for a separation; so that he answered, with a laugh, “Why not? all we want is to come to an understanding.” But he found himself sorely enough undeceived, as Charlotte continued, “And we have now a choice of opportunities for placing Ottilie in another situation. Two openings have offered themselves for her, either of which will do very well. Either she can return to the school, as my daughter has left it and is with her great-aunt; or she can be received into a desirable family, where, as the companion of an only child, she will enjoy all the advantages of a solid education.”

Edward, with a tolerably successful effort at commanding himself, replied, “Ottilie has been so much spoiled, by living so long with us here, that she will scarcely like to leave us now.”

“We have all of us been too much spoiled,” said Charlotte; “and yourself not least. This is an epoch which requires us seriously to bethink ourselves. It is a solemn warning to us to consider what is really for the good of all the members of our little circle—and we ourselves must not be afraid of making sacrifices.”

“At any rate I cannot see that it is right that Ottilie should be made a sacrifice,” replied Edward; “and that would be the case if we were now to allow her to be sent away among strangers. The captain's good genius has sought him out here—we can feel easy, we can feel happy, at seeing him leave us; but who can tell what may be before Ottilie? There is no occasion for haste.”

“What is before us is sufficiently clear,” Charlotte answered, with some emotion; and as she was determined to have it all out at once, she went on: “You love Otilie; every day you are becoming more attached to her. A reciprocal feeling is rising on her side as well, and feeding itself in the same way. Why should we not acknowledge in words what every hour makes obvious? and are we not to have the common prudence to ask ourselves in what it is to end?”

“We may not be able to find an answer on the moment,” replied Edward, collecting himself; “but so much may be said, that if we cannot exactly tell what will come of it, we may resign ourselves to wait and see what the future may tell us about it.”

“No great wisdom is required to prophesy here,” answered Charlotte; “and, at any rate, we ought to feel that you and I are past the age when people may walk blindly where they should not or ought not to go. There is no one else to take care of us—we must be our own friends, our own managers. No one expects us to commit ourselves in an outrage upon decency: no one expects that we are going to expose ourselves to censure or to ridicule.”

“How can you so mistake me?” said Edward, unable to reply to his wife's clear, open words. “Can you find it a fault in me, if I am anxious about Otilie's happiness? I do not mean future happiness—no one can count on that—but what is present, palpable, immediate. Consider, don't deceive yourself; consider frankly Otilie's case, torn away from us, and sent to live among strangers. I, at least, am not cruel enough to propose such a change for her!”

Charlotte saw too clearly into her husband's intentions, through this disguise. For the first time she felt how far he had estranged himself from her. Her voice shook a little—“Will Otilie be happy if she divides us?” she said. “If she deprives me of a husband, and his children of a father!”

“Our children, I should have thought, were sufficiently provided for,” said Edward, with a cold smile; adding, rather more kindly, “but why at once expect the very worst?”

“The very worst is too sure to follow this passion of yours,” returned Charlotte: “do not refuse good advice while there is yet time; do not throw away the means which I propose to save us. In troubled cases those must work and help who see the clearest—this time it is I. Dear, dearest Edward! listen to me—can you propose to me, that now at once I shall renounce my happiness! renounce my fairest rights! renounce you!”

“Who says that?” replied Edward, with some embarrassment.

“You, yourself,” answered Charlotte; “in determining to keep Otilie here are you not acknowledging everything which must arise out of it? I will urge nothing on you—but if you cannot conquer yourself, at least you will not be able much longer to deceive yourself.”

Edward felt how right she was. It is fearful to hear spoken out, in words, what the heart has gone on long permitting to itself in secret. To escape only for a moment, Edward answered, "It is not yet clear to me what you want."

"My intention," she replied, "was to talk over with you these two proposals—each of them has its advantages. The school would be best suited to her, as she now is; but the other situation is larger and wider, and promises more, when I think what she may become." She then detailed to her husband circumstantially what would lie before Ottilie in each position, and concluded with the words, "For my own part I should prefer the lady's house to the school, for more reasons than one; but particularly because I should not like the affection, the love indeed, of the young man there, which Ottilie has gained, to increase."

Edward appeared to approve; but it was only to find some means of delay. Charlotte, who desired to commit him to a definite step, seized the opportunity, as Edward made no immediate opposition, to settle Ottilie's departure, for which she had already privately made all preparations, for the next day.

Edward shuddered—he thought he was betrayed. His wife's affectionate speech he fancied was an artfully contrived trick to separate him forever from his happiness. He appeared to leave the thing entirely to her; but in his heart his resolution was already taken. To gain time to breathe, to put off the immediate intolerable misery of Ottilie's being sent away, he determined to leave his house. He told Charlotte he was going; but he had blinded her to his real reason, by telling her that he would not be present at Ottilie's departure; indeed, that, from that moment, he would see her no more. Charlotte, who believed that she had gained her point, approved most cordially. He ordered his horse, gave his valet the necessary directions what to pack up, and where he should follow him; and then, on the point of departure, he sat down and wrote:

Edward To Charlotte.

"The misfortune, my love, which has befallen us, may or may not admit of remedy; only this I feel, that if I am not at once to be driven to despair, I must find some means of delay for myself, and for all of us. In making myself the sacrifice, I have a right to make a request. I am leaving my home, and I only return to it under happier and more peaceful auspices. While I am away you keep possession of it—but *with Ottilie*. I choose to know that she is with you, and not among strangers. Take care of her; treat her as you have treated her—only more lovingly, more kindly, more tenderly! I promise that I will not attempt any secret intercourse with her. Leave me, as long a time as you please, without knowing anything about you. I will not allow myself to be anxious—nor need you be uneasy about me: only, with all my heart and soul, I beseech you, make no attempt to send Ottilie away, or to introduce her into any other situation. Beyond the circle of the castle and the park, placed in the hands of strangers, she belongs to me, and I will take possession of her! If you have any regard for my affection, for my wishes, for my sufferings, you will leave me alone to my madness: and if any hope of recovery from it should ever hereafter offer itself to me, I will not resist."

This last sentence ran off his pen—not out of his heart. Even when he saw it upon the paper, he began bitterly to weep. That he, under any circumstances, should renounce the happiness—even the wretchedness—of loving Otilie! He only now began to feel what he was doing—he was going away without knowing what was to be the result. At any rate he was not to see her again *now*—with what certainty could he promise himself that he would ever see her again? But the letter was written—the horses were at the door; every moment he was afraid he might see Otilie somewhere, and then his whole purpose would go to the winds. He collected himself—he remembered, that, at any rate, he would be able to return at any moment he pleased; and that, by his absence he would have advanced nearer to his wishes: on the other side, he pictured Otilie to himself forced to leave the house if he stayed. He sealed the letter, ran down the steps, and sprang upon his horse.

As he rode past the hotel, he saw the beggar to whom he had given so much money the night before, sitting under the trees: the man was busy enjoying his dinner, and, as Edward passed, stood up, and made him the humblest obeisance. That figure had appeared to him yesterday, when Otilie was on his arm; now it only served as a bitter reminiscence of the happiest hour of his life. His grief redoubled. The feeling of what he was leaving behind was intolerable. He looked again at the beggar. “Happy wretch!” he cried, “you can still feed upon the alms of yesterday—and I cannot any more on the happiness of yesterday!”



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CHAPTER XVII.

Ottolie heard some one ride away, and went to the window in time just to catch a sight of Edward's back. It was strange, she thought, that he should have left the house without seeing her, without having even wished her good-morning. She grew uncomfortable, and her anxiety did not diminish when Charlotte took her out for a long walk, and talked of various other things; but not once, and apparently on purpose, mentioning her husband. When they returned she found the table laid only with two covers.

It is unpleasant to miss even the most trifling thing to which we have been accustomed. In serious things such a loss becomes miserably painful. Edward and the captain were not there. The first time for a long while Charlotte sat at the head of the table herself—and it seemed to Ottolie as if she was deposed. The two ladies sat opposite each other; Charlotte talked, without the least embarrassment, of the captain and his appointment, and of the little hope there was of seeing him again for a long time. The only comfort Ottolie could find for herself was in the idea that Edward had ridden after his friend, to accompany him a part of his journey.

On rising from table, however, they saw Edward's travelling carriage under the window. Charlotte, a little as if she was put out, asked who had had it brought round there. She was told it was the valet, who had some things there to pack up. It required all Ottolie's self-command to conceal her wonder and her distress.

The valet came in, and asked if they would be so good as to let him have a drinking cup of his master's, a pair of silver spoons, and a number of other things, which seemed to Ottolie to imply that he was gone some distance, and would be away for a long time.

Charlotte gave him a very cold dry answer. She did not know what he meant—he had everything belonging to his master under his own care. What the man wanted was to speak a word to Ottolie, and on some pretence or other to get her out of the room; he made some clever excuse, and persisted in his request so far that Ottolie asked if she should go to look for the things for him? But Charlotte quietly said that she had better not. The valet had to depart, and the carriage rolled away.

It was a dreadful moment for Ottolie. She understood nothing—comprehended nothing. She could only feel that Edward had been parted from her for a long time. Charlotte felt for her situation, and left her to herself.

We will not attempt to describe what she went through, or how she wept. She suffered infinitely. She prayed that God would help her only over this one day. The day passed, and the night, and when she came to herself again she felt herself a changed being.

She had not grown composed. She was not resigned, but after having lost what she had lost, she was still alive, and there was still something for her to fear. Her anxiety, after returning to consciousness, was at once lest, now that the gentlemen were gone, she might be sent away too. She never guessed at Edward's threats, which had secured her remaining with her aunt. Yet Charlotte's manner served partially to reassure her. The latter exerted herself to find employment for the poor girl, and hardly ever,—never, if she could help it,—left her out of her sight; and although she knew well how little words can do against the power of passion, yet she knew, too, the sure though slow influence of thought and reflection, and therefore missed no opportunity of inducing Otilie to talk with her on every variety of subject.

It was no little comfort to Otilie when one day Charlotte took an opportunity of making (she did it on purpose) the wise observation, "How keenly grateful people were to us when we were able by stilling and calming them to help them out of the entanglements of passion! Let us set cheerfully to work," she said, "at what the men have left incomplete: we shall be preparing the most charming surprise for them when they return to us, and our temperate proceedings will have carried through and executed what their impatient natures would have spoiled."

"Speaking of temperance, my dear aunt, I cannot help saying how I am struck with the intemperance of men, particularly in respect of wine. It has often pained and distressed me, when I have observed how, for hours together, clearness of understanding, judgment, considerateness, and whatever is most amiable about them, will be utterly gone, and instead of the good which they might have done if they had been themselves, most disagreeable things sometimes threaten. How often may not wrong, rash determinations have arisen entirely from that one cause!"

Charlotte assented, but she did not go on with the subject. She saw only too clearly that it was Edward of whom Otilie was thinking. It was not exactly habitual with him, but he allowed himself much more frequently than was at all desirable to stimulate his enjoyment and his power of talking and acting by such indulgence. If what Charlotte had just said had set Otilie thinking again about men, and particularly about Edward, she was all the more struck and startled when her aunt began to speak of the impending marriage of the captain as of a thing quite settled and acknowledged. This gave a totally different aspect to affairs from what Edward had previously led her to entertain. It made her watch every expression of Charlotte's, every hint, every action, every step. Otilie had become jealous, sharp-eyed and suspicious, without knowing it.

Meanwhile, Charlotte with her clear glance looked through the whole circumstances of their situation, and made arrangements which would provide, among other advantages, full employment for Otilie. She contracted her household, not parsimoniously, but into narrower dimensions; and, indeed, in one point of view, these moral aberrations might be taken for a not unfortunate accident. For in the style in which they had been going on, they had fallen imperceptibly into extravagance; and from a want of seasonable reflection, from the rate at which they had been living, and from the variety of schemes into which they had been launching out, their fine

fortune, which had been in excellent condition, had been shaken, if not seriously injured.

The improvements which were going on in the park she did not interfere with; she rather sought to advance whatever might form a basis for future operations. But here, too, she assigned herself a limit. Her husband on his return should still find abundance to amuse himself with.

In all this work she could not sufficiently value the assistance of the young architect. In a short time the lake lay stretched out under her eyes, its new shores turfed and planted with the most discriminating and excellent judgment. The rough work at the new house was all finished. Everything which was necessary to protect it from the weather she took care to see provided, and there for the present she allowed it to rest in a condition in which what remained to be done could hereafter be readily commenced again. Thus hour by hour she recovered her spirits and her cheerfulness. Otilie only seemed to have done so. She was only forever watching, in all that was said and done, for symptoms which might show her whether Edward would be soon returning: and this one thought was the only one in which she felt any interest.



It was, therefore, a very welcome proposal to her when it was suggested that they should get together the boys of the peasants, and employ them in keeping the park clean and neat. Edward had long entertained the idea. A pleasant-looking sort of uniform was made for them, which they were to put on in the evenings, after they had been properly cleaned and washed. The wardrobe was kept in the castle; the more sensible and ready of the boys themselves were intrusted with the management of it—the architect acting as chief director. In a very short time, the children acquired a kind of character. It was found easy to mould them into what was desired; and they went through their work not without a sort of manœuvre. As they marched along, with their garden shears, their long-handled pruning knives, their rakes, their little spades and hoes, and sweeping brooms; others following after these with baskets to carry off the stones and rubbish; and others, last of all, trailing along the heavy iron roller—it was a thoroughly pretty, delightful procession. The architect observed in it a beautiful series of situations and occupations to ornament the frieze of a garden-house. Otilie, on the other hand, could see nothing in it but a kind of parade, to salute the master of the house on his near return.

And this stimulated her, and made her wish to begin something of the sort herself. They had before endeavored to encourage the girls of the village in knitting and sewing and spinning, and whatever else women could do; and since what had been done for the improvement of the village itself, there had been a perceptible advance in

these descriptions of industry. Otilie had given what assistance was in her power, but she had given it at random, as opportunity or inclination prompted her; now she thought she would go to work more satisfactorily and methodically. But a company is not to be formed out of a number of girls, as easily as out of a number of boys. She followed her own good sense, and, without being exactly conscious of it, her efforts were solely directed towards connecting every girl as closely as possible each with her own home, her own parents, brothers and sisters: and she succeeded with many of them. One lively little creature only was incessantly complained of as showing no capacity for work, and as never likely to do anything if she were left at home.

Otilie could not be angry with the girl, for to herself the little thing was especially attached—she clung to her, went after her, and ran about with her, whenever she was permitted—and then she would be active and cheerful and never tire. It appeared to be a necessity of the child's nature to hang about a beautiful mistress. At first, Otilie allowed her to be her companion; then she herself began to feel a sort of affection for her; and, at last, they never parted at all, and Nanny attended her mistress wherever she went.

The latter's footsteps were often bent towards the garden, where she liked to watch the beautiful show of fruit. It was just the end of the raspberry and cherry season, the few remains of which were no little delight to Nanny. On the other trees there was a promise of a magnificent bearing for the autumn, and the gardener talked of nothing but his master; and how he wished that he might be at home to enjoy it. Otilie could listen to the good old man forever! He thoroughly understood his business; and Edward—Edward—Edward—was forever the theme of his praise!

Otilie observed, how well all the grafts which had been budded in the spring had taken. "I only wish," the gardener answered, "my good master may come to enjoy them. If he were here this autumn, he would see what beautiful sorts there are in the old castle garden, which the late lord, his honored father, put there. I think the fruit gardeners that are now don't succeed as well as the Carthusians used to do. We find many fine names in the catalogue, and then we bud from them, and bring up the shoots, and, at last, when they come to bear, it is not worth while to have such trees standing in our garden."

Over and over again, whenever the faithful old servant saw Otilie, he asked when his master might be expected home; and when Otilie had nothing to tell him, he would look vexed, and let her see in his manner that he thought she did not care to tell him: the sense of uncertainty which was thus forced upon her became painful beyond measure, and yet she could never be absent from these beds and borders. What she and Edward had sown and planted together were now in full flower, requiring no further care from her, except that Nanny should be at hand with the watering-pot; and who shall say with what sensations she watched the later flowers, which were just beginning to show, and which were to be in the bloom of their beauty on Edward's birthday, the holiday to which she had looked forward with such eagerness, when these flowers were to have expressed her affection and her gratitude to him!—but the hopes which she had formed of that festival were dead now, and doubt and anxiety never ceased to haunt the soul of the poor girl.

Into real open, hearty understanding with Charlotte, there was no more a chance of her being able to return; for, indeed, the position of these two ladies was very different. If things could remain in their old state—if it were possible that they could return again into the smooth, even way of calm ordered life, Charlotte gained everything; she gained happiness for the present, and a happy future opened before her. On the other hand, for Ottilie all was lost—one may say, all; for she had first found in Edward what life and happiness meant; and, in her present position, she felt an infinite and dreary chasm of which before she could have formed no conception. A heart which seeks, feels well that it wants something; a heart which has lost, feels that something is gone—its yearning and its longing changes into uneasy impatience—and a woman's spirit, which is accustomed to waiting and to enduring, must now pass out from its proper sphere, become active, and attempt and do something to make its own happiness.

Ottilie had not given up Edward—how could she?—although Charlotte, wisely enough, in spite of her conviction to the contrary, assumed it as a thing of course, and resolutely took it as decided that a quiet rational regard was possible between her husband and Ottilie. How often, however, did not Ottilie remain at nights, after bolting herself into her room, on her knees before the open box, gazing at the birthday presents, of which as yet she had not touched a single thing—not cut out or made up a single dress! How often with the sunrise did the poor girl hurry out of the house, in which she once had found all her happiness, away into the free air, into the country which then had had no charms for her. Even on the solid earth she could not bear to stay; she would spring into the boat, and row out into the middle of the lake, and there, drawing out some book of travels, lie rocked by the motion of the waves, reading and dreaming that she was far away, where she would never fail to find her friend—she remaining ever nearest to his heart, and he to hers.



Nanny

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CHAPTER XVIII.

It may easily be supposed that the strange, busy gentleman, whose acquaintance we have already made—Mittler—as soon as he received information of the disorder which had broken out among his friends, felt desirous, though neither side had as yet called on him for assistance, to fulfil a friend's part towards them, and do what he could to help them in their misfortune. He thought it advisable, however, to wait first a little while; knowing too well, as he did, that it was more difficult to come to the aid of cultivated persons in their moral perplexities, than of the uncultivated. He left them, therefore, for some time to themselves; but at last he could withhold no longer, and he hastened to seek out Edward, on whose traces he had already lighted. His road led him to a pleasant, pretty valley, with a range of green, sweetly-wooded meadows, down the centre of which ran a never-failing stream, sometimes winding slowly along, then tumbling and rushing among rocks and stones. The hills sloped gently up on either side, covered with rich corn-fields and well-kept orchards. The villages were at proper distances from each other. The whole had a peaceful character about it, and the detached scenes seemed designed expressly, if not for painting, at least for life.

At last a neatly-kept farm, with a clean, modest dwelling-house, situated in the middle of a garden, fell under his eye. He conjectured that this was Edward's present abode; and he was not mistaken.

Of this our friend in his solitude we have only thus much to say—that in his seclusion he was resigning himself utterly to the feeling of his passion, thinking out plan after plan, and feeding himself with innumerable hopes. He could not deny that he longed to see Otilie there; that he would like to carry her off there, to tempt her there; and whatever else (putting, as he now did, no check upon his thoughts) pleased to suggest itself, whether permitted or unpermitted. Then his imagination wandered up and down, picturing every sort of possibility. If he could not have her there, if he could not lawfully possess her, he would secure to her the possession of the property for her own. There she should live for herself, silently, independently; she should be happy in that spot—sometimes his self-torturing mood would lead him further—be happy in it, perhaps, with another.

So days flowed away in increasing oscillation between hope and suffering, between tears and happiness—between purposes, preparations, and despair. The sight of Mittler did not surprise him; he had long expected that he would come; and now that he did, he was partly welcome to him. He believed that he had been sent by Charlotte. He had prepared himself with all manner of excuses and delays; and if these would not serve, with decided refusals; or else, perhaps, he might hope to learn something of Otilie,—and then he would be dear to him as a messenger from heaven.

Not a little vexed and annoyed was Edward, therefore, when he understood that Mittler had not come from the castle at all, but of his own free accord. His heart closed up, and at first the conversation would not open itself. Mittler, however, knew very well that a heart that is occupied with love has an urgent necessity to express

itself—to pour out to a friend what is passing within it; and he allowed himself, therefore, after a few speeches backwards and forwards, for this once to go out of his character, and play the confidant in place of the mediator. He had calculated justly. He had been finding fault in a good-natured way with Edward, for burying himself in that lonely place, upon which Edward replied:

“I do not know how I could spend my time more agreeably. I am always occupied with her; I am always close to her. I have the inestimable comfort of being able to think where Ottilie is at each moment—where she is going, where she is standing, where she is reposing. I see her moving and acting before me as usual; ever doing or designing something which is to give me pleasure. But this will not always answer; for how can I be happy away from her? And then my fancy begins to work; I think what Ottilie should do to come to me; I write sweet, loving letters in her name to myself, and then I answer them, and keep the sheets together. I have promised that I will take no steps to seek her; and that promise I will keep. But what binds her, that she should make no advances to me? Has Charlotte had the barbarity to exact a promise, to exact an oath from her, not to write to me, not to send me a word, a hint, about herself? Very likely she has. It is only natural; and yet to me it is monstrous, it is horrible. If she loves me—as I think, as I know that she does—why does she not resolve, why does she not venture to fly to me, and throw herself into my arms? I often think she ought to do it; and she could do it. If I ever hear a noise in the hall, I look towards the door. It must be her—she is coming—I look up to see her. Alas! because the possible is impossible, I let myself imagine that the impossible must become possible. At night, when I lie awake, and the lamp flings an uncertain light about the room, her form, her spirit, a sense of her presence, sweeps over me, approaches me, seizes me. It is but for a moment; it is that I may have an assurance that she is thinking of me, that she is mine. Only one pleasure remains to me. When I was with her I never dreamed of her; now when I am far away, and, oddly enough, since I have made the acquaintance of other attractive persons in this neighborhood, for the first time, her figure appears to me in my dreams, as if she would say to me, ‘Look on them, and on me. You will find none more beautiful, more lovely than I.’ And so she is present in every dream I have. In whatever happens to me with her, we are woven in and in together. Now we are subscribing a contract together. There is her hand, and there is mine; there is her name, and there is mine; and they move one into the other, and seem to devour each other. Sometimes she does something which injures the pure idea which I have of her; and then I feel how intensely I love her, by the indescribable anguish which it causes me. Again, unlike herself, she will rally and vex me; and then at once the figure changes—her sweet, round, heavenly face draws out; it is not her, it is another; but I lie vexed, dissatisfied and wretched. Laugh not, dear Mittler, or laugh on as you will. I am not ashamed of this attachment, of this—if you please to call it so—foolish, frantic passion. No, I never loved before. It is only now that I know what to love means. Till now, what I have called life was nothing but its prelude—amusement, sport to kill the time with. I never lived till I knew her, till I loved her—entirely and only loved her. People have often said of me, not to my face, but behind my back, that in most things I was but a botcher and a bungler. It may be so; for I had not then found in what I could show myself a master. I should like to see the man who outdoes me in the talent of love. A miserable life it is, full of anguish and tears; but it is so natural, so dear to me, that I could hardly change it for another.”

Edward had relieved himself slightly by this violent unloading of his heart. But in doing so every feature of his strange condition had been brought out so clearly before his eyes, that, overpowered by the pain of the struggle, he burst into tears, which flowed all the more freely as his heart had been made weak by telling it all.

Mittler, who was the less disposed to put a check on his inexorable good sense and strong, vigorous feeling, because by this violent outbreak of passion on Edward's part he saw himself driven far from the purpose of his coming, showed sufficiently decided marks of his disapprobation. Edward should act as a man, he said; he should remember what he owed to himself as a man. He should not forget that the highest honor was to command ourselves in misfortune; to bear pain, if it must be so, with equanimity and self-collectedness. That was what we should do, if we wished to be valued and looked up to as examples of what was right.

Stirred and penetrated as Edward was with the bitterest feelings, words like these could but have a hollow, worthless sound.

"It is well," he cried, "for the man who is happy, who has all that he desires, to talk; but he would be ashamed of it if he could see how intolerable it was to the sufferer. Nothing short of an infinite endurance would be enough, and easy and contented as he was, what could he know of an infinite agony? There are cases," he continued, "yes, there are, where comfort is a lie, and despair is a duty. Go, heap your scorn upon the noble Greek, who well knows how to delineate heroes, when in their anguish he lets those heroes weep. He has even a proverb, 'Men who can weep are good.' Leave me, all you with dry heart and dry eye. Curses on the happy, to whom the wretched serve but for a spectacle. When body and soul are torn in pieces with agony, they are to bear it—yes, to be noble and bear it, if they are to be allowed to go off the scene with applause. Like the gladiators, they must die gracefully before the eyes of the multitude. My dear Mittler, I thank you for your visit; but really you would oblige me much, if you would go out and look about you in the garden. We will meet again. I will try to compose myself, and become more like you."

Mittler was unwilling to let a conversation drop which it might be difficult to begin again, and still persevered. Edward, too, was quite ready to go on with it; besides that of itself, it was tending towards the issue which he desired.

"Indeed," said the latter, "this thinking and arguing backwards and forwards leads to nothing. In this very conversation I myself have first come to understand myself; I have first felt decided as to what I must make up my mind to do. My present and my future life I see before me; I have to choose only between misery and happiness. Do you, my best friend, bring about the separation which must take place, which, in fact, is already made; gain Charlotte's consent for me. I will not enter upon the reasons why I believe there will be the less difficulty in prevailing upon her. You, my dear friend, must go. Go, and give us all peace; make us all happy."

Mittler hesitated. Edward continued:

“My fate and Otilie’s cannot be divided, and shall not be shipwrecked. Look at this glass; our initials are engraved upon it. A gay reveller flung it into the air, that no one should drink of it more. It was to fall on the rock and be dashed to pieces; but it did not fall; it was caught. At a high price I bought it back, and now I drink out of it daily—to convince myself that the connection between us cannot be broken; that destiny has decided.”

“Alas, alas!” cried Mittler, “what must I not endure with my friends? Here comes superstition, which of all things I hate the worst—the most mischievous and accursed of all the plagues of mankind. We trifle with prophecies, with forebodings and dreams, and give a seriousness to our every-day life with them; but when the seriousness of life itself begins to show, when everything around us is heaving and rolling, then come in these spectres to make the storm more terrible.”



“In this uncertainty of life,” cried Edward, “poised as it is between hope and fear, leave the poor heart its guiding-star. It may gaze towards it, if it cannot steer towards it.”

“Yes, I might leave it; and it would be very well,” replied Mittler, “if there were but one consequence to expect; but I have always found that nobody will attend to symptoms of warning. Man cares for nothing except what flatters him and promises him fair; and his faith is alive exclusively for the sunny side.”

Mittler, finding himself carried off into the shadowy regions, in which the longer he remained in them, the more uncomfortable he always felt, was the more ready to assent to Edward’s eager wish that he should go to Charlotte. Indeed, if he stayed, what was there further which at that moment he could urge on Edward? To gain time, to inquire in what state things were with the ladies, was the best thing which even he himself could suggest as at present possible.

He hastened to Charlotte, whom he found as usual, calm and in good spirits. She told him readily of everything which had occurred; for from what Edward had said he had only been able to gather the effects. On his own side, he felt his way with the utmost caution. He could not prevail upon himself even cursorily to mention the word separation. It was a surprise, indeed, to him, but from his point of view an unspeakably delightful one, when Charlotte, at the end of a number of unpleasant things, finished with saying:

“I must believe, I must hope, that things will all work round again, and that Edward will return to me. How can it be otherwise, as soon as I become a mother?”

"Do I understand you right?" returned Mittler.

"Perfectly," Charlotte answered.

"A thousand times blessed be this news!" he cried, clasping his hands together. "I know the strength of this argument on the mind of a man. Many a marriage have I seen first cemented by it, and restored again when broken. Such a good hope as this is worth more than a thousand words. Now indeed it is the best hope which we can have. For myself though," he continued, "I have all reason to be vexed about it. In this case I can see clearly no self-love of mine will be flattered. I shall earn no thanks from you by my services; I am in the same case as a certain medical friend of mine, who succeeds in all cures which he undertakes with the poor for the love of God; but can seldom do anything for the rich who will pay him. Here, thank God, the thing cures itself, after all my talking and trying had proved fruitless."

Charlotte now asked him if he would carry the news to Edward: if he would take a letter to him from her, and then see what should be done. But he declined undertaking this. "All is done," he cried; "do you write your letter—any messenger will do as well as I—I will come back to wish you joy. I will come to the christening!"

For this refusal she was vexed with him—as she frequently was. His eager impetuous character brought about much good; but his over-haste was the occasion of many a failure. No one was more dependent than he on the impressions which he formed on the moment.

Charlotte's messenger came to Edward, who received him half in terror. The letter was to decide his fate, and it might as well contain No as Yes. He did not venture, for a long time, to open it. At last he tore off the cover, and stood petrified at the following passage, with which it concluded:

"Remember the night-adventure when you visited your wife as a lover—how you drew her to you, and clasped her as a well-beloved bride in your arms. In this strange accident let us revere the providence of heaven, which has woven a new link to bind us, at the moment when the happiness of our lives was threatening to fall asunder and to vanish."

What passed from that moment in Edward's soul it would be difficult to describe! Under the weight of such a stroke, old habits and fancies come out again to assist to kill the time and fill up the chasms of life. Hunting and fighting are an ever-ready resource of this kind for a nobleman; Edward longed for some outward peril, as a counterbalance to the storm within him. He craved for death, because the burden of life threatened to become too heavy for him to bear. It comforted him to think that he would soon cease to be, and so would make those whom he loved happy by his departure.

No one made any difficulty in his doing what he purposed—because he kept his intention a secret. He made his will with all due formalities. It gave him a very sweet feeling to secure Otilie's fortune—provision was made for Charlotte, for the unborn

child, for the captain, and for the servants. The war, which had again broken out, favored his wishes: he had disliked exceedingly the half-soldiering which had fallen to him in his youth, and that was the reason why he had left the service. Now it gave him a fine exhilarating feeling to be able to rejoin it, under a commander of whom it could be said, that under his conduct death was likely, and victory was sure.

Ottolie, when Charlotte's secret was made known to her, bewildered by it, like Edward, and more than he, retired into herself—she had nothing further to say: hope she could not, and wish she dared not. A glimpse into what was passing in her we can gather from her diary, some passages of which we think to communicate.



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Part Two.

CHAPTER I.

THERE often happens to us in common life what, in an epic poem, we are accustomed to praise as a stroke of art in the poet; namely, that when the chief figures go off the scene, conceal themselves or retire into inactivity, some other or others, whom hitherto we have scarcely observed, come forward and fill their places. And these putting out all their force, at once fix our attention and sympathy on themselves, and earn our praise and admiration.

Thus, after the captain and Edward were gone, the architect, of whom we have spoken, appeared every day a more important person. The ordering and executing of a number of undertakings depended entirely upon him, and he proved himself thoroughly understanding and businesslike in the style in which he went to work; while in a number of other ways he was able also to make himself of assistance to the ladies, and find amusement for their weary hours. His outward air and appearance were of the kind which win confidence and awake affection. A youth in the full sense of the word, well-formed, tall, perhaps a little too stout; modest without being timid, and easy without being obtrusive, there was no work and no trouble which he was not delighted to take upon himself; and as he could keep accounts with great facility, the whole economy of the household soon was no secret to him, and everywhere his salutary influence made itself felt. Any stranger who came he was commonly set to entertain, and he was skilful either at declining unexpected visits, or at least so far preparing the ladies for them as to spare them any disagreeableness.

Among others, he had one day no little trouble with a young lawyer, who had been sent by a neighboring nobleman to speak about a matter which, although of no particular moment, yet touched Charlotte to the quick. We have to mention this incident because it gave occasion for a number of things which otherwise might perhaps have remained long untouched.

We remember certain alterations which Charlotte had made in the churchyard. The entire body of the monuments had been removed from their places, and had been ranged along the walls of the church, leaning against the string-course. The remaining space had been levelled, except a broad walk which led up to the church, and past it to the opposite gate; and it had been all sown with various kinds of trefoil, which had shot up and flowered most beautifully.

The new graves were to follow one after another in a regular order from the end, but the spot on each occasion was to be carefully smoothed over and again sown. No one could deny that on Sundays and holidays when the people went to church the change had given it a most cheerful and pleasant appearance. At the same time the clergyman, an old man and clinging to old customs, who at first had not been especially pleased with the alteration, had become thoroughly delighted with it, all the more because when he sat out like Philemon with his Baucis under the old linden trees at his back

door, instead of the humps and mounds he had a beautiful clean lawn to look out upon; and which, moreover, Charlotte having secured the use of the spot to the parsonage, was no little convenience to his household.

Notwithstanding this, however, many members of the congregation had been displeased that the means of marking the spots where their forefathers rested had been removed, and all memorials of them thereby obliterated. However well preserved the monuments might be, they could only show who had been buried, but not where he had been buried, and the *where*, as many maintained, was everything.

Of this opinion was a family in the neighborhood, who for many years had been in possession of a considerable vault for a general resting-place of themselves and their relations, and in consequence had settled a small annual sum for the use of the church. And now this young lawyer had been sent to cancel this settlement, and to show that his client did not intend to pay it any more, because the condition under which it had been hitherto made had not been observed by the other party, and no regard had been paid to objection and remonstrance. Charlotte, who was the originator of the alteration herself, chose to speak to the young man, who in a decided, though not a violent manner, laid down the grounds on which his client proceeded, and gave occasion in what he said for much serious reflection.

“You see,” he said, after a slight introduction, in which he sought to justify his peremptoriness; “you see, it is right for the lowest as well as for the highest to mark the spot which holds those who are dearest to him. The poorest peasant, who buries a child, finds it some consolation to plant a light wooden cross upon the grave, and hang a garland upon it, to keep alive the memorial, at least as long as the sorrow remains; although such a mark, like the mourning, will pass away with time. Those better off change the cross of wood into iron, and fix it down and guard it in various ways; and here we have endurance for many years. But because this too will sink at last, and become invisible, those who are able to bear the expense see nothing fitter than to raise a stone which shall promise to endure for generations, and which can be restored and made fresh again by posterity. Yet this stone it is not which attracts us; it is that which is contained beneath it, which is intrusted, where it stands, to the earth. It is not the memorial so much of which we speak, as of the person himself; not of what once was, but of what is. Far better, far more closely, can I embrace some dear departed one in the mound which rises over his bed, than in a monumental writing which only tells us that once he was. In itself, indeed, it is but little; but around it, as around a central mark, the wife, the husband, the kinsman, the friend, after their departure, shall gather in again; and the living shall have the right to keep far off all strangers and evil-wishers from the side of the dear one who is sleeping there.

“And, therefore, I hold it quite fair and fitting that my principal shall withdraw his grant to you. It is, indeed, but too reasonable that he should do it, for the members of his family are injured in a way for which no compensation could be even proposed. They are deprived of the sad sweet feelings of laying offerings on the remains of their dead, and of the one comfort in their sorrow of one day lying down at their side.”

“The matter is not of that importance,” Charlotte answered, “that we should disquiet ourselves about it with the vexation of a lawsuit. I regret so little what I have done, that I will gladly myself indemnify the church for what it loses through you. Only I must confess candidly to you, your arguments have not convinced me; the pure feeling of an universal equality at last, after death, seems to me more composing than this hard determined persistence in our personalities and in the conditions and circumstances of our lives. What do you say to it?” she added, turning to the architect.

“It is not for me,” replied he, “either to argue, or to attempt to judge in such a case. Let me venture, however, to say what my own art and my own habits of thinking suggest to me. Since we are no longer so happy as to be able to press to our breasts the in-urned remains of those we have loved, since we are neither wealthy enough, nor of cheerful heart enough to preserve them undecayed in large elaborate sarcophagi; since, indeed, we cannot even find place any more for ourselves and ours in the churches, and are banished out into the open air, we all, I think, ought to approve the method which you, my gracious lady, have introduced. If the members of a common congregation are laid out side by side, they are resting by the side of, and among their kindred; and, if the earth be once to receive us all, I can find nothing more natural or more desirable than that the mounds, which, if they are thrown up, are sure to sink slowly in again together, should be smoothed off at once, and the covering, which all bear alike, will press lighter upon each.”

“And is it all, is it all to pass away,” said Otilie, “without one token of remembrance, without anything to call back the past?”

“By no means,” continued the architect; “it is not from remembrance, it is from *place* that men should be set free. The architect, the sculptor, are highly interested that men should look to their art—to their hand, for a continuance of their being; and, therefore, I should wish to see well-designed, well-executed monuments; not sown up and down by themselves at random, but erected all in a single spot, where they can promise themselves endurance. Inasmuch as even the good and the great are contented to surrender the privilege of resting in person in the churches, *we* may, at least, erect there or in some fair hall near the burying-place, either monuments or monumental writings. A thousand forms might be suggested for them, and a thousand ornaments with which they might be decorated.”

“If the artists are so rich,” replied Charlotte, “then tell me how it is that they are never able to escape from little obelisks, dwarf pillars, and urns for ashes? Instead of your thousand forms of which you boast, I have never seen anything but a thousand repetitions.”

“It is very generally so with us,” returned the architect, “but it is not universal; and very likely the right taste and the proper application of it may be a peculiar art. In this case especially we have this great difficulty, that the monument must be something cheerful and yet commemorate a solemn subject; while its matter is melancholy, it must not itself be melancholy. As regards designs for monuments of all kinds, I have collected numbers of them, and I will take some opportunity of showing them to you: but at all times the fairest memorial of a man remains some likeness of himself. This,

better than anything else, will give a notion of what he was; it is the best text for many or for few notes, only it ought to be made when he is at his best age, and that is generally neglected; no one thinks of preserving forms while they are alive, and if it is done at all, it is done carelessly and incompletely: and then comes death; a cast is taken swiftly off the face; this mask is set upon a block of stone, and that is what is called a bust. How seldom is the artist in a position to put any real life into such things as these!”

“You have contrived,” said Charlotte, “without perhaps knowing it or wishing it, to lead the conversation altogether in my favor. The likeness of a man is quite independent; everywhere that it stands, it stands for itself, and we do not require it to mark the site of a particular grave. But I must acknowledge to you to having a strange feeling; even to likenesses I have a kind of disinclination. Whenever I see them they seem to be silently reproaching me. They point to something far away from us,—gone from us; and they remind me how difficult it is to pay right honor to the present. If we think how many people we have seen and known, and consider how little we have been to them and how little they have been to us, it is no very pleasant reflection. We have met a man of genius without having enjoyed much with him,—a learned man without having learned from him,—a traveller without having been instructed,—a man to love without having shown him any kindness.

“And, unhappily, this is not the case only with accidental meetings. Societies and families behave in the same way towards their dearest members, towns towards their worthiest citizens, people towards their most admirable princes, nations towards their most distinguished men.

“I have heard it asked why we heard nothing but good spoken of the dead, while of the living it is never without some exception. It should be answered, because from the former we have nothing any more to fear, while the latter may still, here or there, fall in our way. So unreal is our anxiety to preserve the memory of others,—generally no more than a mere selfish amusement; and the real, holy, earnest feeling, would be what should prompt us to be more diligent and assiduous in our attentions toward those who still are left to us.”

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CHAPTER II.

Under the stimulus of this accident, and of the conversations which arose out of it, they went the following day to look over the burying-place, for the ornamenting of which and relieving it in some degree of its sombre look, the architect made many a happy proposal. His interest too had to extend itself to the church as well; a building which had caught his attention from the moment of his arrival.

It had been standing for many centuries, built in old German style, the proportions good, the decorating elaborate and excellent; and one might easily gather that the architect of the neighboring monastery had left the stamp of his art and of his love on this smaller building also; it worked on the beholder with a solemnity and a sweetness, although the change in its internal arrangements for the Protestant service, had taken from it something of its repose and majesty.

The architect found no great difficulty in prevailing on Charlotte to give him a considerable sum of money to restore it externally and internally, in the original spirit, and thus, as he thought, to bring it into harmony with the resurrection-field which lay in front of it. He had himself much practical skill, and a few laborers, who were still busy at the lodge, might easily be kept together, until this pious work too should be completed.

The building itself, therefore, with all its environs, and whatever was attached to it, was now carefully and thoroughly examined; and then showed itself, to the greatest surprise and delight of the architect, a little side chapel, which nobody had thought of, beautifully and delicately proportioned, and displaying still greater care and pains in its decoration. It contained at the same time many remnants, carved and painted, of the implements used in the old services, when the different festivals were distinguished by a variety of pictures and ceremonies, and each was celebrated in its own peculiar style.



It was impossible for him not at once to take this chapel into his plan; and he determined to bestow especial pains on the restoring of this little spot, as a memorial of old times, and of their taste. He saw exactly how he would like to have the vacant surfaces of the walls ornamented, and delighted himself with the prospect, of exercising his talent for painting upon them; but of this, at first, he made a secret to the rest of the party.

Before doing anything else, he fulfilled his promise of showing the ladies the various imitations of, and designs from, old monuments, vases and other such things which he had made; and when they came to speak of the simple barrow-sepulchres of the northern nations, he brought a collection of weapons and implements which had been found in them. He had got them exceedingly nicely and conveniently arranged in drawers and compartments, laid on boards cut to fit them, and covered over with cloth; so that these solemn old things, in the way he treated them, had a smart dressy appearance, and it was like looking into the box of a trinket merchant.

Having once begun to show his curiosities, and finding them prove serviceable to entertain our friends in their loneliness, every evening he would produce one or other of his treasures. They were most of them of German origin—pieces of metal, old coins, seals and such like. All these things directed the imagination back upon old times; and when at last they came to amuse themselves with the first specimens of printing, woodcuts, and the earliest copper-plate engraving, and when the church, in the same spirit, was growing out, every day, more and more in form and color like the past, they had almost to ask themselves whether they really were living in a modern time, whether it were not a dream, that manners, customs, modes of life, and convictions were all really so changed.

After such preparation, a great portfolio, which at last he produced, had the best possible effect. It contained indeed principally only outlines and figures, but as these had been traced upon original pictures, they retained perfectly their ancient character, and most captivating indeed this character was to the spectators. All the figures breathed only the purest feeling; every one, if not noble, at any rate was good; cheerful composure, ready recognition of One above us, to whom all reverence is due; silent devotion, in love and tranquil expectation, was expressed on every face, on every gesture. The old bald-headed man, the curly-pated boy, the light-hearted youth, the earnest man, the glorified saint, the angel hovering in the air, all seemed happy in an innocent, satisfied, pious expectation. The commonest object had a trait of celestial life; and every nature seemed adapted to the service of God, and to be, in some way or other, employed upon it.

Towards such a region most of them gazed as towards a vanished golden age, or on some lost paradise; only perhaps Ottilie had a chance of finding herself among beings of her own nature. Who could offer any opposition when the architect asked to be allowed to paint the spaces between the arches and the walls of the chapel in the style of these old pictures, and thereby leave his own distinct memorial at a place where life had gone so pleasantly with him?

He spoke of it with some sadness, for he could see, in the state in which things were, that his sojourn in such delightful society could not last forever; indeed, that perhaps it would now soon be ended.

For the rest, these days were not rich in incidents; yet full of occasion for serious entertainment. We therefore take the opportunity of communicating something of the remarks which Ottilie noted down among her manuscripts, to which we cannot find a

fitter transition than through a simile which suggested itself to us on contemplating her exquisite pages.

There is, we are told, a curious contrivance in the service of the English marine. The ropes in use in the royal navy, from the largest to the smallest, are so twisted that a red thread runs through them from end to end, which cannot be extracted without undoing the whole; and by which the smallest pieces may be recognized as belonging to the crown.

Just so is there drawn through Ottilie's diary, a thread of attachment and affection which connects it all together, and characterizes the whole. And thus these remarks, these observations, these extracted sentences, and whatever else it may contain, were, to the writer, of peculiar meaning. Even the few separate pieces which we select and transcribe will sufficiently explain our meaning.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

“To rest hereafter at the side of those whom we love is the most delightful thought which man can have when once he looks out beyond the boundary of life. What a sweet expression is that—‘He was gathered to his fathers!’ ”

“Of the various memorials and tokens which bring nearer to us the distant and the separated—none is so satisfactory as a picture. To sit and talk to a beloved picture, even though it be unlike, has a charm in it, like the charm which there sometimes is in quarrelling with a friend. We feel, in a strange sweet way, that we are divided and yet cannot separate.”

“We entertain ourselves often with a present person as with a picture. He need not speak to us, he need not look at us, or take any notice of us; we look at him, we feel the relation in which we stand to him; such relation can even grow without his doing anything towards it, without his having any feeling of it: he is to us exactly as a picture.”

“One is never satisfied with a portrait of a person that one knows. I have always felt for the portrait-painter on this account. One so seldom requires of people what is impossible, and of them we do really require what is impossible; they must gather up into their picture the relation of everybody to its subject, all their likings and all dislikings; they must not only paint a man as they see him, but as everyone else sees him. It does not surprise me if such artists become by degrees stunted, indifferent, and of but one idea; and indeed it would not matter what came of it, if it were not that in consequence we have to go without the pictures of so many persons near and dear to us.”

“It is too true, the architect's collection of weapons and old implements, which were found with the bodies of their owners, covered in with great hills of earth and rock, proves to us how useless is man's so great anxiety to preserve his personality after he is dead; and so inconsistent people are! the architect confesses to have himself opened

these barrows of his forefathers, and yet goes on occupying himself with memorials for posterity.”

“But after all why should we take it so much to heart? Is all that we do, done for eternity? Do we not put on our dress in the morning, to throw it off again at night? Do we not go abroad to return home again? And why should we not wish to rest by the side of our friends, though it were but for a century?”

“When we see the many grave-stones which have fallen in, which have been defaced by the footsteps of the congregation, which lie buried under the ruins of the churches, that have themselves crumbled together over them, we may fancy the life after death to be as a second life, into which a man enters in the figure, or the picture, or the inscription, and lives longer there than when he was really alive. But this figure also, this second existence, dies out too, sooner or later. Time will not allow himself to be cheated of his rights with the monuments of men or with themselves.”

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CHAPTER III.

It causes us so agreeable a sensation to occupy ourselves with what we can only half do, that no person ought to find fault with the dilettante, when he is spending his time over an art which he can never learn; nor blame the artist if he chooses to pass out over the border of his own art, and amuse himself in some neighboring field. With such complacency of feeling we regard the preparation of the architect for the painting the chapel. The colors were got ready, the measurements taken; the cartoons designed. He had made no attempt at originality, but kept close to his outlines; his only care was to make a proper distribution of the sitting and floating figures, so as tastefully to ornament his space with them.

The scaffoldings were erected. The work went forward; and as soon as anything had been done on which the eye could rest, he could have no objection to Charlotte and Otilie coming to see how he was getting on.

The life-like faces of the angels, their robes waving against the blue sky-ground, delighted the eye, while their still and holy air calmed and composed the spirit, and produced the most delicate effect.



The ladies ascended the scaffolding to him, and Otilie had scarcely observed how easily and regularly the work was being done, than the power which had been fostered in her by her early education at once appeared to develop. She took a brush, and with a few words of direction, painted a richly folding robe, with as much delicacy as skill.

Charlotte, who was always glad when Otilie would occupy or amuse herself with anything, left them both in the chapel, and went to follow the train of her own thoughts, and work her way for herself through her cares and anxieties which she was unable to communicate to a creature.

When ordinary men allow themselves to be worked up by common every-day difficulties into fever-fits of passion, we can give them nothing but a compassionate smile. But we look with a kind of awe on a spirit in which the seed of a great destiny has been sown, which must abide the unfolding of the germ, and neither dare nor can do anything to precipitate either the good or the ill, either the happiness or the misery, which is to arise out of it.

Edward had sent an answer by Charlotte's messenger, who had come to him in his solitude. It was written with kindness and interest, but it was rather composed and serious than warm and affectionate. He had vanished almost immediately after, and Charlotte could learn no news about him; till at last she accidentally found his name in the newspaper, where he was mentioned with honor among those who had most distinguished themselves in a late important engagement. She now understood the method which he had taken; she perceived that he had escaped from great danger; only she was convinced at the same time that he would seek out greater; and it was all too clear to her that in every sense he would hardly be withheld from any extremity.

She had to bear about this perpetual anxiety in her thoughts, and turn which way she would, there was no light in which she could look at it that would give her comfort.

Otilie, never dreaming of anything of this, had taken to the work in the chapel with the greatest interest, and she had easily obtained Charlotte's permission to go on with it regularly. So now all went swiftly forward, and the azure heaven was soon peopled with worthy inhabitants. By continual practice both Otilie and the architect had gained more freedom with the last figures; they became perceptibly better. The faces, too, which had been all left to the architect to paint, showed by degrees a very singular peculiarity. They began all of them to resemble Otilie. The neighborhood of the beautiful girl had made so strong an impression on the soul of the young man, who had no variety of faces preconceived in his mind, that by degrees, on the way from the eye to the hand, nothing was lost, and both worked in exact harmony together. Enough; one of the last faces succeeded perfectly; so that it seemed as if Otilie herself was looking down out of the spaces of the sky.

They had finished with the arching of the ceiling. The walls they proposed to leave plain, and only to cover them over with a bright brown color. The delicate pillars and the quaintly-moulded ornaments were to be distinguished from them by a dark shade. But as in such things one thing ever leads on to another, they determined at least on having festoons of flowers and fruit, which should as it were unite together heaven and earth. Here Otilie was in her element. The gardens provided the most perfect patterns; and although the wreaths were as rich as they could make them, it was all finished sooner than they had supposed possible.

It was still looking rough and disorderly. The scaffolding poles had been run together, the planks thrown one on the top of the other; the uneven pavement was yet more disfigured by the particolored stains of the paint which had been spilled over it.

The architect begged that the ladies would give him a week to himself, and during that time would not enter the chapel; at the end of it, one fine evening, he came to them, and begged them both to go and see it. He did not wish to accompany them, he said, and at once took his leave.

"Whatever surprise he may have designed for us," said Charlotte, as soon as he was gone, "I cannot myself just now go down there. You can go by yourself, and tell me all about it. No doubt he has been doing something which we shall like. I will enjoy it first in your description, and afterwards it will be the more charming in the reality."

Ottolie, who knew well that in many cases Charlotte took care to avoid everything which could produce emotion, and particularly disliked to be surprised, set off down the walk by herself, and looked round involuntarily for the architect, who however was nowhere to be seen, and must have concealed himself somewhere. She walked into the church, which she found open. This had been finished before; it had been cleaned up, and service had been performed in it. She went on to the chapel door; its heavy mass, all overlaid with iron, yielded easily to her touch, and she found an unexpected sight in a familiar spot.

A solemn beautiful light streamed in through the one tall window. It was filled with stained glass, gracefully put together. The entire chapel had thus received a strange tone, and a peculiar genius was thrown over it. The beauty of the vaulted ceiling and the walls was set off by the elegance of the pavement, which was composed of peculiarly shaped tiles, fastened together with gypsum, and forming exquisite patterns as they lay. This and the colored glass for the windows the architect had prepared without their knowledge, and a short time was sufficient to have it put in its place.

Seats had been provided as well. Among the relics of the old church some finely carved chancel chairs had been discovered, which now were standing about at convenient places along the walls.

The parts which she knew so well now meeting her as an unfamiliar whole, delighted Ottolie. She stood still, walked up and down, looked and looked again; at last she seated herself in one of the chairs, and it seemed, as she gazed up and down, as if she was, and yet was not—as if she felt and did not feel—as if all this would vanish from before her, and she would vanish from herself; and it was only when the sun left the window, on which before it had been shining full, that she awoke to possession of herself, and hastened back to the castle.



She did not hide from herself the strange epoch at which this surprise had occurred to her. It was the evening of Edward's birthday. Very differently she had hoped to keep it. How was not everything to be dressed out for this festival? and now all the splendor of the autumn flowers remained ungathered. Those sunflowers still turned their faces to the sky; those asters still looked out with quiet, modest eye; and whatever of them all had been wound into wreaths had served as patterns for the decorating a spot which, if it was not to remain a mere artist's fancy, was only adapted as a general mausoleum.

And then she had to remember the impetuous eagerness with which Edward had kept her birthday-feast. She thought of the newly-erected lodge, under the roof of which they had promised themselves so much enjoyment. The fireworks flashed and hissed

again before her eyes and ears; the more lonely she was, the more keenly her imagination brought it all before her. But she felt herself only the more alone. She no longer leaned upon his arm, and she had no hope ever any more to rest herself upon it.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"I have been struck with an observation of the young architect.

"In the case of the creative artist, as in that of the artisan, it is clear that man is least permitted to appropriate to himself what is most entirely his own. His works forsake him as the birds forsake the nest in which they were hatched.

"The fate of the architect is the strangest of all in this way. How often he expends his whole soul, his whole heart and passion, to produce buildings into which he himself may never enter. The halls of kings owe their magnificence to him; but he has no enjoyment of them in their splendor. In the temple he draws a partition line between himself and the Holy of Holies; he may never more set his foot upon the steps which he has laid down for the heart-thrilling ceremonial; as the goldsmith may only adore from far off the *monstrance* whose enamel and whose jewels he has himself set together. The builder surrenders to the rich man, with the key of his palace, all pleasure and all right there, and never shares with him in the enjoyment of it. And must not art in this way, step by step, draw off from the artist, when the work, like a child who is provided for, has no more to fall back upon its father? And what a power there must be in art itself, for its own self-advancing, when it has been obliged to shape itself almost solely out of what was open to all, only out of what was the property of everyone, and therefore also of the artist!"

"There is a conception among old nations which is awful, and may almost seem terrible. They pictured their forefathers to themselves sitting round on thrones, in enormous caverns, in silent converse; when a new-comer entered, if he were worthy enough, they rose up, and inclined their heads to welcome him. Yesterday, as I was sitting in the chapel, and other carved chairs stood round like that in which I was, the thought of this came over me with a soft, pleasant feeling. Why cannot you stay sitting here? I said to myself; stay here sitting meditating with yourself long, long, long, till at last your friends come, and you rise up to them, and with a gentle inclination direct them to their places. The colored window panes convert the day into a solemn twilight; and some one should set up for us an ever-burning lamp, that the night might not be utter darkness."

"We may imagine ourselves in what situation we please, we always conceive ourselves as *seeing*. I believe men only dream that they may not cease to see. Some day, perhaps, the inner light will come out from within us, and we shall not any more require another.

"The year dies away, the wind sweeps over the stubble, and there is nothing left to stir under its touch. But the red berries on yonder tall tree seem as if they would still remind us of brighter things; and the stroke of the thrasher's flail awakes the thought how much of nourishment and life lies buried in the sickled ear."

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CHAPTER IV.

How strangely, after all this, with the sense so vividly impressed on her of mutability and perishableness, must Otilie have been affected by the news which could not any longer be kept concealed from her, that Edward had exposed himself to the uncertain chances of war! Unhappily, none of the observations which she had occasion to make upon it escaped her. But it is well for us that man can only endure a certain degree of unhappiness; what is beyond that, either annihilates him, or passes by him, and leaves him apathetic. There are situations in which hope and fear run together, in which they mutually destroy one another, and lose themselves in a dull indifference. If it were not so, how could we bear to know of those who are most dear to us being in hourly peril, and yet go on as usual with our ordinary everyday life?

It was therefore as if some good genius was caring for Otilie, that, all at once, this stillness, in which she seemed to be sinking from loneliness and want of occupation, was suddenly invaded by a wild army, which, while it gave her externally abundance of employment, and so took her out of herself, at the same time awoke in her the consciousness of her own power.

Charlotte's daughter, Luciana, had scarcely left the school and gone out into the great world; scarcely had she found herself at her aunt's house in the midst of a large society, than her anxiety to please produced its effect in really pleasing; and a young, very wealthy man, soon experienced a passionate desire to make her his own. His large property gave him a right to have the best of everything for his use, and nothing seemed to be wanting to him except a perfect wife, for whom, as for the rest of his good fortune, he should be the envy of the world.

This incident in her family had been for some time occupying Charlotte. It had engaged all her attention, and taken up her whole correspondence, except so far as this was directed to the obtaining news of Edward; so that latterly Otilie had been left more than was usual to herself. She knew, indeed, of an intended visit from Luciana. She had been making various changes and arrangements in the house in preparation for it; but she had no notion that it was so near. Letters, she supposed, would first have to pass, settling the time, and then unsettling it; and then a final fixing: when the storm broke suddenly over the castle and over herself.

Up drove, first, lady's maids and men-servants, their carriage loaded with trunks and boxes. The household was already swelled to double or to treble its size, and then appeared the visitors themselves. There was the great aunt, with Luciana and some of her friends; and then the bridegroom with some of his friends. The entrance-hall was full of things—bags, portmanteaus, and leather articles of every sort. The boxes had to be got out of their covers, and that was infinite trouble; and of luggage and of rummage there was no end. At intervals, moreover, there were violent showers, giving rise to much inconvenience. Otilie encountered all this confusion with the easiest equanimity, and her happy talent showed in its fairest light. In a very little time she had brought things to order, and disposed of them. Every one found his room,—every

one had his things exactly as he wished, and all thought themselves well attended to, because they were not prevented from attending on themselves.



The journey had been long and fatiguing, and they would all have been glad of a little rest after it. The bridegroom would have liked to pay his respects to his mother-in-law, express his pleasure, his gratitude, and so on. But Luciana could not rest. She had now arrived at the happiness of being able to mount a horse. The bridegroom had beautiful horses, and mount they must on the spot. Clouds and wind, rain and storm, they were nothing to Luciana, and now it was as if they only lived to get wet through, and to dry themselves again. If she took a fancy to go out walking, she never thought what sort of dress she had on, or what her shoes were like, she must go and see the grounds of which she had heard so much; what could not be done on horseback she ran through on foot. In a little while she had seen everything, and given her opinion about everything; and with such rapidity of character it was not easy to contradict or oppose her. The whole household had much to suffer, but most particularly the lady's maids, who were at work from morning to night, washing, and ironing, and stitching.

As soon as she had exhausted the house and the park, she thought it was her duty to pay visits all round the neighborhood. As they rode and drove very fast, all round the neighborhood was a considerable distance. The castle was flooded with return visits, and that they might not miss one another, it soon came to days being fixed for them.

Charlotte, in the meantime, with her aunt, and the man of business of the bridegroom, were occupied in determining about the settlements, and it was left to Ottilie, with those under her, to take care that all this crowd of people were properly provided for. Game-keepers and gardeners, fishermen and shop-dealers were set in motion, Luciana always showing herself like the blazing nucleus of a comet with its long tail trailing behind it. The ordinary amusements of the parties soon became too insipid for her taste. Hardly would she leave the old people in peace at the card-table. Whoever could by any means be set moving (and who could resist the charm of being pressed by her into service?) must up, if not to dance, then to play at forfeits, or some other game, where they were to be victimized and tormented. Notwithstanding all that, however, and although afterwards the redemption of the forfeits had to be settled with herself, yet of those who played with her, never anyone, especially never any man, let him be of what sort he would, went quite empty-handed away. Indeed, some old people of rank who were there she succeeded in completely winning over to herself, by having contrived to find out their birthdays or christening days, and marking them with some particular celebration. In all this she showed a skill not a little remarkable. Every one saw himself favored, and each considered himself to be the one most favored, a weakness of which the oldest person of the party was the most notably guilty.



LUCIANA AS ARTEMESIA.

It seemed to be a sort of pride with her, that men who had anything remarkable about them—rank, character, or fame—she must and would gain for herself. Gravity and seriousness she made give way to her, and, wild strange creature as she was, she found favor even with discretion itself. Not that the young were at all cut short in consequence. Everybody had his share, his day, his hour, in which she contrived to charm and to enchain him. It was therefore natural enough that before long she should have had the architect in her eye, looking out so unconsciously as he did from under his long black hair, and standing so calm and quiet in the background. To all her questions she received short sensible answers; but he did not seem inclined to allow himself to be carried away further, and at last, half provoked, half in malice, she resolved that she would make him the hero of a day, and so gain him for her court.

It was not for nothing that she had brought that quantity of luggage with her. Much, indeed, had followed her afterwards. She had provided herself with an endless variety of dresses. When it took her fancy she would change her dress three or four times a day, usually wearing something of an ordinary kind, but making her appearance suddenly at intervals in a thorough masquerade dress, as a peasant girl or a fish maiden, as a fairy or a flower-girl; and this would go on from morning till night. Sometimes she would even disguise herself as an old woman, that her young face might peep out the fresher from under the cap; and so utterly in this way did she confuse and mix together the actual and the fantastic, that people thought they were living with a sort of drawing-room witch.

But the principal use which she had for these disguises were pantomimic tableaux and dances, in which she was skilful in expressing a variety of character. A cavalier in her suite had taught himself to accompany her action on the piano with the little music which was required; they needed only to exchange a few words and they at once understood one another.

One day, in a pause of a brilliant ball, they were called upon suddenly to extemporize (it was on a private hint from themselves) one of these exhibitions. Luciana seemed embarrassed, taken by surprise, and contrary to her custom let herself be asked more than once. She could not decide upon her character, desired the party to choose, and

asked, like an improvisatore, for a subject. At last her piano-playing companion, with whom it had been all previously arranged, sat down at the instrument, and began to play a mourning march, calling on her to give them the Artemisia which she had been studying so admirably. She consented; and after a short absence reappeared, to the sad tender music of the dead march, in the form of the royal widow, with measured step, carrying an urn of ashes before her. A large black tablet was borne in after her, and a carefully cut piece of chalk in a gold pencil case.

One of her adorers and adjutants, into whose ear she whispered something, went directly to call the architect, to desire him, and if he would not come to drag him up, as master-builder, to draw the grave for the mausoleum, and to tell him at the same time that he was not to play the statist, but enter earnestly into his part as one of the performers.

Embarrassed as the architect outwardly appeared (for in his black, closefitting, modern civilian's dress, he formed a wonderful contrast with the gauze crape fringes, tinsel tassels, and crown), he very soon composed himself internally, and the scene became all the more strange. With the greatest gravity he placed himself in front of the tablet, which was supported by a couple of pages, and drew carefully an elaborate tomb, which indeed would have suited better a Lombard than a Carian prince; but it was in such beautiful proportions, so solemn in its parts, so full of genius in its decoration, that the spectators watched it growing with delight, and wondered at it when it was finished.

All this time he had not once turned towards the queen, but had given his whole attention to what he was doing. At last he inclined his head before her, and signified that he believed he had now fulfilled her commands. She held the urn out to him, expressing her desire to see it represented on the top of the monument. He complied, although unwillingly, as it would not suit the character of the rest of his design. Luciana was now at last released from her impatience. Her intention had been by no means to get a scientific drawing out of him. If he had only made a few strokes, sketched out something which should have looked like a monument, and devoted the rest of his time to her, it would have been far more what she had wished, and would have pleased her a great deal better. His manner of proceeding had thrown her into the greatest embarrassment. For although in her sorrow, in her directions, in her gestures, in her approbation of the work as it slowly rose before her, she had tried to manage some sort of change of expression, and although she had hung about close to him, only to place herself in some sort of relation to him, yet he had kept himself throughout too stiff, so that too often she had been driven to take refuge with her urn; she had to press it to her heart and look up to heaven, and at last, a situation of that kind having a necessary tendency to intensify, she made herself more like a widow of Ephesus than a Queen of Caria. The representation had to lengthen itself out and became tedious. The pianoforte player, who had usually patience enough, did not know into what tune he could escape. He thanked God when he saw the urn standing on the pyramid, and fell involuntarily as the queen was going to express her gratitude, into a merry air; by which the whole thing lost its character, the company however being thoroughly cheered up by it, who forthwith divided, some going up to express

their delight and admiration of the lady for her excellent performance, and some praising the architect for his most artist-like and beautiful drawing.

The bridegroom especially paid marked attention to the architect. "I am vexed," he said, "that the drawing should be so perishable; you will permit me however to have it taken to my room, where I should much like to talk to you about it."

"If it would give you any pleasure," said the architect, "I can lay before you a number of highly finished designs for buildings and monuments of this kind, of which this is but a mere hasty sketch."

Otilie was standing at no great distance, and went up to them. "Do not forget," she said to the architect, "to take an opportunity of letting the baron see your collection. He is a friend of art and of antiquity. I should like you to become better acquainted."

Luciana was passing at the moment. "What are they speaking of?" she asked.

"Of a collection of works of art," replied the baron, "which this gentleman possesses, and which he is good enough to say that he will show us."

"Oh, let him bring them immediately," cried Luciana; "you will bring them, will you not?" she added, in a soft and sweet tone, taking both his hands in hers.

"The present is scarcely a fitting time," the architect answered.

"What!" Luciana cried, in a tone of authority; "you will not obey the command of your queen!" and then she begged him again with some piece of absurdity.

"Do not be obstinate," said Otilie, in a scarcely audible voice.

The architect left them with a bow, which said neither yes nor no.

He was hardly gone, when Luciana was flying up and down the saloon with a greyhound. "Alas!" she exclaimed, as she ran accidentally against her mother, "am I not an unfortunate creature? I have not brought my monkey with me. They told me I had better not; but I am sure it was nothing but the laziness of my people, and it is such a delight to me. But I will have it brought after me; somebody shall go and fetch it. If I could only see a picture of the dear creature, it would be a comfort to me; I certainly will have his picture taken, and it shall never be out of my sight."

"Perhaps I can comfort you," replied Charlotte. "There is a whole volume full of the most wonderful ape faces in the library, which you can have fetched if you like."

Luciana shrieked for joy. The great folio was produced instantly. The sight of these hideous creatures, so like to men, and with the resemblance even more caricatured by the artist, gave Luciana the greatest delight. Her amusement with each of the animals was to find some one of her acquaintance whom it resembled. "Is that not like my uncle?" she remorselessly exclaimed; "and here, look, here is my milliner M., and here is Parson S., and here the image of that creature — bodily! After all, these

monkeys are the real *incroyables*, and it is inconceivable why they are not admitted into the best society.”

It was in the best society that she said this, and yet no one took it ill of her. People had become accustomed to allow her so many liberties in her prettinesses, that at last they came to allow them in what was unpretty.

During this time, Otilie was talking to the bridegroom; she was looking anxiously for the return of the architect, whose serious and tasteful collection was to deliver the party from the apes; and in the expectation of it, she had made it the subject of her conversation with the baron, and directed his attention on various things which he was to see. But the architect stayed away, and when at last he made his appearance, he lost himself in the crowd, without having brought anything with him, and without seeming as if he had been asked for anything.

For a moment Otilie became—what shall we call it?—annoyed, put out, perplexed. She had been saying so much about him—she had promised the bridegroom an hour of enjoyment after his own heart; and with all the depth of his love for Luciana, he was evidently suffering from her present behavior.

The monkeys had to give place to a collation. Round games followed, and then more dancing; at last, a general uneasy vacancy, with fruitless attempts at resuscitating exhausted amusements, which lasted this time, as indeed they usually did, far beyond midnight. It had already become a habit with Luciana to be never able to get out of bed in the morning or into it at night.

About this time, the incidents noticed in Otilie's diary become more rare, while we find a larger number of maxims and sentences drawn from life and relating to life. It is not conceivable that the larger proportion of these could have arisen from her own reflection, and most likely some one had shown her varieties of them, and she had written out what took her fancy. Many, however, with an internal bearing, can be easily recognized by the red thread.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

“We like to look into the future, because the undetermined in it, which may be affected this or that way, we feel as if we could guide by our silent wishes in our own favor.”

“We seldom find ourselves in a large party without thinking, the accident which brings so many here together should bring our friends to us as well.”

“Let us live in as small a circle as we will, we are either debtors or creditors before we have had time to look round.”

“If we meet a person who is under an obligation to us, we remember it immediately. But how often may we meet people to whom we are ourselves under obligation without its even occurring to us!”

"It is nature to communicate one's self; it is culture to receive what is communicated as it is given."

"No one would talk much in society, if he only knew how often he misunderstands others."

"One alters so much what one has heard from others in repeating it, only because one has not understood it."

"Whoever indulges long in monologue in the presence of others, without flattering his listeners, provokes ill-will."

"Every word a man utters provokes the opposite opinion."

"Argument and flattery are but poor elements out of which to form a conversation."

"The pleasantest society is when the members of it have an easy and natural respect for one another."

"There is nothing in which people more betray their character than in what they find to laugh at."

"The ridiculous arises out of a moral contrast, in which two things are brought together before the mind in an innocent way."

"The foolish man often laughs where there is nothing to laugh at. Whatever touches him, his inner nature comes to the surface."

"The man of understanding finds almost everything ridiculous; the man of thought scarcely anything."

"Some one found fault with an elderly man for continuing to pay attention to young ladies. 'It is the only means,' he replied, 'of keeping one's self young, and everybody likes to do that.'"

"People will allow their faults to be shown them; they will let themselves be punished for them; they will patiently endure many things because of them; they only become impatient when they have to lay them aside."

"Certain defects are necessary for the existence of individuality. We should not be pleased, if old friends were to lay aside certain peculiarities."

"There is a saying, 'He will die soon,' when a man acts unlike himself."

"What kind of defects may we bear with and even cultivate in ourselves? Such as rather give pleasure to others than injure them."

"The passions are defects or excellencies only in excess."

“Our passions are true phœnixes: as the old burn out, the new straight rise up out of the ashes.”

“Violent passions are incurable diseases; the means which will cure them are what first make them thoroughly dangerous.”

“Passion is both raised and softened by confession. In nothing, perhaps, were the middle way more desirable than in knowing what to say and what not to say to those we love.”

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CHAPTER V.

So swept on Luciana in the social whirlpool, driving the rush of life along before her. Her court multiplied daily, partly because her impetuosity roused and attracted so many, partly because she knew how to attach the rest to her by kindness and attention. Generous she was in the highest degree; her aunt's affection for her and her bridegroom's love, had heaped her, with beautiful and costly presents, but she seemed as if nothing which she had was her own, and as if she did not know the value of the things which had streamed in upon her. One day she saw a young lady looking rather poorly dressed by the side of the rest of the party, and she did not hesitate a moment to take off a rich shawl which she was wearing and hang it over her—doing it, at the same time, in such a humorous, graceful way that no one could refuse such a present so given. One of her courtiers always carried about a purse, with orders, whatever place they passed through, to inquire there for the most aged and most helpless persons, and give them relief, at least for the moment. In this way she gained for herself all round the country a reputation for charitableness which caused her not a little inconvenience, attracting about her far too many troublesome sufferers.

Nothing, however, so much added to her popularity as her steady and consistent kindness towards an unhappy young man, who shrank from society because, while otherwise handsome and well-formed, he had lost his right hand, although with high honor, in action. This mutilation weighed so heavily upon his spirits, it was so annoying to him that every new acquaintance he made had to be told the story of his misfortune, that he chose rather to shut himself up altogether, devoting himself to reading and other studious pursuits, and once for all would have nothing more to do with society.

She heard of the state of this young man. At once she contrived to prevail upon him to come to her, first to small parties, then to greater, and then out into the world with her. She showed more attention to him than to any other person; particularly she endeavored, by the services which she pressed upon him, to make him sensible of what he had lost in laboring herself to supply it. At dinner, she would make him sit next to her; she cut up his food for him, that he might only have to use his fork. If people older or of higher rank prevented her from being close to him, she would stretch her attention across the entire table, and the servants were hurried off to make up to him what distance threatened to deprive him of. At last she encouraged him to write with his left hand. All his attempts he was to address to her, and thus, whether far or near, she always kept herself in correspondence with him. The young man did not know what had happened to him, and from that moment a new life opened out before him.



Luciana

One may perhaps suppose that such behavior must have caused some uneasiness to her bridegroom. But, in fact, it was quite the reverse. He admired her exceedingly for her exertions, and he had the more reason for feeling entirely satisfied about her, as she had certain features in her character almost in excess, which kept anything in the slightest degree dangerous utterly at a distance. She would run about with anybody, just as she fancied; no one was free from danger of a push or a pull, or of being made the object of some sort of freak. But no person ever ventured to do the same to her; no person dared to touch her, or return, in the remotest degree, any liberty which she had taken herself. She kept every one within the strictest barriers of propriety in their behavior to herself, while she, in her own behavior, was every moment overleaping them.

On the whole, one might have supposed it had been a maxim with her to expose herself indifferently to praise or blame, to regard or to dislike. If in many ways she took pains to gain people, she commonly herself spoiled all the good she had done, by an ill tongue, which spared no one. Not a visit was ever paid in the neighborhood, not a single piece of hospitality was ever shown to herself and her party among the surrounding castles or mansions, but what on her return her excessive recklessness let it appear that all men and all human things she was only inclined to see on the ridiculous side.

There were three brothers who, purely out of compliment to each other, which should marry first, had been overtaken by old age before they had got the question settled; here was a little young wife with a great old husband; there, on the other hand, was a dapper little man and an unwieldy giantess. In one house, every step one took one stumbled over a child; another, however many people were crammed into it, never would seem full, because there were no children there at all. Old husbands (supposing the estate was not entailed) should get themselves buried as quickly as possible, that such a thing as a laugh might be heard again in the house. Young married people should travel: housekeeping did not sit well upon them. And as she treated the persons, so she treated what belonged to them; their houses, their furniture, their dinner-services—everything. The ornaments of the walls of the rooms most particularly provoked her saucy remarks. From the oldest tapestry to the most modern printed paper; from the noblest family pictures to the most frivolous new copperplate: one as well as the other had to suffer—one as well as the other had to be pulled in

pieces by her satirical tongue, so that, indeed, one had to wonder how, for twenty miles round, anything continued to exist.

It was not, perhaps, exactly malice which produced all this destructiveness; wilfulness and selfishness were what ordinarily set her off upon it: but a genuine bitterness grew up in her feelings towards Otilie.

She looked down with disdain on the calm, uninterrupted activity of the sweet girl, which everyone had observed and admired, and when something was said of the care which Otilie took of the garden and of the hothouses, she not only spoke scornfully of it, in affecting to be surprised, if it were so, at there being neither flowers nor fruit to be seen, not caring to consider that they were living in the depth of winter, but every faintest scrap of green, every leaf, every bud which showed, she chose to have picked every day and squandered on ornamenting the rooms and tables, and Otilie and the gardener were not a little distressed to see their hopes for the next year, and perhaps for a longer time, destroyed in this wanton recklessness.

As little would she be content to leave Otilie to her quiet work at home, in which she could live with so much comfort. Otilie must go with them on their pleasure-parties and sledging-parties; she must be at the balls which were being got up all about the neighborhood. She was not to mind the snow, or the cold, or the night-air, or the storm; other people did not die of such things, and why should she? The delicate girl suffered not a little from it all, but Luciana gained nothing. For although Otilie went about very simply dressed, she was always, at least so the men thought, the most beautiful person present. A soft attractiveness gathered them all about her; no matter whereabouts in the great rooms she was, first or last, it was always the same. Even Luciana's bridegroom was constantly occupied with her; the more so, indeed, because he desired her advice and assistance in a matter with which he was just then engaged.

He had cultivated the acquaintance of the architect. On seeing his collection of works of art, he had taken occasion to talk much with him on history and other matters, and especially from seeing the chapel had learned to appreciate his talent. The baron was young and wealthy. He was a collector; he wished to build. His love for the arts was keen, his knowledge small. In the architect he thought that he had found the man he wanted; that with his assistance there was more than one aim at which he could arrive at once. He had spoken to his bride of what he wished. She praised him for it, and was infinitely delighted with the proposal. But it was more, perhaps, that she might carry off this young man from Otilie (for whom she fancied she saw in him a kind of inclination), than because she thought of applying his talents to any purpose. He had shown himself, indeed, very ready to help at any of her extemporized festivities, and had suggested various resources for this thing and that. But she always thought she understood better than he what should be done, and as her inventive genius was usually somewhat common, her designs could be as well executed with the help of a tolerably handy domestic as with that of the most finished artist. Further than to an altar on which something was to be offered, or to a crowning, whether of a living head or of one of plaster of Paris, the force of her imagination could not ascend, when a birthday, or other such occasion, made her wish to pay some one an especial compliment.

Ottolie was able to give the baron the most satisfactory answer to his inquiries as to the relation of the architect with their family. Charlotte had already, as she was aware, been exerting herself to find some situation for him; had it not been indeed for the arrival of the party, the young man would have left them immediately on the completion of the chapel; the winter having brought all building operations to a standstill; and it was, therefore, most fortunate if a new patron could be found to assist him, and to make use of his talents.

Ottolie's own personal position with the architect was as pure and unconscious as possible. His agreeable presence, and his industrious nature, had charmed and entertained her, as the presence of an elder brother might. Her feelings for him remained at the calm unimpassioned level of blood relationship. For in her heart there was no room for more; it was filled to overflowing with love for Edward; only God, who interpenetrates all things, could share with him the possession of that heart.

Meantime the winter sank deeper; the weather grew wilder, the roads more impracticable, and therefore it seemed all the pleasanter to spend the waning days in agreeable society. With short intervals of ebb, the crowd from time to time flooded up over the house. Officers found their way there from distant garrison towns; the cultivated among them being a most welcome addition, the ruder the inconvenience of every one. Of civilians too there was no lack; and one day the count and the baroness quite unexpectedly came driving up together.

Their presence gave the castle the air of a thorough court. The men of rank and character formed a circle about the baron, and the ladies yielded precedence to the baroness. The surprise at seeing both together, and in such high spirits was not allowed to be of long continuance. It came out that the count's wife was dead, and the new marriage was to take place as soon as ever decency would allow it.

Well did Ottolie remember their first visit, and every word which was then uttered about marriage and separation, binding and dividing, hope, expectation, disappointment, renunciation. Here were these two persons, at that time without prospect for the future, now standing before her, so near their wished-for happiness, and an involuntary sigh escaped out of her heart.

No sooner did Luciana hear that the count was an amateur of music, than at once she must get up something of a concert. She herself would sing and accompany herself on the guitar. It was done. The instrument she did not play without skill; her voice was agreeable: as for the words one understood about as little of them as one commonly does when a German beauty sings to the guitar. However, everyone assured her that she had sung with exquisite expression, and she found quite enough approbation to satisfy her. A singular misfortune befell her, however, on this occasion. Among the party there happened to be a poet, whom she hoped particularly to attach to herself, wishing to induce him to write a song or two, and address them to her. This evening, therefore, she produced scarcely anything except songs of his composing. Like the rest of the party he was perfectly courteous to her, but she had looked for more. She spoke to him several times, going as near the subject as she dared, but nothing further could she get. At last, unable to bear it any longer, she sent one of her train to him, to

sound him and find out whether he had not been delighted to hear his beautiful poems so beautifully executed.



“My poems?” he replied, with amazement; “pray excuse me, my dear sir,” he added, “I heard nothing but the vowels, and not all of those; however, I am in duty bound to express all gratitude for so amiable an intention.” The dandy said nothing and kept his secret; the other endeavored to get himself out of the scrape by a few well-timed compliments. She did not conceal her desire to have something of his which should be written for herself.

If it would not have been too ill-natured, he might have handed her the alphabet, to imagine for herself, out of that, such laudatory poem as would please her, and set it to the first melody that came to hand; but she was not to escape out of this business without mortification. A short time after, she had to learn that the very same evening he had written, at the foot of one of Otilie's favorite melodies, a most lovely poem, which was something more than complimentary.

Luciana, like all persons of her sort, who never can distinguish between where they show to advantage and where to disadvantage, now determined to try her fortune in reciting. Her memory was good, but, if the truth must be told, her execution was spiritless, and she was vehement without being passionate. She recited ballad stories, and whatever else is usually delivered in declamation. At the same time she had contracted an unhappy habit of accompanying what she delivered with gestures, by which, in a disagreeable way, what is purely epic and lyric is more confused than connected with the dramatic.

The count, a keen-sighted man, soon saw through the party, their inclinations, dispositions, wishes and capabilities, and by some means or other contrived to bring Luciana to a new kind of exhibition, which was perfectly suited to her.

“I see here,” he said, “a number of persons with fine figures, who would surely be able to imitate pictorial emotions and postures. Suppose they were to try, if the thing is new to them, to represent some real and well-known picture. An imitation of this kind, if it requires some labor in arrangement, has an inconceivably charming effect.”

Luciana was quick enough in perceiving that here she was on her own ground entirely. Her fine shape, her well-rounded form, the regularity and yet expressiveness of her features, her light-brown braided hair, her long neck—she ran them all over in her mind, and calculated on their pictorial effects, and if she had only known that her

beauty showed to more advantage when she was still than when she was in motion, because in the last case certain ungracefulnesses continually escaped her, she would have entered even more eagerly than she did into this natural picture-making.

They looked out the engravings of celebrated pictures, and the first which they chose was Van Dyk's Belisarius. A large well-proportioned man, somewhat advanced in years, was to represent the seated blind general. The architect was to be the affectionate soldier standing sorrowing before him, there really being some resemblance between them. Luciana, half from modesty, had chosen the part of the young woman in the background, counting out some large alms into the palm of his hand, while an old woman beside her is trying to prevent her, and representing that she is giving too much. Another woman who is in the act of giving him something, was not forgotten. Into this and other pictures they threw themselves with all earnestness. The count gave the architect a few hints as to the best style of arrangement, and he at once set up a kind of theatre, all necessary pains being taken for the proper lighting of it. They were already deep in the midst of their preparations, before they observed how large an outlay what they were undertaking would require, and that in the country, in the middle of winter, many things which they required it would be difficult to procure; consequently, to prevent a stoppage, Luciana had nearly her whole wardrobe cut in pieces, to supply the various costumes which the original artist had arbitrarily selected.

The appointed evening came, and the exhibition was carried out in the presence of a large assemblage, and to the universal satisfaction. They had some good music to excite expectation, and the performance opened with the Belisarius. The figures were so successful, the colors were so happily distributed, and the lighting managed so skilfully, that they might really have fancied themselves in another world, only that the presence of the real instead of the apparent produced a kind of uncomfortable sensation.

The curtain fell, and was more than once raised again by general desire. A musical interlude kept the assembly amused while preparation was going forward, to surprise them with a picture of a higher stamp; it was the well-known design of Poussin, Ahasuerus and Esther. This time Luciana had done better for herself. As the fainting, sinking queen she had put out all her charms, and for the attendant maidens who were supporting her, she had cunningly selected pretty well-shaped figures, not one among whom, however, had the slightest pretension to be compared with herself. From this picture, as from all the rest, Otilie remained excluded. To sit on the golden throne and represent the Zeus-like monarch, Luciana had picked out the finest and handsomest man of the party, so that this picture was really of inimitable perfection.

For a third they had taken the so-called "Father's Admonition" of Terburg, and who does not know Wille's admirable engraving of this picture? One foot thrown over the other, sits a noble knightly-looking father; his daughter stands before him, to whose conscience he seems to be addressing himself. She, a fine striking figure, in a folding drapery of white satin, is only to be seen from behind, but her whole bearing appears to signify that she is collecting herself. That the admonition is not too severe, that she is not being utterly put to shame, is to be gathered from the air and attitude of the

father, while the mother seems as if she were trying to conceal some slight embarrassment—she is looking into a glass of wine, which she is on the point of drinking.



Here was an opportunity for Luciana to appear in her highest splendor. Her back hair, the form of her head, neck and shoulders, were beyond all conception beautiful; and the waist, which in the modern antique of the ordinary dresses of young ladies is hardly visible, showed to the greatest advantage in all its graceful slender elegance in the really old costume. The architect had contrived to dispose the rich folds of the white satin with the most exquisite nature, and, without any question whatever, this living imitation far exceeded the original picture, and produced universal delight.

The spectators could never be satisfied with demanding a repetition of the performance, and the very natural wish to see the face and front of so lovely a creature, when they had done looking at her from behind, at last became so decided, that a merry impatient young wit cried out aloud the words one is accustomed to write at the bottom of a page, "Tournez, s'il vous plait," which was echoed all round the room.

The performers, however, understood their advantage too well, and had mastered too completely the idea of these works of art to yield to the most general clamor. The daughter remained standing in her shame, without favoring the spectators with the expression of her face. The father continued to sit in his attitude of admonition, and the mother did not lift nose or eyes out of the transparent glass, in which, although she seemed to be drinking, the wine did not diminish.

We need not describe the number of smaller after-pieces; for which had been chosen Flemish public-house scenes and fair and market days.

The count and the baroness departed, promising to return in the first happy weeks of their approaching union. And Charlotte now had hopes, after having endured two weary months of it, of ridding herself of the rest of the party at the same time. She was assured of her daughter's happiness, as soon as the first tumult of youth and betrothal should have subsided in her; for the bridegroom considered himself the most fortunate person in the world. His income was large, his disposition moderate and rational, and now he found himself further wonderfully favored in the happiness of becoming the possessor of a young lady with whom all the world must be charmed. He had so peculiar a way of referring everything to her, and only to himself through her, that it gave him an unpleasant feeling when any newly-arrived person did not devote himself heart and soul to her, and was far from flattered if, as occasionally happened, particularly with elderly men, he neglected her for a close intimacy with himself. Everything was settled about the architect. On New Year's day he was to

follow him, and spend the Carnival at his house in the city, where Luciana was promising herself infinite happiness from a repetition of her charmingly successful pictures, as well as from a hundred other things; all the more as her aunt and her bridegroom seemed to make so light of the expense which was required for her amusements.

And now they were to break up. But this could not be managed in an ordinary way. They were one day making fun of Charlotte aloud, declaring that they would soon have eaten out her winter stores, when the nobleman who had represented Belisarius, being fortunately a man of some wealth, carried away by Luciana's charms, to which he had been so long devoting himself, cried out unthinkingly, "Why not manage then in the Polish fashion? you come now and eat up me, and then we will go on round the circle." No sooner said than done. Luciana willed that it should be so. The next day they all packed up and the swarm alighted on a new property. There indeed they found room enough, but few conveniences and no preparations to receive them. Out of this arose many *contretemps*, which entirely enchanted Luciana; their life became ever wilder and wilder. Huge hunting-parties were set on foot in the deep snow, attended with every sort of disagreeableness; women were not allowed to excuse themselves any more than men, and so they trooped on, hunting and riding, sledging and shouting, from one place to another, till at last they approached the residence, and there the news of the day and the scandals and what else forms the amusement of people at courts and cities gave the imagination another direction, and Luciana with her train of attendants (her aunt had gone on some time before) swept at once into a new sphere of life.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"We accept every person in the world as that for which he gives himself out, only he must give himself out for something. We can put up with the unpleasant more easily than we can endure the insignificant.

"We venture upon anything in society except only what involves a consequence.

"We never learn to know people when they come to us: we must go to them to find out how things stand with them.

"I find it almost natural that we should see many faults in visitors, and that directly they are gone we should judge them not in the most amiable manner. For we have, so to say, a right to measure them by our own standard. Even cautious, sensible men can scarcely keep themselves in such cases from being sharp censors.

"When, on the contrary, we are staying at the houses of others, when we have seen them in the midst of all their habits and environments among those necessary conditions from which they cannot escape, when we have seen how they affect those about them, and how they adapt themselves to their circumstances, it is ignorance, it is worse, it is ill-will, to find ridiculous what in more than one sense has a claim on our respect.

“That which we call politeness and good breeding effects what otherwise can only be obtained by violence, or not even by that.

“Intercourse with women is the element of good manners.

“How can the character, the individuality of a man co-exist with polish of manner?

“The individuality can only be properly made prominent through good manners. Everyone likes what has something in it, only it must not be a disagreeable something.

“In life generally, and in society no one has such high advantages as a well-cultivated soldier.

“The rudest fighting people at least do not go out of their character, and generally behind the roughness there is a certain latent good humor, so that in difficulties it is possible to get on even with them.

“No one is more intolerable than an underbred civilian. From him one has a right to look for a delicacy, as he has no rough work to do.

“When we are living with people who have a delicate sense of propriety, we are in misery on their account when anything unbecoming is committed. So I always feel for and with Charlotte, when a person is tipping his chair She cannot endure it.

“No one would ever come into a mixed party with spectacles on his nose, if he did but know that at once we women lose all pleasure in looking at him or listening to what he has to say.

“Free-and-easiness, where there ought to be respect, is always ridiculous. No one would put his hat down when he had scarcely paid the ordinary compliments if he knew how comical it looks.

“There is no outward sign of courtesy that does not rest on a deep moral foundation. The proper education would be that which communicated the sign and the foundation of it at the same time.

“Behavior is a mirror in which everyone displays his own image.

“There is a courtesy of the heart. It is akin to love. Out of it arises the purest courtesy in the outward behavior.

“A freely offered homage is the most beautiful of all relations. And how were that possible without love?

“We are never further from our wishes than when we imagine that we possess what we have desired.

“No one is more a slave than the man who thinks himself free while he is not.

“A man has only to declare that he is free, and the next moment he feels the conditions to which he is subject. Let him venture to declare that he is under conditions, and then he will feel that he is free.

“Against great advantages in another, there are no means of defending ourselves except love.

“There is something terrible in the sight of a highly-gifted man lying under obligations to a fool.

“ ‘No man is a hero to his valet,’ the proverb says. But that is only because it requires a hero to recognize a hero. The valet will probably know how to value the valet-hero.

“Mediocrity has no greater consolation than in the thought that genius is not immortal.

“The greatest men are connected with their own century always through some weakness.

“One is apt to regard people as more dangerous than they are.

“Fools and modest people are alike innocuous. It is only your half-fools and your half-wise who are really and truly dangerous.

“There is no better deliverance from the world than through art; and a man can form no surer bond with it than through art.

“Alike in the moment of our highest fortune and our deepest necessity, we require the artist.

“The business of art is with the difficult and the good.

“To see the difficult easily handled, gives us the feeling of the impossible.

“Difficulties increase the nearer we are to our end.

“Sowing is not so difficult as reaping.”

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CHAPTER VI.

The very serious discomfort which this visit had caused to Charlotte was in some way compensated to her through the fuller insight which it had enabled her to gain into her daughter's character. In this, her knowledge of the world was of no slight service to her. It was not the first time that so singular a character had come across her, although she had never seen any in which the unusual features were so largely developed; and she had had experience enough to show her that such persons after having felt the discipline of life, after having gone through something of it, and been in intercourse with older people, may come out at last really charming and amiable; the selfishness may soften and eager restless activity find a definite direction for itself. And therefore, as a mother, Charlotte was able to endure the appearance of symptoms which for others might perhaps have been displeasing, from a sense that where strangers only desire to enjoy, or at least not to have their taste offended, the business of parents is rather to hope.

After her daughter's departure, however, she had to be pained in a singular and unlooked-for manner, in finding that, not so much through what there really was objectionable in her behavior, as through what was good and praiseworthy in it, she had left an ill report of herself behind her. Luciana seemed to have prescribed it as a rule to herself not only to be merry with the merry, but miserable with the miserable; and in order to give full swing to the spirit of contradiction in her, often to make the happy, uncomfortable, and the sad, cheerful. In every family among whom she came, she inquired after such members of it as were ill or infirm, and unable to appear in society. She would go to see them in their rooms, enact the physician, and insist on prescribing powerful doses for them out of her own travelling medicine-chest, which she constantly took with her in her carriage; her attempted cures, as may be supposed, either succeeding or failing as chance happened to direct.

In this sort of benevolence she was thoroughly cruel, and would listen to nothing that was said to her, because she was convinced that she was managing admirably. One of these attempts of hers on the moral side failed very disastrously, and this it was which gave Charlotte so much trouble, inasmuch as it involved consequences and everyone was talking about it. She never had heard of the story till Luciana was gone; Otilie, who had made one of the party present at the time, had to give her a circumstantial account of it.



One of several daughters of a family of rank had the misfortune to have caused the death of one of her younger sisters; it had destroyed her peace of mind, and she had never been properly herself since. She lived in her own room, occupying herself and keeping quiet; and she could only bear to see the members of her own family when they came one by one. If there were several together, she suspected at once that they were making reflections upon her, and upon her condition. To each of them singly she would speak rationally enough, and talk freely for an hour at a time.

Luciana had heard of this, and had secretly determined with herself, as soon as she got into the house, that she would forthwith work a miracle, and restore the young lady to society. She conducted herself in the matter more prudently than usual, managed to introduce herself alone to the poor sick-souled girl, and, as far as people could understand, had wound her way into her confidence through music. At last came her fatal mistake; wishing to make a scene, and fancying that she had sufficiently prepared her for it, one evening she suddenly introduced the beautiful pale creature into the midst of the brilliant glittering assembly; and perhaps, even then, the attempt might not have so utterly failed, had not the crowd themselves, between curiosity and apprehension, conducted themselves so unwisely, first gathering about the invalid, and then shrinking from her again; and with their whispers and shaking their heads together, confusing and agitating her. Her delicate sensibility could not endure it. With a dreadful shriek, which expressed, as it seemed, a horror at some monster that was rushing upon her, she fainted. The crowd fell back in terror on every side, and Ottilie had been one of those who had carried back the sufferer utterly insensible to her room.

Luciana meanwhile, just like herself, had been reading an angry lecture to the rest of the party, without reflecting for a moment that she herself was entirely to blame, and without letting herself be deterred by this and other failures, from going on with her experimentalizing.

The state of the invalid herself had since that time become more and more serious; indeed, the disorder had increased to such a degree, that the poor thing's parents were unable to keep her any longer at home, and had been forced to confide her to the care of a public institution. Nothing remained for Charlotte, except, by the delicacy of her own attention to the family, in some degree to alleviate the pain which had been occasioned by her daughter. On Ottilie, the thing had made a deep impression. She felt the more for the unhappy girl, as she was convinced, she did not attempt to deny it to Charlotte, that by a careful treatment the disorder might have been unquestionably removed.

So there came, too, as it often happens that we dwell more on past disagreeables than on past agreeables, a slight misunderstanding to be spoken of, which had led Ottilie to a wrong judgment of the architect, when he did not choose to produce his collection that evening, although she had so eagerly begged him to produce it. His practical refusal had remained ever since hanging about her heart, she herself could not tell why. Her feelings about the matter were undoubtedly just; what a young lady like Ottilie could desire, a young man like the architect ought not to have refused. The

latter, however, when she took occasion to give him a gentle reproof for it, had a very valid excuse to offer for himself.

“If you knew,” he said, “how roughly even cultivated people allow themselves to handle the most valuable works of art, you would forgive me for not producing mine among the crowd. No one will take the trouble to hold a medal by the rim. They will finger the most beautiful impressions, and the smoothest surfaces; they will take the rarest coins between the thumb and forefinger, and rub them up and down, as if they were testing the execution with the touch. Without remembering that a large sheet of paper ought to be held in two hands, they will lay hold, with one, of an invaluable proof-engraving of some drawing which cannot be replaced, like a conceited politician laying hold of a newspaper, and passing judgment by anticipation, as he is cutting the pages, on the occurrences of the world. Nobody cares to recollect that if twenty people, one after the other, treat a work of art in this way, the one-and-twentieth will not find much to see there.”

“Have not I often vexed you in this way?” asked Otilie. “Have not I, through my carelessness, many times injured your treasures?”

“Never once,” answered the architect, “never. For you it would be impossible. In you the right thing is innate.”

“In any case,” replied Otilie, “it would not be a bad plan, if in the next edition of the book of good manners, after the chapters which tell us how we ought to eat and drink in company, a good circumstantial chapter were inserted, how to behave among works of art and in museums.”

“Undoubtedly,” said the architect; “and then curiosity-collectors and amateurs would be better contented to show their valuable treasures to the world.”

Otilie had long, long forgiven him; but as he seemed to have taken her reproof sorely to heart, and assured her again and again that he would gladly produce everything—that he was delighted to do anything for his friends—she felt that she had wounded his feelings, and that she owed him some compensation. It was not easy for her, therefore, to give an absolute refusal to a request which he made her in the conclusion of this conversation, although when she called her heart into counsel about it, she did not see how she could allow herself to do what he wished.

The circumstances of the matter were these: Otilie's exclusion from the picture-exhibition by Luciana's jealousy had irritated him in the highest degree; and at the same time he had observed with regret, that at this, the most brilliant part of all the amusements at the castle, ill health had prevented Charlotte from being more than rarely present; and now he did not wish to go away, without some additional proof of his gratitude, and, for the honor of one and the entertainment of the other, preparing a far more beautiful exhibition than any of those which had preceded it. Perhaps, too, unknown to himself, another secret motive was working on him. It was so hard for him to leave the house, and to leave the family. It seemed impossible to him to go

away from Otilie's eyes, under the calm, sweet, gentle glance of which the latter part of the time he had been living almost entirely alone.

The Christmas holidays were approaching; and it became at once clear to him that the very thing which he wanted was a representation with real figures of one of those pictures of the scene in the stable,—a sacred exhibition such as at this holy season good Christians delight to offer to the divine Mother and her Child, of the manner in which she, in her seeming lowliness, was honored first by the shepherds and afterwards by kings.

He had thoroughly brought before himself how such a picture should be contrived. A fair, lovely child was found, and there would be no lack of shepherds and shepherdesses. But without Otilie the thing could not be done. The young man had exalted her in his design to be the mother of God, and if she refused, there was no question but the undertaking must fall to the ground. Otilie, half embarrassed at the proposal, referred him and his request to Charlotte. The latter gladly gave her permission, and lent her assistance in overcoming and overpersuading Otilie's hesitation in assuming so sacred a personality. The architect worked day and night, that by Christmas-eve everything might be ready.

Day and night, indeed, in the literal sense. At all times he was a man who had but few necessities; and Otilie's presence seemed to be to him in the place of all delicacies. When he was working for her, it was as if he required no sleep; when he was busy about her, as if he could do without food. Accordingly by the hour of the evening solemnity all was completed. He had found the means of collecting some well-toned wind instruments to form an introduction, and produce the desired temper of thought and feeling. But when the curtain rose, Charlotte was taken completely by surprise. The picture which presented itself to her had been repeated so often in the world, that one could scarcely have expected any new impression to be produced. But here, the reality as representing the picture had its especial advantages. The whole space was the color rather of night than of twilight, and there was nothing even of the details of the scene which was obscure. The inimitable idea that all the light should proceed from the child, the artist had contrived to carry out by an ingenious method of illumination which was concealed by the figures in the foreground, who were all in shadow. Bright looking boys and girls were standing round, their fresh faces sharply lighted from below; and there were angels too, whose own brilliancy grew pale before the divine, whose ethereal bodies showed dim and dense, and needing other light in the presence of the body of the divine humanity. By good fortune the infant had fallen asleep in the loveliest attitude, so that nothing disturbed the contemplation when the eye rested on the seeming mother, who with infinite grace had lifted off a veil to reveal her hidden treasure. At this moment the picture seemed to have been caught, and there to have remained fixed. Physically dazzled, mentally surprised, the people round appeared to have just moved to turn away their half-blinded eyes, to be glancing again towards the child with curious delight, and to be showing more wonder and pleasure than awe and reverence,—although these emotions were not forgotten, and were to be traced upon the features of some of the older spectators.

But Otilie's figure, expression, attitude, glance, excelled all which any painter has ever represented. A man who had true knowledge of art, and had seen this spectacle, would have been in fear lest any portion of it should move; he would have doubted whether anything could ever so much please him again. Unluckily, there was no one present who could comprehend the whole of this effect. The architect alone, who, as a tall, slender shepherd, was looking in from the side over those who were kneeling, enjoyed, although he was not in the best position for seeing, the fullest pleasure. And who can describe the mien of the new-made queen of heaven? The purest humility, the most exquisite feeling of modesty, at the great honor which had undeservedly been bestowed upon her, with indescribable and immeasurable happiness, was displayed upon her features, expressing as much her own personal emotion as that of the character which she was endeavoring to represent.

Charlotte was delighted with the beautiful figures; but what had most effect on her was the child. Her eyes filled with tears, and her imagination presented to her in the liveliest colors that she might soon hope to have such another darling creature on her own lap.

They had let down the curtain, partly to give the exhibitors some little rest, partly to make an alteration in the exhibition. The artist had proposed to himself to transmute the first scene of night and lowliness into a picture of splendor and glory; and for this purpose had prepared a blaze of light to fall in from every side, which this interval was required to kindle.

Otilie, in the semi-theatrical position in which she found herself, had hitherto felt perfectly at her ease, because, with the exception of Charlotte and a few members of the household, no one had witnessed this devout piece of artistic display. She was, therefore, in some degree annoyed when in the interval she learned that a stranger had come into the saloon, and had been warmly received by Charlotte. Who it was no one was able to tell her. She therefore made up her mind not to produce a disturbance, and to go on with her character. Candles and lamps blazed out, and she was surrounded by splendor perfectly infinite. The curtain rose. It was a sight to startle the spectators. The whole picture was one blaze of light; and instead of the full depth of shadow, there now were only the colors left remaining, which, from the skill with which they had been selected, produced a gentle softening of tone. Looking out under her long eyelashes, Otilie perceived the figure of a man sitting by Charlotte. She did not recognize him; but the voice she fancied was that of the assistant at the school. A singular emotion came over her. How many things had happened since she last heard the voice of that her kind instructor! Like a flash of forked lightning the stream of her joys and her sorrow rushed swiftly before her soul, and the question rose in her heart, Dare you confess, dare you acknowledge it all to him? If not, how little can you deserve to appear before him under this sainted form; and how strange must it not seem to him who has only known you as your natural self to see you now under this disguise? In an instant, swift as thought, feeling and reflection began to clash and gain within her. Her eyes filled with tears, while she forced herself to continue to appear as a motionless figure, and it was a relief, indeed, to her when the child began to stir,—and the artist saw himself compelled to give the sign that the curtain should fall again.

If the painful feeling of being unable to meet a valued friend had, during the last few moments, been distressing Otilie in addition to her other emotions, she was now in still greater embarrassment. Was she to present herself to him in this strange disguise? or had she better change her dress? She did not hesitate—she did the last; and in the interval she endeavored to collect and to compose herself; nor did she properly recover her self-possession until at last, in her ordinary costume, she had welcomed the new visitor.

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CHAPTER VII.

In so far as the architect desired the happiness of his kind patronesses, it was a pleasure to him, now that at last he was obliged to go, to know that he was leaving them in good society with the estimable assistant. At the same time, however, when he thought of their goodness in its relation to himself, he could not help feeling it a little painful to see his place so soon, and as it seemed to his modesty, so well, so completely supplied. He had lingered and lingered, but now he forced himself away; what, after he was gone, he must endure as he could, at least he could not stay to witness with his own eyes.

To the great relief of this half-melancholy feeling, the ladies at his departure made him a present of a waistcoat, upon which he had watched them both for some time past at work, with a silent envy of the fortunate unknown, to whom it was by-and-by to belong. Such a present is the most agreeable which a true-hearted man can receive; for while he thinks of the unwearied play of the beautiful fingers at the making of it, he cannot help flattering himself that in so long-sustained a labor the feeling could not have remained utterly without an interest in its accomplishment.

The ladies had now a new visitor to entertain, for whom they felt a real regard, and whose stay with them it would be their endeavor to make as agreeable as they could. There is in all women a peculiar circle of inward interests, which remain always the same, and from which nothing in the world can divorce them. In outward social intercourse, on the other hand, they will gladly and easily allow themselves to take their tone from the person with whom at the moment they are occupied; and thus by a mixture of impassiveness and susceptibility, by persisting and by yielding, they continue to keep the government to themselves, and no man in the cultivated world can ever take it from them.

The architect, following at the same time his own fancy and his own inclination, had been exerting himself and putting out his talents for their gratification and for the purposes of his friends; and business and amusement, while he was with them, had been conducted in this spirit, and directed to the ends which most suited his taste. But now in a short time, through the presence of the assistant, quite another sort of life was commenced. His great gift was to talk well, and to treat in his conversation of men and human relations, particularly in reference to the cultivation of young people. Thus arose a very perceptible contrast to the life which had been going on hitherto, all the more as the assistant could not entirely approve of their having interested themselves in such subjects so exclusively.

Of the impersonated picture which received him on his arrival, he never said a single word. On the other hand, when they took him to see the church and the chapel with their new decorations, expecting to please him as much as they were pleased themselves, he did not hesitate to express a very contrary opinion about it.

“This mixing up of the holy with the sensuous,” he said, “is anything but pleasing to my taste; I cannot like men to set apart certain especial places, consecrate them, and deck them out, that by so doing they may nourish in themselves a temper of piety. No ornaments, not even the very simplest, should disturb in us that sense of the Divine Being which accompanies us wherever we are, and can consecrate every spot into a temple. What pleases me is to see a home-service of God held in the saloon where people come together to eat, where they have their parties, and amuse themselves with games and dances. The highest, the most excellent in men, has no form; and one should be cautious how one gives it any form except noble action.”

Charlotte, who was already generally acquainted with his mode of thinking, and in the short time he had been at the castle had already probed it more deeply, found something also which he might do for her in his own department; and she had her garden children, whom the architect had reviewed shortly before his departure, marshalled up into the great saloon. In their bright, clean uniforms, with their regular orderly movement, and their own natural vivacity, they looked exceedingly well. The assistant examined them in his own way, and by a variety of questions, and by the turns which he gave them, soon brought to light the capacities and dispositions of the children; and without its seeming so, in the space of less than one hour he had really given them important instruction and assistance.

“How did you manage that?” said Charlotte, as the children marched away. “I listened with all my attention. Nothing was brought forward except things which were quite familiar, and yet I cannot tell the least how I should begin, to bring them to be discussed in so short a time so methodically, with all this questioning and answering.”

“Perhaps,” replied the assistant, “we ought to make a secret of the tricks of our own handicraft. However, I will not hide from you one very simple maxim, with the help of which you may do this, and a great deal more than this. Take any subject, a substance, an idea, whatever you like; keep fast hold of it; make yourself thoroughly acquainted with it in all its parts, and then it will be easy for you, in conversation, to find out, with a mass of children, how much about it has already developed itself in them; what requires to be stimulated, what to be directly communicated. The answers to your questions may be as unsatisfactory as they will, they may wander wide of the mark; if you only take care that your counter-question shall draw their thoughts and senses inwards again; if you do not allow yourself to be driven from your own position—the children will at last reflect, comprehend, learn only what the teacher desires them to learn, and the subject will be presented to them in the light in which he wishes them to see it. The greatest mistake which he can make is to allow himself to be run away with from the subject; not to know how to keep fast to the point with which he is engaged. Do you try this on your own account the next time the children come; you will find you will be greatly entertained by it yourself.”

“That is very good,” said Charlotte. “The right method of teaching is the reverse, I see, of what we must do in life. In society we must keep the attention long upon nothing, and in instruction the first commandment is to permit no dissipation of it.”



OTTILIE AS THE MADONNA.

“Variety, without dissipation, were the best motto for both teaching and life, if this desirable equipoise were easy to be preserved,” said the assistant, and he was going on further with the subject, when Charlotte called out to him to look again at the children, whose merry troop were at the moment moving across the court. He expressed his satisfaction at seeing them wearing a uniform. “Men,” he said, “should wear a uniform from their childhood upwards. They have to accustom themselves to work together; to lose themselves among their equals; to obey in masses, and to work on a large scale. Every kind of uniform, moreover, generates a military habit of thought, and a smart, straightforward carriage. All boys are born soldiers, whatever you do with them. You have only to watch them at their mock fights and games, their storming parties and scaling parties.”



“On the other hand, you will not blame me,” replied Otilie, “if I do not insist with my girls on such unity of costume. When I introduce them to you, I hope to gratify you by a party-colored mixture.”

“I approve of that entirely,” replied the other. “Women should go about in every sort of variety of dress; each following her own style and her own likings, that each may learn to feel what sits well upon her and becomes her. And for a more weighty reason as well—because it is appointed for them to stand alone all their lives, and work alone.”

“That seems to me to be a paradox,” answered Charlotte. “Are we then to be never anything for ourselves?”

“Oh, yes!” replied the assistant. “In respect of other women assuredly. But observe a young lady as a lover, as a bride, as a housewife, as a mother. She always stands

isolated. She is always alone, and will be alone. Even the most empty-headed woman is in the same case. Each one of them excludes all others. It is her nature to do so; because of each one of them is required everything which the entire sex have to do. With a man it is altogether different. He would make a second man if there were none. But a woman might live to an eternity, without even so much as thinking of producing a duplicate of herself."

"One has only to say the truth in a strange way," said Charlotte, "and at last the strangest thing will seem to be true. We will accept what is good for us out of your observations, and yet as women we will hold together with women, and do common work with them too; not to give the other sex too great an advantage over us. Indeed, you must not take it ill of us, if in future we come to feel a little malicious satisfaction when our lords and masters do not get on in the very best way together."

With much care, this wise, sensible person went on to examine more closely how Otilie proceeded with her little pupils, and expressed his marked approbation of it. "You are entirely right," he said, "in directing these children only to what they can immediately and usefully put in practice. Cleanliness, for instance, will accustom them to wear their clothes with pleasure to themselves; and everything is gained if they can be induced to enter into what they do with cheerfulness and self-reflection."

In other ways he found to his great satisfaction, that nothing had been done for outward display; but all was inward, and designed to supply what was indispensably necessary. "In how few words," he cried, "might the whole business of education be summed up, if people had but ears to hear!"

"Will you try whether I have any ears?" said Otilie, smiling.

"Indeed I will," answered he; "only you must not betray me. Educate the boys to be servants, and the girls to be mothers, and everything is as it should be."

"To be mothers?" replied Otilie. "Women would scarcely think that sufficient. They have to look forward, without being mothers, to going out into service. And, indeed, our young men think themselves a great deal too good for servants. One can see easily, in every one of them, that he holds himself far fitter to be a master."

"And for that reason we should say nothing about it to them," said the assistant. "We flatter ourselves on into life; but life flatters not us. How many men would like to acknowledge at the outset, what at the end they must acknowledge whether they like it or not? But let us leave these considerations, which do not concern us here.

"I consider you very fortunate in having been able to go so methodically to work with your pupils. If your very little ones run about with their dolls, and stitch together a few petticoats for them; if the elder sisters will then take care of the younger, and the whole household know how to supply its own wants, and one member of it help the others, the further step into life will not then be great, and such a girl will find in her husband what she has lost in her parents.

“But among the higher ranks the problem is a sorely intricate one. We have to provide for higher, finer, more delicate relations; especially for such as arise out of society. We are, therefore, obliged to give our pupils an outward cultivation. It is indispensable, it is necessary, and it may be really valuable, if we do not overstep the proper measure in it. Only it is so easy, while one is proposing to cultivate the children for a wider circle, to drive them out into the indefinite, without keeping before our eyes the real requisites of the inner nature. Here lies the problem which more or less must be either solved or blundered over by all educators.

“Many things, with which we furnish our scholars at the school, do not please me; because experience tells me of how little service they are likely to be in after-life. How much is not at once stripped off; how much is not at once committed to oblivion, as soon as the young lady finds herself in the position of a housewife or a mother!

“In the meantime, since I have devoted myself to this occupation, I cannot but entertain a devout hope that one day, with the companionship of some faithful helpmate, I may succeed in cultivating purely in my pupils that, and that only, which they will require when they pass out into the field of independent activity and self-reliance; that I may be able to say to myself, in this sense is their education completed. Another education there is indeed which will again speedily recommence, and work on well nigh through all the years of our life—the education which circumstances will give us, if we do not give it to ourselves.”

How true Otilie felt were these words! What had not a passion, little dreamed of before, done to educate her in the past year! What trials did she not see hovering before her if she looked forward only to the next—to the very next, which was now so near!

It was not without a purpose that the young man had spoken of a helpmate—of a wife; for with all his diffidence, he could not refrain from thus remotely hinting at his own wishes. A number of circumstances and accidents, indeed, combined to induce him on this visit to approach a few steps towards his aim.

The lady superior of the school was advanced in years. She had been already for some time looking about among her fellow-laborers, male and female, for some person whom she could take into partnership with herself, and at last had made proposals to the assistant in whom she had the highest ground for feeling confidence. He was to conduct the business of the school with herself. He was to work with her in it, as if it was his own; and after her death, as her heir, to enter upon it as sole proprietor.

The principal thing now seemed to be, that he should find a wife who would cooperate with him. Otilie was secretly before his eyes and before his heart. A number of difficulties suggested themselves, and yet again there were favorable circumstances on the other side to counterbalance them. Luciana had left the school; Otilie could therefore return with the less difficulty. Of the affair with Edward, some little had transpired. It passed, however, as many such things do, as a matter of indifference, and this very circumstance might make it desirable that she should leave the castle. And yet, perhaps, no decision would have been arrived at, no step would have been

taken, had not an unexpected visit given a special impulse to his hesitation. The appearance of remarkable people, in any and every circle, can never be without its effects.

The count and the baroness, who often found themselves asked for their opinion, almost everyone being in difficulty about the education of their children, as to the value of the various schools, had found it desirable to make themselves particularly acquainted with this one, which was generally so well spoken of; and under their present circumstances, they were more easily able to carry on these inquiries in company.

The baroness, however, had something else in view as well. While she was last at the castle, she had talked over with Charlotte the whole affair of Edward and Otilie. She had insisted again and again that Otilie must be sent away. She tried every means to encourage Charlotte to do it, and to keep her from being frightened by Edward's threats. Several modes of escape from the difficulty were suggested. Accidentally the school was mentioned, and the assistant and his incipient passion, which made the baroness more resolved than ever to pay her intended visit there.

She went; she made acquaintance with the assistant; looked over the establishment, and spoke of Otilie. The count also spoke with much interest of her, having in his recent visit learned to know her better. She had been drawn towards him; indeed, she had felt attracted by him; believing that she could see, that she could perceive in his solid, substantial conversation, something to which hitherto she had been an entire stranger. In her intercourse with Edward, the world had been utterly forgotten; in the presence of the count, the world appeared first worth regarding. The attraction was mutual. The count conceived a liking for Otilie; he would have been glad to have had her for a daughter. Thus a second time, and worse than the first time, she was in the way of the baroness. Who knows what, in times when passions ran hotter than they do now-a-days, this lady might not have devised against her? As things were, it was enough if she could get her married, and render her more innocuous for the future to the peace of mind of married women. She therefore artfully urged the assistant, in a delicate, but effective manner, to set out on a little excursion to the castle; where his plans and his wishes, of which he made no secret to the lady, he might forthwith take steps to realize.

With the fullest consent of the superior he started off on his expedition, and in his heart he nourished good hopes of success. He knew that Otilie was not ill-disposed towards him; and although it was true there was some disproportion of rank between them, yet distinctions of this kind were fast disappearing in the temper of the time. Moreover, the baroness had made him perceive clearly that Otilie must always remain a poor portionless maiden. To be related to a wealthy family, it was said, could be of service to nobody. For even with the largest property, men have a feeling that it is not right to deprive of any considerable sum, those who, as standing in a nearer degree of relationship, appear to have a fuller right to possession; and really it is a strange thing, that the immense privilege which a man has of disposing of his property after his death, he so very seldom uses for the benefit of those whom he loves, out of

regard to established usage only appearing to consider those who would inherit his estate from him supposing he made no will at all.

Thus, while on his journey, he grew to feel himself entirely on a level with Otilie. A favorable reception raised his hopes. He found Otilie indeed not altogether so open with him as usual, but she was considerably matured, more developed, and, if you please, generally more conversible than he had known her. She was ready to give him the fullest insight into many things which were in any way connected with his profession; but when he attempted to approach his proper object, a certain inward shyness always held him back.

Once, however, Charlotte gave him an opportunity for saying something. In Otilie's presence she said to him, "Well now, you have looked closely enough into everything which is going forward in my circle. How do you find Otilie? you had better say while she is here."

Hereupon the assistant signified, with a clear perception and composed expression, how that, in respect of a freer carriage, of an easier manner in speaking, of a higher insight into the things of the world, which showed itself more in actions than in words, he found Otilie altered much for the better; but that he still believed it might be of serious advantage to her if she would go back for some little time to the school, in order methodically and thoroughly to make her own forever what the world was only imparting to her in fragments and pieces, rather perplexing her than satisfying her, and often too late to be of service. He did not wish to be prolix about it. Otilie herself knew best how much method and connection there was in the style of instruction out of which, in that case, she would be taken.

Otilie had nothing to say against this; she could not acknowledge what it was which these words made her feel, because she was hardly able to explain it to herself. It seemed to her as if nothing in the world was disconnected so long as she thought of the one person whom she loved: and she could not conceive how, without him, anything could be connected at all.

Charlotte replied to the proposal with a wise kindness. She said that she herself, as well as Otilie, had long desired her return to the school. At that time, however, the presence of so dear a companion and helper had become indispensable to herself; still she would offer no obstacle at some future period, if Otilie continued to wish it, to her going back there for such a time as would enable her to complete what she had begun, and to make entirely her own what had been interrupted.

The assistant listened with delight to this qualified assent. Otilie did not venture to say anything against it, although the very thought made her shudder. Charlotte, on her side, thought only how to gain time. She hoped that Edward would soon come back and find himself a happy father, then she was convinced all would go right; and one way or another they would be able to settle something for Otilie.

After an important conversation which has furnished matter for after-reflection to all who have taken part in it, there commonly follows a sort of pause, which in

appearance is like a general embarrassment. They walked up and down the saloon. The assistant turned over the leaves of various books, and came at last on the folio of engravings which had remained lying there since Luciana's time. As soon as he saw that it contained nothing but apes, he shut it up again.

It may have been this, however, which gave occasion to a conversation of which we find traces in Ottilie's diary.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

"It is strange how men can have the heart to take such pains with the pictures of those hideous monkeys. One lowers one's self sufficiently when one looks at them merely as animals, but it is really wicked to give way to the inclination to look for people whom we know behind such masks."

"It is a sure mark of a certain obliquity, to take pleasure in caricatures and monstrous faces and pigmies. I have to thank our kind assistant that I have never been vexed with natural history; I could never make myself at home with worms and beetles."

"Just now he acknowledged to me, that it was the same with him. 'Of nature,' he said, 'we ought to know nothing except what is actually alive immediately around us. With the trees which blossom and put out leaves and bear fruit in our own neighborhood, with every shrub which we pass by, with every blade of grass on which we tread, we stand in a real relation. They are our genuine compatriots. The birds which hop up and down among our branches, which sing among our leaves, belong to us; they speak to us from our childhood upwards, and we learn to understand their language. But let a man ask himself whether or not every strange creature, torn out of its natural environment, does not at first sight make a sort of painful impression upon him, which is only deadened by custom. It is a mark of a motley, dissipated sort of life, to be able to endure monkeys and parrots and black people about one's self.'"

"Many times when a certain longing curiosity about these strange objects has come over me, I have envied the traveller who sees such marvels in living, every-day connection with other marvels. But he, too, must have become another man. Palm trees will not allow a man to wander among them with impunity; and doubtless his tone of thinking becomes very different in a land where elephants and tigers are at home."

"The only inquirers into nature whom we care to respect, are such as know how to describe and to represent to us the strange wonderful things which they have seen in their proper locality, each in its own especial element. How I should enjoy once hearing Humboldt talk!"

"A cabinet of natural curiosities we may regard like an Egyptian burying-place, where the various plant gods and animal gods stand about embalmed. It may be well enough for a priest-caste to busy itself with such things in a twilight of mystery. But in general instruction, they have no place or business; and we must beware of them all

the more, because what is nearer to us, and more valuable, may be so easily thrust aside by them.”

“A teacher who can arouse a feeling for one single good action, for one single good poem, accomplishes more than he who fills our memory with rows on rows of natural objects, classified with name and form. For what is the result of all these, except what we know as well without them, that the human figure pre-eminently and peculiarly is made in the image and likeness of God?”

“Individuals may be left to occupy themselves with whatever amuses them, with whatever gives them pleasure, whatever they find useful; but the proper study of mankind is man.”

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CHAPTER VIII.

There are but few men who care to occupy themselves with the immediate past. Either we are forcibly bound up in the present, or we lose ourselves in the long gone-by, and seek back for what is utterly lost, as if it were possible to summon it up again, and rehabilitate it. Even in great and wealthy families who are under large obligations to their ancestors, we commonly find men thinking more of their grandfathers than their fathers.

Such reflections as these suggested themselves to our assistant, as, on one of those beautiful days in which the departing winter is accustomed to imitate the spring, he had been walking up and down the great old castle garden, and admiring the tall avenues of the lindens, and the formal walks and flower-beds which had been laid out by Edward's father. The trees had thriven admirably, according to the design of him who had planted them, and now when they ought to have begun to be valued and enjoyed, no one ever spoke of them. Hardly any one even went near them, and the interest and the outlay was now directed to the other side, out into the free and the open.

He remarked upon it to Charlotte on his return; she did not take it unkindly. "While life is sweeping us forwards," she replied, "we fancy that we are acting out our own impulses; we believe that we choose ourselves what we will do, and what we will enjoy. But in fact, if we look at it closely, our actions are no more than the plans, and the desires of the time which we are compelled to carry out."

"No doubt," said the assistant. "And who is strong enough to withstand the stream of what is round him? Time passes on, and in it, opinions, thoughts, prejudices and interests. If the youth of the son falls in the era of revolution, we may feel assured that he will have nothing in common with his father. If the father lived at a time when the desire was to accumulate property, to secure the possession of it, to narrow and to gather one's self in, and to base one's enjoyment in separation from the world, the son will at once seek to extend himself, to communicate himself to others, to spread himself over a wide surface, and open out his closed stores."

"Entire periods," replied Charlotte, "resemble this father and son whom you have been describing. Of the state of things when every little town was obliged to have its walls and moats, when the castle of the nobleman was built in a swamp, and the smallest manor-houses were only accessible by a draw-bridge, we are scarcely able to form a conception. In our days, the largest cities take down their walls, the moats of the princes' castles are filled in; cities are no more than great *places*, and when one travels and sees all this, one might fancy that universal peace was just established, and the golden age was before the door. No one feels himself easy in a garden which does not look like the open country. There must be nothing to remind him of form and constraint; we choose to be entirely free, and to draw our breath without sense of confinement. Do you conceive it possible, my friend, that we can ever return again out of this into another, into our former condition?"

“Why should we not?” replied the assistant. “Every condition has its own burden along with it, the most relaxed as well as the most constrained. The first presupposes abundance, and leads to extravagance. Let want reappear, and the spirit of moderation is at once with us again. Men who are obliged to make use of their space and their soil, will speedily enough raise walls up round their gardens to be sure of their crops and plants. Out of this will arise by degrees a new phase of things: the useful will again gain the upper hand; and even the man of large possessions will feel at last that he must make the most of all which belongs to him. Believe me, it is quite possible that your son may become indifferent to all which you have been doing in the park, and draw in again behind the solemn walls and the tall lindens of his grandfather.”

The secret pleasure which it gave Charlotte to have a son foretold to her, made her forgive the assistant his somewhat unfriendly prophecy of how it might one day fare with her lovely, beautiful park. She therefore answered without any discomposure: “You and I are not old enough yet to have lived through very much of these contradictions; and yet when I look back into my own early youth, when I remember the style of complaints which I used then to hear from older people, and when I think at the same time of what the country and the town then were, I have nothing to advance against what you say. But is there nothing which one can do to remedy this natural course of things? Are father and son, parents and children, to be always thus unable to understand each other? You have been so kind as to prophesy a boy to me. Is it necessary that he must stand in contradiction to his father? Must he destroy what his parents have erected, instead of completing it, instead of following on upon the same idea, and elevating it?”

“There is a rational remedy for it,” replied the assistant. “But it is one which will be but seldom put in practice by men. The father should raise his son to a joint ownership with himself. He should permit him to plant and to build; and allow him the same innocent liberty which he allows to himself. One form of activity may be woven into another, but it cannot be pieced on to it. A young shoot may be readily and easily grafted with an old stem, to which no grown branch admits of being fastened.”

The assistant was glad to have had the opportunity, at the moment when he saw himself obliged to take his leave, of saying something agreeable to Charlotte, and thus making himself a new link to secure her favor. He had been already too long absent from home, and yet he could not make up his mind to return there, until after a full conviction that he must allow the approaching epoch of Charlotte's confinement first to pass by, before he could look for any decision from her in respect to Otilie. He therefore accommodated himself to the circumstances, and returned with these prospects and hopes to the superior.

Charlotte's confinement was now approaching; she kept more in her own room. The ladies who had gathered about her were her closest companions. Otilie managed all domestic matters, hardly able, however, the while, to think what she was doing. She had indeed utterly resigned herself; she desired to continue to exert herself to the extent of her power for Charlotte, for the child, for Edward. But she could not see how it would be possible for her. Nothing could save her from utter distraction, except patiently to do the duty which each day brought with it.

A son was brought happily into the world, and the ladies declared, with one voice, it was the very image of its father. Only Otilie, as she wished the new mother joy, and kissed the child with all her heart, was unable to see the likeness. Once already Charlotte had felt most painfully the absence of her husband, when she had to make preparations for her daughter's marriage. And now the father could not be present at the birth of his son. He could not have the choosing of the name by which the child was hereafter to be called.

The first among all Charlotte's friends who came to wish her joy was Mittler. He had placed expresses ready to bring him news the instant the event took place. He was admitted to see her, and, scarcely able to conceal his triumph even before Otilie, when alone with Charlotte he broke fairly out with it; and was at once ready with means to remove all anxieties, and set aside all immediate difficulties. The baptism should not be delayed a day longer than necessary. The old clergyman, who had one foot already in the grave, should leave his blessing, to bind together the past and the future. The child should be called Otto; what name would he bear so fitly as that of his father and of his father's friend?

It required the peremptory resolution of this man to set aside the innumerable considerations, arguments, hesitations, difficulties; what this person knew, and that person knew better; the opinions, up and down, and backwards and forwards, which every friend volunteered. It always happens on such occasions that when one inconvenience is removed, a fresh inconvenience seems to arise; and in wishing to spare all sides we inevitably go wrong on one side or the other.

The letters to friends and relations were all undertaken by Mittler, and they were to be written and sent off at once. It was highly necessary, he thought, that the good fortune which he considered so important for the family, should be known as widely as possible through the ill-natured and misinterpreting world. For indeed these late entanglements and perplexities had got abroad among the public, which at all times has a conviction that whatever happens, happens only in order that it may have something to talk about.

The ceremony of the baptism was to be observed with all due honor, but it was to be as brief and as private as possible. The people came together; Otilie and Mittler were to hold the child as sponsors. The old pastor, supported by the servants of the church, came in with slow steps; the prayers were offered. The child lay in Otilie's arms, and as she was looking affectionately down at it, it opened its eyes and she was not a little startled when she seemed to see her own eyes looking at her. The likeness would have surprised anyone. Mittler, who next had to receive the child, started as well; he fancying he saw in the little features a most striking likeness to the captain. He had never seen a resemblance so marked.

The infirmity of the good old clergyman had not permitted him to accompany the ceremony with more than the usual liturgy.

Mittler, however, who was full of his subject, recollected his old performances when he had been in the ministry, and indeed it was one of his peculiarities that on every

sort of occasion, he always thought what he would like to say, and how he would express himself about it.

At this time he was the less able to contain himself, as he was now in the midst of a circle consisting entirely of well-known friends. He began therefore towards the conclusion of the service, to put himself quietly into the place of the clergyman; to make cheerful speeches aloud, expressive of his duty and his hopes as godfather, and to dwell all the longer on the subject, as he thought he saw in Charlotte's gratified manner that she was pleased with his doing so.

It altogether escaped the eagerness of the orator, that the good old man would gladly have sat down; still less did he think that he was on the way to occasion a more serious evil. After he had described with all his power of impressiveness the relation in which every person present stood toward the child, thereby putting Ottilie's composure sorely to the proof, he turned at last to the old man with the words, "And you, my worthy father, you may now well say with Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen the saviour of this house.' "

He was now in full swing towards a brilliant peroration, when he perceived the old man, to whom he held out the child, first appear a little to incline towards it, and immediately after to totter and sink backwards. Hardly prevented from falling, he was lifted to a seat; but, notwithstanding the instant assistance which was rendered, he was found to be dead.

To see thus side by side birth and death, the coffin and the cradle, to see them and to realize them, to comprehend, not with the eye of imagination, but with the bodily eye, at one moment these fearful opposites, was a hard trial to the spectators; the harder, the more utterly it had taken them by surprise. Ottilie alone stood contemplating the slumberer, whose features still retained their gentle sweet expression, with a kind of envy. The life of her soul was killed; why should the bodily life any longer drag on in weariness?

But though Ottilie was frequently led by melancholy incidents which occurred in the day to thoughts of the past, of separation and of loss, at night she had strange visions given her to comfort her, which assured her of the existence of her beloved, and thus strengthened hers, and gave her life for her own. When she laid herself down at night to rest, and was floating among sweet sensations between sleep and waking, she seemed to be looking into a clear but softly illuminated space. In this she would see Edward with the greatest distinctness, and not in the dress in which she had been accustomed to see him, but in military uniform; never in the same position, but always in a natural one, and not the least with anything fantastic about him, either standing or walking, or lying down or riding. The figure, which was painted with the utmost minuteness, moved readily before her without any effort of hers, without her willing it or exerting her imagination to produce it. Frequently she saw him surrounded with something in motion, which was darker than the bright ground; but the figures were shadowy, and she could scarcely distinguish them—sometimes they were like men, sometimes they were like horses, or like trees, or like mountains. She usually went to sleep in the midst of the apparition, and when, after a quiet night, she woke again in

the morning, she felt refreshed and comforted; she could say to herself, Edward still lives, and she herself was still remaining in the closest relation towards him.



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CHAPTER IX.

The spring was come; it was late, but it therefore burst out more rapidly and more exhilaratingly than usual. Otilie now found in the garden the fruits of her carefulness. Everything shot up and came out in leaf and flower at its proper time. A number of plants which she had been training up under glass frames and in hotbeds, now burst forward at once to meet, at last, the advances of nature; and whatever there was to do, and to take care of, it did not remain the mere labor of hope which it had been, but brought its reward in immediate and substantial enjoyment.

There was many a chasm however among the finest shoots produced by Luciana's wild ways, for which she had to console the gardener, and the symmetry of many a leafy coronet was destroyed. She tried to encourage him to hope that it would all be soon restored again, but he had too deep a feeling, and too pure an idea of the nature of his business, for such grounds of comfort to be of much service with him. Little as the gardener allowed himself to have his attention dissipated by other tastes and inclinations, he could the less bear to have the peaceful course interrupted which the plant follows towards its enduring or its transient perfection. A plant is like a self-willed man, out of whom we can obtain all which we desire, if we will only treat him his own way. A calm eye, a silent method, in all seasons of the year, and at every hour, to do exactly what has then to be done, is required of no one perhaps more than of a gardener. These qualities the good man possessed in an eminent degree, and it was on that account that Otilie liked so well to work with him; but for some time past he had not found himself able to exercise his peculiar talent with any pleasure to himself. Whatever concerned the fruit-gardening or kitchen-gardening, as well as whatever had in time past been required in the ornamental gardens, he understood perfectly. One man succeeds in one thing, another in another; he succeeded in these. In his management of the orangery, of the bulbous flowers, in budding shoots and growing cuttings from the carnations and auriculas, he might challenge nature herself. But the new ornamental shrubs and fashionable flowers remained in a measure strange to him. He had a kind of shyness of the endless field of botany, which had been lately opening itself, and the strange names humming about his ears made him cross and ill-tempered. The orders for flowers which had been made by his lord and lady in the course of the past year, he considered so much useless waste and extravagance. All the more, as he saw many valuable plants disappear; and as he had ceased to stand on the best possible terms with the nursery gardeners, who he fancied had not been serving him honestly.

Consequently, after a number of attempts, he had formed a sort of a plan, in which Otilie encouraged him the more readily, because its first essential condition was the return of Edward, whose absence in this, as in many other matters, every day had to be felt more and more seriously.

Now that the plants were ever striking new roots, and putting out their shoots, Otilie felt herself even more fettered to this spot. It was just a year since she had come there as a stranger, as a mere insignificant creature. How much had she not gained for

herself since that time! but, alas! how much had she not also since that time lost again! Never had she been so rich, and never so poor. The feelings of her loss and of her gain alternated momentarily one with another, chasing each other through her heart; and she could find no other means to help herself, except always to set to work again at what lay nearest to her, with such interest and eagerness as she could command.

That everything which she knew to be dear to Edward received especial care from her may be supposed. And why should she not hope that he himself would now soon come back again; and that when present, he would show himself grateful for all the care and pains which she had taken for him in his absence?

But there was also a far different employment which she took upon herself in his service; she had undertaken the principal charge of the child, whose immediate attendant it was all the easier for her to be, as they had determined not to put it into the hands of a nurse, but to bring it up themselves by hand with milk and water. In the beautiful season it was much out of doors, enjoying the free air, and Otilie liked best to take it out herself, to carry the unconscious sleeping infant among the flowers and blossoms which should one day smile so brightly on its childhood,—among the young shrubs and plants, which, by their youth, seemed designed to grow up with the young lord to their after stature. When she looked about her, she did not hide from herself to what a high position that child was born: far and wide, wherever the eye could see, all would one day belong to him. How desirable, how necessary it must therefore be, that it should grow up under the eyes of its father and its mother, and renew and strengthen the union between them!

Otilie saw all this so clearly, that she represented it to herself as conclusively decided, and for herself, as concerned with it, she never felt at all. Under this fair heaven, by this bright sunshine, at once it became clear to her, that her love, if it would perfect itself, must become altogether unselfish; and there were many moments in which she believed it was an elevation which she had already attained. She only desired the well-being of her friend. She fancied herself able to resign him, and never to see him any more, if she could only know that he was happy. The one only determination which she formed for herself was never to belong to another.

They had taken care that the autumn should be no less brilliant than the spring. Sunflowers were there, and all the other plants which are never tired of blossoming in autumn, and continue boldly on into the cold; asters especially were sown in the greatest abundance, and scattered about in all directions, to form a starry heaven upon the earth.

FROM OTTILIE'S DIARY.

“Any good thought which we have read, anything striking which we have heard, we commonly enter in our diary; but if we would take the trouble, at the same time, to copy out of our friends' letters the remarkable observations, the original ideas, the hasty words so pregnant in meaning, which we might find in them, we should then be rich indeed. We lay aside letters never to read them again, and at last we destroy them

out of discretion, and so disappears the most beautiful, the most immediate breath of life, irrecoverably for ourselves and for others. I intend to make amends in future for such neglect.”

“So, then, once more the old story of the year is being repeated over again. We are come now, thank God, again to its most charming chapter. The violets and the may-flowers are as its superscriptions and its vignettes. It always makes a pleasant impression on us when we open again at these pages in the book of life.”

“We find fault with the poor, particularly with the little ones among them, when they loiter about the streets and beg. Do we not observe, that they begin to work again, as soon as ever there is anything for them to do? Hardly has nature unfolded her smiling treasures, than the children are at once upon her track to open out a calling for themselves. None of them beg any more; they have each a nosegay to offer you; they were out and gathering it before you had awakened out of your sleep, and the supplicating face looks as sweetly at you as the present which the hand is holding out. No person ever looks miserable who feels that he has a right to make a demand upon you.”

“How is it that the year sometimes seems so short, and sometimes is so long? How is it that it is so short when it is passing, and so long as we look back over it? When I think of the past (and it never comes so powerfully over me as in the garden), I feel how the perishing and the enduring work one upon the other, and there is nothing whose endurance is so brief as not to leave behind it some trace of itself, something in its own likeness.”

“We are able to tolerate the winter. We fancy that we can extend ourselves more freely when the trees are so spectral, so transparent. They are nothing, but they conceal nothing; but when once the germs and buds begin to show, then we become impatient for the full foliage to come out, for the landscape to put on its body, and the tree to stand before us as a form.”

“Everything which is perfect in its kind, must pass out beyond and transcend its kind. It must be an inimitable something of another and a higher nature. In many of its tones the nightingale is only a bird; then it rises up above its class, and seems as if it would teach every feathered creature what singing really is.”

“A life without love, without the presence of the beloved, is but poor *comédie à tiroir*. We draw out slide after slide, swiftly tiring of each, and pushing it back to make haste to the next. Even what we know to be good and important hangs but wearily together; every step is an end, and every step is a fresh beginning.”

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CHAPTER X.

Charlotte meanwhile was well and in good spirits. She was happy in her beautiful boy, whose fair promising little form every hour was a delight to both her eyes and heart. In him she found a new link to connect her with the world and with her property. Her old activity began anew to stir in her again.

Look which way she would, she saw how much had been done in the year that was past, and it was a pleasure to her to contemplate it. Enlivened by the strength of these feelings, she climbed up to the summer-house with Otilie and the child, and as she laid the latter down on the little table, as on the altar of her house, and saw the two seats still vacant, she thought of gone-by times, and fresh hopes rose out before her for herself and for Otilie.

Young ladies, perhaps, look timidly round them at this or that young man, carrying on a silent examination, whether they would like to have him for a husband; but whoever has a daughter or a female ward to care for, takes a wider circle in her survey. And so it fared at this moment with Charlotte, to whom, as she thought of how they had once sat side by side in that summer-house, a union did not seem impossible between the captain and Otilie. It had not remained unknown to her, that the plans for the advantageous marriage, which had been proposed to the captain, had come to nothing.

Charlotte went on up the cliff, and Otilie carried the child. A number of reflections crowded upon the former. Even on the firm land there are frequent enough shipwrecks, and the true wise conduct is to recover ourselves, and refit our vessel as fast as possible. Is life to be calculated only by its gains and losses? Who has not made arrangement on arrangement, and has not seen them broken in pieces? How often does not a man strike into a road and lose it again! How often are we not turned aside from one point which we had sharply before our eye, but only to reach some higher stage! The traveller, to his greatest annoyance, breaks a wheel upon his journey, and through this unpleasant accident makes some charming acquaintance, and forms some new connection, which has an influence on all his life. Destiny grants us our wishes, but in its own way, in order to give us something beyond our wishes.

Among these and similar reflections they reached the new building on the hill, where they intended to establish themselves for the summer. The view all round them was far more beautiful than could have been supposed; every little obstruction had been removed; all the loveliness of the landscape, whatever nature, whatever the season of the year had done for it, came out in its beauty before the eye; and already the young plantations, which had been made to fill up a few openings, were beginning to look green, and to form an agreeable connecting link between parts which before stood separate.

The house itself was nearly habitable; the views, particularly from the upper rooms, were of the richest variety. The longer you looked round you, the more beauties you discovered. What magnificent effects would not be produced here at the different

hours of day—by sunlight and by moonlight? Nothing could be more delightful than to come and live there, and now that she found all the rough work finished, Charlotte longed to be busy again. An upholsterer, a tapestry-hanger, a painter, who could lay on the colors with patterns, and a little gilding, were all which were required, and these were soon found, and in a short time the building was completed. Kitchen and cellar stores were quickly laid in; being so far from the castle, it was necessary to have all essentials provided; and the two ladies with the child went up and settled there. From this residence, as from a new centre point, unknown walks opened out to them; and in these high regions the free fresh air and the beautiful weather were thoroughly delightful.

Ottilie's favorite walk, sometimes alone, sometimes with the child, was down below, towards the plane trees; along a pleasant footpath, leading directly to the point where one of the boats was kept chained in which people used to go across the water. She often indulged herself in an expedition on the water, only without the child, as Charlotte was a little uneasy about it. She never missed, however, paying a daily visit to the castle garden and the gardener, and going to look with him at his show of greenhouse plants, which were all out now, enjoying the free air.



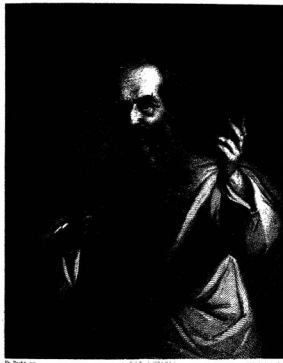
At this beautiful season, Charlotte was much pleased to receive a visit from an English nobleman, who had made acquaintance with Edward abroad, having met him more than once, and who was now curious to see the laying out of his park, which he had heard so much admired. He brought with him a letter of introduction from the count, and introduced at the same time a quiet but most agreeable man as his travelling companion. He went about seeing everything, sometimes with Charlotte and Ottilie, sometimes with the gardeners and the foresters, often with his friend, and now and then alone; and they could perceive clearly from his observations that he took an interest in such matters, and understood them well; indeed, that he had himself probably executed many such.

Although he was now advanced in life, he entered warmly into everything which could serve for an ornament to life, or contribute anything to its importance.

In his presence, the ladies came first properly to enjoy what was round them. His practised eye received every effect in its freshness, and he found all the more pleasure in what was before him, as he had not previously known the place, and was scarcely able to distinguish what man had done there from what nature had presented to him ready made.

We may even say that through his remarks the park grew and enriched itself; he was able to anticipate in their fulfilment the promises of the growing plantations. There was not a spot where there was any effect which could be either heightened or produced, but what he observed it.

In one place he pointed to a fountain which, if it was cleaned out, promised to be the most beautiful spot for a picnic party. In another, to a cave which had only to be enlarged and swept clear of rubbish to form a desirable seat. A few trees might be cut down, and a view would be opened from it of some grand masses of rock, towering magnificently against the sky. He wished the owners joy that so much was still remaining for them to do, and he besought them not to be in a hurry about it, but to keep for themselves for years to come the pleasures of shaping and improving.



Herr Mittler

At the hours which the ladies usually spent alone he was never in the way, for he was occupied the greatest part of the day in catching such views in the park as would make good paintings, in a portable camera obscura, and drawing from them, in order to secure some desirable fruits from his travels for himself and others. For many years past he had been in the habit of doing this in all remarkable places which he visited, and had provided himself by it with a most charming and interesting collection. He showed the ladies a large portfolio which he had brought with him, and entertained them with the pictures and with descriptions. And it was a real delight to them, here in their solitude, to travel so pleasantly over the world, and see sweep past them, shores and havens, mountains, lakes and rivers, cities, castles, and a hundred other localities which have a name in history.

Each of the two ladies had an especial interest in it—Charlotte the more general interest in whatever was historically remarkable; Otilie dwelling in preference on the scenes of which Edward used most to talk,—where he liked best to stay, and which he would most often revisit. Every man has somewhere, far or near, his peculiar localities which attract him; scenes which, according to his character, either from first impressions, or from particular associations, or from habit, have a charm for him beyond all others.

She, therefore, asked the earl which, of all these places, pleased him best, where he would like to settle, and live for himself, if he might choose. There was more than one lovely spot which he pointed out, with what had happened to him there to make him

love and value it; and the peculiar accentuated French in which he spoke, made it most pleasant to listen to him.

To the further question, which was his ordinary residence, which he properly considered his home; he replied, without any hesitation, in a manner quite unexpected by the ladies.

“I have accustomed myself by this time to be at home everywhere, and I find, after all, that it is much more agreeable to allow others to plant and build, and keep house for me. I have no desire to return to my own possessions, partly on political grounds, but principally because my son, for whose sake alone it was any pleasure to me to remain and work there,—who will, by-and-by, inherit it, and with whom I hoped to enjoy it,—took no interest in the place at all, but has gone out to India, where, like many other foolish fellows, he fancies he can make a higher use of his life. He is more likely to squander it.

“Assuredly we spend far too much labor and outlay in preparation for life. Instead of beginning at once to make ourselves happy in a moderate condition, we spread ourselves out wider and wider, only to make ourselves more and more uncomfortable. Who is there now to enjoy my mansion, my park, my gardens? Not I, nor any of mine,—strangers, visitors, or curious, restless travellers.

“Even with large means, we are ever but half and half at home, especially in the country, where we miss many things to which we have become accustomed in town. The book for which we are most anxious is not to be had, and just the thing which we most wanted is forgotten. We take to being domestic, only again to go out of ourselves; if we do not go astray of our own will and caprice, circumstances, passions, accidents, necessity, and one does not know what besides, manage it for us.”

Little did the earl imagine how deeply his friend would be touched by these random observations. It is a danger to which we are all of us exposed when we venture on general remarks in a society the circumstances of which we might have supposed were well enough known to us. Such casual wounds, even from well-meaning, kindly-disposed people, were nothing new to Charlotte. She so clearly, so thoroughly knew and understood the world, that it gave her no particular pain if it did happen that through somebody's thoughtlessness or imprudence she had her attention forced into this or that unpleasant direction. But it was very different with Otilie. At her half-conscious age, at which she rather felt than saw, and at which she was disposed, indeed was obliged, to turn her eyes away from what she should not or would not see, Otilie was thrown by this melancholy conversation into the most pitiable state. It rudely tore away the pleasant veil from before her eyes, and it seemed to her as if everything which had been done all this time for house and court, for park and garden, for all their wide environs, were utterly in vain, because he to whom it all belonged could not enjoy it; because he, like their present visitor, had been driven out to wander up and down in the world—and, indeed, in the most perilous paths of it—by those who were nearest and dearest to him. She was accustomed to listen in silence, but on this occasion she sat on in the most painful condition; which, indeed, was made rather

worse than better by what the stranger went on to say, as he continued with his peculiar, humorous gravity:

“I think I am now on the right way. I look upon myself steadily as a traveller, who renounces many things in order to enjoy more. I am accustomed to change; it has become, indeed, a necessity to me; just as in the opera, people are always looking out for new and new decorations, because there have already been so many. I know very well what I am to expect from the best hotels, and what from the worst. It may be as good or it may be as bad as it will, but I nowhere find anything to which I am accustomed, and in the end it comes to much the same thing whether we depend for our enjoyment entirely on the regular order of custom, or entirely on the caprices of accident. I have never to vex myself now, because this thing is mislaid, or that thing is lost; because the room in which I live is uninhabitable, and I must have it repaired; because somebody has broken my favorite cup, and for a long time nothing tastes well out of any other. All this I am happily raised above. If the house catches fire about my ears, my people quietly pack my things up, and we pass away out of the town in search of other quarters. And considering all these advantages, when I reckon carefully, I calculate that, by the end of the year, I have not sacrificed more than it would have cost me to be at home.”

In this description Otilie saw nothing but Edward before her; how he too was now amidst discomfort and hardship, marching along untrodden roads, lying out in the fields in danger and want, and in all this insecurity and hazard growing accustomed to be homeless and friendless, learning to fling away everything that he might have nothing to lose. Fortunately, the party separated for a short time. Otilie escaped to her room, where she could give way to her tears. No weight of sorrow had ever pressed so heavily upon her as this clear perception (which she tried, as people usually do, to make still clearer to herself), that men love to dally with and exaggerate the evils which circumstances have once begun to inflict upon them.

The state in which Edward was, came before her in a light so piteous, so miserable, that she made up her mind, let it cost her what it would, that she would do everything in her power to unite him again with Charlotte, and she herself would go and hide her sorrow and her love in some silent scene, and beguile the time with such employment as she could find.

Meanwhile the earl's companion, a quiet, sensible man and a keen observer, had remarked the mistake in the conversation, and spoke to his friend about it. The latter knew nothing of the circumstances of the family; but the other being one of those persons whose principal interest in travelling lay in gathering up the strange occurrences which arose out of the natural or artificial relations of society, which were produced by the conflict of the restraint of law with the violence of the will, of the understanding with the reason, of passion with prejudice—had some time before made himself acquainted with the outline of the story, and since he had been in the family he had learned exactly all that had taken place, and the present position in which things were standing.

The earl, of course, was very sorry, but it was not a thing to make him uneasy. A man must hold his tongue altogether in society if he is never to find himself in such a position; for not only remarks with meaning in them, but the most trivial expressions, may happen to clash in an inharmonious key with the interest of somebody present.

“We will set things right this evening,” said he, “and escape from any general conversation; you shall let them hear one of the many charming anecdotes with which your portfolio and your memory have enriched themselves while we have been abroad.”

However, with the best intentions, the strangers did not, on this next occasion, succeed any better in gratifying their friends with unalloyed entertainment. The earl's friend told a number of singular stories—some serious, some amusing, some touching, some terrible—with which he had roused their attention and strained their interest to the highest tension, and he thought to conclude with a strange but softer incident, little dreaming how nearly it would touch his listeners.

THE TWO STRANGE CHILDREN.

TWO children of neighboring families, a boy and a girl, of an age which would suit well for them at some future time to marry, were brought up together with this agreeable prospect, and the parents on both sides, who were people of some position in the world, looked forward with pleasure to their future union.

“It was too soon observed, however, that the purpose seemed likely to fail; the dispositions of both children promised everything which was good, but there was an unaccountable antipathy between them. Perhaps they were too much like each other. Both were thoughtful, clear in their wills, and firm in their purposes. Each separately was beloved and respected by his or her companions, but whenever they were together they were always antagonists. Forming separate plans for themselves, they only met mutually to cross and thwart one another; never emulating each other in pursuit of one aim, but always fighting for a single object. Good-natured and amiable everywhere else, they were spiteful and even malicious whenever they came in contact.

“This singular relation first showed itself in their childish games, and it continued with their advancing years. The boys used to play at soldiers, divide into parties, and give each other battle, and the fierce haughty young lady set herself at once at the head of one of the armies, and fought against the other with such animosity and bitterness that the latter would have been put to a shameful flight, except for the desperate bravery of her own particular rival, who at last disarmed his antagonist and took her prisoner; and even then she defended herself with so much fury that to save his eyes from being torn out, and at the same time not to injure his enemy, he had been obliged to take off his silk handkerchief and tie her hands with it behind her back.

“This she never forgave him: she made so many attempts, she laid so many plans to injure him, that the parents, who had been long watching these singular passions,

came to an understanding together and resolved to separate these two hostile creatures, and sacrifice their favorite hopes.

“The boy shot rapidly forward in the new situation in which he was placed. He mastered every subject which he was taught. His friends and his own inclination chose the army for his profession, and everywhere, let him be where he would, he was looked up to and beloved. His disposition seemed formed to labor for the well-being and the pleasure of others; and he himself, without being clearly conscious of it, was in himself happy at having got rid of the only antagonist which nature had assigned to him.

“The girl, on the other hand, became at once an altered creature. Her growing age, the progress of her education, above all, her own inward feelings, drew her away from the boisterous games with boys in which she had hitherto delighted. Altogether she seemed to want something; there was nothing anywhere about her which could deserve to excite her hatred, and she had never found anyone whom she could think worthy of her love.

“A young man, somewhat older than her previous neighbor-antagonist, of rank, property and consequence, beloved in society, and much sought after by women, bestowed his affections upon her. It was the first time that friend, lover, or servant had displayed any interest in her. The preference which he showed for her above others who were older, more cultivated, and of more brilliant pretensions than herself, was naturally gratifying; the constancy of his attention, which was never obtrusive, his standing by her faithfully through a number of unpleasant incidents, his quiet suit, which was declared indeed to her parents, but which as she was still very young he did not press, only asking to be allowed to hope; all this engaged him to her, and custom and the assumption in the world that the thing was already settled, carried her along with it. She had so often been called his bride that at last she began to consider herself so, and neither she nor anyone else ever thought any further trial could be necessary before she exchanged rings with the person who for so long a time had passed for her bridegroom.

“The peaceful course which the affair had all along followed was not at all precipitated by the betrothal. Things were allowed to go on both sides just as they were; they were happy in being together, and they could enjoy to the end the fair season of the year as the spring of their future more serious life.

“The absent youth had meanwhile grown up into everything which was most admirable. He had obtained a well-deserved rank in his profession, and came home on leave to visit his family. Towards his fair neighbor he found himself again in a natural but singular position. For some time past she had been nourishing in herself such affectionate family feelings as suited her position as a bride; she was in harmony with everything about her; she believed that she was happy, and in a certain sense she was so. Now first for a long time something again stood in her way. It was not to be hated—she had become incapable of hatred. Indeed the childish hatred, which had in fact been nothing more than an obscure recognition of inward worth, expressed itself now in a happy astonishment, in pleasure at meeting, in ready acknowledgments, in a

half willing, half unwilling, and yet irresistible attraction; and all this was mutual. Their long separation gave occasion for longer conversations; even their old childish foolishness served, now that they had grown wiser, to amuse them as they looked back; and they felt as if at least they were bound to make good their petulant hatred by friendliness and attention to each other—as if their first violent injustice to each other ought not to be left without open acknowledgment.

“On his side it all remained in a sensible, desirable moderation. His position, his circumstances, his efforts, his ambition, found him so abundant an occupation, that the friendliness of this pretty bride he received as a very thankworthy present; but without, therefore, even so much as thinking of her in connection with himself, or entertaining the slightest jealousy of the bridegroom, with whom he stood on the best possible terms.

“With her, however, it was altogether different. She seemed to herself as if she had awakened out of a dream. Her fightings with her young neighbor had been the beginnings of an affection; and this violent antagonism was no more than an equally violent innate passion for him, first showing under the form of opposition. She could remember nothing else than that she had always loved him. She laughed over her martial encounter with him with weapons in her hand; she dwelt upon the delight of her feelings when he disarmed her. She imagined that it had given her the greatest happiness when he bound her; and whatever she had done afterwards to injure him, or to vex him, presented itself to her as only an innocent means of attracting his attention. She cursed their separation. She bewailed the sleepy state into which she had fallen. She execrated the insidious lazy routine which had betrayed her into accepting so insignificant a bridegroom. She was transformed—doubly transformed, forwards or backwards, whichever way we like to take it.

“She kept her feelings entirely to herself; but if anyone could have divined them and shared them with her, he could not have blamed her: for indeed the bridegroom could not sustain a comparison with the other as soon as they were seen together. If a sort of regard to the one could not be refused, the other excited the fullest trust and confidence. If one made an agreeable acquaintance, the other we should desire for a companion; and in extraordinary cases, where higher demands might have to be made on them, the bridegroom was a person to be utterly despaired of, while the other would give the feeling of perfect security.

“There is a peculiar innate tact in women which discovers to them differences of this kind; and they have cause as well as occasion to cultivate it.

“The more the fair bride was nourishing all these feelings in secret, the less opportunity there was for anyone to speak a word which could tell in favor of her bridegroom, to remind her of what her duty and their relative position advised and commanded—indeed, what an unalterable necessity seemed now irrevocably to require; the poor heart gave itself up entirely to its passion.

“On one side she was bound inextricably to the bridegroom by the world, by her family, and by her own promise; on the other, the ambitious young man made no

secret of what he was thinking and planning for himself, conducting himself towards her no more than a kind but not at all a tender brother, and speaking of his departure as immediately impending; and now it seemed as if her early childish spirit woke up again in her with all its spleen and violence, and was preparing itself in its distemper, on this higher stage of life, to work more effectively and destructively. She determined that she would die to punish the once hated, and now so passionately loved, youth for his want of interest in her; and as she could not possess himself, at least she would wed herself forever to his imagination and to his repentance. Her dead image should cling to him, and he should never be free from it. He should never cease to reproach himself for not having understood, not examined, not valued her feelings toward him.

“This singular insanity accompanied her wherever she went. She kept it concealed under all sorts of forms; and although people thought her very odd, no one was observant enough or clever enough to discover the real inward reason.

“In the meantime, friends, relations, acquaintances had exhausted themselves in contrivances for pleasure parties. Scarcely a day passed, but something new and unexpected was set on foot. There was hardly a pretty spot in the country round which had not been decked out and prepared for the reception of some merry party. And now our young visitor before departing wished to do his part as well, and invited the young couple, with a small family circle, to an expedition on the water. They went on board a large beautiful vessel dressed out in all its colors,—one of the yachts which had a small saloon and a cabin or two besides, and are intended to carry with them upon the water the comfort and conveniences of land.

“They set out upon the broad river with music playing. The party had collected in the cabin, below deck, during the heat of the day, and were amusing themselves with games. Their young host, who could never remain without doing something, had taken charge of the helm, to relieve the old master of the vessel, and the latter had lain down and was fast asleep. It was a moment when the steerer required all his circumspectness, as the vessel was nearing a spot where two islands narrowed the channel of the river, while shallow banks of shingle stretching off, first on one side and then on the other, made the navigation difficult and dangerous. Prudent and sharp-sighted as he was, he thought for a moment that it would be better to wake the master; but he felt confident in himself, and he thought he would venture and make straight for the narrows. At this moment his fair enemy appeared upon deck with a wreath of flowers in her hair. ‘Take this to remember me by,’ she cried out. She took it off and threw it to the steerer. ‘Don’t disturb me,’ he answered quickly, as he caught the wreath; ‘I require all my powers and all my attention now.’ ‘You will never be disturbed by me any more,’ she cried; ‘you will never see me again.’ As she spoke, she rushed to the forward part of the vessel, and from thence she sprang into the water. Voice upon voice called out, ‘Save her, save her, she is sinking!’ He was in the most terrible difficulty. In the confusion the old shipmaster woke, and tried to catch the rudder, which the young man bid him take. But there was no time to change hands. The vessel stranded; and at the same moment, flinging off the heaviest of his upper garments, he sprang into the water and swam towards his beautiful enemy. The water is a friendly element to a man who is at home in it, and who knows how to deal

with it; it buoyed him up, and acknowledged the strong swimmer as its master. He soon overtook the beautiful girl, who had been swept away before him; he caught hold of her, raised her and supported her, and both of them were carried violently down by the current, till the shoals and islands were left far behind, and the river was again open and running smoothly. He now began to collect himself; they had passed the first immediate danger, in which he had been obliged to act mechanically without time to think; he raised his head as high as he could to look about him; and then swam with all his might to a low bushy point, which ran out conveniently into the stream. There he brought his fair burden to dry land, but he could find no signs of life in her; he was in despair, when he caught sight of a trodden path leading among the bushes. Again he caught her up in his arms, hurried forward, and presently reached a solitary cottage. There he found kind, good people—a young married couple; the misfortunes and the dangers explained themselves instantly; every remedy he could think of was instantly applied; a bright fire blazed up: woollen blankets were spread on a bed, counterpane, cloaks, skins, whatever there was at hand which would serve for warmth, were heaped over her as fast as possible. The desire to save life overpowered, for the present, every other consideration. Nothing was left undone to bring back to life the beautiful half-torpid, naked body. It succeeded; she opened her eyes! her friend was before her; she threw her heavenly arms about his neck. In this position she remained for a time; and then a stream of tears burst out and completed her recovery. ‘Will you forsake me,’ she cried, ‘now when I find you again thus?’ ‘Never,’ he answered, ‘never.’ hardly knowing what he said or did. ‘Only consider yourself,’ she added; ‘take care of yourself, for your sake and for mine.’



“She now began to collect herself, and for the first time recollected the state in which she was; she could not be ashamed before her darling, before her preserver; but she gladly allowed him to go, that he might take care of himself; for the clothes which he still wore were wet and dripping.

“Their young hosts considered what could be done. The husband offered the young man, and the wife offered the fair lady, the dresses in which they had been married, which were hanging up in full perfection, and sufficient for a complete suit, inside and out, for two people. In a short time our pair of adventurers were not only equipped, but in full costume. They looked most charming, gazed at one another, when they met, with admiration, and then with infinite affection, half laughing at the same time at the quaintness of their appearance, they fell into each other's arms.

“The power of youth and the quickening spirit of love in a few moments completely restored them; and there was nothing wanted but music to have set them both off dancing.

“To have found themselves brought from the water on dry land, from death into life, from the circle of their families into a wilderness, from despair into rapture, from

indifference to affection and to love, all in a moment: the head was not strong enough to bear it; it must either burst, or go distracted: or if so distressing an alternative were to be escaped, the heart must put out all its efforts.

“Lost wholly in each other, it was long before they recollected the alarm and anxiety of those who had been left behind; and they themselves, indeed, could not well think, without alarm and anxiety, how they were again to encounter them. ‘Shall we run away? shall we hide ourselves?’ said the young man. ‘We will remain together,’ she said, as she clung about his neck.

“The peasant having heard them say that a party was aground on the shoal, had hurried down, without stopping to ask another question, to the shore. When he arrived there, he saw the vessel coming safely down the stream. After much labor it had been got off; and they were now going on in uncertainty, hoping to find their lost ones again somewhere. The peasant shouted and made signs to them, and at last caught the attention of those on board; then he ran to a spot where there was a convenient place for landing, and went on signalling and shouting till the vessel's head was turned towards the shore; and what a scene there was for them when they landed. The parents of the two betrothed first pressed on the banks; the poor loving bridegroom had almost lost his senses. They had scarcely learned that their dear children had been saved, when in their strange disguise the latter came forward out of the bushes to meet them. No one recognized them till they were come quite close. ‘Who do I see?’ cried the mothers. ‘What do I see?’ cried the fathers. The preserved ones flung themselves on the ground before them. ‘Your children,’ they called out; ‘a pair.’ ‘Forgive us!’ cried the maiden. ‘Give us your blessing!’ cried the young man. ‘Give us your blessing!’ they cried both, as all the world stood still in wonder. ‘Your blessing!’ was repeated the third time; and who would have been able to refuse it?”

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CHAPTER XI.

The narrator made a pause, or rather he had already finished his story, before he observed the emotion into which Charlotte had been thrown by it. She got up, uttered some sort of an apology, and left the room. To her it was a well-known history. The principal incident in it had really taken place with the captain and a neighbor of her own; not exactly, indeed, as the Englishman had related it. But the main features of it were the same. It had only been more finished off and elaborated in its details, as stories of that kind always are, when they have passed first through the lips of the multitude, and then through the fancy of a clever and imaginative narrator; the result of the process being usually to leave everything and nothing as it was.

Otilie followed Charlotte, as the two friends begged her to do; and then it was the earl's turn to remark, that perhaps they had made a second mistake, and that the subject of the story had been well known to or was in some way connected with the family. "We must take care," he added, "that we do no more mischief here; we seem to bring little good to our entertainers for all the kindness and hospitality which they have shown us; we will make some excuse for ourselves, and then take our leave."

"I must confess," answered his companion, "that there is something else which still holds me here, which I should be very sorry to leave the house without seeing cleared up or in some way explained. You were too busy yourself yesterday when we were in the park with the camera, in looking for spots where you could make your sketches, to have observed anything else which was passing. You left the broad walk, you remember, and went to a sequestered place on the side of the lake. There was a fine view of the opposite shore which you wished to take. Well, Otilie, who was with us, got up to follow; and then proposed that she and I should find our way to you in the boat. I got in with her, and was delighted with the skill of my fair conductress. I assured her that never since I had been in Switzerland, where the young ladies so often fill the place of the boatmen, had I been so pleasantly ferried over the water. At the same time I could not help asking her why she had shown such an objection to going the way which you had gone, along the little by-path. I had observed her shrink from it with a sort of painful uneasiness. She was not at all offended. 'If you will promise not to laugh at me,' she answered, 'I will tell you as much as I know about it; but to myself it is a mystery which I cannot explain. There is a particular spot in that path which I never pass without a strange shiver passing over me, which I do not remember ever feeling anywhere else, and which I cannot the least understand. But I shrink from exposing myself to the sensation, because it is followed immediately after by a pain on the left side of my head, from which at other times I suffer severely.' We landed. Otilie was engaged with you, and I took the opportunity of examining the spot, which she pointed out to me as we went by on the water. I was not a little surprised to find there distinct traces of coal, in sufficient quantities to convince me that at a short distance below the surface there must be a considerable bed of it.

"Pardon me, my lord; I see you smile; and I know very well that you have no faith in these things about which I am so eager, and that it is only your sense and your

kindness which enable you to tolerate me. However, it is impossible for me to leave this place without trying on that beautiful creature an experiment with the pendulum.”

The earl, whenever these matters came to be spoken of, never failed to repeat the same objections to them over and over again; and his friend endured them all quietly and patiently, remaining firm, nevertheless, to his own opinion, and holding to his own wishes. He, too, again repeated, that there was no reason, because the experiment did not succeed with everyone, that they should give them up, as if there was nothing in them but fancy. They should be examined into all the more earnestly and scrupulously; and there was no doubt that the result would be the discovery of a number of affinities of inorganic creatures for one another, and of organic creatures for them, and again for each other, which at present were unknown to us.



He had already spread out his apparatus of gold rings, markasites, and other metallic substances, a pretty little box of which he always carried about with himself; and he suspended a piece of metal by a string over another piece, which he placed upon the table. “Now, my lord,” he said, “you may take what pleasure you please (I can see in your face what you are feeling), at perceiving that nothing will set itself in motion with me, or for me. But my operation is no more than a pretence; when the ladies come back, they will be curious to know what strange work we are about.”

The ladies returned. Charlotte understood at once what was going on. “I have heard much of these things,” she said; “but I never saw the effect myself. You have everything ready there. Let me try whether I can succeed in producing anything.”

She took the thread in her hand, and as she was perfectly serious, she held it steady, and without any agitation. Not the slightest motion, however, could be detected. Otilie was then called upon to try. She held the pendulum still more quietly and unconsciously over the plate on the table. But in a moment the swinging piece of metal began to stir with a distinct rotatory action, and turned as they moved the position of the plate, first to one side and then to the other; now in circles, now in ellipses; or else describing a series of straight lines; doing all the earl's friend could expect, and far exceeding, indeed, all his expectations.

The earl himself was a little staggered; but the other could never be satisfied, from delight and curiosity, and begged for the experiment again and again with all sorts of variations. Otilie was good-natured enough to gratify him; till at last she was obliged to desire to be allowed to go, as her headache had come on again. In further admiration and even rapture, he assured her with enthusiasm that he would cure her forever of her disorder, if she would only trust herself to his remedies. For a moment they did not know what he meant; but Charlotte, who comprehended immediately

after, declined his well-meant offer, not liking to have introduced and practised about her a thing of which she had always had the strongest apprehensions.

The strangers were gone, and, notwithstanding their having been the inadvertent cause of strange and painful emotions, left the wish behind them, that this meeting might not be the last. Charlotte now made use of the beautiful weather to return visits in the neighborhood, which, indeed, gave her work enough to do, seeing that the whole country round, some from a real interest, some merely from custom, had been most attentive in calling to inquire after her. At home her delight was the sight of the child, and really it well deserved all love and interest. People saw in it a wonderful, indeed a miraculous child; the brightest, sunniest little face; a fine, well-proportioned body, strong and healthy; and what surprised them more, the double resemblance, which became more and more conspicuous. In figure and in the features of the face, it was like the captain; the eyes every day it was less easy to distinguish from the eyes of Otilie.

Otilie herself, partly from this remarkable affinity, perhaps still more under the influence of that sweet woman's feeling which makes them regard with the most tender affection the offspring, even by another, of the man they love, was as good as a mother to the little creature as it grew, or rather, she was a second mother of another kind. If Charlotte was absent, Otilie remained alone with the child and the nurse. Nanny had for some time past been jealous of the boy for monopolizing the entire affections of her mistress; she had left her in a fit of crossness, and gone back to her mother. Otilie would carry the child about in the open air, and by degrees took longer and longer walks with it. She took her bottle of milk to give the child its food when it wanted any. Generally, too, she took a book with her; and so with the child in her arms, reading and wandering, she made a very pretty *Penserosa*.

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CHAPTER XII.

The object of the campaign was attained, and Edward, with crosses and decorations, was honorably dismissed. He betook himself at once to the same little estate, where he found exact accounts of his family waiting for him, on whom all this time, without their having observed it or known of it, a sharp watch had been kept under his orders. His quiet residence looked most sweet and pleasant when he reached it. In accordance with his orders, various improvements had been made in his absence, and what was wanting to the establishment in extent, was compensated by its internal comforts and conveniences. Edward, accustomed by his more active habits of life, to take decided steps, determined to execute a project which he long had sufficient time to think over. First of all, he invited the major to come to him. This pleasure in meeting again was very great to both of them. The friendships of boyhood, like relationship of blood, possess this important advantage, that mistakes and misunderstandings never produce irreparable injury; and the old regard after a time will always re-establish itself.

Edward began with inquiring about the situation of his friend, and learned that fortune had favored him exactly as he most could have wished. He then half-seriously asked whether there was not something going forward about a marriage; to which he received a most decided and positive denial.

“I cannot and will not have any reserve with you,” he proceeded. “I will tell you at once what my own feelings are, and what I intend to do. You know my passion for Otilie; you must long have comprehended that it was this which drove me into the campaign. I do not deny that I desired to be rid of a life which, without her, would be of no further value to me. At the same time, however, I acknowledge that I could never bring myself utterly to despair. The prospect of happiness with her was so beautiful, so infinitely charming, that it was not possible for me entirely to renounce it. Feelings, too, which I cannot explain, and a number of happy omens, have combined to strengthen me in the belief, in the assurance, that Otilie will one day be mine. The glass with our initials cut upon it, which was thrown into the air when the foundation-stone was laid, did not go to pieces; it was caught, and I have it again in my possession. After many miserable hours of uncertainty, spent in this place, I said to myself, ‘I will put myself in the place of this glass, and it shall be an omen whether our union be possible or not. I will go; I will seek for death; not like a madman, but like a man who still hopes that he may live. Otilie shall be the prize for which I fight. Otilie shall be behind the ranks of the enemy; in every intrenchment, in every beleaguered fortress, I shall hope to find her, and to win her. I will do wonders, with the wish to survive them; with the hope to gain Otilie, not to lose her.’ These feelings have led me on; they have stood by me through all dangers; and now I find myself like one who has arrived at his goal, who has overcome every difficulty and who has nothing more left in his way. Otilie is mine, and whatever lies between the thought and the execution of it, I can only regard as unimportant.”

“With a few strokes you blot out,” replied the major, “all the objections that we can or ought to urge upon you, and yet they must be repeated. I must leave it to yourself to

recall the full value of your relation with your wife; but you owe it to her, and you owe it to yourself, not to close your eyes to it. How can I so much as recollect that you have had a son given to you, without acknowledging at once that you two belong to one another forever; that you are bound, for this little creature's sake, to live united, that united you may educate it, and provide for its future welfare?"

"It is no more than the blindness of parents," answered Edward, "when they imagine their existence to be of so much importance to their children. Whatever lives, finds nourishment and finds assistance; and if the son who has early lost his father does not spend so easy, so favored a youth, he profits, perhaps, for that very reason, in being trained sooner for the world, and comes to a timely knowledge that he must accommodate himself to others, a thing which sooner or later we are all forced to learn. Here, however, even these considerations are irrelevant; we are sufficiently well off to be able to provide for more children than one, and it is neither right nor kind to accumulate so large a property on a single head."

The major attempted to say something of Charlotte's worth, and Edward's long-standing attachment to her; but the latter hastily interrupted him. "We committed ourselves to a foolish thing, that I see all too clearly. Whoever, in middle age, attempts to realize the wishes and hopes of his early youth, invariably deceives himself. Each ten years of a man's life has its own fortunes, its own hopes, its own desires. Woe to him who, either by circumstances or by his own infatuation, is induced to grasp at anything before him or behind him. We have done a foolish thing. Are we to abide by it all our lives? Are we, from some respect of prudence, to refuse to ourselves what the customs of the age do not forbid? In how many matters do men recall their intentions and their actions; and shall it not be allowed to them here, here, where the question is not of this thing or of that, but of everything; not of our single condition of life, but of the whole complex life itself?"

Again the major powerfully and impressively urged on Edward to consider what he owed to his wife, what was due to his family, to the world, and to his own position; but he could not succeed in producing the slightest impression.

"All these questions, my friend," he returned, "I have considered already again and again. They have passed before me in the storm of battle, when the earth was shaking with the thunder of the cannon, with the balls singing and whistling round me, with my comrades falling right and left, my horse shot under me, my hat pierced with bullets. They have floated before me by the still watch-fire under the starry vault of the sky. I have thought them all through, felt them all through. I have weighed them, and I have satisfied myself about them again and again, and now forever. At such moments why should I not acknowledge it to you? you too were in my thoughts, you too belonged to my circle; as, indeed, you and I have long belonged to one another. If I have ever been in your debt I am now in a position to repay it with interest; if you have been in mine you have now the means to make it good to me. I know that you love Charlotte, and she deserves it. I know that you are not indifferent to her, and why should she not feel your worth? Take her at my hand and give Ottilie to me, and we shall be the happiest beings upon the earth."

“If you choose to assign me so high a character,” replied the major, “it is the more reason for me to be firm and prudent. Whatever there may be in this proposal to make it attractive to me, instead of simplifying the problem, it only increases the difficulty of it. The question is now of me as well as of you. The fortunes, the good name, the honor of two men, hitherto unsullied with a breath, will be exposed to hazard by so strange a proceeding, to call it by no harsher name, and we shall appear before the world in a highly questionable light.”

“Our very characters being what they are,” replied Edward, “give us a right to take this single liberty. A man who has borne himself honorably through a whole life, makes an action honorable which might appear ambiguous in others. As concerns myself, after these last trials which I have taken upon myself, after the difficult and dangerous actions which I have accomplished for others, I feel entitled now to do something for myself. For you and Charlotte, that part of the business may, if you like it, be given up; but neither you nor any one shall keep me from doing what I have determined. If I may look for help and furtherance, I shall be ready to do everything which can be wished; but if I am to be left to myself, or if obstacles are to be thrown in my way, some extremity or other is sure to follow.”

The major thought it his duty to combat Edward's purposes as long as it was possible; and now he changed the mode of his attack and tried a diversion. He seemed to give way, and only spoke of the form of what they would have to do to bring about this separation, and these new unions; and so mentioned a number of ugly, undesirable matters, which threw Edward into the worst of tempers.

“I see plainly,” he cried at last, “that what we desire can only be carried by storm, whether it be from our enemies or from our friends. I keep clearly before my own eyes what I demand, what, one way or another, I must have; and I will seize it promptly and surely. Connections like ours, I know very well, cannot be broken up and reconstructed again without much being thrown down which is standing, and much having to give way which would be glad enough to continue. We shall come to no conclusion by thinking about it. All rights are alike to the understanding, and it is always easy to throw extra weight into the ascending scale. Do you make up your mind, my friend, to act, and act promptly, for me and for yourself. Disentangle and untie the knots, and tie them up again. Do not be deterred from it by nice respects. We have already given the world something to say about us. It will talk about us once more; and when we have ceased to be a nine days' wonder, it will forget us as it forgets everything else, and allow us to follow our own way without further concern with us.” The major had nothing further to say, and was at last obliged to sit silent; while Edward treated the affair as now conclusively settled, talked through in detail all that had to be done, and pictured the future in every most cheerful color, and then he went on again seriously and thoughtfully: “If we think to leave ourselves to the hope, to the expectation, that all will go right again of itself, that accident will lead us straight, and take care of us, it will be a most culpable self-deception. In such a way it would be impossible for us to save ourselves, or re-establish our peace again. I who have been the innocent cause of it all, how am I ever to console myself? By my own importunity I prevailed on Charlotte to write to you to stay with us, and Ottilie followed in consequence. We have had no more control over what ensued out of this,

but we have the power to make it innocuous; to guide the new circumstances to our own happiness. Can you turn away your eyes from the fair and beautiful prospects which I open to us? Can you insist to me, can you insist to us all, on a wretched renunciation of them? Do you think it possible? Is it possible? Will there be no vexations, no bitterness, no inconvenience to overcome, if we resolve to fall back into our old state? and will any good, any happiness whatever, arise out of it? Will your own rank, will the high position which you have earned, be any pleasure to you, if you are to be prevented from visiting me, or from living with me? And after what has passed, it would not be anything but painful. Charlotte and I, with all our property, would only find ourselves in a melancholy state. And if, like other men of the world, you can persuade yourself that years and separation will eradicate our feelings, will obliterate impressions so deeply engraved; why, then the question is of these very years, which it would be better to spend in happiness and comfort than in pain and misery. But the last and most important point of all which I have to urge is this: supposing that we, our outward and inward condition being what it is, could nevertheless make up our minds to wait at all hazards, and bear what is laid upon us, what is to become of Otilie? She must leave our family; she must go into society where we shall not be to care for her, and she will be driven wretchedly to and fro in a hard, cold world. Describe to me any situation in which Otilie, without me, without us, could be happy, and you will then have employed an argument which will be stronger than every other; and if I will not promise to yield to it, if I will not undertake at once to give up all my own hopes, I will at least reconsider the question, and see how what you have said will affect it.”

This problem was not so easy to solve; at least, no satisfactory answer to it suggested itself to his friend, and nothing was left to him except to insist again and again, how grave and serious, and in many senses how dangerous, the whole undertaking was; and at least that they ought maturely to consider how they had better enter upon it. Edward agreed to this, and consented to wait before he took any steps; but only under the condition that his friend should not leave him until they had come to a perfect understanding about it, and until the first measures had been taken.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Men who are complete strangers, and wholly indifferent to one another, if they live a long time together, are sure both of them to expose something of their inner nature, and thus a kind of intimacy will arise between them. All the more was it to be expected that there would soon be no secrets between our two friends, now that they were again under the same roof together, and in daily and hourly intercourse. They went over again the earlier stages of their history, and the major confessed to Edward that Charlotte had intended Otilie for him at the time at which he returned from abroad, and hoped that some time or other he might marry her. Edward was in ecstasies at this discovery; he spoke without reserve of the mutual affection of Charlotte and the major, which, because it happened to fall in so conveniently with his own wishes, he painted in very lively colors.

Deny it altogether, the major could not; at the same time, he could not altogether acknowledge it. But Edward only insisted on it the more. He had pictured the whole thing to himself not as possible, but as already concluded; all parties had only to resolve on what they all wished; there would be no difficulty in obtaining a separation; the marriages should follow as soon after as possible, and Edward could travel with Otilie.

Of all the pleasant things which imagination pictures to us, perhaps there is none more charming than when lovers and young married people look forward to enjoying their new relation to each other in a fresh, new world, and test the endurance of the bond between them in so many changing circumstances. The major and Charlotte were in the meantime to have unrestricted powers to settle all questions of money, property, and other such important worldly matters; and to do whatever was right and proper for the satisfaction of all parties. What Edward dwelt the most upon, however, what he seemed to promise himself the most advantage from was this:—as the child would have to remain with the mother, the major would charge himself with the education of it; he would train the boy according to his own views, and develop what capacities there might be in him. It was not for nothing that he had received in his baptism the name of Otto, which belonged to them both.

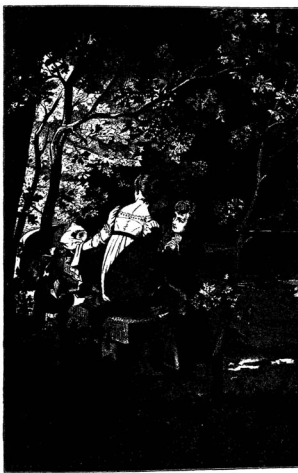
Edward had so completely arranged everything for himself, that he could not wait another day to carry it into execution. On their way to the castle, they arrived at a small town, where Edward had a house, and where he was to stay to await the return of the major. He could not, however, prevail upon himself to alight there at once, and accompanied his friend through the place. They were both on horseback, and falling into some interesting conversation, rode on further together.

On a sudden they saw, in the distance, the new house on the height, with its red tiles shining in the sun. An irresistible longing came over Edward; he would have it all settled that very evening; he would remain concealed in a village close by. The major was to urge the business on Charlotte with all his power; he would take her prudence by surprise; and oblige her by the unexpectedness of his proposal to make a free

acknowledgment of her feelings. Edward had transferred his own wishes to her; he felt certain that he was only meeting her half-way, and that her inclinations were as decided as his own; and he looked for an immediate consent from her, because he himself could think of nothing else.

Joyfully he saw the prosperous issue before his eyes; and that it might be communicated to him as swiftly as possible, a few cannon shots were to be fired off, and, if it was dark, a rocket or two sent up.

The major rode to the castle. He did not find Charlotte there; he learned that for the present she was staying at the new house; at that particular time, however, she was paying a visit in the neighborhood, and she probably would not have returned till late that evening. He walked back to the hotel, to which he had previously sent his horse.



EDWARD LOOKING AT THE CHILD.

Edward, in the meantime, unable to sit still from restlessness and impatience, stole away out of his concealment along solitary paths only known to foresters and fishermen, into his park; and he found himself towards evening in the copse close to the lake, the broad mirror of which he now for the first time saw spread out in its perfectness before him.

Otilie had gone out that afternoon for a walk along the shore. She had the child with her, and read as she usually did while she went along. She had gone as far as the oak tree by the ferry. The boy had fallen asleep; she sat down; laid it on the ground at her side, and continued reading. The book was one of those which attract persons of delicate feeling, and afterwards will not let them go again. She forgot the time and the hours; she never thought what a long way round it was by land to the new house; but she sat lost in her book and in herself, so beautiful to look at, that the trees and the bushes round her ought to have been alive, and to have had eyes given them to gaze upon her and admire her. The sun was sinking; a ruddy streak of light fell upon her from behind, tingeing with gold her cheek and shoulder. Edward, who had made his way to the lake without being seen, finding his park desolate, and no trace of human creature to be seen anywhere, went on and on. At last he broke through the copse behind the oak tree, and saw her. At the same moment she saw him. He flew to her,

and threw himself at her feet. After a long, silent pause, in which they both endeavored to collect themselves, he explained in a few words why and how he had come there. He had sent the major to Charlotte; and perhaps at that moment their common destiny was being decided. Never had he doubted her affection, and she assuredly had never doubted his. He begged for her consent; she hesitated; he implored her. He offered to resume his old privilege, and throw his arms around her, and embrace her; she pointed down to the child.

Edward looked at it, and was amazed. "Great God!" he cried; "if I had cause to doubt my wife and my friend, this face would witness fearfully against them. Is not this the very image of the major? I never saw such a likeness."

"Indeed!" replied Otilie; "all the world say it is like me."

"Is it possible?" Edward answered; and at the moment the child opened its eyes—two large, black, piercing eyes, deep and full of love; already the little face was full of intelligence. He seemed as if he knew both the figures which he saw standing before him. Edward threw himself down beside the child, and then knelt a second time before Otilie. "It is you," he cried; "the eyes are yours! ah, but let me look into yours; let me throw a veil over that ill-starred hour which gave its being to this little creature. Shall I shock your pure spirit with the fearful thought, that man and wife who are estranged from each other, can yet press each other to their heart, and profane the bonds by which the law unites them by other eager wishes? Oh, yes! As I have said so much; as my connection with Charlotte must now be severed; as you will be mine, why should I not speak out the words to you? This child is the offspring of a double adultery. It should have been a tie between my wife and myself, but it severs her from me, and me from her. Let it witness, then, against me. Let these fair eyes say to yours, that in the arms of another I belonged to you. You must feel, Otilie, oh! you must feel, that my fault, my crime, I can only expiate in your arms.

"Hark!" he called out, as he sprang up and listened. He thought that he had heard a shot, and that it was the sign which the major was to give. It was the gun of a forester on the adjoining hill. Nothing followed. Edward grew impatient.

Otilie now first observed that the sun was down behind the mountains; its last rays were shining on the windows of the house above. "Leave me, Edward," she cried; "go. Long as we have been parted, much as we have borne, yet remember what we both owe to Charlotte. She must decide our fate; do not let us anticipate her judgment. I am yours if she will permit it to be so. If she will not, I must renounce you. As you think it is now so near an issue, let us wait. Go back to the village, where the major supposes you to be. Is it likely that a rude cannon-shot will inform you of the results of such an interview? Perhaps at this moment he is seeking for you. He will not have found Charlotte at home; of that I am certain. He may have gone to meet her; for they knew at the castle where she was. How many things may have happened! Leave me! she must be at home by this time; she is expecting me with the baby above."



Ottolie spoke hurriedly; she called together all the possibilities. It was too delightful to be with Edward; but she felt that he must now leave her. "I beseech, I implore you, my beloved," she cried out, "go back and wait for the major."

"I obey your commands," cried Edward. He gazed at her for a moment with rapturous love, and then caught her close in his arms. She wound her own about him, and pressed him tenderly to her breast. Hope streamed away, like a star shooting in the sky, above their heads. They thought then, they believed, that they did indeed belong to one another. For the first time they exchanged free, genuine kisses, and separated with pain and effort.

The sun had gone down. It was twilight, and a damp mist was rising about the lake. Ottolie stood confused and agitated. She looked across to the house on the hill, and she thought she saw Charlotte's white dress on the balcony. It was a long way round by the end of the lake; and she knew how impatiently Charlotte would be waiting for the child. She saw the plane trees just opposite her, and only a narrow interval of water divided her from the path which led straight up to the house. Her nervousness about venturing on the water with the child vanished in her present embarrassment. She hastened to the boat; she did not feel that her heart was beating; that her feet were tottering; that her senses were threatening to fail her.

She sprang in, seized the oar, and pushed off. She had to use force; she pushed again. The boat shot off, and glided, swaying and rocking, into the open water. With the child in her left arm, the book in her left hand, and the oar in her right, she lost her footing, and fell over the seat; the oar slipped from her on one side, and as she tried to recover herself, the child and the book slipped on the other, all into the water. She caught the floating dress, but lying entangled as she was herself, she was unable to rise. Her right hand was free, but she could not reach round to help herself up with it; at last she succeeded. She drew the child out of the water; but its eyes were closed, and it had ceased to breathe.

In a moment she recovered all her self-possession; but so much the greater was her agony; the boat was driving fast into the middle of the lake; the oar was swimming far away from her. She saw no one on the shore; and, indeed, if she had, it would have been of no service to her. Cut off from all assistance, she was floating on the faithless, unstable element.

She sought for help from herself; she had often heard of the recovery of the drowned; she had herself witnessed an instance of it on the evening of her birthday; she took off

the child's clothes, and dried it with her muslin dress; she threw open her bosom, laying it bare for the first time to the free heaven. For the first time she pressed a living being to her pure, naked breast. Alas! and it was not a living being. The cold limbs of the ill-starred little creature chilled her to the heart. Streams of tears gushed from her eyes, and lent a show of life and warmth to the outside of the torpid limbs. She persevered with her efforts; she wrapped it in her shawl, she drew it close to herself, stroked it, breathed upon it, and with tears and kisses labored to supply the help which, cut off as she was, she was unable to find.

It was all in vain; the child lay motionless in her arms; motionless the boat floated on the glassy water. But even here her beautiful spirit did not leave her forsaken. She turned to the Power above. She sank down upon her knees in the boat, and with both arms raised the unmoving child above her innocent breast, like marble in its whiteness; alas, too like marble, cold; with moist eyes she looked up and cried for help, where a tender heart hopes to find it in its fulness, when all other help has failed.

The stars were beginning one by one to glimmer down upon her; she turned to them and not in vain; a soft air stole over the surface, and wafted the boat under the plane trees.

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CHAPTER XIV.

She hurried to the new house, and called the surgeon and gave the child into his hands. It was carried at once to Charlotte's sleeping-room. Cool and collected from a wide experience, he submitted the tender body to the usual process. Otilie stood by him, through it all. She prepared everything, she fetched everything, but as if she were moving in another world; for the height of misfortune, like the height of happiness, alters the aspect of every object. And it was only when after every resource had been exhausted, the good man shook his head, and to her questions, whether there was hope, first was silent, and then answered with a gentle No! that she left the apartment, and had scarcely entered the sitting-room, when she fell fainting, with her face upon the carpet, unable to reach the sofa.

At that moment Charlotte was heard driving up. The surgeon implored the servants to keep back, and allow him to go to meet her and prepare her. But he was too late; while he was speaking she had entered the drawing-room. She found Otilie on the ground, and one of the girls of the house came running and screaming to her open-mouthed. The surgeon entered at the same moment, and she was informed of everything. She could not at once, however, give up all hope. She was flying up-stairs to the child, but the physician besought her to remain where she was. He went himself, to deceive her with a show of fresh exertions, and she sat down upon the sofa. Otilie was still lying on the ground; Charlotte raised her, and supported her against herself, and her beautiful head sank down upon her knee. The kind medical man went backwards and forwards; he appeared to be busy about the child; his real care was for the ladies; and so came on midnight, and the stillness grew more and more deathly. Charlotte did not try to conceal from herself any longer that her child would never return to life again. She desired to see it now. It had been wrapped up in warm woollen coverings. And it was brought down as it was, lying in its cot, which was placed at her side on the sofa. The little face was uncovered; and there it lay in its calm sweet beauty.

The report of the accident soon spread through the village; everyone was roused, and the story reached the hotel. The major hurried up the well-known road; he went round and round the house; at last he met a servant who was going to one of the out-buildings to fetch something. He learned from him in what state things were, and desired him to tell the surgeon that he was there. The latter came out, not a little surprised at the appearance of his old patron. He told him exactly what had happened, and undertook to prepare Charlotte to see him. He then went in, began some conversation to distract her attention, and led her imagination from one object to another, till at last he brought it to rest upon her friend, and the depth of feeling and of sympathy which would surely be called out in him. From the imaginative she was brought at once to the real. Enough! she was informed that he was at the door, that he knew everything and desired to be admitted.

The major entered. Charlotte received him with a miserable smile. He stood before her; she lifted off the green silk covering under which the body was lying; and by the

dim light of a taper, he saw before him, not without a secret shudder, the stiffened image of himself. Charlotte pointed to a chair, and there they sat opposite to one another, without speaking, through the night. Otilie was still lying motionless on Charlotte's knee; she breathed softly, and slept or seemed to sleep.

The morning dawned, the lights went out; the two friends appeared to awake out of a heavy dream. Charlotte looked towards the major, and said quietly: "Tell me through what circumstances you have been brought hither, to take part in this mourning scene."



"The present is not a time," the major answered, in the same low tone as that in which Charlotte had spoken, for fear lest she might disturb Otilie; "this is not a time, and this is not a place for reserve. The condition in which I find you is so fearful that even the earnest matter on which I am here, loses its importance by the side of it." He then informed her, quite calmly and simply, of the object of his mission, in so far as he was the ambassador of Edward: of the object of his coming, in so far as his own free will and his own interests were concerned in it. He laid both before her, delicately but uprightly; Charlotte listened quietly, and showed neither surprise nor unwillingness.

As soon as the major had finished, she replied, in a voice so light that to catch her words he was obliged to draw his chair closer to her: "In such a case as this I have never before found myself; but in similar cases I have always said to myself, how will it be to-morrow? I feel very clearly that the fate of many persons is now in my hands, and what I have to do is soon said without scruple or hesitation. I consent to the separation; I ought to have made up my mind to it before; by my unwillingness and reluctance I have destroyed my child. There are certain things on which destiny obstinately insists. In vain may reason, may virtue, may duty, may all holy feelings place themselves in its way. Something shall be done which to it seems good, and which to us seems not good; and it forces its own way through at last, let us conduct ourselves as we will.

"And, indeed, what am I saying? It is but my own desire, my own purpose, against which I acted so unthinkingly, which destiny is again bringing in my way? Did I not long ago, in my thoughts, design Edward and Otilie for one another? Did I not myself labor to bring them together? And you, my friend, you yourself were an accomplice in my plot. Why, why, could I not distinguish mere man's obstinacy from real love? Why did I accept his hand, when I could have made him happy as a friend, and when another could have made him happy as a wife? And now, look here on this unhappy slumberer. I tremble for the moment when she will recover out of this half death sleep into consciousness. How can she endure to live? How shall she ever console herself, if she may not hope to make good that to Edward, of which, as the instrument of the

most wonderful destiny, she has deprived him? And she can make it all good again by the passion, by the devotion with which she loves him. If love be able to bear all things, it is able to do yet more; it can restore all things: of myself at such a moment I may not think.

“Do you go quietly away, my dear major; say to Edward that I consent to the separation; that I leave it to him, to you, and to Mittler, to settle whatever is to be done. I have no anxiety for my own future condition; it may be what it will; it is nothing to me. I will subscribe whatever paper is submitted to me, only he must not require me to join actively. I cannot have to think about it, or give advice.”

The major rose to go. She stretched out her hand to him across Otilie. He pressed it to his lips, and whispered gently: “And for myself, may I hope anything?”

“Do not ask me now!” replied Charlotte. “I will tell you another time. We have not deserved to be miserable; but neither can we say that we have deserved to be happy together.”

The major left her, and went, feeling for Charlotte to the bottom of his heart, but not being able to be sorry for the fate of the poor child. Such an offering seemed necessary to him for their general happiness. He pictured Otilie to himself with a child of her own in her arms, as the most perfect compensation for the one of which she had deprived Edward. He pictured himself with his own son on his knee, who should have better right to resemble him than the one which was departed.

With such flattering hopes and fancies passing through his mind, he returned to the hotel, and on his way back he met Edward, who had been waiting for him the whole night through in the open air, since neither rocket nor report of cannon would bring him news of the successful issue of his undertaking. He had already heard of the misfortune; and he too, instead of being sorry for the poor creature, regarded what had befallen it, without being exactly ready to confess it to himself, as a convenient accident, through which the only impediment in the way of his happiness was at once removed.

The major at once informed him of his wife's resolution, and he therefore easily allowed himself to be prevailed upon to return again with him to the village, and from thence to go for a while to the little town, where they would consider what was next to be done, and make their arrangements.

After the major had left her, Charlotte sat on, buried in her own reflections; but it was only for a few minutes. Otilie suddenly raised herself from her lap, and looked full with her large eyes in her friend's face. Then she got up from off the ground, and stood upright before her.

“This is the second time,” began the noble girl, with an irresistible solemnity of manner, “this is the second time that the same thing has happened to me. You once said to me that similar things often befall people more than once in their lives in a similar way, and if they do, it is always at important moments. I now find that what

you said is true, and I have to make a confession to you. Shortly after my mother's death, when I was a very little child, I was sitting one day on a footstool close to you. You were on the sofa, as you are at this moment, and my head rested on your knees. I was not asleep, I was not awake: I was in a trance. I knew everything which was passing about me. I heard every word which was said with the greatest distinctness, and yet I could not stir, I could not speak; and if I had wished it, I could not have given a hint that I was conscious. On that occasion you were speaking about me to one of your friends; you were commiserating my fate, left as I was a poor orphan in the world. You described my dependent position, and how unfortunate a future was before me, unless some very happy star watched over me. I understood well what you said. I saw, perhaps too clearly, what you appeared to hope of me, and what you thought I ought to do. I made rules to myself, according to such limited insight as I had, and by these I have long lived; by these, at the time when you so kindly took charge of me, and had me with you in your house, I regulated whatever I did, and whatever I left undone.

“But I have wandered out of my course; I have broken my rules; I have lost the very power of feeling them. And now, after a dreadful occurrence, you have again made clear to me my situation, which is more pitiable than the first. While lying in a half torpor on your lap, I have again, as if out of another world, heard every syllable which you uttered. I know from you how all is with me. I shudder at the thought of myself; but again, as I did then, in my half sleep of death, I have marked out my new path for myself.

“I am determined, as I was before, and what I have determined I must tell you at once. I will never be Edward's wife. In a terrible manner God has opened my eyes to see the sin in which I was entangled. I will atone for it, and let no one think to move me from my purpose. It is by this, my dearest, kindest friend, that you must govern your own conduct. Send for the major to come back to you. Write to him that no steps must be taken. It made me miserable that I could not stir or speak when he went;—I tried to rise,—I tried to cry out. Oh, why did you let him leave you with such unlawful hopes!”

Charlotte saw Otilie's condition, and she felt for it; but she hoped that by time and persuasion she might be able to prevail upon her. On her uttering a few words, however, which pointed to a future,—to a time when her sufferings would be alleviated, and when there might be better room for hope, “No!” Otilie cried, with vehemence, “do not endeavor to move me; do not seek to deceive me. At the moment at which I learn that you have consented to the separation, in that same lake I will expiate my errors and my crimes.”

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CHAPTER XV.

Friends and relations, and all persons living in the same house together, are apt, when life is going smoothly and peacefully with them, to make what they are doing, or what they are going to do, even more than is right or necessary, a subject of constant conversation. They talk to each other of their plans and their occupations, and, without exactly taking one another's advice, consider and discuss together the entire progress of their lives. But this is far from being the case in serious moments; just when it would seem men most require the assistance and support of others, they all draw singly within themselves everyone to act for himself, every one to work in his own fashion; they conceal from one another the particular means which they employ, and only the result, the object, the thing which they realize, is again made common property.

After so many strange and unfortunate incidents, a sort of silent seriousness had passed over the two ladies, which showed itself in a sweet mutual effort to spare each other's feelings. The child had been buried privately in the chapel. It rested there as the first offering to a destiny full of ominous foreshadowings.

Charlotte, as soon as ever she could, turned back to life and occupation, and here she first found Otilie standing in need of her assistance. She occupied herself almost entirely with her, without letting it be observed. She knew how deeply the noble girl loved Edward. She had discovered by degrees the scene which had preceded the accident, and had gathered every circumstance of it, partly from Otilie herself, partly from the letters of the major.

Otilie, on her side, made Charlotte's immediate life much more easy for her. She was open, and even talkative, but she never spoke of the present, or of what had lately passed. She had been a close and thoughtful observer. She knew much, and now it all came to the surface. She entertained, she amused Charlotte, and the latter still nourished a hope in secret to see her married to Edward after all.

But something very different was passing in Otilie. She had disclosed the secret of the course of her life to her friend, and she showed no more of her previous restraint and submissiveness. By her repentance and her resolution she felt herself freed from the burden of her fault and her misfortune. She had no more violence to do to herself. In the bottom of her heart she had forgiven herself solely under condition of the fullest renunciation, and it was a condition which would remain binding for all time to come.

So passed away some time, and Charlotte now felt how deeply house and park, and lake and rocks and trees, served to keep alive in them all their most painful reminiscences. They wanted change of scene, both of them, it was plain enough; but how it was to be effected was not so easy to decide.

Were the two ladies to remain together? Edward's previously-expressed will appeared to enjoin it,—his declarations and his threats appeared to make it necessary; only it could not be now mistaken that Charlotte and Otilie, with all their goodwill, with all their sense, with all their efforts to conceal it, could not avoid finding themselves in a painful situation towards one another. In their conversation there was a constant endeavor to avoid doubtful subjects. They were often obliged only half to understand some allusion; more often, expressions were misinterpreted, if not by their understandings, at any rate by their feelings. They were afraid to give pain to one another, and this very fear itself produced the evil which they were seeking to avoid.

If they were to try change of scene, and at the same time (at any rate for a while) to part, the old question came up again, where Otilie was to go? There was the grand, rich family, who still wanted a desirable companion for their daughter, their attempts to find a person whom they could trust having hitherto proved ineffectual. The last time the baroness had been at the castle, she had urged Charlotte to send Otilie there, and she had been lately pressing it again and again in her letters. Charlotte now a second time proposed it; but Otilie expressly declined going anywhere, where she would be thrown into what is called the great world.

“Do not think me foolish or self-willed, my dear aunt,” she said; “I had better tell you what I feel, for fear you should judge hardly of me; although in any other case it would be my duty to be silent. A person who has fallen into uncommon misfortunes, however guiltless he may be, carries a frightful mark upon him. His presence, in everyone who sees him and is aware of his history, excites a kind of horror. People see in him the terrible fate which has been laid upon him, and he is the object of a diseased and nervous curiosity. It is so with a house, it is so with a town, where any terrible action has been done; people enter them with awe; the light of day shines less brightly there, and the stars seem to lose their lustre.

“Perhaps we ought to excuse it, but how extreme is the indiscretion with which people behave towards such unfortunates, with their foolish importunities and awkward kindness! You must forgive me for speaking in this way, but that poor girl whom Luciana tempted out of her retirement, and with such mistaken good nature tried to force into society and amusement, has haunted me and made me miserable. The poor creature, when she was so frightened and tried to escape, and then sank and swooned away, and I caught her in my arms, and the party came all crowding round in terror and curiosity! little did I think, then, that the same fate was in store for me. But my feeling for her is as deep and warm and fresh as ever it was; and now I may direct my compassion upon myself, and secure myself from being the object of any similar exposure.”

“But, my dear child,” answered Charlotte, “you will never be able to withdraw yourself where no one can see you; we have no cloisters now: otherwise, there, with your present feelings, would be your resource.”

“Solitude would not give me the resource for which I wish, my dear aunt,” answered Otilie. “The one true and valuable resource is to be looked for where we can be active and useful; all the self-denials and all the penances on earth will fail to deliver

us from an evil-omened destiny, if it be determined to persecute us. Let me sit still in idleness and serve as a spectacle for the world, and it will overpower me and crush me. But find me some peaceful employment, where I can go steadily and unweariedly on doing my duty, and I shall be able to bear the eyes of men, when I need not shrink under the eyes of God.”

“Unless I am much mistaken,” replied Charlotte, “your inclination is to return to the school.”

“Yes,” Otilie answered; “I do not deny it. I think it a happy destination to train up others in the beaten way, after having been trained in the strangest myself. And do we not see the same great fact in history? some moral calamity drives men out into the wilderness; but they are not allowed to remain as they had hoped in their concealment there. They are summoned back into the world, to lead the wanderers into the right way; and who are fitter for such a service than those who have been initiated into the labyrinths of life? They are commanded to be the support of the unfortunate; and who can better fulfil that command than those who have no more misfortunes to fear upon earth?”

“You are selecting an uncommon profession for yourself,” replied Charlotte. “I shall not oppose you, however. Let it be as you wish; only I hope it will be but for a short time.”

“Most warmly I thank you,” said Otilie, “for giving me leave at least to try to make the experiment. If I am not flattering myself too highly, I am sure I shall succeed: wherever I am, I shall remember the many trials which I went through myself, and how small, how infinitely small they were compared to those which I afterwards had to undergo. It will be my happiness to watch the embarrassments of the little creatures as they grow; to cheer them in their childish sorrows, and guide them back with a light hand out of their little aberrations. The fortunate is not the person to be of help to the fortunate; it is in the nature of man to require ever more and more of himself and others, the more he has received. The unfortunate who has himself recovered, knows best how to nourish, in himself and them, the feeling that every moderate good ought to be enjoyed with rapture.”

“I have but one objection to make to what you propose,” said Charlotte, after some thought, “although that one seems to me of great importance. I am not thinking of you, but of another person: you are aware of the feelings towards you of that good, right-minded, excellent assistant. In the way in which you desire to proceed, you will become every day more valuable and more indispensable to him. Already he himself believes that he can never live happily without you, and hereafter, when he has become accustomed to have you to work with him, he will be unable to carry on his business if he loses you; you will have assisted him at the beginning only to injure him in the end.”

“Destiny has not dealt with me with too gentle a hand,” replied Otilie; “and whoever loves me has perhaps not much better to expect. Our friend is so good and so sensible, that I hope he will be able to reconcile himself to remaining in a simple relation with

me; he will learn to see in me a consecrated person, lying under the shadow of an awful calamity, and only able to support herself and bear up against it by devoting herself to that Holy Being who is invisibly around us, and alone is able to shield us from the dark powers which threaten to overwhelm us.”

All this, which the dear girl poured out so warmly, Charlotte privately reflected over; on many different occasions, although only in the gentlest manner, she had hinted at the possibility of Otilie's being brought again in contact with Edward; but the slightest mention of it, the faintest hope, the least suspicion, seemed to wound Otilie to the quick. One day when she could not evade it, she expressed herself to Charlotte clearly and peremptorily on the subject.

“If your resolution to renounce Edward,” returned Charlotte, “is so firm and unalterable, then you had better avoid the danger of seeing him again. At a distance from the object of our love, the warmer our affection, the stronger is the control which we fancy that we can exercise on ourselves; because the whole force of the passion, diverted from its outward objects, turns inwards on ourselves. But how soon, how swiftly is our mistake made clear to us, when the thing which we thought that we could renounce stands again before our eyes as indispensable to us! You must now do what you consider best suited to your circumstances. Look well into yourself; change, if you prefer it, the resolution which you have just expressed. But do it of yourself, with a free consenting heart. Do not allow yourself to be drawn in by an accident; do not let yourself be surprised into your former position. It will place you at issue with yourself and will be intolerable to you. As I said, before you take this step, before you remove from me, and enter upon a new life, which will lead you no one knows in what direction, consider once more whether really, indeed, you can renounce Edward for the whole time to come. If you have faithfully made up your mind that you will do this, then will you enter into an engagement with me, that you will never admit him into your presence; and if he seeks you out and forces himself upon you, that you will not exchange words with him?”



Otilie

Otilie did not hesitate a moment; she gave Charlotte the promise, which she had already made to herself.

Now, however, Charlotte began to be haunted with Edward's threat, that he would only consent to renounce Otilie, as long as she was not parted from Charlotte. Since that time, indeed, circumstances were so altered, so many things had happened, that an engagement which was wrung from him in a moment of excitement might well be supposed to have been cancelled. She was unwilling, however, in the remotest sense to venture anything or to undertake anything which might displease him, and Mittler was therefore to find Edward, and inquire what, as things now were, he wished to be done.

Since the death of the child, Mittler had often been at the castle to see Charlotte, although only for a few moments at a time. The unhappy accident which had made her reconciliation with her husband in the highest degree improbable, had produced a most painful effect upon him. But ever, as his nature was, hoping and striving, he rejoiced secretly at the resolution of Otilie. He trusted to the softening influence of passing time; he hoped that it might still be possible to keep the husband and the wife from separating; and he tried to regard these convulsions of passion only as trials of wedded love and fidelity.

Charlotte, at the very first, had informed the major by letter of Otilie's declaration. She had entreated him most earnestly to prevail on Edward to take no further steps for the present. They should keep quiet and wait, and see whether the poor girl's spirits would recover. She had let him know from time to time whatever was necessary of what had more lately fallen from her. And now Mittler had to undertake the really difficult commission of preparing Edward for an alteration in her situation. Mittler, however, well knowing that men can be brought more easily to submit to what is already done, than to give their consent to what is yet to be done, persuaded Charlotte that it would be better to send Otilie off at once to the school.

Consequently, as soon as Mittler was gone, preparations were at once made for the journey. Otilie put her things together; and Charlotte observed that neither the beautiful box, nor anything out of it, was to go with her. Otilie had said nothing to her on the subject; and she took no notice, but let her alone. The day of the departure came; Charlotte's carriage was to take Otilie the first day as far as a place where they were well known, where she was to pass the night, and on the second she would go on in it to the school. It was settled that Nanny was to accompany her, and remain as her attendant.

This capricious little creature had found her way back to her mistress after the death of the child, and now hung about her as warmly and passionately as ever; indeed she seemed, with her loquacity and attentiveness, as if she wished to make good her past neglect, and henceforth devote herself entirely to Otilie's service. She was quite beside herself now for joy at the thought of travelling with her, and of seeing strange places, when she had hitherto never been away from the scene of her birth; and she ran from the castle to the village to carry the news of her good fortune to her parents and her relations, and to take leave. Unluckily for herself, she went among other places into a room where a person was who had the measles, and caught the infection, which came out upon her at once. The journey could not be postponed. Otilie herself was urgent to go. She had travelled once already the same road. She knew the people

of the hotel where she was to sleep. The coachman from the castle was going with her. There could be nothing to fear.

Charlotte made no opposition. She, too, in thought, was making haste to be clear of present embarrassments. The rooms which Otilie had occupied at the castle she would have prepared for Edward as soon as possible, and restored to the old state in which they had been before the arrival of the captain. The hope of bringing back old happy days burns up again and again in us, as if it never could be extinguished. And Charlotte was quite right; there was nothing else for her except to hope as she did.

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CHAPTER XVI.

When Mittler was come to talk the matter over with Edward, he found him sitting by himself, with his head supported on his right hand, and his arm resting on the table. He appeared in great suffering.

“Is your headache troubling you again?” asked Mittler.

“It is troubling me,” answered he; “and yet I cannot wish it were not so, for it reminds me of Otilie. She too, I say to myself, is also suffering in the same way at this same moment, and suffering more perhaps than I; and why cannot I bear it as well as she? These pains are good for me. I might almost say that they were welcome; for they serve to bring out before me with the greater vividness her patience and all her other graces. It is only when we suffer ourselves, that we feel really the true nature of all the high qualities which are required to bear suffering.”

Mittler, finding his friend so far resigned, did not hesitate to communicate the message with which he had been sent. He brought it out piecemeal, however; in order of time, as the idea had itself arisen between the ladies, and had gradually ripened into a purpose. Edward scarcely made an objection. From the little which he said, it appeared as if he was willing to leave everything to them; the pain which he was suffering at the moment making him indifferent to all besides.

Scarcely, however, was he again alone, than he got up, and walked rapidly up and down the room; he forgot his pain, his attention now turning to what was external to himself. Mittler's story had stirred the embers of his love, and awakened his imagination in all its vividness. He saw Otilie by herself, or as good as by herself, travelling on a road which was well known to him—in a hotel with every room of which he was familiar. He thought, he considered, or rather he neither thought nor considered; he only wished—he only desired. He would see her; he would speak to her. Why, or for what good end that was to come of it, he did not care to ask himself; but he made up his mind at once. He must do it.

He summoned his valet into his council, and through him he made himself acquainted with the day and hour when Otilie was to set out. The morning broke. Without taking any person with him, Edward mounted his horse, and rode off to the place where she was to pass the night. He was there too soon. The hostess was overjoyed at the sight of him; she was under heavy obligations to him for a service which he had been able to do for her. Her son had been in the army, where he had conducted himself with remarkable gallantry. He had performed one particular action of which no one had been a witness but Edward; and the latter had spoken of it to the commander-in-chief in terms of such high praise, that notwithstanding the opposition of various ill-wishers, he had obtained a decoration for him. The mother, therefore, could never do enough for Edward. She got ready her best room for him, which indeed was her own wardrobe and store-room, with all possible speed. He informed her, however, that a young lady was coming to pass the night there, and he ordered an apartment for her at

the back, at the end of the gallery. It sounded a mysterious sort of affair; but the hostess was ready to do anything to please her patron, who appeared so interested and so busy about it. And he, what were his sensations as he watched through the long, weary hours till evening? He examined the room round and round in which he was to see her; with all its strangeness and homeliness it seemed to him to be an abode for angels. He thought over and over what he had better do; whether he should take her by surprise, or whether he should prepare her for meeting him. At last the second course seemed the preferable one. He sat down and wrote a letter which she was to read:

EDWARD TO OTTILIE.

“While you read this letter, my best beloved, I am close to you. Do not agitate yourself; do not be alarmed; you have nothing to fear from me. I will not force myself upon you. I will see you or not, as you yourself shall choose.

“Consider, oh! consider your condition and mine. How must I not thank you, that you have taken no decisive step! But the step which you have taken is significant enough. Do not persist in it. Here, as it were, at a parting of the ways, reflect once again. Can you be mine?—will you be mine? Oh, you will be showing mercy on us all if you will; and on me, infinite mercy.

“Let me see you again!—happily, joyfully see you once more! Let me make my request to you with my own lips; and do you give me your answer your own beautiful self, on my breast, Otilie! where you have so often rested, and which belongs to you forever!”

As he was writing, the feeling rushed over him that what he was longing for was coming—was close—would be there almost immediately. By that door she would come in; she would read that letter; she in her own person would stand there before him as she used to stand; she for whose appearance he had thirsted so long. Would she be the same as she was?—was her form, were her feelings changed? He still held the pen in his hand; he was going to write as he thought, when the carriage rolled into the court. With a few hurried strokes he added: “I hear you coming. For a moment, farewell!”

He folded the letter, and directed it. He had no time for sealing. He darted into the room through which there was a second outlet into the gallery, when the next moment he recollected that he had left his watch and seals lying on the table. She must not see these first. He ran back and brought them away with him. At the same instant he heard the hostess in the antechamber showing Otilie the way to her apartments. He sprang to the bedroom door. It was shut. In his haste, as he had come back for his watch, he had forgotten to take out the key, which had fallen out, and lay the other side. The door had closed with a spring, and he could not open it. He pushed at it with all his might, but it would not yield. Oh, how gladly would he have been a spirit, to escape through its cracks! In vain. He hid his face against the panels. Otilie entered, and the hostess, seeing him, retired. From Otilie herself, too, he could not remain concealed for a moment. He turned towards her; and there stood the lovers once more, in such

strange fashion, in one another's presence. She looked at him calmly and earnestly, without advancing or retiring. He made a movement to approach her, and she withdrew a few steps towards the table. He stepped back again. "Ottilie!" he cried aloud, "Ottilie! let me break this frightful silence! Are we shadows, that we stand thus gazing at each other? Only listen to me; listen to this at least. It is an accident that you find me here thus. There is a letter on the table, at your side there, which was to have prepared you. Read it, I implore you—read it—and then determine as you will!"

She looked down at the letter; and after thinking a few seconds, she took it up, opened it, and read it: she finished it without a change of expression; and she laid it lightly down; then joining the palms of her hands together, turning them upwards, and drawing them against her breast, she leaned her body a little forward, and regarded Edward with such a look, that, eager as he was, he was compelled to renounce everything he wished or desired of her. Such an attitude cut him to the heart; he could not bear it. It seemed exactly as if she would fall upon her knees before him, if he persisted. He hurried in despair out of the room, and leaving her alone, sent the hostess in to her.

He walked up and down the antechamber. Night had come on, and there was no sound in the room. At last the hostess came out and drew the key out of the lock. The good woman was embarrassed and agitated, not knowing what it would be proper for her to do. At last as she turned to go, she offered the key to Edward, who refused it; and putting down the candle, she went away.

In misery and wretchedness. Edward flung himself down on the threshold of the door which divided him from Ottilie, moistening it with his tears as he lay. A more unhappy night had been seldom passed by two lovers in such close neighborhood!

Day came at last. The coachman brought round the carriage, and the hostess unlocked the door and went in. Ottilie was asleep in her clothes; she went back and beckoned to Edward with a significant smile. They both entered and stood before her as she lay; but the sight was too much for Edward. He could not bear it. She was sleeping so quietly that the hostess did not like to disturb her, but sat down opposite her, waiting till she woke. At last Ottilie opened her beautiful eyes, and raised herself on her feet. She declined taking any breakfast, and then Edward went in again and stood before her. He entreated her to speak but one word to him; to tell him what she desired. He would do it, be it what it would, he swore to her; but she remained silent. He asked her once more, passionately and tenderly, whether she would be his. With downcast eyes, and with the deepest tenderness of manner she shook her head to a gentle *No*. He asked if she still desired to go to the school. Without any show of feeling she declined. Would she then go back to Charlotte? She inclined her head in token of assent, with a look of comfort and relief. He went to the window to give directions to the coachman, and when his back was turned she darted like lightning out of the room, and was down the stairs and in the carriage in an instant. The coachman drove back along the road which he had come the day before, and Edward followed at some distance on horseback.

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CHAPTER XVII.

It was with the utmost surprise that Charlotte saw the carriage drive up with Otilie, and Edward at the same moment ride into the courtyard of the castle. She ran down to the hall. Otilie alighted, and approached her and Edward. Violently and eagerly she caught the hands of the wife and husband, pressed them together, and hurried off to her own room. Edward threw himself on Charlotte's neck and burst into tears. He could not give her any explanation; he besought her to have patience with him, and to go at once to see Otilie. Charlotte followed her to her room, and she could not enter it without a shudder. It had been all cleared out. There was nothing to be seen but the empty walls, which stood there looking cheerless, vacant and miserable. Everything had been carried away except the little box, which from an uncertainty what was to be done with it, had been left in the middle of the room. Otilie was lying stretched upon the ground, her arm and head leaning across the cover. Charlotte bent anxiously over her, and asked what had happened; but she received no answer.

Her maid had come with restoratives. Charlotte left her with Otilie, and herself hastened back to Edward. She found him in the saloon, but he could tell her nothing. He threw himself down before her; he bathed her hands with tears; he flew to his own room, and she was going to follow him thither, when she met his valet. From this man she gathered as much as he was able to tell. The rest she put together in her own thoughts as well as she could, and then at once set herself resolutely to do what the exigencies of the moment required. Otilie's room was put to rights again as quickly as possible; Edward found his, to the last paper, exactly as he had left it.

The three appeared again to fall into some sort of relation with one another. But Otilie persevered in her silence, and Edward could do nothing except entreat his wife to exert a patience which seemed wanting to himself. Charlotte sent messengers to Mittler and to the major. The first was absent from home and could not be found. The latter came. To him Edward poured out all his heart, confessing every most trifling circumstance to him, and thus Charlotte learned fully what had passed; what it had been which had produced such violent excitement, and how so strange an alteration of their mutual position had been brought about.

She spoke with the utmost tenderness to her husband. She had nothing to ask of him, except that for the present he would leave the poor girl to herself. Edward was not insensible to the worth, the affection, the strong sense of his wife; but his passion absorbed him exclusively. Charlotte tried to cheer him with hopes. She promised that she herself would make no difficulties about the separation; but it had small effect with him. He was so much shaken that hope and faith alternately forsook him. A species of insanity appeared to have taken possession of him. He urged Charlotte to promise to give her hand to the major. To satisfy him and to humor him, she did what he required. She engaged to become herself the wife of the major, in the event of Otilie consenting to the marriage with Edward; with this express condition, however, that for the present the two gentlemen should go abroad together. The major had a foreign appointment from the court, and it was settled that Edward should accompany

him. They arranged it all together, and in doing so found a sort of comfort for themselves in the sense that at least something was being done.

In the meantime they had to remark that Otilie took scarcely anything to eat or drink. She still persisted in refusing to speak. They at first used to talk to her, but it appeared to distress her, and they left it off. We are not, universally at least, so weak as to persist in torturing people for their good. Charlotte thought over what could possibly be done. At last she fancied it might be well to ask the assistant of the school to come to them. He had much influence with Otilie, and had been writing with much anxiety to inquire the cause of her not having arrived at the time he had been expecting her; but as yet she had not sent him any answer.



OTTILIE AND EDWARD MEETING AT THE INN.



In order not to take Otilie by surprise, they spoke of their intention of sending this invitation in her presence. It did not seem to please her; she thought for some little time; at last she appeared to have formed some resolution. She retired to her own room, and before the evening sent the following letter to the assembled party:

OTTILIE TO HER FRIENDS.

“Why need I express in words, my dear friends, what is in itself so plain? I have stepped out of my course, and I cannot recover it again. A malignant spirit which has gained power over me seems to hinder me from without, even if within I could again become at peace with myself.

“My purpose was entirely firm to renounce Edward, and to separate myself from him forever. I had hoped that we might never meet again; it has turned out otherwise. Against his own will he stood before me. Too literally, perhaps, I have observed my promise never to admit him into conversation with me. My conscience and the feelings of the moment kept me silent towards him at the time, and now I have nothing more to say. I have taken upon myself, under the accidental impulse of the moment, a difficult vow, which if it had been formed deliberately, might perhaps be painful and distressing. Let me now persist in the observance of it so long as my heart shall enjoin it to me. Do not call in anyone to mediate; do not insist upon my speaking; do not urge me to eat or to drink more than I absolutely must. Bear with me and let me alone, and so help me on through the time; I am young, and youth has many unexpected means of restoring itself. Endure my presence among you; cheer me with your love; make me wiser and better with what you say to one another: but leave me to my own inward self.”

The two friends had made all preparation for their journey, but their departure was still delayed by the formalities of the foreign appointment of the major, a delay most welcome to Edward. Otilie's letter had roused all his eagerness again; he had gathered hope and comfort from her words, and now felt himself encouraged and justified in remaining and waiting. He declared, therefore, that he would not go; it would be folly, indeed, he cried, of his own accord, to throw away, by over-precipitateness, what was most valuable and most necessary to him, when although there was a danger of losing it, there was nevertheless a chance that it might be preserved. “What is the right name of conduct such as that?” he said. “It is only that we desire to show that we are able to will and to choose. I myself, under the influences of the same ridiculous folly, have torn myself away, days before there was any necessity for it, from my friends, merely that I might not be forced to go by the definite expiration of my term. This time I will stay: what reason is there for my going; is she not already removed far enough from me? I am not likely now to catch her hand or press her to my heart; I could not even think of it without a shudder. She has not separated herself from me; she has raised herself far above me.”

And so he remained as he desired, as he was obliged; but he was never easy except when he found himself with Otilie. She, too, had the same feeling with him; she could not tear herself away from the same happy necessity. On all sides they exerted an indescribable, almost magical power of attraction over one another. Living, as they were, under one roof, without even so much as thinking of each other, although they might be occupied with other things, or diverted this way or that way by the other members of the party, they always drew together. If they were in the same room, in a short time they were sure to be either standing or sitting near each other; they were only easy when as close together as they could be, but they were then completely easy. To be near was enough; there was no need for them either to look or to speak: they did not seek to touch one another, or make sign or gesture, but merely to be together. Then there were not two persons, there was but one person in unconscious and perfect content, at peace with itself and with the world. So it was that if either of them had been imprisoned at the further end of the house, the other would by degrees, without intending it, have moved towards its fellow till it found it; life to them was a riddle, the solution of which they could only find in union.

Ottilie was throughout so cheerful and quiet that they were able to feel perfectly easy about her; she was seldom absent from the society of her friends: all that she had desired was that she might be allowed to eat alone, with no one to attend upon her but Nanny.

What habitually befalls any person repeats itself more often than one is apt to suppose, because his own nature gives the immediate occasion for it. Character, individuality, inclination, tendency, locality, circumstance and habits, form together a whole, in which every man moves as in an atmosphere, and where only he feels himself at ease in his proper element.

And so we find men, of whose changeableness so many complaints are made, after many years, to our surprise, unchanged, and in all their infinite tendencies, outward and inward, unchangeable.

Thus in the daily life of our friends, almost everything glided on again in its old smooth track. Ottilie still displayed by many silent attentions her obliging nature, and the others like her continued each themselves; and then the domestic circle exhibited an image of their former life, so like it, that they might be pardoned if at times they dreamed that it might all be again as it was.

The autumn days, which were of the same length with those old spring days, brought the party back into the house out of the air about the same hour. The gay fruits and flowers which belonged to the season, might have made them fancy it was now the autumn of that first spring, and the interval dropped out and forgotten; for the flowers which now were blowing, were the same as those which then they had sown, and the fruits which were now ripening on the trees, were those which at that time they had seen in blossom.

The major went backwards and forwards, and Mittler came frequently. The evenings were generally spent in exactly the same way. Edward usually read aloud, with more life and feeling than before; much better, and even it may be said with more cheerfulness. It appeared as if he was endeavoring, by light-heartedness as much as by devotion, to quicken Ottilie's torpor into life, and dissolve her silence. He seated himself in the same position as he used to do, that she might look over his book; he was uneasy and distracted unless she was doing so, unless he was sure that she was following his words with her eyes.

Every trace had vanished of the unpleasant, ungracious feelings of the intervening time. No one had any secret complaint against another; there were no cross-purposes, no bitterness. The major accompanied Charlotte's playing with his violin, and Edward's flute sounded again, as formerly, in harmony with Ottilie's piano. Thus they were now approaching Edward's birthday, which the year before they had missed celebrating. This time they were to keep it without any outward festivities, in quiet enjoyment among themselves. They had so settled it together, half expressly, half from a tacit agreement. As they approached nearer to this epoch, however, an anxiety about it, which had hitherto been more felt than observed, became more noticeable in Ottilie's manner. She was to be seen often in the garden examining the flowers: she

had signified to the gardener that he was to save as many as he could of every sort, and she had been especially occupied with the asters, which this year were blowing in immense profusion.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

The most remarkable feature, however, which was observed about Otilie was that, for the first time, she had now unpacked the box, and had selected a variety of things out of it, which she had cut up, and which were intended evidently to make one complete suit for her. The rest, with Nanny's assistance, she had endeavored to replace again, and she had been hardly able to get it done, the space being over full, although a portion had been taken out. The covetous little Nanny could never satisfy herself with looking at all the pretty things, especially as she found provision made there for every article of dress which could be wanted, even the smallest. Numbers of shoes and stockings, garters with devices on them, gloves, and various other things were left, and she begged Otilie just to give her one or two of them. Otilie refused to do that, but opened a drawer in her wardrobe, and told the girl to take what she liked. The latter hastily and awkwardly dashed in her hand and seized what she could, running off at once with her booty, to show it off and display her good fortune among the rest of the servants.

At last Otilie succeeded in packing everything carefully into its place. She then opened a secret compartment, which was contrived in the lid, where she kept a number of notes and letters from Edward, many dried flowers, the mementos of their early walks together, a lock of his hair, and various other little matters. She now added one more to them, her father's portrait, and then locked it all up, and hung the delicate key by a gold chain about her neck, against her heart.

In the meantime, her friends had now in their hearts begun to entertain the best hopes for her. Charlotte was convinced that she would one day begin to speak again. She had latterly seen signs about her which implied that she was engaged in secret about something; a look of cheerful self-satisfaction, a smile like that which hangs about the face of persons who have something pleasant and delightful, which they are keeping concealed from those whom they love. No one knew that she spent many hours in extreme exhaustion, and that only at rare intervals, when she appeared in public through the power of her will, she was able to rouse herself.

Mittler had latterly been a frequent visitor, and when he came he stayed longer than he usually did at other times. This strong-willed, resolute person was only too well aware that there is a certain moment in which alone it will answer to smite the iron. Otilie's silence and reserve he interpreted according to his own wishes; no steps had as yet been taken towards a separation of the husband and wife. He hoped to be able to determine the fortunes of the poor girl in some not undesirable way. He listened, he allowed himself to seem convinced; he was discreet and unobtrusive, and conducted himself in his own way with sufficient prudence.

There was but one occasion on which he uniformly forgot himself—when he found an opportunity for giving his opinion upon subjects to which he attached a great importance. He lived much within himself, and when he was with others, his only relation to them generally was in active employment on their behalf; but if once, when

among friends, his tongue broke fairly loose, as on more than one occasion we have already seen, he rolled out his words in utter recklessness, whether they wounded or whether they pleased, whether they did evil or whether they did good.



The evening before the birthday, the major and Charlotte were sitting together expecting Edward, who had gone out for a ride; Mittler was walking up and down the saloon; Ottilie was in her own room, laying out the dress which she was to wear on the morrow, and making signs to her maid about a number of things, which the girl, who perfectly understood her silent language, arranged as she was ordered.

Mittler had fallen exactly on his favorite subject. One of the points on which he used most to insist was, that in the education of children, as well as in the conduct of nations, there was nothing more worthless and barbarous than laws and commandments forbidding this and that action. "Man is naturally active," he said, "wherever he is; and if you know how to tell him what to do, he will do it immediately, and keep straight in the direction in which you set him. I myself, in my own circle, am far better pleased to endure faults and mistakes, till I know what the opposite virtue is that I am to enjoin, than to be rid of the faults and to have nothing good to put in their place. A man is really glad to do what is right and sensible, if he only knows how to get at it. It is no such great matter with him; he does it because he must have something to do, and he thinks no more about it afterwards than he does of the silliest freaks which he engaged in out of the purest idleness. I cannot tell you how it annoys me to hear people going over and over those Ten Commandments in teaching children. The fifth is a thoroughly beautiful, rational, preceptive precept. 'Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother.' If the children will inscribe that well upon their hearts, they have the whole day before them to put it in practice. But the sixth now? What can we say to that? 'Thou shalt do no murder;' as if any man ever felt the slightest general inclination to strike another man dead. Men will hate sometimes: they will fly into passions and forget themselves; and as a consequence of this or other feelings, it may easily come now and then to a murder; but what a barbarous precaution it is to tell children that they are not to kill or murder! If the commandment ran, 'Have a regard for the life of another—put away whatever can do him hurt—save him though with peril to yourself—if you injure him, consider that you are injuring yourself;'—that is the form which should be in use among educated, reasonable people. And in our Catechism teaching we have only an awkward clumsy way of sliding into it, through a 'what do you mean by that?'

"And as for the seventh; that is utterly detestable. What! to stimulate the prococious curiosity of children to pry into dangerous mysteries; to obtrude violently upon their imaginations ideas and notions which beyond all things you should wish to keep from them! It were far better if such actions as that commandment speaks of were dealt

with arbitrarily by some secret tribunal, than prated openly of before church and congregation—”

At this moment Otilie entered the room.

“ ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery,’ ”—Mittler went on—“How coarse! how brutal! What a different sound it has, if you let it run, ‘Thou shalt hold in reverence the bond of marriage. When thou seest a husband and a wife between whom there is true love, thou shalt rejoice in it, and their happiness shall gladden thee like the cheerful light of a beautiful day. If there arise anything to make division between them, thou shalt use thy best endeavor to clear it away. Thou shalt labor to pacify them, and to soothe them; to show each of them the excellencies of the other. Thou shalt not think of thyself, but purely and disinterestedly thou shalt seek to further the well-being of others, and make them feel what a happiness is that which arises out of all duty done; and especially out of that duty which holds man and wife indissolubly bound together.’ ”

Charlotte felt as if she was sitting on hot coals. The situation was the more distressing, as she was convinced that Mittler was not thinking the least where he was or what he was saying; and before she was able to interrupt him, she saw Otilie, after changing color painfully for a few seconds, rise and leave the room.

Charlotte constrained herself to seem unembarrassed: “You will leave us the eighth commandment,” she said, with a faint smile.

“All the rest,” replied Mittler, “if I may only insist first on the foundation of the whole of them.”

At this moment Nanny rushed in, screaming and crying: “She is dying; the young lady is dying; come to her, come.”

Otilie had found her way back with extreme difficulty to her own room. The beautiful things which she was to wear the next day were laid out on a number of chairs; and the girl, who had been running from one to the other, staring at them and admiring them, called out in her ecstasy, “Look, dearest madam, only look! There is a bridal dress worthy of you.”

Otilie heard the word, and sank upon the sofa. Nanny saw her mistress turn pale, fall back, and faint. She ran for Charlotte, who came. The medical friend was on the spot in a moment. He thought it was nothing but exhaustion. He ordered some strong soup to be brought. Otilie refused it with an expression of loathing: it almost threw her into convulsions, when they put the cup to her lips. A light seemed to break on the physician: he asked hastily and anxiously what Otilie had taken that day. The little girl hesitated. He repeated his question, and she then acknowledged that Otilie had taken nothing.

There was a nervousness of manner about Nanny which made him suspicious. He carried her with him into the adjoining room; Charlotte followed; and the girl threw herself on her knees, and confessed that for a long time past Otilie had taken as good

as nothing; at her mistress' urgent request, she had herself eaten the food which had been brought for her; she had said nothing about it, because Otilie had by signs alternately begged her not to tell anyone, and threatened her if she did; and, as she innocently added, "because it was so nice."

The major and Mittler now came up as well. They found Charlotte busy with the physician. The pale, beautiful girl was sitting, apparently conscious, in the corner of the sofa. They had begged her to lie down; she had declined to do this; but she made signs to have her box brought, and resting her feet upon it, placed herself in an easy, half recumbent position. She seemed to be wishing to take leave; and by her gestures, was expressing to all about her the tenderest affection, love, gratitude, entreaties for forgiveness, and the most heartfelt farewell.

Edward, on alighting from his horse, was informed of what had happened; he rushed to the room; threw himself down at her side; and seizing her hand, deluged it with silent tears. In this position he remained a long time. At last he called out: "And am I never more to hear your voice? Will you not turn back toward life, to give me one single word? Well, then, very well. I will follow you yonder, and there we will speak in another language."

She pressed his hand with all the strength she had; she gazed at him with a glance full of life and full of love; and drawing a long breath, and for a little while moving her lips inarticulately, with a tender effort of affection she called out, "Promise me to live;" and then fell back immediately.

"I promise, I promise!" he cried to her; but he cried only after her; she was already gone.

After a miserable night, the care of providing for the loved remains fell upon Charlotte. The major and Mittler assisted her. Edward's condition was utterly pitiable. His first thought, when he was in any degree recovered from his despair, and able to collect himself, was, that Otilie should not be carried out of the castle; she should be kept there, and attended upon as if she were alive: for she was not dead; it was impossible that she should be dead. They did what he desired; at least, so far as that they did not do what he had forbidden. He did not ask to see her.

There was now a second alarm, and a further cause for anxiety. Nanny, who had been spoken to sharply by the physician, had been compelled by threats to confess, and after her confession had been overwhelmed with reproaches, had now disappeared. After a long search she was found; but she appeared to be out of her mind. Her parents took her home; but the gentlest treatment had no effect upon her, and she had to be locked up for fear she should run away again.

They succeeded by degrees in recovering Edward from the extreme agony of despair; but only to make him more really wretched. He now saw clearly, he could not doubt how, that the happiness of his life was gone from him forever. It was suggested to him that if Otilie was placed in the chapel, she would still remain among the living, and it would be a calm, quiet, peaceful home for her. There was much difficulty in obtaining

his consent; he would only give it under condition that she should be taken there in an open coffin; that the vault in which she was laid, if covered at all, should be only covered with glass, and a lamp should be kept always burning there. It was arranged that this should be done, and then he seemed resigned.

They clothed the delicate body in the festal dress which she had herself prepared. A garland of asters was wreathed about her head, which shone sadly there like melancholy stars. To decorate the bier and the church and chapel, the gardens were robbed of their beauty; they lay desolate, as if a premature winter had blighted all their loveliness. In the earliest morning she was borne in an open coffin out of the castle, and the heavenly features were once more reddened with the rising sun. The mourners crowded about her as she was being taken along. None would go before; none would follow; everyone would be where she was, everyone would enjoy her presence for the last time. Men and women, and little boys, there was not one unmoved; least of all to be consoled were the girls, who felt most immediately what they had lost.

Nanny was not present; it had been thought better not to allow it, and they had kept secret from her the day and the hour of the funeral. She was at her parents' house, closely watched, in a room looking towards the garden. But when she heard the bells tolling, she knew too well what they meant; and her attendant having left her out of curiosity to see the funeral, she escaped out of the window into a passage, and from thence, finding all the doors locked, into an upper open loft. At this moment the funeral was passing through the village, which had been all freshly strewn with leaves. Nanny saw her mistress plainly close below her, more plainly, more entirely, than anyone in the procession underneath; she appeared to be lifted above the earth, borne as it were on clouds or waves, and the girl fancied she was making signs to her; her senses swam, she tottered, swayed herself for a moment on the edge, and fell to the ground. The crowd fell asunder on all sides with a cry of horror. In the tumult and confusion, the bearers were obliged to set down the coffin; the girl lay close by it: it seemed as if every limb was broken. They lifted her up, and by accident or providentially she was allowed to lean over the body; she appeared, indeed, to be endeavoring with what remained to her of life to reach her beloved mistress. Scarcely, however, had the loosely hanging limbs touched Otilie's robe, and the powerless finger rested on the folded hands, than the girl started up, and, first raising her arms and eyes towards heaven, flung herself down upon her knees before the coffin, and gazed with passionate devotion at her mistress.

At last she sprang, as if inspired, from off the ground, and cried with a voice of ecstasy: "Yes, she has forgiven me; what no man, what I myself could never have forgiven. God forgives me through her look, her motion, her lips. Now she is lying again so still and quiet, but you saw how she raised herself up, and unfolded her hands and blessed me, and how kindly she looked at me. You all heard, you can witness that she said to me: 'You are forgiven.' I am not a murderess any more. She has forgiven me. God has forgiven me, and no one may now say anything more against me.' "

The people stood crowding around her. They were amazed; they listened and looked this way and that, and no one knew what should next be done. "Bear her on to her

rest," said the girl. "She has done her part; she has suffered, and cannot now remain any more among us." The bier moved on, Nanny now following it; and thus they reached the church and the chapel.

So now stood the coffin of Otilie, with the child's coffin at her head, and her box at her feet, inclosed in a resting-place of massive oak. A woman had been provided to watch the body for the first part of the time, as it lay there so beautifully beneath its glass covering. But Nanny would not permit this duty to be taken from herself. She would remain alone without a companion, and attend to the lamp which was now kindled for the first time; and she begged to be allowed to do it with so much eagerness and perseverance, that they let her have her way, to prevent any greater evil that might ensue.

But she did not long remain alone. As night was falling, and the hanging lamp began to exercise its full right and shed abroad a larger lustre, the door opened and the architect entered the chapel. The chastely ornamented walls in the mild light looked more strange, more awful, more antique, than he was prepared to see them. Nanny was sitting on one side of the coffin. She recognized him immediately; but she pointed in silence to the pale form of her mistress. And there stood he on the other side, in the vigor of youth and of grace, with his arms drooping, and his hands clasped piteously together, motionless, with head and eye inclined over the inanimate body.

Once already he had stood thus before in the Belisarius; he had now involuntarily fallen into the same attitude. And this time how naturally! Here, too, was something of inestimable worth thrown down from its high estate. *There* were courage, prudence, power, rank and wealth in one single man, lost irrevocably; *there* were qualities which, in decisive moments, had been of indispensable service to the nation and the prince; but which, when the moment was passed, were no more valued, but flung aside and neglected, and cared for no longer. And *here* were many other silent virtues, which had been summoned but a little time before by nature out of the depths of her treasures, and now swept rapidly away again by her careless hand—rare, sweet, lovely virtues, whose peaceful workings the thirsty world had welcomed, while it had them, with gladness and joy; and now was sorrowing for them in unavailing desire.

Both the youth and the girl were silent for a long time. But when she saw the tears streaming fast down his cheeks, and he appeared to be sinking under the burden of his sorrow, she spoke to him with so much truthfulness and power, with such kindness and such confidence, that, astonished at the flow of her words, he was able to recover himself, and he saw his beautiful friend floating before him in the new life of a higher world. His tears ceased flowing; his sorrow grew lighter: on his knees he took leave of Otilie, and with a warm pressure of the hand of Nanny, he rode away from the spot into the night without having seen a single other person.

The surgeon had, without the girl being aware of it, remained all night in the church; and when he went in the morning to see her, he found her cheerful and tranquil. He was prepared for wild aberrations. He thought that she would be sure to speak to him of conversations which she had held in the night with Otilie, and of other such apparitions. But she was natural, quiet and perfectly self-possessed. She remembered

accurately what had happened in her previous life; she could describe the circumstances of it with the greatest exactness, and never in anything which she said stepped out of the course of what was real and natural, except in her account of what had passed with the body, which she delighted to repeat again and again, how Otilie had raised herself up, had blessed her, had forgiven her, and thereby set her at rest forever.

Otilie remained so long in her beautiful state, which more resembled sleep than death, that a number of persons were attracted there to look at her. The neighbors and the villagers wished to see her again, and everyone desired to hear Nanny's incredible story from her own mouth. Many laughed at it, most doubted, and some few were found who were able to believe.

Difficulties, for which no real satisfaction is attainable, compel us to faith. Before the eyes of all the world, Nanny's limbs had been broken, and by touching the sacred body she had been restored to strength again. Why should not others find similar good fortune? Delicate mothers first privately brought their children who were suffering from obstinate disorders, and they believed that they could trace an immediate improvement. The confidence of the people increased, and at last there was no one so old or so weak as not to have come to seek fresh life and health and strength at this place. The concourse became so great, that they were obliged, except at the hours of divine service, to keep the church and chapel closed.

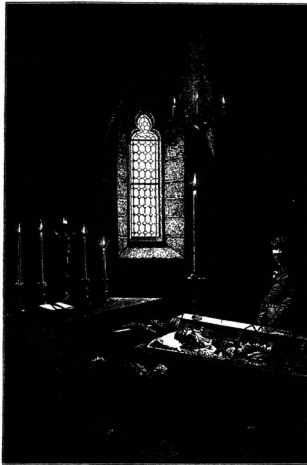
Edward did not venture to look at her again; he lived on mechanically; he seemed to have no tears left, and to be incapable of any further suffering; his power of taking interest in what was going on diminished every day; his appetite gradually failed. The only refreshment which did him any good was what he drank out of the glass, which to him, indeed, had been but an untrue prophet. He continued to gaze at the intertwining initials, and the earnest cheerfulness of his expression seemed to signify that he still hoped to be united with her at last. And as every little circumstance combines to favor the fortunate, and every accident contributes to elate him; so do the most trifling occurrences love to unite to crush and overwhelm the unhappy. One day as Edward raised the beloved glass to his lips, he put it down and thrust it from him with a shudder. It was the same and not the same. He missed a little private mark upon it. The valet was questioned, and had to confess that the real glass had not long since been broken, and that one like it belonging to the same set had been substituted in its place.

Edward could not be angry. His destiny had spoken out with sufficient clearness in the fact, and how should he be affected by the shadow? and yet it touched him deeply. He seemed now to dislike drinking, and thenceforward purposely to abstain from food and from speaking.

But from time to time a sort of restlessness came over him; he would desire to eat and drink something, and would begin again to speak. "Ah!" he said, one day to the major, who now seldom left his side, "how unhappy I am that all my efforts, are but imitations ever, and false and fruitless. What was blessedness to her, is pain to me; and yet for the sake of this blessedness I am forced to take this pain upon myself. I

must go after her; follow her by the same road. But my nature and my promise hold me back. It is a terrible difficulty, indeed, to imitate the inimitable. I feel clearly, my dear friend, that genius is required for everything; for martyrdom as well as the rest.”

What shall we say of the endeavors which in this hopeless condition were made for him? his wife, his friends, his physician, incessantly labored to do something for him. But it was all in vain: at last they found him dead. Mittler was the first to make the melancholy discovery; he called the physician, and examined closely, with his usual presence of mind, the circumstances under which he had been found. Charlotte rushed in to them; she was afraid that he had committed suicide, and accused herself and accused others of unpardonable carelessness. But the physician on natural, and Mittler on moral grounds, were soon able to satisfy her of the contrary. It was quite clear that Edward's end had taken him by surprise. In a quiet moment he had taken out of his pocket-book and out of a casket everything which remained to him as memorials of Ottilie, and had spread them out before him; a lock of hair; flowers which had been gathered in some happy hour, and every letter which she had written to him from the first, which his wife had ominously happened to give him. It was impossible that he would intentionally have exposed these to the danger of being seen, by the first person who might happen to discover him.



THE ARCHITECT AT OTTILIE'S BIER.

But so lay the heart, which but a short time before had been so swift and eager, at rest now, where it could never be disturbed; and falling asleep, as he did, with his thoughts on one so saintly, he might well be called blessed. Charlotte gave him his place at Ottilie's side, and arranged that thenceforth no other person should be placed with them in the same vault.

In order to secure this, she made it a condition under which she settled considerable sums of money on the church and the school.

So lie the lovers, sleeping side by side. Peace hovers above their resting-place. Fair angel faces gaze down upon them from the vaulted ceiling, and what a happy moment that will be when one day they awake again together!



- [*] A common name for the mineral mica.
- [*] This story is substantially the same as one given in the first Gospel of the Infancy of Christ, which was received as authentic by the Gnostics of the second century. The same apocryphal book gives various details of the Flight into Egypt, which St. Matthew so briefly records.—Ed.
- [*] The lily-stalk, of course, referred to the well-known legend of the budding of St. Joseph's rod, when he presented himself as a suitor for Mary—the subject of many early paintings. The legend is probably derived from the uncanonical Gospel of the Birth of Mary given by St. Jerome.—Ed.
- [*] A name supposed to be assumed by Jarno. *See* "Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship."
- [*] Goethe inserted a version of this ballad in Schiller's *Muscnalmanach* for 1799, before he translated the story. The French original is 'La Folle en Pélérinage.'
- [*] Cesare Beccaria of Bonesana, whose work 'Dei Delitti e Delle Pene,' first published anonymously in 1764, gave an impulse to the study of penal laws.—D.
- [†] Gaetana Filangieri, the renowned author of 'La Scienza della Legislazione' (8 vols. 1781-88), whose acquaintance Goethe had made in Naples.—D.
- [*] William Penn, to whom, in 1681, Charles II. granted estates in North America, which he settled as a colony of Quakers, and from which arose the State of Pennsylvania, died in England in 1718.—Ed.
- [*] *Oberamtmann*: a superior government official charged with the administration of justice.—Ed.
- [*] Under this title (*Anton Reiser*) C. Ph. Moritz published an autobiography of his early years.—D.
- [*] See note, p. 48.
- [*] A religious sect so called. *See* Goethe's *Autobiography* (trans. vol. i. p. 30).
- [*] *i.e.*, of similar signification.
- [*] From Ovid. See below, p. 105.—D.
- [*] Makaria is meant. See below, p. 110.

[*] Horace, Od. iv. 10.

[†] Ovid, Metam. iv. 17, 18. See above, p. 101.

[*] See above, p. 103.

[*] See "Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship," several of the characters in which now reappear occasionally.

[*] The above extracts are from Carlyle's excellent translation, to which the reader who wishes to compare the two editions of this work is referred.

[*] Lago Maggiore, with the Borromean Islands, as Goethe expressly declared to Eckermann. Jean Paul introduces Isola Bella with some success in his "Titan" without having seen it.—D.

[*] See 'Wilhelm Meister,' also Goethe's Poems, vol. i., p. 61.

[*] This passage is interesting as apparently giving Goethe's own views as to erratic rocks, at a time when the now familiar and well-established theory of glacier-movement had not been arrived at.—Ed.

[*] The circumstance after all is not told. It was meant, Düntzer says, to be an accident to one of the miners.—Ed.

[*] Goethe had made use of this story before, in his journey on the Rhine in the years 1814-1815.—D.

[*] No further information is given. Düntzer supposes that some diversion of "St. Christopher's" is suggested.—Ed.

[†] The spectral barber in Musaeus's tale 'Stumme Liebe:' he wears a scarlet cloak on his left shoulder; and after completing an operation he claims a like service in return.—D.

[*] *Memento mori* was the salutation of the Trappist monks.—D.

[*] The narrative here passes into the third person: the first person is resumed towards the end, p. 162.

[*] The name applied in England to the body-snatchers, who were increasing in number to a horrible extent. In the year 1828 the profit arising from the sale of bodies tempted a certain William Burke in Edinburgh to the commission of several murders. Compare Goethe's letter to Beuth of 4th February, 1832, which is printed in his works under the title *Plastische Anatomie*.—D.

[*] This term corresponds to the English *skein*.

[*] An antique metallic shuttle, the outline of which is somewhat like an ordinary hand-mirror.—Ed.

[*] *Geschirrfasser*.—*Geschirr* is what is called the “mounting” of a loom, comprising chiefly the “heddles” which raise and depress the alternate yarns.—Ed.

[*] Large provincial districts; Pennsylvania originally consisted of six such divisions.

[*] *i.e.* A sworn court summoned from the elders.

[*] An Aristotelian term meaning effective power.—Ed.