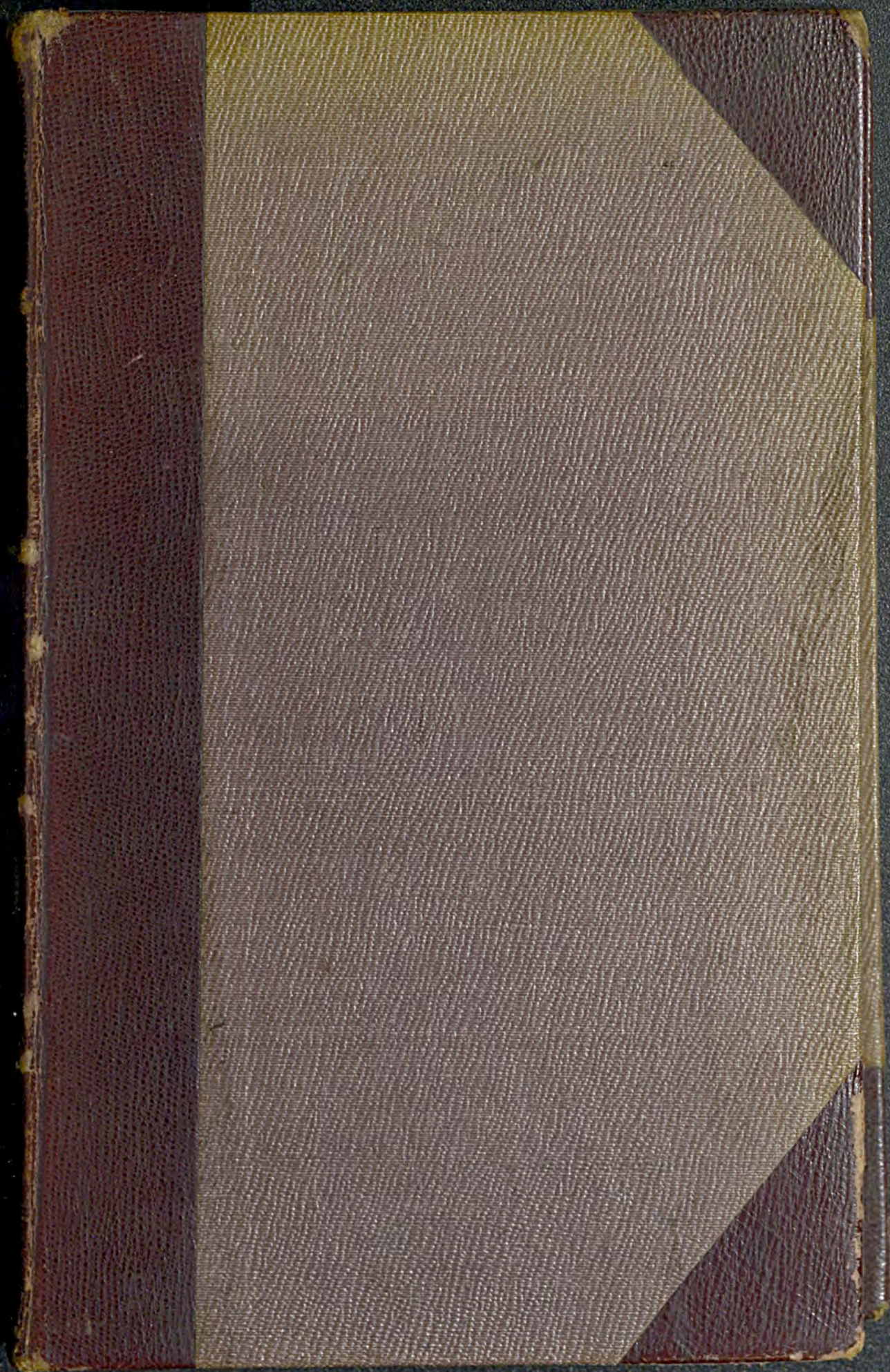
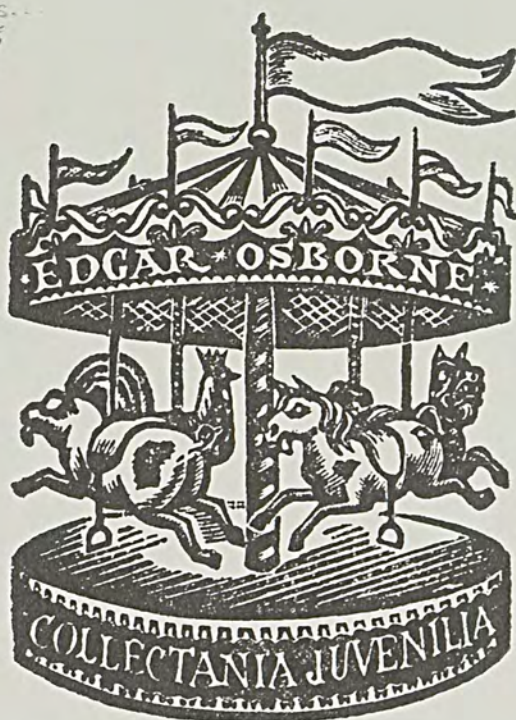
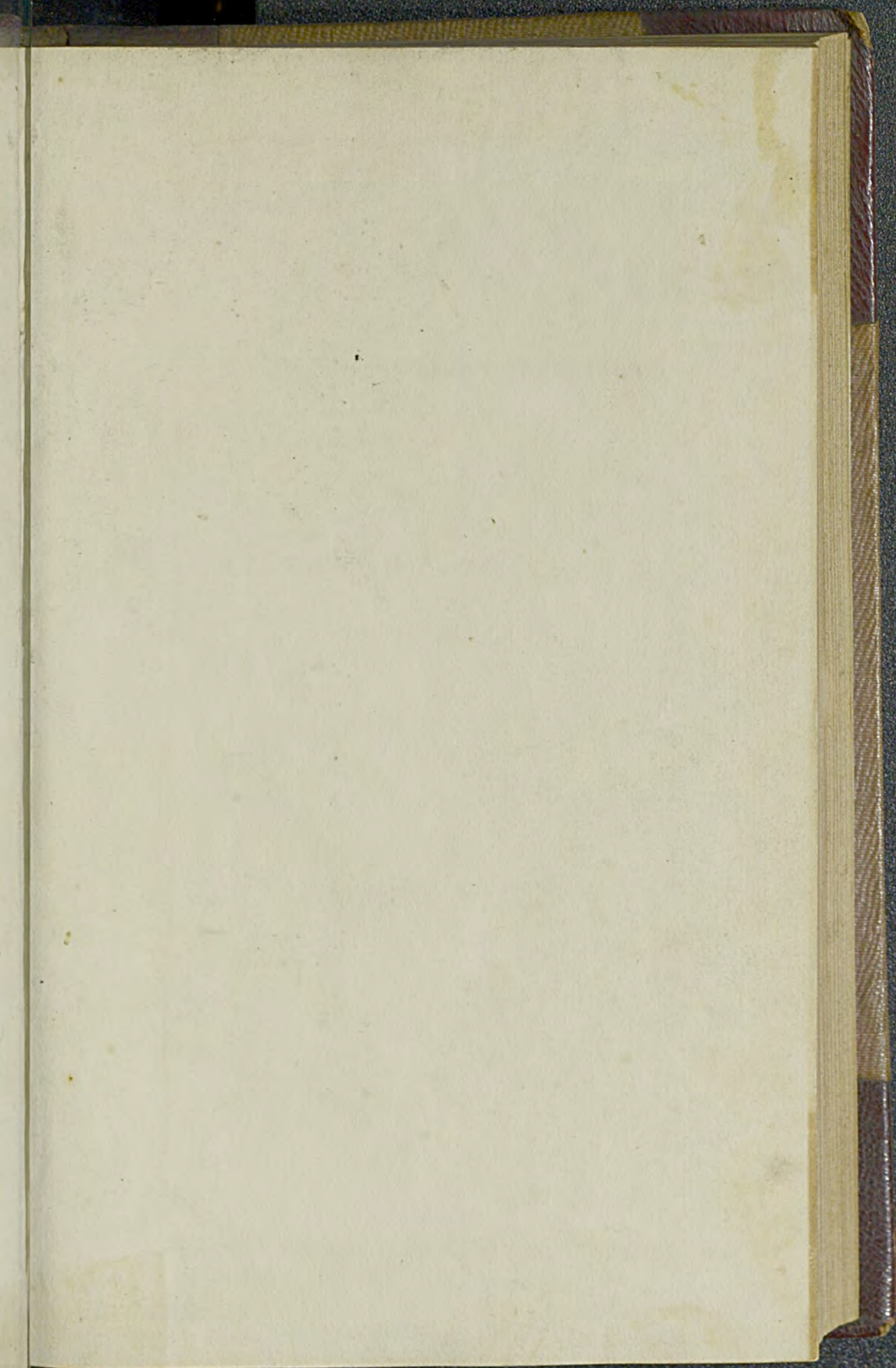


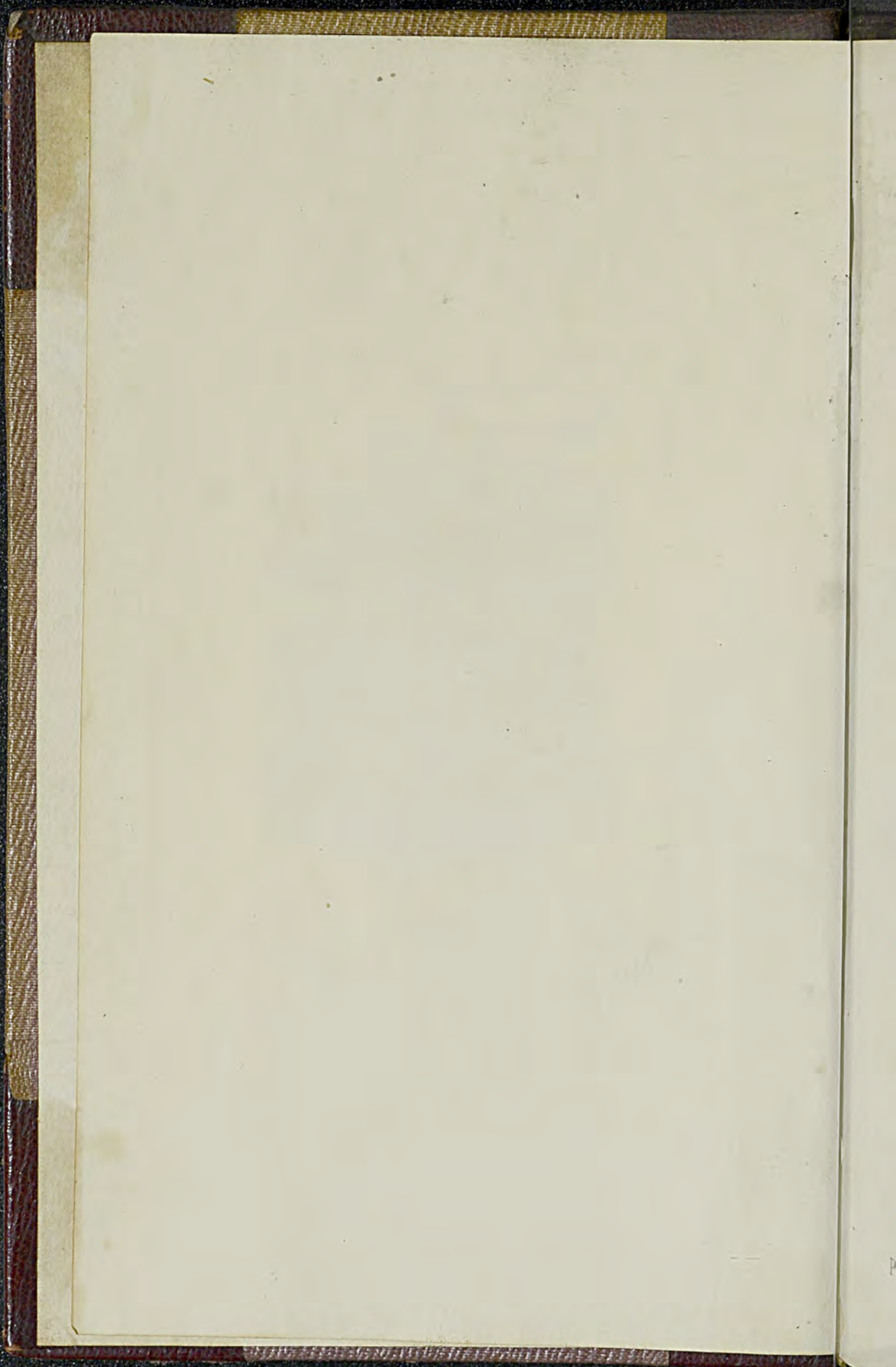


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TALES

DESIGNED CHIEFLY FOR THE YOUNG,

BY

CHRISTOPHER VON SCHMID,

CANON OF AUGSBURG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. III.

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THE LAMB.

Exchanged

CHAPTER. I.

CHRISTINA AND HER MOTHER ROSALIE.

CHRISTINA, a poor little girl of about ten years old, was in the wood gathering strawberries. It was a very hot afternoon, and in the open sunny part of the wood, where there was not a breath of air, the heat was almost overpowering. Her light straw bonnet was equally ineffective, in protecting her from the burning rays of the sun. The clear drops stood upon her forehead, and her cheeks glowed like fire; still she continued diligently to gather the strawberries, without ever looking up. "For," said she, cheerfully, as she wiped her forehead with her white handkerchief, "it is for my sick mother. The money, for which I will sell my berries, will procure some little thing to revive her."

Towards evening, with her basket full of strawberries, she went through the wood towards home. It began to rain. The drops fell more and more loudly among the leaves of the trees, and heavy peals of thunder resounded in the distance. As she came out of the wood a tempest arose; the rain beat furiously against her, and black clouds arose in the fiery evening sky, towering over one another like mountains. Christina knew that the lightning most frequently strikes the highest trees, and, there-

fore, she sought shelter at a distance from them, beneath some lowly hazel bushes, and here she stood waiting till the storm should pass away.

But suddenly she heard, among the bushes close at hand, a mournful cry, almost like that of a little child. The storm and rain, thunder and lightning, did not prevent this good compassionate little girl, from going to see what it was. She went; and lo! there was a tender little lamb, all dripping with rain and shivering, and evidently straying from its home. "Ah! you poor little creature!" said Christina, "you must not perish; come, I will take you home with me." And she took the lamb carefully in her arms, and as soon as the rain ceased, she hurried home with it to her little thatched dwelling.

"Oh, see, dear mother," said she, as soon as she entered their clean tidy little room, "look what I have found! Look what a beautiful little sheep! O how lucky I was! What care I shall take of it: it shall be my only pleasure!"

"Child," said the sick mother, raising herself up in bed, and supporting her head on her hand, "in your joy you forget that this lamb must have an owner. It has only strayed away, and, therefore, we must give it back again. It probably belongs to the rich farmer at Eich-hof. It is not right to keep other people's property a single night in the house. So you had better carry it home to-night."

"What nonsense!" cried a rough voice through the open window. "It is folly to be so particular!" The man who said this was a mason, who, while outside repairing the wall of their cottage, had overheard their conversation. The mother and daughter looked at him in alarm; but he continued: "Why do you make such strange faces? I only speak for your good. We will cut up the lamb and divide it. We shall have a couple of little roasting pieces from the flesh, and the skin, too, is worth something. The rich farmer has more than a hundred fine large sheep; and, doubtless, he will never

feel the loss of this poor little thing. So I will kill it immediately. And you need not be afraid. No one sees us, and you may trust me ; I can be as silent," said he, flinging a trowel full of mortar on the wall—" as silent as a wall."

Christina was horrified at what the mason said. The thought how wicked it would be to keep the lamb, now became clear to her. " You are wrong," said she to the mason. " Though no man sees us, yet God does ! But you, dearest mother, are right—and I only wonder that what you said did not occur to myself. Gladly, indeed," continued she, while the tears started into her eyes, " gladly would I have kept the little lamb ! Yet we ought to be willing to obey our good God."

She wrapped the lamb in her apron, and went with it towards Eich-hof, though the rain had not yet quite ceased, and the sun had almost set.

When she drew near Eich-hof, she saw the farmer's wife standing at the house-door, with her youngest child in her arms, while the elder ones stood around her. They were looking reverently at the beautiful rainbow, which, now, after the storm, appeared among the dark gray clouds, in all the splendour of its seven colours. " Look at the rainbow," said the mother, as she pointed towards it with uplifted arm, " and glorify Him who has formed it. In the fiery lightning and the fearful thunder, God shows us his great power and majesty ; but in the beautiful colours of the rainbow, He displays his goodness and his mercy."

Christina was charmed, now in looking at the beautiful colours of the rainbow, now at the smiling countenances of the children ; and she was silent till the rainbow had disappeared. Then she took the lamb out of her apron, and setting it on its feet, told how she had found it.

" It was very good and honest of you," said the farmer's wife, kindly, " to come out so late in the evening, and even while it was raining ! You are a good, honest little girl."

"That she is, indeed!" said the farmer, who now came out. "I trust that you, my children, will ever be as honest and upright as this poor little girl. It is better never to have a single sheep, and to be honest and virtuous, than to be the dishonourable and dishonest possessor of a hundred. The honesty which impelled this poor child to bring back the lamb, is a treasure of the heart, more precious than a whole flock of sheep; a treasure of which the wolf or the enemy can never deprive her."

Frank, the farmer's little boy, now ran to the fold and brought out the old sheep. How the little thing jumped and sprang about her for joy! "Oh!" cried Christina, when she saw this; "if it were only for this delight that the poor little thing feels, I do not regret bringing it back—though I wished so much to keep it!"

"Well," said the farmer, "since you are so honest, and so fond of the little creature, I will make you a present of it. But it would do you no good at present. It cannot live without milk, and would perish miserably. But in about a fortnight it will be strong enough to feed on grass and herbs, and then Frank will bring it to you."

"But be sure to take good care of it," said his wife. "It will neither be troublesome nor expensive to bring it up. While you are gathering strawberries or sewing, you can easily herd it, and, without ever trespassing on any one's meadow, you can easily gather as much grass to dry for hay, as will feed it during the winter. When it once grows up, the milk will be very useful for your own and your mother's humble house-keeping, and the wool will supply a few pairs of stockings every year."

"And if you have luck," said the farmer's little boy, "perhaps you will have a whole flock in time!"

Christina was forced to stay for supper, and heartily enjoyed the milk and bread and butter. The good woman then gave her a fine large slice of fresh rich butter, wrapped in vine leaves, and a dozen of eggs, to carry home. "Take these to your mother," said she, while she

carefully put the eggs in her apron; "greet her kindly from me, and may God soon restore her to health!"

Christina hastened joyfully home through the flowery little valley. Meanwhile the sky had cleared, and the evening star and the slender moon, which now appeared for the first time, beamed gently into the valley. All the flowers and shrubs still dropped with rain, and had a fragrant perfume. Christina's heart felt indescribably happy. "The heaven and earth," thought she, "are always more beautiful after a storm; but I never before saw them look so sweet and lovely as they do this evening."

When she reached home she told all this to her mother. "You see," said her mother, "it is just as I told you. That is the pleasure of a good conscience. When we do what is right, our heart is filled with sweet peace; for God teaches us through our conscience that He is pleased with us. O Christina, always hearken to the voice of conscience, and never do anything that is not right and just before God. You know well we are poor, and have very little in this world; but let us keep a good conscience, and we are rich enough, and we will never want happiness—yes, the noblest and sweetest happiness in the world will be ours."

Christina now counted the days till she should get her lamb. Had there been an almanac in the house, she would have looked at it every day. But as it was, she looked every evening at the moon, and then went to bed happy. "For," said she, "when it is full, I shall have my lamb."

At last it was full moon—and the moon began again to decrease—but still the lamb came not. Christina waited, and waited, and, at length, almost gave up all hope. "I will never see my little lamb again!" said she, one evening as she sat mournfully by the bed-side of her mother. "Have patience," said her mother; "patience brings roses." And lo! at that very moment the room door opened, and the merry farmer's boy entered with the

lamb, and a basketful of fresh green fodder for it. Christina sprang up, full of joy, and, kneeling down beside the lamb, stroked it kindly, and said, "O how pretty and how big it has grown meanwhile! I can hardly recognize it! How white and curly its wool is! Oh, now my happiness is complete."

"I would have brought the lamb several days ago," said the boy, "but my father said, 'wait a little longer; and it will thrive much better, and be still larger and stronger.'"

"You and your parents are so kind!" said Christina, "how I should like not to be so poor, that I might give you something! But from the very first wool that I get from my lamb, I shall knit you a nice pair of stockings: you shall see I will keep my word."

The boy now went away, and Christina led her lamb into the little shed behind the house, and strewed the fodder before it. The lamb soon became accustomed to her, and grew so tame, as to eat bread from her hand, drink milk from her cup, and follow her about like a dog. Christina had only to call, and the lamb immediately sprang to her. When her mother saw how fond Christina was of her lamb, she would often say, "Well, you do not now repent having done as I told you, and taken back the lamb?"

"O dear mother," replied Christina, "as my lamb follows me when I call on it, so will I always follow you. For I well know, how infinitely more you love me than I love my lamb."

CHAPTER II.

THE BARONESS VON WALDHEIM AND HER
DAUGHTER EMILY.

THE village in which Christina lived, lay at the foot of a woody mountain. Among the oaks upon the height arose the massive tower of an old castle. Here the Baroness von Waldheim had lived for the last few weeks. The castle had formerly belonged to her; but since the death of her husband, it was only assigned to her as a portion of her jointure. As the castle was somewhat dilapidated, she had had a few rooms, which commanded a beautiful prospect, newly fitted up for herself, and she now lived in solitude, entirely devoted to the education of her only daughter, Emily, a charming little girl about the same age as Christina.

As long as the strawberries lasted, Christina came almost every day to the castle. Emily liked better to buy strawberries from her than from any one else, and called her nothing but, "her pretty strawberry-girl;" for the berries that Christina gathered were all perfectly ripe, and as red as scarlet. The dish in which she brought them, though of the commonest earthenware, was pure and white as snow; and the cleanliness of her hands, and her whole appearance, was quite in keeping with that of the dish.

But it was now eight days since Christina had been at the castle; and Emily, who liked strawberries better than any kind of sweetmeat, often complained that her strawberry-girl staid away so long. But one morning Christina came to the castle at last. The cook went into the drawing-room to announce her to the ladies, and Christina

remained at the door. Emily came out immediately, and said, "why have you left me such a time without strawberries? That was not right; for you know I never buy but from you. If you be so inattentive, you will lose my custom."

Christina's eyes filled with tears. "Oh! my good young lady," said she, "my mother has been sick all the spring; but this week she was so very ill that I could not leave her even for an hour. It was only last night she became a little better, and this morning I went, at break of day, to the wood, that I might earn a few coppers from you."

"But why," said Emily, "did you not tell me long ago of your mother's illness? My mother is not unkind to the poor. She would have assisted you in your distress."

"Oh, my good young lady," said Christina, "I know well how kind you and your mother are to the poor. But my mother says, as long as one can earn one's own bread, it is wrong to be a burden to any one. There are many poor people who are unable to work, and it would be a sin to steal the bread from them."

Emily was much pleased with these words. "Wait here a little," said she kindly, and hastened into the room to speak with her mother. The baroness desired to see Christina; Emily led her in; and Christina was not a little astonished at the beauty of the room, the nice green walls, painted with wreaths of flowers, the large mirror with its golden frame, the pretty tables of polished brown wood, and the sofas and chairs covered with green silk, and the inlaid, polished floor. In all her life she had never seen anything like it, and a kind of awe crept over her at the sight of so much beauty and splendour.

The good lady, who was sitting at her embroidery-frame was deeply moved, when she saw the poor bashful child standing at the door, her blue eyes still filled with tears, her neat, though humble, dress of white and red striped linen, her little yellow straw hat, and the dish of strawberries in her trembling hand.

"Come nearer to me," said she kindly; "you should not be afraid." As Christina came near, she saw her image in the looking-glass. She had never before seen a large looking-glass; for the one they had at home was no bigger than a pocket-book. At first sight she thought this was a rival strawberry-girl coming to meet her. She stood still in amazement. But what most astonished her was, that this girl was dressed exactly like her, wore just such a straw hat, adorned with strawberry blossoms, and just such a dish full of strawberries in her hand. But she soon saw her mistake, and blushed over and over again.

The baroness smiled at the poor child's innocent mistake, and asked most kindly about her sick mother. Christina took courage once more, and answered every question distinctly. As she told of their poverty, and of her dear mother's many sorrows and sufferings, her emotion was so great that she could hardly speak. She sobbed bitterly, and the tears flowed down her cheeks.

"Do not weep so, my dear child," said the kind lady; "I will take care of your poor mother. But you must tell me where you live?"

"In the last house of the village," replied Christina; "from this window you may see the straw roof among the trees."

"What!" said Madam von Waldheim, "the white thatched cottage that looks so pretty among the dark green trees? Is it there your mother lives? And what is her name?"

"Her name is Rosalie West," said Christina; "but in the village they generally call her 'poor Rosalie.'"

The good lady now paid her three times the price of the strawberries, and ordered the servants to fill the earthen dish, in which Christina had brought the strawberries, with some of the best soup for her sick mother.

"That is a dear good child," said the baroness to Emily, when Christina was gone. "I do not mean merely that she is such a pattern of neatness and cleanliness amidst

all her poverty ; but her love to her mother is above all. Such a heart filled with filial tenderness, is more precious than a diamond star on the breast. O Emily ! if, as must yet happen, I lay there sick and miserable, as poor Christina's mother, would you watch over me as tenderly, serve me as dutifully, and do as much for me ?”

Emily, in whose eyes tears had stood ever since Christina's story, now threw herself weeping round her mother's neck. “May God keep you, dearest mother,” said she, sobbing, “from sickness, and misery. Rather may he send sickness to myself ! But if it must be so, and if you should fall sick, oh, surely, surely, I would not do less for you, than Christina does for her mother.”

“God bless you, my dear child, for your filial love,” said the tender mother. “O always remain so, and you shall enjoy many happy days. For believe me, God will bless every child who honours and loves her parents. And believe me, you shall see, that he will yet let poor Christina see better days !”

Meanwhile Christina returned home contented and happy. Her mother was delighted with her story, and the poor woman, who had for a long time tasted little but gruel, greatly enjoyed the rich soup. “O dear Christina,” said she, while, clasping her hands, she looked piously to Heaven ; “God never leaves his own to perish. He always helps them in his own good time !—Therefore, let us always trust in him ; but also, always do our duty honestly and faithfully. For you see, dear Christina, had not you, from love to me, been so diligent in gathering strawberries, and also obeyed my injunctions of cleanliness and order, we would not have had the happiness to interest the good lady and her daughter in our poverty. You see that not the smallest good action goes without its reward ; for God makes use of it to touch generous hearts, and, through their instrumentality, to deliver us from want.”

CHAPTER III.

THE TWO MOTHERS.

THE following day was Sunday. In the evening, after she had finished her little household labours, and fed her lamb, Christina was sitting by the bed-side of her mother, reading aloud, slowly, and distinctly, with a soft and gentle voice. It was a beautiful evening, and the setting sun shone, with a deep red glare, through the vine leaves at the window, into the little room; when, on a sudden, the Baroness von Waldheim, with Emily, stepped into the room. "Ah!" cried Christina, springing up, "here are the good lady and her daughter!" The invalid was deeply affected by their kind visit.

The baroness was delighted, as she glanced around the little room. The walls were snow-white, the few cups and plates upon the shelves were clean and shining; the table, the bench, the few chairs, and the floor, cleanly swept. The bed-clothes also, and the poor sick woman's dress, poor as they looked, were perfectly clean. Madam von Waldheim sat down on the chair from which Christina had just risen. She was pleased to observe how tidy and neat Christina kept everything; and she turned over the leaves of the book, and praised Christina's good, distinct reading, which she had heard. And as she saw their work-basket in one corner of the room, she examined its contents, and was much pleased both with the mother's and daughter's work.

"You cannot have been brought up in this village," said the baroness, "for here you could not have learned to work, or your daughter to read, so well. By what accident did you happen to come hither?"

“Through a strange and very cruel fate, madam!” said the sick woman. “My husband was huntsman in the service of a nobleman beyond the Rhine. We were scarcely two years married, and had lived in the greatest peace and happiness, when, suddenly, the French war broke out. Our master fled across the Rhine, and could not take us with him. My husband was advised to enlist in a hunter’s corps. It was impossible for me to follow him with my daughter, who was then so little that she could not even lisp her father’s name. We parted with a thousand tears. Alas! it was the last time I ever saw him. From time to time he wrote me that he was well; but on a sudden I heard that he was severely wounded, and soon after I heard that he died of his wounds. My grief was indescribable. Ah! he was good, kind, and honourable! I know not where his grave lies; but he certainly rests in peace.

“My daughter and I were now reduced to the greatest poverty. I would have gone home to my parents; but the war had visited with its horrors all the neighbouring places. My parents lost everything they had in the world, and died of an infectious sickness which the war had spread. I was forced to wander about. My possessions were easily carried; for I had almost nothing but these two hands. After wandering a long time, I came to this village. This little cottage was unoccupied; and the honest family, to whom it belongs, allowed me to enter it, on condition that I should teach their two little girls to knit and sew, to which I willingly agreed. I have certainly suffered much—but God has ever watched mercifully over me, and always and in all places comforted and assisted me; even to this moment when he has led you, my noble benefactress, under my straw roof. To him be thanks for all—both for sufferings and mercies!”

The baroness listened throughout very attentively, and the bright tears shone in her eyes. “Ah!” said she, “my story is very similar to yours, but still more melancholy.

For not only have I, like you, lost husband and parents, but also my only son. My husband was major of a regiment of hussars. In one of the first battles, in which he greatly distinguished himself, but which was lost, he was dangerously wounded. At the frightful news, I hastened without delay to him with my two children. But I only had the mournful comfort of seeing him once more. He died in my arms. You may imagine what were my feelings, but I cannot describe them. The defeat was succeeded by a hurried retreat. All the roads were covered with fugitives. I was carried along with the multitude, hardly knowing what I did. My two children,—a beautiful boy of about four years, and my daughter who, at the time, was not a year old, added to my distress. When I came with them to the Rhine, and tried to cross the bridge, the press of soldiers, horse and foot, of cannons, ammunition carts, and waggons with the wounded, all forcing for a passage, was so great, that I could not approach it. Meanwhile the sun had gone down. They were still skirmishing at some distance, to cover the retreat over the bridge. But the roar of the cannons approached nearer and nearer. Alas! it was the most horrible evening of my life. Some of the fugitives had taken possession of a barge, farther down the river, with which they proposed to cross. Out of compassion, they received me and my children. But the boat was so overladen, and they were so unskilful in managing it, that it was upset.

“An officer, on the opposite bank, had perceived our danger, and sent out, to our assistance, two soldiers with a small boat, the only one that could be got. It reached us just as we were sinking. I and my daughter, whom I held fast in my arms, were saved from certain death in the waves, and brought, half dead, to land. But my son perished, and was never more seen.”

The baroness could say no more for weeping, and she hid her face in her white handkerchief. After a little she

continued, "My daughter and I would certainly have perished from the cold and wet, had not a compassionate nobleman, who was passing at the time, and who was also on his flight, received us into his carriage. But the anxiety and terror of the shipwreck, together with my grief at the death of my husband and son, and the hardships of flight, brought a severe illness upon me. When I recovered, I, for the first time, remembered the consequences of my double loss. As my husband left no male heir, our possessions devolved to the prince of the land. Our castle was immediately taken possession of, and converted into an hospital for the sick and wounded. Owing, I must suppose to the unsettled state of the country, I was left for a long time without my jointure; and as I had no residence of my own, I was obliged to pay a very high rent in the city, and at last was reduced to actual poverty. At length, however, a respectable annuity was assigned to me; the amount for the preceding years was paid, and a part of this castle, which had formerly belonged to us, was fitted up for my reception. But the loss of my husband and my son can never be repaired! Nevertheless, however great this loss was, I have gained by it, for my sufferings have brought me to know God, and made me compassionate to the sorrows of my fellow-creatures. And then—what more can we desire upon earth, than a respectable competence, with a place where we may live in peace, may serve God, and do good to our fellow-men, in the blessed hope of once more meeting our lost ones in the glory of a better world."

Meanwhile it had been growing late. Baroness Waldheim looked at her watch, and stood up. "Have you had the advice of a physician?" asked she.

"Ah no," replied the sick woman. "I am unable to procure a regular physician, and I thought it better to do without assistance at all than to employ a quack."

"You are quite right," said the good lady; "no assistance at all was much better than such would have been."

She then promised to send her own physician to the sick woman, and comforted her with the hope that, with God's assistance, she would soon be better. She also told Christina to come every day to the castle for food for her mother; and then kindly wishing them both good night, she returned with Emily to the castle.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TWO DAUGHTERS' AMUSEMENTS.

IN about a fortnight the Baroness von Waldheim and Emily returned, to visit the sick Rosalie. Meanwhile she had become much better. The advice of the physician, and the nourishing food, had very much restored her. She was already up, and sat at her work-table sewing. As soon as she saw the good lady, she rose up, hastened to meet her, and tears of emotion and of gratitude ran down her pale cheeks. She could not find words to express her gratitude. The baroness seated herself at the opposite side of the table. She had brought her work-basket, and took out her work; but she allowed Emily to go with Christina into the little garden, which stretched from the cottage to the brook, and which belonged to the good farmer who had so kindly sheltered Rosalie.

While the two mothers conversed with one another on their sad fate, their daughters amused themselves in the garden. Christina showed her pet lamb to the young lady. Emily was quite delighted with the pretty little creature. As she had been brought up in a large town, she knew sheep only from her picture-book. She had never seen a lamb closely. Christina's lamb allowed Emily to stroke it, and ate the fresh green leaves that she held out to it in her hand, and ran after her as if wishing for more. Emily

was quite enchanted; she wished nothing better than to possess such a lamb. But she was too discreet to let it be observed. "No!" thought she, "for the whole world I would not deprive poor Christina of her only pleasure!"

When the baroness and her daughter were gone, Christina told her mother how delighted Emily had been with her lamb.

"Well, then, Christina," said her mother, "you know how much Emily and her mother have done for us. Had it not been for them I would perhaps have been now lying in the grave, and you would have had no mother. It is right that we show our gratitude as much as possible. You could now gratify Emily very much, but I fear it would be too hard on you. Still, were I in your place, I know what I should do!"

"Give her my lamb!" cried Christina, immediately. "Yes, that I will," continued she; "she shall have it early tomorrow morning. Emily's mother has preserved to me what is dearest to me on earth—you, dearest mother! Why should not I be glad to give to her daughter my little lamb, dear as it is to me?"

"Well," said her mother, "I am glad to see that you have a grateful heart. That is more precious than if you had the weight of your lamb in gold."

The mother now remembered that she had among her things a little bit of red satin, with some gold spangles. She sought them out, and immediately sat down to make the satin into a collar for the lamb, and with the spangles to embroider it with Emily's name. Emily had made Christina a present of a pretty white neckerchief, in the corner of which the initials of Emily's name were worked in blue silk. These initials served Rosalie as a pattern. She was determined to remain up till her work should be finished; Christina assisted, and kept her company, now threading her needle, and now looking for the brightest and most beautiful spangles. At last, near midnight, her

embroidery was finished, and Christina was so charmed with the appearance of the work, that she could hardly sleep for joy.

With the dawn of the following morning, the good girl hastened to the brook with her lamb, and spent her last morsel of soap in washing the little creature; and lo! he was almost as pure and white as new-fallen snow. Then the mother put on his collar. The scarlet satin, with the gold letters, looked so exceedingly beautiful among the white crisp curls of the wool, that Christina and her mother gazed admiringly at the lamb, and could hardly cease praising it.

Christina now carried the lamb up to the castle. She went first of all into the kitchen, to see the old cook, who had always been very kind to her, and consulted her upon what would be the best way of sending in her present. The cook was quite delighted with the lamb, and praised Christina's resolution very warmly. She took the lamb, and went to the door of the drawing-room, which she softly opened. The baroness was sitting at an open window embroidering, while Emily read aloud to her. They were both so engaged as to perceive nothing. Then the cook gently pushed the lamb through the open door, closed it again softly, and hastened back to the kitchen.

The baroness and Emily had noticed nothing of all this. The lamb stood a little while at the door looking about, and then began to bleat loudly. Emily turned round, and cried, "O, look at the lamb!" Then she took from the side-table some bread that remained from breakfast, and holding it out to the lamb, the poor little creature, which had eaten nothing that day, ran to her immediately, and ate it from her hand. Emily was quite delighted. The lamb appeared to her far more beautiful even than the day before; and when she read the golden initials of her name, and saw, thereby, that the little creature was intended as a present to her, her joy was still greater.

"O how kind of Christina," said she, "to give me what she loves best! But I hardly like to take it. What do you think I should do, dearest mother?"

"You must take it," replied her mother, "else I am sure you would grieve the good child greatly. But I shall try to reward her some other way."

Emily now hastened into the kitchen, to call her good strawberry-girl. Christina had wished to go away immediately, but the cook detained her; and it now cost Emily much trouble, to persuade the modest little girl to enter the room.

Meanwhile the baroness had taken out of her desk a gold piece, on which was the picture of a lamb. "You have a very grateful heart, my dear little girl," said she, as Emily led the blushing girl into the room. "You have made my daughter a present, that you would not have parted with for gold. But you must take this gold lamb as a little remembrance from me."

The good Christina was so moved by this kind way of giving, that she had much difficulty in refusing the present. But it would have grieved and hurt her far more to accept payment for her grateful present. She was in great embarrassment, and tears started into her eyes. "O no, no, noble lady," said she, "I really cannot take the gold. It would take away all my pleasure. Nothing but the purest and most heartfelt gratitude, induced me to bring my lamb as a small humble present to Miss Emily; and, indeed, I cannot permit myself to be so over-rewarded for it." She resisted all persuasion to take anything in return.

This disinterestedness, on the part of one so poor, pleased the baroness still more than her simple rustic present. "Well," said she, "I must try to reward you in some way that will suit your disposition better. On account of your noble heart, you shall henceforth be my Emily's play-fellow. In your company she runs no risk

of learning low ideas. At first, therefore, you must come here every day after dinner. I will give you some work together, and then we shall see what more is to be done."

When Christina returned home, and told all that had happened, her mother was much pleased with her conduct. "You see now," said she, "that it is as I have often told you. The poorest child,—if she only strives from the heart to do what is right—will, in the end, find those who will prize her more for her goodness, than if she were covered with gold and precious stones. On the contrary, the richest and fairest maiden, if she has nothing else to recommend her, will never escape the contempt of the virtuous, nor engage the love and respect of good men. Virtue, virtue alone is the sure way of being truly happy, rich, and honoured."

CHAPTER V.

A STRANGER APPEARS.

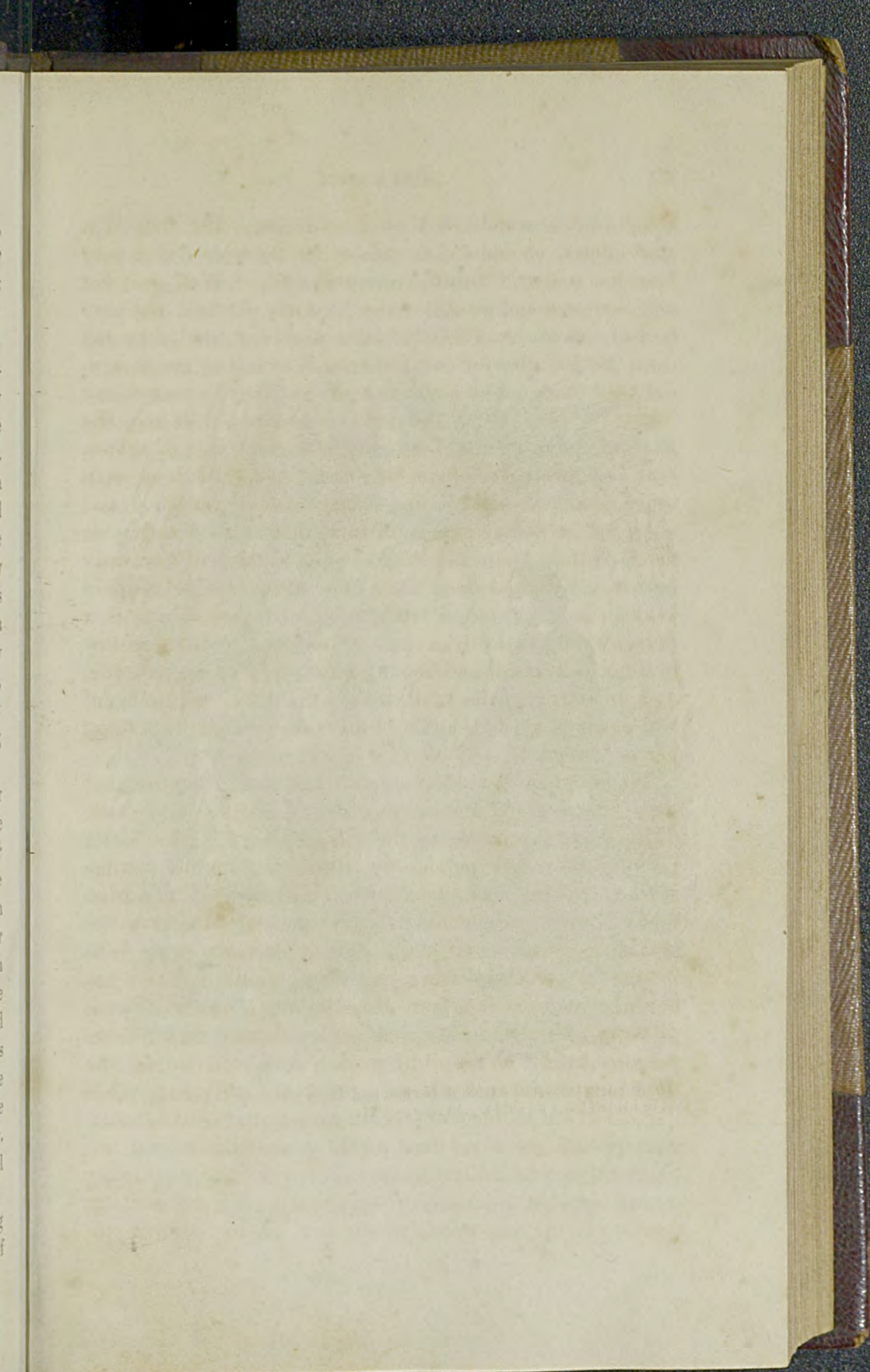
FROM the gold-embroidered collar with which the lamb was adorned, the Baroness von Waldheim discovered that Rosalie was an excellent work-woman. But as this art was not much prized in the village, Rosalie had, for a long time, quite given it up, and confined herself to knitting and sewing. Now, however, the Baroness von Waldheim not only gave her commissions of herself, but procured them for her from others; so that in this way, poor Rosalie not only procured a comfortable subsistence, but also found frequent access to the castle.

At first, Madam von Waldheim had been only actuated by motives of compassion in her kindness to Rosalie, but, as she saw more of her, her compassion was by degrees changed into respect. She found very great pleasure in conversing with so pious and intelligent a companion.

People often wondered that a noble lady, the wife of a staff-officer, should feel friendship for the widow of a poor common soldier. But the baroness said, "Well, was not my dear husband a soldier also? And, in truth, the very fact of her husband having been a soldier, and, like my own, having died for our fatherland, was her recommendation to me. The similarity of our fate increased my interest in her. She, like me, is a widow; like me, she has suffered much; and, like me, she has an only daughter. Our daughters are about the same age, and love each other tenderly—and if my Emily be only as good and noble as Christina, and Emily's mother as good and noble as Christina's mother, I shall be quite contented. Certainly outward circumstances shew the difference of people's rank in society; but a truly noble and good heart, is a person's only real distinction. This poor soldier's widow is so modest, mild, and honourable, so proved by suffering, and so heartily pious, and, at the same time, so intelligent and accomplished, that I feel myself honoured by calling her my friend."

Madam von Waldheim continued to distinguish her poor friend more and more. Every Sunday she came down from the castle to the village church; and after service, she never passed by Rosalie's humble cottage without looking in, at least for a few moments. She often told Christina, who came daily to the castle, to bring her mother with her, and, in a short time, they were both invited to come up every day after dinner. Then the baroness and her daughter, Rosalie and Christina, would sit down at a work-table, and employ themselves for hours with a variety of beautiful work. And, afterwards, the good lady would make Rosalie drink tea with her, while Christina ate a slice of bread and butter with Emily. And in the evening, they would commonly go out all together, to take a little walk.

One beautiful summer evening, they all were walking together in the oak-wood, which covered the declivity of





The stranger respectfully took off his hat, and Emily was surprised to observe that in his left hand he held a gold ring.—p. 21.

the castle-hill. Several shady walks strewn with nice gravel, led through the wood, and here and there was fixed a pleasant seat as a resting place. The day had been very hot, and the air was, even yet, rather sultry. The baroness, with her companion Rosalie, sat down upon a seat, hewn in the rock, and shaded by oaks. This seat, on account of the lovely prospect it commanded, was her favourite resting place.

Emily and Christina went on a little further, each carrying a little basket on her arm. It was now the season for raspberries, and Emily had long been anxious to pull some for herself. Christina led her to an open part of the wood, which was almost covered with raspberry bushes. Both the girls now busied themselves pulling and heartily enjoying the fragrant berries. Every now and then, the one called out to the other, "Here are still finer ones!" And they always put the finest ones in their baskets, to carry back to Emily's mother. The lamb which they had brought with them, ran about the open space, now grazing a little, now cropping at the bushes, till by degrees it wandered a considerable way.

Emily now perceived a young stranger who was stroking the lamb, and looking very attentively at its collar. She and Christina at once hastened towards him, for they were afraid he would carry away either the collar or the lamb. The young man looked up when he heard them approach. His features were fresh and handsome, and he wore a dark green dress of summer cloth, with a round hat. He appeared to be moved even to tears, and looked up at Emily with a kind of astonishment and perplexity: at last he respectfully took off his hat with his right hand; but Emily was surprised to observe that in his left he held a gold ring.

"Pardon me, young lady," said he, when he observed Emily's anxiety, "I should be very sorry to hurt the lamb which I see belongs to you. I was only looking at the

letters which are embroidered on its collar. Probably they are the initials of your name?"

"Yes," replied Emily, surprised, "they are. The three gold letters on the red satin are, E. v. W. and my name is Emily von Waldheim."

"Emily! Emily!" cried the young man, astonished.

Emily was frightened at his vehemence. She believed him deranged, and felt very uncomfortable. "Come, we ought not to stay here," said she to Christina, and taking her by the hand, wished to run away. But the young stranger recollected himself, and said quite calmly,

"I beg you will remain only a few moments! I have here a gold ring, on which the very same letters are engraved. You see here E. v. W.! It was on this account that I examined the letters on the collar so closely; for, it is of the utmost importance to me to find out to whom this ring belonged. But," continued he, sorrowfully, "it is impossible it can have belonged to you; you see, opposite the letters is the date 1786. This dashes all my hopes. You could not have been born at that time!"

"My mother's name," said Emily, "is the same as mine; she also is Emily von Waldheim."

"What!" cried the young man, again agitated. "Could it be possible? Ah! perhaps the ring belongs to your mother; could you lead me to her?"

"With pleasure," replied Emily, "she is only a few hundred yards from this. Have the kindness to follow me." They walked on; the young man placing her upon his right, and Christina following with the lamb.

When they approached the seat, the young man stopped bashfully at a little distance, and looked at the Baroness von Waldheim for some moments in silence. His face was pale, as if from fear, and the hand in which he held the ring trembled. But soon recovering himself he approached, bowed respectfully, mentioned the singular coincidence of the letters, and handed her the ring.

The Baroness von Waldheim took the ring—looked at the three letters—uttered a loud cry—and would have fallen, had not Rosalie supported her.

“My God! What is this?” cried she, when she had a little recovered from the first shock. “This is my husband’s bridal ring. See, this ring on my finger, which my husband gave me at our betrothal, and which I always wear in memory of him, is exactly the same pattern, only rather smaller. O tell me, tell me! where you got this ring? Who are you? Who are your parents?”

The young man became still paler, and trembled in every limb. “My father,” said he, “was killed in the war. My mother was a beautiful lady; when I last saw her she was dressed in black, and she always wept bitterly. I had also a little sister called Emily. My mother was crossing the Rhine with us both. The boat sunk. I, at the time a child of four years old, was saved from the waves. But I have never heard more of my mother and little sister. The ring, and some other trifles, were found in a little package containing my clothes; but I can neither tell anything of my parents or country. My own name is Charles!”

“O Charles!” cried the Baroness von Waldheim, and fell upon the young man’s neck, “you are my son! Yes, you are my son!—the very image of your father. O God! O God! how wonderful art Thou in thy ways!” cried she, while with uplifted arms, she looked weeping towards heaven. And then, again, she embraced her son, and bedewed his face with her tears. The young man was so transported that he could utter no other words than “O mother! mother! O my God—my merciful God!”

Emily stood near, leaning on Christina, and trembled and wept. At last her mother cried, “O Emily, behold your brother! Charles, Charles, speak to your sister! Oh my children, embrace each other.”

Charles pressed his weeping sister to his arms, and cried, “O my dear, dear sister! O my God! what joy Thou

hast prepared for me,—so unexpectedly to find both mother and sister !” And Emily could not, for weeping, utter a word but “ My dear, dear brother !”

All three felt so happy, and had so much to say, and so many questions to ask, that they forgot the whole world around them. The sun had set, and it became almost dark without their perceiving it. But Rosalie at last reminded them it was time to return to the house ; and Madam von Waldheim returned to the castle leading her children by the hand, followed by Rosalie and Christina.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HISTORY OF CHARLES'S YOUTH.

MADAM von Waldheim ordered a little feast of joy to be prepared in the castle. Emily covered the table with a cloth of dazzling whiteness ; and the wax lights in their massive candlesticks, were reflected in the glittering plate which stood upon the table. Charles took his place between his mother and sister, and Christina and Rosalie were invited to join them. “ For,” said the baroness, “ had it not been for you and your lamb, I would never have found my dear son Charles !” Charles, who was very hungry after his journey, enjoyed his supper ; but his mother and sister could scarce eat a morsel for joy, and did nothing but look at him. They asked him numberless questions ; but it was not till after supper that they requested him to tell his whole history, which he willingly did.

“ Since the evening that I was saved from the Rhine,” said he, “ I have passed all my childhood and youth in the house of a good parish-priest, called Engelhard, who lives beyond the Rhine. I would not now remember anything of my childhood, and my dear parents, had he not often

repeated to me the little a child of four could tell him. I have only a very dim recollection even of our shipwreck. But the good priest, who lives near the scene, and had diligently inquired all about me, has often described to me that frightful evening, and the terrible night that succeeded it. The war, with all its terrors, had, like a destructive storm, swept over the whole district. Two villages were on fire, and the flames illuminated every thing for miles around, with a red glare, tinging the black clouds with a ruddy glow, and gleaming frightfully over the river. The defeated army had escaped over the river. But their conquerors pressed close upon them. The roar of the cannons was so loud, that it resembled a frightful storm, but sometimes you could even distinguish the fire of the musquetry. Whole families, fathers, mothers, and children, some in waggons, some on foot, had flocked thither; but when they reached the river, they had no means of proceeding farther. The tumult and confusion were indescribable. The good priest's house was filled with the fugitives, and he was indefatigable in comforting and assisting them. On a sudden there was a loud knock at his door. He opened it—and there stood a soldier, with a little weeping boy in his arms. I was that little boy!

“ ‘For God's sake, father,’ cried the soldier, ‘have pity on this poor child, and take charge of him. I have just saved him from the river. But I have no place to take him to. This little wet bundle contains his clothes and something more. Take him—for I am obliged to go.’ The good-hearted priest kindly took me in his arms, and the soldier hurried off, crying, ‘God will reward you! farewell.’

“The good clergyman now learned from me that my father, who was an officer, had been killed in the war, and that my mother had been crossing the Rhine, with me and my little sister, when this accident befel us. He spared no pains to learn if my mother and sister might

not have been saved from the frightful death of drowning. As soon as possible he proceeded to the neighbouring village, and inquired in all quarters. He met with several of those who had been on board the boat and had escaped. All spoke with respect and compassion of the afflicted officer's widow; but they all agreed that she and her little child must certainly have perished. The force of the stream, it was true, had carried some of the men on board back to the shore which they had just left; but it was most improbable that any one should reach the opposite coast. The generous priest, however, still thought it possible. But it was a long time before he could make inquiries. The war for a long time interrupted all communication between the opposite sides of the river. And afterwards, when he was able to receive intelligence from the other bank, no one had seen any lady like the one whom he described; and every one declared she must certainly have perished.

"The benevolent clergyman now took charge of me and of my education. He was a very kind, but yet an old man; and a true lover of children. The days of my childhood could not have passed more happily. He was always cheerful and kind, and could guide me by a single word. For his whole conduct, with all its kindness, had so much earnestness and dignity, that I felt the greatest reverence for him, and would not, for the world, have dared to show myself in the slightest degree disobedient.

"His first care was to instruct me in religion, and his instructions were so simple and earnest, that he made me love God and my Redeemer from the bottom of my heart. He taught me to read and write, and, as he thought I showed signs of considerable capacity, he gave me instructions in Latin. He read Latin books with me, and always chose the most beautiful passages, and those most suited to my age. Whatever I read, I had to write down for him, translated into German. In this manner I collected

several volumes, clearly and distinctly written, all of which he had neatly bound together. I was very fond of this, and soon acquired a facility of reading any Latin book which was not on too abstruse a subject. Afterwards he gave me lessons in Greek.

“His pretty little residence was surrounded by a beautiful garden, and a large orchard. After reading for an hour, we used to work in the garden; for he cultivated it himself, and I assisted him. This served us as relaxation from study. In winter, or on rainy days, he amused himself with drawing, in which he was very expert. He also painted so well on canvass, that judges placed his performances on a par with the finest works of art. I, too, was very fond of drawing and painting, but he made it a rule only to give me instructions in it as a reward for particular diligence in my studies; and under his excellent guidance, I made considerable progress in this art. Thus every day flew past in useful and pleasant occupations; and I was as happy and as cheerful as any child in his own father's house.

“Meanwhile, however, the good priest had many trials. He felt bitterly the hardships of the war. The military exactions bore heavily upon him, and several times his house was plundered. This, however, would have troubled him very little, had it not been for me. He had often promised to supply me with the means of studying; for although the revenue of his parish was not great, yet, by his frugal manner of living, he had laid by what would suffice for my collegiate expenses. But now he found it impossible; for the war reduced him to the greatest poverty.

“There was, however, in Vienna, a friend of his early years, who was held in great esteem, and had many friends among the nobles and the literati. To this friend he wrote, inquiring if he could procure for a young man who had abilities and taste for study, an opportunity of doing so. He soon received the welcome answer, that his friend would receive me with open arms to his house,

and afterwards provide for me. I ought, he wrote, to set out on my journey immediately, as it was necessary that those who were to be enrolled as students, should be previously examined in the beginning of the next month.

A merchant, who often visited my adopted father, was at the time on the point of setting out on a journey to this country, and offered to take me without expense. As in this manner I could perform the half of my journey in a comfortable travelling carriage, his offer was joyfully accepted.

"I shall never forget the morning of my parting from the kind old clergyman. The good man, with his pale noble countenance and venerable grey hairs, clasped me in his arms, and bedewed my face with tears.

" 'Dearest Charles,' said he, 'the moment has now arrived when you must leave me, to go out into the world. In this quiet remote village, and in my house, God has not allowed you to see or hear ought but what is good. But it will not be so in the great city to which you are going. It is true you will live in the house of a good and pious man, and you will become acquainted with many such other in the city; but you will also see enough of bad example, and hear a great deal of wickedness. O Charles, do not forget my exhortations—do not be led astray—always persevere in your present noble and pious sentiments.'

"He handed to me, also," continued Charles, "a written copy of his paternal admonitions, that I might never forget them. I have the paper still in my pocket-book, and you may read it at your leisure."

"Oh no—no!" they all cried. "We should like to hear these good instructions this moment."

Charles took out the letter and read:—

" 'My dearest son,

" 'Let our holy religion be your first and constant care. It is the most precious treasure we have upon earth, and the true heavenly bread of our immortal souls. Do not be contented with assisting piously and reverently at the public services of the church, but let your own

quiet chamber also be a temple for meditation. Never forget that God's eye sees you everywhere, and do everything as if before his face. Fly ever to Him in your trouble, and trust in Him. Do not forsake Him, and He will never forsake you.

“ ‘ You will hear many thoughtless conversations about religion. Avoid such conversations. He who truly follows the precepts of the Christian religion, feels a conviction in his heart that it is from God. By this touch-stone, which our Redeemer himself has given us, its truth is tested. An experience of almost seventy years has convinced me of this. This is its best triumph over all the doubts of those friends who have not yet come to a full recognition of it; and over all the sophistries of its deluded enemies.

“ ‘ Never do anything evil—never gainsay the voice of your conscience. Do not associate with those who deride innocence and modesty, and make a jest of vice; fly from them as from a pestilential fever. Such thoughtless notions have beguiled many a fair and promising youth into fleeting pleasures of sin; and thereby reduced him to a living skeleton, and precipitated him into an early grave. Keep your heart pure and unspotted, and you will preserve the beautiful colour of your cheeks, the fire of your eyes, the peace of your conscience, and the cheerfulness of spirit which you now possess; and when I again see you, the first glance will tell me if you are still good and uncorrupted.

“ ‘ Be unwearied in the labour of your calling. The vocation of a student is noble and honourable. Whether you study law, medicine or divinity, in all these the welfare, either temporal or eternal, of your fellow-beings is intrusted to you. It would be a fearful thought were you not in earnest in desiring to become master of your profession, and if, instead of contributing to the happiness of men, you, through ignorance and unskilfulness, should cause their injury. The years of study are the seed-time; make use of this precious time ere it flies away—else you cannot expect a joyful harvest. You have often seen in our village how the peasantry must struggle, how they rise before day, suffer frost and heat, and exert all their energies, not only for their own support, but to afford those taxes which are necessary for the maintenance of the noble and the learned. Labour, therefore, unweariedly, that you may be enabled to do something for those good people, who do so much for us, and instead of a useless burden, you may be a blessing to them.

“ ‘ But, at proper times, you may allow yourself innocent relaxation; only, never permit sensual pleasure to gain a mastery over your heart. He who lets himself be carried away by the pleasures of sense—by gaming, drinking, dissipation—even though he be not guilty of overt crime, is yet a slave to his pleasures, and therefore a wicked man. An inordinate inclination for sensual gratifications, uproots in our heart the feeling for all that is truly great, beautiful, and good, and makes us unfit for the enjoyment of more noble gratifications.

“ ‘ My dearest son ! perhaps this is the last time you will see my face. I am nearly seventy years old, and not far from the grave. You cannot deny that I have had experience, and know the world and men, and what motive could I have for deceiving you ! Trust me therefore, and persevere in virtue ; for if you be virtuous, your virtue is profitable to yourself, and you will yourself experience the blessing of it. But if you are wicked, you do evil to yourself ; your’s is the shame, and your’s the loss. Therefore, dearest Charles, persevere—oh, persevere—in virtue all your life long.’ ”

They were all deeply affected by these beautiful lessons. Charles put back the letter in his pocket-book, and continued his narrative.

“ The good man then gave me the ring with these precious initials. ‘ You have here,’ said he, with deep emotion, ‘ the whole inheritance of your beloved parents. Perhaps, under God’s guidance, it may lead to the happy discovery of your parentage.’ ”

“ The kind, affectionate, old man now took from his desk the two last gold pieces he possessed in the world, as he had expended all his resources in providing me with decent clothing, and the money necessary for my journey. He gave me the gold pieces which you see here, and said, ‘ You had better take these also, my dear son, in case of need—and here is something else, far more precious than gold—the New Testament ! I can give you no more now. But only live according to the precepts of this holy book ; remain pious, noble, and good—and you are rich enough.’ ”

“ Then blessing me, with trembling hands and weeping eyes, he clasped me once more in his arms, and bade me farewell. Sobbing and deeply affected, I left the house.”

Poor Charles wept afresh as he told this ; and bright tears flowed down the cheeks of his mother, sister, and the rest.

“ This parish-priest,” said the mother, “ is a truly excellent man, and a worthy clergyman. There was something noble in so kindly and generously maintaining a poor strange child, for so many years, bestowing his time and his exertions, and so to speak, giving his last farthing to

bring him up a good and happy man. It is only the Christian religion which can make the heart of man thus disinterested and benevolent, and include every human being in its love, even as our nearest kindred and relations."

CHAPTER VII.

HOW CHARLES HAD COME HITHER.

CHARLES was silent for a time, and dried his tears; then he continued: "The merchant who offered me the vacant place in his carriage is an excellent man, and a very pleasant companion. He always had something cheerful to say, and constantly laboured to make me forget my mournful parting. Sometimes he would tell me amusing stories; sometimes propound riddles, or sing a merry song for me. He knew the name of every village through which we passed, and in the towns he showed me every thing that was worth seeing. But about three leagues from this we were obliged to separate; for his business led him in another direction. He wished me all happiness, and God's blessing on my undertaking; exhorted me to be diligent, and to trust in God; gave my little trunk in charge to a carrier, made me a present of a gold piece, and shaking me cordially by the hand, continued his journey.

"This parting also was a severe trial for me. I was now separated from every acquaintance upon earth! However, I continued my journey on foot. Towards evening I reached the wood which surrounds this castle. I felt much exhausted by the heat of the day, and by the long journey to which I was unaccustomed. I sat down therefore to rest myself a little on a grassy seat, which I saw beneath a beech-tree. The old castle which, gilded by the evening sun, towered up from among the trees, presented a most picturesque appearance. I took a piece of

paper out of my pocket-book, and began to sketch the castle.

“ But I soon laid aside the sketch I had begun. The setting sun—the stillness of the wood—and the approach of night, excited in me very mournful reflections. ‘ Ah!’ thought I, ‘ night approaches, and I know not where I shall find shelter. I know not a soul for miles around—all are utter strangers to me; and my beloved foster-father, from whom I am now several days’ journey separated, is very old, and I may perhaps never see his venerable countenance again! I have scarcely known my good parents; I only remember my father as a corpse, and my mother, in her black widow’s weeds, and her eyes red with weeping.’

“ These thoughts brought tears to my eyes. I took out the gold ring which the good clergyman had given me, and which I kept in my pocket, along with his letter of advice. ‘ Ah, my God!’ cried I, ‘ this ring must have belonged to my parents, and it is the only inheritance they have left to me, a poor orphan. The three little letters must be the initials of the beloved name either of my father or my mother, and I do not even know what that name is! This ring must have been worn either by my father, whose hand has long mouldered in the grave, or by my mother who may possibly be still alive! Yes, perhaps she still lives—perhaps even in the very place through which I am wandering.’

“ My heart was torn by this reflection! A feeling at once of the bitterest sorrow, and the most blessed hope overpowered me. I fell down on my knees, clasped my hands, and prayed fervently to heaven. ‘ O merciful God! Thou alone knowest if my mother yet lives! Thou alone, if she still lives, canst permit me to find her! Ah! perhaps it was not without a wise end Thou hast thrown this ring into my hands. Would that the letters upon it might lead to the discovery of my mother. O my dear, kind mother! If she still lives—she mourns me as dead; she believes that I, a tender child, was drowned in the waters

of the Rhine: Oh how great would be her joy to clasp me in her arms, now that I have grown up to youth! And what a blessing would it be for me could I look once more upon her kind maternal countenance, and thank her for all she did for me before I was able to prize her love, and feel grateful for it. How unspeakably happy would I be to show her how grateful I am, and to be the support of her approaching age! O blessed God, Father of the widow and the orphan—lead me, if she yet lives—Oh lead me to her arms! Hear my childlike prayer and grant me to find her!"

"When I had thus prayed, and was looking with eyes still filled with tears, through the branches of the beech tree to the blue sky, I heard a slight rustling among the bushes. Looking round I saw the lamb—and the golden letters on the scarlet satin glittered brightly in the evening sun. A strange, indescribable feeling—a kind of shuddering delight overpowered me. It appeared to me as though a light from heaven were around me, as if a beam of light from above illuminated the letters—they seemed to possess a supernatural brilliancy. I believed that I felt God's presence, and it seemed to me as if the leaves of all the trees around, trembled in reverence before Him. I felt as if something within me said, 'Thy prayer is heard!' And so it was. My feelings had not deceived me. Like an angel of heaven, I just then, for the first time, saw my sister advancing in her white dress, and she, for the first time, named to me the beloved name of my mother. Thus, dearest mother, has God wonderfully led me back again to thy arms, and to thine, dearest sister, also!"

"Yes, it is indeed so, my dearest children," said the mother, as she clasped both her children in her arms. "Our good God, our bounteous Heavenly Father has re-united us all three. He it was, dearest Charles, who deprived me of you in your infancy, and gave you into the care of a generous man, who, from the purest benevolence, gave you an education which I, a poor forlorn widow,

could not have bestowed, and better than which no princess could have purchased for you with gold. He it is, also, who has restored you to me, a blooming youth—and changed the tears of sorrow, with which I wept your loss, into tears of joy. ‘He hath done all things well,’ and all his ways are but the purest wisdom and love. O my dearest children, let us thank Him, and humbly bless and honour His holy providence!” And all three kept silent for some time with deep emotion, while their hearts held communion with God. Rosalie also, and Christina, looked on with folded hands and tearful eyes, and with hearts filled with emotion and piety, they sat silent, and scarcely ventured to breathe.

“How happy,” said Charles, after a time, “will the good old man, my second father, be when he learns this wonderful work of providence! I must send him an account of the joyful circumstances this very night.” It was almost midnight when Charles went to his room; but it would have been impossible for him to go to bed. He sat down at the writing-table which stood in the room, and wrote to his dear father, the venerable priest, at such length, and with so much fervour, that he still sat writing by the light of the wax candle, when the golden dawn beamed in through the window, and eclipsed, by its brilliancy, the fainter gleam of his taper.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHARLES’S ADOPTED FATHER.

CHARLES now lived as happily in his paternal castle, as if he were in paradise. The more he knew his mother, the more he found himself impelled to honour this admirable lady. His sister, also, who was ever industrious, cheerful, and kind, he learned to prize more and

more every day. His arrival at Waldheim produced another good result. The castle, which had formerly been his father's property, was at present assigned only as part of his mother's jointure ; but now he was in a position to reclaim back his paternal inheritance, and to regard the inhabitants of the village, and neighbouring country, as his future dependants. His mother joyfully led him through the castle, showed him its environs, and the possessions attached to it ; and spoke much to him of the noble destiny which lay before him, in contributing to the happiness of the inhabitants of the little valley.

One evening the baroness, Charles, and Emily, sat thus conversing together, on an oak seat, which, together with a little rustic table, had been placed beneath the shade of two thick chestnut trees, on the gravelled plot before the castle door. Then they saw a venerable old man, with snow-white hair and a black dress, coming towards them, with a staff in one hand, and a three cornered hat under his arm. " Ah, my God !" cried Charles, " it is my father !" springing up and running to meet him. " Is it possible," he repeated, " dearest, kindest father, is it you ? —How have you come ?"

" My dear Charles—my dearest son !" said the priest. " As soon as I received your letter, I determined, in spite of my age, to undertake this long journey. I thought, for weighty reasons, that my presence here would be useful, indeed necessary. And, besides, it was my fondest wish to become acquainted with the mother and sister of my dear foster-son, and to share the joy which God has bestowed on all the three, not only at a distance, but upon the very spot." Charles threw his arms around his neck, and his mother and Emily could not find words enough to express their gratitude to him.

The venerable old man, who was exhausted by climbing the hill, now seated himself beside them. The baroness offered him refreshments ; but his noble heart could not think now of eating and drinking. He immediately began

to speak, with equal eloquence and feeling, of the wonderful ways of God's providence;—he next explained the necessary steps, in order that the prince might recognize Charles as the young Baron von Waldheim; and also detailed the course of study which he should pursue, in order that he might become a wise and good master to his future dependants.

Meanwhile, Rosalie and her daughter came as usual to pay their visit. The baroness presented them to the good clergyman. "Here, my dear father," said she, "is the good child, who, in the lamb, made us a present so rich in blessings,—and here is her mother who ornamented the collar with the three eventful letters." The old pastor was delighted to become acquainted with the good Rosalie and her daughter, and greeted them in the kindest manner.

The baroness now ordered tea to be laid beneath the chestnut trees, with bread, butter, fruit, and wine. But Emily and Christina slipped away; ornamented the lamb, which was always pure and white as snow, with wreaths of fresh green leaves, and young half opened rose-buds, and brought it to the parish priest. The good old man looked on it with pleasure, stroking it, and said to the baroness and Emily—"You have made me acquainted with the two worthy friends, through whom God bestowed such a blessing on you, neither have you forgotten the lamb, which, though unconsciously, was such an active agent also. But now, I must introduce you to the man, who, under God, was the principal cause of this happy re-union, and who did all that man could do for the foundation of your happiness. I mean that noble-minded soldier, who, at the risk of his own life, precipitated himself into the Rhine, and snatched our dear Charles, then a tender, helpless child, from its raging waters. This good man has suffered much, since he performed that noble action. Allow me briefly to tell you the heads of his story. He served in several campaigns, and endured many hardships, until at last he was severely

wounded. He and many more of the wounded were put in waggons and carried onwards. Now it happened, that on their way the long train of waggons passed by the house of a wool-dyer, who lived near the gate of a little town near the river. In this house the brave soldier had formerly been quartered, and had done great service to the dyer, whose house was particularly exposed to the insolence of the soldiery, saving not only his property but his life. When the waggons approached the house, the dyer looked out of the window to see them pass—and there, among the wounded, he perceived his former protector, who had, with difficulty, raised himself up, and was looking anxiously towards the window. The dyer immediately hastened down, saluted him cordially, and begged the officer who commanded the detachment, to leave the poor half-dead man with him. The army-surgeon was called; and declared it impossible for the poor man to reach the hospital, but that he, and a hundred others, must die on the road. “Let him be brought, however,” said he, “into the house of the compassionate dyer; the sufferings, at least, of his last hours, might be somewhat alleviated.”

The dyer, with the greatest kindness, now received his former friend and benefactor into his house. His unceasing attentions, and the skill of the village surgeon, with God’s assistance, saved his life, contrary to all expectation; but for a long time he remained so weak, that he could neither travel farther, nor endure any severe labour. The dyer, who was a rich man, and had a very extensive business, was very willing he should remain with him, and the grateful soldier, who wrote an excellent hand, took charge of his correspondence, and kept his books with the greatest diligence and exactness. Each became every day more attached to the other, and they lived in true brotherly unity.

But, alas! a change came. His worthy host died very suddenly. Death overtook him very unexpectedly,

else he would have provided for his friend in his will. His possessions fell to his relations; the establishment was sold; and the hard-hearted heirs dismissed the good soldier with empty hands. He had now to seek support elsewhere; and wished to rejoin his regiment, and as he had, in a great measure, lost the use of his left arm, to solicit his discharge. His path lay not far from my parish, and he naturally conceived a wish to inquire what had become of the child, whom he had saved from the water. He paid me a visit, the evening of the very day on which Charles had left me. I was delighted to see the noble-hearted soldier again, kept him with me, determined to do all in my power to procure him a situation.

Just then arrived Charles's letter, containing the joyful and unexpected news. I thought it right to bring the brave man here with me. For, in the first place, I think he can testify to the day and year, in which he rescued a boy of about four years old from the Rhine, together with a package of his clothes, containing the ring which he gave to me;—which will be very useful, in proving that Charles is really the son of the Baroness von Waldheim, whom every one believed to have been drowned. And secondly, I hoped Charles would not prove ungrateful to him who saved his life, especially as the good man is true as gold, an excellent writer and accountant, also an experienced forester, and might be of the greatest service to the future Baron von Waldheim."

"Oh, where is he?—where is he?" cried the baroness, Charles, and Emily, almost with one voice.

The priest turned round, made a sign to a plain-dressed man, who had modestly stood at some distance, took him by the hand, and led him before the baroness, saying, "Here he is—my good, noble, honest John West."

"John West!" cried Rosalie, who, at that moment, was placing the tea-service upon the table, "O my God, it is my husband!" She flew into his arms, and embraced him, trembling and quivering with excess of joy.

Every one was astonished at this new dispensation of heavenly providence. But the man himself stood as if petrified. It was long before he could believe such unexpected happiness, and then he burst into tears of joy. The happy Rosalie now cried to her daughter, "O Christina, this is your father—embrace him!" Christina, who had hitherto, stood immovable with folded hands, now approached modestly and, shedding plenteous tears, he clasped her in his loving arms. The joy of these three was now quite equal to that which the baroness, Emily, and Charles, had experienced a few days before.

After they had recovered from their first agitating joy, Charles stepped forward and embraced the preserver of his life, with unutterable emotion. The baroness also, and Emily, heartily shook his hand, and overwhelmed him with their gratitude and praise. "Dear West," said Madam von Waldheim, "from this moment, you, your wife and daughter, shall be received into this castle, and never more be separated from us; and if, as I hope, we shall receive back our possessions, you shall receive such an appointment as shall make you perfectly contented."

CHAPTER IX.

UNIVERSAL JOY IN THE VILLAGE.

THE Baroness von Waldheim had not immediately allowed it to be generally known, that the young stranger who resided in the castle was her son; she wished to enjoy her happiness for a few days in quietness. But the coachman who had driven the old priest and his companion, and whose horses were at the inn in the village, let it all out. While he was cleaning his coach, and watering his horses, several people from the village, in which it was a holiday, inquired to whom the coach belonged. For a

strange vehicle was quite a rarity there. The coachman replied, "It was I that drove here the clergyman who educated your young lord."

"What!" cried the people, "our young lord was drowned when a child!"

"No," said the coachman, "he is still alive, and is up at the castle. He was saved from the waters, by the man who came in the coach with the clergyman; otherwise he would certainly have been drowned. I am the clergyman's servant, and when your young lord was little, I have a hundred times carried him through the fields or meadows, on these old shoulders which you see here. But Charles was always a dear, brave, excellent young gentleman, and has ever been very kind to his old Jack. You will all love him, and he will be a blessing to you!"

The news, that Baron Charles, who had been born in the castle, and baptized in the parish church of Waldheim, but had long been believed to be dead, was found at last, spread immediately through the whole village.

"What!" said the people to one another, "can it be, that our young lord whom we so often saw, an infant, in his mother's arms, is still alive? We can't believe it! We must satisfy our own eyes of it—let us go and see him."

All the inhabitants, young and old, ran joyfully up to the castle. But when they saw the family sitting on the seat beneath the chestnut trees, they remained respectfully at a distance. A large circle soon gathered, of fathers, mothers, and children; while the family, and their companions were so engaged with their own joy, as not to observe them.

Madam von Waldheim was the first to notice them, and asked, "What can be the cause of such a crowd?" and the cook, who was now, for the second time, bringing in hot water for tea, as they had suffered the first to grow cold, said "The people are very anxious to see our young lord; they have just this moment learned he is here."

"That is well," said the good priest; "I am glad to see

the people manifest this feeling. Will you, my dear madam, allow me to present my adopted son to these good people as their future lord, and to speak a few fervent words to them?" Then the noble old man, with deep emotion, took the velvet cap off his venerable snow-white head, and standing up, advanced a step, and, as if full of inspiration, began to speak.

"Ye parents and children, fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters, step forward and see and hear what great joy God has prepared, both for your noble lady's family, and for yourselves."

"God, without whose knowledge, not a sparrow falls from the roof, and by whom the hairs of our head are numbered, is wonderful in his ways, and guides all things wisely by his providence. He, the God of the widow and orphan, the Father of all the suffering and oppressed, is ever sensible of their wants and always watches over and guides them, often so wonderfully, that we may plainly see his work with our eyes, and almost seize it with our hands. This generous master leaves not the smallest good action unrewarded, and often, even upon earth, repays it in the most noble and glorious manner."

The good pastor now related the chief facts of Charles's story, with which his hearers were yet unacquainted, and then continued:—

"You see, therefore, how gloriously God has rewarded your good lady, for the benevolent kindness which she showed to the poor sick Rosalie, who believed herself a widow, and wept her husband as dead. So beautifully, I say, has he requited this truly noble lady for the pity she showed to poor Christina, Rosalie's daughter! God granted to her the greatest happiness of which her widowed state was capable, in permitting her again to find her beloved, her only son!

"Richly, too, has God blessed the young Emily for her compassion to a poor little girl, and for her gentle, and unassuming kindness of heart. She treated Christina as

affectionately and kindly as if she had been her own sister,—and therefore God has given her the unexpected joy of finding her only beloved brother!

“ Richly, too, has he rewarded poor Rosalie, who bore the pangs of sickness and poverty so patiently, and trained her daughter so well in honesty, gratitude, industry, cleanliness, and every other virtue. This good education has now brought the mother the most joyful fruits, and changed her sorrow into joy!

“ God has also rewarded the good Christina for her compassion to a poor lost lamb, her obedience to her mother, the honesty with which she returned the lamb to its owner, and the gratitude with which she offered it as a present to the young lady. These estimable qualities won for her the affection of the baroness and Miss Emily; were also the cause of her finding her father, and will, eventually, make her more happy than the richest dowry could have done.

“ And how wonderfully also God has brought back your young lord into the arms of his beloved mother, who had long believed him dead, to bless the diligence, obedience, and good conduct he had shown from the earliest childhood, to reward his child-like love for that mother he had scarcely known. How mercifully did He hearken to the sincere and heart-felt prayer of the troubled youth in the wood!

“ Signally, too, has he rewarded the gallantry of this brave soldier! The good man, filled with the tenderest compassion, sprang into the water, at the risk of his own life, to save the child of the mourning widow from the waves. Therefore God had mercy on his own wife and child, saved them from want and misery, awakened noble hearts to show them kindness, and in the end granted him unexpectedly to find once more, the mother and child for whom, in spite of all his inquiries, he had so long pined in vain! Father, mother, and child, now look forward after all their sufferings, to more peaceful and happier days together.

“ And all this God has brought to pass through the little lamb, which, white as a lily, and decked with young roses, stands in the midst of you, a lovely picture of innocence. He, the good God, allowed it to stray away; He guided Christina’s steps to find it; He it was who moved the good farmer’s heart to make her a present of it; He who put it into the thoughts of Christina and her mother to give it to Emily; and he who led the lamb into the hands of the young traveller, in order to bring him to the arms of his beloved mother. It is by means of this lamb he reinstates him in his possessions, and prepares happiness for you. For I can assure you that Charles is a noble and promising young man. He fears God, and loves his fellow-creatures. He will be an excellent and kind master to you and your children.

“ And shall God, who thus watches over even the life of a lamb, leave you uncared for and untended? O no! with far more love and compassion than Christina felt towards the lamb, does He bear each one of you in His heart!

“ My beloved friends! How can a preacher of the gospel look upon a lamb, without recalling to mind Him who, like an innocent lamb, bled for man’s salvation, and who has often compared himself to a Good Shepherd? Yes, He whose servant I am, whose gospel I preach, is the everlasting, true, and loving Shepherd of us all. He knows all his sheep,—He calls them by their names; He invites with a gentle voice,—He guides them with his gentle rod,—He delivers them from danger, and leads them into pasture,—He seeks those who are lost, and would willingly bear each one of them back upon his shoulders to heaven! Therefore always put trust in Him with your whole hearts.

“ But let us also listen to His voice and follow Him, and do all the good we possibly can. For you see how God makes use of our good actions to prepare joy, blessing, and salvation, to ourselves and others. For example, had your good lady not shown herself so benevolent to the poor sick

Rosalie ; had Emily not been so kind to poor Christina, had she not given her the handkerchief, with her initials worked upon it ; had Christina not been generous enough to present the lamb to Emily ; or had her mother's gratitude not prompted her to embroider the pretty collar, with Emily's initials ; had Charles not felt such filial love, and so longed to find his mother, and so sincerely prayed in the wood ; all these things would not have happened, and this would not have been the great day of joy that it now is for us all. So every good action we do, even the smallest, produces rich blessings to ourselves and others. Good deeds are like pearls, which God's holy providence will not allow to be lost, but will gather as if upon a string : good actions are like golden links, of which God makes a golden chain of glorious and joyful events.

"And you, my dear children," concluded the good pastor, as he turned to the children, "especially the elder among you, who have listened attentively to my words, and you little ones, who have only looked at the pretty white lamb which stands in the midst of you, so beautifully adorned with roses—O ! may God bless you all—and grant you may ever live as innocent as the lamb, and as soft and patient, if, as has happened to many other poor little lambs, you should fall into rough and violent hands. Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, who gave his life for his sheep, will bear you also in his arms, and in his heart ; he will take you into his powerful protection, when seduction shall assail your innocence, as the fierce wolf attacks the soft and guileless lamb. He will never suffer you to be snatched out of his hands."

Thus spoke the good pastor ; his countenance was illuminated by the rays of the setting sun, and his venerable white locks shone in the clear light of evening. He stood, with his eyes filled with tears, upturned to heaven ; and all who heard him had tears in their eyes ; and new trust in that God who "doeth all things well" entered their hearts,

and softly refreshed them, like the morning dew on the flowers of the valley. The honest country people returned home with emotion, and filled with good resolutions. "How happily everything has turned out," said they, to one another on the road home; "such universal joy as this evening, has never been in our village before!"

CHAPTER X.

A CHILDREN'S FEAST.

THE Baroness von Waldheim now repaired to the capital, accompanied by Charles, and presenting her newly-found son to the prince, requested the restoration of his estate. The venerable pastor and the gallant West also accompanied her, to prove, by their united evidence, that Charles was in reality the young Baron von Waldheim. The prince heard her graciously, found the proofs brought before him perfectly satisfactory, and ordered an immediate restitution of the estate; he also commanded that, until Charles should come of age, his mother should act as guardian both for himself and for the estate.

Full of joy the baroness and her party returned to the castle. A few days after, the good priest, amidst the grateful tears of the baroness, Charles, and Emily, took leave of them, to return to his beloved parish. Charles, handsomely equipped, and in more brilliant circumstances than on his previous journey, also set off for college. But the baroness, as guardian of the estates, appointed West to receive the rents, and (as he was an excellent forester), to be overseer of all the forests which belonged to the estate, and which were very extensive.

After Charles had finished his studies with great distinction, he travelled for some time, for his further improvement and information, and at length returned to take

possession of his estates. One evening he was seated on the oaken seat at the castle gate, with his mother and Emily, now a beautiful young woman. Just then the sheep were driven past. The baroness maintained a very large number. THE LAMB had now increased to a little flock, which however Emily still regarded as her particular property. Charles and Emily amused themselves counting the sheep and lambs. "Now, my children," said the Baroness von Waldheim, when the flock was all driven past, "we can carry out the project of which I spoke to you long ago. The flock is now numerous enough. To-morrow will be the anniversary of the day when God brought about for you, my dear children, and me, by means of THE LAMB, all this happiness in which all the parents and children of our little estate, so heartily sympathized with us. To-morrow, therefore, we shall have a public children's feast for the village and the neighbouring country, and neither shall the parents go away empty-handed." The baroness now went with Charles and Emily to the castle-court, and having made a selection of the finest sheep, ordered the shepherd to shut them up. The following morning she ordered the castle servant-maids to wash the sheep and they all did their best to make them white and beautiful. They were made almost as white as snow, and then Emily and Christina ornamented them with rose-coloured ribband.

The baroness invited all the children of the village, and the neighbouring valley, who had begun to go to school, to come to the castle at two o'clock in the afternoon. The children, both boys and girls, came with the greatest delight, and at least an hour before, assembled at the castle door, in their best dresses. At the appointed time they were called into the castle-court. And lo! to their astonishment—there stood a long table, almost the whole length of the court, and upon the table they perceived, to their no small joy, large beautiful cakes, shining dishes heaped up with all kinds of pastry; and pretty baskets, heaped with

red and white cherries, and yellow and purple plums. Huge flasks too, stood beside, filled with dark red mead. The children were arranged on the seats upon either side of the table, the boys on one side and the girls on the other, and every one was plentifully helped. Nothing was now to be seen but happy faces. The children enjoyed their feast heartily, and, when drinking the delicious mead, did not forget to pledge the health of the baroness, Charles, and Emily.

When the feasting was over, they suddenly heard the merry sound of pipes. The shepherd's sons now entered the court, with their rustic music; the sheep, white and beautifully decorated, followed them; and the old shepherd with his huge sheep-dog, closed the procession. The children were quite delighted with the beautiful sheep, and cried, one to another, "O how beautiful! We never before saw such beautiful white sheep, and such pretty red ribbands!" But how great was the joy of the children when they heard that the sheep were to be divided among them, and that the children of each house should have one. The baroness desired that the sheep should be shared by lot, in order to make the division more amusing, and to avoid all appearance of partiality. On every sheep there hung, attached to the red collar, a piece of paper, with a number written on it. In a large earthen vessel, which the children called a "luck-pot," there were also a great number of folded pieces of paper, on which were the same numbers as on the sheep. The children now, one after another, drew a number, and as soon as it was known, the pipes began to sound until the sheep with the corresponding number was separated from the flock. It would be impossible to describe the anxiety of the children in drawing the papers, the expectation of each child as to what sheep he should possess, and his happiness when it was really assigned to him. The whole court was filled with joy.

When the sheep were all distributed, the children returned with them to the village. The shepherd's sons led

the way with their clear-toned pipes, and the sheep accompanied by the children, followed them; the old shepherd bringing up the rear with his dog. In the same manner, they marched in triumph through the village. When the people heard the sound of the pipes, and the shouts of the children, and saw the beautifully adorned sheep, they wondered very much what could be the meaning of all this. But when they learned how the kind family at the castle had made a handsome present to their children, their joy was almost unbounded. Many of the parents shed tears of joy at the generosity of their gracious lady.

To each house in which there were no children going to school, the baroness sent a sheep; but to the good farmer who had so kindly permitted Rosalie to live in his little cottage, she made a present of ten sheep. Neither did she forget the good farmer at Eich-hof, and his wife, who long before had made Christina a present of the lamb, and so kindly invited her to their supper. Since these good people were rich enough, and had no need of sheep, she invited them both to dine at the castle, and the farmer often used to say, he prized that honour far more than if the baroness had made him a present of a hundred sheep.

The following morning, all the fathers in the village came up to the castle, in holiday attire, to thank the good lady for her kindness.

"My good people," said Charles, replying in her name, "you all know, how I, a poor youth, with almost nothing in the world but my staff, once wandered through this place. Through the means of a lamb, God restored to me my father's inheritance, and made me once more the happy lord of so worthy a tenantry. My mother, my sister, and I, are desirous that the benefit God has shown us through the lamb, should never be forgotten, either by our or your descendants, but on the contrary, should continue to be a blessing to them; listen therefore to what we have determined!

"It has hitherto been one of the territorial rights in this

village, to let out permission for grazing sheep. From this day you shall all, without exception, enjoy this privilege. On this account, my mother has given your children these sheep as a little beginning. May God bless them to you!

"I hope the cultivation of your fields may also be improved by the keeping of sheep; according to the old proverb, 'the sheep's footsteps turn into gold;' and that even those poor people, who have no tillage land, may, at least, get good milk and wool.

"I will also make arrangements, that the wool which we produce, shall be immediately manufactured in the village; and I hope the day may yet arrive when the dresses of all the inhabitants on my estate, will be prepared from home-wrought wool. May God grant his blessing to our project!"

Charles's wish was completely fulfilled. Poor Rosalie, now the wife of the agent, and her daughter Christina, gave the women instructions in spinning and sewing. A cloth manufacturer, a hatter, and a hosier, settled in the village, upon Charles's recommendation. Beautiful cloth of all colours, and also good hats and stockings, were manufactured. And Charles often remarked with emotion that old and young were clothed from head to foot in home-produced and home-wrought wool; and that the corn fields throughout the whole valley, came into better condition, and yielded a larger produce.

Emily still took particular pleasure in working with coloured wool. She had gathered a stock of particularly fine wool from her own little flock; and West, the agent, now discovered a new and unexpected talent. From the dyer, with whom he had lived, he had learned to dye wools of all colours and of all possible shades, from the darkest to the lightest. Emily was in this manner enabled to prepare the most beautiful work. Charles assisted her by his sketches, and Christina also gave her no trifling help. She embroidered flower-wreaths, and pretty little baskets full of flowers of all colours; large rosebushes covered with rosebuds, full-

blown roses and rich green leaves ; and sometimes extensive landscapes, studded with trees, rocks, waterfalls, and the like, or with garlands of vine-leaves, and green and purple grapes, or other pretty devices. Thus, by degrees, Emily furnished a whole room in the castle most beautifully. The table cover, the covers of the chairs and sofas, and also the carpet, were embroidered in this manner, and all who saw them were astonished at the brightness of the colours, the beauty of the sketches, and the skilful shading.

As the entire of the wool which was applied to this purpose had been originally produced from this single lamb, Charles, (now the Baron von Waldheim,) made a large and spirited drawing, of the never-to-be-forgotten moment when by means of the lamb, he found his long-lost mother and sister. In the fore-ground, upon the rocky seat under the oak, he sketched his mother with her companion Rosalie. Farther back in the wood were seen Emily, Christina, and himself, with the lamb in the midst of them. In one hand he held the ring, while, with the other, he pointed to the golden letters, which were distinctly seen on the lamb's red satin collar. But Emily was pointing, with outstretched arm, to the spot where her mother sat, as if she wished to say, "There she is!" The drawing was most exquisitely coloured, and the figures in the piece, which were all, especially the lamb, strongly illuminated by the setting sun, were beautifully relieved by the dark shadows in the wood. He had it richly framed, and hung up in the drawing-room ; and beneath it, in gold letters, was inscribed—

UNDER GOD'S PROVIDENCE !

THE MADONNA.

CHAPTER. I.

LITTLE AUGUSTUS.

IN a forest on the banks of the Danube, lived Theodora, a fisherman's widow, in her lonely cottage. Her husband had been lately cut off in the prime of manhood, leaving to her, as the sole consolation of her early widowhood, Augustus, an only son, a fine sprightly boy, about five years old. She devoted all her care to give him a good religious education, and hoped one day to see him following his father's trade, in his father's house. For the present, the fishing could not be carried on, and it was a sad sight for the poor widow, whenever her eye rested on the fishing tackle hanging on her cottage wall, or the fishing boat lying idle outside the door. Still, she was able to support herself by her needle, and many a time did midnight, while her only son was sleeping soundly, surprise her at the work, which she plied for his sake.

The little son's only thought from morning till night, was how he could please his mother. If she wept, as she always did when she remembered her husband, he endeavoured in his own artless and affectionate way, to dry up her tears. Some days after the death of her husband, she was visited by her brother, who brought her a present of a fish from the neighbouring village. Theodora looked at the present for a moment, and burst into tears. "Ah!" said she, "I thought I should never see such another fish in my cottage." "O mother," said her son, "why do you

cry? When I am big I will bring you fish enough." The poor mother could not but smile. "Yes, Augustus," said she, "I do hope you will be the consolation and support of my old age. Be as good and honest a man as your father and you will make me the happiest of mothers."

One fine day in August, Theodora had been busily engaged from day-break, with some nets, which she expected to be able to finish. Her son, in the meantime, was in the forest, gathering nuts, from which she extracted oil to light her lamp during the long winter nights. The happiness of Augustus knew no bounds, when he returned to his mother, with his little basket under his arm, full of nuts. On such occasions she always praised him, and encouraged him to acquire early these habits of industry, without which there can be no success in life. On this day, he was tired and hungry after returning. The dinner bell soon rung in the neighbouring village, and his mother called him to dinner, which consisted of a bowl of good milk, and some bread, laid on the grass, at the foot of an old oak, in a green plot, not far from her cottage.

When the bread and milk had disappeared, his mother said, "Lie down there, Augustus, under the shade of that tree, and sleep, for you are tired. I will go to my work and return at the proper time to call you. Sleep now," said she once more, as she turned to look at him again, when she was carrying the empty bowl to her cottage. In a few moments she looked again, and saw him fast asleep on the grass, his curly head resting on one arm, while the other clutched the little basket. His face was all smiles, and his ruddy cheeks were sweetly shaded by the flickering shadows of the beech over his head. She tore herself away, and worked hard for a considerable time at her nets. Two hours flew over her as if they were two minutes. She ran to awake her son—but he had disappeared. "The good boy," thought she, "has already returned to his work." Little did she suspect the terrible stroke that was descending on her. She returned, and stretched out the net on the

grass: a few stitches yet remained, which detained her yet a considerable time. But as the boy was not returning, she became uneasy. She went and searched the whole wood, which was about a league long, and half a league broad; but she got no trace of him. "Augustus, Augustus," she cried, one hundred times at least—but there was no answer—Augustus could not be found!

Her affliction cannot be described; it was like the agonies of death. "Can it be," said she, "that he neglected that warning I gave him so repeatedly, not to go near the river." The very idea was horrifying—she ran to the river,—but no trace of him was there. She returned to the village, weeping and disconsolate. A crowd was soon gathered by her cries; all, especially her brother, compassionated the poor widow, but they could give her no news of her son. They instantly set out to look for him, some in the forest, others in the surrounding fields, others in the river—but in vain. Night fell, and no man had seen the slightest trace of him.

"If he were drowned in the Danube," said one of the fishermen, "we shall certainly find his body. We know the currents of the river. He will certainly be thrown up on the sand-bank near the old willow tree."

The poor mother shuddered at this remark, and returning home, spent a sleepless and wretched night. At break of day she hurried to the bank of the river, to find, perhaps, the body of her son. For days and for weeks, she went morning and evening to the same spot, and wandered disconsolate up and down the banks. There was she seen by the fishermen, as they pushed off their boats in the grey glimmering of dawn, or returned home late at night. All deeply sympathized in her afflictions.

A considerable time passed on, still the body was not found, nor could the mother get the least intelligence of her lost boy. "Oh!" did she often exclaim, in an agony of grief, "in so short a time, to lose my dear husband, and my only child—that is too hard—did I not know that it happened

by the will of God—I should despair.” She accused her own negligence, often wringing her hands, and exclaiming “why did I not take better care of my boy.” When the good women of the village came to console her, her only answer was, “O mothers, look to my case, and learn prudence from my neglect.”

So violent and lasting was poor Theodora’s grief, that she soon became wan as a corpse, and wasted away to a shadow. Some weeks after the loss of her son, as she came to the chapel on Sunday, in the mourning dress which she had worn since the death of her husband, all her neighbours might be heard remarking among themselves, “Poor Dora! she will soon follow her husband and child to the grave!”

The village pastor, a respectable old man, who always took a lively interest in the happiness of his parishioners, had paid the poor widow several visits. But when he saw her this day in the chapel, her woe-begone appearance excited his warmest sympathy. He sent for her after Mass. The venerable old man, with his snow white locks flowing over his black robe, was sitting at his desk, writing something in his parish Register when she entered. He saluted her kindly, and having requested her to wait a few moments, Theodora turned and fixed her eyes on a little picture, set in an elegant frame, on the wall. She gazed long and devoutly, till the tears came to her eyes.

“Well,” said the priest, laying down his pen, and rising from his place, “do you like that picture?”

“Oh yes,” said poor Theodora, “it is very beautiful; I cannot look on it without crying.”

“You know what it is?” asked the priest.

“Oh yes,” she answered, “an image of the Virgin Mother of God. I never saw so fine a picture of the Holy Mother, sorrowing for the death of her beloved Son.”

“That” said the priest, “is the best and most consoling model for you. Look closely now at the picture. Look—that sword in her breast, is an emblem of that poignant grief, which, according to the prophecy of Simeon, pierced

her heart, at the cruel death of her Son. Her eyes full of tears, and her two hands raised to heaven, express her devotion and confidence in God. Those golden beams playing around her head, are types of that immortal crown which she now wears in heaven, as the reward of her patience in affliction, and her devout submission to the will of God.

"Good Theodora," he continued, "you have had your own griefs—you have lost your husband and your child. A double-edged sword has pierced your heart. But, like Mary, do you raise your eyes to heaven; bow to the will of God; confide in Him. Pray and hope for help from above; you know how Mary, by confidence in God, and strengthened by his grace, stood at the very foot of the cross. That faith which made her say, 'Behold the hand-maid of the Lord: be it done to me according to thy word,' when the angels announced the glad tidings to her—was strong in her heart, in this hour of deep woe, and sustained her in her agony. Nothing but the belief that God does all things for the best—that what He permits is for our good, can sustain and console you in your affliction. Keep ever in mind the great end of all our earthly woes. The sorrows of this world bear no proportion to the future glory which shall be revealed in us. Virtue is perfected by patience. Christ himself entered into his glory, through sufferings—Mary followed the same path, nor is any other road open for us to heaven."

Theodora was much affected by this exhortation, and found great consolation in the sight of that picture. She could not take her eyes from it. "Yes," said she, "I will follow the example of that sorrowful mother; I will look to heaven—pray—hope—and say from my heart 'Lord, thy will be done.'"

"Right," said the old priest, "right; that pleases me." Nothing made the good man so happy as to be able to console the afflicted. He took down the picture, and giving it to the poor widow, said "Lest you might forget your

good resolution, take the picture home with you ; it is yours. When your heart begins to bleed again—when you feel the edge of that sword of grief, look on this picture—renew your good resolution—your wounds will, after some time, be closed up, and a crown of glory await you in heaven.”

Theodora followed the advice of the good priest, and the violence of her grief gradually subsided. Still, whenever she passed near the tree, where she had, for the last time, seen her son, she felt a thorn of grief rankling in her heart. She bethought herself of cutting a niche in the tree, and placing the image in it. “That tree,” said she, “always renews my grief—but now it must renew my hope and consolation ; other mothers have the consolation of planting a cross in the church-yard, on the grave of their son, but this tree must be the monument for my poor Augustus.”

She communicated her intention to the priest, who allowed her to carry it into effect. “Do so,” said he, since it gives you consolation.” Accordingly she cut a round niche in the tree, and placed the image there, and whenever she passed by, and thought of her lost son, she looked on that sweet face, saying to herself, “O Mary, may I, too, be a handmaid of the Lord—may His holy will be done.” The prayer always banished her grief, and restored a sweet serenity to her soul.

CHAPTER II.

MR. WAHL.

WHILE the poor mother bewailed her lost son as dead, he was more than a hundred leagues away—alive and in health, in the great city of Vienna, where he lived in a princely mansion, and besides the dress and attendance of a young nobleman, had what was still better—abundant means of acquiring an education in everything necessary for a Christian, and a man.

The history of this strange metamorphose is simply this: Poor Augustus had no sooner awakened from sleep, and opened his eyes, under the beech tree, than he started off to the wood, to fill his basket again. When he had nearly half filled it, the nuts were not so thick on the ground; and running eagerly forward, he came out of the forest suddenly at the bank of the river. There he saw a large vessel, lying at anchor, waiting for some passengers. The passengers already on board, who were some, very wealthy, and all of a respectable class, availed themselves of the few moments' delay, to take a walk on the bank. The senior portion of the company walked in the green fields, on the river's edge, while the children were all busily engaged, gathering shells and polished pebbles on the sand-banks. Augustus no sooner appeared, than he was instantly surrounded by a group of young and laughing faces, all prying and peeping to know what he had in his basket. They admired those bright brown nuts, the like of which they had never seen before. Antonia, a lovely little girl, some years younger than Augustus, exclaimed that she had never seen such beautiful, triangular chestnuts in all her days. "Oh!" said Augustus, who had never seen chestnuts, "these are not the strange things you call them—they are beech-nuts, and you can eat them." He instantly distributed them in handfuls, to the great joy of the young company. The good boy's heart overflowed with joy, on seeing so many happy and playful persons of his own age around him. It was a happiness he had never felt before, for he seldom met any children of the village. He joined in the sports of his new acquaintances, and was plentifully supplied by them, with their own delicious pears and plums.

He was most anxious to inspect the vessel, for it was the first large one he had ever seen near him. "A floating house, much larger," as he remarked, "than his own house," was a miracle to him. The children brought him into the vessel. Antonia showed to him, the beautiful carpeted cabin, for passengers of the first class. "Oh!" said

Augustus, in amazement, "this is a much grander house than our own." Antonia and her other companions then produced all their playthings, and in the display of such witching novelties and splendour, can it be a wonder that poor Augustus completely forgot his home. The vessel weighed anchor—her motion was not felt by Augustus—and in a few minutes, standing out in the middle of the current, she swept majestically down the Danube.

No person in the vessel had ever thought of Augustus. The passengers who had been on board all day, supposed that he must belong to those who embarked last, while they, in turn, supposed he must have been on board before them. It was not till late in the evening, when Augustus began to cry, and call for his mother, that they found they had a strange child on board. All in the vessel were surprised, and not a little alarmed. Some pitied the poor mother and child—others could not help laughing at the mishap of the young traveller, while the sailors stormed and swore, and threatened to throw him into the river.

After some time, the captain came and interrogated the child. "Tell me," said the bluff, sturdy gentleman, "tell me, boy, to what town or village do you belong?" "I don't belong to any town or village," answered Augustus. "Singular enough," remarked the captain. "Where then is your house?" "My house," answered Augustus, "is in the wood, not far from the village." "Good," said the captain. "What's the name of the village?" "Eh," said Augustus, "what could be its name but the village? I never heard my mother give it any name. 'The bell is ringing in the village for dinner,' she used to say, or, 'I am going to buy bread in the village.'" "What are your parents' names?" asked the captain. "My father is dead," answered Augustus; "my mother is called Dora, the fisherwoman." "I know," said the captain, "Theodora is her Christian name, but what is her family name." She has no other name but Dora," answered Augustus, "and she often told me we ought never call people by any name

but their own." The captain saw from the simple answers of the boy, that he had no idea of what a family name was, and that it was useless to press him farther. He became much annoyed, exclaiming, "I wish the cuckoo had brought you to any other place, rather than to my vessel." The tears started to the poor child's eyes, as he answered earnestly, yet without bitterness, "No, it was not the cuckoo that brought me here, I did not see him at all; but I often heard him in spring."

The whole company laughed heartily, but the captain was in a great difficulty, for it unluckily happened, that the banks by which they were then sailing, were uninhabited, and covered with forests, so that no house was to be seen, far or near. Later in the evening, when the sun was setting, they caught a glimpse of a church-spire in the distance. "I can leave the boy," said the captain, "in that village, and let him return to his mother, and as we could not proceed much farther on our voyage, this day, we may cast anchor here for the night." But Mr. Wahl, Antonia's father, would not consent to that. He was a wealthy merchant, having large chests of money and valuables, with which he, as well as his companions, were flying from the enemy; for at this time, all Germany was convulsed with the thirty-years' war.

"I heartily wish," said Mr. Wahl, "that the poor mother had her poor son safe at home; but that cannot be, just now. The enemy is in the neighbourhood, marching down to the Danube. A few hours' voyage saves us from the danger of falling into their hands, and losing all our property. Go on, in the name of God."

Mr. Wahl was in such trepidation, that he pressed the captain to sail on during the night, as they were favoured with the light of the full moon. The captain said, that such a course was unusual, but on receiving the promise of a large sum of money, for himself and his crew, they sailed the whole night, towards Vienna.

At sunrise they arrived at a little village on the bank of

the river. The captain begged the peasants to take the boy, and make inquiries in the country around for his mother, and have him sent home to her. "This," he said, "would be an act of charity to the mother and the child;" but the peasants answered, "Who knows to whom the child belongs? Perhaps we could never find his mother, and be obliged to support him. In those hard times, we have poor enough to support, and cannot afford to put additional burdens on our backs."

Some short time after, they saw another large village at the other side of the river. It was not far from the bank, and as it appeared to be a place of some importance, the captain resolved to see the parish-priest, or mayor, and intrust the child to them. He gave orders to make for the bank; but suddenly Mr. Wahl started up, "Hark" said he; "do you hear the thunder of the cannon? The enemy are on us—we have not a moment to lose—ahead, ahead; sail on." The captain, who feared that in the end the child would be left on his own hands, positively refused to listen to Mr. Wahl. Angry words arose, which might have led to some unpleasant occurrences, if Mrs. Wahl, who was a kind and gentle lady, had not interfered, suggesting to her husband, in a soft and affectionate tone, "that if they took charge of the boy, they would be doing an act of charity, and would avoid these disagreeable contentions." Mr. Wahl at once gladly assented to the suggestion. "Sail on," said he to the captain; "I will take the child, and provide for him." The captain was now out of his difficulty, and appeared well pleased. The whole company praised Mr. Wahl's generous offer.

The vessel arrived safely at Vienna, where Mr. Wahl purchased a splendid house, and commenced business. He had the best tutors attending his daughter Antonia, and Augustus was allowed to attend the lectures. Notwithstanding his years, he soon exhibited such undoubted indications of superior talents, as surprised all his acquaintances. Moreover, he was so modest and obedient, so friendly

and affectionate, and so sincerely pious, that Mrs. Wahl and her husband loved him as if he were their own child. That deep sense of piety and the fear of God, which had been instilled into his infant mind by his mother, grew stronger every day, and produced its natural effects on his whole conduct.

But what particularly pleased Mr. Wahl, was the decided talent Augustus showed for business. He was placed by his adopted father, in a situation to know all that was necessary for a merchant, and was then appointed to superintend business. So diligently did he apply himself to his duty, that before he had attained his twentieth year, he was able to conduct, with success, some of the most important transactions in his adopted father's business. By degrees Mr. Wahl extended his trade; he had large contracts for the army, which, though the profit was small, brought him in the gross, large sums of money. The good man felt that the industry and enterprise of Augustus was the main-spring of this prosperity: so he resolved to make him his partner. He then gave him his daughter, Antonia, in marriage; and at the close of the war, the Emperor of Austria gave Mr. Wahl and his son-in-law, patents of nobility, as a reward for their long and valuable services.

Mr. Wahl and his wife did not long survive the peace. They were ardently beloved, and piously attended to the last, by Augustus and Antonia. They died tranquilly, and with the confident hope of once more meeting, and for ever, their beloved children, in the realms of eternal light and peace.

Augustus, or, as he was now called, Count von Wahlheim, retired from business, and resolved to purchase a property in Bavaria, or Suabia, which had been the scene of the late desolating war, and where many estates were now offered for sale. Many proposals were made to him, but he thought it better to inspect his purchase in person, and travelling down the country, he selected the beautiful estate of Neukirch, where he found everything to suit his

taste. He gave orders to have the old castle repaired and ornamented, and beautifully furnished; and then returned to Vienna, to accompany his wife and children to their new dwelling.

When Antonia entered with her husband on her lately acquired property, and saw on every side, the mournful and terrible traces of the late war, she was deeply affected. Many houses in the village were heaps of ruins; others threatened every moment to fall in, and extensive tracts of country lay without a vestige of verdure or cultivation. "Poor, poor people," said Antonia, the tears streaming from her eyes, "we must give you some relief." These sentiments pleased Augustus, because they were his own, and it was immediately decided that a large portion of their capital should be devoted to the improvement of their estate, and the relief of their tenantry. Neat cottages, and comfortable farm-houses soon rose around the castle. Rich corn-fields, and verdant pasture amply repaid the outlay of capital, and so contented and happy were the tenants, that the praises of their new landlord were always on their lips, and they came in a body, to offer a grateful address. But he answered, "I was a poor boy, and God has made me a rich man, and conferred many other great favours on me. I were unworthy of these favours, if I did not show my gratitude, by making others share my good fortune. I am happy in being able to relieve your wants, and aid your industry. To make others happy, is the greatest happiness."

CHAPTER III.

THE WONDERFUL DISCOVERY.

WHILE Augustus von Wahlheim was living like a great lord, his poor mother, Dora, had many hard trials, in poverty and affliction, all of which, however, she bore with Christian patience, and resignation to the will of God.

Not long after she had lost her son in the forest, the banks of the Danube, near which she lived, became the seat of war, and the enemy's forces took up their position in the forest. Theodora fled from her lonely cottage, and took refuge with her brother in the village, in her father's house. But she was soon obliged to fly. An engagement was fought in the neighbourhood, by the contending armies; the whole village was reduced to ashes, and the inhabitants fled in all directions. Theodora's house was burned—her brother endeavoured to support himself on the fishing smacks, and she took refuge in the house of her sister, who lived several leagues off. She was kindly received by her sister, and helped the education of her numerous family. They lived together in peace, and supported each other under the heavy calamities which both had suffered from the war. After some years, Theodora received a letter from her brother, informing her that his wife was dead; that his two daughters were married during the war, and requesting her to return and live with him. Theodora returned to her brother.

As soon as she came to her native village, she visited the forest, and searched for the beech tree, where she had placed the image of the Blessed Virgin, which she had forgotten in her flight. But what a change had come over that well known spot. The path that led to her house had disappeared, completely overgrown with long rank grass, and thick brambles. Large trees stretched out their long arms over the spots, which before had been covered with underwood: many old trees familiar to poor Theodora, had disappeared. Not a trace of her cottage was to be seen; even the spot on which it stood, could scarcely be recognised. A dark, impenetrable wood had closed over and around it. She searched for a long time, but fruitlessly, for that beech tree under which she had prayed and wept so frequently. She worked her way through thorns and brambles, and closely inspected around and around the

bark of all the beech trees. "Though I may not find the picture," thought she, "at least the niche in the bark will tell me where it was."

"Don't be giving yourself useless trouble," said a venerable old man, who was gathering rotten timber in the forest; "I think the tree was cut down long ago. Things go here in the forest as they do with us in the village. Those whom we left after us there as children are grown men, the men are grown old, and the old have been long since in their graves. The sapling supplants the tree. Every thing in this world passes away, and men much faster than trees. We have no permanent residence here—we ought to fix our thoughts on that which is prepared for us, and which knows no change, but stands for ever." The old man retired, and Theodora abandoned the hope of finding the tree.

Count von Wahlheim lived several leagues off, but this very forest was part of his lately purchased property. It happened that he came one day to the forest, to distribute wood to the poor tenants on his property, for their winter fire. As the whole place had grown to a wilderness, and was too thickly stocked with wood, he resolved to superintend the work in person, in order that the wood might be thinned with advantage. He wished also, to see with his own eyes, that every poor person got his stipulated portion. Orders to this effect were issued to the steward, and trees were allotted to several poor families. Theodora came on behalf of her brother, for whom, according to the distribution made by the count, the tree near which the count was then standing, had been marked out. Theodora advanced and begged the count to excuse her brother's absence, as he was so ill as to be confined to bed. The thought never entered the count's head, that this poor, old, ragged woman was his mother; and as little could she suppose, that the young lord, in the full bloom of health and beauty, with the diamond ring, and other marks of rank on his person, was

her lost Augustus. But though he did not know her, he was struck with her appearance, pitied her misfortunes, and ordered her to have the tree.

The forester was unwilling to obey the order. "O," said he, "it is a pity to cut down this fine old beech; aspen and poplar are good enough for the poor. Beechwood ought to be reserved for the castle, and the tenants." Count von Wahlheim cast a stern and reproving glance at the forester. "The poor," said he, "ought not to be supplied with that alone, which we reject; they ought to have their share of the best, especially in times of need. That tree must go to the sister of the sick man; let it be sawed into blocks and planks, at my expense, and laid down at their door. Fell it this moment, before you lay an axe to the wood for my own castle."

He retired instantly, to escape the outburst of Theodora's gratitude. "May heaven bless that good master," said she, as she followed him with her eyes, before he disappeared.

Thus did the mother and son, who, some twenty years ago, had seen each other for the last time in this forest, meet there now, and not recognise each other—and thus were they perhaps on the point of being again separated for ever, if God's kind providence, had not otherwise selected a more significant and sweeter means of uniting them.

Two foresters instantly plied their axes at the trunk of the tree. It came to the ground with a tremendous crash; and the men shouted aloud in amazement, "a miracle, a real miracle." The timber had split into fragments near the root where it was rotten; a large portion of the bark was peeled off—and there, fixed in the tree, the men discovered the image which Theodora had placed there. The colours were still fresh and brilliant, and the gilt frame gleamed in the sunbeams, reflecting a dazzling lustre on the image. The foresters were young men, and had never heard the history of the image. "This," said

they to each other, "surpasses our understanding: how that beautiful image of the Mother of God could have been fixed here! There is no mark on the bark of the tree over it: that spot was covered with bark and overgrown with moss, like the other trees of the forest. No man ever heard of such a thing—it is a miracle."

Count von Wahlheim, who was not many paces distant, overheard the exclamation of the two men, and leaving the persons to whom he had been distributing wood, he came and took the image in his hand. Having examined it attentively, "Really it is beautiful," he remarked: "it is a masterpiece. That pale sorrowful face, those tranquil eyes raised so devoutly to heaven, are exquisitely finished—and the soft texture and colours of the dark blue mantle, are true as life. It is obvious that the image must have been placed in the tree by some pious person, who cut a niche in the trunk, over which, as the tree grew, the bark closed, completely concealing the image, after the lapse of some years."

Suddenly he turned pale—his hand trembled—his whole body shook with some painful emotion: "wonderful, indeed," he said, as he sunk on the trunk of the fallen tree. He had inspected the image closely, and discovered on the back of it the following inscription: "Here, under this tree, I saw my only son, Augustus, for the last time, on the 10th of October, in the year of our Lord, 1632. God be with him, wherever he is—and as He consoled Mary, when she stood at the foot of the cross, may He also console an afflicted mother—Theodora Sommer."

The thought flashed like lightning across his mind. "I am that lost child: name, year, and date, agree—my mother put that image here."

Just at that moment his mother was passing by. Having waited for some time in the forest, to go home in company with one of her neighbours, she heard that the image had been discovered in the trunk of a tree. "Oh! sir," said she, coming up, "that image is mine: give it

to me, I implore you. Look, there's my name on it—written thus, at my own request, by our excellent pastor. The other words were also written by him.”

“Alas!” said she, bursting into tears, as she gazed on the fallen tree, “is this, then, that beech under which I saw my beloved Augustus sleeping so soft and sweetly, before he was snatched away from me. Many a time I passed by it, since my return from my flight, and yet I could not recognise it. The trunk had grown so thick—O my son, once more I behold that spot where I saw you last—but never—never more can I see you in this world. I feel as if I were standing over your grave.” The tears choked her utterance—and she could say no more.

Count von Wahlheim, who had been so much affected a few moments ago, on reading his mother's name on the picture, was now almost completely overpowered on beholding her. His heart burned within him; and he could have sprung forward and locked her in his arms. But he restrained himself—he knew that the sudden shock might kill his beloved mother. He took her hand affectionately, dried her tears with his own handkerchief—spoke some kind and consoling words—and, by degrees, gave her to understand that her son was living still; that he knew him well—and that, no doubt, she would soon know him. After these, and similar precautions, he said the word at length: “I am your lost son.” “You!” was the only answer of the poor mother, as she sunk upon his breast—utterly unable to give other expression to her feelings. They stood for a considerable time locked in each others arms, while all the bystanders wept and shared in their emotions.

“Dearest mother,” said the count, at length breaking silence, “God has fulfilled for you that prayer, which you had inscribed for me on the picture. He has been with me, and poured out on me some of his choicest blessings. He has also fulfilled that prayer which you had written for yourself. He has consoled you as he

consoled Mary. He has restored to your arms your only son, whom you had mourned as dead. On this spot we were separated, and here, on the same spot, we meet. He preserved that image in the tree, and revealed it to us at the very moment that it could enable us to recognise each other. To us, as to so many others, has He clearly proved that He knows how to do all things for the best."

"Oh! yes," said the mother, "our good God has done it. He took you away from me at a time, that, perhaps, my affection would have spoiled you by excessive indulgence. He restored you to my arms in the hour of my need, to be an angel of comfort to me, and to this whole neighbourhood. All his ways are wisdom and love. Blessed be His name:" a prayer which was warmly echoed by all the bystanders.

Count von Wahlheim then ordered the forester to send word to Theodora's brother, that she and her son would go visit him the following day. Theodora, herself, earnestly reminded her neighbours that they must take care of her poor brother in her absence. The count's coach was ordered—he placed his mother in it, and seating himself by her side, they drove off to the castle. Fresh joys here awaited poor Theodora. She felt some shame in appearing in her old clothes before her daughter-in-law, but Antonia was too noble-minded to attach importance to trifles. She flew with open arms to Theodora, embraced her most affectionately, and expressed her unfeigned joy on finding the mother of her beloved husband. Theodora wept for joy—but when her two grand-children, Ferdinand and Maria, appeared, in the bloom of happy and innocent childhood, like two little angels, she was overpowered with the happy thoughts that crowded on her soul. "Great," she exclaimed, "as were once my sorrows, my joys are now still greater. I can only weep—pray—and thank my God. O! my good God, since even on this earth, thou canst thus change sorrow into joy, what must

be the case in heaven—inexpressible, indeed, must be the happiness that awaits us there.”

Next morning Count von Wahlheim ordered his coach, and visited, with his mother, her sick brother. Theodora remained with him until he had recovered, when she returned to the castle, for her son and daughter-in-law said she should live with themselves. All her brothers and sisters were well provided for—Count von Wahlheim and his relations, being too good and sensible to be ashamed of their poor relations. They, moreover, gave a large party, to which all were invited, on the occasion of Theodora's taking up her abode in the castle. The simple and honest relations were delighted with the kindness and love manifested towards them, and many a happy tear glistened in their eyes, at this wonderful interposition of Divine Providence in their favour.

Augustus and Antonia took this opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the necessities of each of them, and then provided them liberally, but not prodigally, with that sort of help which would best suit the position of all and enable them to advance in the world.

The little picture was placed in the most conspicuous part of the house. “It must always be to us,” said the count, “an admonition of gratitude and confidence in God's mercy. That look of Mary's, raised so fondly to heaven, will tell us to do likewise. For among all our dangers, and the sorrows of this life, what can more powerfully sustain us in virtue, or console us in grief, than a pious raising of our eyes to heaven?”

THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

LITTLE Minna was a kind, tender-hearted girl, who willingly shared all she had with others, gave clothes to poor children, prepared broth and other food for the sick, carried it to them with her own hands, and, in a word, was never so happy as when she could relieve the wants of others, with the last penny of her own pocket money. But with all her good qualities, incredible as it may appear, she often caused great annoyance to good people—for she was very forgetful. She made many promises—and forgot them all next day. She often gave a large price for a thing she did not want; and it was only when a poor person appealed to her charity, that she began to think what good use she could have made of her money. At another time, she forgot to water the beautiful flowers in the hall of the castle, which were entrusted to her care, and they withered and perished, to the great grief of her mother. At another time, poor Minna, she, who would give her own clothes to the poor, and would not hurt the smallest thing that breathes, would forget her own dear Canary bird, and starve it to death.

In the village, not far from Minna's paternal castle, there lived Sophia, a poor little girl. Her father, Colonel Bruhl, a worthy old soldier, had been disabled by his wounds in foreign service, and was now living on his pension. He had returned to his native land, to spend the remainder of his days in peace. But his scanty income

was scarcely sufficient for his support. His pension was not paid regularly, and many months had elapsed just now, without bringing any remittance to him.

Sophia, his only daughter, supported him, in the mean time, with her needle, and other useful accomplishments of her sex. She was a great favourite of Minna's, who gave her a great deal of work, took lessons from her in embroidery, paid her most liberally, and never addressed her with a less endearing name than her dear friend. But even this dear friend, often suffered severely from Minna's forgetfulness.

Minna's mother fell dangerously ill. The most eminent physician of the nearest town was called in; and Minna had promised that he should pay a visit to Sophia's father, who still, after the lapse of so many years, often suffered great torments from his wounds. Sophia had no sooner heard of the physician's visit to the castle, than she ran with all speed to remind Minna of her promise, but before she arrived, the physician was gone. Minna remembered her promise the moment Sophia appeared—she was confused—confounded—she blushed, begged Sophia's pardon, and expressed such hearty sympathy for the sufferings of the poor officer, that the tears streamed down her cheeks. But the physician—alas! to call him back, was impossible.

On another occasion, Minna proposed, with the help of Sophia, to embroider a screen for her mother's birth day. Accordingly, Minna brought to her young friend a beautifully painted pattern, representing a garland of flowers. "We can easily work the garland," said Sophia; "but I must go to town myself and purchase the silk; for it requires an experienced eye to select proper silk, to represent, truthfully, the delicate shades and tints of the flowers."

"That's the best plan," answered Minna; "if you, my kind friend, be so good as to take the trouble. In the mean time, during your absence, I will take care of your

father, and prepare his dinner, and bring it to him with my own hands."

Sophia relied on her young friend's promise, and started for town. But, unfortunately, it so happened, that a distinguished visitor drove from town to visit the castle, and, amid the distractions and pleasure of this visit, Minna forgot her promise. The poor officer was confined to his room. He could not stir; and as all his neighbours were out in the meadows at the hay-making, no person was within call. Bread and water were his only fare—while all the luxuries of life, were plenteously circulated at the festive board of the castle.

Next morning Minna, accompanied by two young ladies, her visitors, went to walk in the village. Sophia was watering a piece of linen, the production of her industrious winter evenings—which she had laid out to bleach on the small green plot, between her house and the stream. Minna shuddered when she saw Sophia, for it was then only she remembered her promise. But Sophia was too delicate to upbraid her friend in presence of the strangers. Still she felt strongly inclined to convey some intimation, that, henceforward, she ought not to be so forgetful, at least, in such matters. Sophia invited the three young ladies to see her garden. They entered, and admired the beautiful rose trees which she had planted with her own hand, and the forget-me-nots which grew wild on the brink of the stream. She then conducted them into her parlour, and, at the request of Minna, shewed them all her work. While the young ladies were engaged admiring the beautiful patterns, and exquisite embroidery, Sophia returned to the garden and selected some flowers. To the two strangers she gave roses—but to the forgetful Minna—a bunch of forget-me-nots—simply, but tastefully wreathed with some green leaves. Minna understood the meaning of this present. She was deeply sensible of the refined delicacy of her friend's device, and thanked her, with her whole soul, for having

taken this means to admonish her of her forgetfulness. "Truly, you know the flowers that become me best," said she, blushing, and placing the blue nosegay on her bosom.

Minna returned, with the two young ladies, to the castle, and accompanied them to the apartments that were prepared for them. They placed their flowers in a crystal vase near the window. After the lapse of a few weeks, Minna happened to enter that chamber—the young visitors had carried away their own flowers, but there stood Minna's "forget-me-nots," which, to this very moment, she had completely forgotten. The fragrant leaves, which she had wound around her nosegay, were withered, but the forget-me-nots, themselves, were of as fresh and vivid a blue, as on the day they were gathered from the river's brink. Minna was not a little amazed. "How is this possible," said she; "there is not a drop of water in the glass, and all the other shrubs are as yellow and shrivelled as autumnal leaves." She examined the bunch more closely, and discovered that the forget-me-nots were not natural, but artificial. Sophia was a perfect mistress of that delightful art of imitating natural flowers—she had made these forget-me-nots, with her own hand—and so correct was the outline, so true and natural the colouring, that it required no ordinary skill to distinguish them from real flowers.

"You are perfectly right, kind Sophia," thought Minna, "I understand you perfectly. Indeed, I stand too much in need of some such admonition. These unfading flowers are a perpetual warning to me 'not to forget:' never—never more, dear friend, will I forget thee. These very flowers shall I henceforth use, to remind me of my duty."

Without further delay, she took the blooming forget-me-nots, with their withered wreath, and placed them in a beautiful crystal vase, elegantly ornamented. Then hastening away to her friend, Sophia, she cordially thanked her for her happy device, and praised the exquisite skill and taste she had shewn in making the flowers. "When-

ever I make a promise, henceforward," said she, "I will set these flowers on my worktable or piano, and not allow them to be removed by any person but myself, when my promise is fulfilled."

"Bravo, bravo," exclaimed the old colonel, "do so. Whenever I wish to remember anything particularly, I always place a piece of white paper on my box, and my sergeant used to make a mark in his pocket-book; but, for a young lady, flowers are the most appropriate memento. I admire the happy suggestion, which led men to select the most beautiful flowers in the field, as a memento of sweet associations, and call them forget-me-nots, but I admire, still more, the idea of using them to remind us of our duties, especially the sacred duties of charity. Happy thought, indeed—it delights me—it is a most happy thought."

Minna kept her word, and the forget-me-nots secured many blessings to herself and to the poor. Many a poor person, whom Minna would have forgotten, had to thank those sweet flowers for a bowl of good soup, or a glass of wine, or a piece of bread. Many a duty, once carelessly neglected was now punctually discharged—and many a sorrow and remorse of conscience, and painful remembrance were now spared to Minna, by the silent forget-me-nots.

The great improvement in her habits was soon obvious to the fond eye of her mother. "How is it," she asked, "that you do not forget the slightest thing now. What has caused this great change?"

Minna told the whole story of the forget-me-nots, with which her mother was highly pleased. "You are good children," said she, "and I must find some means of making you happy." She accordingly purchased, from the goldsmith in the town, two rings of the purest gold, and had set on each of them a forget-me-not in precious stones—five sky-blue sapphires, and a yellow diamond stone in the centre.

When the rings came home, she gave one of them to Minna. "Make the same use of this ring," said she, "as you have formerly made of the forget-me-nots. Whenever you make a promise, or are engaged in any important concern, put this forget-me-not ring on your finger, and do not lay it aside, until you have fulfilled that promise, or performed your business. This other ring, I intend for your good friend, Sophia, whose successful device for reforming your forgetful habits, eminently deserves some acknowledgment at my hands. That plain 'forget-me-not,' which she presented to you, is of infinitely greater value, than the ring which I now present to her."

Minna hurried away to present the ring to her friend. "Oh!" said she, "you have no need of such a ring. You never forget anything. Still, accept and wear this ring, as a keepsake from a friend, on whom your simple flower has conferred a priceless benefit."

"Ah! my dear friend," said Sophia, "who is the person that does not sometimes require to be reminded of his duty. Whenever we look on this costly forget-me-not, may we resolve to do some good act; to relieve some poor person; or to do whatever is in our power to make others happy." Both promised faithfully to carry that resolution into effect.

"Well resolved, my children," said the colonel, "and whoever cannot wear so costly a ring as your's, may he still make your good resolution, whenever he sees the forget-me-not growing wild in the meadow or on the river's brink. But above all, may that sweet flower remind him of Him that made him, and whom every flower should bring to our minds. Then would every forget-me-not that grows in our fields, be of more real value, than if its stem were of gold, and its leaves of the most costly diamonds."

This adventure of the forget-me-nots was attended with other good effects. When stern winter set in, and all the fields around the castle were clothed every morning in their chilly mantle of hoar frost, and the hoarse winds howled

through the halls, Minna and her mother returned to their town residence. The story of the forget-me-not was circulated among Minna's numerous acquaintances, and forget-me-not rings became a fashion. Every person knew the circumstance that led to the adoption of the ring—and the prince himself now remembered that good old colonel, whom he had formerly trusted and esteemed. The paymaster, who had forgotten to pay the pension, soon received a royal admonition, which he could not easily forget; and the poor colonel, whose wants had been previously unknown, was rewarded with a considerable augmentation of pay. For this unexpected change of his fortunes, many a time did the grateful old soldier exclaim, "How great are the blessings which God has poured down on me and others through that simple Forget-me-not!"

GODFREY, THE LITTLE HERMIT.

CHAPTER I.

THE GREEN ISLAND.

At the early age of twelve years Godfrey was cast away on a desolate island, where he lived many years a hermit. This may appear strange and wonderful, but as the fact really occurred more than one hundred years ago, it is worth while to give the whole story in detail.

His parents were an industrious and pious couple, and dwelt in a little cottage on the sea shore. Godfrey was the oldest of seven children. The poor parents worked night and morning to support their numerous family, to feed them, clothe them, and rear them piously. The father, who was called Philip, kept his arable and pasture lands, and the vineyard, near his house, in such excellent order, that their table was always plentifully supplied with bread, milk, and all the fruits of the season. He also understood, perfectly, the management of bees, and received large returns for his honey. He was also a tasteful and expeditious basket maker; and obliged his young boys to assist him, in procuring and preparing branches of sallow and willow, and in similar light labours. Sometimes he helped the fishermen in the neighbouring village, and punctually received his fair share of the capture. His daughters spun hemp, and his wife

wove fishing nets, in the intervals of leisure from her household duties. The children were amply provided with all things necessary for their education—especially in the duties of a Christian life. “A good education,” the parents often said, “was the best inheritance they could bequeath to their children.”

Godfrey, the eldest boy, was the favourite of his parents. He was very intelligent, smart, and active, and diligent in all his business, and obliging and agreeable to all his acquaintances. His figure was good—and his complexion, features, and air, prepossessing—his clear brown eyes spoke the candour of his soul—and his auburn locks curling gracefully down his shoulders, added still more to his appearance. His usual dress was a grey jacket, and trowsers in sailor’s style, which his god-father, Thomas, the fisherman, had got made for him.

But with all his good qualities, Godfrey had some very bad points of character. He was very selfwilled: always maintaining that his own opinion was right; and so impatient of even the slightest contradiction, that his parents were often under the necessity of rebuking him severely, to bring him to reason. He was imperious to his sisters; flew into a passion whenever they opposed him; and offended them with harsh and unfeeling rebukes. Whenever he returned home, after spending some weeks with his rich god-father, he was dissatisfied with the humble fare in his father’s house; often murmuring at table; and scarcely thinking it worth while to return thanks to God or his parents, for their favours. His parents always admonished him, when he was guilty of any of these faults,—he wept, and promised amendment; but the good promise was soon broken, and he relapsed into his old habits. His parents became greatly alarmed,—and were apprehensive that all their fond hopes were about to be blasted for ever. His god-father, the old fisherman, would often say: “Godfrey, Godfrey, take care of yourself.—Our good God must take you into his

own school, and teach you with his own rod, to make a reform in your conduct."

The hill on which Godfrey's house stood, commanded an extensive prospect of the sea. A small island, which was visible from the cottage window, presented a beautiful appearance—with its perpetual fringe of silver foam. It was clothed with large forests of lofty trees, and rich green shrubs, which gave it the name of the green island. The island was uninhabited; but it was often visited by Godfrey's father, for the osiers and willows with which it was thickly stocked; and Godfrey, himself, who had now grown strong enough to handle an oar, and cut and carry the osiers—was proud of being able to accompany and assist his father. One evening his father said to him: "If sky and sea be as clear and calm to-morrow, as they are this evening, we must go to the island." Godfrey jumped with joy at this announcement; and was so full of the thoughts of his voyage, that he slept scarcely a wink that night.

Next morning, when the first streaks of dawn were blushing in the east, and the pale morning stars were glimmering faint and dim, Godfrey was out of bed and ready for the voyage. He helped his mother to prepare the boat, and provisions, and all things necessary for the voyage, which was generally a work of some labour; for it sometimes happened, that a change in the weather detained the father and son for several days on the island. To provide against such a contingency, the good mother laid in a good stock of bread, butter, and milk, and, also, sent a pot and an earthen pitcher, to make a warm soup, if the case required. The father's large frieze riding coat was also sent, to serve as a covering for her husband and son, if they were detained for a night on the island.

When all was ready for the journey, Godfrey seized his new straw hat, which his god-father, Thomas, had purchased for him at the last fair day. His sister, Martha, had made him a present of a green band, which she had

worked with her own hands, and sewn on the hat. "Godfrey," said his father, "bring two baskets—we shall require them."

"For what?" asked Godfrey.

"You will soon know," answered the father, with a smile: "will you not take my assurance that we want them? You act towards me, as too many men act towards God; who wish to know, beforehand, why He orders this or the other thing. Do what I order you—and, in the end, you will find there was some meaning in my order." Godfrey ran instantly and brought the baskets.

The father and son now started from the cottage, and were accompanied by the mother and daughters to the little boat. After an affectionate farewell, and many hearty prayers for a prosperous voyage and a safe return—the oars were plied—and poor Godfrey worked so hard, that, in a short time, he was obliged to throw off his jacket. They arrived safe at the island; and, after a few tacks, landed at a spot where there was safe anchorage, and a large plantation of the best osiers. The father fastened the boat with a rope to a large willow tree, and without further delay, he and his son commenced their work. They cut down the osiers—and bound them in bundles; and each carried the fruits of his own labour to the boat. The father was proud of the assistance of his son. "Right, my boy," said he: "children ought to assist their parents according to their power. If the father bears the heavier burden, the son ought to bear the lighter."

When they had deposited the osiers in the boat, the father said, "come let us rest now and take our dinner. Rest is sweet after labour—and dinner is never so much relished, as when earned by hard work." Godfrey was delighted at being able to assist his father. They brought their bread and a pitcher of milk under a large poplar tree, overhanging the sea; and after they had said the

grace, which they were accustomed to say at home, they sat down on the green sod to their frugal fare, of fresh, good milk, and bread and butter, of which they had a plentiful store.

While they were eating, the father told him his grandfather had once lived on that island, from which he had afterwards removed to the mainland. "He was an upright and pious man," said he, "and the house that he built in our village, was inhabited by his son and his grandson."

"I think," said Godfrey, "my great-grandfather did well in quitting this island, and going to live among his fellow-men—for though the island is green and beautiful, I would not, for all the world, live so far away from all human beings."

When they had taken their dinner and given thanks, the father said, "Go, now, and bring your basket from the boat, I have another happiness in reserve for you." Then leading Godfrey through a thicket, they came to a green open spot, in the centre of which there stood a fine walnut tree, which shot up its majestic arms into the blue sky, and was literally loaded with nuts. Godfrey could hardly contain himself. The joy was unexpected, because there had been no nuts on the tree, for several preceding years, and he had scarcely ever heard them mentioned.

"Look," said his father, "that very tree was planted by your great-grandfather—of all that he planted, this alone remains. There, beyond, on that rock, are the ruins of his house."

Godfrey heartily praised his good grandfather, for having planted the noble tree; and instantly began to fill his baskets with its fruits. He plied his teeth to tear off the outer green rind, and then endeavoured to extract the white kernel from its hard brown shell. "Father," said he, as he worked, "why has God shut up this sweet kernel in its two coverings—one as bitter as gall—the other as hard as flint?"

“Dear Godfrey,” answered the father, “He has had a wise object in doing so. He wished to protect the seed, from which that noble tree grows: the bitter rind prevents mice and other animals from injuring the shell and destroying the kernel. Another object, too, He might have had—He may have wished to teach us in what light we are to view the hard fortunes and bitter reverses of this world. For as we do not throw away these nuts, on account of the hard shell and bitter rind, but, on the contrary, receive them as benefits from the hands of God; so should we do likewise, with regard to sufferings and disappointments. Their first appearance is, no doubt, harsh, bitter, and revolting, but we ought to be firmly persuaded, that in the end there is some sweet fruit within them, which shall appear in its own time, and reward us for our pains.”

The father then ascended the tree, and shook the boughs one after another. Godfrey worked with all his might, filling his basket with the nuts that were showering down on him. If they struck him, it did not relax his ardour—but made him laugh more heartily. But at last, the shower of nuts, as he called it, became so heavy, that he thought it more prudent to retreat, without, however, totally abandoning his work. As soon as he had filled his basket, he ran and emptied it into the boat, and returned again to the tree, from which a new harvest of nuts had been shaken in the interval. “Oh! how happy my mother must be,” said he to his father, “when we bring her home such a store of nuts. What must be the glee of my sisters, when they see me scattering those agreeable presents among them. I am the happiest boy living. I am never more happy, than when I make others happy.”

CHAPTER II.

THE STORM.

WHILE Godfrey and his father were so quietly engaged, dark clouds began to rise from the horizon, and thicken over their heads without their perceiving them. Godfrey had just returned to the boat, and after emptying his basket, stood viewing, with complacency, the large heap of nuts: when suddenly a tremendous squall bent the willow tree to the beach, and raised the waves—another fearful blast sent the boat adrift, and swept it out into the high sea.

Godfrey was dreadfully alarmed, and, in his terror, shouted as loud as he could. The terrified father ran in haste to the beach, but before he had arrived, the boat was far out in the ocean. The agitated waves rose higher and higher. The frail skiff was now seen on the crest of a billow, then, for a few moments, sunk and disappeared, re-appeared again, but always became more dim and distant. The distracted father beheld his lost boy now raising up his hands to heaven, then extending them to the shore. But the hoarse roar of the sea, and the splashing and hissing of the waves on the beach, drowned poor Godfrey's cries. In a few moments the sky was overcast with dark and heavy clouds; and the foaming sea was wrapped in night. The forked bolts of lightning, rapidly followed by awful peals of thunder, sprung from the dark womb of the clouds, and glared on the fretted face of the ocean, before they were lost in its depths. Even still, by the aid of these fearful flashes, the poor father could still discern the dim figure of his lost Godfrey: in a few moments the uplifted arms alone were visible—and, at last, a heavy

shower of rain, descending like a dark mantle over the sea, dimmed the horizon, and cut off all prospect of the sea. No Godfrey or boat was any more visible—and the disconsolate father, sinking down under the willow tree, spent a most wretched evening and sleepless night.

In the mean time, the mother and daughters were in the greatest alarm at home. As soon as the sudden change came on and the green island had disappeared through the dark and massive clouds, and the rain splashed, and the storm howled, the mother turned pale as death, and cried to her trembling children, "O children, pray: God grant that this awful storm may not surprise your father and Godfrey on the open sea—that would be dreadful—O may God Almighty look down and have pity on us." All fell on their knees and prayed fervently. When the weather began to clear, and the green island was once more visible, all eyes were strained to catch a glimpse of the boat. But there was no sign of it. Night came down on the waters—leaving the poor mother and her children a prey to suspense and sleepless anxiety.

But their alarm can scarcely be described, when the morning sun rose bright and warm into a fine autumnal sky—and yet no boat had arrived or was visible. Mid-day came, and yet they waited and hoped in vain. Their agony was now past all endurance. They ran to Thomas, the fisherman, and told him their alarm. He shook his head, and appeared to share their fears. "It is strange," said he, "that they should remain there so long. I will row to the green island, and see what detains them." So, embarking with his servant boy, they rowed towards the island.

In the mean time, the mother and children were in an agony of suspense. But the boat at length appeared. "O thanks be to God," exclaimed the mother, "Thomas and his boy are not alone—there are more than three in the boat. All's well." She and her children hurried down to the beach. But when the boat neared them, "Where

is Godfrey?" shrieked the alarmed mother. The father was pale as death—he cast one sad look at his wife—but was silent. His grief was too great for expression.

But Thomas spoke to the mother, "God console you in your affliction. Godfrey is drowned. Bow to the will of God. What He does is for the best. Godfrey had some faults, but was affectionate and kind, and pious, and we have reason to hope, is more happy in heaven now, than we are on earth."

But the mother would not be consoled. No words can describe her anguish. The children wept and screamed. Godfrey's faults were forgotten; his good qualities appeared better than ever. The father himself was so much afflicted, that he could not attempt to console his family. But when the first outburst of grief passed over—all found their only consolation for Godfrey's death—in the soothing reflection, "It was the will of God. God has taken him to Himself. We will meet our dear Godfrey once more in heaven, in the bosom of God."

CHAPTER III.

THE ROCKY ISLAND.

WHILE his parents and sisters were mourning for the death of Godfrey, he had escaped the awful fate that threatened him. As the little boat rose and sunk on the agitated mass of crested and swelling billows, he thought that every moment was his last. In an agony of terror he had raised up his little hands to heaven, and prayed to God for mercy and forgiveness. The boat, after having been tossed about at the mercy of the waves, drifted to a rocky island—Godfrey sprung out, the moment the keel was fixed in the strand, and waded through the surf to the rocks, up which he clambered, drenched all over with rain and brine.

When, recovering from his alarm he found himself safe, and looked out on the dark and angry face of the sea, he threw himself on his knees, and raising up his hands to heaven, poured out his gratitude. "O, thou, my God, thou whom the wind and sea obey. Thou to whom I prayed for relief—hast heard my prayer. Eternal praise and glory be to thy name."

He then looked down at his little boat, which had been caught in a chasm between two high rocks. "Good God," exclaimed the poor boy, with great emotion, "the most expert seamen could not have made more successfully through the chasm between those two high rocks. Who conducted the boat here without oar or rudder? Who caused the winds and waves to bring me to this spot? Had the boat gone two feet to the right or to the left, it was dashed to a thousand pieces on those rocks, and I was buried in that gulph. Thy Almighty goodness, thy all-ruling Providence alone—my merciful God, have saved me. May my whole life be devoted to praise and thank Thee."

When the weather began to clear up, and the golden beams of the descending sun glimmered through the misty horizon, Godfrey stood on the pinnacle of the rock and looked out over the sea. The green island with all its lofty trees, appeared to him no bigger than a tuft of moss, which he could carry in his straw hat. The mainland itself presented nothing but a dim and vague outline, between sky and sea. The highest mountains looked like clouds—burnished now and then with the rays of the evening sun. No trace of his father's house, or of the hill on which it stood, or of the trees with which it was surrounded, was distinguishable. "O my God," exclaimed the poor boy, "how very far I must be from my father's house. These rocks on which I am thrown cannot be seen from land; I never saw them, nor even heard of them; I heard that in this direction there was no land for fifty miles out at sea. My father certainly believes I am drowned. The fishermen



Godfrey came down from his rock, and inspected the boat, but what was his despair on finding the keel stove in, and his cargo of nuts scattered about the rocky beach.—p. 87.

will take him up at the green island, but who will ever think of coming to take me from this rock. I must make an attempt to return to my dear family across the wide sea, in that little boat."

By degrees the storm subsided, and the sea became calm and clear as a glass. The waves and surf had retired, leaving the boat astrand. Godfrey came down from his rock, and inspected the boat, but what was his despair, on finding the keel stove in, and his cargo of nuts scattered about the rocky beach. Even the ribs and side planks had been so shattered by the waves that they were almost fallen to pieces. "Merciful God," exclaimed the boy, "the boat is lost—the oars are gone—I am a prisoner on this barren rock. Here must I spend my whole life, and never, never more see the face of father, mother, sister or brother." He wrung his hands in agony, while the tears streaming down his ashy cheeks, showed the dismay of his soul on contemplating, in the shattered timbers of his boat, the wreck of all his hopes.

But just at this moment, at a point of the heavens where the dark clouds still lingered, a rainbow unfolded its glowing colours, and formed, by its reflection in the calm bosom of the sea, a majestic and beautiful ring. Struck with the delightful object, Godfrey exclaimed, "O, God, how can men be sad or sullen, while Thou art so admirable in all thy works! May that rainbow be to me, what it once was to Noah, a sign and pledge of hope and mercy. As Thou sendest after rain—sunshine; and after thunder and lightning—this sweet rainbow—so dost thou send joy after sorrow, and consolation after affliction. Whatever woes and sufferings may be my lot now, Thou canst change them into joy. Thou hast saved me from death—and can thy blessings stop there? In Thee will I place my confidence, and calmly rest my fond hopes."

Godfrey's first care was to secure his little stock of provision. He filled his basket with nuts, and carrying them on his head to a level space between the rocks deposited

them safely. After having filled his basket several times, he prepared to save from the wreck all the articles that could be of any use to him. His large milk pitcher, had been dashed to pieces, by the tossing of the boat, but the earthen jug and the pot and dish were safe. He deposited them with his store of nuts. It was fortunate that, after having finished his work on the green island, he had placed the two hooks and the knives and spoons in the boat, before they went to gather the walnuts. He laboured hard, and separated the planks of the boat, and carried them to the high land; "For, perhaps, I may want them," said he; "and it were too bad, if the returning tide should sweep them away." He also carried off the bundles of osiers; and continued busily engaged in his work, until the full moon had risen over the bosom of the sea, and lighted up all the cliffs and caverns of his lonely island.

The labour and terror of this eventful day, had fatigued poor Godfrey; still his heart sunk at the thought of sleeping, under the canopy of heaven, on these dreary rocks; and melancholy forebodings once more crowded on his mind—but he thought within himself: "God has taken care of me so far: He will continue to do so—does not His only son tell us not to be solicitous for the morrow." Having said the evening prayers, as if he were under his father's roof, he lay down to sleep near his store of provisions and furniture. Much rain had not fallen on the island, so that the ground was perfectly dry. Wrapped in his father's great coat, he recommended himself, once more, to the protection of heaven; and in a few moments, forgot all his cares and fears in a sound and refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER IV.

AN EXPLORING EXPEDITION.

GODFREY had been so fatigued, that he slept as soundly the whole night on his rocky bed, as on a bed of down. For a time, hideous and appalling dreams disturbed him. He dreamed that he still heard the crashing of thunder, and the howl and hiss of the agitated sea ; and his little boat, lashed by the waves, now appeared swallowed up in the yawning gulph, or dashed to pieces against the rocks, while he, himself, struggled, but in vain, to clamber up their steep and craggy cliffs. But towards morning he had a beautiful, a happy, dream. He dreamed that he was at home. His parents and sisters were in the garden: the trees were clothed in the rich foliage of autumn, and loaded with blushing apples and purple plums,—more sweet and tempting than he had ever seen before. His father was sitting on the bough of an apple tree, which he had just shaken, and the thick layer of apples gemmed the green sod under the tree. His mother and sisters were gathering the apples into a basket ; but when they saw him approach, they ran and embraced him affectionately. The father sprung from the tree, and seized him cordially by the hand, while his fond mother was giving him some of the most beautiful apples in her basket. But when he was in the act of extending his hand to take the apples—poor Godfrey awoke. It was the scream of a seagull soaring, at break of day, from the rocks over his head, that had awaked him. When he opened his eyes, and beheld the grey and frowning cliffs hanging above, and the wide and measureless expanse of the sea, where nothing but sky and water met his eye—a cold thrill shot

through his frame. His grief could not be repressed—and he burst into tears.

A flock of seagulls, with shrill and playful cries, now sailed over his head in the direction of the mainland. "Happy, happy gulls," thought Godfrey; "I wish you could carry my love to my dear parents, and tell them that I am not drowned, but locked up in this rocky island. My fond father and my good god-father, Thomas, would certainly venture out to sea, through every danger, to bring me back to my home."

But once more recovering himself, he rose and said his morning prayers, more devoutly than he had ever said them at home. Having made a breakfast of nuts and some bread that still remained, he resolved to explore the island. "Perhaps," said he, "I may find some fruit trees or vegetables to support myself, until it pleases God to take me from this island. Who knows, but that the island is inhabited? They must have boats, and surely they would not refuse to bring me home."

Accordingly, having cut two pieces of bread, and buttered them, and laid in a good store of nuts, with the precaution of first peeling off the outer green rind, to lighten his load, he took his hook, and cut one of the strongest osiers, for a walking-staff. Thus accoutred and provided, with his pack on his shoulders, he set out on his exploring expedition.

It was a laborious and dangerous attempt. He ascended high cliffs, and descended dark chasms and ravines. The whole island was covered with huge, dark brown masses of rock, rising in ledges over each other, from the sea, to the centre of the island. His courage quailed before this gloomy and awful scene. Sometimes he worked his way through a long and narrow chasm, until high perpendicular cliffs suddenly barred his passage, and compelled him to retrace his steps. At other times, he made several attempts to scale a high ledge of rock, but was obliged, after attaining a certain height, to return, which was

often most dangerous. No trace of man or his dwelling could be found—no fruit tree—not even a vegetable. And with the exception of the moss on the grey and sombre rocks—or a stunted fir, in the fissures of some dark cavern—nothing green relieved the eye in this dreary prospect. “Oh, God!” exclaimed the poor boy, “death, death by starvation, is my fate, if I am detained long on this island.”

Still, in the hope of making some discovery, he continued his toilsome journey. The sun was intensely hot among these rocks. The perspiration rolled down his forehead and cheeks, and soon brought on a scorching thirst. But the rocks all around, were hard and dry, as if they had been blasted with fire. “Alas!” said the poor traveller, “thirst may kill me, before my other provisions fail. O, God! come to my relief.”

Having pushed on his steps for some time, he heard the murmuring of a fountain. He hastened towards it. The well was very small—but its water was fresh and clear as crystal. Having rested for some time at the well, until he had cooled, he drank plentifully, and after taking some of his bread and nuts, he drank copiously again. Never had he before been sensible of how great a benefit that water is, which men undervalue, because it is so common.

“O! how kind art Thou, my God, how grateful should I be to Thee, for this refreshing draught. This, at least, will not fail, how long soever I be left here: but my bread and nuts, how long will they last? But Thou who hast now slaked my thirst, wilt save me from starvation. Every aid we receive from Thee, is, as my mother told me, a pledge of future favours.”

Starting once more with fresh vigour, he came, at length, to a small green spot, clothed with the eternal verdure of the venerable pines, beneath which a stream rolled its tiny waters, from the well to the sea. The rocks rose here to an extraordinary height; and it cost Godfrey some hours of hard and dangerous labour, to

clamber to their summits. He stood now on the highest point of the island. But what a fearful prospect rose before him. Beneath, were the grey and weather-beaten pinnacles of the rocks, and the gloomy caps of the pines, around the island, the foam of the fretted and restless waves—and as far as the eye could reach—the pathless depths of the sea. His worst apprehensions were too dreadfully realized. He had the evidence of his eyes, that he was on a desolate island, far away from the mainland. There was no trace of mortal dwelling—no sign of commerce or cultivation. Had he not lived before the days of the famous Robinson, he might be truly called a second Robinson. In fact, of the two, Godfrey's condition was infinitely the more deplorable.

Still, however lonely and desolate his state was, he did not lose courage. "Am I, then," said he, "alone, cut off from all men by that endless barrier of the ocean, a prisoner on this barren heap of rocks. But I must not despair. He who has saved me from the raging sea, knows how to preserve me even here. There, under those green pines, by the side of my well, I will erect some sort of covering, and store up my provisions, and all that I have saved from the boat. On the pinnacle of this rock I can sit and watch during the day, for some vessel that, perhaps, may come in sight, and carry me to the mainland.

The sun was now descending. The mountains on the mainland were burnished with his beams; and poor Godfrey discerned, in the clear light of evening, his own native hills gleaming with gold and purple. Sweet thoughts of home crowded on his memory, and he burst into tears. "Dear Heavenly Father," he prayed, "Thou who hast led me from my father's roof, and conducted me safe to this spot, through storm and breakers—Thou canst, at thy will, direct some ship to this rock, and make its crew the instruments of my preservation, and restore me, once more, to my beloved home. To Thee nothing is

impossible. Thou canst save us from the pit. I place all my hopes in Thee."

Peace once more visited his troubled heart; and descending from his rock, he lay down under one of the pine trees, near the little stream, and was soon fast asleep.

CHAPTER V.

STARVATION.

GODFREY supported himself on nuts and a little bread; and spent his days on the top of the rock, expecting that some merchant vessel or fisherman's skiff might appear, and be attracted by his signals. He strained his eyes, in vain, on the wide and swelling sea: no trace of bark or ship was to be seen. Death, by starvation, he thought, was now inevitable. He saw the necessity of husbanding his little store of provisions, and resolved to eat no more each day, than would be absolutely necessary to support life. He marked, with his knife, his daily allowance of bread, which, together with being very small, was so flinty, that he was obliged to soften it in the water of his well. His nuts were counted out, and numbered with more care and anxiety, than the miser counts his guineas, and then distributed into portions for each day. But, notwithstanding, these frugal precautions, his stock gradually disappeared, until, at last, he found himself reduced to his last walnut, and last portion of bread. That night he lay down to rest, harassed with the most gloomy apprehensions, and awoke in the morning, weak with hunger and scarcely able to stand. "Oh! my God," he exclaimed, "I cannot believe that Thou hast doomed me to starve. Thou hast provided for me hitherto. I had been long since dead, were it not for the provisions saved from the boat. But since they are gone now—

bread and nuts, Thou wilt provide some other food for me. I place my hopes in Thee. Thou wilt not abandon me."

Weak and almost exhausted he clambered through the whole island in search of herbs and roots—but as the surface was an almost uninterrupted rock he found scarcely anything, except the water-cresses in the well and stream. He eat greedily the green leaves and soft bulbous roots, and traced the stream from its source to the sea. But the cresses soon were exhausted and still his hunger was unappeased. Maddened almost to desperation, he mounted a rock overhanging the sea and looked wistfully towards the mainland. "O Lord," said he, "how many benefits did I enjoy there, without being duly sensible of their value or thanking Thee from my heart! There the earth gives bread—and fruit trees bend under the load of apples and nutritious plums. Milk and honey are there. O, pardon me for not having been duly thankful for them. Man never can feel the real worth of thy favours, until he is deprived of them."

While he was speaking, he saw in the calm clear waters of the sea, shoals of little fishes, with black eyes and red fins, sporting near the rocks. "Oh, if I could catch and eat them;" said he, "but where is the net—or how take them with the hand?" It was excruciating for poor Godfrey to have the fishes before his eyes, and almost within his grasp, and yet not be able to catch them; for he had no idea of any other means of taking them, except with the net. "My God!" said he, "Thy Divine Son says that the father does not give a serpent to his child who asks a fish. O, give me some means of catching this fish, that I may not die of starvation."

A little bird flew over his head, and perched on a bough of the pine tree, overhanging the sea. It had a little worm in its beak. "O Lord," said Godfrey, "Thou feedest the fowls of the air, as our Saviour assures us—I see it now with my own eyes. Ah! do not let me be

starved to death." The little bird struck the wriggling worm against the bough to kill it, but it dropped from its beak and fell into the sea. The little fishes shot from all quarters, and swarmed around the worm; and one of them, more fortunate than the others, speedily swallowed it.

"Ha," thought Godfrey, "if one of those worms were fastened to a thread and thrown into the sea, could I not draw up the fish that swallows it." His straw hat was lying on the rock near him. He took off the band, knotted it to a long string, went to look for a worm, which he fastened to the end of it, and then flung it into the water. But no fish would come near it: Godfrey then fastened the string to the end of his walking stick, and once more cast the worm into the water. A fish seized and swallowed it; Godfrey drew, but drew up the string without the fish.

"That won't do," said he, "I must have a hook on the end of the string to hold the fish." Then taking the needle which had fastened the band on his hat, he bent it into the shape of a hook, and having fixed a worm on the hook, and tied it firmly to the end of the string, he once more cast his rod into the sea. The fishes swarmed around it; one of them seized it, Godfrey drew, and O! what his transport, on finding a little fish, glittering like silver, fast at the end of his line. He was not equally successful in all his other attempts, but he had, after some time, not less than half-a-dozen of little fishes, and who could now be more happy than he? He had steel, flint and a tinder box among the effects saved from the boat. He collected some dry moss and withered sticks, and lit a fire, at which he roasted his fishes, and was now able to still the cravings of hunger, with a plentiful meal, for which, on his bended knees, he returned most heartfelt thanks to God.

Every day, henceforward, Godfrey diligently plied his new trade. From the top of his rock he saw many large fishes, swimming about in the sea. "Oh!" thought Godfrey,

“ if I could catch one of those fishes it would support me for many days.” Well aware that such large fishes could not be taken with a needle, he endeavoured to devise some plan for catching them. The thought struck him, that there must be many large nails in the fragments of the boat. He ran down to it, and taking out a nail, straightened and sharpened it on a stone, then bent it into the form of a hook, and twisting together several strings to make a strong line, he fastened his hook, with a large worm on it, firmly to the end of his line, and was now sure of catching large fish. Nothing, in truth, could surpass his happiness.

But Godfrey soon found that his invention was a failure. The hook was often taken—the fish was now floundering over the water, but always escaped, before he could be drawn to land. Godfrey was at a loss to account for this. He pondered for a while, but as he had been very inquisitive and observant from his earliest days, he remembered, that, being one day in the forest with the huntsman, he had seen several arrows, and had asked the huntsman, what was the use of the two barbs at the sides of the arrow head. The huntsman told him that they were intended to retain the arrow in the wound, and not allow them to fall out.

Godfrey now resolved to make a hook with barbs. His two hooks and his knife served for anvil, hammer and chisel. With endless labour, and after many attempts, he succeeded in making a hook with one barb, and to his great delight found on experiment that few of the fish, that took the hook, escaped.

But he resolved to improve still more on his invention. He found it was very fatiguing to hold the rod constantly at the same height, and, also, to be always on the watch to draw up the fish the moment it took the hook. But it happened one day that a twig, floating on the water, became entangled in his line. Godfrey remarked that he was not now obliged to hold his rod in the same position ;

for even when he relaxed the line, the twig prevented the hook from falling down to the bottom of the sea. He also found that the twig, even when the sea was not calm, shewed, by its motion, when the fish had taken the hook, and thus enabled him to draw at the proper moment. He accordingly fixed a piece of wood to his line instead of the twig. Godfrey was now perfect master of his art, and had developed it to its full perfection. He thought it was a new invention: he was not aware that it was no other than that art of angling, which had been known in all ages. Still, it was an invention for him, and he was proud of it; and thanked God for that power that enables men to provide for their wants.

But it happened, on one occasion, that Godfrey was in the greatest want, and suffered severely from hunger during two or three days. The sea was so rough that he could not fish. The waves rose so high, and splashed and thundered with such force against the rocks, that he was afraid to go near the beach. He bethought himself how to provide against such a calamity in future, and resolved to lay up a store of fish. Near his little well, he found a sheltered chasm in one of the rocks. Into this he turned the water from the well, and soon filled his pond to the brim. Here he always kept a sufficient store of fish, alive and at hand whenever he required them. He now felt himself above all his wants. "O," said he, "how happy I am that there is no danger now of starvation. How grateful ought I not be to Thee, my God. Keep me here, now, as long as it is Thy will. I will, no doubt, be brought home when it best suits Thy eternal designs."

CHAPTER VI.

THE ROCKY CAVERN.

Now that all danger of starvation was over, Godfrey's thoughts once more fondly and anxiously turned to his parents and sisters. Every day, nay, every hour, he strained his eyes towards every point of the compass, in the hope of seeing some ship.

One morning, after he had ascended the pinnacle of his rock, a large vessel suddenly came in sight. She was hardly a mile distant, with her swelling sails gleaming in the ruddy beams of the rising sun. Godfrey was almost overpowered at the sight. He trembled through fear and hope. He fixed a longing gaze on the ship, which appeared to be making direct for the island. Every moment she drew nearer and nearer. Godfrey hastily tying his red pocket handkerchief to the top of a long pine branch, which he had prepared for the purpose, raised it high, and waved it to and fro, in the hope of attracting the attention of some person on board. But before the vessel came close enough to perceive the signal, she suddenly tacked and changed her course, and sailed off from the island. Godfrey having followed her with his eyes, until she vanished at the extreme verge of the horizon, then sunk down on his rock weary, sad, and desponding. He wept bitterly. But at the moment he happened to remember what he had heard his father say on a similar occasion, when some disappointment had crossed him: "In the hour of trial, the help of God, sometimes, appears to be coming, but then suddenly is withdrawn. But this should not dishearten us. It is rather a trial, by which our confidence and patience are to be tested and

improved. Even when our misery seems to be extreme, we must never renounce our belief and trust in the wise dispensations of his paternal love. For whatever God does, is intended for our good, either in this world, or in the world to come." With these sentiments of his father, Godfrey once more consoled himself, and gathered fresh courage. In the mean time, he did not lose all hope of seeing another ship, and returning home to his parents. But the weather now began to be severe. At the close of autumn, heavy rain set in and for several days, beat almost incessantly on the rocky island. The thick pine wood, under which Godfrey had spent his nights, now afforded no protection. The rain fell upon him, as from the eaves of a house, and every spot in the island was so saturated with wet, that he could find no place to repose. The heavy rains at length ceased, but were soon followed by the cold of winter. Shivering blasts howled and moaned through the chasms of the rocks, against which the pine wood was no protection. The nights especially were so intensely cold, that poor Godfrey was benumbed and shivering. "Oh, my God!" said he, one morning, when he was almost stiffened with cold, "what will become of me, when the full cold of winter sets in? If I must sleep in the open air under the pines, I shall certainly be frozen to death. Grant me, oh! my God, to find some shelter against the rain and snow."

Without delay, he began to search for such a place. Between the highest rock on the island where he spent his whole day, and another near rock that was not entirely so high, there was a small patch of verdure on a little platform. Godfrey had often looked wistfully down on it, and had endeavoured, but in vain, to descend to it, the rocks, with which it was encompassed, being almost perpendicular. Once more he searched diligently for some other plan of settling on it. He remarked, about a hundred paces from the source of his well, a large rock cleft in twain from top to bottom. He clambered up to

the cleft, and passed through it into the little green spot. In one of the rocks he discovered a cave, the entrance to which was shaded by the massive trunks of two venerable pines. He entered, and finding it very commodious exclaimed with a transport of joy, "This cave was made expressly for me. This is a sure protection against wind and snow. Thou, O heavenly Father, dost provide for all. Since I came hither, Thou hast provided me with food. Thou gavest to me a well to quench my burning thirst, and now Thou providest for me shelter against the cold of winter. Hard as my trials are, I can recognise in them proofs of thy paternal love. Never can I, sufficiently, express my thanks!"

Godfrey was now busily engaged gathering a large quantity of moss, which he dried in the sun; for though the nights were excessively cold, the days were still very warm. In the evening he carried his moss into the cavern, and spent the first comfortable night in his new habitation.

He now arranged all his furniture and effects, in the best order possible. He brought his pot, pitcher, and spoons, and everything else with him. He began to make every provision against the approaching winter. He piled all the wood that he had cut, on a ledge of sheltered rock, and prepared to cut more. He endeavoured to light a fire in his cavern, but he was nearly smothered with the smoke. He then resolved to secure the entrance, so as to defend him against the piercing blasts. Having constructed a door of some boughs and twigs interwoven together, he fitted it to two large pine stakes, which he drove deep into the ground, to serve as door-posts. Instead of iron hinges, he made use of a ligature, formed of tender pine branches, twisted together, and was thus able to move his light door with perfect ease. The space between the twigs in his door, he carefully filled up with moss, except one small opening to serve as a window. Thus protected, he was warm enough during the night, and in the day-

time he kept a fire lighted, in a dry part of his little platform, under the shelter of an impending rock. Here he always had fire under the ashes, from which, with the aid of some dry brambles, he had no trouble in raising such a blaze as was sufficient, not only to roast or boil his fish, but also to warm himself. He never used flint and steel, except in a case of absolute necessity. He spared his little match as if it were gold; not for a thousand crowns would he lose it. "Not for a large lump of gold," said he, "would I give the little match set in that piece of wood, though it is scarcely as large as a barley corn. For were it not for that match, I should have been obliged to eat raw fish; I had no means of lighting a fire on this island. My flint and steel were of equal use to me. The benefits of God are poured out on us on all sides, but we are not duly thankful for them in the days of our prosperity."

Winter had now come on in all its severity, but it was not so cold as in our country. One morning, on going out, he found that snow had fallen during the night. On another occasion, the rocks and pines were clothed with a venerable hoar. How happy did not Godfrey feel on being able to warm himself at his comfortable fire, and thank God for the favours conferred on him.

When Godfrey sat by his blazing fire, so solitary on the long winter evenings, while the smoke ascended to the clouds in curling wreaths, and the cleft rocks and dark pine trees, gleamed bleak and chilly in the flickering blaze, his thoughts often turned fondly and sadly to his father's fire-side. The tears came to his eyes, when he remembered how happy he had sat there with his parents and sisters, his father amusing them with some instructive story, while weaving his baskets, his sisters seated around spinning, and his fond mother sometimes making nets, sometimes distributing nuts or apples to her beloved children. "I would willingly lose my hand," would he say, "for only one hour in your company."

During the winter, Godfrey was engaged in a thousand different occupations. With great toil he made a table and chair of the shattered timbers of his boat, and having fixed them close to a rock, he constructed of boards also a kind of roof to shelter them, under which he used to sit on rainy days preparing his fishing lines, sharpening hooks, cleaning his fish, or, at times, even taking his repasts, which were more pleasant, under the air, than in his dark narrow cave. He levelled the green plot before his door, and broke, or rolled away all the rocks. He also made the descent to his well easier, by cutting two or three steps in the steep rock.

Spring returned once more. The seaguls and curlews built their nests on the beach and on the rocks overhanging the sea; and occasionally Godfrey succeeded in taking some of their eggs, which were a delicious banquet to him, not only because of their excellent flavour, but still more, because the various colours, yellow, green, and blue, with which the shells were tinted, reminded him of the feast of Easter, which usually falls about this period. The water cresses and some wild herbs were his salad, and the roots served as spices. The sea-salt which he collected on the rocks, made his fish and eggs more palatable. This simple food agreed very well with him, and he was rapidly growing stout and tall. "O!" would he often say, "how little is required to support human life, and to keep us in health and vigour." Whenever he was not engaged fishing, he was saving or preparing his food, felling wood, or at other employments, and sometimes extracting the pearls from the shell-fish occasionally thrown upon the beach. He found a large number of them, and some of superior beauty and value. He also gathered coral from the rocks in the sea, and then made little baskets of rushes closely woven and well covered to keep his treasure. "May God grant," said he, "that I may once more see the face of my father: I can then give him this little treasure. It will secure many comforts

for his old age, and also help to settle my sisters in life. O, how many favours have my good parents bestowed on me, and I cannot repay them! Now that I am so big and strong, how willingly would I help them in all their labours. Still, perhaps, when I gather my coral and pearls, I am working for them; I may be of some use to them, and if a child have the affection of a child, what work can be more pleasing than to work for our beloved parents."

CHAPTER VII.

A FRIEND IN SOLITUDE.

GODFREY lived as happy and content on his rocky island, as it is possible for a young and sprightly boy to live in a place of profound solitude. He had so much to do, time never hung heavy on his hands. But when heavy rain obliged him to remain seated under his wooden shed, or when great storms, or frost, or snow, compelled him to take refuge in his dark cave, he could not repress a sigh. "O," he used to say, "it is very hard to be alone without any living being to speak to! How happy I was under my father's roof, with my mother and sisters." He often spent the whole day thinking of them. One night he had a most vivid dream: his father stood before him, and with a most affectionate smile on his venerable face, called him his dear Godfrey, pressed him in the most fond and ardent terms to approach, and was in the act of extending his arms to embrace him. Godfrey awoke, and finding himself alone in his dark cave, began to weep so bitterly, that the hot tears streamed down his cheeks. "O, my good father!" said he, "how fondly you would welcome me, if I could return; how affectionately he spoke to me, and what great favours I have received

from him. Sad and afflicting, indeed, it is to be so far away from him, and, perhaps, never to be able to see him again. Alas! he does not even know that I am alive. Yet," said Godfrey, looking piously to heaven, "I have another Father still—Thee, dearest Father, 'who art in heaven.' It is true, that in Thy heavenly abode, Thou art equally hidden from my sight, as is my father's face here on earth; but I know, nevertheless, that Thou art in heaven above, nay, that Thou art nigh unto me, even here upon earth. Thou lovest me infinitely more than my earthly father can; Thou seest me and knowest all my thoughts. My earthly father hears me not, and, for the present, I cannot speak with him; but Thou hearest all my words; with Thee I can speak at every instant. True, Thou dost not speak with me, as men speak with one another; but Thou inspirest good thoughts into my soul; Thou sendest comfort and joy into my heart; by bounteous gifts and paternal ordinances, Thou teachest me to know Thy love for me. Oh! how lovingly hast Thou already provided for me upon this island; and I doubt not that it was with the wisest and most loving views Thou broughtest me hither. How happy do I feel in knowing Thee! How miserable—how guilty should I be, could I ever forget Thee more. Even as my thoughts, on this desert island, ever turn to my earthly father, so shall I unceasingly think of Thee, dearest Father, 'who art in heaven!' Oh! how happy is the man, who knows Thee—loves Thee—places his trust in Thee. He is no where alone; every where there is for him a friend, to whom he may turn in all his troubles. Yes, in Thee, dearest Father in heaven, do I ever find my surest refuge—my only comfort—my best support. And as I still hope that I shall once more behold my beloved father here on earth, so also shall that blissful moment arrive when I shall behold Thy face!"

Godfrey continued every day to say his prayers morning and evening with great devotion, and before and after his

solitary meals. He thanked God for all his gifts ; and, as in his deep solitude there was nothing to dissipate his thoughts, and no distracting object to withdraw his mind, he was enabled to meditate upon them with more undivided attention, and to recognise more vividly the goodness of God, as displayed in his works. Many a time would he repair to the summit of the loftiest cliff, to watch the rising of the sun ; and, as he saw the heavens and the earth put on each moment a deeper and more brilliant crimson, the clouds become, as it were, one mass of flame, and at length the sun himself rise up like a huge fiery globe, his whole heart would fill with reverence and adoration ; he would fall down upon his knees and pray to Him who had created these wondrous works. And had there been an artist to paint the pious boy, as he knelt upon the cliff, his upturned face and clasped hands, illuminated by the ruddy beams of the rising sun, it would have been, indeed, a lovely picture.

So also, he loved best to say his evening prayers, as he looked upon the setting sun. "It is Thou, O heavenly Father," he would say, "who makest the sun to rise and to set, to shine upon men, Thy children, and to give life and fertility to everything which lives, blooms, and vegetates upon the earth !"

With reverence and joy, too, would he gaze upon the soft gentle moon, and watch its waxing and its waning, with an interest which he had never before experienced. "Oh, how loving and gentle !" he would say to himself, "must be that Being, who has prepared for man, exhausted by the toils of the day, a light so soft and soothing as this."

And again, during the clear, but moonless nights, he took the greatest delight in watching the numberless stars which sparkle in the heavens. Many a time would he clamber up to his cliff, to take in the whole starry heavens in one single view. And now, for the first time, he observed that certain stars rose and set, and traversed a circle in the heavens as wide as that through which

the sun revolves, whilst others revolved in lesser circles without ever setting at all; and that the whole firmament seemed to revolve around a single star, which never moved from its place. He remarked, too, that the stars rose a little earlier each day, and that, from month to month, new stars which he had never seen before, made their appearance, till at length, after the lapse of a year, the same ones returned once again; and though he had never heard a word of fixed stars and planets, he saw that almost all the stars preserved the same distances from each other, and the same relative position; that a few, however, kept their own course through the heavens, and, as it were, wandered about among the other stars, and that the clearest and brightest of them all only appeared in the morning or in the evening, and at times shone so brightly that the cliffs and trees cast a sensible shadow in its light. All these discoveries filled him with joy; and, indeed, when there came a lovely starry night, especially in winter, when the most beautiful stars are seen in the sky, he never could look upon the sparkling, star-spangled heaven, without an insensible shudder of holy reverence and awe. "Ah, how true it is!" he would exclaim, "'the heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament proclaimeth the work of His hands.'"

God's works on earth, too, as far as they could be seen upon this unfruitful rocky isle, stirred up pious thoughts within him, and awakened him to devotion. "As yonder blue heaven above is adorned with stars!" he exclaimed one day in spring, "so is the green carpet of my little grotto studded with pretty yellow flowers, whose tender leaves shoot out like rays from the stem." Many a time had he, in his childish plays, with his companions, made little chains of the blossoms of these flowers; and when the flower had withered amused him by blowing the little woolly flakes at his play-fellows, and watching them as they flew all around. But now he looked at them

with a very different eye. "Even these neglected flowers!" thought he, "how wondrously they exhibit God's wisdom and goodness. Every one of these winged little flakes carries a seed within; each seed-vessel is like a little ship with sails, and many of them have sailed here through the air from the main-land. And as the wind carries them so easily, thus it happens that these flowers are found growing up yonder upon the cliffs; and long before I came here, almost all the flowers, whose roots and leaves now supply my food, were planted by this wonderful provision of nature."

The pines, the only trees upon this island, were objects of his especial affection. "Were it not that these trees supply me with fire-wood," he said, "my kitchen, I fear, would be ill-provided, and I could hardly live through the cold winter." He now regarded with fresh interest the rich brown scales of the pine-cones, with which he had many a time played when he was a boy; he separated the scales with his knife, and discovered that under each of them were hidden two little winged seeds. "Ah!" said he, "these seeds, too, must have flown hither from the main-land; these pines must have been planted on the rocks round about me, in the same way as those yellow flowers. How else could the seeds have reached up to the top of these high cliffs? And how well the roots of the pines are fashioned for climbing up the rugged cliff. They creep all round and round, and search out every where over the polished face of the rock, just as if they were endued with reason, till they discover a chink or a cleft, through which they can burrow their way. The stem grows up slender and straight like a taper, and so pliant, that, in a storm, it will bend and swing on every side, but is difficult to break;—an admirable provision to enable it to hold its ground on such heights as these. Its branches and twigs remain green even in winter; and when every other tree is bare, afford shelter to many a

poor little bird. And, indeed, whether it be while it is still growing up and decorated with its young fresh green leaves, or whether it has attained its full height, and rears its head to heaven, the pine is a beautiful tree; and when, through the dark green branches of the pines which overhang my grotto, I look up to the heavens, they appear to wear a lovelier blue, and the moon shews with redoubled brilliancy." And Godfrey resolved to spare the pines which grew before his grotto, and to cut wood for himself at a distance from home.

Even the humble moss, which he had hardly thought of looking at before, now furnished a rich field for examination. "How well hath God done all things!" he would say; "even the smallest plant of moss is a miracle of his wisdom and goodness. It is like a tiny little pine tree. And how delicate is the texture of its little leaves, if you hold them up to the light."

He observed the little capsules which contain the seeds. "What pretty little boxes!" he exclaimed, "they are just shaped like tiny little cups, and provided with little lids. The seeds are as minute as the finest little dust; and when the seeds become ripe the lid drops off, and the winds scatter the seeds far and near. It is thus the mosses come to be so abundantly disseminated in every direction. They draw nutriment from the hardest rock, and clothe it with a lovely green. Its soft and delicate stems serve to supply a nest for the little birds which sing yonder, and a bed for myself. What an infinite number of little stems were necessary to make a soft bed for me. And thus, had they not been so plentifully provided, I should have slept upon the flinty rock, and I should not have been able to defend my cave so well against the cold. Yes, merciful God, all—all things, from the lofty pine to the humble moss, from the glorious sun to the tiny little seed of the moss-plant, all proclaim Thy power! The whole earth is filled with thy praise;



He would often say his morning and night prayers before the rock on which his cross was erected, and which he called his domestic altar, and a stone which he had rolled to the spot served as his kneeling stool.—p. 109.

heaven and earth are, as it were, a temple of thy majesty, and my heart shall henceforth be an altar consecrated to Thee !”

Still, though Godfrey regarded heaven and earth as God’s temple, yet it was very painful to him never to be able to visit a church. “I wish,” he said, “that I had any Christian symbol to stir up pious recollections. Such symbols are well fitted to excite to piety.” He found a nice pine-branch, with the brown bark all covered with delicate green and yellow moss. This he cut with his axe into two pieces, one shorter than the other, formed it into a cross, and erected it upon a green moss-grown rock at a short distance from his cave.

“The sign of the cross,” said he, “this sacred symbol of our redemption, is so simple that one can easily form it wherever one may be ; and yet how beautifully does it remind us of our Redeemer, who died for us on the cross ? Others, more fortunate, may decorate their crosses with gold and jewels, but this simple ornament, the moss, does not look at all badly, and suits very well the residence of a poor hermit.”

He would often say his morning and night prayers before the rock on which his cross was erected, and which he called his domestic altar, and a stone which he had rolled to the spot served as his kneeling stool.

His parents had taught him to repeat several pretty little prayers ; and he was delighted now that he was able to remember and repeat them every day. He felt that they excited good thoughts in him, and were like wings which raised his heart to heaven. “It is true,” thought he, “whenever one has received a great favour from God, or is placed in any pressing necessity, one scarcely needs to know a prayer by heart ; the very occasion and the emotion of the heart, will then teach us how to pray. But still, there are many times when we neither feel the pressure of any special necessity, nor are excited by any special joy. In such cases, these little forms are

very useful ; and the prayers which I have by heart, are, as it were, a little prayer-book which my parents have given me for my journey through life. I have it always about my person, and yet can never lose it."

His parents had also taught him a number of passages from Holy Scripture. These passages also, especially the words of Jesus, he repeated every day, lest, as he no longer had a book to read them, they might slip from his memory. He meditated upon them, and found great comfort and edification therein. He felt that these beautiful texts, were as a casket of jewels which no one could steal from him, and which were of inestimable value to him.

Thus, in his solitude, he often thought of St. John in the desert. He thought that if it were the will of God, that John, who was destined to be a saint, and to work great good among men, should spend his youth in a desert, there must be in solitude some special virtue of its own, and that therefore it was not without reason God had brought him thither. And, in reality, this solitary life was of the most salutary consequences to the gentle boy ; and in his quiet, uninterrupted retirement, he grew up a most pious and virtuous youth.

CHAPTER VIII.

FRESH SORROWS AND TROUBLES.

HITHERTO Godfrey had enjoyed in his island, the most perfect and uninterrupted good health. Unluckily, one day a sharp fragment of a muscle-shell wounded him severely in the heel ; for his shoes had long been worn out on these rocky paths, and he was obliged to leave them aside. The wound inflamed, and occasioned him great pain. A fever ensued ; and he could scarcely rise from his bed.

It was with unspeakable difficulty that, leaning upon a staff, he was able to go to the spring and carry a pitcher of water to slake his burning thirst. He was glad that he felt no desire to eat, for in the circumstances it would have been almost impossible for him to catch a fish, and prepare it for eating. He had no linen, too, to dress his wound. Alas! poor Godfrey was now, indeed, in a very pitiable condition.

How often, and with more painful regrets than ever, did he think, as he lay tortured with pain and burning with fever upon his bed of moss, in his dark cave, of the home which he had lost. "Ah!" said he, "at home, when I wanted anything, with what affectionate eagerness did my parents provide it for me! My father himself would run to fetch the doctor; my mother, with gentle persuasion, would give me the medicines, bring the warm soup to my bed-side, and smooth the pillows with her own hand. My brothers and sisters were in the greatest affliction, and had no thought but to console me, and to procure every possible gratification for me; they all prayed for me. But here, I am so completely alone and destitute of all human aid! Oh! how dreadful would it be, were I to perish here lonely and forsaken! No holy communion; no priest to hear my confession!"

The tears gushed forth as he spoke. "Oh, merciful God!" he cried, raising his hands to heaven—"dearest Father, my only refuge, though all the world forsake me, yet Thou wilt not! Ah, take pity upon me! Thou hast ever helped me in my need! Ah, grant me thy aid once again! Ah, restore me to health; let me not die in this lonely island; bring me back once more to my beloved parents!"

He now became more and more conscious that he had not been so grateful and obedient to his good parents as he should have been. "Alas, my merciful God!" thought he, "perhaps Thy design in bringing me to this island was, that I might discover and amend my faults. Ah, pardon me, dearest Father! I promise, that if Thou

wilt restore me to my parents once more, I will become towards them love and gratitude itself, and will obey them with a cheerful and ready obedience."

With bitter repining, too, did he reflect that he had often been unkind to his brothers and sisters, quarrelled with them, and used harsh language towards them. "O how deeply I regret it now!" he cried, "but do Thou only forgive me, dearest Father in heaven, and restore me to their arms, and I will make it the study of my life to live in the most affectionate, union with them, and to be towards them a model of brotherly love. Alas! while I was in the enjoyment of their society, I did not know how to value the happiness of possessing parents so tender, brothers and sisters so affectionately devoted. Many a time did I mar this happiness by my own self-will and thoughtlessness. Ah, grant me, dearest Father! but to behold them once again, in order to ask their pardon, to comfort them by an amended life, and to make them some return for all their goodness to me."

Such were the unceasing prayers of poor Godfrey in his illness, and at length God restored him to health. His wound began to heal, the fever gradually abated, and at last entirely disappeared. The first time he found himself free, and was able to go out of his cave without the assistance of a staff, he thanked God upon bended knees for his merciful recovery; his heart was filled with new confidence in God. "Dear Father, 'who art in heaven,'" he joyfully said, "Thou hast fulfilled one of my wishes in restoring me to health; I am full of the joyful confidence that Thou wilt also accomplish my second wish, and restore me to the arms of my dear parents!"

His first solicitude on his recovery was to provide some kind of shoes, which might secure his foot, still but imperfectly healed, from further injury. With the assistance of his axe and his knife, he made a pair of stout soles out of the boards of the shattered boat; and he cut up the leather of his old shoes into bands, which

he nailed to the new soles with the nails of the old ones. The new shoes, which were what we might call sandals, fitted him to admiration, considering his imperfect instruments.

But he was also in want of new clothes; his old ones had grown too small for him, and besides, they were so worn and tattered, that they gave him but little protection against the frost. In cold weather he frequently suffered so much, that his teeth chattered, and he was afraid that his illness should return. On such days, to be sure, he put on his father's cloak, but it was too long and trailed after him; and the sleeves reached far over his hands, and even though he tucked them up, were very inconvenient to him at work. Now, the cloak was of stout brown cloth, and still all but new; and he resolved to make it into a long coat reaching down to the ground, which would serve as a complete dress, such as he had once seen worn in a convent.

"But where," thought he, "am I to find needles, and thread, and a pair of scissors?"

By way of needle he polished a piece of a broken nail, and it cost him infinite trouble to bore an eye in it with another pointed nail. Luckily, he had once observed in a smith's forge, that iron is not only very soft while it is hot, but also retains a certain degree of softness, whereas, if it be plunged red-hot into cold water, it becomes very hard. He thanked God, who had, for man's use, imparted this wondrous twofold quality to iron; and he succeeded in making a tolerable needle, which, however, was more like a packing, than a sewing needle.

In order to provide sewing-thread, he unravelled the remains of a worn stocking, which he had long discarded, and for scissors he made use of his knife, which he sharpened on a stone.

He now set about his work, cut out the cloak upon a board to the shape of a long coat, and sewed it together as well as he was able. For a girdle he used the rope

which had once been the painter of the little boat, and which now had been bleached white by the sun and the rain.

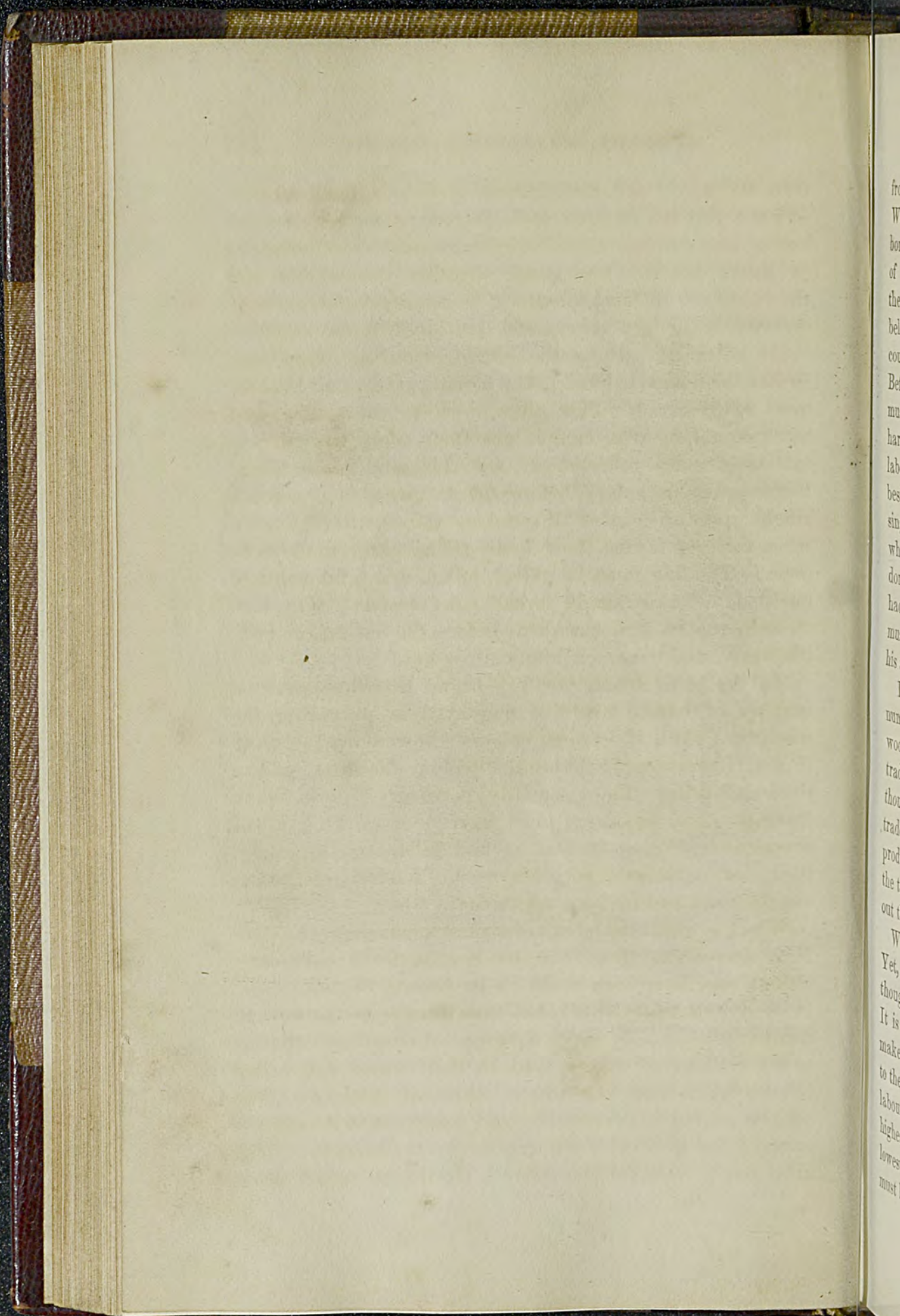
His straw hat, too, had become rotten and unfit for use, he tried, therefore, to plait a new one of rushes; and, having been trained to basket-making, he succeeded very well.

It was now time to try on his new clothes; and with his long brown coat, the white girdle encircling the waist, the dark-green rush hat, which was somewhat turned up at the sides, and his long white willow staff in his hand, he had all the appearance of a hermit in costume. He went down to the sea to look at himself in the clear mirror-like water, and could not but smile at the figure he presented. "I look," said he, "the very image of the convent lay-brother, who used to visit us occasionally when I was at home. My dress is, perhaps, a little coarse and ill-made, but it keeps me as warm as if it were of the finest cloth, most skilfully cut out, and most exquisitely sewn. I look upon it as a great blessing from God, and will thank him for it every day of my life."

While he was working at his dress, his reflections were very sensible and practical. "Till I came here," he said to himself, "I had never thought how happy a thing it is to live among mankind. How many thousand men take a part in constructing the dress of one single individual? How many hands must be set in motion even before the flax, which forms the thread which I am putting into this needle, or the straw, of which my old straw-hat here beside me was plaited, could be grown in the field. Before the farmer can plough the field, he must have a plough. Iron must be taken from the mines and iron works, and smelted in the smelting house, and hammered on the anvil. How many men must be employed to make all the tools necessary for the iron mines, the smelting house, and the smithy? The carpenter makes wheels and the frame of the plough. For this timber must be brought



His straw hat, too, had become rotten and unfit for use, he tried, therefore, to plait a new one of rushes.—p. 114.



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from the wood, and that cannot be done without an axe. What a number of iron tools the carpenter requires for boring and cutting, all of which are made by the labour of men's hands. The smith sheathes the wheels and the plough with iron, for which he requires a forge, coals, bellows, a sledge, tongs, and an anvil, none of which could be made without the united labour of many men. Before the horse is yoked to the plough, traces and harness must be procured. This gives work to the saddler and harness-maker, who cannot get their tools without the labour of many other men. All this, and many things besides, are necessary before the farmer can commit a single grain of corn or flaxseed to the earth; and even when the crop is ripe, how many things yet remain to be done? The flax must be pulled, pilled, dried, fanned, and hackled, before a single thread can be spun. The corn must be reaped and threshed, before the hat-maker culls his straw, and weaves it into a straw hat."

In the same train, Godfrey began to reflect what a number of hands must be employed in preparing the wool-dyed cloth of various colours; how many tools and trades, jennies and cloth-mills, colour factories, and a thousand other things equally necessary; how many tradesmen and labourers must have been working on the production of other tradesmen and labourers, to enable the tailor, at length, with his needle and scissors, to cut out the cloth and make a man's coat.

Who knows all the labour of making even a single needle? Yet, several of them can be bought for a halfpenny, though they have been made by the labour of many men. It is a beautiful order that thus combines many, and makes them for one; every individual thereby contributing to the welfare of others, and, by their united and varied labour, sustaining the whole fabric of society. The highest cannot dispense with, and ought not to despise the lowest; the lowest should never envy the highest. Each must live by, and for the other. He that does not work.

ought not to eat. So has it been ordained by God, in order that man might stand in need of his fellow-man, and live with him, and bear with his failings, and crush that proud spirit that makes us wish to have our own will. "O, how happy!" said Godfrey, "to live in the company of man. The man, cut off from all human intercourse, is to be pitied; he has many afflictions to bear. If ever I am taken from this island, and placed among men, I will not let my spirits sink, or grow lazy and morose; I will work hard, that by unceasing and diligent labour, I may contribute my share to the general good of my country.

"My clothes, my linen, my iron, and thread, all these things which I owe to my intercourse with men, are of unspeakable value to me, but what are they compared to the treasures I got at my father's fire-side, the school, and the chapel? O, my good God!" he cried, "what would I be, without the knowledge of Thee and of Thine only Son, and his commands and promises? The most miserable thing on the face of the earth; O, may all men know and feel what a blessing—what salvation it is to know Thee, my God, and Him whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ!"

CHAPTER IX.

A GREAT CALAMITY.

Now that Godfrey had perfectly recovered and was well clothed, he lived happy and content on his island. Still the longing to see his parents troubled his heart, and grew more powerful each succeeding day. Several times every day he climbed to the top of his rock and looked around and around, to all the points of the compass over the swelling sea, to catch, if possible, a glimpse of a sail. Many a ship, too, he did see, which appeared, for a time, bearing towards the island, and making his heart swell

with the hope of seeing his home. But the ship invariably tacked when nearing the island, and sailed to the right or the left. Why they all avoided the island, he could not conceive for a long time, but, at last, he discovered the true cause. A barrier of rocks, some of them above, others below the water, as could be seen from the breakers, surrounded the island, and it was to avoid these reefs that the ships changed their course. One day that a ship was going in full sail past the island, she suddenly folded all her canvass, and had all her boats and oars in motion to turn the vessel sideways. Godfrey's suspense was harassing; but recovering and resigning himself to the will of God: "It is the will of God," said he; "may His will be done. When the time comes for delivering me from my imprisonment, He will find the ways and means. All things are subject to Him. He can turn all to good."

Believing now that he should spend another winter on his island, Godfrey began to lay up a store of wood. He felled some pine trees, and cutting them up into logs, piled them carefully on a ledge of rock near his cave. He also collected and bound up into faggots, brambles and rotten twigs, with which he could rapidly light a good fire, whenever he required it.

One day he was engaged at some distance from his cave, cutting down a large pine tree, which fell with a tremendous crash into a deep ravine, from the rock on which it was growing. He spent the whole day cutting it into logs, which was very laborious, for he had no saw, and the sweat rolled down his forehead as he manfully plied his hook against the fallen trunk. When dinner-hour came, and he began to grow hungry, he placed a large load of the logs on his shoulders, and was quietly returning to his dwelling. But judge of his terror when he came out of the ravine? thick black wreathes of smoak were curling up to heaven from the rocks, which covered his cavern, and high above the

smoke two livid pillars of fire, straight as a pine tree, gleamed horribly in the skies.

Godfrey having formerly heard of burning mountains, was afraid that, perhaps, this might be some fire issuing from the bowels of the earth, which would soon envelope the whole island. Throwing down his bundle of wood, he rushed with beating heart towards his cavern, but stopped suddenly, and in the greatest consternation, at the entrance of the little valley. He saw nothing but fire and smoke; the crackling and hissing of the flames horrified him. But he had one consolation, that the fire was not issuing from the earth; for having some time to think, he concluded, that some of the burning twigs of his fire-place must have been placed too near his heap of wood, and driven about, perhaps, by the wind, may have communicated with the pile, and set the whole in a blaze. The door of his cave, his table and bench, and the shed which he saw fall in, as he came up, all, even the two venerable pines, were wrapped and devoured in the flames. It was from the pine trees, the high flames, he had seen at a distance, were towering.

At first, Godfrey was not sensible of the real extent of the loss he had suffered by this fire. He blamed himself severely for having been so careless about his fire. He deplored the loss of all his kitchen utensils, and his provision of logs, and, in truth, every article that could not withstand the flames. "Good God!" he exclaimed, "the shed has broken my iron pot; no more boiled fish for me; my water-pitcher is in pieces; when I want a drink I must walk to the well. My table and bench are gone; my shed, too; and if I ever wish to leave my cavern, I have not a single dry spot to sit down. The door of my cavern, too! I have no protection against the cold."

But the worst was yet to come. Judge of the poor fellow's agony, when he found that all his fishing lines, which he had hung up to dry near his shed, were burned.

"O God!" said he, clapping his hands, "what a wretched boy I am; all my lines are gone, how can I fish now?" All the thread he had in his possession had been already used in making these lines; and as the woollen thread in his coat, or the tow in his girdle would not be strong enough to hold a fish, he knew not how to help himself. Starvation once more stared him in the face. "While I was sick," said he, "my greatest apprehension was, that I should die alone on this barren rock; that death threatens me now, unless Thou, my God, come to my relief on this frightful island."

Godfrey had advanced a few paces towards the entrance of his cave, but he was soon obliged to retire. The ground was burning hot, the air glowed with sparkling flame, rosin showered down in drops of fire from the blazing pines, and the smoke was so thick, as almost to suffocate him. "Oh!" said poor Godfrey, "there is a saying, that good often comes from evil, but when I look around on this terrible havoc, I am at a loss to know what good can come from it. I see no end to my sorrows."

With a heavy heart, he left his little cell, and retiring to a little distance, sat down on a rock, and rested his head between his hands. He thought within himself, how easily all this damage could be repaired, if he were living among men. A few pence would buy fishing lines, and a pot, and a pitcher; and though he had not the money, he could, at least, find some kind-hearted man, who would give him a line and a few earthen vessels, or lend the money to him. But here, so far away from men, there were no means of repairing his loss. "O!" said he, "what a happy thing it is to be living among men; how easily one man can relieve the necessities of another; how little it costs him, to save another from the greatest misfortunes, and make him happy; but the poor solitary has no resource in the distress that overwhelms him. Should I ever have the happiness of returning to the society of men, I will, on all occasions, endeavour to

relieve my neighbours in their necessities." He felt that the calamities which God sends to ourselves, make our compassion for the woes of others more feeling and vivid. "Wherever that pity does not exist," said he, "must be as miserable as my place on this lonely and desolate rock."

Overwhelmed with the most gloomy forebodings, poor Godfrey remained sitting on the rock until late in the evening. He thought of returning to his cave, and advanced to the entrance of his little valley. The flames were extinguished, but the embers and ruins were so hot, that he was obliged to turn to some other place to pass the night. The little wood near the well had been so much thinned by him when he was laying up his store of wood, that it afforded scarcely any shelter, so that he was obliged to pass the night under the canopy of heaven, stretched on the bare rock. His grief and anguish were so great, that they banished sleep from his eyes. "Alas!" said he, "I am like a little bird turned out of its nest." Now, more powerfully than ever, the desire of seeing his parents, a yearning for the home fire-side, agitated his soul. "O!" said he, "what troubles have I not had to overcome on this island, and how many may yet be in store for me? In my father's house, how happy I would be? Could I but return there, it would be new life for me."

He raised his weeping eyes to heaven. The night was beautiful—not a cloud to be seen in the heavens, and the stars all shining brilliantly. He thought how beautiful, how happy heaven must be, and what good we are one day to receive there from God. "There above—alone," said he, "is our home, our true Father's house. Thrown on this bleak and sterile island, if I long for the main land, where gardens bloom with countless flowers and fruit trees, where my father would receive me with open arms, I desire still more to be one day with Thee, my God. The whole world is like this rocky island. In this world all men have much to suffer, as I have here,

grief, cold, hunger, sickness, and death at last. But above in heaven there is no grief, no sorrow, but joy and bliss without end. If I have the happiness of going there, where I expect to see my beloved parents, what matters it to me how long I may be left on this island. Ah! if a ship were now to appear and bring me to my father, how happy would I not be? So may I be happy when God calls me away from this, to a better world in heaven."

CHAPTER X.

HELP FROM AFAR.

THREE years had now passed since Godfrey was cast away on the desert island, and little did his parents dream that he was still alive. They had no hopes of seeing him again on this earth. Their other children were their only consolation. Martha, who was now in her fourteenth year was an industrious and pious girl; and Andrew, who was only nine years old, when Godfrey was snatched away, was now able to assist his father.

One day in autumn, when the nuts were ripe, the father said to Andrew and Martha: "Dear children, if the sky be as clear, and the sea as calm to-morrow morning as it is now, we will go to the green island. I want some willows, and you can, in the mean time, get a supply of nuts. They are as plentiful this season, as they were three years ago when poor Godfrey was alive." They sailed in the morning, and after having cut the willows, they sat down under a tree to take their bread and milk. "Dear children," said the father, "this is the very tree under which I sat, for the last time, with your brother Godfrey." There on the spot, he gave a most lively and pathetic description of the terrible storm and of poor Godfrey's misfortune. "Look," said he, pointing with a wild

gesture, "it was there beyond I saw him disappear in the roaring waves." Tears came to his eyes as he spoke; Andrew turned his head aside to conceal his tears, but poor Martha sobbed and wept outright. They then went to the walnut trees, and filled their baskets with nuts. "My mother will be happy," said Andrew, "when she sees these nuts." "No," answered Martha, "my mother is always melancholy when the nuts are ripe. They remind her of our dear Godfrey: weep, she bitterly will, when she sees these nuts."

The father was now telling them to prepare for the voyage home. But Andrew asked him—"Come, father, bring us to the top of that mountain, we must have a grand view from it." "Ah! do bring us up," added Martha, in an imploring tone, "the view towards the land must be delightful." The father willingly consented, and they ascended the hill. It was a remarkably fine autumn day. The sky was so clear and blue, and the air so bright and transparent, that objects at an immense distance, could be clearly discerned. The children were delighted with the view of the mainland far over the deep. "O!" said they, "how plain and clear, how fair and beautiful the hills and valleys, the rocks and forests, the spires and castles appear to us. No painter could paint them more beautifully." "But our own little village," said Martha, "oh! how small it is—how nice and comfortable. Do you see our own house, too, Andrew, with its whitewashed walls appearing through the green trees? O! how very, very small it looks: the windows look like black spots, not bigger than your ball." The trees were all tinted with the varied hues of autumn, and far beyond them, blue mountains shot up their peaks to the skies. Martha had never seen these mountains before, the view of them being intercepted by the hills around her village. "O, how fair are all things that God has made!" said she; "how good he is? If this earth be so delightful, what must we find in heaven?"

Andrew happening, at this moment, to turn towards the wide ocean, exclaimed, in amazement, "Father, see what is that? there's smoke coming up from the sea." The father looked, and saw distinctly an enormous volume of smoke, ascending straight from the sea, and bending into an arch near the top. This was the smoke from the conflagration of poor Godfrey's house on the rocky island, for that fire occurred on the very day on which the father and his two children came to cut willows on the green island. The father said: "I don't know what it can be: I fear it is a ship on fire."

"Oh! that would be horrible," exclaimed Martha: "may God pity the poor sailors: they cannot escape the fire without plunging into the sea."

The father continued to look fixedly at the smoke: the sun was favourable: the sea glowed like molten silver. "I think," said he, holding his hand over his eyes, "I see a black speck from which the smoke appears to rise. Do you see it?"

"O, yes," answered Martha, who had very sharp sight: "I see it clearly: it has two peaks."

"I see the two peaks also," added Andrew: "one higher than the other."

"That cannot be a ship," said the father: "that is not the shape she would have, nor would she look so large at so great a distance. It must be an island of which I never heard before, and inhabited, too, as the smoke is there."

"My God," said Martha, "is it not possible that our dear Godfrey is alive there?"

"Oh! very possible," exclaimed Andrew: "it was in that direction the boat was driven by the storm."

"O, if he were living still, what happiness were ours," sighed poor Martha, turning pale as a corpse. She was suspended between hope and terror.

"To the Almighty God nothing is impossible," said the father: "it may be that He has saved Godfrey."

"Come," said Andrew, "we will row over at once, and bring him home with us."

"We will go," said the father, "but not so easily as you think. We must get a large boat and a good pilot. Come, come home quickly."

The father rowed his two children home to the mainland. All three told the poor mother their joyful surmises. The gleam of hope put new life into her; and she began to consider Godfrey's recovery as certain. All her little ones shouted for joy.

The parents called all their neighbours together, but opinions were, as usual, very different.

"Ha!" said the most confident among them, "how could it be an island? I never heard of such a thing since I was born. It was a ship on fire."

"No," said another, who thought his sense was the best, "no, it was not a ship on fire, but a burning mountain. I often heard that such things often rise up in the sea during the night. If we sailed to that mountain, all was over with us; the blazing fire and red hot stones would soon destroy us."

"Whether it is a ship or a burning mountain," said a third, "this I know, that for a hundred crowns I would not venture so far out in the sea, with these little smacks we have here."

"Philip," said a fourth, "give me a hundred crowns and I will venture my hide: less I will not take."

The good old Thomas was silent for some time, but said he, at last, "Gossip Philip, I will go with you. I pledge my hand and word. Godfrey was always a good boy; and he is my godson. It is not certain, it is scarcely even probable, that he is alive, but it is possible. It is well worth our trouble, to try the dangerous voyage. He, who inspires us with courage, will enable us to effect our intention."

Peter, who was a stout young peasant, also volunteered. "Agreed, Thomas," said he: "if you go, I go. Since I

have often ventured my life to catch some worthless fish, why not do the same for a great work of charity. Money is not my object. I will take none. If we bring home the boy, I will think of that act with pleasure during all my life, and that joy will be a sufficient reward."

"God grant us that happiness," said Thomas. "If wind and water be as fair to-morrow as they are now, we sail at break of day."

The other men returned to their homes, shaking their heads, and foretelling some mistake. Thomas and Peter spent the night with Godfrey's father, and consulted, for a long time, on their intended voyage. Margaret, Godfrey's mother, was preparing to lay up a plentiful stock of provision, but Thomas told her to leave that to him. "We will sail," said he, "in my large boat; and I will take care to have a good store of provision for the voyage."

Morning arose calm and clear, with a favourable breeze blowing from the shore. The mother and all her children accompanied the father and the two good men to the boat. When they were embarking, the mother raised her eyes piously to heaven, saying: "I and my children will pray, without ceasing, for your happy return; and may God grant that you bring home my dear Godfrey."

Unfurling their sails, they soon came to the green island, and then steered in the direction where Godfrey's father had seen the black speck in the waves, for, as yet, it was not visible. But when they had sailed about a mile from the green island, they discovered the rock, which appeared to grow larger and more distinct as they approached it. "Brothers," said Peter, "it is an island, beyond all doubt: come, let us ply the oars—sails and oars must be worked to land us quickly."

The boat now shot rapidly along. But Thomas cried out, "pull up, haul down the sails: there are rocks under us: stop—take care or we are dashed to pieces. Larger vessels than mine would never weather this place;

they would either be grounded on the rocks, or shivered to atoms."

By plying the oars cautiously, they, at length, succeeded, though not without great difficulty, in passing the reefs. Peter was the first to spring on land. "We are on the island at last," said he; "and, by the help of God, we will find Godfrey too. Whatever we undertake under God, and for the love of men, always ends well."

The other two men landed also, and tied the boat to a rock with a long cable. Thomas looked around on the bleak and craggy rocks, and shook his head. "A poor dwelling, this," said he: "if it is on these rocks that Godfrey was thrown, I don't know how he could survive three years." They began to explore the island, clambering over steep rocks and creeping down precipitous chasms. At last they came to a beaten path, which led them to some steps hewn in the solid rock. They ascended. The road led straight to Godfrey's cavern. Young Peter was first. Thomas, who, considering his years, was still very active, followed him closely. Godfrey's father was more slow. The sight of this horrible desert made his heart sink: he was agitated between fear and hope. "Good God," said he, "if the poor child is living still, it is a miracle of Thy power and goodness. Nothing but Thy supreme Providence over all that lives, could protect him here."

CHAPTER XI.

AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

GODFREY had spent a sleepless and sorrowful night. When the red streaks of morning glimmered in the sky, and glowed each moment brighter and more beautiful, his heavy gloom began to clear away. "Good God,"

said he, "it is Thou that drivest away the darkness of night, before the bright morning beams, so canst Thou dispel my grief by the light of thy holy consolations. When I had eaten my last walnut, I was very desponding, I thought death by starvation was my lot, and I wept bitterly. But Thou didst not abandon me. I learned how to provide fish for my support. But now, that all my fishing tackle is gone, Thou wilt help me in some other way. Those that put their hopes in Thee, are never confounded."

When the sun had risen, and blazed bright and warm in the sky, Godfrey walked towards his little valley, to survey the smoking ruins. The ground was strewn with ashes, and smoke was still issuing from beneath the smouldering embers. The rocks, around and above, were black with smoke and soot; all the timber work was ashes, and even of the two old pine trees, not a vestige remained. The cross on the top of the rock, was the only thing that had escaped the flames. It stood there untouched. "Good," said Godfrey, "this is a good sign for me. When this world, and all its goods, shall be dust and ashes, after the avenging fire, the salvation, which our Redeemer purchased for us by dying on the cross, will still remain for us."

Kneeling down before the cross, poor Godfrey began to pray. "Dear heavenly Father," said he, "forgive me for having been so faint-hearted and desponding, and not sufficiently dwelling on the example of thy beloved Son. In his inexpressible agony, he resigned himself to Thy holy will. I am now in deep affliction: I tremble with terror, when I think that I have now no means of support. But, as my dear Saviour prayed, so will I. 'Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass away from me: but not my will, but Thine be done.' If it be Thy will that the chalice should pass away from me, send me some ray of hope—a consoling angel I have no right to expect."

While Godfrey was saying this prayer, the three men

entered, and beheld him in his hermit's dress, kneeling before the cross, with both hands raised up to heaven. But he was so absorbed in his devotion, that he did not observe them. The ardent Peter was the first that saw him. "Look," said he, softly to the others, "look at the pious hermit praying so devoutly. Perhaps he can give us some news: let us ask him."

"Good brother," said Peter, shouting aloud, "can you tell us is there a Godfrey living on this island?" Godfrey was paralysed with terror, on hearing his name so suddenly mentioned by a human voice. He looked around, recognized his father, sprang towards him, and, throwing himself on his neck, cried out, "O my father." For a time, the joy of both father and son was too full for words. They wept copiously. "O dearest father," said Godfrey, at last, "when I saw you first, it was as if I saw an angel, whom God had sent to me in my greatest need." Both returned their most heartfelt thanks to Almighty God, for having, at length, brought them together.

"Come, come," said Thomas at last, "look at us too for a while, Godfrey. Don't you know your godfather, Thomas?"

Godfrey embraced him affectionately.

Peter then spoke: "God bless you dear Godfrey; do I see you at last? How stout and tall you look! But how, in this world, did you get yourself barred up in this hermit's den? How did you live in this island, that is fit only for dragons?"

Godfrey made no answer, but turning to his father, asked, "How is my dear mother, and my sisters, and how did you come here so unexpectedly?"

The father answered, that all at home were perfectly well, and would be the happiest people in the world when they saw him. "But no more questions on that point now," said he, "there would be no end to them; tell your own history first, from beginning to end, and then

we will tell you how affairs have gone on at home. See beyond on that rock, near the cross, there is one green patch and no ashes ; come sit down there, and let us hear your history."

They accordingly sat down together, and Godfrey, at the request of his father and Thomas, commenced his story.

He recounted all that had happened from the moment he got the last sight of his father, up to the moment they were sitting there together. He entered into minute details, and described all his feelings ; what he thought and what he did ; particularly, how he always placed his hopes in God, and had always been heard in his greatest need. Tears often interrupted his story. The father, too, was often obliged to dry his eyes : "God be praised, Godfrey," said he, "that I have found you at last, and that you are now a more prudent and pious boy, than when we were separated on the green island."

"Well, Godfrey," said the jovial Peter, "I cannot help laughing when I see you in that coat, with your girdle around your ribs. If any man told me, without letting me know how you came here, that you, in your youthful days, were dressed like a hermit, and lived in a dark hole in a desert, and eat nothing but fish, roots, and cockles, I would say you were gone mad. But I would be doing a great injustice to you, as men often do, who condemn things they only know by halves. You have shown much sense and industry, by being able to support yourself on these bleak rocks, and make your clothes, too. Necessity was the mother of invention for you. It quickened and increased your sense, and not your sense only, but your piety and virtue."

Thomas, who had listened with the most breathless attention, and, occasionally, gave a significant nod of admiration, now remarked : "More pious and prudent you are certainly, Godfrey, since you were cast on this island. Do you remember what I told you long ago, that God would take you into his own school? Has it

not come to pass? Affliction is the best school. It was in that school you first learned to love God, to pray to Him, and thank Him for all his benefits. But above all things it pleases me, that you have been able to keep the love of God alive in your heart, especially in the craggs of this island, and to feel His goodness and beneficence, where you have nothing but pine trees, and moss, and such flowers, as no one could cull for a nosegay. How much greater reason have we to feel the bounteous hand of God in our gardens and fields; when we look on the glittering bower of roses, or on the orchard, fragrant with blossom or bending with fruit, or on the broad plains, now mantled in deep green verdure, or waving with golden corn. How it delights me, too, that you are more deeply sensible of the benefits which God confers on men, through their fellow-men. Had you not brought with you from the society of men, some few implements, a nail, or even a needle, you had long since died on these bleak rocks; and worse even than death your state would have been had you not known God, by the pious and solid instruction received in your infancy. Without that knowledge, you must have despaired; but above all, that incident of the little bird holding the worm in its beak, and the smoke ascending from your island, strike me most forcibly. What more insignificant than a worm; what more worthless than smoke? Yet that worm taught you how to catch fish, and save yourself from starvation; and the smoke was a sign from heaven to us, that there was an island here, that the island must be inhabited, and that probably our dear Godfrey was there. The smoke has put an end to all your griefs, and unbarred your prison. The finger of God is here; so great things does He sometimes effect by trifling means: may His adorable providence be for ever praised."

For a moment all were silent with deep gratitude to the great God, for the profound wisdom He manifests in the ways of men. After a while, Godfrey said:

"The smoke, then, was what led you to my island from the mainland? My God! I thought that fire was the greatest calamity that had ever befallen me. I tortured myself to guess what good could come from it. I could not imagine any. But now I see clearly that it was the greatest good that could happen to me. In this, as in every thing else, the maxim is true, 'good comes from bad.' O, truly! God knows how to conduct all things for the best."

"Very true," said Thomas, "and we ought to learn from your case, that sooner or later, good can be derived from evil; and that we ought, in all things, to have the most perfect confidence in the providence of God, and resignation to His holy will."

Godfrey then inquired whether they had seen the smoke from the mainland. "No," said the father, "that was not possible." He then told Godfrey how he and his son Andrew, and his little daughter Martha were on the green island—how they gathered the ripe nuts, and at last ascended the high hill. "Do you remember, dear father," said Godfrey, "the lesson you taught to me by one of those nuts? you told me, that every evil that could befall us was like one of those nuts, that had a sweet kernel under a hard and bitter shell. You were perfectly right. My imprisonment on this island, was to me most harsh and bitter, but I now taste its good fruits. My detention here was most useful; my sorrows are changed into joy." "Well," said Peter, with a smile, "many a hard and bitter nut we have to crack in this world, and whatever may be in store for me, I will always remember Godfrey's nut."

Godfrey now conducted his father and the two men to his cavern, his well, and his fish-pond, and asked them to partake of his provision. "Excellent fish, no doubt it is," said Peter, "but without meaning to disparage it, we must insist on your being our guest to-day. We have a good store with us. I will clamber down by that horrible

path, and make all preparation for dinner, below in the boat." Accordingly he hastened down to the boat, whose mast was visible from the place where they were standing. The others followed at a more leisurely pace, talking happily as they walked along. When they arrived, Peter said, "This beautiful patch of green moss must serve as table and chair—dinner is ready in the boat." They had abundance of bread, meat, milk, butter, and fish. The bread was poor Godfrey's favourite. "O," said he, with tears of gratitude and joy, "what a gift of heaven, that bread is; I have not seen a morsel during three years. It is the best food for man. How thankful should I be to God for having given it! Never should we eat one morsel of bread without giving thanks to God."

They sat down together, eat their dinner, and were as happy a party as the sun ever shone upon. The conversation never flagged, though night was soon falling, and the moon beams began to gleam on the spoons, dishes, and other affairs on the table. At last Thomas observed, "Enough for this day, I think we shall have a favourable wind in the morning, and then we shall return home without delay. Our friends at home must be in great anxiety and praying for our happy voyage. We must remove their pain as soon as possible. Let us sleep now, to be able to weigh at the first streak of dawn." Thomas and Peter went to the boat, and made for themselves a sort of bed of the sail. Godfrey and his father went to spend the night in the cavern. Godfrey was overjoyed to have under his rocky roof that father whom he had so often seen there in his dreams. They conversed long and happily together, and then slept sweetly, after having, on bended knees, returned most fervent thanks to Almighty God, for the favours of that blissful day.

CHAPTER XII.

JOY AND SORROW.

AT break of day, the following morning, Peter came to the entrance of the cave. "Rise quickly," said he, "and come: we have the most favourable breeze we would desire, we shall weigh this moment and make for home." Father and son started, and were going out, but Godfrey said, "Wait a moment; before I quit this island, I must once more return thanks to God, not only for all the joys, but also for the griefs, I have had on this island." He knelt down before the cross, and with many tears, and a throbbing heart, returned thanks to God. The father and Peter were so pleased, that they, too, knelt and did likewise.

They then descended to the beach. Thomas had cut down a large pine branch, and was busily engaged decorating it with ribbons of various colours—blue and white, red and green, which he had brought with him in a little parcel. When Godfrey asked in amazement, what he intended to do with the branch, Thomas answered, "I promised your broken-hearted mother, that if we were successful in our search, I would hang up some signal of joy from the mast head. O, what must be the delight of that mother, when her eye catches this sign far away on the waves?" He fastened the long branch to the top of the mainmast. Breakfast had, in the mean time, been prepared by Peter, and the moment they had taken it, they embarked, and ran gaily before the wind. When they approached the main-land, and Godfrey discovered his father's house, his heart beat with the liveliest emotions of joy.

On shore all was bustle and happiness. The mother and daughters, who had been watching on the shore, stretched out their arms and raised a joyful and happy

welcome when they saw Godfrey. All the inhabitants of the village, young and old, men and women, crowded down to the beach. "They certainly found him," ran from mouth to mouth. "There he is!"

When Godfrey landed, he was welcomed with a loud and hearty cheer of joy from the assembled multitude. But who can tell his mother's joy on pressing to her heart, alive and in health, that beloved son, whom she had bewailed as dead during three long years. Martha and Andrew, too, were overjoyed. But the younger children did not remember their brother Godfrey, and seeing him in that strange dress, they were shy and distant with him. But the parents told them to embrace and welcome him, and they were soon familiar with him, and pressed through the crowd to be near him. Men and women, young and old, shook hands with him, wishing him a thousand welcomes, and good luck for the future. Godfrey wept; his heart was full: "My God!" he cried, "what greater bliss could I enjoy! none, except that which we will feel in heaven, when we are welcomed by the saints, those especially who were our friends and relations on this earth."

Godfrey's mother was impatient to hear his history. She would have carried him away to the house, but the crowd would not allow her. "We must hear his story, too," they cried, conducting him, on the word, to the large lime-tree in the centre of the village square, where they obliged him to sit on the bench, so that he could be seen and heard by all. They were all fond of their young hermit, he was so modest and affectionate. The whisper crept through the crowd, and some were heard remarking aloud, "The hermit we saw here some days ago, was very old, and had a wrinkled face, and a bald head, and a long bushy beard, but this is a fine hermit; look at his blooming face and his glossy cheeks; that long brown coat, and the hair flowing in ringlets down his shoulders, become him well."

When all were silent, Godfrey commenced his story.

At first, he was somewhat abashed, as a boy should be when speaking before so many men, but the fulness of his heart soon gave him courage and fluency. He spoke with such feeling and energy, that he chained the attention and won the hearts of the crowd. He told all the perils he had been in, from hunger, and from thirst, and from cold; how he had been dangerously ill, and had lost the labour of three years by that fire, and found himself once more in danger of starvation, and how God had, at last, been pleased to make known his prison, and restore him to his mother's arms. "I never lost my confidence in God," said he. Raising his hands and streaming eyes to heaven, he declared, that he looked upon his detention on that rocky island as the greatest blessing heaven could bestow; that on those craggy cliffs he had found the richest treasure—the treasure of a better knowledge of his God; and that there on those gloomy peaks, towering over the restless ocean, he had learned the best lesson of all—how to correct his faults, and be a good man. "Really," said he, "I feel as grateful to God for having imprisoned me there, as I now do, for being brought home to my friends."

He also told them, that it was there in his bleak solitude he had first become duly sensible of the advantages of living in society among his fellow-men; he warmly expressed his joy on finding himself among his friends, neighbours, and acquaintances, and having once more given to all his hearers a most hearty salute, he closed with a warm outburst of his gratitude to God. In the course of his narrative, the old nodded approbation, and the young wept tears of sympathy, and at the close, all greeted him with an universal round of applause before they dispersed and returned to their homes, praising Almighty God for his wonderful ways.

Departing with his parents and sisters, Godfrey crossed the threshold of that home from which he had been so long an exile. Could he restrain his tears? When they entered they found to their amazement, a rich enter-

tainment lying ready on the table, which was tastefully wreathed with garlands of flowers. This was the work of Thomas, who had resolved that the happy mother should enjoy her happiness, without the trouble or expense of preparing a dinner. Godfrey was placed between his father and mother; then at either side came Thomas and Peter, while Martha, Andrew, and the other children sat in order after them. They had many dishes, of which Godfrey had not tasted during the last three years. He partook of them with gratitude; but what was especially agreeable to him, who had not seen on the island any fruit, but the nuts of the pine, were the baskets of red apples, and yellow pears, and purple plums, and brown nuts, and, above all, the rich glowing branches of red and yellow grapes. "These rich fruits," said he, "are found in perfection only where men dwell. Without human care and the industry of man, the land around this village would be as barren as the rocks of the island. The more I see, the greater reason I have to thank God, for having once more brought me back to the society of man."

When they rose from table, Godfrey went to a corner of the room, where he had left a bundle of the old clothes he had brought home from the island. "Here, my dear parents and sisters," said he, "is a little present I have brought with me."

The father and mother knew not what he meant; the sisters laughed; Thomas shook his head, and Peter cried out: "Ah! then, Godfrey, what's the meaning of this? Indeed, you might have left your dirty bundle of rags on the island."

But Godfrey smiled, and deliberately opening the parcel produced his little wicker baskets. They had been so secure in his cave, that they escaped the flames, and he had rolled them up quietly in his old clothes, before he quitted the island. He placed the baskets on the table and raised the cover. Judge of the amazement of the company, when they saw the baskets glittering to the brim with silver-coloured pearls and bright red coral.

"Ha!" said Thomas, "a treasure, a rich treasure you have brought home, Godfrey; these pearls are worth many hundred gold pieces; some of them are of extraordinary size and beauty. The corals, too, are valuable. You have raised your parents from poverty; they can now pay all their rents, and debts, and have enough still to provide amply for their children."

"No, no," said Godfrey's father, "Thomas and Peter, you have shared with me the perils of that voyage; you must take your portion of the treasure. Were it not for you, I would never have found my dear Godfrey, nor seen one of these pearls or corals. Divide them into three lots; give the first to Thomas, the next to Peter, and leave to me whatever you please. I can have the third lot for myself, my wife, and children."

Two of the men, who had been bargaining with Godfrey's father to go to the island, came in at the end of dinner, though uninvited, to get some share of the good things that were going. "Zounds!" said the man, who offered to go for one hundred gold pieces, "it is not a hundred I would have gotton had I gone. I could almost tear the hair off my head with vexation."

The other, who had offered to go for a thousand, said, "True, it is not a hundred, but a thousand you would have earned, and that was my offer."

"Shame, shame!" said Thomas, "poor, selfish, narrow-hearted fellows that you are—little worth you are, who would not stir hand or foot to help a neighbour, if you were not paid for it. You have lost the money, and you deserve your loss richly."

"For my part," said Thomas, "I will not take one of these pearls. Godfrey has six sisters and his parents are poor. I would consider it a great sin to accept one of them. I have as much as I want, and I ask no more. But Peter must accept some memento of his generous kindness. He must take what you offered him. He is not rich, and it is just and necessary that he should have

some recompense for the danger to which he has exposed himself."

Peter gratefully accepted the rich reward, and returned his hearty thanks. The old couple pressed Thomas repeatedly to accept, at least, some of the pearls, but he constantly answered, "No more now ; I don't value such things. Corals and pearls are the least valuable things Godfrey brought home from his island. Much more valuable treasure he has in the greater knowledge of God, greater confidence, and greater love for man. These are the rich pearls, of which the Gospel speaks. These are the pearls we ought to prize. To be very candid with you, I feel myself very much strengthened in my confidence in God, by Godfrey's admonitions, and that is of infinitely more value to me, than all the pearls and all the coral in the wide, wide, sea. Yes, my friends, the love and the mercy of God are more boundless and more fathomless than the great ocean, where these pearls were found ; may our confidence in Him be as firm and unshaken as the coral reefs amid the thunders and convulsions of the ocean."

Godfrey once more returned to the ordinary ways of human life, when he returned to human society. He now turned to account the fruit of his lonely musings on the island. He dressed like the other young boys of the village, and either was helping his father making baskets, or his godfather, Thomas, fishing. He was the perfect model of what a young man ought to be, the pride, the support, and the consolation of his parents. Thomas, who had no children, bequeathed to him all his property and his fishing boats. Godfrey was a virtuous and prudent man, full of generous love for God and man ; the most prudent manager, and the most liberal benefactor to the poor in that village where his name is still remembered with blessings.

THE CHERRIES.

ON the banks of the Rhine, in the pleasant little village of Rebenheim, surrounded by orchards and vineyards, lived Ehrenberg, the village mayor. He was universally respected for the fidelity with which he discharged his duty, enforcing order and justice in the place intrusted to his care. His wife, too, was beloved for her great charity to the poor. They had an only daughter—the little Caroline—who gave early promise of a superior mind and a benevolent heart. She was the idol of her parents, who devoted their whole care to give her a sound, religious education.

Not far from the house, and close by the orchard and kitchen garden, there was another little garden, planted exclusively with flowers. The day that Caroline was born, her father planted a cherry tree in the middle of the flower garden. The tree that he selected had a short trunk, in order that his little daughter could more easily admire the blossoms and pluck the cherries when they were ripe. The first time the blossoms appeared, clothing the whole tree like a surplice, the father and mother came out one morning to enjoy the sight. Little Caroline was in her mother's arms: the baby smiled, and stretching out her little hands to the blossoms, endeavoured, at the same time, to speak her joy, but in such a way as no one but a mother could understand: "Flowers, flowers, pretty, pretty." The child engaged more of the parents' thoughts, than all the cherry blossoms, and gardens, and orchards,

and all they were worth. They resolved to educate her well: they prayed to God to bless their care and attention, by making Caroline worthy of Him, and the joy and consolation of her parents.

They spared no pains or expense in their parental solicitude. The mother gave to Caroline her first instructions in religion. She told her, fondly and feelingly, of that good Father in heaven, who makes the flowers bloom, and the trees bud, and the cherries and apples grow ruddy and ripe: she told her, also, of that Infant Son of God, who so tenderly loved good children. She also instructed little Caroline in the various household duties, for which her increasing strength and intelligence qualified her, while the most delightful and serious occupation of the father's vacant hours was, to give lessons to his little daughter in reading and writing. His garden was his principal and, in truth, his sole recreation. It was a treasure to him to enjoy the green carpet and rich leaves of his orchard, after having spent the greater part of the day in his office over his books. From the first dawn of spring, to the moment in autumn when he gathered in his fruits, the orchard afforded him something to do. The kitchen garden was under the care of his wife and the servant maid; but from Caroline's eighth year, the flower garden was intrusted to her, under the superintendence of her mother. Caroline was proud of her charge; and surpassed, by her diligence and taste, her mother's fondest anticipations.

Her father gave the cherry tree, in the centre of the flower garden, to Caroline, which was to her a greater treasure than all the flowers. She watched and admired it every day, from the moment the first buds appeared, until the cherries were ripe. She was sorry when she saw the white blossoms turn yellow and drop to the earth, but her sorrow was changed into joy, when she saw the cherries appear, green at first, and smaller than a strawberry, and then growing daily larger and larger, until the

rich red skin, of the soft ripe cherry, at last blushed between the green leaves. "In that way," said her father, "youth and beauty fade like the blossoms,—but virtue is the fruit which we expect from the tree. This whole world is like a garden, in which God has placed men, to bring forth different fruits. As He sends rain and sunshine on the trees, so does He send down grace on men, to make them grow in virtue, if they correspond with His designs."

Little Caroline promised to do her duty, and every day realized the fond hopes of her parents. The little family lived happy and content, and contributed, not less by example than by word and counsel, to make the villagers and the peasants around them, live in harmony and peace, and promote the general happiness.

But the war, which, at the close of the last century, had desolated the fair banks of the Rhine, at last came down on this quiet village, which had hitherto been the abode of peace and domestic bliss. The village was taken and re-taken several times by friends and foes, and, of course, suffered severely. At one time the enemy, who were in great want of provisions, plundered it so dreadfully, that they left scarcely a morsel of bread to the inhabitants. But they were expelled again. The Germans had attacked them with great courage at break of day, and penetrated to the heart of the village. The battle raged fearfully—the discharge of small arms, pistols and muskets, was incessant, while the cannon thundered from the hills on the opposite sides of the village. Balls and shells whizzed about Caroline's house, and at last the whole village was in a blaze. The moment the fire slackened, the father made strenuous exertions to extinguish the flames: his wife stood wringing her hands, her eyes raised in prayer to heaven, and, by her side, at the window, little Caroline was kneeling, praying fervently with her mother. Late in the day, a thundering knock was heard at the door. The terrified mother looked out of the window.

She saw an officer of hussars standing at the door, holding his horse by the reins. "Oh! thank God," said she, "he is a German." Caroline ran to open the door, and was followed by her mother. The officer had, in the mean time, tied his horse to a tree. "Oh," said he, in a friendly tone, "how dreadfully frightened you appear," when he saw their pale and ashy faces. "Cheer up," said he, "the danger is over: you are safe. The fire in the village too, is almost put under; and your husband will be here in a few moments. I want some refreshment, but I am perfectly content, if you can give me some bread and a drink of water. Then entering the parlour, he laid his sword in a corner, and wiped the reeking perspiration from his forehead. "It was sharp work," said he, "but thank God, we won it."

The news and the visitor were like an angel from heaven to poor Caroline and her mother. There was one bottle of good old Rhenish wine still remaining, which she had concealed under a bed of winter vegetables, and which had fortunately escaped the hands of the plunderers. She produced a flask of the wine and some good bread, excusing herself, at the same time, for not having better. "Enough, enough;" said the officer, taking the bread with a hearty relish, "this is the first morsel I have eaten this day."

Caroline ran and brought in, on a white porcelain cup, some of the ripest cherries. "Cherries!" exclaimed the officer, "they are a rarity in this district. How did they escape the enemy? All the trees in the country around are pillaged." "The cherries," said the mother, "are from a little tree in Caroline's flower garden, which was planted on her birth-day. It is but a few days since they became ripe, perhaps the enemy did not think of examining the flower garden." "And is it for me you intend the cherries, my dear child," asked the officer. "Oh, no, you must take them. It were a pity to take one of them from you."

"Why should I deny a few cherries," said Caroline, "to the man that sheds his blood to defend me. You must eat them all," said she, while the tears streamed down her cheeks: "do, I entreat you—eat them all."

He took some of the cherries, and laid them on the table, near his wine glass. But he had scarcely taken the glass from his lips, when the trumpet sounded. He sprung up and girded on his sword. "That's the signal to march," said he: "I cannot wait one instant." The mother stood before him, with the wine glass in her hand, and pressed him to drink. Caroline had put the cherries in a roll of white paper, and insisted he should put them in his pocket. "The weather is very warm," said she, "and even cherries will be some refreshment."

"But I have no pocket to put them in," said the officer. "See, I carry all my baggage on my person. I am as heavily laden as a cart horse."

"Ah!" said Caroline, "it will be easy to find a little place for the cherries."

So hard did she press the poor officer, that he was obliged to surrender, and taking out a pocket book which he placed under his vest, the cherries were safely deposited in his pocket.

"Oh!" said he, with emotion, "what a happiness it is for a soldier, who is often obliged to snatch his support from unwilling hands, to meet with a generous and benevolent family. What a pity that I cannot remain some time with you. I wish it were in my power, my dear child, to give you some pledge of my gratitude; but I have nothing, not so much as a single groat. You must be content with my thanks." With these words, he sprung into his saddle, and once more bidding Caroline and her mother an affectionate farewell, he spurred rapidly out of sight.

The joy of the good family for their happy liberation, was, alas, of short continuance. Some weeks after, a dreadful battle was fought near the village, which was

reduced to a heap of ruins. Caroline's house was burned to the ground, and all her father's property destroyed. Father, mother, and daughter, fled away on foot, and wept bitterly when they looked back on their once happy, but now blazing village.

The country fell into the hands of the enemy. The brave mayor, who was devotedly attached to fatherland, and loyal to his prince, was very fortunate in having escaped with his life. He had not the slightest idea of returning to his conquered country, so he retired to a distant town, and lived there in very great distress. His own prince was a homeless exile, and could not give him any assistance. The mayor endeavoured to make some money as a clerk or scrivener; his wife worked embroidery, in which she had the efficient co-operation of her young daughter, who, by this time, was fully instructed in all that a young woman ought to know. Thus they endeavoured to support themselves independently.

Countess von Buchenhain, who had, for some time, been residing in the town, gave them much employment. She had given an order for a bonnet, and little Caroline was at her door with it, early in the morning, at the appointed hour. The chamber-maid told her that the countess had company; her sister and family having come the evening before to visit her. The maid took the bonnet, and after praising it highly, told Caroline to wait a few moments, and disappeared. After some delay she returned. "O," said she, "the bonnet pleased every person—the two young ladies say they must get such a one: come, come, you will get many orders." She then conducted Caroline to the garden, where the countess and her visitors were taking coffee in the large summer-house.

Caroline entered. The two young ladies were still in raptures with the bonnet. Their mother gave orders for three bonnets, and passed the highest encomiums on the blue flowers, which were the work of Caroline's own hands.

"The bonnet and flowers," said the countess, "are beautiful. Caroline has great taste. But the prudence and modesty of my young friend, as I must call her, deserve more praise than her skill and taste in plaiting and embroidering flowers." The countess then gave a history of poor Caroline's misfortunes, and of how she was endeavouring to support her poor parents.

The count was standing with his brother-in-law, the colonel, at some distance from the door of the bower. The colonel, who was a fine-looking man, in a splendid uniform, and with a star on his breast, overheard the conversation. He took his cigar from his mouth, and, coming up, looked closely at Caroline. "My heavens!" said he, "you must be the daughter of the mayor of Rebenheim: how tall you have grown. I should scarcely have recognised you—though we are old acquaintances."

Caroline stood there abashed, looking full in the face of the strange gentleman, but unable to do more than blush. Taking her gently by the hand, he conducted her to his wife, who was sitting near the countess. "See, Amelia," said he, "this is the young lady who saved my life ten years ago, when she was only a child."

"How can that be possible?" asked Caroline, in amazement.

"It must, indeed, appear incomprehensible to you," answered the colonel; "but do you remember the hussar officer that rode up, one day, on his smoking horse, to your house in Rebenheim? do you remember how kindly you treated him?"

"O, you are the man," exclaimed Caroline, while her face beamed with a smile of recognition. "Thank God, you are alive—but how I saved your life, I cannot understand."

"Really it would be impossible for you to guess the great service you did to me," said he, "but my wife and daughter know it well. I often told it to them; and I

look upon it as one of the most providential favours I have had in my life."

"And one that I ought to remember better than any other event of the war," said his lady, rising, and affectionately embracing Caroline.

"Well," said the countess, "neither I nor my husband ever heard the story. Please give us a full account of it."

"Oh! it's easily told," said the colonel. "I entered Caroline's house, hungry and thirsty—and, to tell the plain truth, I begged some bread and water. They gave me share of the best they had—and did not hesitate to do so, though their village and themselves were in the greatest distress. Caroline robbed every bough on her cherry tree to refresh me. Rich cherries they were—and, as I am an honest man, the only cherries to be met with in the whole country. But the enemy did not give me time to eat them—I was obliged to mount in a hurry. Caroline insisted, with the kindest hospitality, that I should take them with me, but that was no easy matter. My horse had been shot under me the day before. I snatched whatever I could, in a hurry, from my knapsack, and thrusting them into my pockets, I fought on foot, until a hussar gave me his horse. All I was worth was in my pockets; so that, to make room for the cherries, I was obliged to take the pocket-book out of my pocket, and stick it here in my breast. The enemy, who had been driven back, made a feint of advancing on us, and I led down my hussars on their horse in gallant style. But suddenly we found ourselves in front of a hedge of infantry. One of them fired at me, and a terrible aim he took, for the ball fell here on my breast. It was flattened against my pocket-book—if it had not been there, I was shot through the body and dead on the spot."

"Tell me," said he, in a tone of deep emotion, "was not that little child an instrument, in the hands of God, to save me from death? am I right or not, when I give

Caroline the credit of having saved my life? Her must I thank, that my Amelia is not a widow, nor my daughters orphans, and that I can smoke my cigar, and enjoy the face of this lovely earth."

All agreed with him. His wife, who had Caroline's hand locked in her own during the whole narrative, now pressed it affectionately and with tears in her eyes. "You, then," said she, "were that good angel, that averted such a terrible misfortune from my family." Her two daughters also gazed, with pleasure, at poor Caroline. "Every time we eat cherries," said the younger, "we were speaking of you without knowing you."

"O, how happy we are," said the elder, "that our fond prayer has been heard at last: often we prayed that we might meet you."

The two young ladies then placed Caroline between them, and made her take coffee and the other delicacies of the feast.

But the colonel was in a musing and abstracted mood.

"You are always praising my feats of arms," said he, "but what is man—what can he do? Were it not for that plate of cherries, I was shot in Rebenheim: another would be in my place; and all that I could have, would be, perhaps, '*Lieutenant such a one*,' on a flag in the village church. My order, my honour, and my fortune, I owe to that handful of cherries, or, rather to the hand of God, who employed the child to save the soldier, and to crown him with victory."

"We shall meet again," said the colonel. "I have some business to do with my brother-in-law at present." The two gentlemen retired; Caroline remained some time longer, and then took her leave of the countess, who saluted her affectionately.

In the mean time, the colonel had retired to a corner of the garden, with his brother-in-law, the Count of Buchenheim. The count's steward had died a few months ago. Many proposals had been made for the vacant place. The

count did not know whom to choose, and had, this very morning, been consulting the colonel in the matter. The selection could not be deferred any longer, as business had accumulated, since the death of the last occupant.

"Come, close the matter at once," said the colonel, "appoint Ehrenberg. It is not without the design of Providence that his little daughter, Caroline, came here this morning; and that I remained here last night to have the happiness of meeting her before the place was disposed of." "True," said the count, "her family have put us under heavy obligations. Ehrenberg must be an honest and intelligent man; but as I have scarcely seen him twice, we must take time to deliberate." "What the deuce do you want to deliberate about?" asked the colonel, in his usual impassioned mood. "Search all Germany, and you cannot find a better man. Was I not twice in Rebenheim, during my campaigns, to visit and to thank, from the bottom of my heart, that good child that saved my life, and have I not made all possible inquiries? I could not discover where Caroline and her parents were living, but I heard other things that made my heart warm. The whole village was unanimous in praise of Caroline and her parents. Grey-haired men came up to me with tears in their eyes, 'O, sir,' said they, 'Mr. Ehrenberg was a pattern of justice and honour, and charity. We never could make a due return for his services. Wherever he be, or in whatever state he is, luck must attend him.' So said the peasants; make haste, now, I say—take the pen and write the appointment—I will bring it to him, myself, this instant."

The count consented; the order was drawn out and duly sealed, and the colonel was happier than he had been for many years: his heart never throbbed more proudly and joyfully in the glow of victory, than on this happy morning.

While this affair was thus happily settled, Caroline, never suspecting the good fortune that awaited her, was

returning home in the highest spirits. "Well, my little maid," said the father, "what news? Why are your eyes dancing with joy?" Caroline told how the cherries had saved the officer's life. "May God's providence be for ever blessed," exclaimed the delighted parents.

"This is a ray of hope;" added the mother, "perhaps brighter days are coming." "Yes, Caroline," said the father, "perhaps your affectionate hospitality in your infant days, may make you the prop and consolation of your parents in their declining years." "If I have that happiness," answered Caroline, modestly, "it is only an inheritance derived from my dear parents."

While they were speaking on the events of the morning, suddenly they heard the colonel's voice, and the clanking of his sword, as he bounded up the steps. "Good morning, Mr. Mayor of Buchenheim," said he, bursting into the room.

"Buchenheim—what?" asked Ehrenberg.

"Just so," said the colonel, taking out his pocket-book. "I never carry this except on great occasions, such as the present, when I found my friend Caroline. Look here," said he, pointing to a rent in the cover—"there the ball was stopped—Caroline told you the affair."

"Delighted we were to hear it," said Ehrenberg.

The colonel then opened the pocket-book and took out a paper. "Read that," said he to Ehrenberg. Ehrenberg read, and was amazed to find himself duly appointed, by legal deed, village mayor of Buchenheim, with a good salary of a thousand thalers, and several other perquisites. The good man, who, up to this time, had suffered much from the change in his circumstances, as was visible enough from his thread-bare coat, could scarcely believe his own eyes. "Read it loud, man," said the colonel: "your wife and my friend Caroline, my guardian angel, appear anxious to hear it." Ehrenberg read the document aloud, in a voice trembling from emotion; and mother and daughter wept for joy, at the happy announcement.

"Hussars do things quickly," said the colonel. "A few hours ago, no man dreamed of your being in your office in Buchenheim. But the end must be in keeping with the beginning. Come off this instant, to be presented to my brother-in-law." Ehrenberg begged a few moments to prepare. "One quarter of an hour I give you," said the colonel: "in a quarter of an hour I expect you at my chamber in my brother-in-law's house. And you, too," said he to Caroline and her mother, "prepare to march. Ye are very confined here: I never saw worse quarters, except during my campaigns. It will be another tale with you, in the house of Buchenheim. The house is large and commodious, with a fine garden attached, well stocked with cherry trees. Next Monday you will be there—and this very day you must start. What a happy feast we shall have there—not like the hasty meal you gave the hussar officer, amid the thunder of the canon, and the blazing roofs of Rebenheim. Don't forget to have cherries, dear Caroline, for the desert. I think they will be full ripe at that time."

The colonel then ran away, to spare the good family the trouble of returning their thanks, and, in truth, to conceal his own tears. So rapidly did he disappear through the door and down the steps, that Ehrenberg could hardly catch a glimpse of him.

"O Caroline!" said the happy father, when he returned, "who could have ever imagined, that the little cherry tree I planted in the flower garden, the day you were born, would ever produce such good fruit."

"It was the Providence of God," exclaimed the mother, clasping her hands. "I remember, distinctly, the first day the blossoms appeared on that tree, when you and I went out to look at it, and little Caroline, then a baby in my arms, was so much delighted with the white flowers. We resolved there to educate our daughter piously, and prayed fervently to God, that she, who was then as full of promise as the blossoms on the tree, might, by His grace,

one day be the prop of our old age. That prayer was fulfilled, beyond our fondest anticipation. Praise, for ever, be to the name of God."

"No," said the father: "no pious and hearty prayer of parents, for the good of their child, is ever rejected. May He, who then accepted our prayer, when we stood near the cherry tree in Rebenhaim, now accept our gratitude when we are going to Buchenhaim."

Caroline joined heartily in their grateful prayers. "Eternal thanks to Thee, my God," she exclaimed, "whose love and solicitude for man, exceed the fondest and most ardent love of parents for their children."

THE CAKES.

YOUNG FRED, a gay lively boy about ten years old, was the son of the woodranger at Grunenthal. His father received a letter one morning, which he was to carry from Herr von Grunenthal to Rauhenstein, a castle that lay beyond very high mountains, and in the heart of a thick forest.

"It will be a hard journey," said the father, "especially as the hurt I got the other day in the foot, when we were hunting, is not yet healed. The journey will take full three hours. But since our good master orders, I must obey."

"Give the letter to me, father," said Fred, offering his services. "The whole road, I know, goes through a forest, but it will not be heavy for me. I know it well from this to our own bounds, and can easily find out the rest of it, and safely give the letter into the hands of Mr. von Rauhenstein."

"Into his own hands, and to no other, you will give the letter," said the father; "you know him well. There is a large sum of money in the letter; perhaps you may get something for your trouble." He then described the road for Fred, from their own bounds, to Rauhenstein.

The little fellow buckled on his hunting pouch, and slinging his piece over his shoulder, started on his journey.

He arrived safe at the castle, and told the servants, that by orders, he was bound to deliver the letter into the master's own hand. The servant led him up the broad stone

steps, into a splendid apartment, where von Rauhenstein was engaged with a party of officers at the card table. Fred made his best bow to the gentlemen, and delivered his letter, in which, it appeared, there were one hundred gold pieces. Mr. von Rauhenstein went to his writing desk, and scrawled a few lines, acknowledging the receipt of the money. "All right," said he, sitting down in a hurry to the card table. "You can retire now—no other answer is required—it will follow you."

With a heavy heart poor Fred returned down the broad stone stairs; for he was hungry and thirsty, and heartily tired. But as he was passing through the court, he was met by the cook, who was coming out of the garden, with a large knife in one hand, and cauliflowers in the other. She knew by the poor boy's face, the state of his feelings.

"Come with me, little forester," said she, kindly, "and I will give you some bread and a drink of good beer. You would not be able for your journey—you are far from home—and there is not a single house on the way. You must not take it ill of our master, that he offered you nothing: he does not mind those things himself; but he allows us to give something to persons in your state."

The cook brought Fred into the kitchen, where the large fire was blazing on the hearth. "Lay aside your pouch and fowling-piece and sit down here," said she, pointing to a little table in the corner of the kitchen. There she gave him plenty of soup and meat, vegetables and bread, and a small pot of beer. Fred thought he had never been feasted so sumptuously. He was refreshed and ready for his journey; but before he started he said, one hundred times, at least, "God reward you," to the cook, and that, too, with as much reverence as if she had been the lady of the castle. He would have even kissed her hand, had she allowed him.

Happy as a prince, Fred set out on his journey. But when he had been nearly a half hour on the road, he saw a squirrel in an open space in the forest. The

little animal was a perfect stranger to him, for he had never seen any of them in the forest of Grunenthal. Fred was very young, and, perhaps, the good beer had got into his head, but, at all events, he resolved to take the squirrel alive. He flung a piece of a rotten bough at the little animal, and started in full chase, from oak to oak, into the depths of the black forest, where he lost sight of his game, and what was much more serious, lost the road. He wandered about during the rest of the day, and half the succeeding night, through the thick forest, till, at last, sinking under hunger and fatigue, he flung himself down on some brambles and fell into a troubled sleep. He rose in the morning, more faint than he had been before he lay down. He looked around, and advanced he knew not whither. The place was utterly unknown to him. The wild deer, starting up and bounding off in terror when they saw him, convinced him that he must be in the heart of some unfrequented wood. A herd of swine crossed his path, and among them a huge boar, which bristled its neck, and grunted, and skinned its teeth at him, and made the poor boy scream in agony, and fly for his life. He continued to wander about until noonday, when, unable to move farther, he tottered and fell exhausted to the ground. He cried and called as loud as he could, but there was no answer except the echo of his voice in the silent forest. He could not get a berry or a drop of water to quench his thirst. There he lay faint and despairing at the foot of a pine tree. He earnestly prayed to God not to desert him. He took his pouch to get, if possible, a few crumbs of the bread which he had brought with him from home, and eaten on the road to Rauhenstein. But what was his joy—his rapture on finding a large piece of a cake and some fine rich pears. "O!" said he, "it was the cook put these here, without my knowledge." The poor boy shed tears of gratitude and resolved that he would be always charitable to the needy, especially if they were strangers; and also that if

ever he were rich enough, he certainly would not forget that kindness of the good cook. "Under God," said he, "it was she that saved my life. If she had not given the cake and pears, I never should get out of this forest alive."

Standing up with refreshed strength and better courage, he moved onwards once more. He walked on in the direction of Grunenthal, as well as he could judge by the position of the sun, and after having worked his way for more than an hour, he heard the cheering sounds of the woodman's axe in the distance. Hurrying on in the direction of the sounds, he found two men cutting down a large pine tree. They pointed out the road to Grunenthal, where he arrived safely to the great joy of his parents, who had been dreadfully alarmed on his account.

His father reproved him severely, and gave him good advice. "Thus it is," said he, among other things, "when men allow themselves to be drawn away from the right road to follow their pleasures. You might have perished in that wild wood far from your father's house, without the poor consolation even of catching that squirrel. Our way through life is like a road through a wild forest, where pleasures, like ferocious animals, lie in wait to destroy us, if we are tempted from the right path. As I told you the road through the forest, so does God point out to us in his commandments the right path, in our pilgrimage through this world. Let no earthly pleasure ever seduce you to the right or the left from the way of virtue. One false step might ruin you for ever, and prevent you from entering your true Father's house beyond the grave."

"The love of pleasure," he continued, "perverts the heart of man, and makes him insensible to noble and generous feelings. Mr. von Rauhenstein, with whom you are so much displeased, is not a bad man. But he was so much taken up with his play, that he never thought either of giving you some refreshment, though you stood so much

in need of it, or some money, though the hundredth part of what he had staked that morning, would have sent you home as happy as a prince. Do you guard yourself against that, which displeases you so much in another; let your pleasure or your own will never engage you, so as to make you insensible to the wants and happiness of others. Imitate whatever you find good in others; be ever as kind and generous to all men, as Rosalie, the cook, was to you in the castle of Rauhenstein."

Fred was a good forester, faithful and true to his employer, open and generous to all, and without one stain on his good name. But he was particularly remarkable for his kindness and charity to travellers and the poor. He never forgot Rosalie's kindness. He went to the castle one time, to tell her how much she had done for him, but she had left the service, and no person could give him any account of her. From that day forward he never got any intelligence of his kind benefactress.

In the course of some years, Fred was promoted for his integrity and intelligence to the office of chief huntsman under the king's woodranger, and afterwards was made forester of Tannek, one of the most lucrative posts in the gift of his master. After his marriage, he often told his wife, who was as good as himself, of many adventures of his boyish days, and especially how he had been saved from certain death in the forest by the kindness of Rosalie. They resolved that since they could not find her, they would prove their sense of her goodness, by as liberal charity to travellers and the poor, as their means allowed. They had a good opportunity of indulging their charitable dispositions, as the forester's lodge, in which they lived, lay on the border of the forest near the high road.

Fred's wife went one very sultry day to bring a glass of water from the well. There she found a poor woman sitting on the bench, which her husband had made under the shady pines, near the well, for the accommodation of travellers. The strange woman, though clean and neatly

dressed, was evidently poor, and appeared very tired and unhappy. A wicker basket and her walking-stick lay near her on the bench. Struck by the mild and woe-by-gone expression of her countenance, Fred's wife saluted her cordially, and invited her to the lodge to take some refreshment. The offer was gratefully accepted, and after the poor woman had taken some bread and beer, she and her host became so happy together, that the stranger told the whole history of what was weighing so heavy on her heart.

"I live," said she, "about twelve leagues from this. My husband is a gunsmith, and was able to earn much money by flints, pistols, and other fire-arms. He worked day and night, so that we were able not only to support ourselves and the two children with whom heaven has blessed us, but also to lay aside some provisions for the future. But latterly it was the will of God to send us many hard trials. My husband's hand was hurt so severely by a flint he was trying, that he has not been able to work during the last year. The war then came down on us and stripped us of the greater part of our property. The doctor's bill still continued a heavy drain, and as we had no money coming in, we were badly able to meet it—but, to crown all our misfortunes, we lost our only cow by the murrain. We had already raised money on the credit of our lands and house, and had no means left of replacing our cow, as the neighbours would not lend the money. Without a cow we could not live: so I resolved to undertake a long journey to my brother, hoping that he would give the money. I did make that long journey, and I am now on my way home. I told him my hard case, and begged his help. Twenty or thirty crowns would have bought a cow for me. My brother was willing enough to help me, but his wife would not allow him to give me a penny. She was displeased with me, she said, because I married a man who had no property. All I got was a small sum, that my brother

slipped secretly into my hand, but it will hardly cover half the expenses of my journey. But it was all the pocket money he had then at his disposal. Ah!" said she, "I pity my brother, and still more, my poor husband and children. They are anxiously praying for my return, and expecting some help: what a grief it will be to them, when I meet them with empty hands."

At this moment the forester was returning home, with his bag well stocked with game. He saluted the poor stranger kindly. His wife told him how she had invited her to come in, and what a melancholy tale had just been told.

"Right, right, Dora," said Fred, "it makes my heart glad, to see you acting as I would, consoling the poor stranger, and giving her a share of what God has given to us. Generosity, especially to strangers and travellers, is a most sacred duty."

"And good reason I have to say so," said he, taking a chair and sitting down near the woman, while his wife placed a glass of ale on the table before him. He then told his boyish adventure in the forest, and how he had been saved from certain death, by the kindness of Rosalie, the good cook of Rauhenstein.

"Good God!" exclaimed Rosalie, clasping her hands, "I am that cook. Rosalie is my name. Frederic is your's—and your father was forester of Grunenthal. I can tell you some particulars you omitted in your story. It was green peas I gave you with the soup and roast meat—and the beer glass had a pewter cover, with a stag stamped on it, which particularly struck your fancy. You were very much displeased with Mr. von Rauhenstein, and remarked that he was true to his name, but I told you he was a better man than he appeared to be. Words cannot tell how happy I am, that the bit of cake saved your life, and that I see you now so happy and independent. Wonderful are the ways of God—I could never recognise you. The slender, little forester is now grown

an able and fine looking man. God's blessing has been on you—as every thing around me shews.”

The forester now expressed his joy on meeting his old friend, and bade her a thousand welcomes. “I thought I knew you,” said he, “when I met you first, but I could not distinctly remember who you were or where I saw you. The thought struck me, that you might be my friend Rosalie, though time had made some change in you. To be sure of the fact, I told you my adventure in the forest. God be praised! I have found you at last. I am the happiest man under the sun—You must not stir this day.—Come, Dora,—the best in your kitchen and cellar for our friend.”

Rosalie pressed hard to be allowed to depart. “To-morrow morning I must be at home,” said she. “I will walk a few leagues in the cool of the evening—the twelve leagues would be too long a journey for to-morrow.”

“That matter can be easily managed,” said Fred. “I will yoke my pony to-morrow, and drive you in my light waggon as far as you like. I will drive you to your own door, if I am not obliged to attend the prince, with the hunting party that are on a visit with him.”

Fred's wife was as happy as himself, on finding Rosalie. There was no resisting their united entreaties. She consented to stop that night. The hostess prepared a dinner in her best style, and produced at the desert a large cake, prepared in the same way as that which Rosalie had given to Fred. It was wreathed with garlands of the most beautiful flowers, and in the centre, the words “To gratitude,” were formed with white sugar, in imitation of pearls.

“Oh!” said Rosalie, “don't put the knife in that beautiful cake. I have dined so heartily I will not touch it.”

“Very well,” said the hostess, “but you must put the cake in your basket, and bring it home in the morning to your children.”

Fred had ordered his best wine from the cellar; and he and his wife drank to the health and happiness of Rosalie and her family. "We are bound to do so," said he: "were it not for you, this house, where I and my Dorothy are so happy, would have other tenants."

Next morning, at break of day, Fred was busy preparing to escort his old friend to her family. His wife had a good breakfast on the table; and when all was ready, she put the large cake into Rosalie's basket, together with other provisions for the road, and some few presents for the children. Fred accompanied Rosalie half the journey. When he took his affectionate leave of her, he promised to visit herself and family as soon as possible, and to get his fire arms repaired by her husband,—a promise which he faithfully performed.

Rosalie continued her journey in good spirits. When she approached her house, she saw her two children, William and Theresa, advancing on the road to meet her. When they saw her, they sprung forward with joyful cries, and asked what she had in the basket. "O wait until we go home," said she, "we must not be so impatient and curious."

Her husband met her at the door, and all entered together. Rosalie told the hard reception she had got from her sister-in-law, and also announced the sad news, that she brought home no money. Her husband was sadly disappointed; nor could all she said of the happy night she spent with the forester, dispel his gloom. Rosalie opened her basket, and produced the cake. The sight of it made the children forget all their sorrows; but when the father saw them clapping their hands, and loudly expressing their joy, he could scarcely repress his tears.

"What good is the cake," said he, "where are we to get twenty or thirty gilders, to buy a cow?"

But lo—when the mother tried to cut the cake for the children, the knife stuck so fast in it, that all her strength could not divide it.

"This is an odd cake," said she; "it must have been baked too much." She broke the crust—and the first thing that met her eye, were two thalers of gold—and below them, in order, a dozen others of the same value.

Fred's joy on finding the cake in his pouch, was not greater than her's, when she saw the glittering coin. "Gracious heaven," said she, "Frederic told his wife to put them in the cake, to enable us to buy a cow, and to raise us from poverty."

"The gold is worth thirty-two gilders and some crowns," said little William, who was learning his table of coin in school; "it will buy a fine cow for us."

"And then we can have milk and butter again," said Theresa, hopping about and clapping her hands."

The father's face brightened, and with fervent heart he thanked God for the favour. "That cake which you gave, many years ago, to the little boy," said he, "was capital well laid out; it has been paid back, one hundred thousand fold."

"Yes," said the mother, "and the smallest act of kindness, to one of our brethren, will be much more amply rewarded in heaven."

"O, my children," adds the father, "let us be always merciful, that we may obtain mercy."

THE CHAPEL OF WOLFSBUHL:

AN OLD STORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE POOR WIDOW MARGARET, AND HER SON GEORGE.

MARGARET was a poor labourer's widow. A straw thatched cabin, a little field, a cow and a few vines, were all she was worth in the world. Her son, George, who was a modest and promising little boy, was her chief consolation, and her proudest hope. From early dawn until late at night, her spinning wheel was at work, and with that, and the returns of her little field, she supported herself and her son. She was able to buy flour, and use some of her milk and butter; but honey was too dear for her.

She was content and happy. In spring time, when the sun was bright and warm, she often brought her little son to her field, which lay at the foot of a wooded mountain, and glittered with a thousand wild flowers.

"Look," she would say, "is it not beautiful as paradise? People say, and truly, we are poor, but what do we need? We have but a spot of land—but it is to us a land truly flowing with milk and honey. Those who are content with what they have, are always rich; but those that are always coveting more than they have, are poor, though they had this whole world. Every day we ought to thank God for his favours."

George grew rapidly on his simple fare, and when his mother saw his ruddy cheeks and stout arms, she used to say, proudly, that he would be as good a labourer as his father. That was the height of her ambition. She had formerly been at service with a farmer, who lived about two leagues from her cottage, and when the farmer's son succeeded to the property, she asked him to have George as a servant boy. The farmer consented, and without delay she prepared to equip her son for his charge.

The kindhearted little fellow, went to all his neighbours and playmates, to bid them farewell. The tears came to his eyes when he saw the cow to which he had carried home so many bundles of hay, on his head from the meadow. "Poor cow," said he, stroking down her forehead, "you gave me your milk for many a year. I can't feed you any more, but my mother will take care of you."

His mother gave him affectionate and prudent advice. When he stood crying at the threshold, with his well stocked bundle on his shoulders, and his stick in his hand, her last words were, "Go, now, in God's name; have Him always before your eyes, pray constantly, and never lose an opportunity of going into the chapel. Do as much good as you can to all your neighbours. Don't forget your mother, who has loved and will love you so tenderly, love you to her death. Farewell, and God be with you."

After George's departure, the mother spun more assiduously and lived more frugally than before. She was anxious to lay up some spare money for George, to enable him to enjoy his father's house and field, when he came home. She never took anything better than bread and milk, and rarely boiled anything for dinner or supper. This she never told to her neighbours, but they discovered it, by missing the smoke from her chimney at the usual hours. Still, with all her parsimony, she was generous to the poor. She often gave her neighbour's children a bowl of milk, or if she saw them eating dry bread she would call them in and give them butter, and sometimes honey,

especially on Sundays. But the good advice she used to give them was better than milk or honey.

One evening in winter, when the hills and valleys were clothed with deep snow, and the cold North was blowing fiercely, she was driving her cow to the stream that flowed down to her field from the woody mountain. The evening was bright and clear, the sky was glowing red, the cow had just drank at the stream, when suddenly an enormous wolf sprung out of the forest and tore the poor cow before Margaret's eyes. The snow all around was reddened with blood. Margaret raised her hands over her head and fled as fast as she could to her cottage, weeping bitterly the whole way; not, in truth, so much for the loss she had sustained, as from pity for her son George's cow.

Next morning all the children of the neighbourhood were at Margaret's cottage, bewailing the loss of the cow. They knew there was no more milk or butter to be expected, and that was what fretted them.

"Ah, then," said one of them, why did God make that cruel wolf—that tore poor Margaret's cow?" "Ay," added another, "that terrible wolf, that has often before torn and eaten so many harmless sheep. Why did God let such a thing happen?"

"That I cannot tell you," said Margaret, "but we must believe, that whatever God allows can be turned to the best, and is wise and good. Perhaps He wished that by hating the cruel wolf we might learn to hate the robber and the murderer, and never to commit robbery or murder. O, may none of you ever be like that cruel wolf—may you rather be like the gentle innocent sheep."

CHAPTER II.

KNIGHT ULRICH OF WILDBURGH, AND HIS
SON CONRAD.

KNIGHT ULRICH of Wildburgh, who lived in the neighbourhood, having heard of the depredations of the wolf, and that, not content with destroying the flocks, he was now beginning to attack men, summoned all the tenants, and all his hunting companions of the neighbourhood, and resolved to open a general campaign against the brute. Ulrich never asked better sport, for he was passionately fond of the chase. His son Conrad earnestly begged permission to accompany them, which the father readily granted, for he felt proud of the boy's courage. But he gave strict orders, that Conrad should not, on any account, separate from himself, or some of the experienced huntsmen.

Knight Ulrich sallied forth with his gallant train, armed with swords, javelins, bows, and arrows; for at that time there were no fire arms, and hunting was then a much more perilous sport than in our days. They had a fine pack of wolf dogs. The huntsmen cautiously entered the wood, always keeping within call of each other, that, in case of need, they might afford mutual help. But the young and ardent Conrad was tired of this slow work, and slipping quietly from his father's side, pushed into the heart of the forest. To kill the wolf before any other man could have the honour—was the ambitious hope of our young sportsman. Advancing, with bended bow, into an open space in the wood, he discovered the wolf issuing from a thicket. In an instant Conrad levelled his bow, took aim, fired, and hit the animal in the shaggy breast. But Conrad was too hasty. He had drawn too soon. The distance was too great, to

allow the arrow to do its business ; and the terrible animal was only slightly wounded. Smarting from the wound, the furious wolf sprung, with a ferocious howl, on its defenceless enemy. Conrad made an effort to climb the tree near him, but the wolf had nearly seized the poor boy's foot. The tree was not high, and the lower and strongest branches appeared scarcely able to support his weight. But he stood on one of the boughs, and supported his body against the trunk. The wolf drew back a few paces, took a long run, and made an enormous spring to tear Conrad down. His wide, gaping jaws bristling with frightful teeth, almost touched the trembling boy, but did not actually reach him. The wolf repeated his attempt again and again with new fury, but in vain. At last he lay down under the tree, looking up at Conrad, with gaping throat, out-stretched tongue, and glaring eyes, whining and howling every now and then, with ravenousness and fury.

Conrad was in hopes that the wolf would leave the tree, or that the hunters and dogs would come and kill him ; and began to call for help with all his might. But a violent gale, which swept through the wood, drowned the sound of his voice. Evening began to fall ; the sun was declining ; and the cold became excessive ; and Conrad was now in danger of perishing, if not by this hateful animal, at least, by the not less terrific cold to which he was exposed, upon the naked, frozen branches of the tree.

In this great peril he prayed to God for help. He was unable to raise up his hands, which were benumbed with cold ; it was as much as he could do, to hold on by the branches of the tree ; but he raised up his heart and his eyes to heaven. " O my good and merciful God ! " he cried, " hear my prayer in this my necessity. Pardon me my thoughtlessness, and my disobedience to my father's prudent commands. Save me this night from perishing with the cold, or being torn to pieces by this fearful beast ! Alas ! I cannot hold on this tree much

longer—whether here or below, nothing but certain death awaits me. O God, deliver me from this danger! Inspire my father to come hither with his hunters, and drive away this blood-thirsty monster. As long as I live, I will thank Thee for this mercy; and from this day forward, I will observe thy holy commandments more faithfully than I have hitherto done!”

Conrad's prayer was not unheard. When the hunting party assembled in the evening, Conrad was missed. His father had thought he was with the old huntsman, and the huntsman imagined he remained with his father. The party all declared they had not seen anything of him, and were very much alarmed. His father requested, and indeed ordered, them to search the wood once more, and as the night was now falling, this was no easy task. But they all set out without hesitation. After some time the hounds came upon the scent of the wolf, and began to give tongue, which drew the hunters in that direction; and the wolf, when he heard the cry of the dogs, and the sound of the approaching hunters, took precipitately to flight, and as he had too long a start, the hounds were not able to overtake him.

Conrad's father and the rest of the party approached the tree. The moon had just risen. Conrad came down, begged pardon of his father, and told him how all had occurred, how he had been in such imminent danger, how he had prayed to God, and how God had heard his prayer.

“Well, well, God be praised, that I have you safe once more!” cried his father, clasping him in his arms. “But you must be more attentive to your father's orders for the future: you now see how wise and how well meant things were.”

The old huntsman gave his young master a sharp rebuke. “Young gentlemen,” he said, “imagine that they understand everything better than the old gray heads. But the egg can't be wiser than the hen. And this adventure will be a warning to you.”

"This time," said another, "everything went off tolerably well, but it might have been a bad business. Many a one has got into difficulty, by forgetting the old advice 'Look before you leap.'"

"You are right, my good friends," said Conrad's father, "and Conrad must not forget your sound advice. But let us thank God, who has rescued him from his danger, and who always helps us, when we pray to Him in our hour of need."

CHAPTER III.

THE GOOD CHILDREN.

POOR Margaret's son George, had served his master faithfully and honestly, ever since he left his mother's house. He set manfully about his work, whatever it might be, and was indefatigable in his exertions till it was finished. He was always merry, too, and light-hearted, and kind, obliging, and good natured to every one. The farmer and his wife loved him as their own child, and their children were as fond of him, as though he had been their brother.

One evening he was busy in front of his master's house, tying up pine branches in bundles for fire wood. He was cutting the branches into short pieces with his little axe upon the block, and the children were tying them up in bundles with straw ropes. While he was thus engaged, a man from his native place came up.

"Oh, George!" said he, "the wolf has destroyed your beautiful cow at home: your mother was sorely grieved at it, and wept bitterly; and when she heard I was coming here, she desired me to tell you of this misfortune, and to give you her love. God bless you—I must go, for I have a long journey before me."

George began to weep bitterly, and the children cried with him for company. The farmer and his wife came out to see what was the matter—the children told what had happened.

“Ah!” said George, sobbing, “my dear mother will be sadly afflicted, at the loss of the poor beast. She was the prettiest cow in the whole village—you, yourselves, have none finer than she was. She was a beautiful brown with a little white stain in her forehead, and she was so sleek and glossy, that a drop of water would not be upon her hide. She was of the very best breed, and would give from six to eight measures of milk a day. She was my poor mother’s all: now she will be poor indeed. The milk was her best, almost her only support; and she is not able to buy another cow. It is a great affliction.”

The poor child went crying into his bed-room. He prayed—and thought of some plan to help his mother. He had as yet received none of his wages. As he had bad clothes when he came to service, he was thinking of buying a new hat and a red jacket, such as were worn by the boys of the village. This had been long his favourite project, but hat and jacket were now forgotten. “I will buy a goat for my wages,” said he, “and bring it home to my mother; that will be to her, at least, some slight consolation in her misfortune.”

He accordingly spoke to his master, and having told his intention, asked the wages that were due to him. The farmer praised his filial piety, and paid the money.

“Where can you get the new hat and jacket now?” asked the children.

“O,” answered George, “I can live well enough without a new hat or jacket, and be stout and healthy too; but my mother cannot live well without a goat. I will go this instant to the farmer beyond in Buhel: he has two fine goats, and perhaps he would sell one of them.”

George returned in bad spirits. “The farmer told me,” said he, “that his goats were not for sale, but that

if I gave him a good price, he would consent to part with one of them. But the good price he asked, is more than all my wages. My joy is gone. I must think of some other plan to help my mother."

"Come, children," said the farmer's wife, with a smile, "go into council with George, and tell him how he can help his poor mother. Think of some plan to make out the money. Lissy, you are the eldest, speak first: have you nothing to say?"

"I think," said Lissy, "we could make up the sum from our pocket-money."

"An excellent plan," answered the mother: "do so."

The children ran and brought their tin christmas boxes. "Look, mother, look," said the youngest child, "here is my money too." The boxes were locked, but had a slit in the cover, through which the money was dropped. The mother kept the key. When all were opened, and their contents emptied on the table, and were found not to make up the requisite sum, the children proposed to give their god-mothers' gifts also. But the mother said, "you must not give away your sponsors' presents. I will complete the sum out of my own private purse." George shed tears of joy and gratitude. "O, you are good and kind children," said he.

"You are much better," answered Lissy. "When we want clothes our parents buy them; but you must work hard for them, and support your mother too, with your wages."

George took the money, and went, accompanied by all the children, to bring home the goat. It was a real triumphal procession. "See," said George to the farmer and his wife, "how handsome she is—with her white skin and coal black spots, and her long, soft hair and curling horns—look at her bright, glowing eyes, and the long, flowing beard! The man engages she will milk well." George brought the goat to the stable and tied her. All the children brought as much hay and grass, as the goat

could not eat in a week, until George told them to bring no more.

"To-morrow morning I will bring the goat to my mother," said George to the farmer, "if you give permission, and say there is no danger of the wolf." The farmer gave permission, remarking, at the same time, that he thought there was no danger from the wolf, as he had kept aloof from the neighbourhood, since the people had hunted him so severely, and kept so close a watch. "We have had no trace of him," said he, "far or near, for a considerable time."

"I will start early in the morning," said George. "O, how glad I am to see my dear mother: how glad I am that I can make her some return, for all the good she has done to me. Some joy, at least, I can give her." The good child was so full of these thoughts, that he could scarcely sleep.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OLD BEGGARMAN.

NEXT morning, before day light, George was ready for the road. The farmer's wife gave him his breakfast, and abundant provisions for the journey. "Here," said she, "are some bread and bacon, and a few bundles of flax for your mother."

George thanked her kindly, and having packed up all his effects, and flung them over his shoulder, he tied a cord around the goat's neck, and drove her before him with a stick. Thus equipped, he hastened with a bounding heart to his native home.

The ground was hard with frost, and covered lightly with snow, which had fallen during the night. On his way through the village of Wolfsbuhl, he came to a little

chapel, situated on a gentle eminence. The door was open. "I must follow my mother's advice," said he, "and go in to pray. But how am I to manage the goat? It is not right, it is sinful, to bring her into the church." He, accordingly, tied her fast to the iron handle of the door, and going in, knelt down reverently before the altar. He prayed fervently for his mother. He remembered her fond injunction, never to forget her, and was thinking of what a welcome visitor the goat must be to her. He also prayed for the repose of his father's soul, and for all his friends and neighbours, especially for the farmer and his wife and children, and all his benefactors. "Gracious God," he prayed, "I resolve to obey Thy holy commands, and the advice of my beloved mother, and to please Thee and the holy angels, and all good men. O, do Thou grant me the necessary grace: aid me, above all, in consoling and supporting my mother."

Tranquil and refreshed, he rose from his knees, and was proceeding towards the door, when he saw a grey haired and decrepid old man sitting on the stone bench. A large bundle of rotten wood was lying at his feet. His arms rested on his thick staff, his eyes were fixed on the goat, and George saw the tears trickling down his furrowed and hollow cheeks. After a kind and affectionate good morrow, George asked, "Good father, why do you look so at the goat? why are you crying?"

"Ah!" said the old man, "I had one of the kind, and her milk was my best nourishment. But the wolf killed her. Since that hapless day, my table is badly served. Water is my only drink now, and I have no butter for my bread. My strength is wasting fast. I fear, I shall scarcely be able to carry this bundle of sticks to that poor cottage you see there below, about a hundred paces from here, on the skirts of the village of Greiselbach."

"O!" said George, "one of your miseries is easily cured. I will carry your bundle to your own door." The old man declined the offer. But George remembered his

mother's words, "Do as much good as you can to all men: help, given to the needy, is like prayer, a thing that always does good." "Permit me now," said George, "it is no trouble to me; I will be here in one quarter of an hour; and the goat can stay secure until I return."

"O, there is no danger of her," answered the old man. "I pledge my word she will not be stolen: the people of this village are strictly honest."

George raised the bundle on his shoulders, and started at a rapid pace, and with an occasional bound, down the hill. The old man followed at a more leisurely pace. George left the bundle at the door, and was returning to the chapel. The old man met him near the village, and with tears in his eyes, thanked George for his kindness. "You are a good boy," said he, "to shew such respect for an old man. God will reward, a hundred and a thousand-fold, that act of kindness to a poor old stranger. Reward you, He will. Mark my words." George, after shaking hands heartily with the old man, and wishing him quiet and happy days in his decline, bounded up the hill, happy in the conviction that he had done a good act. "That was alms-giving," thought he; "many an act of charity we can do, that costs us no money."

CHAPTER V.

THE WOLF AND THE GOAT.

AFTER separating from the old man, George had scarcely ran ten paces, when some little boys, who had been sliding on the frozen lake, rushed down the hill in breathless haste, screaming at the top of their voices: "the wolf, the wolf!" They were as pale as death. "Where's the wolf?" asked George.

"On the top of the hill—running to the chapel," said

one little boy, who, without daring to look back, ran after his companions, who were in full speed down the hill towards the nearest house. George was terror stricken. "O," said he, wringing his hands, "my goat, the wolf has her! My poor mother—I can't help you now."

Never thinking of the danger to which he was exposing his own life, he ran up the hill. But when he came to the top, he stood for a moment, amazed and confounded. His goat was alive and unhurt—but was evidently terrified, and plunging to break loose. But when she saw him, she became quiet, and began to bleat as if in joy for his return. The chapel door which had been half open, was now shut, and the wolf's head was seen thrust out through one of the round windows at the side of the door. He had broken the glass, and struggled with all his might to force his body through the iron bars. His eyes were glowing with rage, and the foam flew from his mouth. But his struggles were vain; he could not burst his prison.

"An undoubted miracle," said George. "Who saved my goat, and locked up that ferocious brute? There was no person here. No human footsteps are here in the snow, but my own and the old man's. The wolf's tracks are straight into the door. An angel of heaven must have come down, and without touching the earth, bound up that terrible brute, to prevent him from doing any more harm to man. God above, be praised for his mercy."

In the mean time, the old man came up. On hearing the little boys shout, "the wolf, the wolf," he hastily armed himself with his old rusty lance, and advanced as fast as his tottering limbs could bear him, to save, if possible, his generous young friend.

"There's a miracle," said George, running to meet him—"there's the wolf in prison, and not a hair of my goat injured. Tell me, how you think the affair happened?"

"It is quite plain," said the old man. "I see it as clearly, as if I had been on the spot. When the wolf

scented the goat and spied her at the door, he sprung madly forwards to devour her. The goat, seeing him coming, bounded into the chapel, but as she was tied fast to the door, (which opened inwards) she could not advance, but turned aside to conceal herself behind the open door. The wolf, having lost sight of her in the blindness and hurry of his blood-thirsty and hungry rage, ran far into the chapel, which the goat perceiving, must have naturally rushed out, and pulled the door by the string after her, thus making a prisoner of the wolf."

"It was not a miracle, then?" said George, somewhat disappointed. "It happened naturally?"

"Naturally, no doubt," answered the old man, "but still a miracle of God's providence. God had so arranged it. By His supreme providence, the savage and destructive animal has been taken, and is prevented from doing more damage—and you are entitled to a considerable reward. Our good prince has promised ten gold gilders to any man who takes the wolf, living or dead. That reward is yours by right, because you were the immediate occasion of the capture. When you least expected it, you have a round sum of money. You shall assuredly get it."

George was agreeably surprised: for the promised sum was in those days, of much greater value than the present.

"In that case," said George, "I can buy a cow, and have money, beside, to give to my mother. When the money comes, I will give the goat to you, and that will be some help to you in your old age. If I had not met you at the chapel, I would have untied my goat, and went on my journey, to be met by the wolf, and lose my goat and perhaps my own life also."

The old man raised his hands and eyes to heaven, "God's mercy be for ever praised. He has rewarded you for carrying that bundle of sticks to my cabin. He has heard my poor prayer, and helped me in my distress. May we ever bless His adorable providence."

CHAPTER VI.

THE REWARDED SON.

WHEN they had returned thanks to God, on bended knees, at the chapel door, the old man sat down on the stone bench, and George ran in full speed to the village of Greiselbach. The people were afraid to stir from their houses; some of them only ventured to ask through their windows, what had happened to the wolf?

"Come, come," said George, "you have nothing to fear. The wolf is shut up safely in the chapel."

The bailiff ventured out, accompanied by some of the most courageous men. They looked through the two windows, and saw the wolf bounding madly against the walls, endeavouring to reach the high windows. But when he rushed to the windows near the door, the men fell back in terror.

"Thank God," said the bailiff, "the wolf is held fast at last. We and our flocks can have some safety now. But how this happened, I cannot conceive." The old man then explained the affair, to the great wonder of the villagers.

"Ah! then," said the peasants, "who would believe that a goat could entrap the wolf." "It is like what I have said one hundred times," said the bailiff, "'When the thief is ripe, a hair would hang him.'" "Thanks be to God," continued the bailiff, "His is the glory. He has sent the help. I must send a messenger this instant to the brave knight, with the joyful news. Knight Ulrich von Wildburg will be out of himself with joy. You, little boy, must remain with us in the mean time. The promised reward is certainly yours, and until you receive it, I will

take charge of you and your goat, and provide for all your wants."

One of the peasants rode in full speed to Wildbrug. The knight was at table with his wife and son. When the news came, he flung his knife and fork on the table, and starting up in rapture, "glorious news;" said he, "this is a feast for a noble sportsman. I start this instant. Ready, Conrad, you must accompany me." Orders were instantly issued to all the huntsmen of the village, horse and foot, to muster for the march. "That roast meat," said the knight, pointing to the table, "goes into our portmanteaus we shall eat it in the true sportsman's style, when the wolf is laid low."

While the horses were preparing, and the troop were mustering for the expedition, the knight ascertained all the particulars from the messenger, who was often interrupted by the exclamation of the ardent sportsman, "glorious! splendid!—O, what a happiness to slay the ravenous wolf!"

He and his knights now mounted, and were followed by a great crowd of persons on foot, who were curious to see the sport. When he drove up to the chapel, hurrying to the window, without taking any notice of the salutations of the crowd, he exclaimed, "True, beyond a doubt, the wolf is there; the stoutest brute I have ever seen! now for the sport." He at once ordered his men to make ready.

The bailiff came forward, and, in an humble tone, suggested that, in his opinion, the best plan was to starve the wolf to death, and thus to get rid of him quietly without danger to any human life.

But the knight haughtily spurned the proposal. "Do you imagine we are such cowards as you?" said he. No, no, by my own hand, and with this lance, the brute shall fall, according to the laws of fair and honourable sport. It is my right. Me and my tenants he has pillaged and harassed. Quick—fall into order—let whoever has courage open the door." One of the huntsmen, armed with a lance,

opened the door. But the wolf did not come out. "He knows," said the knight, with a grim smile, "that a warm welcome awaits him. Come, send in the dogs—they will send him out, whether he wills or no." The knight, firmly clutching his lance in both hands, took his stand a few paces in front of the door. When the wolf appeared, the lance was buried in his open throat, a stream of dark blood gushed out, and he fell quivering and convulsed at the knight's feet. Green boughs in your helmets and bonnets," said he, with a cheer. "So shall every robber perish." All the boys and peasants, and huntsmen, did as they were ordered, and lauded his bravery to the stars.

Crowds of persons, men, women and children, came to see the wolf stretched at the knight's feet. He was so happy, that his severity relaxed and he was kind and familiar. "For the whole world," said he, to the crowd, "would any of you come near that brute when he was alive? Did not the knight and his followers shew true courage? Here—look at those terrible jaws, and the sharp teeth, and that shaggy paunch and his enormous length." The people wondered at the animal, and the courage of the knight; and their admiration was, plainly, by no means unacceptable to him.

The bailiff then asked the knight, whether George was to get the promised reward. "Well, well," answered the knight, "he must have it. True, it was he brought the wolf within reach of my spear. The honour of having killed the thief is enough for me. Let him come to me at once, and I will pay down the money, though the land-tax, on which it is levied, has not yet been collected."

The bailiff communicated this information to George, and George told it to the old man, adding, at the same time, "The goat is yours now." George then went to the knight to thank him, but was followed by the old man, who told him how kindly George had acted, and how he made him a present of the goat. The knight having eyed the old man for a moment, exclaimed: "What—why,

man, I think I know you. You were a brave soldier, and once served under me. That George is a fine fellow—to give the goat: here are some gold crowns from me: drink to my health.”

Conrad took his father aside for a moment, and remarked to him, that the reward coming to the boy, was the grant of the prince. “We, too, ought to do something. When I was in great danger from this wolf, in the tree, I made a resolution, to do some good work for some person or other. The good work I promised, is not performed yet. What do you think, if we make a present of a cow to George’s mother? I will pay the price out of my own pocket money.”

“Right, very well,” said the father, at the same time calling George. “Since you,” said he, “give your goat to the old soldier, I, Hans Ulrich von Wildburg, do take care that you shall not be a loser. Your mother must have the best cow in my possession. You stop this night in my castle; and to-morrow morning you shall have the promised reward; and my own servant shall drive the cow safely to your mother’s door.”

Knight Ulrich and his son rode to their castle, and arrived there at night-fall. Adelaide, his lady, was sitting in her splendid hall, spinning by the light of her lamp, as was the custom in those good old times. The father and son gave her a lively and animated description of the events of the day. “Well,” said the lady, “what pleases me most, in all the occurrences of the day, are George’s piety—his love for his mother, and his generous charity to the old soldier. I must see that good boy. Go, Conrad, and call him. He is arrived by this time, and is with our retainers below in the hall.”

Conrad, who was dressed in his green hunting coat, with its tops and buttons of gold lace, led into the chamber the trembling George, dressed in his coarse, and almost threadbare fustian. The lady received the poor boy very cordially, and praised him for having purchased the goat

for his mother, and then made a present of it to the old soldier, when the mother did not stand in need of it. She asked many questions, for she thought the mother, who had reared such a son, must be a superior woman. George's answers delighted her; and after having given the highest praise, and sent her best wishes to his mother, she took her leave of him, in the most gracious and affectionate manner.

When he had retired, she addressed Conrad. "I am very glad you have given some of your pocket money to George's mother. That wolf was very near giving us a different tale to tell. Your impatience and disobedience, had nearly sent you to the grave, and plunged your father and me in the most inexpressible woe, if God had not preserved you, and directed all for the best. O, that you would imitate the noble and amiable conduct of that boy in the fustian dress. It would be a greater honour to you, than all the gold lace on your clothes."

Then turning to her husband—"I am now more convinced than ever, that the most essential thing for a parent is, to bring up their children in the fear and love of God, to make them submissive and respectful to their parents, and kind and generous to all their neighbours. And to effect this, the first, the essential point is, to teach them to control and subdue their self-willed and unruly inclinations. The heart of the child is like the ploughed field: thorns and thistles must be torn out, before it can produce fruitful corn. This is of equal necessity for all children, whether born under the thatch or the gilded dome, whether destined to hold the plough, the quill of office, or the sword."

CHAPTER VII.

THE HAPPY MOTHER.

NEXT morning Margaret was sitting at her stove, busy, as usual, with her wheel. "Good news," said one of her neighbours, coming in. "Your George caught the wolf, and won the prize that was set on his head. He has avenged the loss of your cow; and brings you something more into the bargain."

Margaret shook her head, and could not believe the story. "Pray, how is that possible?" she asked. "My George never followed the hunt; and, I firmly believe, never killed even a little bird. Bows and arrows, or lances, he never used. He is a boy still: he is not even a young man: how could he kill so terrible a brute? This is a story invented, I fear, to humbug me. Sorry I am to find that I am treated so—it almost brings the tears to my eyes:" the tears really were in her eyes.

The neighbour answered: "I must confess, the news did appear somewhat suspicious to me. But I heard from one of our huntsmen, who has been constantly on the watch for the wolf, that it is an undoubted fact. He could not give me the particular information: but he is highly enraged, that, to use his own words, a beardless boy should snap a princely reward from under the nose of experienced huntsmen. But," said the woman, retiring, "we shall know the whole truth of the matter."

Margaret's old hands trembled as she spun, meditating all the while on the news she had got from the woman. But the more she pondered, the more incredible the account appeared. Her grief for the loss of the poor cow was stirred up and flowed afresh. But when George, himself, came in, and told her the great luck God had sent to him,

and laid down the ten gold coins on the table, old Margaret could hardly credit her own eyes and ears. Amazed looks, and a few hearty thanks to God, were the only answer she was able to give.

George looked out in the window, and taking his mother by the hand, said, in a cheering tone, "Mother, come out and see, our good knight has sent you a cow, which will certainly please you." She followed George to the door, and there was the knight's servant holding the cow by the horns. "This cow," said he, "was the very best in my stall, I am sorry to lose her. My only consolation is, that she is falling into good hands; for I know well what good care you took of your old cow, she was the best cow in the country, except the one I bring to you."

Margaret, who could scarcely find words to express her astonishment, cried out, "O my God, how good Thou art! Thou canst change sorrow into joy. When I lost my cow, I did not think that the loss would be to me the occasion of a much greater recompense. But let me not think of more earthly blessings. Earthly woes lead me to eternal joys. Want and poverty taught me to pray more fervently, and to direct my hopes more confidently to Thee, and Thou hast not let my confidence be confounded."

Then, addressing the servant, she said, "Words cannot express my happiness and thanks. Good right you have to a handsome favour from me. A quarter of an hour ago, I had not a groat in my house, but now I can give you a gold gilder."

"O, allow me," said the honest servant, "my good master gave positive orders, that I should not, under pain of losing my place, accept the smallest sum from you. My good lady has already given me, for this very journey, more money than I could think of accepting from you. Farewell, and God's blessing be on you, and the present I brought to you."

When the servant was gone, and when George and his mother had put the cow in the stall, and given her plenty of

hay, which, for some time past, had been going to waste, they returned to their cottage.

"Why," said Margaret, seating herself on the stool, "I don't know how it is—this good news has shaken me as much as if it were a fit of terror. I am weak and exhausted."

George was obliged to tell her the whole story, from beginning to end, with all its particulars. She listened attentively, occasionally interrupting him with some sign of approbation. "Dear George," said she, at the close, "you have followed my advice. You have placed your hopes in God—you have been kind and charitable to your neighbours; and you have made your mother a happy woman. He that loves God, hears Him and confides in Him; he that honours his parents, and does evil to no man, but as much good as he can to all, is the favourite of God and of man, and prospers in this world and the next."

George faithfully followed his mother's injunctions, and became a prudent, intelligent and charitable farmer. Conrad, too, was not only a brave, but what was much better, a virtuous and truly honourable knight.

The tradition of this story was vivid at the close of the last century, and, perhaps, still survives. Wildburg castle was long since razed to the ground, and nothing remains but some ruins, which, perhaps, have given its name to the present village of Wildburg. A village near it, is called Wolfsbuhl. On your way from Dunkelsbuhl to Nordlingen, when passing through the village of Greiselbach, the chapel of Wolfsbuhl may be seen on your left, still crowning the summit of the hill.

ANSELMO.

CHAPTER I.

THE YOUNG EXILE.

ONE beautiful spring morning, Anselmo, a noble youth of sixteen, was wandering along the sea-shore. He was returning from Salerno, at that time the seat of the most celebrated of all the Italian universities, for the purpose of spending the Easter holidays in his father's castle. The country was decked out in all the gorgeousness of spring, which, in that happy soil of Italy, is about a month earlier than with us. The sea sparkled under the deep red beams of the rising sun; Anselmo's heart glowed with pious emotion, and he could not refrain from kneeling down to adore the Creator of all these wondrous objects—the sun, the heaven, the earth, and the sea.

He remained a long time in this kneeling posture, then stood up suddenly, and hastened joyously on, his heart full of the pleasure he should have in seeing his beloved parents once more. His family belonged to the old nobility; but their rich and extensive inheritance had suffered greatly in the war, and in consequence their circumstances were now very considerably limited. To their son, however, they gave what their means still allowed, and what is beyond all the riches of the world, an excellent education. From his tenderest childhood they taught him to know and love God, to trust in Him, and in Him to seek his only happiness.

They procured for the young man, who was very talented, instructions in all the necessary acquirements, and even in the ornamental accomplishments, suited to his rank ; and they had sent him to the university, denying themselves many an indulgence, in order that he might be able to live there in a manner befitting his birth. On his own side he avoided every unnecessary expense, led a very frugal and retired life, and took no share in the costly amusements to which his noble young fellow-students invited him. He did not conceal that his purse was not as well stocked as theirs, and he now was very glad that he was able to give so good an excuse, and thus devote his time exclusively to his studies. And now, with the view of saving his parents expense, he was journeying homeward, not on horseback, nor in a carriage, but on foot ; and being stout and active, he found this pedestrian expedition extremely agreeable.

His path lay through a dense grove of laurel, and wound around an angle of the cliff. On a sudden he observed, quite unexpectedly, a ship which lay at anchor ; a number of swarthy visaged men, in a strange and very remarkable costume, were drawing water at a fountain, which gushed forth from the rock. They were Algerine pirates ! and no sooner did they espy the defenceless youth, than they sprang upon him, like tigers upon a lamb, seized him, dragged him into the ship, stripped him of his rich dress, put upon him a coarse sack-cloth slave's dress, and a low-crowned hat, chained him hand and foot, and stowed him away among the other Christian prisoners whom they had captured at sea or on land. The captives saluted their new and interesting fellow-prisoner with loud expressions of condolence, and some of them burst into floods of tears for the melancholy destiny which awaited them all in common.

When Anselmo had recovered from his first terror he folded his hands, manacled as they were, and raised his eyes to heaven. His emotions quite overcame him.

"O merciful and all powerful God," he prayed aloud, "who didst make the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, Thou hast permitted this affliction to befall me; grant me Thy grace to live resigned to Thy will, to pass unharmed through this ordeal, and to be found without blemish in Thy sight! comfort my beloved parents and family: alas! my father and mother expected my return to-morrow evening; they will come with my little brothers and sisters to meet me! O, how shall they be distressed when they fail to meet me, and cannot discover what has befallen me! Perhaps all their inquiries after me may prove fruitless. Nevertheless, I place my trust in Thee, dearest Father in heaven—Thou wilt restore me to their arms—Thou wilt change their tears and mine into joy once more—Thou forsakest not those who trust in Thee—the rocks may totter, and the mountains may fall into the sea, but thy love and truth endure for ever!"

His fellow-captives, who for the most part were Italians, heard and understood his prayer, and were deeply affected by his pious confidence in God. Throwing off all reserve towards the pious young man, they asked him his history, who he was, whence he was coming, and whither he had been travelling, and told him their own history in return. A young lawyer, of a tall and majestic figure, who knew Anselmo's family, was very attentive to him. This man, of a noble family and highly accomplished, having completed his studies under great difficulties, (for he had been left an orphan and in great destitution,) had just obtained, as he told Anselmo, with tears in his eyes, a judicial appointment, and was on his way to conduct his bride to the ship which was to bring her to her new home. "But, alas!" said he, "instead of the tender bond which would have united me to her for ever, I am doomed to wear those hateful chains!" A young sailor bewailed nothing but his aged and helpless parents, whom he had hitherto maintained by the wages of his perilous and labourious calling. "Ah!" said he, "they shall now be a prey to

the most extreme want, famine, and distress." A fisherman, who was somewhat advanced in years, was the saddest of them all. Silent and abstracted he sat at the furthest extremity of the ship; his head leaned upon his hand, and the tears streamed down his cheeks. He was the father of five young children, and was overcome by anxious thoughts of what would now be their fate and that of their pious and virtuous mother. Anselmo drew near him, took him affectionately by the hand, reminded him of God's holy providence, and how God turns all things to our good, and will never fail to justify His title—"Father of the widow and the orphan." Even in the depth of their misery, the poor man and the other prisoners listened to him with great piety. The appearance of the handsome noble-looking youth, the wisdom of his words, the kindness which he displayed for all, and his cheerfulness under his bonds, by degrees aroused every one of his companions and gave them fresh courage. The old fisherman stood up—"Our good God," he cried, "has sent us this youth to console us: like him, we will put our trust in God; I myself now cherish the hope that God will convert our very chains into a blessing for us."

The young sailor intoned the beautiful "Sicilian Mariner's Hymn," so famed for its soft and simple melody; and as all the prisoners in the ship were Christians, they joined in the chaunt, selecting those verses especially which were most adapted to afford consolation in their present affliction.

CHAPTER II.

THE SLAVE.

MEANWHILE Anselmo, as the ship sailed upon her voyage, watched with sorrowing eyes his native land, his beloved Italy, as it receded further and further from his sight.

The hills and mountains, the churches and palaces diminished gradually in size, and at last entirely disappeared, and nothing now met his gaze but the sky and sea around him.

The pirates cruised about for several days, in the hope of meeting and capturing Christian ships. They were disappointed in their hopes, but, on the contrary, to their terror they discovered the white sails of a large ship of war which followed in their track. The Christian captives were secretly rejoiced, and cherished a hope of regaining their liberty; but the pirates compelled them with stripes to take up the oars, and they themselves rowed with all their might, and set all sail upon the ship. The war-ship gained upon them somewhat; but she sailed too slowly to overtake them. Night came on, and the Christians sighed to see their hopes thus prostrated to the earth, while the pirates exulted in the certain prospect of escaping. When the morning dawned, the war-ship was no more to be seen. Anselmo, who had begun to think that his prayer was already heard, was very much downcast, and could not restrain his tears. But he soon recovered his spirits, and said to his fellow-captives, "Well, if God has not heard our prayer immediately, yet be assured He will not leave it unheard. He alone knows how to dispose the fitting time; and trust me, the hour shall yet come which will deliver me and you, my comrades in misfortune, from the hands of those unbelievers!"

Before the lapse of an hour they saw the great city of Algiers rising up, as it were, from the sea, in the beams of the morning-sun. Built on the declivity of a hill, and rising street above street, the rows of houses came into view, one after another, in regular succession, and the Turkish mosques, surmounted by the glittering crescent, instead of the cross, were a bitter sight for poor Anselmo's piety.

The ship came into harbour, the prisoners were landed, and after a short repose were marched through the narrow,

filthy streets of the city to the great market-place. Here they were exposed to inspection and sale, like cattle in a market. First came a crowd of the lowest rabble, gazing unfeelingly upon the captive Christians, and insulting and mocking them with loud laughter, and every most opprobrious name they could devise. By and by, a number of the wealthy inhabitants of the city appeared. They passed amid the rows of the captives, and examined them one after the other, as an intended purchaser will inspect a horse. Huge stones and beams lay in readiness upon the market-place, to prove the strength of the slaves who were submitted for sale. The Turks compelled them to lift these and carry them up and down the street, and then commenced eagerly to bargain about the price. Several sales were effected. The lawyer and the young sailor were sold for a very large price; but Anselmo, who could not lift any of the heavy stones, was laughed at. He was thought too feeble for slave-labour, and the purchasers passed him contemptuously by.

At a little distance stood an old wrinkled Jew, looking, as it seemed, with great indifference upon the sale. He was dressed in black, his beard was white as snow, and he wore a three-cornered hat. When all the slaves except Anselmo were sold off, he came forward, looked at him, with a shake of the head, asked to see his hands and condemned them, as indicating by their whiteness, that he was unused to labour.

"But, I suppose," said he, in Italian, "you must have learned something. What have you applied yourself to?"

Anselmo thought that in his present condition, it would not be right to conceal his talents, if he hoped to improve it. He said that it was chiefly in writing he had been employed, and that he could write both French and Italian.

"Hem!" said the Jew, "that is something. And what more do you know?" Anselmo answered that he knew Latin and Greek.

"Alas!" said the Jew, "that is worth nothing for the Turks; we have little use for such wares in this country. Do you know nothing more?"

Anselmo replied that he could play the lute and sing.

"It is a pity," said the Jew, "that we have not a lute to try you. But, at all events, you can sing us a pretty song."

Anselmo, who had a charming voice, as well as exquisite taste in singing, forced himself to sing.

"Well," said the Jew, "that is not so bad." And he offered three gold pieces for Anselmo, which, after long bargaining, he advanced to ten. When the merchants still asked more and refused to conclude, he shrugged his shoulders, turned away, and was going home; when they called him back, and gave him their poor young prisoner for the ten pieces. Anselmo was mortified that he was sold at so cheap a rate, compared with the other slaves; but he consoled himself by reflecting that Joseph, and even Christ himself, were sold for a few paltry pieces of silver. "Yet," said he, "Joseph's being sold was, in the end, the source of blessings to himself and many others, and the scandalous sale of Christ was the salvation of the world. Perhaps, under God's providence, mine also may lead to some good result."

The Jew, whose name was Yussuf, was a merchant, and a dealer in slaves, but only in a particular line. He would not have anything to do with slaves destined for vulgar and coarse employments; but he had the knack of finding out promising young persons capable of the higher occupations, which demand more skill and dexterity. He made it a point always to purchase cheaply, and had cleverness enough to dispose of them at a very high rate, and he hoped to make a large profit by Anselmo.

"The graceful and noble figure of this handsome youth," said he to his book-keeper, when he came home, "the talent which I think I can see in his eyes, his bearing, which, even in his slave's dress, bespeaks noble blood—all

inspire me with the hope that I shall be able to dispose of him as attendant or companion, or a sort of page in some distinguished family."

He desired that Anselmo should be brought to a lute-maker, and told him to select the handsomest and best-toned lute he could find; at the same time charging the servant to make as close a bargain as he could.

Anselmo brought home an exquisite instrument, and when his master ordered him to play, he selected one of the psalms which he knew almost entirely by heart:

"Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept when we remembered Sion;

On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments.

For then they that led us into captivity required of us the words of songs, And they that carried us away, said, 'Sing ye to us a hymn of the songs of Sion.'

How shall we sing the song of the Lord in a strange land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my hand be forgotten,

Let my tongue cleave to my jaws if I do not remember thee;

If I make not Jerusalem the beginning of my joy."

Yussuf was deeply affected, and the tears gushed to his eyes. "Oh, that is beautiful!" said he, "that is very beautiful—it touches the heart. For we, Israelites, still live, as our fathers once did, under the willows of Babylon, far from our father-land;—yea, we are dispersed on the whole wide world."

"Oh!" said Anselmo, "all men alike here on earth are dwellers in a strange land; our only true father-land is heaven!"

"You are right," said Yussuf. "That is true—quite true. You speak very sensibly. I would not have imagined that you were so versed in our sacred hymns, and understood so well their hidden meaning. I am now doubly delighted with my purchase. Your style of singing, too, as far as I can judge, is very good. It will be the means of recommending you to a good place, and," he inwardly thought, "will bring me a fine price."

However, he was not in any hurry to dispose of Anselmo. He wished to train him first, as he had often done in similar cases, in the customs and usages of the Turks, and especially to teach him their language, that he might be able to speak to his future master, and to understand and execute his orders. He himself instructed him in the Turkish language, and he was amazed at the rapidity of his progress.

Those who knew Yussuf solely as a man of business, took him to be a very close, narrow-minded man, who calculated everything, even to a farthing; but in reality he was no miser, but rather liberal and benevolent. His treatment of Anselmo was very good, according to the usages of the country. He lived upon rice and lamb, with dates and olives, and occasionally a slice of fat goose. To be sure there was in all this a view to his own interest. "I must not let the boy," thought he, "lose his fair, healthy appearance, else his sale will be spoiled." The room which he assigned to Anselmo was one of the best in the house; but still being designed for slaves, it had a gloomy and disagreeable appearance; and it was a hard task for the noble youth to reconcile himself to it, having always been accustomed to cheerful, pleasant, and richly furnished apartments. Writing a very fine hand, he was obliged to copy a great number of accounts and bills, and bitterly regretted the loss of the time which he might so much more profitably have devoted to his studies at the university. Many a time he was obliged, for a whole day long, to assist in the packing and unpacking of goods, which he found a very fatiguing occupation. But he accepted all these trials as from God's hand, and bore them with patience, and he was always cheerful and gay like an angel of God.

CHAPTER III.

THE TURKISH FAMILY.

AFTER the lapse of a year, Yussuf came in one day in high spirits, smiling and rubbing his hands with glee.

"I think," said he to Anselmo, "I may now congratulate you. I have discovered a most capital place for you. I am sure you will find yourself most happy there, and they will all be delighted with you."

He provided him with a rich suit of the most becoming colours, desired him to take his lute, and brought him to a house in the city, which had quite the appearance of a palace. A servant, in rich livery, announced them, and in a short time returned, and showed them into a splendid apartment.

The master of the house, a handsome, high-complexioned Turk, magnificently attired in the national costume, was seated on a richly embroidered sofa, in front of which a variegated carpet was spread. He was smoking what seemed to be most exquisite tobacco, with a long handsome pipe, and his coffee was placed beside him, served up in most exquisite porcelain, upon a charming little table.

"They have been telling me," said the Turk to Anselmo, "that you are a good singer and lute-player. Pray, let us have a specimen of your performance."

"I cannot sing in Turkish," said Anselmo, "I have no songs but Italian."

"That will do very well," replied the Turk; "sing and play for us whatever you choose yourself."

Anselmo's song was most movingly appropriate to his own position; the Turk listened to it with great attention, and smoked his pipe with a gratified air, nodded his

approval repeatedly, and at the end of the song exclaimed, "Bravo! You quite surpass my expectation, and I am sure your other attainments, which Yussuf reported to me, must be equally satisfactory."

He put to him a vast number of questions, and was pleased with Anselmo's replies.

"Very well," said he at last, "I believe you; I have no doubt you really possess all the qualities which I desire."

He stood up and went into a neighbouring room, the door of which was half open. They heard him speak to some one, but could not hear what it was about. After a while he returned, and paid over upon the spot to Yussuf, who was delighted with his success, a hundred gold pieces. While it was being counted out, Yussuf stood by, stroking his beard, and with an air of extreme delight, put it into a leathern purse which he brought with him.

"Your excellency," said he to the Turk, "will be well pleased with your bargain; and you, Anselmo, will, I am sure, show by your conduct that you are worth the money. Farewell! God the Father protect you!"

The Turk, in whose service Anselmo was thus placed, was called Achmed, and was a very wealthy and extensive merchant, as well as an official of high rank in the city. He told Anselmo that he would entrust to him chiefly his Italian and French correspondence, and mentioned to him the other duties which he would have to perform in the house. Among other things, it would be his office to attend at table; and as it was now dinner hour, Achmed desired him to prepare the table, which he did with great neatness and taste.

Only four persons appeared at table—Achmed, his wife Fatima, and his two children, a boy of nine and a girl of six years old. The lady, who now raised the veil which had covered her features, was extremely beautiful; and the children, who seemed to be very well-bred and amiable, greeted the young stranger affectionately, and watched him with great curiosity. Anselmo attended at table with

great diligence and ease ; he understood every signal, and often anticipated their wishes. At the end of the meal, Achmed declared, that "they had never been served so well, with so much quickness and activity."

The lady had already, from the next apartment, heard Anselmo's singing and playing. "You sing and play very beautifully," said she. "I should like to hear another of your pretty songs."

With the same delicate tact which he had displayed upon a former occasion, Anselmo selected a song on the love of children and parents for each other, which he sang with exquisite taste and feeling.

Achmed and his wife listened to him with great pleasure. The children were quite delighted. "The song is beautiful," said the little boy: "what a pity that we don't understand a word of it!"

"I should like to learn to sing so," said the little girl.

"And I will learn to accompany you on the lute," added her brother.

"Ah!" said his sister, "that must be very difficult. It is easier to sing—I can sing a little myself already;" and, in her soft, sweet, little voice, she began a little Turkish song.

"Very good!" cried her father, "Anselmo shall instruct you."

The children were delighted; and Anselmo assured them that he would do so with pleasure. The children soon were quite attached to him, and this gratified the parents very much, and won for Anselmo their entire affection and their especial confidence.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LION.

AFTER a few weeks Achmed and his family removed to their country residence, and Anselmo was brought with them. This property, which was a fine one, lay far in the interior close to the mountain, and Achmed had a large house upon it, and a garden which was almost a perfect paradise. Rich flower-beds of every variety of hue, gave it a most captivating appearance, and the long rows of trees were laden with oranges, pomegranates, figs, and other delicious fruits. The garden opened into a beautiful mulberry plantation, in which the silk worms throve without any care, and hung their webs, like golden fruits, upon the branches of the trees.—Vines, trained high upon elms or similar trees, clambered from tree to tree, adorning them with the richest clusters of grapes, which seemed as if they were the natural fruit of these forest trees. Farther off was a vast olive grove which also belonged to the estate, and a multitude of slaves were at that very time engaged in gathering the olives, which yielded olive oil of the very choicest kind.

In the evening, when the heat of the day was somewhat abated, Achmed, accompanied by his wife, the two children, and Anselmo, went to visit the labourers. The sun had already gone down, and the wearied labourers sat at their supper, at some distance from the olive grove. A few steps farther on they had kindled a fire, at which they had cooked their supper, but which was now only a heap of red ashes, and had almost ceased to smoke. Achmed and Fatima went on a little farther to look at the mountain, whose lofty cedar-crowned peak still gleamed in the evening sun, though the valley was already sunk in shade.

The children ran about on the green sward. The little boy espied a bird singing its evening song upon a bush; and the little girl discovered a shrub, around which were hovering a number of insects, which were much prettier and more brilliant than fire-flies, and, to the child, had all the appearance of flying diamonds. But on a sudden there appeared, rushing down from the mountain, a fearful lion, with bristling mane and gaping jaws. Every one fled, in consternation, and pale as death, to the house; but little Almira, who could not run so fast, remained behind, and the terrible beast was very close upon her, when Anselmo seized from the fire, with sudden self-possession, a brand which still was red, and swung it around till it began to glow again, to sparkle, and at last to blaze furiously. Whirling before him this fiery wheel, he advanced boldly against the fearful animal—he knew that such animals were afraid of fire. The lion paused, stood still, shook his mane menacingly, uttered a roar which echoed back like thunder from the mountain, and then, still looking with fiery eyes at the daring youth, retired a few steps. The savage beast stood still once more uttered a still more terrific roar, and waited, as it were, prepared for a spring. Anselmo was not terrified, but still advanced with his fiery weapon. The lion quailed, stood still a third time, but turned, at last, trotted away to the mountain, and disappeared in the thickening gloom of the approaching night.

Almira, meanwhile, had reached her mother, who had turned around at the child's mournful cry, but paralysed with fear, had tried in vain to come to the aid of the child, though, in truth, she could have afforded her none. Almira sank, fainting, into the arms of her mother, who clasped her to her breast, and bathed her pale face with a mother's burning tears. The father looked up gratefully to heaven, and embraced Anselmo with the liveliest emotion. Little Aladin patted his sister's cheek tenderly.

"Thank God!" said he, "that you have escaped alive.

If Anselmo had not been there, the lion would have eaten you up, and I should have cried myself to death!" The father and mother advanced, and praised Anselmo's heroism; and he thought himself most happy in having saved the dear child's life; and as soon as he reached his little bed-room, threw himself on his knees, and thanked God for having given him courage and strength to save a fellow-creature's life.

CHAPTER V.

THE OFFERED REWARD.

ANSELMO never, in all his life, slept so well as on this night, nor did he ever rise so cheerfully as the next morning, in the consciousness of having achieved so noble an action on the preceding day. He repaired to the garden, and watched the rising of the sun. He thought he had never seen it rise so gloriously before. The heavens never appeared to him so beauteous a blue. The tints of the flowers appeared to him fresher and more vivid, and every drop of dew seemed to sparkle with greater brilliancy. Everything around proclaimed to him, more sweetly than ever, the bounty and goodness of God. Never before did the prayer come so devoutly from his heart. His prayer arose to heaven with the perfume of the flowers!

He now set about the occupation of the day, and gathered flowers in a basket to fill the flower-vases in the dining room. While he was thus engaged, Achmed, his master, came into the garden, and bad him a most cordial good morrow.

"Come with me, my young hero," he said. "I have an important matter to discuss with you."

He took him affectionately by the hand, and led into a shaded alley, where they began to walk up and down.

"Dearest Anselmo!" said he, after a short silence, "I am deeply grateful to you—you have saved the life of my child. Had it not been for your courage, your prompt self-possession, she would have been fearfully torn to pieces by the teeth of the lion. You shall not any longer be my slave—I regard you now as my son—your heart gives you a claim to this title. Henceforward you shall never wait at table; you shall sit with me and my children, and eat of one dish with me. You shall no longer dress as a slave, but just like myself: you belong, in every respect, to my own family. I will share all my business and all my pleasures with you, and I hope yet to make you a great and a distinguished man. But there is one condition necessary in the first instance—you must profess the faith of Mahomet!"

The pious Christian youth was horror-struck at the proposal. "Achmed!" said he, "ask everything—ask life itself from me. I am ready to give it for you. But do not desire that I fall away from my faith, and renounce Christ, my Lord. Never shall I do so—not for all the riches of the world: He is my salvation—my sole happiness. I will remain true to Him, even unto death."

Achmed pressed his proposal upon Anselmo at great length, and, what surprised him very much, in the Italian language. Hitherto he had only let a few isolated Italian phrases escape him, but now he spoke it in an uninterrupted flow, with great beauty, fluency, and even with overpowering eloquence. He painted in the liveliest colours, the happiness which would be Anselmo's, if he would be content to don the turban, that is to become a Turk and abandon Christianity.

But Anselmo cried out with horror and with great vehemence, "No, no—never shall I do so! To shorten the discussion," said he, now resuming his mother-tongue, in which he spoke with most freedom, "let me give you one single reply—You are grateful to me, for having risked my life to rescue your daughter from the claws of

the lion. Now recollect that Christ, for me and for all men, not merely risked his sacred life, but actually sacrificed it. For me He shed His blood; for me He endured the most terrible of deaths. He has not merely rescued me from the jaws of a ferocious wild beast, but he has delivered me from a far more fearful death—from eternal perdition. He has not merely procured for me a short prolongation of my temporal life, He has prepared for me a happy life for all eternity. How could I abandon Him? What black ingratitude, what frightful treachery would it be to do so?"

Achmed was (though Anselmo was not aware of it, and though it was a secret in Algiers also,) a renegade; that is, he had abandoned Christianity, and adopted the creed of Mahomet. He had been brought up by pious, Christian parents; but in a voyage which he made for commercial purposes, he was taken captive by pirates, and sold as a slave at Constantinople. There he had gained the confidence of his master, a Turk of distinction, and the affections of his daughter; and the hope of his master's rich inheritance, and of his fair daughter's hand, had tempted him to abandon the Christian religion, and embrace that of Mahomet.

Anselmo's pious discourse, therefore, went deeply to his heart, and made a powerful impression upon him. "I do not require of you," said he to Anselmo, "to abandon your faith in Christ. Internally you may still believe in Him; I only ask that externally you embrace the religion of Mahomet. Without this merely external change of creed, you never can rise in this country, or acquire wealth and distinction. The person who, in this country, opposes the opinions of the people, and does not adopt their usages and observances, has nothing to expect but contempt and persecution. You must, therefore, become a Mahometan at least in appearance."

"Oh! no, no," repeated Anselmo, over and over again, "such hypocrisy would be unworthy of me—it would be

but a public and most guilty falsehood. And ask yourself; is it possible for us to deny before men, one whom we love sincerely and from our hearts? Ah! when I reflect on the love of my Lord and Saviour, how, before I was born, He gave His life for me, my soul burns with love for Him. To Him was I devoted and consecrated in baptism, even when I was but a new-born babe. My beloved parents trained me from my tenderest childhood to faith in Him. I know no greater happiness than the knowledge and love of Him. I recall with heavenly rapture, the blessed moment when I was first united with Him in the Holy Communion, the most sacred ordinance of the Christian religion. Oh, how could I demean myself, as though I knew nothing, and wished to know nothing, of Him? How could I desert and forswear Him before the eyes of men? What pain—what scandal should I thus give to my Christian fellow captives. Alas! were I to do so, I should never more, in all my life, enjoy a peaceful hour! Far from me be such a treason! That a Turk, who has never known Christ, to whom he has never been preached, who has only heard His name coupled with blasphemy and revilings, should not believe in Him, I cannot wonder; I can but pity him, and pity him sincerely. But a Christian, who should treacherously deny his Lord and Master, would be a worthless, reprobate wretch. Of that apostate disciple who betrayed Him for a pitiful sum of money, Christ said, ‘It were better for him that he had never been born.’ Your efforts to make me such a man are vain. Try it if you choose. Place here all your treasures, your gold and silver—offer me, besides, all this princely property:—place on the other side the headsman with his naked sword, which has been stained with the blood of many an innocent Christian, and let me choose between them. You shall see whether I, rather than abandon my faith, will not offer my head to the death-stroke cheerfully and boldly!”

Anselmo's every word penetrated Achmed's heart like a

two-edged sword. "Rest at peace," he said. "I honour your faith. I shall never again annoy you by such proposals." He turned away with pale and downcast countenance, and, absorbed in thought, walked slowly towards the open fields.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GRATEFUL MOTHER.

ANSELMO filled his flower-basket, and went into the room in which they ordinarily breakfasted. Fatima, in a white morning dress, sat upon a purple-covered sofa, with her two children, awaiting her husband's return.

"Dear Anselmo!" she cried, as he came in, "your yesterday's feat was a noble one. You saved my dear Almira's life at the hazard of your own. It was a great and noble action!"

"Ah," replied Anselmo, whose heart was still full of his conversation with Achmed, "it was but my duty as a Christian! Christ, who gave his life for us, has commanded us, 'Love one another, as I have loved you!'"

"That is a noble precept!" said Fatima, "I should like to learn this religion of yours. Tell me of it, and tell me also your own history."

Anselmo told with great feeling how his father and mother had instructed him from his childhood in the Christian religion; how they taught him to know God as the Father of all men, and Jesus Christ the well beloved Son of God; how Christ has commanded us to love the Father in heaven above all, and to love as ourselves, all men on earth, as God's children and our brethren and sisters. With tears in his eyes, he told her all that had ever affected him most in the life, passion, and death of Jesus. He still remembered many a word which his

tender mother, in the fulness of her pious heart, had spoken to him about the history of Jesus, and which remained uneffaceably imprinted on his memory. Many of these sayings he repeated word for word. He spoke with a kind of inspiration of the beauty and excellence of the Christian religion. All that he said, but especially his mother's words, made a deep impression upon Fatima's maternal heart, and the hearts of her children. Little Almira wept for pity that Jesus, who was so good, should have been put to death; and little Aladin cried, "Oh, had I been as powerful as He, I should have dashed the villains to pieces with a thunderbolt." Anselmo told him that Jesus had suffered entirely of his own free will, for the love of man; that he permitted himself to be put to death in order to deliver us from eternal death and perdition; and that even when he was dying, he prayed to heaven for his murderers: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

The dying Saviour's love so moved the hearts of mother and children, that all three burst into tears.

"That is a truly God-like love," said Fatima. "This Jesus was, in all that He did and suffered, love and mercy itself."

Fatima still wished to hear how Anselmo had come to Algiers. He told her how he had been going to visit his parents; how the pirates fell on him and dragged him to their ship, treated him barbarously, and sold him as a slave. "What troubles me most," said he, bursting into tears, "is the affliction of my dear parents and my little brother and sister, who are not much older than these dear children here. Ah! how anxiously must they have expected my return: how bitterly must they have wept over my long absence. And how sorely do they still grieve, to think that they shall never more hear of their Anselmo!"

"I pity your poor parents," said Fatima. "It was barbarous in the pirates to drag you off from them. You

Christians must surely regard the Turks as your greatest enemies, and hate them bitterly."

"O no," said Anselmo, "we, Christians, must not hate any man—we must love all—Turks, and Jews, else would we not deserve the name of Christians."

"Your religion pleases me very much," said Fatima. "I admire it greatly." She sat for a long time in a silent and meditative mood. "Indeed," thought she, "the Christians' religion is better than that of the Turks. Mahomet, our prophet, preached hatred against those who differed with him in faith; Christ, the Founder of the Christian religion, preached nothing but love. Mahomet shed the blood of many thousands, in order to propagate his religion: Christ shed His blood for the love of men, and forbade His religion to be propagated by the sword. I must confess that Christ is infinitely above Mahomet!" For the time, however, she did not venture to say all this aloud.

What comes from the heart, goes to the heart again. It was therefore that Anselmo's words had made such a deep impression upon Fatima. Besides, her whole heart was penetrated with joy for the rescue of her darling child, and with gratitude to her magnanimous deliverer. "Come, dear Almira," she said, "do you also thank this noble youth, to whom you owe your life."

The little girl went over to him, looked up to him with tears in her eyes, offered him her little hand, and said: "I thank you, dear Anselmo! God is great and mighty—may He reward you!"

"My dear Anselmo," said her mother, "when I was a little girl of that age, I had a Christian slave as my nurse. She was extremely gentle, and all tenderness and love towards me. She told me a great many stories about a Divine Child, at whose birth the angels rejoiced, praising God and congratulating men. These and such like stories, are among the sweetest recollections of my childhood. She used to sing for me, too, some of her pious

hymns, which have always been floating in my memory, and which were the occasion of your being taken into our house, as being so charming a singer. Even at that early age, there was stirred up in my heart a leaning towards the Christian religion: but when my parents observed this, they removed my pious nurse, Christina. Loving her almost as my mother, I wept and refused to part with her; and, at my earnest prayers, my parents gave her her liberty, and sent her back to her native land, where, as I was told, she arrived safely. Her gentle, pale face is even still before me: she wept bitterly as she was parting from me; and her last word was, 'Believe me, Fatima, you will yet be a Christian.'

CHAPTER VII.

A GREAT RESOLVE AND ITS EXECUTION.

WHILE Fatima was engaged in this conversation, two hours flew by almost like minutes, but the children now began to feel hungry, for the breakfast remained upon the table untouched. The mother became uneasy at her husband not making his appearance for breakfast, and could not conceive where he remained so long; but as he was in the habit of taking a long walk every morning, the fearful idea occurred to her that he might have fallen in the way of the lion.

Meanwhile, however, he had been pacing up and down in the olive wood with folded arms. His apostasy from the Christian religion, had now filled his heart with so much remorse. "This pious youth," said he, "has, without aiming them at me, pierced my heart to the very core, with his simple words, as with so many barbed arrows. I have never been at ease, it is true, but now my condition is intolerable. I will make up my mind to return to my native

land and to the bosom of the Church. With Fatima, perhaps, I shall have a hard contest; would that I could persuade her to return with me and to embrace the Christian religion! True, I would fly alone; but it would be too painful to abandon her, without caring that my son and my daughter shall be brought up in Mahomedanism. I will therefore declare to her my resolution once for all—and this very instant! Perhaps Anselmo's heroism may dispose her to yield more readily to it!"

With a serious and gloomy air, he walked into the apartment to disclose his resolve to her, not knowing how happily Anselmo had prepared the way for him.

"Oh my dear Achmed!" she cried, as he entered the room, "I wish you had been here just now—Anselmo in a short time has said so much to me about the excellence of the Christian religion, that I was wishing from my heart I could become a Christian. I confess that, were I in your place, nothing in the world would have moved me to abandon so glorious a religion."

Achmed's countenance brightened when he heard these words.

"God be praised," said he, "that these are your sentiments! I think as you do, and I am just come for the purpose of speaking more at length with you, on this subject."

Fatima desired Anselmo to bring the children into another apartment, to eat their breakfast, and then said to Achmed, "What occasion is there for a long conversation? I am resolved to accompany you, with our children, to your native country."

Achmed was delighted with this intelligence, but still anticipated many difficulties in carrying the project into effect. But Fatima at once suggested a plan.

"It is but a few days," she said, "since you told several of your relations and commercial friends, that a very pressing business would oblige you to go to Venice in person. I shall announce that you must immediately set

out upon this voyage, which you have often spoken of before: they will easily understand, as will every one else, that you could not resist my desire, my pressing entreaty, to be permitted to accompany you on your journey; and it is very natural that I should not like to leave my children behind me. Our bringing our gold and silver plate, our pearls, diamonds, and other jewellery, will create no suspicion, for the Turks will wish, that we should appear there with as much splendour as possible. We shall also be able to pack up among the merchandize, and carry with us, without exciting observation, many of our treasures; and as regards our property here, I openly begged of you before all our people last night to sell it, because our children could hardly longer venture out into the open air, and because their lives would not be safe in the neighbourhood of the lion. No one will blame an affectionate mother, for these anxious fears. Sell your property, therefore: collect all your capital, and make every possible preparation as soon as you can, to quit Algiers for ever."

Achmed applauded his wife's prudent suggestion, sold the estate, chartered a ship, embarked all his moveable property on board of her, and set sail with his wife, his children, Anselmo, and several Christian slaves; and his heart grew much lighter, as the hateful city of Algiers disappeared from his eyes. He landed at Salerno. There he left his wife and children to recruit after the fatigue of the voyage, and repaired to Rome without delay: after he had laid aside the Turkish costume, and resumed his Christian attire, he was presented to the Pope along with Anselmo, and received back into the church with true paternal affection. The Father of the Faithful testified to Anselmo his especial gratification, and gave him his benediction with great tenderness. "You will yet," said he, "be, under God's hand, an instrument of salvation to many of your fellow men!"

In Salerno, whither Achmed hastened to return, there

was another great solemnity:—Fatima and her children were solemnly baptized in the cathedral. They appeared splendidly attired in their Turkish costume: the archbishop, to whose jurisdiction Achmed had himself belonged, officiated in person at the sacred ceremony: an immense multitude of people assembled in the majestic church; and every eye was fixed upon the fair and noble looking lady, who, in all her splendour, approached the archbishop with so much humility. The people were almost more charmed to see her two sweet children, who received the holy baptism with folded hands and with visible emotion. As they were returning from the church, and, indeed, wherever they appeared in the city upon that or the following days, the mother and children were saluted with loud cheers by the warm-hearted Italians; and every one prayed for happiness and benediction upon their heads.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TWO HAPPY FAMILIES.

ANSELMO, the moment he reached Salerno, had despatched to his parents a trusty friend, whom he had known during his collegiate studies, who prepared them for Anselmo's return, brought them letters from him, and told them the principal part of the adventures of their beloved son. But he was unable, as yet, to determine for them the day of his return from Rome or Salerno to his father's house.

One evening, as the sun was just beginning to sink, the affectionate parents were sitting with their two children, under the pine trees in front of their ancient castle. Their sole subject of conversation was their dear Anselmo. A young man in a pilgrim's garb, came with hasty steps towards them.—It was Anselmo, but they did not recognize

him at once. He was much taller, and his complexion had become a deeper brown; and his mother, too, had expected, from the account of his young friend, that her son would have come in a splendid carriage, and in the company of the rich family. But when she and his father recognized him, the joy both of his parents and of his brother and sister, was beyond all description. They all led him, as if in triumph, into the castle: he laid aside his staff, his scallop-hat, and his pilgrim's weeds, and stood before them attired in a manner becoming his rank.—He had but put on the pilgrim's habit, in order to be able to travel more quietly and more agreeably, according to his own fashion. His mother directed a festal banquet to be prepared, and they all sat together until midnight. Anselmo told them his entire history at full length; and his parents could not cease telling him their grief—now, thanks to God, at an end—and their present happiness.

Three days afterwards arrived Achmed, (now no longer called by that name, but by his former name, Guido,) with his wife and children, to visit Anselmo's parents. Their common faith in Christ, and the bond of Christian love soon made them all one family. Guido honoured Anselmo's father, a venerable and rather aged man, as his own; and Fatima (now called Mary,) and Anselmo's mother, soon became bosom friends. Anselmo's brother and sister heartily enjoyed themselves with Aladin and Almira (now called Clara and Ignatius). They were indefatigable in talking to one another about Italy and Africa, in which special mention was made of the terrible lion.

Anselmo's father, seeing himself thus surrounded by so many happy friends, could not refrain from adoring and praising the holy Providence of God, with a loud voice. "Merciful Father in heaven!" he said, "how wisely and well Thou dost dispose all things! For me and my dear wife it was a hard blow, that our beloved son was taken from us, and we were sorely afflicted thereby. For him, too, it was a great trial. But this brief sorrow has

brought many to salvation; and has been to us all a source of indescribable happiness. Who is there that must not adore Thee in gratitude, Thou infinitely wise and merciful God?"

Guido knew that Anselmo's parents had lost much by the war, that their castle had often been plundered, their valuable effects pillaged, and their property utterly ruined. He handed over to them, therefore, one day, a paper by which the half of his entire extensive property was legally secured to them. "For," said he, "as we owe to you and your son, whom you educated so well, our participation in the goods of eternity, it is no more than just, that we should share our earthly goods with you."

"No!" replied Anselmo's father. "Far be it from me to take a single farthing from you. It is true, we possess no wealth. Like many other families which were more wealthy than we, we must dispense with the splendour and the luxuries, to which the nobility have a claim. But this is a thing of no moment—it rather has its own advantage.—Alas, wealth too easily seduces men, and leads us to prize external pomp more than true intrinsic worth, and to strive after the enjoyments of sense, more than the more elevated and only true pleasures of the spirit. Yet though we are not rich, still neither are we poor. We have, thanks to God, a competent income, and that is sufficient. I have always prayed, and taught my children to pray with Solomon, 'Poverty and riches give me not, O Lord!' Grant me to enjoy my humble daily bread, while here on earth: else might I, if too rich, become an idle braggart and say, 'Who is the Lord?'—or, if too poor, strive for the wealth of others, and blaspheme the name of God by perjury."

"I think these sentiments extremely wise, beautiful, and noble," said Guido. "I know by experience how dangerous the desire of riches is. But Anselmo is too well tried, to be endangered by the possession of wealth. Though you decline my offer, this shall not prevent me

from discharging my debt to your noble son, Anselmo. He saved my daughter's life: I have to thank him, that I am returned to the road to heaven, whence I had wandered, and that my wife and children now walk thereon with me. You, therefore, dearest Anselmo, must accept the half of my fortune."

"Neither can I," said Anselmo, "accept your munificent present, more than my father; for I made at Rome, a firm resolve of entering a religious order; and in entering this, I shall make a vow of poverty, in order to look only to eternal goods, and to teach other men, by instruction, word, and example, to turn their eyes on these alone. I will venture, however, to make a claim on your generosity, and to make a proposal to you. I have told you of my fellow captives on board the pirates' ship, and especially of a young lawyer, a poor sailor, and a fisherman, who are most deserving of compassion. I often enquired after them in Algiers, but never could learn anything of their fate. In Italy, however, I have learned that they still pine in captivity. On my way hither from Salerno, I visited a convent of the 'Order for the Redemption of Captives,' and begged to see the list of the captives for whose release they were at that moment labouring. To my consolation I found on it the names of my fellow captives; but the venerable fathers had not yet been able to collect, by charitable contributions, the sum required for their ransom. And now I beg, dearest Guido, that you will apply to the ransom of these unfortunates, a part of the sum you had destined for me. Do so, I pray! a greater work of charity you cannot perform!"

"Not a part only will I give," said Guido, "but the whole sum, for the ransom of these three and the rest of your fellow captives, and of many other slaves also. They shall receive their freedom, which I have already granted to the Christian slaves, whom I brought from Algiers."

Anselmo was greatly delighted at this. "The Lord,"

said he, "will reward you richly for this. On that great day, He will place you along with those upon His right, to whom He will say: 'I was a captive and you ransomed Me! For, amen, I say unto you, as long as you did it to one of these least ones, you did it unto Me!'"

CHAPTER IX.

ANOTHER AFFECTING VISIT.

GUIDO purchased a beautiful country residence, a few miles from Anselmo's father's castle. The two families lived in the happiest union, and often visited each other; and Anselmo, by Guido's assistance, continued his studies at Salerno and Rome, always, however, spending the holidays with his parents.

One day, at Easter, he was at home upon a visit, and Guido with his family had come to see him. Guido brought with him a letter from the captive lawyer, expressing his warmest gratitude to him for his release, and also greeting most affectionately the generous youth Anselmo, his former fellow prisoner.

The following day as they were sitting happily together at table, the servants announced the old fisherman and the young sailor, who had been Anselmo's fellow prisoners, but were now at liberty, and had come to thank the generous Guido. This was their native district; and the sailor had brought his old parents, and the fisherman, his five children and their mother, along with him. It was most affecting to see how they all wept, and shed plenteous tears of joy and heartfelt gratitude.

"Do not thank me," said Guido to them, "but this youth! To him you are indebted for your freedom, and I and my children for something far more precious. This noble youth, who was your fellow captive, is your deliverer!"

They had not at once recognized Anselmo, but they now remembered him.

"Yes, yes," said the old fisherman, "this is the youth who, in our deep distress aboard the pirate, appeared to us like an angel, and tenderly comforted us. O my children, my dear wife, and you, neighbour, as well as your aged parents, offer him your grateful thanks."

They all encircled Anselmo and tried to kiss his hands and his clothes. But he drew back from them, and said: "Thank my beloved parents for it. It was they who, by word and example, inspired these sentiments into my heart, and taught me to act thus. All that I am, comes, under God, from the good education they have given me."

Anselmo's father stepped into the centre, and took off his cap reverently. "All the praise and thanks," he said, raising his eyes to heaven, "are due to God alone! He, as is ever His wont, has 'done all things well.' He, in permitting that my son should fall into the pirates' hands, has turned the affliction, which we suffered at home, and you aboard the ship, to the advantage of us all. By these afflictions I think we are all made more pious, wiser, and better—God prepared for us great sorrows, but also great joys. If a son turn to good account the good education which his parents and masters bestow; if he apply well the talents which God lends to him; if he remain humble withal; seek not his own, but God's glory, and yield himself to the guidance of God's Spirit, God can work great things by his hands, and make him an instrument of blessing to many, not alone for this short life, but still more for eternity. To him be honour, praise, and thanks, now and for ever more! Amen."

Anselmo devoted himself to the study of theology, and determined to enter, after the completion of his studies, the order which is specially devoted to the ransoming of Christian captives from Turkish slavery, and is therefore called "The Order for the Redemption of Captives;" and he transferred his paternal estate to his younger brother.

This he announced in a letter to his parents, in which he solicited their approbation of his choice.

"Having seen," said he, "with my own eyes, in Algiers, the misery of the Christian slaves, I have conceived a special predilection for this order, which, as you know, was founded by St. John De Matha, an ecclesiastic of noble birth, and distinguished equally for learning, for piety towards God, and for love of his fellow men. What a noble object is that to which this order is devoted: the instruction of the ignorant, the tending of the sick, and, above all, the Redemption of the Captive! I have myself seen that its members are austere to themselves, but indulgent and beneficent to all else beside: they are content with the humblest fare, and seek nothing but to be permitted to devote all that they possess or can acquire, nay even their very selves, with joyful hearts, for the service of their fellow men."

Anselmo's pious parents applauded his resolve; and both (especially his mother,) were delighted when they first beheld their darling son in the white habit of the order, with the red cross upon his breast.

"This cross," said Anselmo, "reminds us that, with faith in Him who died for us upon the cross, we ought to bear our own sorrows patiently, and charitably alleviate the sorrows of others. The white and red colours signify, that the brethren are bound to strive after poverty of life, and to burn with charity for all men, especially for those in affliction."

"This is substantially the duty of all men," said his father, "and it is also our own. It perfectly coincides with the exhortation of St. James:

"RELIGION, CLEAR AND UNDEFILED BEFORE GOD THE FATHER, IS THIS: TO VISIT THE FATHERLESS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR TRIBULATION, AND TO KEEP ONESELF UNSPOTTED FROM THIS WORLD.'"

THE FIREFLY.

ONE evening, after a hot sultry summer day, a poor widow, named Mary, was sitting at the open window of her little room, and looking out into the pretty orchard which surrounded her cottage. She had collected into little heaps, as the evening approached, the hay which had been mown in the morning, and which the heat of the sun soon dried sufficiently; and its sweet perfume was most refreshing and invigorating. The glow of sunset still lingered on the edge of the clear and cloudless horizon, and the moon, about half-full, shone brightly and beauteously into the cheerful little room, and cast the image of the graceful triangular window, which stood open, and of the clear round panes of the closed one, together with the vine branches which surrounded it, upon the trim and tidy floor. Her little Ferdinand, a boy of about six years old, stood at the window, and his rosy little face and yellow hair, as well as a part of his pretty white wrist-bands and little red waistcoat, were lighted up most pleasingly by the moonbeams.

The poor widow sat there resting herself. But heavy as had been the burden of the scorching day, a yet heavier woe pressed upon her, and made her forget her fatigues. She had scarcely tasted a spoonful of her supper, which consisted of a little boiled bread and milk. Little Ferdinand, too, was quite dejected, and sat still, seeing how melancholy his mother was. He, too, like his mother, had but wept bitterly instead of eating; he soon set his



One evening, after a hot sultry summer day, a poor widow, named Mary, was sitting at the open window of her little room, and looking out into the pretty orchard which surrounded her cottage.—p. 216.

spoon down, and the earthen-ware dish stood almost full, just as it had been served, upon the table, in the moonlight, casting a bright circular reflection upon the roof of the little apartment.

It was but in the early part of the spring, that Mary had been made a widow. Her husband, the finest young man in the village, had, by his industry and thriftiness, accumulated money enough to purchase the little cottage and meadow, not, however, without contracting a debt. With industrious foresight, he had planted the vine-yard and field thickly with young trees, which already bore very fine fruit. For his wife he had selected Mary, though she was an orphan, and though her parents had not been able to leave her anything but a good education, for she was regarded as the most pious, industrious, and modest girl in the village. They had lived very happily together, till a nervous fever broke out in the village, and carried off her husband; and she herself, after attending him with most affectionate assiduity, was seized with it almost immediately after his death, and had had a very narrow escape from sinking under it. She was greatly thrown back by her own illness and that of her husband, but now she was on the point of losing, besides, her little cottage. Her husband had long been a servant with the richest farmer in the village—the steward of the estate; who, entertaining a high opinion of his honesty and industry, had lent him three hundred florins, to purchase this cottage and garden; but on condition of his repaying fifty florins each year, half in money and half in labour. He had complied faithfully up to the year of his sickness, and the debt now amounted to but fifty florins. All this Mary knew well.

The steward, however, died of the same illness which carried off her husband, and the heirs, his son-in-law and daughter, found among the papers of the deceased, the bond for three hundred florins. Of the whole transaction they did not know one word, as the deceased had never spoken to them of it; and they now claimed the whole

sum of the poor widow. The terrified woman assured them, and declared before God, that her deceased husband had paid all but fifty florins; but her declaration was of no avail. The young farmer called her a shameless liar, and cited her before the court. As she could not prove any payments, the whole sum was declared to be due. The heirs claimed payment; and as Mary had nothing but her little house and garden, this little property had been ordered to be sold. On her knees she had begged them not to thrust her out: little Ferdinand knelt along with her: they both shed tears—but it was all in vain. The next day was even fixed for the auction; so she had heard, an hour before, as she was finishing her work—a neighbour had told her so across the hedge.

It was therefore she sat so dejected at the open window, now looking up to the moon-lit sky, now down upon her little Ferdinand, now shedding scalding tears and gazing vacantly before her. It was a sorrowful silence.

“O merciful God!” she cried, “so I have to-day raked up the hay in my field for the last time. The early yellow plums, which I plucked from the tree yonder to-day for my poor Ferdinand, are the last fruits which the boy is to eat, from the trees his father planted with such unwearying industry. Yea, perhaps this is our last night of shelter under this roof. This time to-morrow the house shall be another’s property; and who knows whether he may not order us away forthwith! God knows where we shall find shelter to-morrow night—perhaps under the open sky.” And she began to sob bitterly.

Little Ferdinand, who had not stirred till now, came over to her. “Mother,” said he, himself sobbing, “do not cry so bitterly, or I shall not be able to speak to you for sobbing. Don’t you know what father said, when he was dying in yonder bed? ‘Weep not so,’ he said, ‘God is the Father of the widow and the orphan. Call on Him in your necessity—He will watch over you!’ These were his words; and are they not true?”

"Yes, my dear child," said his mother, "they are."

"Well," said the little fellow, "why do you cry so long? Pray to God, and He will help you! When I used to be in the forest with my father, as he was cutting wood, and when I wanted anything, or when I was hungry or had trod upon a thorn, I never used to cry long. I used to go to my poor father and ask him, and he would always lay down his axe, and give me bread or draw out the thorn.—And God is ready to hear us also. He is not as hard-hearted as the rich man, to whom we knelt and prayed for mercy, and who almost kicked us and shewed us to the door. Or, perhaps you think God is not rich enough to help us. He is far richer than the steward. Look out of the window—the moon and all the stars are His.—My father used often to tell me that the whole world is His. Why then should we weep and mourn? Come, let us pray to our good God.—He will certainly hear us.—Begin, and I will help you to pray, and we shall be more successful than with the rich man."

"You are right, dear child!" said his mother, and her tears became less bitter, and her sorrow was tempered with consolation. She clasped her hands, and raised her streaming eyes to heaven: the boy too, folded his little hands and looked to heaven; and the bright moon shone down upon the mother and her boy, and was mirrored back by their tears; and the mother began to pray, and the little one repeated each word after her.

"Dear Father in heaven!" she cried, "behold here a poor widow and her child. A poor widow and a poor orphan look up to Thee! They are in deep distress, and have no earthly refuge:—but Thy heart is full of compassion—Thou Thyself hast said, 'Call on me in thy necessity, and I will be thy Deliverer.' Oh! to Thee do we pray!—Cast us not forth from this cottage: take not from a poor orphan his little paternal inheritance. Or if, in Thy inscrutable, but yet most wise and loving providence, Thou hast so disposed it—ah, grant us, on Thy

great, wide earth, to find another little spot, and grant us comfort for our hearts, that they break not when we shall thus be driven forth, and from yonder hill shall take our last look upon our humble home!"

She could not speak further for sobbing, and looked up to heaven, weeping silently. On a sudden the boy, who still stood with his hands clasped, cried out with a loud voice, pointing with his finger, "Oh, mother, look—what is that? Yonder is a little light flying—a little star! Look—it is floating about the window.—Oh, see, it is coming in now. How beautifully bright it shines; except that it is a green light—almost prettier than the evening star. Now it is flying about the ceiling—well, that is wonderful."

"It is a firefly, dear Ferdinand," said his mother. "By day it is an insignificant little moth, but at night it puts on this wonderful appearance."

"May I catch it?" he asked. "Will it do me any harm?—will the little blaze burn me?"

"It will not burn you," said his mother, smiling, though her cheeks still flowed with tears. "Catch it and look closer at it, it is another of God's wonders."

The boy had now forgot all his sorrows, and set about hunting the firefly, which flitted now close to the ground, now under the table, and now under the chair. But at last he cried out despondingly, "Alas, it is gone!" The little creature, just as he was stretching out his hand to catch it, had retreated under the great chest by the wall. He looked under the chest. "I see it plainly," he said: "'tis sitting there close up to the wall; and the white wall, and every grain of dust, where it is sitting, is glittering as if in the moonlight. But I can't get at it—my arm is too short."

"Have patience," said his mother: "it will come out again."

The boy waited for a little while, and then came to his mother, and said to her, with a soft, entreating voice,

"Oh! mother, stretch in for it for me, or move the chest ever so little from the wall; and I shall easily catch it myself."

His mother stood up and moved the chest, and the little boy caught the firefly as it lay, and looked at it between his hands. He was more delighted with it, than ever was prince or princess with the purest and most brilliant diamond.

His mother, however, had perceived something else, as she moved the chest: something which lay between it and the wall had fallen to the ground. As she took it up she uttered a loud scream.

"O my God!" she cried, "now we are at once freed from all our trouble! This is last year's almanac, which was so long looking for in vain. Alas, I thought that, during my illness, while I lay insensible, some of the strange hands, who were not always most attentive to our house-keeping, must have destroyed it as useless. But now it will be found, that my husband paid the money which is claimed from us. Who would have dreamt that the almanac lay behind the chest, which we bought along with the house, and which, since the house was built, has never been moved from the spot."

She at once procured a light, and with tears of joy ran through the almanac. It contained a regular entry of what amount of the three hundred florins, her late husband had owed at the commencement of the year, and how much he had paid in money and in labour during the year. At the end was an entry in the old steward's hand, "On this, St. Martin's day, I have settled with John Blum, and he now owes me no more than fifty florins."

The mother clasped her hands in joy, embraced her child, and cried out in rapture: "O Ferdinand, do you also thank our merciful God; for we shall no longer be obliged to leave our house. Now we shall be allowed to retain our house!"

"Was it not I who did that?" said the boy. "Had not

I begged you to move the chest, you never would have found the book. It might have stuck there for a hundred years."

His mother stood for a moment in silent astonishment. "O my child!" said she, at length, "it is God who has done it. A deep feeling of awe comes over me, when I reflect upon it. While we wept and prayed, lo, there came that shining insect, and lighted me as though with a taper, to the spot where these leaves lay hid. Yes, indeed, God disposes all things, even the most trivial. His holy Providence watches over us. Nothing is without its design—without God's knowledge not a hair of our head falls to the ground! Remember this all your life long, and ever trust in Him, especially in the hour of need. For Him it is easy to help and to deliver us. He needs not to send an enlightening angel for the purpose: He can do it by means of a winged little worm!"

She could not sleep for joy; and soon after day-break she flew to the judge. He summoned the heir. He made his appearance; acknowledged the correctness of the document; and was greatly ashamed at having defamed the widow before the court, and represented her as unworthy of credit. The judge decided that he was bound to give her some compensation, for the disgrace and affliction which he had caused her. He declared his readiness to do so.

But when the poor widow told her whole story, of her prayer and the apparition of the firefly, the judge declared that it was the finger of God, and that He had visibly come to her aid.

"Yes," said the young steward, who stood by deeply affected, and with tears in his eyes. "Yes it is so. God is the Father of the widow and the orphan—but also their avenger. Forgive me for my harshness—it arose from an error. In compensation for the sorrow which I caused you, I remit to you the fifty florins; and if you should ever be in want, come to me and I will always assist you.

For I see clearly, that God never forsakes any one who trusts in Him ; and confidence in Him is a safe capital, more valuable than the greatest riches ; and if I should ever come to want, or if my wife should become a widow and my children orphans, He will aid us even as He aided you !”

“ Place the same trust in Him,” said the judge ; “ and be as upright as this pious widow, and His aid will not be wanting in the hour of need !”

THE REDBREAST.

MARTIN FRANK was a gallant soldier, who had served many years, made many campaigns, and fought honourably for his country. When he returned home from the wars, he found that his poor parents were dead. They had left him nothing but an old rickety house and a little orchard. The brave man now found himself in a very wretched situation; his wounds rendered all severe labour impossible; he was very melancholy; and considered earnestly night and day how to earn an honourable livelihood. One day, in the neighbouring wood, he remarked that the old stumps and roots of the maple trees that were cut down, presented some very beautiful pieces of streaked and variegated wood, but were little esteemed or rotted useless in the wood. He immediately tried to make pipe-heads and tobacco boxes out of this wood, and soon brought them to extraordinary perfection: the pipe-heads which were neatly cut out of the prettiest wood, and beautifully polished, were specially admired, and met with a rapid sale. Many gentlemen of high rank preferred these pipe-heads, when mounted in silver, even to Meerschaum ones.

The industrious man laboured unweariedly the whole week in his work-shop, or in carrying home maple from the wood, and dressed no better than a common labourer, while thus engaged. But on Sunday he appeared in his green uniform with red facings, and with his silver medal on his breast; and went early, leaning on his corporal's staff, (as his foot was somewhat lame,) with measured

steps to church, and in the evening for an hour, or at most, two, to the tavern. He still had something martial in his appearance and countenance, and continued to wear his mustachios. He was much esteemed for his uprightness, intelligence, and regularity; and, by his industry and prudent economy, he acquired a very respectable competence. For he was not one of those who, when they establish a good business, immediately begin to expend, and think that it will ever continue so. Amongst other things he improved his old wooden house, which a wealthy friend had caused to be pulled down and rebuilt; and he arranged it so well, that he lived very happily and conveniently in it; and it looked very well with its deep brown wood, its new round panes, and the shining lead of the frames, amidst the high pear trees and wide spreading apple trees of the orchard. He got married, and brought up his children, a son and daughter, admirably, and provided very well for them. "He who is not wanting in industry," said he often, "will never want for bread. Even the most insignificant craft can support a man. Do your duty faithfully, and trust in God, and God will do his part, and will not suffer you to want his aid, which is so necessary."

When honest Martin Frank had attained a tolerable old age, and his good and faithful wife was no more, the gallant old soldier looked after his house himself, and without employing a house-maid. At the same time he took his grandson to live with him, a lively blooming boy, who had been christened Martin in honour of his grandfather. Little Martin loved his grandfather with his whole heart and soul, and did everything to please him, divining his wishes from his very looks. His grandfather made use of him as an assistant in his trade, and at their work, related to him sometimes merry, sometimes fearful, tales of his campaigns, from which however, he always drew some good moral.

The grandfather often spent whole days in the woods,

selecting maple roots and stumps, and bringing them home. He always took his grandson with him, and these were the happiest days of the boy's life. He never was so happy as in the woods. His grandfather taught him the names of all the trees of the wood, and the qualities and uses of the different kinds. "We can never sufficiently thank our good God," said he, among other things, "that He has caused the great trees to grow up around us. Had He not given us trees, we should have been sadly off. The firs and the pines yonder on the mountain, afford us beams, planks, and laths: our whole house is built of fir; and even the tables and chairs, chests and bedsteads are made of it. The fir certainly is somewhat soft; but other trees, such as the oak and beech yonder, have very firm hard wood. If our wheel-barrow here were not made of such hard wood, it would not last long; nay, without hard wood, we could not even have a durable handle for our tools. It is a very beautiful provision, too, that each kind of wood has a peculiar colour; red, or brown, or yellow, and thus they serve for all sorts of nice furniture. But the wood of the maple is veined like marble, and it is so fine, that you cannot distinguish the fibres of the wood, for which reason we can make it into such fine articles. We cannot it is true eat the fruit of forest trees; but nevertheless these trees support many thousand industrious men, who earn their livelihood by working in wood. We, too, owe our living to the maple tree. So wisely has God disposed all things. We must recognize his wisdom and goodness in all things, and ever cherish a grateful heart towards him."

Little Martin was delighted beyond measure with the birds in the wood and their sweet song. "Grandfather," said he, "may we not catch one and take it home to the house?"

"Nay," answered his grandfather, "that must not be."

"Why not?" said the child; "they sing delightfully. In the house we might ever hear them sing."

"You can hear them singing here in the wood," said

his grandfather; "it sounds far better here. The poor birds that men catch so cruelly, seldom live long, and often perish by the neglect of men."

One fine harvest day, however, in Autumn, the grandfather and his grandson were seated in a sunny open of the wood at their humble dinner, which the boy had as usual brought with him in a basket. A robin redbreast, came and picked up the crumbs scattered about. The little fellow was delighted with it. "What a very pretty bird," exclaimed he to his grandfather, speaking low, however, in order not to disturb it. "There is nothing I would not give to have such a bird in our room during the winter."—"And so you may," answered his grandfather; "the robin is a very tame bird, and willingly dwells with man. Perhaps it would rather pass the winter under a roof, than in the open air." His grandfather then taught the boy how to catch one.

Little Martin ran every day, for a whole week, to the wood, to see if there was not a robin caught. But he always came home empty-handed, and had almost given up all hopes of getting one. At last, one day he came running home full of joy. "Grandfather," he cried, "see, I have one at last! Oh look at his beautiful little bright black eyes, and what a lovely yellow red his breast is! I am not sorry now for all my care and trouble." He let the bird fly in the room, and his delight was yet greater when he perceived that it was not afraid, but snapped up the flies about the room, ate the grated yellow turnips mixed with flour out of the little green earthenware trough, and washed himself in the water bowl. Martin brought a fresh green little pine, from the wood, and fixed it in the corner of the room. The bird immediately flew to it. "Aha," exclaimed Martin, "he knows his place. How lively he hops from branch to branch. How roguishly he looks out from between the branches, and how prettily his red breast contrasts with their dark green!" The robin soon became quite acquainted with him, would pick the flies off his fingers, sit on the

edge of his plate, and eat with him, and soon came to relish potatoes exceedingly. He often went out of the open window into the garden, hopped about the hedge singing, but always came back of his own accord. The bird was the source of a thousand pleasures to Martin—and when he first began to sing, Martin held his breath, and listened with such delight to the low lively, twitter, that no prince ever heard a first-rate flute player with more pleasure.

His grandfather's name-feast came round again. The grandfather looked, one Sunday evening in the almanac and said, "Good God! how time slips away! Next Tuesday is Saint Martin's day. How different since last year. Then my dear Elizabeth was alive, and we ate together the Martinmas goose which she had specially fattened for my festival. But now—it will be a sad festival. Nothing is right when there is no housewife to look after the household. We cannot even observe the good old custom of eating a goose on St. Martin's night; I had forgotten it, and it is now too late. He put on his green uniform in rather low spirits, and went to the Golden Eagle where on Sunday evenings he usually read the newspaper to the peasants, and related his campaigning adventures to them.

The grandfather had scarcely left the house, when young Adolphus, the son of the Lord of Waldberg, who lived in the castle on the hill, entered the door to order a pair of pipe bowls according to the pattern he carried. Little Martin was just then playing with his robin, which had flown on to his finger, and was picking some bruised hempseed from his hand.

"What will you take for the bird?" said Adolphus. "It is very tame; I will buy it from you."—"I set great value on him," answered Martin, stroking the bird's feathers with the finger of his other hand; "I cannot sell him for any price." But the rich young gentleman begged again and again, and offered him a florin. Then the thought struck Martin that for a florin he might buy a goose, and

so afford his grandfather an unexpected pleasure. He therefore gave the bird to the young gentleman, charging and begging him most earnestly to treat the good gentle little creature well. "Take good care," said he, "that the cats in the castle do not get near him; and lest they should, do not cut his wings."

Martin now went from house to house to find a goose for sale. A farmer's wife had one fat goose left; but she said she could not sell it for less than a crown. Martin said sorrowfully, that he had no more than a florin, and told how he had sold his bird to gratify his grandfather. This pleased the woman. "Well," said she, "for your love for your grandfather, you shall have the goose for a florin."

Martin thanked her joyfully, and said he would come for the goose the next evening.

The evening before the long expected feast, little Martin came solemnly with the well fattened goose under his arm into the room, repeated a salutation to his grandfather, which at Martin's earnest request, the schoolmaster had composed in pretty verse, but which the goose, to the boy's great annoyance, several times interrupted with its gagging. At the end of the speech, Martin, with a low bow, offered his grandfather the goose as a gift for his feast-day.

The old man, who was a great stickler for honesty, at first was not pleased. He had some suspicions, and spoke to the boy very sharply. "Where did you get the goose, or the money for it?" exclaimed he with great earnestness, standing up from his arm-chair, and raising his hazel stick with a threatening air. He still could wield the corporal's stick right well, though he had had no need to use it with his good-hearted obedient nephew. Martin was silent. "Where did you get it?" repeated the old man in his deep expressive tones; "tell me!" Martin recounted the sale of his dear robin. His grandfather was much touched, and wiped away a tear from his mustachios, which had fallen during the relation. "Bravo!" he exclaimed, "you

have done well. I am delighted that you love your grandfather so well. Martin's night will yet be a joyful feast for me—a real festival for my heart. Go now and put the goose for the present into the empty coop."

As the lad turned away, the grandfather said to himself, "That boy has a heart that is worth more than gold. What he has done is an act worthy of St. Martin. Saint Martin gave half his cloak to the beggar; but this lad gave away his whole delight to gratify his grandfather. My holy Patron will not take it amiss, that I should say that this boy has done almost more than holy Martin, who, if I remember right was a soldier too! The boy will yet be a great man."

The grandfather, who in his campaigns had often cooked, and still practised this art, prepared himself this unusual dish, and during the dinner gave the nicest part to his grandson. Whilst they were sitting at table, there came, quite unexpectedly, a servant from the castle with a bottle of wine, and said that his noble master and mistress had learned from the young Baron Adolphus, how little Martin had sold his pretty robin to buy a goose for his grandfather's day; and that they sent the corporal a glass of wine to drink with it, and wished him the compliments of his feast. The old man felt much honoured by this favour, and little Martin too rejoiced that his robin had procured his grandfather not only a roast goose, but also a draught of good wine beside.

Poor Martin, however, missed his dear little bird sadly; he could hardly bear to look at the fir-tree which still stood solitary and deserted in the corner of the room. One evening the grandfather and his grandson were sitting round the fire. As the sky was cloudy, it was dark earlier than usual, and they had therefore lit the fire the sooner. It was a very bitter November evening; it snowed and rained together, the storm sighed and roared as though it would carry their little house away. On a sudden little Martin exclaimed, "Oh! there's a bird at the window, he

is pecking against the glass as if he wanted to be let in." He opened the window—the bird flew in—and who can describe the boy's joy when in the bird he recognized his beloved robin! He had tied a thread of red silk round its foot, by which he would have known it, even if he did not otherwise recognize it. "Oh, you dear little fellow," exclaimed he, "so you have come back? You have not forgotten your Martin. How did you find out our house again? Do you love this humble roof better than the stately castle? Well, well, we too have a warm room here for winter, warm soup, to eat our fill, and, what is better than all, a light heart. And who need wish for more?"

He stretched out his hand, and the bird flew to him. "Would you not like," said he, "to stay here? But you don't understand any better: Alas! I cannot keep you here; that were but to steal you. I must—must take you back again. Ah," sighed he, and he pressed the little bird to his moist cheek, "you don't know how hard it is for me to part with you; but it must be."

"Bravo, boy!" said his grandfather, "that is right; that is your duty. Take the bird back therefore, at once; else it will be harder for you to do so. What is not ours should never stay a night under our roof. And make haste to be back before it becomes quite night."

Martin took his new fur cap, which his grandfather had made him a present of on his Patron-day, and ran through the rain and snow up to the castle. Little Adolphus was delighted when he saw the bird again in the boy's hand. But his mother, who was sitting on a sofa at work before a table on which stood two bright wax candles, was much pleased with the honesty of the lad.

"You have done very well, my little fellow," said she, "in bringing back the bird. You might easily have kept it without our knowing anything about it. Nay, even if I had seen it in your house, I should have thought it was

another robin. But I should never have thought that so little a bird would have had such affection for men, and that he would have been able to find out again the house where he had been kindly received and treated. Since so little a creature is not destitute of feeling, but is grateful and affectionate, how much more should men be so!"

When Martin had given the bird up to the young Baron Adolphus, his countenance was very sorrowful. But the lady said to Adolphus, "Dear Adolphus, you see the poor robin was the poor lad's whole joy; he sold it, as you well know, sorely against his inclination, to afford pleasure to his grandfather. You allowed the bird to escape through your forgetfulness, but it was so fond of him, that it returned of his own accord. He has been so honest as to bring it back, though he loved it dearly and would so gladly have kept it. Now, would it be right to take the bird from him again?"

"Oh no," exclaimed Adolphus, "it would not be fair. There, good Martin, take your robin again; I make you a present of it, as a reward for your honesty." Martin was unwilling to accept of the robin, for which the young baron had paid so dear. But Adolphus insisted. "Take it, take it," said he, "and the next robin you catch, you can bring it to me."

Martin was highly delighted. "If you had given me the whole castle," said he, "you could not have done me a greater favour." But the lady, who was even more pleased with the noble sentiments of her son, than Martin with his robin, went to her desk, and taking a bright piece of gold, gave it to Martin, saying, "since my Adolphus knows so well how to appreciate your noble heart, and has given you the bird as a reward for your honesty, how could his mother leave you unrewarded! Take this gold; for your honour is more precious than gold."

Martin came down the castle hill at full speed, jumping for joy, and almost burst the door in. "I have the robin

here again," said he, "this is the third time that he comes under our roof. He is really a lucky bird. See here, grandfather, what he has brought me!"

He held out the gold coin to his grandfather, and said, "Is it not a beautiful piece of gold? You must take it—I am rich enough in having my dear little bird back again."

"You see," said his grandfather, "that what I always tell you is true. The noble lady too, prized honour more than gold. All good men think so. So thought the good king too, whose image is on this coin, whom I once had the honour to serve. Look at his portrait! he seems as if he were going to speak; and if he could speak, he would say what old corporal Frank always says, 'My lad, be always an honourable man.' With this money I will get you a new uniform. This coat will be a true dress of honour for you; for you have won it by your honourable conduct. Take care, during your whole life, never to wear anything but what is acquired by honour and honesty."

But his robin produced more than a dollar to the noble-minded little Martin. He and his grandfather, were brought thereby under the notice of the owners of the castle by this incident. One fine winter's morning, the family went out to walk, and chanced to pass by Martin's house. The young baron said, "I should like to see whether the robin is alive!" They entered, and the Baron of Waldberg, who hitherto had known Corporal Frank only by sight, entered into conversation with him, inquired about his campaigns, and was highly pleased with him. Henceforth he always stopped to speak to him, as he went to shoot in the wood, and often came to his house to order a pipe bowl, and watched him at work, talking to him for hours together. Adolphus, too, often came with him, played with Martin and frequently invited him to come to the castle.

Meanwhile the grandfather felt more and more the weight of years, and it became the whole wish of his heart to provide well for his grandson before his death. He had

always thought till now, that Martin might support himself by making boxes and pipes. But other industrious people in the village, who were employed in field labour in summer, and had nothing to do in winter, had taken to this trade after the example of the thrifty soldier. There was not so good a sale therefore for boxes and pipes, now that they had become more common. The grandfather therefore often thought of getting his grandson taught some other trade, which might require more knowledge and skill, but which would support a man better. But he had given so much to his son and daughter, that he had but little left for himself, and his grandson, Martin, had so many brothers and sisters, that his parents had enough to do to maintain them all. The good old man therefore could see no way to get the fee and expenses.

Just at this time young Martin, who was now fourteen years old, came one day to the castle to compliment the young Baron Adolphus on his birth-day. Adolphus shewed him a beautiful writing-desk, most exquisitely made, which his father had given him as a birth-day present. "The most skilful artisan in town, made it," said Adolphus, "how do you like it?"

Martin examined the desk with great care. "This is beautiful wood," he exclaimed; "I never saw finer! The other wood is beautiful. This dark brown, is walnut; the red, cherry; the yellow, pear; and this nice white is of the plane tree."

The Baron von Waldberg, who chanced at this moment to enter the room, wondered how Martin came to know the names of all these woods, and said, "Who taught you all this so well?" "My grandfather, Sir," answered Martin. "I have made a collection of all sorts of woods that grow in our forests and orchards. They are only boards, but they are made into little pieces, just like the pretty books on the desk there, and are ranged in a row just like them. They look just like books; the bark, which I have left on them, looks like the backs, and the rest of

the wood, which I have polished nicely, is like the cover and the leaves."

Baron von Waldberg thought that he could not celebrate his son's birth-day better than by an act of generosity.

"Well Martin," said he, "you understand the different kinds of wood very well. I know, too, that you can make pipe bowls very cleverly; but such a desk as that is a far finer piece of work. Would you like to learn this trade and be a cabinet-maker?"

"That I would," said Martin. "There is nothing I would like better; but my grandfather cannot afford the money for my fee."

"Well, then," said the baron, "as for the fee, I will provide that. If your grandfather agrees, I will have you bound apprentice to the master who made that desk."

Martin was delighted with this offer, and his grandfather, too, thought it most fortunate, or rather an interposition of God's bounteous providence; and exhorted his grandson to thank God with his whole heart for so great a favour.

Martin learned his business; in three years became a journeyman, travelled into foreign countries, and returned at length to the great joy of his old grandfather, a healthy, innocent young man, well clad, and in the bloom of youth and health, and very skilful in his trade. The Baron von Waldberg was highly pleased with the first specimen of work which he ordered.

"Well my dear Martin," said he, "it has long been my wish to have a skilful cabinet-maker in this village. I will assist you to open a workshop of your own." The old house was rebuilt. Baron von Waldberg supplied him with all necessary wood without any charge, and the young tradesman executed all his work with his own hands: he soon found abundant employment, for he was as reasonable as skilful; and in the course of time he married the daughter of one of the burghers of the town, a very virtuous, prudent, and industrious girl.

His grandfather, now a venerable old man, lived to see this happiness, and dwelt with his grandson in the new house, highly honoured and beloved. Martin was also able to do great service to his parents and his brothers and sisters.

On one occasion, when Martin had invited his parents, his sisters, and all the rest of his relations, to eat a Martin's goose together, on his grandfather's Patron day, and they were all happy and joyous, the grandfather said, "This is very likely the last time in my life, that I shall see all my children collected around one table! With joy do I remember the evening, when Martin, then a little boy, for love of me sold his ROBIN REDBREAST to procure me a happy St. Martin's evening. Under God's providence, that bird was the first cause of Martin's good fortune. God has rewarded his love for me, his honour, his industry, and his good conduct, and placed him in a position to make the evening of my life happy, and to afford valuable assistance to you all. Now shall I die contented, since He who taketh care of the birds of the air, hath, by means of a ROBIN REDBREAST, so lovingly provided for us all."

THE CANARY-BIRD.

CHAPTER I.

THE ERLAU FAMILY.

IN that unhappy period of French history, when the throne of her ancient royal race was overthrown, and a multitude of her noblest families plunged into the deepest misery, there lived on the farther bank of the Rhine, a family named D'Erlau. Mr. D'Erlau was a man of high principle and excellent disposition; his wife was a very good and amiable lady, and their two children, Charles and Lina, were exact copies of their parents' virtuous dispositions. The moment that the fearful disturbances, which cost all Europe such streams of blood and of tears, broke out in France, Mr. von Erlau retired from the metropolis to his most remote estate, which lay between the Rhine and the Vosges mountain.—Here in his castle, which, as well as the adjacent village, was surrounded by rocks, vine-clad hills, corn fields, and orchards, he lived with his family in the deepest solitude, far away from the business of the world. His retainers, who honoured him as their greatest benefactor, and who hitherto had been accustomed to see him only for a few weeks each year, were delighted to find him now permanently settled amidst them. His kindness to them was beyond description:—the country all around was like a garden; and the object of his generous ambition was, to render it a garden of Paradise, by elevating the character of its inhabitants.

Devotedly attached to his children, he esteemed it a great happiness, that he here found time to be himself their instructor ; and his most delightful hours were those which he spent in instructing them in religion. He was firmly convinced that religion alone is capable of truly forming a man, imparting to him true worth, securing his happiness, and comforting him in the hour of necessity or of death. His virtuous wife, penetrated with the same feelings, always sat by during these lessons ; and her tender and pious maternal heart, often suggested an impressive sentiment, confirmatory of the instructions. In these times of peril, the father dwelt with special emotion on God's holy Providence, and on confidence in Him. When the mother looked upon her children, who were doomed to pass through this stormy world, and then thought of the love which rules all destinies on high, she shed tears at once of sorrow and of joy, and her words became truly "spirit and life." What came from the heart found its way to the heart. The good children listened with the utmost attention and piety, and the tears often glistened in their eyes also. Both parents and children, however, notwithstanding the perils which encompassed them, preserved a joyous and cheerful spirit.

In addition to the most important subject of all, religion, Mr. D'Erlau instructed his children in every other useful and necessary science, nor did he even overlook these things which are but ornamental, and serve to add to the enjoyments of life. He himself, among other accomplishments, played admirably upon the harpsichord, and sang so extremely well, that few, except his wife, could excel him. He taught little Charles, therefore, to play the harpsichord, and gentle little Lina to sing.

One gloomy and terrific evening in the end of winter, the father and mother, with Charles and Lina, were sitting together at the harpsichord, in their warm and brilliant saloon ; for music and singing was their ordinary relaxation at this season of the year. Mr. D'Erlau had written

a little hymn, to God's protecting Providence, specially for the two children, set it to an easy, pleasing air, and composed for it an accompaniment so simply arranged, that the little fellow could compass it with his tiny fingers. Their mother did not know anything of it as yet, for the children wished to give her an agreeable surprise with their hymn. After she had sung several beautiful airs, therefore, with her own matchless voice, her husband accompanying her on the instrument, he called upon the children to give a specimen of their little skill; and the little ones, modestly, but yet with great sweetness, sang the air which he had composed. Their mother was charmed with this first performance of her darling children. No concert at the king's court could have given her so much pleasure. "Yes," she cried, "God, who has yet protected you, will still be your powerful Protector."

But lo!—on a sudden the door was flung violently open,—a body of the National Guard, in full uniform, pressed forcibly into the apartment—the leader of the troop produced an order for Mr. D'Erlau's arrest: he was taken prisoner, and informed that, without remonstrance or delay, he must accompany them to the town prison. He was charged with being a royalist, and an enemy of liberty—this was the ground assigned in the order for his arrest. The mother threw herself at the feet of the rude man who stood before her, with dark flashing eyes, tangled black hair hanging dishevelled on his forehead, and a fierce-looking bushy beard.—She wrung her hands; the scalding tears streamed down her cheeks, pale with terror; her two little ones, too, held up their tender little hands, praying and beseeching them not to take away their father.—The tears chased each other down their cheeks, and in a short time they could not articulate for sobbing. All was in vain! They did not even obtain a delay till the morrow, not even for a single hour, to enable him to pack up a few necessaries for his dreary residence

in the prison. They were immovable. He was ordered to proceed upon the spot; and while the mother embraced him with tears and loud lamentations, and the children clung to his knees, he was violently torn from them and led away.

It would be idle to attempt a description of the sorrow of the mother and her children. They were guarded in the apartment, in order to prevent all further excitement in the village, in which D'Erlau was very much loved. The mother had fainted away with terror; and now she sat in an arm-chair, weeping, wringing her hands, and raising her streaming eyes to heaven, the children sobbing and wailing around her. In a short time, however, this pious and high-souled woman recovered her firmness. "Let us not so soon, my dearest children," she cried, "abandon our hope in God! 'Tis He who has sent us this dreadful trial: He, too, will give us grace to support it; He will turn it to our advantage, and change it hereafter into joy. Let us say to Him cheerfully and confidently, 'Lord, Thy will be done.'"

CHAPTER II.

THE MOTHER'S FLIGHT.

THE unhappy lady employed every possible exertion to obtain her husband's release. The moment the guard was withdrawn, she flew to the city. She went to the judges, declared her husband's complete innocence; appealed to the evidence of the whole neighbourhood, that he had always lived peaceful and retired, not mixing at all in public business, nor even speaking to any one upon it. She flung herself at their feet, but she might as well have spoken to statues of stone. Not one of them was moved to pity, and all she

could obtain from them was permission to visit her husband in prison; and she was even informed, that in a few days he must die a bloody death.

When she returned, after three days, to her residence, the castle was beset by soldiers. Her property had been sequestered, and the castle pillaged, and converted into a barrack. She was not even allowed to go in, and went sadly away, weeping and bewailing her children, for no one could tell her where they were. All her people were dispersed; it was now late in the evening, and she knew not whither to turn, even for shelter during the night.

In the dusk of twilight she met Richard, her old and faithful servant.

"Ah! my dear, kind lady," said he, "you are in imminent peril of being arrested at any moment. In some hasty moment you dropt a few words about 'injustice and barbarity crying out to heaven;' about 'oppression under the semblance of freedom.' Some evil-minded persons have taken up these words, and given information in the proper quarter, and now there is no hope possibly for you but in instant flight. To harbour you, would be attended with too much danger; you could not hope to save your husband; and your remaining, would but lead to your own destruction. Your children are in my house; come thither with me; my brother, the old fisherman of the Rhine, is already in expectation; I will accompany you to him to night, and he will transport you and your children safely across the Rhine, and thus you shall, at least, save your life."

She went to honest Richard's house, which was in the village. But a new trouble awaited her here. On the very day on which her mother went to the city, Lina had taken ill, with grief and alarm, and the sickness had this evening greatly increased. The poor little girl lay in a violent fever. She was quite delirious, and did not recognize even her mother. The mother, therefore, insisted upon remaining and taking charge herself of her darling

child; but the physician, who was present at the moment, very earnestly opposed this resolution.

"The patient," he said, "will not hold out much longer; she will not recover her senses any more, and may now be regarded as dead. The lady's presence cannot now be of any use to the poor child; and it is her duty to think of her own safety."

The afflicted mother stood, pale as death, and her eyes red with weeping, by the sick bed, unable to resolve on leaving it. The physician took her gently by the arm, urging her anxiously to fly. She made a step or two towards the door, trembled from head to foot, and then turned round eagerly with outstretched arms, and clasping her daughter to her heart, cried out in a tone of deep anguish, "No, my darling child! I cannot leave you! I care not for life! I will die with you!"

Old Richard and his good wife besought her with uplifted hands to set out without delay, and promised solemnly to take care of the sick child as though she were their own.

"Night has just fallen," said Richard: "under its protecting shade it is possible to escape; every delay brings danger, and may cost not alone you, my dear, noble lady, but also myself and my wife, our lives; for to harbour any one for a night, without giving previous notice, is forbidden under pain of death."

"Well, dearest Lina," said the heart-broken mother, "if I can render you no further service in this world; if my remaining here can serve no end but to bring these good old people to the scaffold; I will now go in God's name. Farewell, dearest angel; go to the abodes of bliss, where innocence no longer is doomed to suffer, where the tear ceases to flow, and loving hearts shall know no further separation."

Little Charles, who stood beside his mother, took his sister's hand with tears and sobs.

"Rejoice, dear Lina," said he, "you will now be a

bright angel in heaven. There you will be far happier than here on earth, where we must ever live in fear and in anxiety. Oh! that I could go with you!"

The mother knelt down by her darling daughter's sick bed.

"To Thee, O God," she cried, looking up to heaven, "to Thee I offer her as a sacrifice. I deliver her, without reserve, to Thy mercy and compassion!"

She was silent for a few moments; stood up quickly, kissed Lina, then took Charles's hand, and without looking around, passed out of the door, trembling in every nerve with suppressed emotion.

She now betook herself to flight. The trusty servant had collected some necessaries for the journey, and appeared very heavily laden. The poor lady followed him, carrying a little packet under one arm, and holding with the other hand her dear little boy, who also carried a small bundle. Not a word was exchanged. The night was most severe, it blew and rained fearfully. "This storm and these torrents of rain," said the old man, in a low voice, "are pure mercies from God; they shelter us from our enemies. Thus, everything that to us appears terrific, actually tends to our advantage; and thus it is with the sorrows, the storms, and the gloomy occurrences of life!"

They arrived, at length, at the old fisherman's house, and went into the little sooty room, dimly lighted by a single oil-lamp. The generous fisherman welcomed the lady and her boy heartily to his hut. While he, with Richard's assistance, was conveying the skiff to the Rhine, his wife set before the lady and the little boy some warm soup, bread, and a little wine. Trembling with cold and with fear, they swallowed a few morsels. The two men returned. They conducted the lady to the Rhine. The moon, now in the last quarter, had arisen, and shone at intervals through broken clouds, enlivening the terrific darkness a little. The poor lady felt an icy chill come over her, as she stood on the brink of the vast river,

roaring fearfully in the might of its current, and saw their wretched little skiff scarcely capable of holding two persons. She trembled as they urged her and her little boy to go on board; but the men gave her courage. The old fisherman stepped in, seized the oar, and with pious confidence predicted, "God will help us over!"

Richard now took his leave; the faithful fellow had secured, in the plunder of the castle, a gold box, a gold watch, and a couple of diamond rings. These he now delivered up to Madam D'Erlau, and he added a few gold pieces which he had saved in her service, without saying that they were his own. As he kissed her hand, he wept bitterly; and he pressed the little boy to his heart with many a deep sob.

"O, my dear lady!" he said, "I am an old man, and this is the last time I shall ever see you and my dear Charles. I cannot be of further service to you, but God will protect you; He still has happy days in store for you. So good a mistress cannot be left a prey to misfortune. I would gladly accompany you; but, perhaps, I shall yet find means to rescue my kind and noble master. I will leave nothing untried."

They all wept and sobbed together. The lady once more commended to him the care of her husband and her daughter; the old man faithfully promised this, and assisted her and Charles to get on board.

As the boat pushed off, Richard fell upon his knees on the shore, and raised up his hands to heaven.

"I will kneel here," he cried, "and pray to God for a safe passage for them; I shall not rise from my knees, till my brother shall bring the glad tidings of their safety. Oh! that I could bring to them there the same happy news of my dear master and their darling little daughter!"

CHAPTER III.

THE HONEST TYROLESE.

MADAM D'ERLAU had crossed the Rhine in safety with her boy, and was now secure. But she could not remain where she was. There were great difficulties in the way of a refugee's remaining in that country, and besides the scene of the war was drawing nearer every day. By the directions which Richard had given her, she travelled along the Rhine to Switzerland. Her money disappeared rapidly. The cost of living in Switzerland was represented as too high, and she was advised to seek a retreat in Swabia. After much fruitless wandering hither and thither, she came to the frontier of the Tyrol; and at last, by the mediation of a benevolent man, she obtained a promise that an old Tyrolese would give her shelter in his cottage.

She prepared at once, with little Charles, for the journey, the guide, who showed her the way, also carrying the baggage. Her road lay over high mountains and deep valleys. At last, as she reached the summit of one of these mountains, she espied, at a fearful depth below, a narrow green valley. On the right of this valley, at the foot of a gloomy over-hanging cliff, stood a few low wooden cottages, with flat, and almost perfectly plane roofs, from the midst of which, arose gleaming, as though it were covered with glossy grey silk, the window, roof, and spire, of a little chapel. On the left of the valley stood a bleak pine forest, behind which two mountain peaks arose to the clouds, still entirely covered with snow, though everything in the valley was green and blooming. The guide pointed into the valley with his staff, and said, "That is Schwarzenfels! Below, yonder, lives the honest old man

who is to shelter you." Madam D'Erlau sighed, and descended by the narrow foot-path.

The old Tyrolese, who had been expecting her on that day, came out to meet her with a hearty and cordial air. Though old, he was still a hale man. With our forms of politeness he was entirely unacquainted. He never dreamed of our ceremonious forms of address in speaking to any one. Still he had his own correct notions of good breeding. And on this day, to testify his respect for the strange lady, he appeared in his grey Sunday jacket, with his scarlet neck-cloth, and wore his fine green hat, from which a waving cock's feather dangled. "God save you, noble lady!" said he; "I am delighted to be able to afford you and your little boy a shelter under my roof."

His wife, a fine old grey-headed, but rosy-cheeked dame, stood at the door. Her dress was scrupulously clean. As she was just coming from the kitchen, she rubbed her hand in her white apron, before she offered it to the lady. "God save you, dear lady!" said she, "our meal is just ready, but you must put up with humble fare. We have little here but milk and butter, oaten bread and potatoes."

The Tyrolese conducted the lady into a side apartment, the little window of which looked out upon the gloomy pine forest and the snow-covered peaks. The whole furniture of the room consisted of a table, a bench, and two deal chairs, and a shining green earthenware stove, which supplied the place of a grate; beside it, there was a small miserable sleeping closet. Still the lady thanked God for having granted her even this little spot.

She managed her little housekeeping as well as circumstances permitted. She cooked for herself, and spent the rest of the time in knitting and sewing, by which she earned a trifle. Her greatest anxiety was to keep Charles occupied. She had no books to instruct him herself; and beside, he had already begun to learn Latin. One morning as she was thinking anxiously about this, the little bell of the chapel began to ring, and her good, pious hostess came

running in to say that the parish priest, from the village on the opposite side of the mountain, was going to say Mass that day. Madam D'Erlau at once went with Charles to the chapel. The priest after Mass made a little address, which affected her deeply. After Mass she spoke to him, and found him a very intelligent, pious, benevolent man. He promised to provide the necessary books, and to instruct Charles for a couple of hours every afternoon, if he would take the trouble of coming over the mountain to him.

Charles agreed to this gladly, and now that he had a fixed occupation once more, was doubly happy. He could hardly wait for his dinner, in his anxiety to be early over the mountain with his books. Meanwhile, however, when, at times, it rained for days together, and he was prevented from going out, the poor fellow was almost without any means of entertainment. His prudent mother was convinced, that innocent recreation is just as necessary as work, and tried to devise some means of providing both for him.

In the Tyrol they breed a great many canary birds, which are sold far and near, by dealers who make a special trade of it. Their old host, too, had, at that moment, several very fine young canaries, and Charles begged his mother, as these birds were so cheap here, to buy one of them for him.

"Lina used always to have one at home," said he: "buy one for me, and we shall have something, amid these rocks and woods, to remind us of our dear native land!"

His mother readily consented, and the boy selected for himself, from among all the birds, the prettiest one, and that which most resembled the bird his sister had formerly had.

Charles took the greatest delight in the little yellow bird, with its bright, black, little eyes. In a short time it became tame, and would fly to him when he stretched

out his finger, and pick the crumbs even from his very lips.—When he sat down to write, it would fly to him, perch on his pen, and peck at his finger; so that, though these tricks delighted him, he was often obliged to shut it in its cage, in order to labour without interruption. When the bird began to sing, he was never tired praising its notes.

“You must teach him some pretty little piece,” said the old Tyrolese to him, one day.

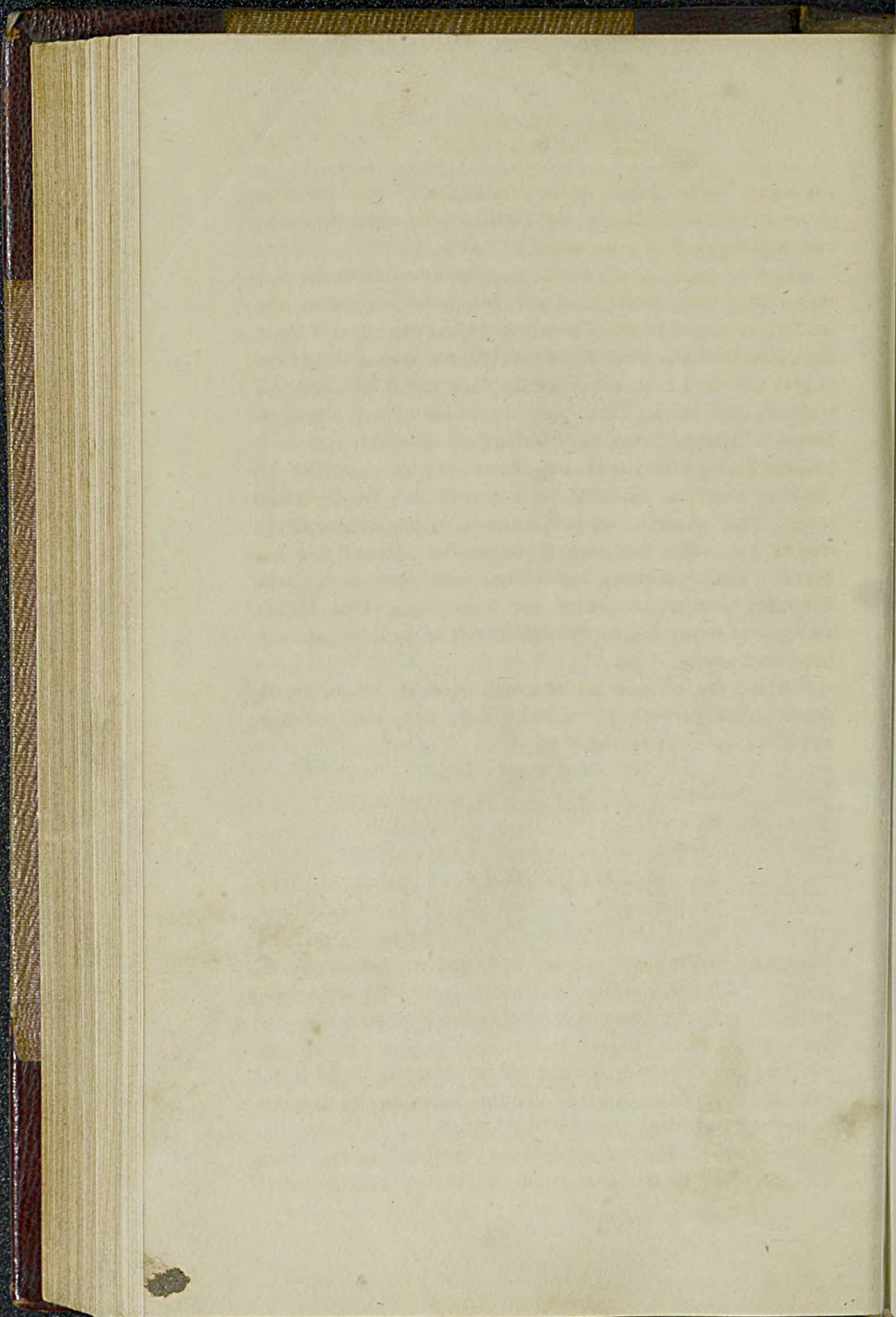
Charles thought the old man was joking, for he did not know that birds can be taught to sing airs. The old man produced a small instrument, which he called a little flageolet.

“Ah!” said Charles, “that is a beautiful little ivory flute!” His host played a little waltz for him, and shewed him how to hold it. The boy was charmed with its clear, distinct tones; and as he had great musical talent, learned it easily, and soon was able to play every piece the moment he heard it. He often would play for the bird now, and always the same piece; and when, at length, the bird sang it for the first time perfectly and without a mistake, he actually leaped for joy; and his mother smiled, and told him that he must always have to say his lesson as correctly and as readily as the bird. And thus the canary bird and the flute were the source of many a pleasant hour to the merry boy, and even to his mother, when it happened that storm or rain shut them up in their gloomy apartment.

Meanwhile the fate of her husband and daughter was ever before Madam D'Erlau's mind, and caused her many a sad day, and many a sleepless and tearful night. She was always on the watch for intelligence, but in vain. The only French news she saw was in the journals, which the parish priest used to send her every week by Charles, not receiving them oftener himself. One evening, Charles came joyously into the house, and took the papers out of



He often would play for the bird now, and always the same piece; and when, at length, the bird sang it for the first time perfectly and without a mistake, he actually leaped for joy; and his mother smiled, and told him that he must always have to say his lesson as correctly and as readily as the bird.—p. 248.



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his bag. "The parish priest," said he, "had not time to read them all through, but he had seen that they contain a great deal of good news."

She read eagerly, and found that the news about the war was really very good; and she began to hope that she might soon again venture to return to her dear native land. But, alas! at the end of the last journal was a list of the nobles who had been executed for their devotion to the old regime; and among them was the name of her husband, Henri D'Erlau! She shrieked as though a thunderbolt had smote her; the paper dropt from her hand, and she fell down in a swoon. It was long before the people of the house, who hastened in at Charles's cries, were able to restore her. She fell into a dangerous illness; her recovery was extremely uncertain; the poor boy, who never for a moment quitted her bed-side, wasted visibly away; and many a time the old Tyrolese would shake his head and say—

"Alas! the coming harvest will strew its leaves on the grave of this poor lady; and the little boy will, perhaps, never see the next spring."

CHAPTER IV.

THE FATHER IN PRISON.

RICHARD, the faithful old servant, had waited on the opposite bank of the Rhine, till his brother, the fisherman, returned with the news of the lady's having safely reached the opposite bank. His greatest anxiety now was to save his dear master from death; for Richard thought it the extreme of injustice that he should perish for his devotion to the rightful king.

Early on the following day, he hastened to the town. He had a son in the town, named Robert, who had been

compelled to serve in the national guard; and by the assistance of this brave and quick-witted youth, who took his turn in guarding the prisoners, Richard hoped to rescue his master from prison. They devised every sort of plan, but could not form any that was practicable. At last, they resolved that the son should keep a sharp look out, and embrace the first favourable opportunity to release his lord. None however offered, and Robert began to abandon all hope.

At last, Monsieur D'Erlau was condemned to die, and the sentence was ordered to be executed upon the following morning. Gloomily resting his head upon his hand, he sat late at night in his solitary cell, unable to sleep. They had not thought it worth while to bring him a light, so that he sat in utter darkness. He thought of his wife and children. His care was for them, and not for himself. In utter ignorance of what had befallen them, he was full of anxiety for their fate. But the sentiment which, with a glance to heaven, he had uttered when his death-sentence was pronounced, still remained unshaken in his heart—"O Lord, Thy will be done!"

He turned all his thoughts to God. "In whom," said he, among other things, "shall I find comfort in this the last night of my life, save in Thee, dearest Father in heaven! What Thou permittest, is ever the best. Do, therefore, with me and with mine, according to Thy divine will. If Thou takest me from my wife and my dear children, Thou wilt watch over them Thyself with paternal care, and comfort them in their great affliction; and in firm reliance upon Thee, I will lay my head upon the block, which is already stained with the blood of so many of my friends. If, on the contrary, Thou wilt grant me yet a little longer to my wife and children, it is easy for Thee to open the door of my prison, and deliver me from the power of my enemies, and our whole lives shall be devoted to continual thanksgiving to Thee!"

While the high-minded prisoner was buried in such

thoughts as these, a sudden alarm was raised upon the gallery, outside. In a moment, the door of his prison was flung open; clouds of smoke rushed in, and a fearful glare illuminated the entire cell. A young soldier stood before him and cried out, "Save yourself in God's name!"

The young soldier was Robert, Richard's son. By the carelessness of a drunken soldier, a fire had broken out in the building where the prisoners were confined. The soldiers who guarded the prisoner's gate, had laid aside their arms and uniforms, and were engaged in extinguishing it. Robert made use of the first confusion to seize the uniform and arms of one of the soldiers and run with them to M. D'Erlau.

"Be quick, and draw these clothes upon you!" he cried; and he assisted him to put on the uniform, placed the hat with the plume and cockade upon the side of his head, buckled on his sabre-belt, and put the musket upon his arm. The beard which the poor gentleman had let grow during his confinement, made him resemble more closely the savage-looking soldiers of the time, and completed his military appearance.

"Now," said Robert, "hasten boldly down the staircase, and out of the great gate. In this guise you will pass, I think, without difficulty. Then make the best of your way to my father, who will be found at the house of his brother, the fisherman, upon the Rhine."

The sight of the young soldier, had been to M. D'Erlau like the apparition of an angel, and his words like a message from heaven. He fell at once into the plan. With all the earnestness of one who had most important business, he hastened down the stairs, cried out with an authoritative tone to the people, who were pressing in with fire-buckets, "Way, way!" and reached the street without interruption. With a bold air and a rapid step, he went straight to the great gate, and having learned the word from Robert, he passed safely out of the city.

Long after midnight he reached the old fisherman's

house. He knocked at the window-shutter. The fisherman came out, and was no little alarmed. He imagined it was a soldier, come to arrest him or his brother, for they had made many enemies by their attachment and fidelity to the Erlau family. But when the worthy fisherman recognized M. D'Erlau, he lifted up his hands in wonder and thanksgiving, and led him joyously into the room. Richard, who had been waiting and watching here for ten nights, threw himself into his arms, crying out, "My dear master!" and they embraced one another affectionately. Erlau's first question was about his wife and children. Richard told him that the lady and Charles had escaped, that Miss Lina had been ill, but was now well again, and in the house at that moment. The little girl, indeed, slept in the next room, and being awakened by Richard's joyous exclamation, she had recognized her father's voice. She hastened to him with tears of joy, threw herself into his arms, and his tears plentifully bedewed the rosy cheeks of his child.

He resolved to cross the Rhine while it was still night, in order to escape from the country which once was a paradise, and now was but a den of murderers; and he wished to cross to the still peaceful soil of Germany, in the same boat which had transported his wife and son across the river. He prepared himself and Lina for the journey without delay. The old fisherman went before them, and Richard followed with a portmanteau on his back. The night was clear and starry. In deep silence they were approaching the Rhine, where the little skiff lay in readiness among the bushes, when on a sudden they heard shots behind them, and a number of rough voices cried out, "Halt, halt!"

The fire in the prison had soon been extinguished, and the soldiers, the moment it was over, examined carefully to see whether any of the prisoners had escaped, during the confusion and uproar of extinguishing it. To their great mortification, they found M. D'Erlau's cell empty.

The soldier who missed his uniform, his musket, and his sabre, cried out furiously: "He has fled in my uniform and arms! let us follow him at once!" They soon obtained traces of the fugitive; and a whole troop of excited soldiers set out in hot pursuit. With fearful shouts they drew nigh. The poor fugitives were frightened almost to death, and made all the haste they could to reach the boat. M. D'Erlau, with Lina in his arms, sprang hastily in; Richard followed him; both seized the oars and rowed with might and main. The old fisherman, for whom there would not have been room in the boat, concealed himself in the hollow of a willow tree.

But the boat was hardly twenty paces from the shore, when the soldiers reached the bank, and commenced firing on the fugitives. The bullets whizzed frightfully about the ears of the innocent voyagers. D'Erlau ordered Lina to lie down in the boat; and they redoubled their exertions. A ball pierced M. D'Erlau's hat, and two others lodged in Richard's oar. The skiff, which was sunk to within an inch of the water, tottered and was almost sinking; but they all escaped unhurt, nevertheless, and reached the opposite shore in safety.

M. D'Erlau fell upon his knees to thank God, and Lina and Richard followed his example; and after this they sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree, to rest after their desperate exertions. When they were a little rested, Richard, who had resolved not to leave his master in his trouble, led the way with his staff in his hand and the heavy burden on his back, and his master and Miss Lina followed him. He took the road which led to the mountain forest of Swabia, which, from the number of black and gloomy pines which are found there, is called the Black Forest.

CHAPTER V.

THE FAITHFUL SERVANT.

M. D'ERLAU's greatest anxiety now was to find his wife. Richard was acquainted with an honest peasant in the neighbourhood of the Black Forest, and to him they made their way in the first instance, in order to rest for a few days, and prepare for the rest of their journey. But hardly had D'Erlau set his foot within the cottage, when he began to speak of going. "I shall not have one easy moment," said he to Richard, "till I shall have found my wife and son once more. You tell me confidently, dear Richard, that they are in Switzerland. But how shall we ever make our way thither? Lina will never be able to travel there on foot, and I am not able to take any conveyance."

Richard produced a purse of gold, and emptied it upon the table.

"You are not so poor as you think, my dear, noble master," said he: "all this is yours."

M. D'Erlau stared now at the gold, now at the faithful servant.

"As you were always independent," continued Richard, "so you were always benevolent too. How many persons are there, to whom you advanced money in their distress. Some of this money I have collected while you were languishing in prison, and your wife was an exile in a distant country. And although, as I found in this case, there are some who possess neither gratitude nor honesty, yet I also met many worthy souls, who not only repaid the money which had been lent, but, in love and gratitude to their kind master, added, from their own stock, to the amount."

M. D'Erlau counted the money. "It is a great deal, a very great deal," said he, with a grateful look towards heaven; "but how long will it last! how long can it last!"

"Never mind," said Richard. "We shall manage it, and, never fear, we shall have enough to travel comfortably to Switzerland."

Richard bought a horse and a light farmer's cart, which was so arranged that it could be covered against the wind and rain. They set out on their journey. Richard generally walked by the side of the cart. M. D'Erlau and Lina wished to take it by turns with him; but at the urgent request of the kind hearted old man, they were obliged to ride almost always. In this way they reached Switzerland. But M. D'Erlau could not hear any where a syllable about his wife: all his inquiries were in vain. He was convinced that she must have taken some other road; and they returned to Swabia.

Meanwhile, his sufferings in prison, the agony and distress attendant on his trial, the anxiety and fears of his flight, and the daily hardships to which he was exposed on the journey, all conspired to exhaust his strength. He fell sick, and was obliged to rest in a small town of Swabia, till his health should be restored.

Richard took a couple of apartments, purchased the most necessary house-furniture, and took charge himself of their humble house-keeping, in which he was very skilful.—Lina assisted him with all her heart; and every morning and evening cheerfully performed all the little household duties, which were not beyond her strength. In the beginning M. D'Erlau was obliged to keep his bed almost constantly; and it was a long time before he was able to sit up during the greater part of the day. Lina did everything in her power to cheer him, to take care of him, and to make his time pass agreeably. She contrived to find a new pleasure for him every day. One time she would surprise him with a new dish, which she had herself cooked for the first time, another time with a new

song, another, with an agreeable piece of news. And her father testified, in every conceivable way, his affection and his gratification with her dutiful dispositions.

At last Lina's birth-day arrived. Early in the morning she went to mass, to offer her thanks to God on this day, and especially to pray for her mother, her father, and her brother. When she came home, behold! in the window stood her favourite flower, a magnificent red and blue stock gilly-flower; and a little canary bird, of the purest yellow, with a splendid crest, just such as she used to have at home, hung, in a pretty cage, above the flowers in the window. The morning sun shone with unusual brilliancy and beauty into the window, and enlivened the colours of the flowers. Lina was enchanted. The tears rushed to her eyes, at this evidence of her father's tender love for her. She thanked him with the liveliest expressions of childish gratitude.

"Accept them for my sake, dear child," said her father. "I can give you no more now. Were we at home at our castle, it would have been different: this day would have been celebrated with loud jubilee, and would have been a festival for the whole village. To-day we must celebrate it with quiet joy."

A better dinner than ordinary was prepared. Her father was once more happy and cheerful at table; and Richard was forced to sit along with them. At the end of dinner the trusty old servant brought in an additional tart decorated with flowers, and a flask of the red wine of their own native land, Alsace. M. D'Erlau drank first to Lina's health, and then to that of his wife and son. But a melancholy feeling came over him in the midst of his joy, and the tears dropped into his wine.

"Ah, Lina!" said he, "where are your mother and brother celebrating this birth-day of yours? What has befallen them? Alas! a lady and a child driven out into the wide world, without friend or protector, are exposed to a thousand inconveniences, embarrassments, and dangers.

Who can tell whether we shall ever again celebrate this day together. Once I used to have such a cheerful heart and so firm a trust in God's Providence—but now I often have very gloomy hours.—I am afraid—I am afraid.”

Lina threw herself weeping upon her father's neck to console him. “Take courage, dearest father,” she cried, “God will not forsake us—He will bring us all once more together; otherwise He never would have delivered us in so wondrous a manner. Be assured He watches over us!”

“Yes, that He does,” said Richard, drying his eyes. They were all silent.—It was a moment of deep and pious emotion for them all.

When, lo! on a sudden the canary-bird began to sing the air of the little song, which M. D'Erlau had formerly composed for his children, on “Trust in Providence!” Lina clapped her hands in amazement. “O my God!” she cried, “what is this? That is the first air which Charles learned to play upon the harpsichord, and I to accompany him by singing—the very air which we were singing when you were arrested, dearest father!”

Her father, Richard, and she, gazed at the little bird in wonder and amazement. It sang the piece over again.

“It is the very air!” said Lina. “Precisely the same—not a single note is wanting!”

“That is most wonderful,” said her father, taking off his cap. “O merciful God! I believe Thou wilt restore my dear wife and son to me once again. It is only from them the bird can have learned this air, though I cannot comprehend how. O Richard, where did you get the bird?”

Richard told him that he had bought the pretty little thing from a young Tyrolese yesterday.

“Oh, run with all your might,” said his master, “and do everything in your power to find him out. Perhaps he may be able to give us more precise information.”

Richard remained a long time away; and M. D'Erlau and his daughter spent their time in most anxious expect-

tation. "How great must their distress have been," he said, "to sell this dear little creature! or, perhaps it is that they are dead, and that the bird is all they have left us!"

Richard at length returned with the young Tyrolese; but the young man could not give any particular information about the bird. He had bought it from a shepherd boy in the Tyrol; and Madam D'Erlau's name was entirely unknown to him. But when M. D'Erlau interrogated him further, he assured him that such a lady and boy did live in his native district, and that it was very possible the bird might have belonged to them. I have seen the lady at church every Sunday," said he; "and I have often met the boy who goes to school to the parish priest. The little fellow must be a great scholar, for he always carries on his back a great bundle of books, buckled in a leather strap."

He described the figure and appearance of the lady and the boy so accurately, that they all unanimously and joyously cried out, "It is they! it must certainly be they!"

They thanked God with many a tear, for disclosing to them, by His wondrous providence, the abode of their beloved friends. M. D'Erlau made the strictest inquiries about the place where the lady lived, and the road which led to it; and presented the astonished Tyrolese with a broad dollar for his true-hearted tale.

They prepared for their journey without delay.—M. D'Erlau forgot his weakness at once: the good news strengthened him more than the most powerful medicine. Lina assisted him in packing, and Richard went to put the little carriage in order, and to bring back their horse, the little brown, which he had lent to the inn-keeper, meanwhile, to work for his feeding, without hire. On the very next day they set out for the Tyrol. The dear little bird was not left behind: it was hung up in its cage to the arched roof of the carriage; and M. D'Erlau and Lina had the pleasure, from time to time during the journey, of being entertained by its enlivening notes.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RE-UNION.

M. D'ERLAU, with his little party, arrived safely in their rustic carriage in the chief village of the parish to which the hamlet of Schwarzenfels belonged. He went at once to the parish priest, who confirmed all that the young Tyrolese, who sold the bird, had told him. Madam D'Erlau and her son were still alive. "But the good lady," said the priest, "lives in the deepest melancholy. She believes that her dear husband is dead, and since she heard this unhappy news, her heart has never felt a single throb of joy. It was with difficulty she survived the mortal sickness into which her sorrow plunged her, and she is now recovering but very tediously and imperfectly."

M. D'Erlau inquired whence this false intelligence had reached here. The priest produced a packet of newspapers, and selecting one of them, placed it before him, and M. D'Erlau read, with his own eyes, that he had been executed upon a certain day. Strange as this appeared, yet it was not difficult of explanation. In those days of confusion this mistake was but a trifling irregularity, They had either forgotten to erase his name from the list of victims, which had been already prepared; or they had purposely omitted to do so, in order the better to avoid animadversion for allowing him to escape.

It grieved M. D'Erlau to the soul to learn that this false, but melancholy, news had thrown his wife into such affliction, and almost brought her to the grave. The parish priest thought that the utmost caution would be necessary now, in communicating to her the joyful intelligence which awaited her. He discussed with M. D'Erlau

how it might best be done ; and though it was already late and the weather was very unfavourable, they all set out for Schwarzenfels. It had been raining all day, and now it began to snow heavily ; for in that country the winter sets in earlier than here. They soon reached the peak of the woody mountain, whence, through the pine branches, the humble cottages could be seen far in the valley below, with their flat snow-covered roofs and smoking chimneys. Here the party sat down upon a moss-grown rock under the thick pines, whose pendant branches sheltered them from the wind and snow ; and Richard went first to the cottage, which the kind-hearted priest pointed out to him, through a gap in the branches of the trees.

Madam D'Erlau was sitting, in deep mourning, at her rude little fireplace, whose flickering blaze had begun to illumine the apartment, which was already somewhat dark. She was knitting and her little boy was reading aloud. As she saw her faithful white-headed servant enter the room, she screamed aloud, and the work fell from her hands. She ran up to him, and, with tears of joy and of sorrow, saluted him as affectionately as if he were her father. Charles, too, was out of his senses with delight. The lady desired the old man to sit down upon the wooden stool, which Charles placed at the fire for him. " Ah, Richard !" she cried, as he sat opposite to her at the fire, " is it thus we are destined to meet ? Alas ! let us not speak of the bloody death of my dearest, kindest, most excellent husband !—the memory is too gloomy. But what has happened Lina ? Did the dear child die, as the doctor foretold ? Alas ! perhaps the darling child is now in her cold grave !"

Richard told her that, in order to persuade the mother to fly, the kind-hearted physician had represented Lina's illness, as more dangerous than it really was ; and that she had recovered soon after, and had been well and healthy ever since. The mother was delighted—her eyes sparkled with joy.

"But why," she cried, and her countenance fell again, "why did you not bring her with you? Why did you not rescue her from our unhappy country, where her life is not safe for a single hour? How could you be so hard-hearted, as to travel without her? How could you?"—

Before she could finish the sentence, the door opened suddenly, and Lina flew into her mother's arms. Charles, too, rushed into her embrace; and it would not be easy to imagine more delicious tears, than those which the delighted mother shed, as she thus clasped them once more in her arms.

But her joy soon changed into sorrow again.—"Ah! would that my dear husband were alive!" she cried, looking to heaven with tears in her eyes. "Oh, then—then, indeed, would the measure of my joy be complete! But now, my dearest children, you are poor fatherless orphans; and the sight of you fills your afflicted mother's heart with anguish! For, alas! what can I, a poor unfriended, uncounselled widow, do for you!"

Richard now began, by distant preparations, to open the way for the glad tidings of his master's deliverance. But Madam D'Erlau was more collected than he had imagined. The great happiness of seeing the good old man once more—the still greater delight of clasping her daughter in her arms again—had been, for the high souled lady, the most natural and gradual preparation, for receiving now into her heart even the greatest joy—the joy of seeing alive once again her husband, whom she had believed to have been executed. With beating heart he had long been standing outside the door, where he could hear every word that was said.

When the lady now discovered, from Richard's words, that her husband was still alive, she cried out in a voice of ecstasy: "He is alive! Oh, God's mercy be for ever praised, which delivered him from his murderers! He

cannot be far away from us. Come, my children, let us go to him."

At this moment M. D'Erlau opened the door, and threw himself, full of joy, into the arms of his wife. But the feelings of the poor lady, who, till that hour, had mourned her dear husband as dead, and now saw him living before her eyes, were altogether peculiar. Timid, and fearful, as if she still doubted the reality of what she saw, she gazed upon him, as he stood before her in the light of the little fire. Unable to describe the happiness which thrilled through her soul, she exclaimed, "Oh, what happiness awaits us in heaven, where we shall see again so many dear ones, whom on earth we bewailed as dead!"

Need it be said, that the little party spent a happy evening by their humble fireside? The old Tyrolese and his wife joined them, and shared heartily in the happiness of their guests.

On the following morning another guest made his appearance, and one who, under God, had had the chief share in bringing about the re-union of this noble family. Richard brought in the canary-bird, which he had left, the evening before, in the parish priest's house. Charles was delighted to see his bird again. During his mother's illness it had escaped through the window, and he had never heard anything more of it since then; and now M. D'Erlau related how the bird had led to the discovery of his wife and son. His wife shed tears of joy and gratitude, at the wondrous dispensation of Providence. "Yes, good God!" she cried, clasping her hands, "it was Thou who didst so dispose it. Thou didst employ this little winged messenger, to tell my husband this secluded corner to which I had retired. Had it not been for his speedy arrival, I should have died of grief before the end of this winter!"

Charles rapturously echoed his mother's thanks. "Was it not a happy idea of mine," he said, "to teach the bird

this precise air? Little did I dream, when I was so distressed about the loss of my bird, that God had only taken it from me, in order to give me back my father and sister, and the bird, too, into the bargain. This shows us how God, out of a trivial misfortune, may prepare a great blessing for us."

"You are right, dear Charles," said his father. "It was with this view God took from us all our earthly goods, in order to give us better treasures in heaven. I trust that, by this temporary loss, we have all been gained to PIETY and VIRTUE, in comparison with which splendour and riches are nothing, and of which alone it can be said, that they possess an eternal value. And after all, perhaps God may restore our temporal goods, too, as He has given you back your canary-bird."

The shepherd boy, whom Charles had employed to catch his lost canary, and who, instead of returning it, had sold it to the bird merchant, was very much confounded, when he was called before the parish priest, and learned from him how the theft had been discovered in another country, many miles away. "Never again, in my life," said the boy, "will I be guilty of a dishonest act, for I now see clearly, there is no roguery so clever that it will not be detected at last."

M. D'Erlau resolved to spend the winter under this humble roof. Richard was lodged in one of the neighbouring cottages: the canary-bird was restored to the place it had occupied before it flew away.

Lina took the greatest care of it; and even in the harshest season, never left it a day without a green leaf or a fresh slice of an apple. Many a time, in the bright winter days, when the happy family were all seated together in their little parlour, looking out upon the white earth, and the wild snow-powdered pine-forest, the bird would sing the first part of their favourite melody, and the children and parents together would sing the rest of it, and console themselves by the sentiments it inspired. And

even in the many gloomy occurrences and melancholy forebodings to which this family were afterwards subjected, it was always no trifling solace to them all, when the tiny songster would, on a sudden, set up his little melody, and conclude with a lively, cheerful shake. "Yes," they would say, "we will trust in Him who already has aided us so wondrously, by means of so small and insignificant a creature. He, who can aid us in a thousand ways, and has already done so, will continue his protecting care over us!"

"Yes, yes!" old Richard would say, "I think so, too. The sight of the poor little bird outside of the window there, in the deep snow and the piercing frost, has always something affecting in my eyes. I always think of the words—'consider the birds of the air:—they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. And are not you more precious than they?' But when I see this little bird, these words sink deeper into my heart, and when it chants its little song, I cannot be downhearted any longer, no matter how bad things may look, or how hard it may go with us. He who cares for the birds of the air, will not forget us."

This noble family were destined to live for a while longer with very narrow means; but, in the end, were enabled to return to their country and recovered the greater part of their property. Mr. and Madam D'Erlau were rejoiced to find themselves once more rich and independent; for it enabled them to reward, to their hearts' content, those who had been their friends in need, Richard, his wife and son, the old fisherman, and every one who had shown them kindness.

THE COPPER COINS, AND THE GOLD COINS.

LETTER I.

MARGARET TO HER MOTHER.

DEAREST MOTHER,

I HAVE arrived safely here in the city. The lady, in whose service I am, was pleased at my punctuality, and welcomed me most cordially.

She told me what it was that induced her to think of taking me into her service. As you (like myself before I came here,) are not aware of it, I must tell it to you.

When she came on a visit, last spring, with her two children, to our parish priest, her brother, she had occasion to consult a great deal with him, and to examine, with his assistance, a number of papers. The children, who had never been in the country before, preferred running about in the open air, to sitting at home in the house; and in consequence the parish priest sent for me to bring them to the garden, the wood, and the meadows, in the neighbourhood, charging me to take great care of them. After a while the lady and her brother came after us; they went into the wood and saw us in the meadow, though we could not see them. The little boy saw some fish in the clear streamlet, and wished to wade into the water to catch them. In order to keep him from doing this, I called them to follow me, and promised that I

would show them something still nicer, and brought them to a little spot all filled with flowers.

The children were delighted. "Now," said I, "cannot God make beautiful flowers?" The children agreed. "Well, then," said I, "you ought to love God, who makes such pretty things for us." This observation pleased the lady extremely; and then the parish priest praised you very warmly, dearest mother, and said that you had brought up your children very well, and that my brother and I were always among his first pupils at school. And this autumn, the late children's maid being obliged to return to her parents, who require her themselves, she wrote to her brother to know whether I would be disposed to go into her service. The parish priest, as you are already aware, at once wrote back, that we both looked on it as a great piece of good fortune, and that I should go by the next courier. This was the account the lady gave me. "And so," said she, taking me by the hand, "I think it is God who has brought us together."

Hereupon she brought me into the nursery, which is a very nice lightsome room, with green walls. The children remembered me, and flew to me at once. "Tell me," said Fred, "how is uncle's poodle, that ran with us in the meadow, and knew so many nice tricks, and could fetch out of the river the stones that we threw into the water?"

"Have you brought us any of the nice flowers," said Theresa, (though it was late in the autumn,) "that grow in the meadow?"

"No," said I, "but instead of the flowers, I have brought you apples from the trees which were then in such beautiful blow."

I divided the fruit between them, and they were delighted with them, each contending that his own apple had the finest red cheeks.

Their mother smiled. "Be always equally kind and affectionate to the children," said she, "and be sure always to take good care of them."

"That I shall gladly do," said I, "they are such dear pretty children."

"Do so," said the lady, "and I shall not fail to be a kind and affectionate mother to you."

These words of the lady were very cheering and consoling to me. But no one in the world can be so kind and affectionate to me as you, dearest mother. Ah! when I remember your tears and counsels to me at parting, the tears rush to my eyes. I shall never forget, as long as I live, how you accompanied me to the road where the courier passes; how you insisted on carrying one of my bundles; how you waited in the rain till the coach arrived, though I urged you to go; how you tied up a little cake, which you had specially baked for me, and a few apples, in a pocket-handkerchief, and gave it to me for the journey; how you committed me to the care of the honest old courier, and repeated your counsels briefly to me once more. Yes, dearest mother, I shall never forget your words, they are graven upon my heart. I will ever love God, avoid sin, shun evil company, serve my mistress honestly and faithfully, and take the best care of the children under my charge. This I promise to you and to God. Pray for me, that God grant me His all-powerful grace, to keep my promise. I never fail to pray for you, and I shall ever remain your dutiful and affectionate daughter.

MARGARET OST.

LETTER II.

MARGARET TO HER MOTHER.

HERE I am, writing to you again, dearest mother, though it is only a week since I sent you a letter by the returning courier. It is such a pleasure and a comfort to me to write to you; for I then feel as if I were sitting chatting

with you in our comfortable little parlour. Both the children, of whom I have charge, are sleeping, softly and soundly, and thus I have time once again to write to you a few lines.

My mistress, Mrs. Maier, is really a most reasonable and truly Christian lady. All her orders to me are given in the kindest manner, and she takes great pains to teach me everything that I do not know. A better mistress I could not desire. The children, too, have grown very fond of me, and stay with me as willingly as with their mother. This is a great happiness for me, and she, too, is greatly pleased; for as my master is obliged to travel about a great deal upon his business, she has to spend the greater part of the day in the ware-room.

I wish, dearest mother, you could see the ware-rooms. My mistress deals in muslin; and you cannot believe what a lovely white it is, and how very fine and even the texture is. In my life, I never saw anything so beautiful; and I could not cease wondering how anything so fine could be made. My mistress told me that the threads are all spun by machines.

"Machines!" cried I, in my simplicity. "Who are they? I never heard of any such people; they must be very clever!"

She laughed heartily, and explained the thing to me. And afterwards she showed me lace handkerchiefs and dresses. The flowers and other ornaments are amazingly beautiful.

"These," said she, "cannot be made by machines; they are worked by the hand; and thousands of people, thanks to God! earn their bread by this occupation."

My mistress's house is a very large and fine one. A lady of rank lodges in the first floor. On the very first morning after my arrival, her maid came down to me with a white china-jug, with blue flowers, and a bright plated lid, in her hand.

"I say," she cried to me, "the last children's maid

used always to bring the spa-water from the fountain, outside of the gate, to my lady. Won't you do the same? The cook and house-maid have not time to do it; and it does not suit me to tramp about with a jug in my hand. But in the evenings, when your mistress has shut the shop and can look after the children herself, you can easily spare a quarter of an hour to go to the fountain. You shall not have to do it for nothing. My lady will give you a kreuzer* for every jug, and pay you regularly at the end of each week. Well, what do you say; will you do it?"

"Most willingly," I replied, "if my mistress gives me leave. But who would ask payment for a drink of cold water? I will gladly bring it for nothing."

"Don't hesitate to take the money," said my mistress, who was standing by, "the lady can well afford it, and six florins a year will be a very good thing for you."

I took the jug, and entered at once on my duties as water-carrier. This evening I had just lighted the lamp; my mistress was knitting, and the children were at play, when the maid walked in and handed me six shining kreuzers. "They are quite fresh from the mint," said she; "and though they are copper, they shine just like gold."

I was delighted with the bright pieces, and thought myself amazingly rich. These six pieces I now send to you, my dear mother. You will be able now to get a glass of beer with your dry bread in the evenings. I will send you at the end of each month all the kreuzers I get, and the courier has promised to take all the letters free.

You will smile at my poor present, but I know you will accept it in the spirit in which it is intended. And so good night. It is late, and you are already sleeping as softly as the two children here in their little bed. I will now go to sleep also, that I may be able to get up to my

* About the value of our halfpenny.

work to-morrow ; for before the children awake in the morning, I have a number of things to do in the house. God be with you, and with your affectionate daughter,

MARGARET OST.

LETTER III.

MRS. OST TO HER DAUGHTER.

FOR heaven's sake, dearest daughter, what have you been doing ? The moment I opened your letter, out fell six new solid gold pieces. I was frightened, and trembled in every limb ! " Good God ! " I cried, " the girl cannot have stolen the money ! Oh, if my Margaret has let herself be blinded by the glitter of the gold, and betrayed into such an evil deed, I should be the most unhappy of mothers ! "

I then read your letter. You spoke of " shining kreuzers," and called it a " poor present." This puzzled me. The copper can't have turned into gold, thought I. I thought about it for a long time. At last it occurred to me that one of the lady's servants might have played a trick upon you, and put brass counters into the letter instead of the kreuzers, in order to raise my hopes at first, and then disappoint them.

I ran to the money-changer, who is well acquainted with coins. I told him that I looked upon it as a trick, but that I wished, nevertheless, to show him the bright glittering pieces.

" Yes, yes ! " said he, " it is just like the trick a mischievous boy would play." He put on his spectacles, however, to have a look at the pieces. " Let me see them ? " said he.

I gave them to him. " Hey day ! " he exclaimed, " these are genuine gold ; every piece is worth ten florins, thirty

kreuzers. No, no ; this is no joke. At least I would be sorry to pass such a joke on any one, nor do I think any one else in the world would think of doing it."

I then showed him your letter. "It must have been a mistake," said he. "The lady must have made a mistake, especially as it was night ; instead of copper, she gave gold pieces."

"It cannot be anything else," said I. "I shall send the money back to my daughter the first post-day."

"Do so," said he ; "it would be a bad business otherwise."

I brought the money home with me, but the whole night long I could not close an eye ; I was constantly in terror lest thieves might come and steal the money, and perhaps strangle myself into the bargain. With the gold nothing came into my house but fear, anxiety, and care. I am delighted that I am rid to-day of this unlucky money. Go instantly to the lady, and give her back the gold. I shall not lay my head quietly to rest, till I shall know that the money is again in the hands of the rightful owner. Write me word instantly whether you have restored it safely.

Your brother, George, has written to me. He is well and happy. Ah, my God, when the lot fell on him to be a soldier, and when he was marched away with the other recruits, how afflicted I was ! I wept my eyes sore. But God brings all things about. Now, that George is so content and happy in his situation, I am more composed. Meanwhile, however, he is in want of all sorts of things, and would wish to be able to drink a glass of beer occasionally with his comrades. They all get something from home, but I am not able to send him a single kreuzer. This pains me very much. If the gold pieces were my own, then I could assist him ; but not a word about that ! I think we would all three choose to die of starvation, rather than take a penny of another's property.

God be with you, dearest daughter, and with us all, and guard us from all evil! Farewell, and write immediately, I beg you once again, by the returning carrier, to your anxious mother.

LETTER IV.

MARGARET TO HER MOTHER.

THE beginning of your letter, dearest mother, alarmed and grieved me. I could not help crying to think that it could, even for a moment, occur to you that I had stolen the money. No; sooner would I suffer my hand to be cut off, than steal or do any other injustice.

I ran with all speed up stairs to Madam von Holm, and laid the six gold pieces on the table. "Your ladyship," said I, "must have given me gold pieces instead of the copper kreuzers you intended to give."

The lady shook her head, and looked at the pieces one after another. She appeared almost as much astonished as yourself.

I then gave her your letter to read.

"This is extraordinary," said she, as she finished it; "but yet it is no mistake of mine; nor can I look upon the affair as a pure jest. I think that, perhaps, some unknown benevolent hand has put the gold into the letter, to support your poor mother. This mode of giving is unusual, it is true, but still it is well meant."

"Dearest lady!" said I, with tears in my eyes, "this unknown hand can be none other than your own. Whose else could it be? It was your generosity prompted you to gladden the hearts of the afflicted widow and her children by this rich present!"

"No, indeed," said the lady, "except a few show-

pieces, I have scarcely any gold at all, and of these nice new pieces not a single one. No, no; take back your gold once more, my dear girl!"

"But," said I, "what shall I do with it? It is not mine. To whom shall I give it? I cannot conceive who would have put gold into the letter instead of copper. Tell me what I shall do!"

"Send the gold back," said she, "to your mother, for whom you intended the copper kreuzers. She may with a good conscience apply it to her own uses."

I stood still for a moment, and thought anxiously. "Ah, my lady," I said at last, "do you take the money into keeping till the owner shall be found!"

"Keep the money," said she, "as I desire you. If any one should claim it, and your mother should have already spent it, I will myself make it good!"

At this moment two young ladies walked in to pay a visit. My dress was new to them, as the peasants who come to the city from the surrounding districts wear a different costume. They made me turn round and round, to get a good look at me. The little blue collar with black edging, the red boddice, the green skirt, and the white sleeves and apron, were all examined. "You are, indeed, a pretty child," said they to me.

"I am not a child any longer," said I, a little annoyed. They laughed, and endeavoured to explain to me that in the city grown-up young ladies, and even married women, are often addressed, "My child;" but I could hardly believe them.

After some further conversation, I took up the gold pieces and was about to go. The young ladies appeared very much amazed, and asked me if the money was mine. The lady told them how I had gotten it. "That is very strange," said they, "but it is a great piece of luck for you. You must immediately buy a new dress, such as the city girls wear, instead of your country costume."

"Oh, no," said I, "I shall not take your advice; the

fine dresses of the city girls do not suit country girls at all."

"You are right, my dear Margaret," said the lady; "stick to your pretty country costume, which I admire very much. Many a rustic maiden has laid aside, along with the simple costume of the country, the simplicity and purity of country manners, too, and became vain and frivolous. Employ your money in some better way than this."

Dearest mother, I don't know how to employ the money better than by sending it to you. Do you also send a part to dear George; you both need it more than I.

I have another request to make, dear mother. My mistress, Mrs. Maier, was delighted to hear that I can spin well, and that the thread is so fine and firm, and asked me to spin a little piece of cloth for her this winter. Will you, therefore, send me my nice wheel, which my father made specially for me a little before his death; I cannot spin so well with any other. My father was the best wheelwright in our whole country, and you are the best spinner. Ah, if we could sit together in the evenings, and our wheels were humming in concert, how happy we should be! Many a time during the winter shall I think of you, as I sit at my wheel.

Farewell; have no further care about the gold pieces, but buy with them whatever you want for the winter. The cold is already setting in. Buy warmer clothing, and lay in a stock of wood, too, for this cold, bitter, winter weather. Don't sit in the cold any longer, to spare the wood. I am delighted to think that when I am sitting in this warm cheery room, you, too, have a warm little room of your own.

LETTER V.

GEORGE TO MARGARET.

GOD bless you, dearest sister! Praise and thanks to Him for the great favour which, through you, He has done to my mother and myself.

My dear mother has sent me through the post the three letters which you wrote to her, and two of the gold pieces which you gave her. You may imagine how delighted I was at it!

But your honesty pleased me still more than the gold, though I shall have excellent occasion for the gold. It came just in the nick of time, for I was in want of a number of small articles of dress, which we are obliged to provide for ourselves, and which my pay is insufficient to procure; but now I am stocked for a long time.

Meanwhile, the affair made a great noise in the regiment. My comrades all know that my dear mother is very poor, and that she has barely what supports her; and they wondered, therefore, where she got so much money; for one of them had seen the letter, and read on the address, "With three florins in gold."

I told them how we got the money, and read for them my mother's letter, and your three also, which she had enclosed to me. But some of them said, "Go away—go away! that is rank nonsense. No one is such a fool as to change in this hidden and mysterious way his good gold pieces for copper kreuzers. The gold is stolen!"

The affair came to the ears of my captain, who though a young officer, is yet a man of great prudence and courage. He sent for me.

"How is this, Ost?" said he. "I hear you are grown rich all on a sudden, and the story appears to be very extraordinary. Have you brought your mother's and sister's letters?"

"O yes," I replied, handing him all four letters, and laying down on the table the two gold pieces which I had not yet changed.

He read the letters attentively, and with evident pleasure. "Well, my dear Ost," said he, "your mother is a truly honourable woman, and has brought up her children too, as I see, in honest principles; your sister is a most upright girl, and you, too, have always shewn yourself a right honest, brave lad. Always continue to love your mother as you do, and follow her good counsels, and you shall always be happy and fortunate."

"I am particularly pleased," the captain continued, "with your sister's good nature and civility to the invalid Madam von Holm, and her offer to bring her the spa water from the fountain outside of the gate every day, without fee or reward. I know this lady very well. She is my aunt; and,—not only in my opinion, for I might be prejudiced, but in that of all who know her,—a most excellent lady."

"Is it possible, then," said I, "that this generous lady could have indulged her generosity by changing the copper kreuzers, for the purpose of assisting a poor family in its day of need?"

"O, no," said the captain. "She is not wanting in will, it is true, but she is not rich enough to repay a little civility so exorbitantly, and to pay a gold piece for a jug of water. The exchange of the coins is, for the present, a mystery. I know not how to explain it; but this I know for certain, that if you and your sister continue always as virtuous, and as affectionately attached to your mother as now, God's blessing will rest upon you, and you will always find good friends and benefactors among men."

After a day or two, one of my comrades, who had hitherto been the captain's servant, but now was transferred, as a grenadier, to another company, came to me and told me that the captain had sent for me, and seemed to wish to take me as his servant. For you must know that many of the officers are attended by the private soldiers.

I went to him at once. "Well, Ost," said he, "will you be my servant? If your sister is so faithful and honest towards my aunt, and so active and obliging, I think you will be the same to me."

You may believe, dear sister, that I gladly accepted this offer, and promised to serve him truly and well. His service is a very good one, for he is a dear kind master; and I can easily combine my duties to him, with my service to the king. I have simply to bring him his dinner every day, to keep his clothes in order, and if he wants anything to go for it or order it. I have also to take care of his horse. For all this he pays me handsomely, and I have always remaining from his table as much as I require.

A short time since, as he has a great deal of writing, he said to me, "Do you hear, Ost? As your sister writes so well, you can hardly be a bad writer; for you both went to the same school, and are both industrious. Will you copy these two sheets here for me?"

"Most willingly," said I; "that is, as well as I can. I brought them to him next morning. He was very much pleased with them; and with a smile said, jestingly, 'Excellent, Mr. Secretary!'"

He now constantly gives me papers to copy, and pays me specially for it; and thus I am as comfortable as many a rich farmer's son, who, in addition to his pay, has also a large allowance from home.

You see, dearest sister, what luck your letters and your kreuzers have brought to me. We must thank God, who

has disposed everything so well for us, and we must continue our trust in Him.

We shall soon be going into the field. Pray to God to protect me and my dear captain from the bullets and swords of the enemy. But be not down-hearted and sad at the dangers which I shall have to encounter. God gives me a courageous heart to fight for father-land; and my captain's courage animates my own. He often says, "It is sweet and glorious to die for father-land!" He is right, for I think it is really a Christian duty to give one's life and blood for one's people. If I am doomed, then, never to see you or my mother in this world more, I now bid you farewell. But I should be sorry had I not a hope of requiting hereafter the great services which my mother has ever done to us. It grieves me to think that I should not be able to assist you, dear sister, by advice and protection. But my good God will protect you both, if He should call me to Himself, and will re-unite us all in heaven. God be with you, dearest sister, and with your affectionate brother.

GEORGE.

LETTER VI.

MARGARET TO HER MOTHER.

GOD be praised, dearest mother, it is a peace once more! You are already aware of this; we have had thanksgivings in all the churches for it, but we find new cause every day to thank God.

Many soldiers are home already on leave. Many homes are full of joy; but in many also there is mourning for the fallen, who shall never return more, and many a bitter tear is shed.

But yesterday my tears were tears of joy. For only think, yesterday George came here quite unexpectedly. I cannot tell you how delighted I was. At first I was no little terrified, when a tall stately soldier, with a moustache and a frightful sabre at his side strode into the room, and hastened up to me. I screamed for terror. But he laughed and said, "Dear sister, don't you know me?" It was then, for the first time, I knew it was George, and I was actually wild with joy; my heart beat quicker from joy now, than it had done from terror before.

George inquired, first of all, most affectionately, for you. He sends a thousand loves, and desired me to say, that the first moment he can, he will go himself to see you.

My mistress ordered cake and wine, and three glasses.

"Your brother's arrival must be celebrated," said she to me; "we must drink his health."

He sat down beside us, and told us all his adventures in the war. The most remarkable adventure for us is, that he rescued his gallant captain from the hands of the enemy, and from certain death. The poor gentleman was wounded, and his horse was shot under him. He had sunk upon his knee. One of the enemy's hussars had already raised his sabre to cleave his skull, but George came up just at the moment, warded off the blow, and struck down the fierce hussar. Several of the enemy came up, but George's comrades hastened up to his assistance at his call, "to the rescue of our captain!" The enemy were put to flight. George bound up his master's wounds till the surgeon should be called, brought him into a cottage, with the assistance of his comrades, and took the greatest care of him. He recovered; the wound is perfectly healed, and has done him no further injury; but George says, it is a more glorious mark of honour than the order that he carries on his breast.

The captain, who is here with his aunt, Madam von

Holm, said to George, "I must make acquaintance with your good sister also. Call her to us."

"I am delighted," said he, as I entered, "to know the sister of the man to whom I owe my life. I will certainly show my gratitude to him, and render you and your mother all the service in my power. Write this to your mother, and salute her cordially in my name. The mother who has brought up her children so well, cannot be honoured in proportion to her desert."

Early this morning the captain set out again, for he is hastening to see, as soon as possible, his father and mother who are still alive. George accompanied him, and, at parting, renewed all his affectionate messages to you.

Madam von Holm, who has always been most kind to me, is even more friendly now. To-day, on her return from the church, she walked into our parlour. "I have just been giving thanks to God," she said, "for permitting me to see my dear Charles again.—I could not restrain my tears of joy, as he told me of the danger from which your brother saved him.—See, what a world of good the kreuzers have led to. Had you not, in your filial affection, sent them off on the spot to your mother, your brother would not have been Charles's servant, and, perhaps, Charles would now be no more. God has given a great blessing to this childish present of yours."

"That is quite true," said the maid, who accompanied her mistress; "but I should wish to know how it was, that the coppers were taken out of the letter and the gold pieces put in their place."

"So should I, also," said madam von Holm; "not for mere curiosity, however, but in order to thank the unknown benefactor, who put the gold into the letter. Meanwhile, let us thank God, who uses men as instruments of good to their fellows. He will plentifully bless the generous soul whom He only knows, and through whom He has imparted to us so bountiful a blessing."

For this, dearest mother, we should pray to our good God every day: I will also pray, that it may please Him to discover who it was that proved so great a benefactor to us. Your distribution of the six gold pieces, two for yourself, two for George, and two for me, is most kind; and I am sure you are as anxious as myself and my brother, to kiss that gentle hand through which God sent us such a blessing.

Meanwhile, farewell. With a heart full of purest love, I am ever your dutiful daughter,

MARGARET.

LETTER VII.

GEORGE TO HIS MOTHER.

It grieves me sincerely, dearest mother, that I have not yet been able to realize my heart's best wish of seeing you once more. It was not possible for me to leave my dear master, who is now so used to me and places such confidence in me, to travel alone. However I hope to come to you very soon, and then never to part from you more.

I have very good news to tell you. Only think it has come to light at last, who it was that put the gold into my sister's letter.

Yesterday my master and I returned to Madam von Holm's; and we learned on our arrival, that the colonel of the regiment was here with one of his relatives. My master immediately hastened to him. The colonel returned his visit, and asked to be presented to Madam von Holm. She invited him to dinner; there were some others to meet him; and I waited at table.

The lady, during dinner, told the story of the kreuzers. Every one asked eagerly whether the mystery about the

exchange of the coppers was yet cleared up. The colonel, who was a very gay, friendly man, smiled.

"I can gratify your curiosity," said he. "And as I see you are greatly interested about it, I shall do so at once. During the war, we had a sharp eye upon all letters. We knew that there were spies in the country, who gave the enemy intelligence of every thing that could be of use to them and injure us. On one occasion a packet of letters came to me, partly carried through the post, partly by the courier. One of these letters was addressed *To my Dear Mother, the Wheel-wright's Widow, with Six Kreuzers*. This appeared very strange to me, 'What can it mean?' said I, 'the postage is more than six kreuzers.' I began to suspect. The spies often sent their information under simple addresses, and addressed them to very humble people who could never be suspected. I opened the letter, 'Ha!' said I, 'I knew Ost, the wheel-wright, well. He was an excellent man, and a native of my own estate, Kornfeld. Many a pipe has he turned for me!—God be merciful to him!'"

"The daughter's childish letter to her mother affected me deeply. The day before, I had got a rouleau of gold pieces, which I did not want at the time, and I took out the coppers and put the gold in their place. Thank God that this momentary impulse has, under His guidance, led to so many happy results!

"I thought," he continued, "that there might be some reference to the matter at dinner, and having kept the kreuzers as a memorial, I have brought them with me to distribute among the parties interested in the story. For as God has blessed these kreuzers so abundantly, I am sure we will all prize one of them more than a ducat of gold."

He gave one to Madam von Holm, one to the captain, and reserved one for himself. The remaining three he laid beside his plate. "These," said he, "are destined for George, his mother, and his sister."

"This piece," said Madam von Holm, holding it in her fingers and looking fixedly at it, "has so many dear memories associated with it, having been, by God's guidance, the means of saving my nephew's life, that it shall be as dear a keepsake, in my eyes, as a golden medal!"

"My father and mother," said the captain, "have, at my request, resolved to show their gratitude to my friend George, and to provide for his mother. By her husband's early death and other misfortunes, the poor widow's house is deeply mortgaged, and George has but little hope of being able to redeem it, and settle at home. We have resolved, therefore, as I owe the son so much, to assist him with a sum of money."

"I shall most gladly contribute to it," said the colonel.

After dinner, when the other guests withdrew, the colonel called me, and consulted with Madam von Holm and my master about our affairs. They resolved to pay off my father's debts, and to establish me in a position to carry on my trade profitably and independently.—The colonel promised, now that the peace had come, to obtain my discharge, so that I might at once enter on the possession of the house and workshop. In less than a month all will be arranged.

The colonel then desired me to bring my sister.—He greeted her most warmly, praised her, and handed her the three kreuzers.

"Divide these with your mother and brother," said he; "and continue as good a sister and daughter as you have been. These pieces shall be to you and your brother a memorial that 'God rewards filial love;' and your mother, whenever she looks at her kreuzer, shall be able to congratulate herself, that she brought up her children so well."

And now, dearest mother, we must thank God, who has rescued us so graciously from all our misfortunes and troubles. I will come to you very soon; and as, at your

age, the charge of the house-keeping is too severe, I will bring my dear sister to relieve you. We will all live happy and united. We, your affectionate children, cannot be sufficiently grateful to God, for enabling us to make your old age happy.

In token of our united filial affection, we jointly subscribe ourselves your ever grateful children,

GEORGE AND MARGARET.

THE HOP-BLOSSOMS.

CHAPTER I.

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

FREDERICK HERMAN, schoolmaster of Steinhach, was one of the honestest and most peaceable men under the sun. His greatest happiness was to take care of children; and the zeal with which he discharged his important duty was crowned with perfect success. Content with his scanty income, he felt himself as happy in his straw-thatched cottage, school house, and garden, as a king on his throne.

The little village, Steinhach, lay in a wild, mountainous district. It was on a dark rainy day that Herman caught the first glimpse of it, as he descended the rugged mountain path: his heart sunk within him, when he descried the grey old church spire and cabin roofs overgrown with moss, appearing below in the valley between rocks and trees. But his depression was still greater, when he was conducted to the crumbling school house, to which there was no access except by a rough, stony road over a wild swamp. The house intended for his dwelling had a most uncomfortable look; the ceiling was of black, musty wood; the earthen floor was damp and rugged; and the little windows were so dark from age and dust, as almost to exclude the light. The school house was equally bad. The garden near the house was large enough, but it gave nothing in its present state, except weeds and stunted grass.

A few trees were of a good sort, but the greater number were either bad or so old that they had more withered than green boughs. But the schoolmaster was not disheartened : " With the help of God," said he, cheerfully, " things will be better here shortly."

Joyfully and zealously he devoted himself to his business. The children, inspired by his example, applied themselves with increased diligence and love to their studies. The kind master, by improving the children and winning their love, soon became a favourite with their parents. He presented a modest petition to the parishioners ; and they unanimously resolved to repair and beautify the old school house. His own vacant hours were spent in tilling his garden : at break of day or in the evening's dusk, he might be seen rooting out old trees and planting young ones in their place, grafting or pruning or propping others, digging beds, or sowing pulse and young plants. His father was a gardener, and it was from him he had inherited this love and taste for gardening. He also enclosed and reclaimed the swampy spot before his door, and a furze covered hill near the garden attached to his school. Every thing that he took in hands succeeded : the place around his new school house, soon looked like a blooming garden.

After the lapse of about three years, Herman returned, in Autumn, to the city, to bring home his young wife. Her name was Theresa Hikmer, a prudent, intelligent, and virtuous young woman. Her father was a steward, and had given her an excellent education. She had never seen the school but once, and the recollections of that visit were by no means cheering. Herman told her that he had made some improvements since that time ; but her hopes were not very high, nor had Steinhach any other charms for her when she set out, than the society of her husband.

But how great was her surprise on arriving, to find the swamp before the door changed into a blooming pasture, planted with rows of young trees, loaded with blushing apples and golden pears. The school, it is true, was still

covered with thatch: but the fair yellow of that new thatch contrasted with the dark grey walls, gave the house a pleasing and comfortable look. Herman excused himself, by stating that the walls were too weak to support any other sort of roof; but Theresa interrupted him. "We can be content and happy," said she, "under a thatched roof, if we love God and live in peace and harmony."

Her surprise was greater when she entered the dwelling house. The windows were clean and clear as crystal, and commanded a beautiful view of the garden. The walls were white as snow, and the floor new and clean. Along one of the walls lay the schoolmaster's writing desk, over which was placed a glazed book case: at the other side was a good piano, which, like the writing desk, was made of brown nut wood, finely varnished. Over the writing desk was a good copperplate engraving of the Divine Friend of little children, calling the little ones to come near him; and over the piano another engraving, in the same style, of St. Cecilia, the inventress of the organ and patroness of music: but the most beautiful engraving of all, the Holy Family, held the most conspicuous place between the two windows, directly opposite to the door. These good engravings, set in their dark brown frames, were a great ornament to the white and naked walls, and made the house look not only comfortable but elegant. A plain table set in the middle of the floor, and a half dozen cane bottomed chairs, made up the only other furniture of the apartment. The furniture had been procured partly by the savings of Herman or the assistance of the parish, or the generous offerings of his pupils. Flower pots, with geraniums or other plants, were placed on all the windows.

Herman was afraid that whitewashed walls might look poor in the eyes of his wife, who, until now, had been accustomed to papered apartments: he also expressed his regret, that he could not have even a good looking glass. But Theresa observed, "that the flowers on the windows

were a greater ornament, than the flowers on the papered walls of the rich : they were cheaper, and, moreover, had a pleasing smell : and as to the looking glass, what better mirror," added she, "do we require than that picture of the Holy Family, or the other images on the walls. In the image of St. Cecilia, for instance, with those eyes raised so devoutly to heaven, we see, as in a glass, that we ought to use the sacred gift of music, principally to raise up man's heart to heaven."

Herman now conducted his wife to the garden. From the garden door to the enclosing hedge at the opposite end, there was a broad walk strewn with gravel and in excellent order. The portion of the garden nearer to the house, was sown under beds of vegetables of different kinds, to the right and left, which, by the varied hues of green, were very pleasing to the eye. The lower half of the garden was under trees : the old trees were so loaded with fruit that they required props, and even these lately planted could shew a few apples or pears : the ground was clothed with rich new grass. In a corner of the garden, beehives were arranged on a long bench. The hill, flanking one of the sides, was planted with hops, shooting up and twining round their props their dark green leaves, in the evening sun. Theresa sat down on a bench under an apple tree at the end of the walk, and having, for a few moments, surveyed, in evident happiness, the scene around her—"See," said she, at last, "what industry can do : there is no place or rank in life, that industry, perseverance, and taste, cannot make tolerable and even agreeable. By your industry this spot has been changed into a land flowing with milk and honey ; a perfect Paradise."

From the garden they went to the school room. The children were all assembled, dressed in their holiday attire. They welcomed the wife of their beloved master with happy smiles, and sang a song in her honour. A boy, leading a little lamb, and a girl, carrying two white doves, advanced, and requested her to accept their presents.

All the other children had some rustic gift to present; a hen, or a basket of eggs or of fruit, honey bright and clear as transparent gold, butter, or flax fine as silk, or as the yellow locks of the children that presented them. Theresa wept tears of joy. "I come," said she, "from one fair garden into another—here, in this school room: but how much more fair, more beautiful is this, where lovely children bloom like opening flowers."

"True," said the parish priest, who was also present, "very true. Heaven grant that I and my worthy assistant here, may save these precious plants from blast or decay. A school is God's garden, where innocence, piety, and all virtues should bloom."

CHAPTER II.

EARLY HISTORY OF THERESA.

THERESA was the daughter of a respectable steward at Lindenberg. While yet very young, she lost her mother. Her father entrusted his frugal table and all his household concerns to a trusty old servant maid, who had lived in his house since his marriage. Theresa was of the same age as Leonora, the youngest daughter of the proprietor of the castle. She was her constant playmate, and was allowed to assist at the instructions of her tutors, and to receive lessons in all feminine accomplishments, from the same persons. The intimacy thus early commenced, soon ripened into a tender and lasting friendship.

One day the lord of the castle, Leonora's father, went with a great train of his dependents to the next town to wait on the prince. Leonora, who was then recovering from a dangerous illness, was obliged to remain at home. One of the maids was ordered to attend her during the absence of the family. This maid asked permission from

her young mistress, to go, for a half hour, to one of the nearest roads, to get a sight of the prince on his way to the city. Leonora consented. All the servants in the castle, every soul in the village that could walk, had also gone.—Theresa alone, though her father would gladly have taken her to the city, preferred remaining at home, to keep company with Leonora. There was also another reason. Her old servant maid was sick, and Theresa could not think of leaving her alone.

Leonora, finding the time pass heavily in the deserted castle, walked out to the garden. It was a beautiful summer's morning. She inspected all her flowers, which she had almost forgotten during her illness. They had not been watered for a long time, and they lay drooping and withered on the hard clay. Taking a watering pot, Leonora went to a well in the centre of the garden, and was filling the vessel from a large marble reservoir; but when she endeavoured to raise the water her feeble strength failed; she staggered, slipped, and fell in. The water was very deep; and the fright and sudden cold deprived her of breath, and of all power or thought of helping herself.

Theresa happened at the moment to be standing near the window. She saw the young lady fall in, and heard the hollow splash of the water. She screamed aloud for help, and she ran as fast as she could to the garden. To her horror, she found the nearest door locked. Still crying out for help, she ran back through the court-yard, and entering the garden by another door, arrived almost breathless at the well. Leonora had disappeared, but in her death agony, she rose again and raised an arm over the water. Theresa seized the hand, and with some difficulty, succeeded in drawing up her young mistress. But she was senseless; her eyes were closed; and her face wan and pale as a corpse. Theresa tried every means, but in vain, to revive her. At length Leonora faintly opened her eyes, stared long and wildly at Theresa,

slightly pressed her hand, but could not speak a word. When she had recovered somewhat, Theresa led her gently to the castle and placed her in bed. The warmth of the bed, soon restored animation. Tears of joy and gratitude streamed copiously down her cheeks, "Oh!" said she repeatedly, "you have saved my life; never, never, as long as I live, can I forget to repay you." "Let us both thank God," said Theresa, "it is He that saved you."

From that day forward, the friendship of Leonora for Theresa, was still more warm and devoted. Leonora, could hardly allow her to go out of sight. For hours together, they studied or worked in the castle or the garden bowers. They were inseparable companions in all their walks, and Leonora's great study was how to please her friend. Thus they lived for many years united in sisterly affection. Their noble and generous dispositions, their mildness and modesty, and devoted attachment to each other, made their lives a foretaste of the bliss of heaven.

But the French war had just broken out, and hostile armies were bearing down on Lindenberg. Leonora's father resolved to start with his family for Vienna. She begged Theresa to fly with them. All her eloquence, her tears, her promises, her protestations were called into play. "This place," said she, "will soon be in the hands of the enemy; what good, what happiness can you find here. God knows what may befall you. Many long years may pass away before I and my parents can return; stay here and we can do nothing for you; but come with us, and we shall do all in our power to make you happy. Come, do come with us, dearest Theresa."

"Heaven knows," said Theresa, "how happy I would be with you. But how can I abandon my good father? who would take care of him? our faithful old servant is dead. He has no one except myself now." Leonora then drew an enchanting picture of all the glories and charms and pleasures of the great Imperial Capital. "Oh!" said Theresa, "how could I enjoy myself, so far away from

my dear aged father, and not knowing how he was going on—it would kill me—I could not bear it.”

“Well,” answered Leonora, “you must promise to think of it. When we are gone, the castle windows will be closed; the castle itself deserted, and not a soul of your rank remaining behind. Peasants and servants, and perhaps foreign soldiers, will be your only company. But if you come to Vienna, your figure and engaging manner, will certainly secure a good place for you.”

But Theresa replied, “that until she saw her father well provided for, she could neither enjoy nor think of any provision for herself, however good it might be.”

Lady Lindenberg, Leonora’s mother, would be most happy to have Theresa accompanying her daughter. “Come with us, dear Theresa,” said she—“Leonora will require such a faithful friend and beloved companion as you, in a strange place; you will be as a daughter to me, no mother could take better care of you.”

But Theresa still persisted in her resolve. With many tears and a cordial expression of her thanks to the good lady, she declared that it was impossible for her to think of abandoning her poor sick father, especially during those troubled times.

“You are right, my dear child,” said Lady Lindenberg, “God will assuredly bless and reward you for your filial affection. Remain with your father and be his consolation and guardian in his illness. But when it pleases God to take him away, you shall not be an orphan. Write immediately to us, and I will find means of bringing you to our new residence: I will then be your mother, and Leonora, my daughter, will be to you an affectionate sister.”

The day of separation at length came, and Leonora and Theresa wept bitterly; even the mother could not restrain her tears, when she witnessed the ardent attachment and sorrowful parting of the young friends. Count von Lindenberg was obliged to turn aside, to conceal the tears

that started to his eyes. Theresa gazed after the coach, until it disappeared behind the neighbouring hills. She wept so long and bitterly, that her eyes were red and swollen, and she was compelled to lie down on her bed to relieve the torturing head ache.

Still she lived happy and content with her father, and carefully managed his little household. She was always so busily employed, that she never felt the time pass heavily, though the castle and the castle garden were to her now, as if they had never existed. A year thus passed off happily ; but then the sad news came, that Count von Lindenberg was dead. As he had no son, the estate passed into one of the collateral branches ; and the heir, anxious to dispose of a property which was so much exposed to the casualties of war, sold it off to a rich corn merchant, who had amassed an enormous fortune, by contracts with the commissariat. The new master made many changes in the property. Theresa's father was dismissed, and compelled to leave the steward's house. He hired a small cottage in the village. His annuity was very small, and irregularly paid in these disordered times. Woe and starvation would have been his inevitable fate, if his good daughter were not now able to support him by the work of her hands. She was well acquainted with all that a young woman should know ; and plied her needle at sewing or embroidery during the long day, and sometimes to a late hour in the night. By her untiring industry, she was able to provide for her house with such prudence and economy, that her beloved father had every thing he could wish to cheer his old age.

His health was, however, gradually giving way. For a long time he was confined to his bed room, and, at length, could not leave his bed. Theresa attended him with the most devoted solicitude. She sat by his bed side whole nights together, toiling with her needle by the light of her lamp, while her soul was praying fervently to God in his behalf. Love so tender and devoted drew tears of gratitude

from her father. "Theresa," he would often say, "your affection is beyond praise: mark my words; God will assuredly reward your filial love. You will have luck in this life." The very night he died, he had solemnly repeated these words.

After his death, Theresa resolved to avail herself of the kind offer of Lady Lindenberg. But just as she had written a letter on the subject, she received one from Leonora which brought very bad news. Lady Lindenberg was dead, and had left poor Leonora in extreme destitution. For a long time past, owing to the interruption of communication by the war, they had not been able to receive the revenue that was due to them from Lindenberg, and the poor young lady was obliged to live with an old aunt in Bohemia, who was harsh, avaricious, and unfeeling. Leonora was treated as one of the servants. Her letter to her old friend, gave a heart rending account of the miseries of her position.

Leonora being now a poor orphan, without parent or friend, and all Theresa's hopes from that quarter being blasted for ever, she resolved to leave Lindenberg, and travelled a long journey to Hilmer, her father's brother. He received her very kindly, and was a second father to her. She was so prudent and intelligent, so modest and gentle, and, withal, of so engaging a figure, that several very favourable offers of marriage were made to her, by some young men of the town. But she preferred Herman, with whom she became acquainted in her uncle's house: he was not rich, but he was virtuous and intelligent, qualities which Theresa prized more than riches.

She consulted her uncle, who highly approved her choice. "He is poor in the goods of this world," said he, "but rich in goods of a higher order. He is religious, well instructed, has a generous and noble heart, and bears an irreproachable character. Heart and soul he is devoted to the duties of his state; and few have done more good. His income is small—but it can be increased by industry.

Your dispositions are the same. You will be happy with him. What you want in wealth, you shall have in the blessings of heaven. Your devoted love to your father, is a rich capital in heaven, which, in its own time, will assuredly bear abundant interest."

CHAPTER III.

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S FAMILY.

IN that rural school house, surrounded by its blooming garden, Theresa and Herman lived contented and happy. They loved God ardently, and every day found fresh reasons to thank Him and rejoice in his blessings. Being of one heart and one soul, and having, from their earliest years, been trained up in habits of patience and good temper, no unkind or hasty word ever interrupted the harmony of their domestic hearth. Frugal and industrious, and never haunted by vain wishes, nor indulging in unnecessary expense, they were yet ever ready to apply savings of their toil to the relief of their neighbours, and to lay up a little store against the day of distress.

Nothing contributed more to their happiness, than the constant employment of their time. Herman was always at his post in the school, and made it his happiness and pride. Theresa managed the domestic affairs in such a way, as to make them a model of neatness and regularity; and when school hour was over, she devoted an hour to the instruction of the little girls in sewing or embroidery, amusing them, at the same time, with some moral or interesting stories, and sometimes joining with them in a hymn.

Her vacant hours were employed either with her needle or in the care of the garden. When trees were to be pruned or grafted or planted, Herman always took some

of the grown boys with him to instruct them: his wife, also, taught the young girls how to manage the kitchen garden, when, and how vegetables of all kinds were to be sewn and cultivated. At the close of their well spent day, Herman and his wife were happy in the conviction of having done their duty. "Men never feel so happy," they would often say, "as when they have contributed to the welfare and happiness of others." But the children, with whom heaven had blessed their union, were their chief happiness. Catherine, the eldest, and Sophia, the second child, had the mother's blue eyes and rich auburn hair; Freddy, a gay, sprightly boy, was like the father. They had other children—all blooming as roses, and fair and innocent as angels. When the elder ones began to speak, and to express, each succeeding day, love to their parents, the solicitude of these parents to bring up their little family in piety, increased. Their combined cares were crowned with such success, the children were so docile and zealous for improvement, that the little family enjoyed almost the happiness of heaven.

In the fine days in Spring, when she sat on the bench under the apple tree, her younger children at her feet playing with flowers, while the elder ran around her and asked her a thousand questions, when all around was green and blooming, and the birds sang in the trees, her heart was so full of joy and happiness, that she would sing for her dear children. These simple strains coming from the sweet lips of a mother, inspired the children with an early love of all that was good, beautiful, and true. They were soon able to join her in the song. Herman was so happy, so strongly moved, when he beheld the good mother surrounded by his pious children, that he composed a song, which, though plain and artless, was so well suited to the place and circumstances, that it caught the fancy of the little ones, became their favourite, and made a lasting impression on their souls.

It was on a clear Spring's morning, when the sun had

just risen, and gilded hill and vale with his golden beams, —no cloud darkening the blue vault of heaven,—and leaves, blossoms, grass, and flowers, glittering with dew, that the mother, surrounded by her children, first sang the song under the favourite apple tree.

Many a time afterwards was it sung by the happy family, and still with increasing pleasure. It was by this and similar means, that the parents endeavoured to educate their children. But their good example was more powerful than any words. The children grew up unaffectedly pious, mild, gentle, and obliging to all. As their father and mother were a model of piety and prudence to all the parents of the parish, the children were, also, a model, to all their playmates, of diligence, piety, and filial love. The old parish priest had good reason to say, "The schoolmaster's family is the most virtuous, and the happiest, too, in the whole village."

CHAPTER IV.

WANT AND SICKNESS.

THE happiness of this family had its bitters and alloys ; but they were received with resignation to the will of God. "The bright sun cannot always shine, nor are the heavens always blue, but dark rainy days come to make the crops grow and give a rich harvest ; thus," said Herman, "if we wish to reap a rich reward in heaven, we must bear the clouds and storms of this life, which are sent to try and improve us in virtue."

A year of great scarcity came on : bread sold for twice its ordinary price. Herman's scanty returns were hardly enough to buy food for his numerous family. The mother was so taken up with the care of her children, making, mending, and washing their clothes, that she had but

little time to sew or embroider for hire; and thus that very remunerative source of support, was almost entirely dried up. The poor family were accordingly thrown into great distress by the present scarcity.

"Alas!" said Theresa to her husband, "what shall we do? our meal chest is almost empty. Where can we get bread for so many? how can we meet several other necessary expenses? the shoemaker brought here, the day before yesterday, three new pair of shoes for the children, and three others which he had mended: that old grey coat of yours is so old, that we can count the threads. We cannot get money enough, I fear, to feed and clothe, decently, ourselves and our poor children."

She was deeply afflicted, but Herman endeavoured to console and cheer her. Sitting down to the piano, he accompanied, and sang a hymn of confidence in God.

The elder children, and the mother, too, entered fully into the sentiments of the song, and felt their confidence and courage revived.

The parish priest came in as they had finished the song. When returning from a visit to one of his sick parishioners, he had heard the music, and was deeply affected by a hymn breathing such tender confidence in God in those hard times. "Dear Herman," said he, "I can give you two or three bushels of corn at the usual price: I am not rich, you know; but you must take the corn; and when the times are better, you may pay me at your own convenience."

The whole family was delighted with the priest's kindness, and returned him the most heartfelt thanks. The corn gave them a sufficient supply, until the next harvest brought down the markets. The want they had suffered gave them one great blessing. It taught them to rely on God in the day of distress. "Great as the scarcity was, my dear children," said Herman, "none of you ever went hungry to bed. Our anxiety was greater than our wants. God interfered at the proper time and

relieved us. To Him be our thanks ever given: let us always place our hopes in His mercy." The children were taught to prize more highly the gifts of God. More clearly and feelingly they were convinced, that He was the universal Father that gave bread to all—and this they professed more devoutly every day at grace before and after meals. They felt now, for the first time, the full force of the words, "that the eyes of all hoped in God, and that He gives food to all in the proper time."

On another occasion all the children were attacked by the scarletina. The afflicted mother went from bed to bed, and watched several nights without ever closing her eyes. Herman earnestly pressed her to allow herself a few hours sleep, at least, while he took her place by the sick beds; but her solicitude for her beloved children was too great to allow her to sleep. "O," said she, "there are too many of them sick: both of us have enough to do." She never felt so keenly as now her straitened circumstances. "Oh!" she exclaimed, one morning, after a severe night, "so many of my children sick, and not a penny in the house! I know not what shall happen us; my heart is broke."

But Herman did not despond. With unflinching confidence in God, he sat to his piano, and cheered the drooping spirits of his wife with the hymn of hope.

The mother was encouraged to hope; and soon had the happiness of beholding her young family restored to health.

This misfortune had, also, its good effects. The children were more sensible than ever, of the obligations they were under to their parents. As yet they had not proved the full depth of their parent's love, but now they were more docile and affectionate than ever. "Never, dear mother," said Catherine, "can I forget the love you have shewn to me during my illness. It shall be my constant care, never to give a moment's uneasiness to so kind a parent, but, on all occasions, to make you happy by my obedience,

industry, and piety." The bonds of family affection were thus drawn closer than ever. The children were more sensible that health was a gift of God, for which they should daily thank Him. Thus sickness itself had contributed to their general happiness.

CHAPTER V.

THE SICK MOTHER.

HERMAN and his wife and family now enjoyed a few tranquil and happy years, without any great affliction or trial. But another great calamity was now prepared by heaven to test their virtue.

After the birth of her ninth child, the mother was unable to leave her bed. In some days she appeared to improve, and was able to sit up for a few hours. Catherine's birth-day came; and the fond mother was up the whole day. Being as yet unable to attend to the business of the house, she took a straw bonnet, a present of her friend Leonora, and prepared it as a birth-day present for her daughter. The bonnet was sadly faded. But by carefully removing the stains and making it smaller, it would pass, except on very close inspection, for a new bonnet. Catherine, who saw all the trouble her mother was taking, thanked her affectionately. A new ribbon, green, blue, or red, would be, she thought, a great ornament to her new bonnet; and she had some notion of asking her father for the money to buy it. She knew he would give it most willingly, but she could not ask it. "My poor father," thought she, "has so much expense with his large family, it would be a sin to ask money for unnecessary ornaments."

The mother had been busily employed all day preparing the bonnet; but during the following night she became

dangerously ill. She complained of violent pains, and fell into such a state, that she appeared on the point of death. The husband rose in alarm, and, lighting a candle, called his eldest daughter. She awakened the other children. All came into the mother's bed room crying and sobbing. "Ah, dear mother," said one of the youngest, "I beg of you do not die. Even the infant in the cradle, startled in its sleep by the cries of its brothers and sisters, wept along with them.

The sight of her weeping children, their sobs and screams, had well nigh killed the poor mother. The father sent them out of the room, and told them to pray to God to cure their mother. All went on their knees and raised up their little hands. Tears streamed from the father's eyes, as he beheld, by the light of the lamp which he held in his hand, his nine children, Catherine holding the infant in her arms. It was she that raised her voice in prayer. "O dear Father, who art in heaven, do not take away our mother—restore her once more in health to our arms." "O, yes, kind Father," said Herman within himself, "Thou seest these weeping children: Thou knowest my affliction. Thou wilt not take away the good mother from those helpless babes.

Returning to the bed room, he sat down by the bed side. He trembled with anxiety, and became paler than the mother herself, who, by this time, was beginning slowly to recover her strength. In a weak whisper, she said, "Dearest Herman, be not alarmed; I feel myself much better. God will come to our aid. Have patience—put the children to bed." He did so. Catherine alone remained up. That long night passed heavily and anxiously over; but when the first hues of the morning sun gleamed in the window, Catherine ran to call the forester's wife, her god-mother. The woman came without delay. "Thank God, you are come," said Herman: "sit by her bed and take good care of her, and I will run for the physician." He was taking his hat and stick,

when he was called back by his wife. "O Herman," said she, "doctors and apothecaries are too dear for us. We have already drawn most of our next quarter. We were told sternly, that we could get no more in advance. I feel myself much better now. God, I trust, will be my physician; He can restore me to health without any expense to you. Wait, at all events, for a few days."

"I believe you are right, Theresa," said the forester's wife; "I think the attack you had last night, was not at all so dangerous as it appeared. You remained up too long and exhausted your strength. Your work at the bonnet was, it is true, only an amusement; but even that, when continued too long, overpowered you. Believe me, that swooning attack you had last night, was brought on by fatigue. All danger is over now, I am sure. You know I had an attack like this last year. The doctor ordered me to take some herbs, which restored me at once. These herbs grow in our neighbourhood; I have no doubt they will cure you also."

Theresa was enterely of her opinion; but Herman still had his doubts. "The symptoms certainly appear the same," said he, "but the constitutions of people are very different. The medicine that cures one man, might be useless, or dangerous to another. That's what makes the doctor necessary, who alone can form a prudent judgment of what is good in each particular case."

Again he was going away, but both the women declared, that they should try the herbs. "They can do no harm," said the forester's wife, "and if they do not work well, then you can call in the doctor."

Catherine, who had gathered the herbs last year for her godmother, begged to be allowed to bring them now to her mother. The mother seconded her request, and Herman at last consented, protesting, at the same time, that if there was not a speedy change for the better, no entreaty or remonstrance should prevent him from calling in the doctor. "Ah!" said he, "fear of expense has carried us too far;

we should follow the golden rule: When 'a serious illness threatens, consult a good doctor without delay, lest when he comes he should come too late.'"

CHAPTER VI.

THE YOUNG LADY OF THE MOUNTAIN CASTLE.

CATHERINE put on her bonnet, and taking her little basket under her arm, said to her mother, "I will be back shortly with the herbs; they are growing in abundance near the castle, not far from the old ruined fortress."

"Oh!" said little Fred., "take care, Catherine, don't go too near the old ruin. The lady of the castle sometimes appears there; she does not like children; perhaps she may hurt you."

"Hush!" answered Catherine, "that's an old woman's story to frighten away children from the castle, lest the loose stones might fall on them, and kill them dead on the spot."

As Catherine was going through the garden, she plucked from the hedge some wreaths of hop, which, by its dark green leaves, intermingled with the lighter green of the hop blossom, made a pretty ornament. She wound it round her bonnet, and started rapidly for the castle.

The road to the castle led now through open sunny spots, full of fragrant herbs, and then through dark and shady thickets. As soon as she saw herself surrounded on all sides by hazel, and other trees, wild and matted together, she threw herself on her knees, and raising up her hands to heaven, prayed fervently for her mother. Then rising and issuing from the thicket to an open space not far from the castle, she found the herbs she wanted, growing abundantly among others. She began to pluck them at once, praying within herself all the time: "O, dear heavenly

Father, bless these herbs; restore my mother's health; come to our aid."

All around was still; nothing was heard save the chirping of the grasshopper and the occasional twitter of a bird on the neighbouring trees. When Catherine had nearly filled her basket, she thought she heard a sound as if some one were coming. Raising her eyes, she saw a light and beautiful figure in white issuing from the dark grove, and scarcely appearing to touch the ground. She wore around her head a white handkerchief, such as had been the fashion before the fortress was destroyed, and exactly resembling one of the pictures in the old village church. No wonder that Catherine felt a sudden thrill; but recovering her presence of mind, she looked steadily at the unexpected apparition. The slender figure of the young stranger, and even her age, appeared to be the same as Catherine's. In her right-hand she held a little green purse with a silver clasp, and with the left she kept the white hood fast under her chin. She smiled so sweetly and her face was so mild and handsome, that Catherine's terrors were at once dispelled.

"Good girl," said she in a gentle voice, but rapidly and in an accent quite strange to Catherine, "Would you wish to get a good sum of money?"

"Money!" said Catherine; "my parents want it badly just now. But how did you know that? Why do you offer money to me now?"

"Listen to me," said the young stranger, who by this time had proved herself not to be what Catherine had at first almost believed, "a few moments ago, by a luckless accident, I lost my bonnet. I have travelled very far, and a long journey is still before me. You will do me a great favour if you have the goodness to sell me your bonnet. You shall have a good price. Do you consent?"

"O, most willingly!" said Catherine; "the bonnet is beautiful, and I love it dearly. It is my mother's gift, and she once wore it herself. Yesterday she fitted it for me,



"Oh!" said Catherine, taking off the bonnet and giving it to the stranger, "I'll give them to you for nothing."

"No," said she, "I cannot accept the hop blossoms as a present. That would be too valuable a present."—p. 305.

and this is the first day I wore it. I love it dearly. But for my mother's sake I will sell it. I would sell my life for her."

"Good," said the stranger; "but what do you expect for the bonnet? Say—how much must I give you?"

"I don't know its value," said Catherine; "it is worn, and cannot last long. But I think a small thaler would not be too much for it."

"O, that's too little," said the stranger; "the bonnet is excellent, and the very fashion of the day. I want it; you must give it to me for a great thaler. But say now what is the price of the hop wreath around it?"

Catherine stared for a moment at the stranger, believing that she was jesting. But she was not; on the contrary, she had nearly fallen into a similar mistake. For though Catherine was dressed in humble check, the fashion of her dress and the bonnet, had made the stranger believe that the hop wreath was an artificial flower—a masterpiece of art.

"O!" said the young stranger, smiling and gazing on the hop blossoms, "they are beautiful beyond description. My mother brought flowers from Italy, which were very dear, but not so beautiful certainly as these. The colours were brighter and more lively, but the light green blossoms and the dark green leaves, are more to my taste, especially when contrasted with the yellow bonnet, round which they are twined with such graceful negligence. Come, now, say what shall I give you for the hop blossoms?"

"Oh!" said Catherine, taking off the bonnet and giving it to the stranger, "I'll give them to you for nothing."

"No," said she, "I cannot accept the hop blossoms as a present. That would be too dear a present." Then taking down her white handkerchief she put on the bonnet, remarking, "It fits me well, and I think becomes me too. What do you think?" Catherine nodded assent. "Now, do you know what?" said the stranger, "we cannot have

many words, as I am in a great hurry. For the bonnet I will give, as I said, a thaler, and for the hop wreath three thalers. They are well worth that—they are nature to the life.”

“That they are, assuredly,” said Catherine, smiling; “but I am at a loss to know how that makes them more valuable. There is not another person in the wide world, in my opinion, who would give so much money, for a few hop blossoms.”

“Ah!” said the stranger, “you don’t know the value of ornaments of this kind. Here,” said she, “taking a gold coin out of her purse, and offering it to Catherine, “this is worth four thalers; come, take it at once, I am in a hurry.”

“I cannot take it,” said Catherine, earnestly; “it is twice too much.”

“If it be not too little for you,” answered the lady, “it is not too much for me.”

Catherine, who never imagined her young friend believed the hop blossoms were artificial, persisted in her refusal. But happening to say, that she had a great quantity of hop blossoms in her garden, and that the gold coin would buy a sackful of them, the mystery might be cleared up. But at the moment they heard the coachman’s horn. “Oh!” exclaimed the stranger, “our coach is on the top of the hill. My mother is waving her white handkerchief for me. Farewell.” She threw the gold coin into the basket and bounding rapidly away, was at the coach in a few moments and mounted. The coachman cracked his whip, the horses started rapidly down the hill, and in a moment were out of sight.

Catherine would have believed this adventure was only a dream, if she had not found the gold coin among her herbs in the basket. In vain she endeavoured to guess, why the young lady should set more value on the hop blossoms, than on the bonnet. However, that may be,” said she, at last, “this much is certain: God has heard

my prayer for my mother, and wishes that I should employ this gold, to comfort and help her in her illness."

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHILDREN.

"WHAT a welcome surprise this must be for my parents," said Catherine, looking at the glittering coin: "it is a present from heaven: I must bring it to them without delay. I have herbs enough collected. The sun is hot; but this basket," said she, "will protect my head as well as the bonnet." So saying she sprung, fleet as a young roe, down the hill side.

"Dearest parents," said she, when she came to the door, "I have had most singular good luck to-day. Here is a gold coin worth four thalers."

"Girl," said the father, looking joyfully at the glittering gold, "where have you found the money? That's help in need. Four thalers are a large sum for us poor people."

The sick mother sat up in her bed, and, taking the gold from her husband's hand, smiled and wept with joy.

"Let me see the money," said little Fred. "I have heard much talk of gold, but I never saw it yet." The mother gave it to him. "Is that it?" said he. "I wondered what ye were making such great bustle for. We have lots of finer gold in our own little valley than that. What good is that thin, little, yellow thing? When the sun is going down in the evening, the clouds, and the tops of the mountains, and the millstream, and the cottage windows, have a much brighter and redder gold: is not the sun, when he goes down so round and red, a finer piece of gold than this?"

Catherine gave, without delay, a history of the bargain she had made with the young lady for the bonnet. The

bright face of the mother then became sad and clouded. She believed that it was from some mistake, the strange lady gave so large a sum of money for the bonnet.

Catherine, reading the mother's uneasiness in her face, exclaimed: "Ah! mother, do not be angry with me, for having sold the bonnet that gave you so much trouble, when you prepared it for my birth-day present. It was entirely to my taste, and doubly dear as your gift. It pained me much to part with it. But, my dear mother, I was fonder of you than of the bonnet. I sold it only for the money, which I thought you required in your illness."

"Be not uneasy, dear Catherine," said the mother, "your love for me affects me very much. You are a good child. But we cannot keep that money with an easy conscience. There must be some mistake in the matter."

"No doubt," added the father: "no person, in their senses, would give four thalers for an old straw bonnet. The lady must either not have known the value of the money, or be a simpleton: no one should entrust money to her hands."

"She allowed but a thaler for the bonnet," said Catherine; "the other three were given for the hop wreath I wore around it. She said so expressly." Catherine then repeated, word for word, the terms of the sale.

"I see the whole matter now," said the mother: "the strange lady thought that these hop blossoms that grow in our garden, were artificial flowers; that was the reason she gave such a price for them."

"Yes," said the father; "and we must send back her money."

"Certainly," added the mother; "it would be robbery to retain the three thalers."

"Oh, you are right, my dear parents," said Catherine; "and now, for the first time, I understand why the young lady admired the hop blossoms so much. She said the hop blossoms were nature itself, and, simple girl that I

was, I took her words in the literal sense, and assured her they were. But I see now, she only meant to say that they were exactly like the real hop blossoms. It was an odd blunder. But how are we to send back the money to the young lady? I don't know even her name, nor whence she came, nor where she was going."

"We can easily ascertain that," said the father, "at the hotel where she took the post horses; as she is travelling post, her name and her mother's are taken down at the office. The landlady at the hotel always knows the names, residences, and destinations of her travellers. Sit down without delay; write a letter, and have it ready for the address. The landlady will tell you the address; and letter and money can go by the post. The girl can have her own then; may God preserve me from ever having under my roof the property of another; it never brings blessings with it. But are we to send back the price of the bonnet? what say you, Theresa?"

"As the lady wanted the bonnet, and can use it for some time, though it was old, a thaler is not too much. The lady could well afford to give that sum, and we can conscientiously retain it."

Catherine, who had been taught how to write a letter, sat down and wrote to the young lady. The father read it, and, after a few verbal corrections, approved it. It was in a clear and legible hand.

"HONOURED AND GRACIOUS LADY,

"I WAS happy to be able to supply you on your journey with a bonnet, for which you have kindly paid the full value. But, as you must have discovered already, there was a great mistake regarding the hop blossoms: it is only a few moments ago, that my parents cleared up the misunderstanding for me. I am sorry that I did not tell you expressly, that the hop blossoms were not artificial flowers but real hop blossoms, which I had plucked from the hedge around our garden. I send you back, enclosed,

the three thalers which you allowed for them, retaining only the price you allowed for the bonnet. The sum you have allowed is, indeed, greater than the value; but the kindness of your manner to me, a poor stranger, justifies me in the hope that you intended to allow more than the bonnet was worth. With this explanation, I may be permitted to add that, deeply sensible of your kindness, and praying for your future welfare, I am, with great respect, your obedient, humble servant,

CATHERINE HERMAN."

The mother then gave her the gold coin, telling her to get it changed by the landlady, who would seal the letter and enclose three thalers. "The fourth thaler," she added, "is your own; you may do what you please with it."

"Can I, dear mother," said Catherine, delighted. "O, I know already what I shall do with it. Since my father had some doubts whether these herbs would cure you, I will go to the doctor with the thaler, and beg of him to cure you. Surely he will do it for so much money. The apothecary, then, will have his bill. But I have a green silk shawl, which my god-mother gave me. It is beautiful and almost new. I have not worn it more than three times. I will sell it, with all my heart; and so we can procure all that we want without going in debt."

When Sophia, the youngest sister, heard this, she said: "I will sell the pearl necklace my god-mother gave to me. The pearls are worth something." The pearls were glass, but in Sophia's opinion, they were not only a great ornament but of very great value.

"And I will sell my fox," cried little Charles, for this was the name he called his hobby horse. "And I will sell my doll," said little Louisa, who had it in her arms. "I don't like to give it away. It will make me cry: but for my mother's sake it must go. She wants money, I hear."

"Right, right," exclaimed Charles, "money will be as plenty as hay, by and by."

The father praised the affectionate feeling of his children; the mother wept with joy. "Good children," said she to her husband, "are the parents' greatest joy in prosperity, and their best consolation in affliction."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LANDLADY OF THE POST OFFICE.

CATHERINE now prepared for her journey to the little town where the post office was. It was more than a league from the village. She borrowed her sister Sophia's straw bonnet. Remembering the advice and example of her mother, she cut a few good cauliflowers in the garden, and, putting them in a basket, carried them to market. "A good house-keeper," her mother often said, "when obliged to go to the field or the garden, or even through her house, always sees whether she could not be doing some other business at the same time: she never goes empty handed if possible."

When Catherine arrived in the town, she went directly to the post office. The landlady, a well looking, affable woman, was sitting at the window, sewing. Catherine saluted her politely; and asked who were the young lady and her mother, who passed through the office early on yesterday.

"That was Lady Grunthal and her daughter Henrietta," answered the landlady; "they were coming from their property at Grunthal, and are on the way to join Baron Grunthal at the court, where he has been for some time. They intend to remain for some months. But, poor child, what do you want to know of those high folk? What business have you with them?"

Catherine, producing her letter and the money, said:

"In a little bargain we made, Miss Henrietta overpaid me three thalers; I am going to return them by post: have the kindness to change this coin."

"Ha," said the landlady, "that must have been a weighty bargain, in which there was a misreckoning of three thalers. No one could think, dear child, that you had such important affairs on hand. Pray, may I ask what it was? could you tell?"

When Catherine was commencing her story, the postillion, who had driven the young lady and her mother, returned with the horses. He was dressed in his bright yellow jacket and scarlet vest. Taking his pot of beer, he sat down at the lowest table in a corner of the room; but overhearing Catherine's voice, he cried out merrily: "ho, here is our fine young hop dealer, who charged Miss Grunthal only three thalers for a bunch of hop blossoms!"

"Who? what?" exclaimed the landlady, "three thalers for a sprig of hop? Who ever heard the like? The like never happened since the creation of the world."

"Faith," said the postillion, lifting his cup, "that young lady understands the hop trade well. I should be very sorry hops always sold so dear: a poor fellow like me, might then bid adieu to his beverage. Still," said he, raising the draught to his lips, "health and long life to our successful hop trader."

"A strange story, this," said the landlady; "I must sift it to the bottom. Come, dear child, you are tired and hungry. Sit down near me: there is a good glass of red wine, and the best bread. But you must give me a full history of this affair. What induced the young lady to buy the hop blossoms? what did she want them for? quick, quick, tell me."

"The young lady lost her bonnet on the road," said Catherine.

"What! only her bonnet," added the lady; "you should have said her head. But how came that? When she came to the office she had her bonnet, and a fine one it was, tied neatly under her chin with a rose-coloured

ribbon. How is it possible that she lost her bonnet?" Catherine could not tell.

"I can give you some information on that point," said the postillion; "I saw the accident. The young lady is as sprightly and restless a child as ever you met. She could not sit still for one moment. She sings a song this moment; then orders me to play a tune on the horn; then thrusts her neck and body out of the coach windows, right and left, to see the country. If the mother had not watched her, she would have fallen out a thousand times. For a few moments she was quiet; then complained of the excessive heat, and starting up untied her bonnet. At the moment we happened to be near the small stony river, not far from the great waterfall. When she saw the rushing stream, foaming through rocks and bushes, her joy knew no bounds. She ordered me to pull up the horses in the middle of the river, where we had the best view of the fall. She started up in the coach, and clapping her hands: 'O!' she cried, 'how it roars and foams; it's like a river of milk; see the spray rising, and the silver spangles flying about. The green leaves of the bushes, and the rocks themselves, are dripping as if with rain!' She went on in such a strain of fine words, that I can't remember half of them. There would have been no end to her wondering, but suddenly a blast of wind whipped the bonnet out of her hand, and whirled it into the middle of the stream. She made an effort to catch the bonnet in its fall, but she would have followed it herself, if the mother had not held her back. I sprung from the box seat, and endeavoured to draw it up, but I came too late. The rushing stream hurried away the bonnet, turning up now the green silk, and then the rose-coloured lining. In a few minutes it disappeared altogether. I could hardly refrain from laughing, though, indeed, I was sorry for the fine bonnet."

"Well," asked the landlady, "what did the mother say of the loss of the bonnet?"

"She took the matter more quietly than I expected," he answered; "she had been too much frightened by the danger of the daughter, who was within a hair of falling into the river. She trembled all over, and was as pale as that plaster over the fire. She gave her daughter a long and very good lecture. 'Your levity,' said she, 'had nearly cost you your life; you had nearly fallen into the gulf, and what a blow would that be to the mother that loves you so dearly. If you do not correct that levity, and become more steady, you shall, assuredly, plunge yourself into the gulf of temporal and eternal woe. Join me now in thanks to God, and promise to amend.' The daughter took the words of the mother very much to heart. 'O, dearest mother,' said she, weeping, 'you were my angel guardian! O, how I thank you! Before God, I promise to be good!' This promise pleased me well," said the postillion; "I don't think she will destroy beer and malt, as I feared at first."

"Lord grant it," added the landlady. "But what next?"

"Well," continued the postillion, "when we came to the ascent on the coach road, where the footpath turns in and winds over the hill, the daughter asked the mother permission to alight and walk up; she wished, she said, to get a better view of the craggy rocks and deep vallies, than she could have from the carriage; and, besides, she was tired of the slow pace at which we were ascending. The mother consented, and remained herself in the coach. I saw the young lady, who was quicksilver once more, running at headlong speed, to this young thing here, and stopping her to make a bargain for the bonnet, and that famous hop sprig. The carriage had scarcely got to the top of the hill, when our young lady was back to us with a pretty bonnet on her curly locks; and, indeed, it became her better than that slouched silk one, that had been swept off in the river."

"She bought that bonnet from me," said Catherine, who then told the mistake regarding the hop blossoms.

"Well," asked the landlady, "how did mamma take the hop sprigs? Tell us, Hans, you know the upshot of the matter."

"Bad enough," he answered, "as you may easily guess she was very much displeased. The bonnet, she said, was not too dear for a thaler, but the hop sprig, for which Henrietta had given three thalers, was not worth three farthings. 'What!' asked the daughter, 'did not you give more for the Spanish flowers in your bonnet?' 'Are you blind?' asked the mamma. 'Have you eyes? Don't you see that they are real hop blossoms?' Still Henrietta persisted. 'Ah!' said she, 'feel those hop flowers, they rustle like sarsenet; indeed, they have been, perhaps, gummed too highly. It is not possible that I have been deceived.' But by degrees the young lady was convinced of her mistake, and blushed to the two ears, red as my scarlet waistcoat."

"Well," continued the landlady, "and what did mamma say then? Did she chastise the foolish creature?"

"The good lady," said the postillion, "made several wise remarks on the occurrence, and gave her daughter some good advice. I wish I could remember all, to give it to you in her own words. Taking occasion from the hop blossoms, she said, 'see, my child, how the eyes deceive. You imagined you were buying beautiful flowers that would last many years, and you have got only common hop blossoms, that will wither and shrivel to-morrow morning. Such mistakes are common. Dear bargains are things of daily occurrence with most men. Many an innocent child barter innocence, honour, and peace of mind, for vain flattery, hollow promises, and fleeting pleasure. It pains me beyond measure, to see you guilty of such levity and thoughtlessness. You had nearly lost your life in the river; and after you have been saved from death, and

have made such promises of amendment, see what a foolish thing you have done. O! resolve to cure yourself of this thoughtless temper, or you will, most certainly, draw down inexpressible affliction on me."

The landlady, who up to this moment, had enjoyed the whole story heartily, now became very serious. "In truth," said she, "lady Grunthal is a pious and prudent mother. But what did the young lady say to this reprimand, which all of us should treasure up in our memory, or rather in our hearts."

"O," said Hans, "she was quite crest-fallen, and hardly spoke another word during the whole journey. She sung no more songs; she never asked me to play on the horn. The tears scarcely ever left her eyes. Before we arrived at the gate, she once more begged her mother's pardon, and promised to follow her advice."

"We ought to do the same," said the landlady. "Lessons of that kind are good for us as well as for children. Will not you promise to follow them, Catherine? will you not?" Catherine did promise.

The landlady then changed the gold coin for four thalers. "Will you allow me to read your letter now?" said she. Catherine consented. But when the landlady had read it, she said, "That letter never came from your handsome head; that's not your handwriting."

Catherine assured her that the writing was hers, and the composition too, with the exception of a few verbal corrections by her father.

"Well," said the landlady, "we shall know whether the hand is yours." Enclosing the three thalers in the letter, and placing an envelope over them, she said, "Take a pen now, I will give you the address." Catherine wrote it, and astonished the good lady. "Girl," she cried, "I could never believe it. You write beautifully. I could not do it half so well, Your father has made you a good scholar." She then sealed the letter, and laying it up with

the other parcels, said that all would go off by the next post. "You are not only an intelligent, but an honest girl," said she; "be so for ever, and I could not wish you better."

CHAPTER IX.

THE DOCTOR.

CATHERINE asked the landlady where the doctor lived. The inquisitive lady should know what business Catharine had with him. Catherine told her of the illness of her mother, her father's grief, and the lamentations of their nine children. She also said that she intended the thaler for the doctor, whom she was going to bring to her mother.

The landlady was struck by the affectionate piety of the young girl. "That's kind, indeed," said she, "that you should give the thaler, which you got for your bonnet, to pay a doctor for your sick mother. Come with me. The doctor does not live far from here. His wife is a great friend of mine. I will conduct you to his house." She then put on her black silk mantle, and accompanied Catherine to the doctor's house.

The landlady could not refrain from giving a full history of the straw bonnet and the garland of hops. She gave it in such glowing colours, that the doctor and his wife were in roars of laughter. She then spoke most feelingly of Catherine's love for her parents, of the sick mother, and the afflicted father with his nine children. She praised the honour and integrity of the parents. The doctor's wife could not repress her tears: the doctor himself, addressing Catherine, who had the money in her hand, said: "Put your money in your pocket, good girl. I would think it a sin to take a farthing from you. I will

be passing near your village in the morning, and, with the help of God, I will see your mother and restore her to health."

"And I, also," said the landlady of the hotel, "must pay the apothecary's bill for the good, honest woman. What could be more honest and noble, than that the husband and wife, though in sickness and poverty, should send back the money, which heaven seemed to throw so miraculously in their way?"

Catherine wept, and, thanking the doctor and landlady, returned to the hotel, for the basket which she had left there.

"What have you in your basket?" asked the landlady.

"Since you have been so kind to my mother," answered Catherine, opening the basket, "I beg of you to accept these cauliflowers, as a poor acknowledgment of my gratitude. My mother told me to sell them, but I know well she will be delighted to hear that I gave them to you, as a slight return for your kindness."

"Your gratitude really edifies me," answered the landlady; "but you must allow me to pay well for your cauliflowers. Your parents want money more than I." Then emptying the basket, she paid Catherine a good price, saying, at the same time, "you must not bring home your basket empty; wait a moment." She put a bottle of Malaga wine into the basket, and some loaves of good bread. "The wine," said she, "is for your mother—the doctor says she ought to take a glass every day. The bread is for your sisters, not forgetting yourself." She then took her leave of Catharine, who thanked her cordially for her kindness.

Catherine returned home in great spirits; gave the thaler to her mother; and told her the doctor would not accept a farthing: she then produced the bottle of wine, and divided the bread among her sisters. The parents were delighted; and all the children cheered for joy. "See," said Catherine, "how soon God has rewarded

our honesty. Truly has my father often said, that integrity and honour make us favourites of God and man."

Early next morning the good doctor visited them. The illness, he said, was not dangerous. "There would be great danger," he added, "if you had not called in the doctor at the proper time. The herbs will soon do good; but more powerful remedies are wanted now. In eight days' time, I hope, she will be able to leave her bed." Having written the prescription, he promised to return in a few days; and mounting his horse, galloped rapidly out of sight.

After three days he returned. Having kindly asked the patient how she felt, he said: "All right now. You require no more medicine—nothing but rest and good nourishment."

"Ah!" said her husband, "where can we get that?"

The doctor drew a sealed packet out of his pocket, and presenting it to Catherine, told her to read the superscription. She read it aloud: "To Miss Catherine Herman, Steinhach, thirty-two florins, twenty-four kreuzers." She opened the packet, and found with the money the enclosed letter,

"MY DEAR CATHERINE,

I CANNOT express how much I admire your honesty in returning the three thalers. My parents also commend you in the highest terms. My mistake regarding these hop flowers, which you had wreathed around your pretty bonnet, was, indeed, a fortunate one: it has taught me this truth, that in villages the most obscure, and under the roof of thatch, honest and honourable persons are to be found. I enclose the three crowns, which I gave you through mistake before, and three others as a poor reward for your honesty. A richer reward awaits you in heaven. We hear your mother is ill. My mother encloses six

crowns for her, to purchase nourishing food, and hopes she will soon be restored to health. I heartily join in my mother's prayer: may God restore the sick. Farewell. I remain your well wisher,

HENRIETTA VON GRUNTHAL."

Catherine and her father and mother, were astonished and delighted with this letter and the welcome money. They were at a loss to know how Miss Henrietta could have heard of the mother's illness, for Catherine had neither spoken nor written a word on the matter. But the kind doctor had written to Lady Grunthal, when he returned from his visit. He had known her intimately in Vienna, and had seen many proofs of her charity and generosity. The affair of the hop blossoms and Catherine's letter, gave him, as the medical attendant of the poor mother, a good opportunity of enlisting the sympathy of Lady Grunthal, in behalf of a poor, but virtuous and deserving family. But the modest gentleman, who always did good with greater pleasure when he could do it privately, did not tell the part he had in this proceeding. "The letter and money," said he, "came about an hour ago to the post office. I took my hat and stick at once to bring it to you; for when it is in our power to assuage the grief of others or make them happy, we ought never defer it till morning. Besides I felt a great interest in the mother of so many good children. The evening was fine. I had no business on hands; I was going to take my walk, and I thought I could not find a more agreeable one than to you—no doubt, I am somewhat tired and thirsty." Then seating himself near the open window, he asked a cup of milk.

Catherine brought the milk in a clean bowl. "The milk is very good," he said, "but too rich for me. Some water if you please." Catherine gave the water in a glass; and both were clear as crystal. The doctor, after

surveying the little apartment, complimented the family on the order and cleanliness of every thing around him.

Having taken the milk, he went to the book-case and examined the books. "This school," said he, "must be well attended: your examinations come on shortly?"

"To-morrow eight days," answered Herman.

"Very well," said the doctor, "I must pay another visit to our patient here. I will make it on that day, and, with your permission, assist at the examinations." Herman assured the doctor that he would take the visit as a great honour, and thanked him for his kindness.

The doctor seeing the piano, begged Herman to play. Herman performed some selections from a new opera, which had a great run at the time, but which the doctor had not yet heard. Some of the most difficult and beautiful passages were given with such ease, taste, and feeling, that the doctor was amazed. "You are a perfect master," said he. "You must sing well, I am sure. Give us a song." Herman beckoned to Catherine, who produced a song book, and pointing out a song, "This song," said she, "is running in my head constantly, since my mother began to recover, and that fortunate present came to us. Let us sing it."

"Beautiful, beautiful," exclaimed the doctor. "You sing well, Mr. Herman, but Catherine has the voice of a nightingale; still it was not the sweet voice that charms most, it is the soul-felt feeling of gratitude that breathes through it. Feeling is the soul of music. Your performance was worthy of the excellent choice Catherine made. I listened to you not with attention merely, but with devotion."

"But," continued he, "I have a visit to pay to one of my patients in the town this evening, and must, much against my will, leave you for the present." Standing up, he went once more to the sick bed. He encouraged and consoled the mother, and promised to see her in eight days' time.

"Kind doctor," said she, stretching out her hand, "how good you have been to us, poor people. Your kind visits, and that packet you brought—I cannot tell how grateful I am." The glistening tears trickled down her pale cheeks. Catherine and the father, too, shared in her emotion.

The father promised to write to Lady Grunthal, to return his thanks, and Catherine to Henrietta. "But," said he, "dear doctor, you can testify that no words can speak our gratitude so eloquently as those tears." The doctor was sensibly affected, at this extraordinary gratitude of the pious family: though he was not aware of the full value of the favour he conferred, by introducing them to the acquaintance of Lady Grunthal. "Good bye," was his only acknowledgment, as he turned rapidly round and disappeared, to conceal the tears that were starting to his eyes.

When the father, Catherine, and the other children returned from the door, where they had taken leave of the doctor, the mother clasped her hands, and, upraising her streaming eyes to heaven, exclaimed: "O good God! Thy love is boundless. Thou hast had pity on us, and hast relieved us in our necessities. Thou art always near. May we be ever grateful, ever confiding in Thee. Confidence in Thee is our only and our sure refuge in all our afflictions. Grant us but that firm trust in Thee, and happiness is ours on earth and for ever." The father and all the children, closed the mother's prayer with a joyful "amen."

CHAPTER X.

UNEXPECTED VISITORS.

THE mother soon recovered, and was able to resume her labours with joy and contentment, and to devote herself to her most favourite duty—the education of her children. Her husband was, as ever, devoted to his school, and had no other object in life than the care of his children, as he called all the pupils entrusted to his care. No disturbing care or anxiety clouded the peaceful serenity of that winter.

Spring came. The parents smiled to see the trees once more coloured with blossoms: the children plucked the primrose and blue violet in the pasture and on the banks of the hedges, and brought them home to their mother. The family was cheered every morning, by the song of the birds that built their nest in the hedges or trees; but sweeter than all the other music of the spring, to the children, at least, were the welcome notes of the cuckoo.

Herman was sitting at dinner one fine day in spring. His wife, with the infant in her arms, and the eight children, were sitting around him. The large dish of soup in the centre of the table was almost empty; and Catherine had just brought in a dish of smoking potatoes, with which the children, without delay, began to make an acquaintance. A rap was suddenly heard at the door—the children all cried out, “come in;” and looking to the door, they saw a young lady stepping in.

“O! Miss Henrietta,” cried Catherine, starting to meet her. All rose immediately. Catherine and her parents began to thank the young lady for the money, though they had already done so by letter. “I beg of you,” said

Henrietta, "not to say another word about it: sit down—or I must run away this instant. But with your permission, I must sit with you, too, and eat something. I like potatoes; they are a favourite food of mine."

Catherine placed one of her best straw-bottomed chairs at the table, and selecting a pair of the ruddiest potatoes, placed them on a clean plate before Henrietta. She eat them with relish. She was animated, agreeable, and affectionate. She admired and praised the little children, with their ruddy cheeks and brown curling locks. She was delighted to see the children around the table, partaking of its frugal fare so heartily. "They are all so fresh and ruddy," said she, "it would be hard to say which is the healthiest or handsomest: their fare must agree equally well with them—and all are so clean—so neatly dressed."

"Thank God," the mother added; "and yet it is not easy to provide even this plain dinner, and to keep them clean and neatly dressed. They will be growing bigger every day, and with their years my cares will grow."

"Ah," said Henrietta, smiling, "if your children were growing smaller every day, you would have much more anxiety. We must have courage, and place our hopes in God."

When Henrietta had taken her frugal snack, she rose, and, running to the piano, said she should give them some music. She played with great taste; but when Herman was ready, she begged of him to play a gay dance, and taking the baby from the mother's bosom into her arms, she danced up and down the room. The baby smiled; and all the children were so charmed, that they burst into a hearty laugh, and cried and danced with joy.

But the general mirth or the presence of the gentle stranger, did not prevent the mother from saying grace. The parents and children returned thanks to God, and Henrietta joined devoutly in the prayer. "Now," said Henrietta, "we must sing a song. That, too, can be a

prayer. Do, sir," said she, addressing Herman, "play that beautiful air, with the chorus:—

‘ All good gifts come down from God,
Down from the bright blue skies.’ ”

She then commenced and sung sweetly the first strophe.

Herman and his wife and Catherine joined the chorus.

A noble song it was. When it was over, the mother seeing her baby was slumbering, brought it into the room and put it to bed. She had scarcely departed when another knock was heard, and a lady elegantly dressed opened the door. She stood for a few moments silent on the threshold, and looked attentively around her. The bright, clean, comfortable apartment evidently pleased her; but her attention was rivetted on the happy and smiling group of healthy children.

Henrietta whispered to Catherine, who was standing near her, "That's my mother." Catherine advanced respectfully to salute her. But Lady Grunthal, suddenly starting, drew back her hand. "My God!" she exclaimed, "what do I see? I had a friend in my young days, who was as like you as one blooming rose is to another. At first sight, I was sure it was she. Her very image—the complexion, even the dress the same, as when many long years ago she saved my life. I felt, when I saw you, as if I were awaking from a long swoon. Her figure I could never forget—it is even still before me." Then looking around the room, the lady asked, "is not your mother here? O, say—that she is living still and in health."

Before Catherine had time to answer, the mother came to the room-door. Lady Grunthal gazed on her for a few moments, and then exclaimed: "Theresa—O, it is she. O, what a pleasure to meet after such a long separation." Poor Theresa looked and gazed fixedly at the strange lady. "I cannot," said she, in amazement, "bring to mind that I ever saw you!"

"What?" cried Lady Grunthal, "do you forget your

Leonora? do you not remember how we spent the golden years and happy days of youth at Lindenberg? how you came every day to the castle, and we sewed and embroidered and sang, and watered the flowers in the castle garden? and how you drew me out of the well, and saved me from certain death?"

"My God! you are she," exclaimed Theresa, in a transport of surprise and joy. "What happiness to meet you—many thousand times I have thought of you, but I never could get any trace of you."

"It was so with me," answered the lady. "O, how many times have I fervently prayed, to have my good friend near me once more, or to see her even once. Luckless events, over which we had no controul, have kept us asunder. But thank heaven we are united at last. O dearest, long lost friend, come to my arms." She then pressed Theresa to her heart, and shed torrents of happy tears. "O, do you remember how sad that parting at Lindenberg was, when I and my parents fled to Vienna? Thanks be to God, who has so unexpectedly brought us together, after so long an absence. When I came to your door and stood in the centre of your room, I little dreamed what happiness was in store for me."

Theresa wept with joy. "But what led you here, dear friend," said she; "my friend I will still call you—but am I to call you Miss von Lindenberg or Lady Grunthal?"

"You may soon know that," she answered. "See—Henrietta is my daughter."

"You are Lady Grunthal! O, doubly welcome—how wonderful are the ways of God!"

"Yes," answered Lady Grunthal, "God has so arranged it. He would not allow Catherine's honesty in her hop dealings to go without reward. Though I never suspected that my friend Theresa was Catherine's mother, I took a great interest in your happiness. I made many inquiries regarding yourself, your husband, and the children, and never heard anything but good. We are

now on our journey to Grunthal, where I intend to pass the spring. When I saw the little village of Steinhach from the top of the hill, I was anxious to go down and become personally acquainted with that good family, of which I had heard so much. Henrietta, who is never tired running, took the short cut by the foot path down the mountain. I came more leisurely by the high road. I was standing for awhile at your door, listening to your beautiful song. I could not think of interrupting you until it was over. Such, my ever dear friend, are the circumstances that, under God, have united us. But come, dear Theresa, we must take a walk in the garden; we have many, many things to speak of."

Turning to Herman, she said: "You must pardon me, dear sir, for such an abrupt departure. We shall return in an hour's time. Though I must speak with her first, you, as her husband, have as strong claims to my respect. I know that you are a good man, a good husband, a good father, a good master. We shall meet again. Go, Henrietta,—bring whatever cakes and provisions are in our travelling carriage, divide them among the children, and amuse yourself here until we return."

CHAPTER XI.

THE GOOD HOUSEKEEPER.

LADY GRUNTHAL walked down arm in arm, with her long lost friend, and sat with her on the bench at the end of the walk under the apple tree, through whose green leaves, and white and rose coloured blossoms, the clear blue sky was partly visible.

Lady Grunthal first told her own fortunes after her mother's death; what hard times she had under her avaricious aunt; to what misery she was reduced, when

she could not command ink and paper to write to Theresa—nor money to buy them; how she was at length married to her kind husband, Baron von Grunthal, and had lived many years at Prague with him during the war; and how in fine, on her return to Grunthal after the peace, all her inquiries after her lost Theresa, were without the slightest fruit.

Theresa then told her adventures, after the separation at Lindenberg; how she first took refuge with her father's brother; and meeting Herman there, married him, and lived from that hour to the present in uninterrupted peace; what good use she made of her abundant means during the first years of her marriage, and how, under this very tree, she had often thanked God, for having given her such a partner; how, when her family began to increase and grow up, she began for the first time to know want, and was in truth during her last illness, reduced to extreme distress.

"But dear Theresa," said her friend, "for heaven's sake, tell me, how with so small a revenue you have been able to support your nine children, and keep every thing in such order and neatness?"

"It is often a wonder to myself," said Theresa. "The blessing of God is visible upon us. True we do all in our power: and then as my husband often says, 'whoever puts his confidence in God, and does what depends on himself can never fail.'"

"I have clear proof," said Lady Grunthal, "that your household affairs are well attended, and that you are prudent, industrious, and economical. But I wish I had a particular account of how you have managed. Give me the full particulars from the beginning."

"Both of us," said Theresa, "myself and my husband, had very frugal habits before our marriage. Herman, besides what he had from the school, turned his vacant hours to good account; he neither drank nor played. He had at a very early age, begun to think of his prospects

in life, and to lay up a little money. Whatever luxuries he has, were laid up before that time. He could not think now of buying a book, or print, or musical instrument. Instead of useless or unfitting ornaments, we laid up flax, linen, bedding, and other things, which we have since found good use for. We were able, too, in the beginning of our housekeeping, to lay up a small sum every year, and these sums, small though they were, often saved us from misery afterwards."

"That was very prudent," said Lady Grunthal, "but it is yet a mystery to me, how you have been able to make so small a sum reach so far. I have always heard that the great secret of house keeping consisted in these two points, to increase your income, and to diminish your expenditure. How did you increase your income?"

"By every lawful means in our power," answered Theresa, "the money for flour and wood was, of course, nearly always the same. But our property was capable of being made better. My husband's maxim was, 'turn what you have to account.' The pasture here, was parched and burned up, in dry and warm summers; the plot before our door was a useless and unwholesome swamp. My husband found on the side of that hill, a well, which flowed down to the village, and by our door, but as it had not a clear passage, it changed the land into bog. He turned the course of the spring in such a way as to water this part of the garden, where he has his pasture and apple trees. Where the former master could hardly support a half starved cow, we have two fine cows, which give us an abundant supply of milk and butter. The spot before the door which formerly raised unhealthy exhalations, now gives excellent fruit. The part of the garden under vegetable, was also of the greatest use to us. It gives more than is required for our own consumption, and we sell the surplus in the next village. Herman judiciously selected those vegetables, which he knew would best suit this soil. He introduced, for instance, cauliflowers,

which were of so superior a quality, that they were sought eagerly at high prices by all our neighbours. But the fruit trees, planted fifteen years ago, by my husband, are now our most valuable property. An orchard is invaluable, where there is a large family. Besides what we use, we have a large quantity to sell. This very apple tree, under which we sit, produces such fine fruit and in such quantity, that it is often worth ten thalers. We make money, also, by a little nursery, when we keep young trees of good sorts. The bees find abundant nourishment here in the garden and on the side of that mountain, and leave us a good quantity of honey and wax beyond our wants. Hops, my husband observed, grew wild and in great luxuriance in the garden hedge, which suggested to him the plan of planting the side of the hill with them. The hill was covered with briars and brush-wood; but yet the hops have not been a failure. Thus our garden was to us, if not a gold, at least a little silver mine. My husband was never happy or at rest, except when he was improving. He walked a league twice a week over the fields, to teach the landlord's children singing and the clarionet, and was very well paid. He also wrote music; and with so clear and firm a hand, that it looked like print. The music masters employed him, and paid him well. Where industry and skill are found, an opportunity of exercising them can easily be found.

"I, also, endeavoured to turn to the best account, whatever came under my care. I laid out some money on different kinds of vegetables, and seeds, and flowers, especially the rosemary, which is the usual ornament of wedding feasts in this country. As the river is so near us, I kept a good flock of ducks and geese, and made money by them. My young children fed and took care of them. They took great delight in watching the young ducks and goslings; or if they ever grew tired of their work, and felt the charge heavy, the promise of the Martinmas feast was enough to renew their zeal and attention. I was at

my needle or wheel night and morning ; and even when I took an evening's walk with my husband, my hands were not idle.

"As soon as the children were able to be useful, they were instantly employed. They were either spinning or sewing or tilling the garden, or weeding the plots, or picking feathers ; in short all were compelled to contribute, according to their strength, to the general support. In August, for instance, they were obliged to gather the scarlet fruit of the dog-rose, that grows above on the hill in great quantities. The whole side of the hill is often red with them. The people of the village did not value them, but I made my children collect them in baskets. I cut them up, the children took out the seeds, and we made money by this trade in the village. Thus, by care and perseverance, we nearly doubled our little revenues."

"Well, indeed, have you done," exclaimed Lady Grunthal ; "but I am more anxious than ever to hear from you now, how you have fulfilled the second part of good house-keeping. How have you diminished your expenditure, and thereby increased your store?"

Theresa answered "We never laid out one penny without necessity. We were content with homely diet. Dainty dishes, that cost much, and nourish little, never came to our table. Our children knew nothing of confectionary, and such delicacies. Foreign spices were never in my kitchen. Our spices were cumin from our pasture, and parsley, chives and onions from our garden ; but the best spice of all was a good appetite, which our constant work seldom failed to give us. My husband drank no spirits, I drank no tea. Beer, we seldom took. Good milk was our best beverage, especially in summer, and it was much more agreeable and nourishing than the beer, at least of this country. My husband took neither snuff nor tobacco. 'A penny a day,' said he, 'would make gold at the end of the year. Instead of snuff, he used the sweet scented herbs of our garden, and of our flower pots.

‘What snuff can be compared to this?’ he would say, smelling the flower. Our dress was always neat, but plain; no useless ornament, or fleeting and foolish fashions. I made all the dresses for myself and my daughters, and some articles, too, for my husband and the boys. We also took great care of our clothes. When the children came from Mass on Sunday, or from a visit, their Sunday clothes were taken off immediately and carefully folded, and thus they were kept, for a long time, fresh and clean. A stain, no matter how small, the moment it appeared, was removed, to prevent it growing larger. I fitted the old clothes of my husband and myself for the children, as for instance, Catherine’s straw hat. I changed the clothes of the elder for the younger children, and thus made the material useful to the last shred. In our furniture we were equally economical. We never bought what we did not want, how convenient soever it might be; and what we had, we took all possible care to preserve. Many a useful piece of furniture is soon destroyed from want of care and attention. Vessels are broken; garden tools, left exposed to the air, are either parched or stolen; and the children, if they be not docile and well instructed, seize all they can lay hands on, to make playthings, and thus break or ruin them. Every thing had its own certain place in our house, where you could find it at once. My husband never wasted a bit of paper, nor did I of linen or thread. Yes, and those cleanly habits (which no gold can give) saved much money for me; for not only did we thus preserve many articles of property, which might otherwise have been soon useless; but cleanliness it was, I am confident, that saved our children from many of those diseases to which children are generally subject. A thousand other particulars I could give you—but I have already said too much.”

“By no means,” said Lady Grunthal, “you could not be too tedious on this topic. Careful housekeeping is as valuable for the high born lady as for the lowly cottier.

But notwithstanding all your care and economy, you must often have felt the severe pressure of your straitened circumstances."

"O, no doubt," answered Theresa, "our burdens were often very severe and pressing; but they had this good effect, we were compelled to be always busy and laborious, our strength was always kept in full play. That was of the greatest use to us. Our poverty saved us from many a folly, into which wealth might have betrayed us. Our very cares and anxieties made us think more frequently of God, pray to Him more fervently, hope in Him, and often recognize, gratefully, the visible interpositions of His Providence in our favour. Thus we became better—more pious. So far am I from complaining of my state, that I really thank God for His ways; I praise and thank Him sincerely for having placed me in this state of life."

"But," continued Theresa, "I fear we cannot remain much longer here together. I am not so strong as I was in my youthful days, and the number of our children is so great, that I know not how they can be provided for. Some of the boys are now old enough for a trade; the girls, too, will soon be looking to settle themselves in the world. But where can we get the money? Many a time do I put this question to my husband, and I confess that all his exhortations and promises cannot always dispel my gloom. We were always content and happy, beloved and respected in this place: but I wish my husband could get some more lucrative post."

"Dear Theresa," said Lady Grunthal, "no doubt He will. Have courage, and believe me that the good God is watching over, and will provide for, you. When the spot of earth on which we live, does not suit us, He provides another. We must leave that in His own hands. I have always seen, that when a man discharges faithfully the duties of his state, and is content with it, God raises him to a higher place, where he can do more good, and have a

better income, too. This He will do for your husband. Be tranquil ; have patience awhile." Theresa and her friend then arose, and walked towards the house.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.

WHILE the two mothers were thus enjoying this cordial conversation, under the blossomed apple trees, Henrietta was not less happy with the children in the house. She had brought from her travelling carriage a large basket of confectionary, and given it to her young friends. The younger children looked and looked again, and turned round and round in their hands the sugar and comfits, made into so many beautiful forms, and so prettily coloured, the like of which they had never seen before ; they could hardly imagine that these little sheep and shepherds and shepherdesses of sugar, these beautiful garlands of sugar flowers, and baskets of sugar fruit, were made only to be eaten.

"No, no," said one of them, "we won't eat them: it would be a pity." "My flower wreath I will give to my mother," said Louisa ; "she must keep it in her box." Mary eyed her little basket of candied fruit, which were scarcely larger than strawberries. "Oh," said she, shaking her head, "what a pity that the frost came on these apples ; see—they are covered all over with ice." Little Antony ran to his father, and asked him whether his little sugar sheep ought to be eaten raw or roasted. But Charles had already bitten off the head of the shepherdess, to the amazement of all the children, and, smacking his lips, assured them it was very sweet.

Little Rose was standing at a chair, on which she had

carefully picked out all the red sugar fruit, and separated them from the white. She eat the red, but would not touch the white. "What are you doing?" asked Henrietta, "why don't you eat the white?"

"Ah!" answered the child, "they are not ripe yet: you should not pull them so soon."

All the children laughed heartily. Poor Rose blushed to the ears, and burst into tears. "Don't cry, dear little Rose," said Henrietta, "any person might make a mistake. That happened to myself and your sister Catherine, as she can tell you. You should not be laughed at. Is it not true, that you were told never to eat strawberries or other fruit, until they were red and ripe. In avoiding the white sugar, you were only shewing your obedience. That's greatly to your praise. You are a good child."

In the mean time, Catherine had prepared for her mother and Lady Grunthal a rural treat. The table was covered with a snow white table cloth: she had a bowl of sweet milk, yellow butter on a clean plate, and a little cup of honey, bright and clear as transparent gold. She had, also, good home made bread, and a piece of the white bread which Henrietta had brought from the carriage, and two little baskets of fruit so red or yellow, that no painter could rival them. A large and tasteful garland was placed in the middle of the table. The vessels were of earthen ware, and the spoons of lead or tin, but all were clean and neat.

When Lady Grunthal returned with her long lost friend, she praised the neatness and taste of this humble repast. "Country people," said she, "enjoy one great happiness—they have under their hands at first cost, the most valuable productions of this earth—milk, honey, butter, and fruit; towns people must pay much dearer for them, and seldom get them so good. What are the most spicy and richest confectionary—the works of men—when compared with these we have from the hands of God—for example—these rich fruits in the baskets."

Lady Grunthal sat down to table by the side of her old friend, from whom she could not separate, and Henrietta, too, sat near her mother's friend. Herman would have remained at a respectful distance, but Lady Grunthal kindly insisted that he should sit near her. "We have had no conversation yet," said she; "and I have many things to say to you. I have a proposal to make, which, I trust, may not be unacceptable to you, and which I have reason to know, will be well received by Theresa. That proposal I must make to you now, while we are partaking of this banquet, that Catherine has so elegantly prepared for us."

Herman sat down; and Lady Grunthal, without further delay, broached the subject. "My husband," she said, "has been many years anxious to put our school in Grunthal on a better footing than it has been for some time past. But he was unwilling to give pain to the good old master. However, his declining years made the old man anxious for retirement and ease, and a friendly arrangement was made, by which he was left in possession of his usual revenue in money and other contingents, while a new master was to fill his place, and be abundantly provided for from other sources. The fondest wish of my husband is, to find some man of talent and industry, to raise the character of this school. He is of opinion, that a good school is the greatest benefit a landlord can confer on his tenants. That laughable adventure of the hop-blossoms, was the first thing that drew our attention to you. Catherine's letter to Henrietta struck us very forcibly, and left a most favourable impression. About the same time we had a letter from the doctor, whom Catherine had called in to her mother. He declared that the letter was Catherine's composition, and added several high commendations of the family. 'Well,' said my husband, 'the man who has taught his daughter to write such a letter as that, and who is so strictly honest, must be invaluable at the head of a school.' He then wrote to

the doctor, requesting to be favoured with fuller particulars. It was to supply them, the doctor came to the examinations. He was charmed, and forwarded such a report, as put my husband in the greatest humour. The doctor declared that it was not in the school alone you had been useful, but that the whole village was, in other respects, deeply indebted to you. I saw this village once, about twenty years ago—but, I declare, I would scarcely be able to recognize it now. It then looked bleak and wretched, buried among barren rocks and wooded hills. But now the chapel spire and the snug roofs, rise within a circle of blooming orchards. Several hop-gardens are in cultivation. The cottage gardens are well supplied with vegetables and bee-hives. The villagers, who were formerly lazy and careless, have now become, by your example, industrious and brisk as their bees. And you, also, dear Theresa, have done much good. The country around here gave very little employment in agricultural labours; and you introduced the taste for those lace and muslin works, which now give such employment and returns to many of the villagers. Poor though you were, you and your husband have enriched the village. Though the name of ‘an industrial school’ has never been heard here, the village had, in your example, a school for planting, and for gardening, and for the culture of bees, and for many other useful things, which have been brought to perfection under your eyes. On this favourable report of the doctor, my husband formed his determination. Many applications had been made for the vacant post; but he said: ‘No; my part is taken: Herman is my choice, if he consent.’ As I was passing so near your village, on my way to Grunthal, I resolved to be the bearer of this intelligence. I think the proposal ought to be accepted. Grunthal is a very agreeable place. The school is new, large, and well lighted; there is a large and very good garden attached to it. Your annual receipts will be three times greater than here. You ought not, I think, reject the offer.

You can thus provide for all your own little children, and confer a great favour on the numerous flock of little children at Grunthal. O, what a happiness it would be for me, to have the friend of my youth, my Theresa, so near me—and Henrietta would have, in your daughter Catherine, as favourite a companion as you were to me. Come, sir, say what you think?"

Herman was both surprised and overjoyed at the offer: the tears started to his eyes, and, for a few moments, he could not find words to express his feelings. "What happiness," said he, at last, "what wonderful help from God, at the very time we stood most in need of it. Honourable lady, I accept the offer gratefully and with alacrity. I will endeavour to discharge all the duties of my new position, and to give to you and to your noble husband, a better proof of my gratitude by works, than I can now give by words."

Theresa was so happy that she wept and sobbed. Little Rose, who was sitting near her, asked her: "Why do you weep, mamma? the lady is very kind! she is not angry with you! don't cry—or I must cry."

"O," said Theresa to Lady Grunthal, "how happy am I to have found you, my best friend,—found you as kind, as good, as generous, as modest, as I knew you at Lindenberg. My great happiness is to be near you. How kindly has God provided for myself and my children! O, well does He know how to turn all things to the best."

"It is, indeed, a singular arrangement of Providence," said Lady Grunthal, "that the school of Grunthal should have been destined for Herman, though I never dreamed he was your husband.—Oh! I have often prayed that I might have the happiness of meeting you even once in this world. I prayed that, as He had blessed me with earthly goods, I might yet have an opportunity of sharing them with her who had saved my life. How amazed, how delighted I was, when coming under this humble thatch, I saw first, Catherine, who is your very image, and then

yourself. Really, your joy cannot be greater than mine. It is not you alone, dear Theresa, or your husband and children, that have reason to be thankful to God, but I, and my husband, and the villagers, ought to remember long and well, the happy day that God sends such a treasure to them as Herman. Happy, happy mistake, in that sale of the hop-blossoms."

"Well," said Henrietta, who was always gay and sprightly, "I am delighted that I succeeded so well in my trade. It does not become me, indeed, to praise myself, but as others will not, I must do it myself. Had I not paid a round, sporting price for those hop-blossoms, none of those happy returns could have come from the bargain. Mamma would never have found her friend; and Grunthal would not have a good master."

"Those happy consequences do not follow from your bargain, Henrietta," said Lady Grunthal, "nor have you any reason to claim them as your own. Your error was an error, and your silly contract *was* silly. But the Providence of God never appears so manifest, as when He so controuls our mistakes and follies, as to make them lead to good; while our best planned and most promising speculations, often involve us in ruin. This teaches us, that God is over human affairs; that we ought to put our trust in Him, and give all the glory of our success to Him. No, dear Henrietta, I must not encourage you in your levity and occasional follies. Levity and carelessness, from their own nature, invariably bring on serious evils, and if they ever become occasions of good, that is owing to the pure mercy and grace of God. We should always endeavour to do our business steadily and punctually, and leave the event in the hands of God. We must act like the good farmer, who tills his farm with all care and skill, and expects his returns from on high."

Lady Grunthal then requested that Herman and his family should start for Grunthal as soon as possible, and send notice to her of the intended day of departure. She

would send an order to have him and his family and their furniture carried from Steinhach. Once more she assured him that he and his family would be happy at Grunthal. "Assuredly," she declared, "you will be universally beloved and respected, and you will have no difficulty in settling all your children." This promise was, in truth, realized to the letter.

Lady Grunthal then took an affectionate farewell of Theresa, and hoping to see her soon, and that all the family, in the meantime, would be as happy as they deserved, she went with her daughter Henrietta, accompanied by the whole family, to her coach, which, to the amazement of the villagers, was drawn up near Herman's door.

Before Henrietta took her seat, she said to Catherine, "O, I had nearly forgotten something. It was very wrong, on my part, to take your bonnet on that warm summer's day, especially as it was your mother's gift, and therefore doubly dear to you. Here now, I return it to you safe." She opened a box, and taking the very bonnet, with its wreath of hop-blossoms, presented it to Catherine.

"Is it possible," cried Catherine, "the blossoms and green leaves not withered yet! In truth, they are the same, as fresh and green as the day I plucked them."

Henrietta clapped her hands, and cried out, in an exulting tone, "Now we are even. I mistook the real for an artificial hop wreath, and you mistake the artificial for the real. When I returned home, I gave the hop wreath, which I bought so dearly, and which is long since withered, to a milliner, and ordered her to make me an artificial wreath, exactly like it. I now present the wreath to you, keep it, and let it be to you as that wreath which your hand once wove around your bonnet, but which, in the hands of God, has been the means of uniting and making so many persons happy."

"Do, Catherine," said Herman, "remember the prudent advice of the young lady—keep that wreath as a memento of the goodness and mercy of God. He has done

great things for us, by that wreath, of which you have the image now in your hands. In the boundless resources of His Providence, He has ways without number, of pouring down His favours and benefits on men—it may be either a gourd at Niniveh, a barren fig-tree near Jerusalem, or a wreath of wild hop-blossoms from our garden hedge."

THE DAISY.

MRS. BERTHOLD, an intelligent and prudent woman, was standing, one Sunday evening, at the gate of her field, near her native town. Her little daughter, Mary, dressed in white, her neat straw bonnet on her head, was with her. It was a beautiful evening in spring. The field was clothed in deep green verdure, interspersed with some of the first flowers of the year.

"How clear and blue the sky is this evening," said Mary, "how green the field, bespangled all over with those little white flowers, like stars in the sky. Just as the blue heavens glitter with golden stars, so every part of the field is painted with flowers. How beautiful, beautiful indeed, has God made all things." Plucking a few of the flowers, Mary remarked, "They are very pretty—the inner part is of a bright, beautiful yellow, and the delicate white leaves stream from the centre like rays of light. O, see, dear mother, the ends of the leaves are tipped with red. The cup of the flower is white or green, and round as a pearl. We call these 'field flowers.' But why not call every flower that grows in the field, field flowers? Have these no other name?"

"O yes," answered the mother, "we call them, sometimes, 'common flowers,' because you can scarcely find a spot in which they do not grow; they are called 'month flowers,' because there are few months of the year, in which they are not to be found; they appear when the

earth is wrapped in ice and snow. They are also called 'goose flowers,' perhaps, because their tender green leaves are the favourite food of the young geese: but their more general name is 'modest darling.'"

"Modest darling," said Mary, "that's a singular name. Tell me, dear mother, why they got that name? what does it mean?"

"I am not quite certain," answered the mother, "whether I can tell you. But I think those modest little flowers, got the name from their simple and artless, yet agreeable and pleasing ornaments. Thus in everything, but particularly in ornaments, we praise simple elegance. These flowers have no other ornaments to strike the eye, than yellow and white colours, and a slight tinge of red, and yet they are pretty; just like yourself now, with your yellow straw bonnet and white dress, and the three knots of light red ribbons. This modest attire becomes you much better than gaudy colours. I hope that in your dress, as well as in everything else, you may ever study modesty. Do be always a modest darling.

"We have no flowers in our garden at home," said Mary, "nothing but vegetables. Suppose I brought home some of these flowers, and planted them in that little bed that you gave to my care?"

"Why not," answered the mother. "Do so immediately. These flowers can be very useful. The green leaves can be mixed with our salads and spinach. They are good, too, as medicine. A friend of mine, who, it was supposed, had some disease of the lungs, was cured, she told me, by those leaves. This flower plant combines the useful with the agreeable. Would that we could always do the same."

Next day Mary went to the field, and dug up many of the plants that had not yet flowered. She set them, like cabbage plants, in rows on the plot, which her mother had given to her. The soil was very rich; Mary attended them carefully. She often stirred the earth around them,

and plucked up any grass or weeds that might withdraw the nourishment from them; and, except in rainy weather, she never forgot to water them.

When the buds appeared, and the flowers at last opened, Mary was not a little amazed. They were far superior to the flowers in the field. The little white leaves that surrounded the yellow, did not appear; and what was formerly the yellow disk, was now of a dark or a lighter red, apparently composed of innumerable tender tubes.

Mary ran to her mother. "O, come!" said she, "and see what a miracle my flowers are. You could scarcely know them they are so changed."

The mother followed her. "Is it not true now!" exclaimed Mary; "are not they like velvet?"

"They are, indeed," answered the mother; "they are like velvet; and that's the reason flowers of that kind, when improved by cultivation, are called, in some places, velvet flowers. See what a change, care and cultivation can make even in a very common flower."

Mary was so delighted with this metamorphosis of the modest darling into the velvet flower, that she brought home from the field as many roots as covered all her little plot in the garden. But another wonder now struck her. The flowers began to blow, and lo! when they were in full bloom, the yellow disk had disappeared. The whole flower was covered with those tender leaves, but of different colours, some white as snow, others dark, others light red, and, at a little distance, all looked like beautiful little tubes.

Mary, after remarking the flowers one morning, ran to her mother. "O, mother, come!" said she, "and see the new miracle in my flowers. Come, come, where I planted my common daisies. I have a thousand different kind of flowers."

"Very possible," answered the mother; "that's the reason these flowers are sometimes called 'Thousand hues.' This discovery is not so new as you think. Many florists

have before you, improved the daisy in this way. They are now to be found in almost every flower garden."

"And thus," continued the mother, "can we, by industry and care, develope and perfect everything in nature. What is done with these flowers, can be done with most other flowers and fruits. Some of the most beautiful flowers of the garden were, in the beginning, flowers of the field; the best apple and pear trees were, at first, only crabs and wildings. This is the reward God gives to the industry and perseverance of man; thus it is that He makes man the lord of creation.

"Man himself," she said, "never attains his full and due perfection, but by a sound and religious education. The pity is, that many children are not so pliant as these humble flowers; yes, and that many—many more, by their obstinacy and disobedience, frustrate and nullify the best education. Learn you, my child, to set a due value on that education, which I am endeavouring to give you; do, co-operate with me, that it may be crowned with richest fruit."

Mary's flowers flourished under her care; her little bed on which she now planted nothing else, was soon covered thick with green leaves, and looked like a pasture field. She thought they required no more care, and allowed them to grow as they pleased. But she was soon surprised, not however so agreeably as before, to find that her richest flowers and her thousand dies, dwindled and degenerated once more into common daisies.

"Ah! this is too bad," said Mary; "I never expected to be so sadly disappointed in flowers, that once made me so happy. Tell me, dear mother, what can be the cause of this sad change?"

"The cause," said the mother, "is easily explained. The first cause is, you have neglected your flowers; you took no care of them except to manure the earth around them; you forgot to water them; you allowed them to be overrun with grass and weeds. That's the reason they

are now like what they were in the open field. Nothing but constant care can keep the wild flower from degenerating; without care, they once more grow wild.

"And so it is in the education of man. How good soever the education, or however great the promise of youth, if the good work be not continued, the hope is blasted. Let it not depress you if I tell you, that I see many things in you which I must correct, and amend, and guard you against. Since you planted the flowers in our garden, you are older, and bigger, and more prudent, and pious also. But as yet, you stand in need of constant watchfulness, and careful direction. Be ever obedient to me, that you may never, like these poor flowers, fall away from your virtue.

"Another cause why these flowers have fallen away is this: near your little plot, I left one plot of grass, to bleach my yarn and linen. The wild daisy grew thick on that plot. Now, experienced gardeners are of opinion, that the proximity of the wild flower, is injurious to those that have been improved; that they bring them back, in a word, by degrees, to their natural state. Now, this should be a warning to us, to avoid the society of evil men, unless we wish to become like to them. Evil communication corrupts good morals.

"See, my dear Mary, what beautiful, what striking lessons God conveys to us in the inanimate world, if we do but study it with an attentive eye, and desire to discover them, with the intention of practising them."

Mary once more took care of her flowers; removed the wild daisies from the grass plot, and lo, her flowers, which she called her little foster-children, improved once more, and grew every year more beautiful.

But Mary herself was ever obedient to the voice of her mother, and never defeated those motherly instructions by levity or obstinacy; she avoided all bad company. She was a truly virtuous young girl, more beautiful and promising than the fairest of her flowers.

Mary felt deeply the great value of the education, which her mother had given to her. On her mother's feast day, Mary conducted her to a green spot in the garden, on which the mother's name appeared in letters made of red, white, or rose coloured velvet flowers, growing and planted by Mary's own hand. "Dear mother," she said, "you have had much more trouble with me, than I ever had with these flowers. They have amply repaid my care and labour, could I be less grateful? Accept, then, this little acknowledgment of my gratitude, for your great labours."

This modest and pretty acknowledgment from a grateful daughter, was, of course, most agreeable to the mother. "Now, dear Mary," said she, "in honour of you, we shall call these flowers henceforward 'Mary flowers.'"

"No, no," said the daughter, "it must be your name; look, it is growing there—'Margaret.'"

From that day forward, the mother always called the flowers, "Mary flowers;" but the daughter would not consent, and to the day of her death, as many persons after her, called them nothing else but "Margaret flowers."

THE OLD CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE COLLIER'S FAMILY.

DEEP in the bosom of the mountains lived Rupert, an honest collier. His wooden hut was perched on the top of a rock, at the end of a narrow green valley. A small stream, clear as crystal, watered the vale; but at times it was swollen to a fearful height, and foamed over its rough bed, sweeping along with it, large masses of rock and broken trees. The country around was a frightful wilderness. Wooded mountains locked up the valley at one side, and high over the conical tops of the fir and pine, snow clad rocks shot up their pinnacles to the skies. No trace of the hand of man was seen, save the wooden huts of the colliers, a few steps hewn in the rocks and a plank thrown across the stream.

At a little distance from the hut there was an old quarry, where variegated rocks contrasted beautifully with the green leaves that almost shaded them, and beyond, in the distance, a mouldering tower stood on the top of a mountain, near the ruins of an old fortress.

Here in this deep solitude, Rupert lived with his wife Hedwiga, and their two children, Nicholas and Theckla. Several weeks often passed without bringing a single stranger to the valley, which was tenanted exclusively by the hare and roe, and sometimes by the stag, which ventured down from the woods to the stream, in the noon-day heat.

Rupert was always busy in the forest, felling wood and burning charcoal. Hedwiga took care of the house, and constantly plied her wheel. Nicholas tended the flock of mountain goats; and Theckla had charge of a dozen of sheep, which she kept in the little green vale, or in grassy spots on the mountain's side. The little family lived in peace and piety, and desired no greater happiness than what they enjoyed. The children believed that no place could be more beautiful, than the bleak wilderness around them. To them, rocks and forests were the world. In them they were taught by their pious parents, to behold the grandeur and majesty of God. The wild strawberry and the red or black berries on the heath, were their delight. Whenever they happened to pick up a solitary wild flower, the purple fox glove, or the dark blue monk's hood, for example, they brought them to their parents, who warned them that they were poisonous. The beautiful crimson fruit that grew like little caps on the spindle tree, or the acorns in their green cups, were a source of more amusement to these poor children, than the most costly play-toys of the rich. The little stream, whose banks the children had planted with flowers, supplied trout in abundance, and of such excellent quality, that many a rich man might envy Rupert's table.

Many beautiful crystallizations were to be found in the neighbouring quarry. Several stones of yellow slate clay, were perfect images of herbs, leaves, and flowers. Nicholas often drove his goats in that direction; and selecting the most beautiful stones, brought them home, and, after some time, made a splendid collection. Travellers, who came occasionally to the mountains, purchased them from Nicholas, who, however, always gave the money to his father.

Nicholas was never so happy as when, after driving home his goats, he went to his father in the forest, and spent the night with him in the pine hut, near the blazing pile of wood. This spot commanded a beautiful view of

the old mountain castle. When the sun was going down and the pines around looked dark and gloomy, the old tower gleamed like gold in the evening rays.

"I am very curious," said Nicholas, one evening, "to know that old castle. Some time, when I drive my goats in that direction, I must go to the top of the mountain and get a full view of the old ruin."

The father raised his hand in a warning attitude. "Do not, Nicholas," said he; "the old walls are tottering: some accident might happen to you."

"But what, or who, destroyed the fine castle?" asked Nicholas.

The father then told some frightful stories of a wicked baron, who had once tenanted the hold. Poor Nicholas trembled from head to foot, when he heard how the wicked robber plundered the country round, and lived like the rich glutton until the measure of his iniquity was full; and how, at last, he was taken and died by the sword, and his castle was dismantled and given up to the flames.

At the close of this history the father added: "See how the world goes! crime cannot stand; like the grass on those dry walls, it withers and disappears. God punishes all crime. Had that baron been a good man, his castle might be standing this day in all its splendour, and tenanted by his descendants. But now the solitary tower rising over the ruins, is to us, and to all time, a monument of God's vengeance."

CHAPTER II.

THE YOUNG FOX.

ONE day Nicholas was driving his goats to the quarry. While they were browsing on the leaves and brambles, he was picking spars. He thought he heard some sound

like the yelping of a dog, and having looked around on every side, he found a young fox in a cleft of the rock, striving, but in vain, to jump up the steep sides of his prison.

Nicholas pitied the poor animal, and taking a small trunk of withered pine, he used it as a ladder, and clambering down to the luckless fox, carried it up in his arms and brought it home to his father.

"Oh, Nicky," said his sister, "where did you get that strange young dog?"

"It's a young fox," said the father, "only a few months old. The poor animal is very weak and half starved."

Nicholas told how he caught it. "No wonder," said the father, "that it should be so lank. It was well done on your part, to take pity on the unfortunate creature." The mother then produced a dish of goat's milk, which the fox lapped greedily to the last drop.

"You can keep the fox and rear it," said the father, "it will be one additional mouth to provide for: but something is always left for a lad of that kind." The fox was never absent at meal times, he learned to eat everything, and became as fond of the house as if it were his own. But Nicholas was his principal patron. He fed him well, and the poor animal repaid this kindness, by playing with him and following him every where like a dog.

But the fox soon developed his plundering nature. He stole a hen from Hedwiga, and plucked and eat it in a bush behind the hut. She caught him in the fact, and screamed and called for help. The father was for shooting the thief on the spot. But Nicholas wept and prayed that the wretch's life would be spared. "Well, let him live," said the father, "but send him off quickly."

Next day the smith came with a waggon from the next village, to bring home charcoal. He took a great fancy to the fox. "My boys would have great sport with him,"

he said. As Nicholas was not allowed to keep him, he gave him to the smith, who promised to bring something good in return, and, tying a cord around the fox's neck, he led him away with his waggon. The poor animal often looked back, and was very unwilling to go with his new master. Nicholas stood at the door crying, and continued long, gazing sorrowfully for his frisky and faithful companion.

"Let him go," said the father: "he deserved it. The thief deserved the rope. Should you ever steal, or do any wicked act, out of my house you should go, dear as you are to me, and the rope would be your neck cloth at last."

Nicholas forgot his fox, and wandered once more happy and content on his native mountains. One day, he had his goats feeding near the old castle. When he was preparing to return in the evening, he missed one of them. He searched every place, and clambered over high and craggy rocks. "Perhaps," thought he, "it has gone into the old castle." At the moment, he felt a great curiosity to know all about that old castle, which was the wonder of the whole country around. True—he remembered his father's warning. But he said, "it could not be so dangerous; I will only go in for a moment."

The old gate was a complete ruin. Nicholas wandered about through moss covered walls, blocks of hewn stone, strewn around in disorder, and brambles and trees that had grown over the ruins. Immense shafts of pine and oak, shot up from the pile of rubbish. Nicholas gazed with awe on the massive tower, whose rent walls were overgrown with ivy and brambles. He entered the tower, through a low, narrow door. Even the interior was covered with brambles, moss covered stones lay around him, and the long dry grass hung down in wreathes from the crumbling walls. A thrill of horror shot through his frame, as he gazed around, "My God," he exclaimed, "my father was right, crime cannot stand, it disappears like the withered grass on the wall." A chill came over him, he felt it

creeping over his body, he was turning round to go out, but suddenly, all the brambles around, began to shake and nod towards him; a tremendous crash followed; the ground opened under his feet, and stones and brambles tumbled over him into a chasm as deep as a draw well.

It was a subterraneous prison, whose crumbling vault had given way under Nicholas. He was half dead with the fright, though he had received no other injury. But to his horror, he soon discovered, that he could never clamber up the straight walls. The agony of death appeared to seize him. Toads and adders, that had nestled in between the loose stones and roots of the trees, were hissing and writhing around him. This was the most terrible danger, he screamed again, and again for help, but the echo of his voice died away under the arches of the ruin, and left him again in gloomy and death like silence.

Weeping and wringing his hands he sat down on the rubbish, and looked up wistfully to the clear blue sky, through the cleft in the vault and the overhanging brambles. The sky, he thought, never looked so fair. "Oh! thou great and good God," he cried, "who reignest there alone; no mortal hears my voice; thou alone hearest me, no man knows that I am here; thou seest me! Oh! have mercy on me; let me not perish in this frightful pit: pardon my disobedience of my father's orders. During my life, I will obey my parents, and be ever thankful to thee." Thus he prayed and wept.

Darkness was now coming on by degrees. Night came and no relief. In the small part of the heavens that was visible, an occasional star flickered and disappeared. The pale moonlight, streaming through the shattered windows, and lighting up the interior of the great tower, played on the grey walls, and faintly brightened the gloom. But suddenly he hears a horrible scream. Hollow sepulchral howling resounded through the lonesome ruin. Black figures flitted to and fro over his head in the tower. To know what they were—was impossible, but the uncertainty

was his greatest torment. His whole frame shook with terror. He shut his eyes; drops of cold sweat stood on his forehead; he remembered all the horrible ghost stories, which he had often heard of this castle. "Oh, God,—my God,"—he prayed with all the strength of his soul. "Oh! God protect me, holy angels of God guard and protect me."

Thus a great part of the night was spent in anguish and dreadful alarm, but at last, God sent down a refreshing slumber to the poor boy; and he slept until morning.

CHAPTER III.

ANXIETY AND DELIVERANCE.

POOR Nicholas was much happier, when he awoke and found it was broad day. How beautiful did these red beams of morning now appear to him, as they gilded the brambles over his head in the tower. But soon his joy failed, and he began to weep, "Oh! my good God," he exclaimed. "Thou hast made the beautiful morning. After the dark night, Thou bringest on the day. So canst Thou change sorrow into joy. Oh! put an end to my sorrows, and to those of my dear parents. Restore me to their arms, that we may once more be happy together. Oh, what a happiness, if I could go home, or if they could come here. They would soon relieve me; but Thou canst do it, oh! raise me from this frightful pit."

Thus did poor Nicholas pass the bright morning, now weeping violently—now screaming at the top of his voice and calling for help. All was still and motionless, save when a little bird perched on the old walls, and chirped or sung its cheerful song. But heavily did those gay notes fall on the ear of poor Nicholas. "Ah well may you sing gaily, happy, happy, little birds" said he, "you are free,

your wings bear you where you will. Oh! if I had wings how I would soar up, and soon be at home with my parents. Still, without the will of the great Father in heaven, not one even of you falls to the ground. God knew it, and it is his will that I should fall into this dungeon. I am more dear to Him than you are. He that provides for you, cannot desert me."

So great had been his agitation and grief that up to this moment, he had not thought of eating or drinking. But about noontide, he felt the cravings of hunger. Fortunately he had some bread and cheese in his pouch. He eat a few morsels, which were indeed moistened with his tears. "This poor stock is soon gone," said he, "and then death, death, from starvation! But the good God who feeds the birds will not desert me."

But now he was consumed with a raging thirst. On the preceeding evening he had been thirsty. The dry bread, the bitter cheese, and the sultriness of the weather had contributed to aggravate this torment. "Ah my God," he prayed, "let me not die of thirst: the flowret and the blade of grass, drink the rain and the dew; give me but one drop of water." Completely exhausted, he sank down and rested his aching head on a stone.

"My God," he prayed, "since I am doomed to die here, and no priest with me—do grant me but one sweet sleep, and let me awake to thee in heaven: but oh! console my father, my dear mother, and little Theckla."

CHAPTER IV.

NEW TERRORS.

STRETCHED in that position, Nicholas fell into a slumber, which lasted till near evening; when frightful peals of thunder startled him from his rest. The air was darkened.

Huge piles of gloomy clouds rolled heavily above, and made the sky almost black as night. A violent storm howled and moaned through the ruined tower, sweeping down with a tremendous crash, loose stones and rubbish from the battlements. The trembling child could not count one moment on his life, every instant he thought the vaulted roof would fall in, and bury him beneath its ruins. He crouched into the farthest corner of his dungeon. Flashes of lightning glared incessantly, and wrapt the whole ruin in flames, while peal after peal, of the clattering thunder, made the earth rock under his feet.

Nicholas raised up his hands to heaven, and prayed fervently. Heavy rain began to fall, and perceiving by the glare of the lightning that the leaves of the brambles were dripping with rain, he cried out in ecstasy. "Oh! my God, how kind thou art, I prayed but for one drop of water and thou hast given me thousands. This storm which frightened me so much is the greatest favour I could receive. All thy ways are goodness itself."

He soon quenched his thirst with the large drops of rain on the weeds and brambles. The weather soon began to clear up; the lightning was still vivid and frequent, but the thunder was fainter and more distant.

Once more he felt his confidence revive, and he placed his firm trust in God. "Oh! grant," he prayed, "that my father may find me here. He has no notion that I am here. Oh! may some angel whisper it into his ear this night in a dream. Then will he rise at once, and come to raise me from this pit."

The rain had now ceased. The thunder was no longer heard; but flashes of lightning still occasionally broke over the castle—then again all was dark and still as death. Suddenly the blood froze in poor Nicholas' veins; he heard something trailing around the edge of the broken roof, and could distinctly hear the clanking of chains. The lightning flashed and he saw the dreadful visitor looking down at him. 'Oh! God, what can that be,' said he, "a ghost, a ghost,

I fear." His former fears were a paradise compared to his present feelings. It disappeared—the clanking of the chain ceased—but soon after he heard a wailing and scraping against the bottom of the wall on which he was sitting. He started up in terror and rushed to the opposite corner of the dungeon; but the unknown and terrible visitant came up out of the ground, and rushing forward, sprung on Nicholas. Scream after scream of deadly horror burst from the poor boy—a flash of lightning revealed the ghost—it was his faithful fox.

Nicholas' terror was now changed into joy. The fox fawned on him, and licked his feet; and then frisked and bounded around the dungeon. "Oh! my poor brute," said Nicholas, "so you are the terrible ghost; a thousand times welcome," said he, patting the poor animal, "you didn't forget that I once saved you from your stone prison, and you come now to save me, if you could, from this frightful pit:—but what's this you have got on your neck? Is it a piece of a chain: is this the collar the smith put on you? Ah! you have escaped from your prison; but I am in prison still: however I hope that under God, you may be the means of rescuing me from my chains, they are not iron, but they hold me as fast. No doubt you have been sent to release me."

This meeting of an old acquaintance, cheered the poor boy's heart; his fears vanished. He searched for a dry spot in the vault, sat down on a stone, and the fox lay at his feet.

CHAPTER V.

DELIVERANCE FROM THE DUNGEON.

WHEN morning dawned, Nicholas began to say to himself, "I must see how the fox came in here, perhaps, I could go out the same way." He remarked a small opening in the floor of the vault, which had been closed up with the fallen stones, before the fox worked himself through it. Nicholas cleared away the stones, and discovered an underground passage. He pressed himself into it, and groped his way in utter darkness so long, that he feared he should never find the end. At last, he found himself in broad day-light, on the side of the mountain.

Who can say how he felt, when he issued from that deep darkness, and found himself free, and beheld the golden clouds of morning and the rising sun, and the green hills freshened by the preceding night's rain, herbs, leaves and flowers glistening with dew-drops. He felt as if he were rising out of the grave. "O Thou kind and ever good Father in heaven," he cried, falling on his knees, "Thou hast saved me. To Thee I offer my most heartfelt thanks. True, true, it is, that Thou dost never abandon those who place their trust in Thee. Thanks, thanks, eternal thanks to Thee."

Then rising from his knees, he ran as rapidly as he was able, to his beloved parents. The fox frisked after him gaily.

There had been great woe in his father's house. When the goats returned that evening without their master, gloomy forebodings forced themselves on the anxious fire-side. Father, mother, and sister, spent the greater part of that night and the following day, searching for Nicholas,

but in vain. To look for him in the old castle, never came into their heads, as his father had strictly forbidden him to go there. They supposed he must have fallen down some precipice, or been swept away in the torrent.

As all three were sitting sorrowfully this morning at home, speaking of nothing but the mysterious fate of Nicholas, whom they now mourned as dead—he raised the latch, and stood before them safe and sound. All burst into a loud and joyful welcome. “O Lord,” cried the father, “Nicky, is it you—or is it your ghost!”

“O, Nicky, Nicky,” said the mother, clasping him in her arms, “we gave you up for lost. Ah!” said she, while her tears flowed down on her son, “what pain you have given to us. What happened to you?”

The little sister, too, whose eyes were red with weeping, embraced him fondly.

When the first transports of joy were over, “Tell us, Nicholas,” said the father, “why you have remained so long away: same misfortune must have befallen you.” But his mother said, “Don’t, Nicholas, tell your story, until I have given you a good warm breakfast.” The affectionate mother soon had the breakfast ready; Nicholas sat down, and while he was eating, the three sat around him to listen to his story. The fox, too, was sitting with his face turned up to Nicholas, and his eye constantly fixed on him—not to hear the story, but to get his share of the breakfast.

CHAPTER VI.

A FATHER’S ADVICE—GRATITUDE TO GOD.

NICHOLAS told how the floor, in the old tower, had given way under his feet, and thrown him into the vault, and how he wept and screamed, and was dying of hunger and

thirst, and in the most horrible agony. The mother and daughter had often to wipe away the tears during this narrative.

"Ah," said the mother, "misery makes us pray—and does not the scripture say, 'Thus saith the Lord—call on me in your necessities, and I will deliver you.'"

When Nicholas told of the hideous howlings, and the black, flitting phantoms, "O stop," cried Theckla. "I'm trembling all over: I would have dropped dead on the spot."

"O," said the father, "don't be so simple; they were owls—nothing else. Go on, Nicholas."

Nicholas told how the faithful fox made his appearance in the middle of the terrible storm. "I think," he said, "the fox wished to deliver me from my prison, as I once delivered him."

"The fox did not intend any such thing, Nicholas," said the father. "Still, this much is certain, that though the fox is a poor brute that has no sense, he loved his old master, and was able to track you to the vault. In this light it is good—many a man that feels no gratitude for favours, might take a lesson from the fox."

Nicholas then told how he made his way by that long passage, through which the fox had entered. "So," said he, laying down some bread and milk to the fox, "this good fellow was the cause of setting me free."

"It was God that freed you," said his mother. "Thank Him—none of us can thank Him as fully as we ought. True, God has made use of this poor animal to deliver you. It was so arranged, that when he broke his chain, he should find you out in your dungeon. Yes—since you once saved the poor animal, it was the will of Providence, that he should save you. If you, like so many other cruel boys, had killed the fox, you might have starved in that hole in the earth. Was I not right, when I often told you not to be cruel to anything that breathes?"

"And if," said the father, "an irrational brute can be

of such service to man, how much more can one man help another. Never be cruel or unkind to any man. It is not only a sin against God and man, but it is often a grievous injury to yourself. It has happened more than once, that a poor beggar saved the life of a prince. Let us therefore, not from selfishness, but from pure and generous motives, be kind to all God's creatures—especially to man—the noblest creature on earth.”

The father then advised Nicholas gravely—but very affectionately. “I often warned you,” he said, “not to go near that old castle, lest some accident might befall you. I gave you strict orders not to go there. You have slighted my warning—you have disobeyed my orders. See, now, what a wicked thing it is—to disobey a father's orders. Your disobedience plunged you in that vault, and had nearly cost you your life. Many a misfortune disobedience has brought down on children. They broke their necks or their bones, or were drowned, or, like you, fell into pits. But the worst pit of all is the pit of sin, into which disobedience draws us. Many disobedient children have been lost, not only in this world, but in the next. Be ye, therefore, my children, always obedient to your parents, that it may be well with you. Remember the fourth commandment, ‘honour thy father and mother, that thy days may be long, and thy end happy.’”

Next day the smith came to bring home a load of charcoal. “Ha!” said he, when he saw the fox, “I thought I should find him here. I have a strong, new chain, with me now, which he cannot break. Nicholas, I have not paid you yet for the fox. Here, instead of my promised present, I give you a glittering crown.”

“No, no,” said Nicholas, “not for a thousand crowns.” He then told how the fox had saved his life.

“Here, then,” said the smith, “is the chain, as well as the crown. Take it as a present; for unless your mother wish to lose all her hens and fowl, the fox must be chained.”

Next Sunday morning, in the chapel, the little family returned heartfelt thanks to God, for his great mercy; in the evening they went to the old castle, to perform the same pious duty: besides, they were naturally curious to see where Nicholas had fallen down.

When they had ascended the hill, and come to the castle gate, the father said, "Let me go first, and you can follow, lest any accident should happen." He then entered the door, and looked around him to be certain that there was some solid ground to stand on. Having discovered a firm stone on which two persons could stand, he called in his wife and daughter, one after another. The mother shuddered when she looked down into the deep, black vault. "O Lord," she cried, "what a horrible place: can we ever praise God enough for having saved Nicholas—truly—He lets us fall into the pit, and draws us out again."

"Yes, He does," continued the father, "to admonish us of our faults and errors, to punish our levity, and to exercise us in patience and confidence in Him. Nicholas has experienced this. God grant that every man who falls into misery, may, in the end, be able to sing with David, 'that though the Lord had brought him into great trials, He had consoled and saved him in the end.'"

THE DIAMOND RING:

A TALE, IN TWELVE LETTERS.

LETTER I.

JOHN, A SHEPHERD BOY, TO HIS SISTER,
MARIA.

DEAR SISTER,

May 1, 1806.

YESTERDAY evening was beautiful. I was sitting under a tree, playing on my shepherd's flute. My sheep were grazing quietly on the banks of the stream. My little book, which I used in school, was lying near me. The sun was going down, reddening the earth and sky with his golden rays.

Our good curate passed by on his usual walk along the bank of the stream. He stopped for some time to listen to me. He then approached. When he saw the book lying near me, he asked me in a very kind tone, whether I could read. "O, yes," said I, and I did read a page for him without stop or stammer.

He appeared somewhat surprised, and asked me, "Where did you come from? Who are these good parents, that had you so well taught? And why did you come to our village?"

I told him our whole history: how we lost all we had, and were driven from our home by the war; how our dear father was killed in battle. I told him also that my mother was lying sick in a poor hut in Tannenberg, about

six leagues from this, and that you, my dear sister, were attending on her, and endeavouring to support her by spinning; and that I, in order to help you, had come here as a shepherd boy, to Wiesenthal. I wept while I was telling these facts.

He spoke to me in a cheering tone. "Be comforted," said he, "and don't cry. Be as pious and honest as your good parents, and you will most certainly have your reward in the end." He put his hand in his pocket, and gave me the new silver coin which I enclose to you now, with the best wishes for my poor mother. God grant that she may soon recover.

Farewell. I remain your affectionate brother,

JOHN.

LETTER II.

MARIA TO HER BROTHER JOHN.

DEAR BROTHER,

Tannenberg, May 15, 1806.

OH! I am in the greatest affliction. My first letter to you is the most sorrowful I ever wrote. Our dear mother died the night before last, and is to be buried this morning.

The evening before her death, I was sitting by her bedside. Your letter came. I read it for her. She wept with joy.

"Dearest daughter," said she, "I will never rise from this sick bed. I am going to God, our good Father, who is in heaven. My chief consolation on this bed of death is, that I have given you a good education. Oh! my dear children, be always good and pious; advance every day in prudence and piety. Have God always before your eyes; love Him above all; keep his commandments, and hope in Him. Believe with your whole heart in Jesus

Christ, do all that he orders us, and follow his good example. Pray every day, that the Holy Spirit of God may enlighten and direct you, and be ever obedient to his inspirations. Love one another. Do injury to no man. Let no poverty or distress ever induce you to take the least fraction of another's property. Fly even the slightest stain of sin; preserve your innocence pure and stainless. Then will God assuredly provide for you. He will now be to you as a mother, as he has hitherto been a father. Farewell. Don't cry. I am going to God, and I will pray fervently for you. These are the last words of your dying mother. Don't forget them, dear Maria; write them to my dear John, also. I send him my dying blessing. I wish I could see him once more in this world. But we shall all meet once more in heaven, where I expect soon to see your dear father."

She then gave both of us a mother's blessing, and about three hours after departed quietly and without a struggle. My own tears are still flowing fast.

I could not tell what pains our good priest took to prepare her for death, and how kind and generous he was in relieving all her wants. He visited her every day, and every day sent her the best nourishment. He called in the doctor, and paid the apothecary's bill. He was at her side when she was expiring, and by his sweet and consoling words, made her passage easy. Pray, dear brother, that God may reward the good priest.

Pray for me, too, for I am now, indeed, a poor helpless girl. Both of us are houseless orphans, but you are so big and strong, that you can earn your bread by tending sheep. But what can I do? I am not able to work, and I am afraid and ashamed to beg. Begging is often the ruin of innocence. May God pity your poor sister,

MARIA.

LETTER III.

JOHN TO HIS SISTER MARIA.

DEAR SISTER,

Wiesenthal, June 2, 1806.

YOU were right; God will have pity on us. I am still weeping so bitterly, that I can hardly write to you. No words can tell the shock your letter gave me. Oh! who could ever imagine, that our dear mother would die so soon. But we must bear it patiently; remember, whatever God does, He does for the best. That we must firmly believe, however severe the stroke may be.

Our dear mother is happy now. We have good grounds to hope so. She was so pious, she is certainly in heaven. She is better off than we are. Should we not endeavour to rejoice for her sake. God will provide for us also. He feeds the birds of the air, and clothes the flowers of the field. God sends the warm wind to the shorn lamb, the priest says. He will send help and consolation to us also in our need.

Weep no more, dear sister. Let us place our firm hopes in God, and pray to Him, and follow the advice of our good mother; then will God assuredly protect us, and bring us securely to our parents in heaven.

I inclose a letter, which you will give to the priest. Farewell. God be with you and your brother,

JOHN.

LETTER IV.

JOHN TO THE PARISH PRIEST OF TANNENBERG.

REVEREND AND VENERABLE SIR,

Do not be offended, if a poor orphan boy presume to write to you. It is true, I am only a poor shepherd boy.

but I love all my little sheep. I would willingly give them part of my food ; I pity them when anything hurts them, and I carefully pluck out the thorns that stick in their feet. But the lambs are my greatest care.

Pardon me for speaking so boldly to you. You, too, are a shepherd. You love the little sheep, which the great shepherd has entrusted to your care. You love them more than I love mine, and this is what emboldens me to speak confidently and like a child to you.

Yes, you love your parishioners. You have proved that at my mother's death. You have attended her as carefully, as if she were your own mother. This fills my heart with gratitude: and as my father and mother have often taught me that gratitude, especially in children, is one of the noblest virtues, I venture now to express my gratitude to you. Indeed, I feel how utterly unable I am to express the sentiments of my heart, but believe me that my heart is full enough. I pray every day for you, that God may richly reward you—and assuredly He will do so.

Pardon me for now closing this letter with a little petition. My sister is now a poor abandoned girl. I am older than she. I am bound to provide for her ; but, alas ! my God, I am poorer than the poor. I have wept and prayed to God heartily, that He would deign to direct me. The thought struck me, that if I wrote to you, you might receive her. Oh ! I beg of you, for God's sake, and from the bottom of my heart, take pity on that poor abandoned orphan. In the firm hope that you will do so, I present you my humble respects, and remain, with filial reverence, your grateful parishioner,

JOHN MULLER.

Wiesenthal, June 2, 1806.
