Title: Joseph in the Snow, and The Clockmaker. In Three Volumes. Vol. III

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Release Date: July 15, 2010 [EBook #33164]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Charles Bowen, from page scans provided by the Web Archive

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Transcriber's Note:
Page scan source: http://www.archive.org/details/josephinsnowand01auergoog

JOSEPH IN THE SNOW,

AND

THE CLOCKMAKER.

BY AUERBACH.

TRANSLATED BY LADY WALLACE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

SAUNDERS, OTLEY, AND CO.,

66, BROOK STREET, HANOVER SQUARE.

1861.

LONDON: PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET, AND CHARING CROSS.

THE CLOCKMAKER

(*Continued*).

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OF

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CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FIRST NAIL KNOCKED IN, PEACE IN THE HOUSE, AND THE FIRST SUNDAY GUEST.

Next day Annele seemed quite satisfied again with Franzl—she was such a capital servant, and Annele said: "I have not yet given you any thing, Franzl; do you prefer a gown or money?"

"I should like money best."

"There are two crown dollars for you."

Lenz was very much pleased when Franzl told him this—she is a spoiled, hasty, dear, good child, thought he—and Franzl's idea was: "She is like our young bailiff's wife at home, of whom the balancemaker's wife once said: She has always seven visitors in her head, but only six chairs, so one must always stand, or walk about, while the others are sitting down." Lenz laughed, and Franzl continued: "We Kunslingers are sharp enough, but see how nicely your wife has already put every thing into order; any one else would have taken three days to complete it, and stumbled at least seventeen times, and broken half the things into the bargain. Your wife is not left-handed."

Lenz told Annele that Franzl declared she had two right hands, and Annele was delighted with this praise. Annele now displayed a new qualification. Lenz begged her to put in a nail in the wall above his father's file. She hit the nail straight on the head, and Lenz hung up his mother's picture on the first nail that Annele had knocked in at home. "So far well," said Lenz. "Even if it is not quite her own face, still these are her own eyes, which, please God, shall look down on a peaceful, good, and happy life in this house. Let us always live, so that my mother can gaze at us with satisfaction."

Annele was on the point of saying: "Oh! pray don't make a pattern saint of the good woman;" but she gulped it down.

The whole week—it was now only Wednesday—was kept like a half holiday; Lenz worked for a couple of hours, but, apparently, only to remind him of his calling; and he was always in better spirits after he had been busy at work. The various events, during the marriage festivities, were naturally recalled and commented on. It was certainly not a little amusing to hear the way in which Annele could imitate and quiz them all. The landladies of the "Bear," the "Lamb" and the "Eagle," were to the very life; Faller in particular she could take off exactly, in the way in which he constantly stroked his moustaches, till one could almost have believed that there were the same appendages on Annele's pretty mocking face. She intended no malice in these tricks—but

she enjoyed any kind of fun, and was always well amused at the Carnival merry making, and now nothing but good humour shone forth, and she exclaimed: "Oh! how agreeable it is here in the hills, and how still and quiet! I had no idea that there could be such perfect peace. When I am seated here, and see and hear nothing of the world, and have no one to give an answer to, I almost feel as if I were sleeping with my eyes open—and sleeping pleasantly too; below there, it is like being constantly in a busy mill; up here, it is like another existence: I think I could actually hear my heart beat. I will not go down into the village for the next fortnight; I will accustom myself by degrees to give up going there, and it will be no hardship to me; they have no idea below there what enjoyment there is in being out of the bustle, and strife, and tumult of life. Oh Lenz, I don't think you know how fortunate you have been all your life!"

Annele was seated one morning beside Lenz, uttering all these exclamations of happiness and contentment, and the husband replied, with a glad face: "This is just as it should be; I knew you would like this house; and, believe me, I feel thankful to God, and to my parents, that I have been permitted to pass my life hitherto here. But, my dear little wife, we must not remain here for fourteen days, cut off from everybody. At all events, we must go to church together next Sunday; indeed, I think that we ought to go to see your parents for a little today."

"Just as you like; and, fortunately, we don't take with us the delightful peace we enjoy here, but we find it awaiting us when we come home again. I cannot realize that I have been here so short a time, it seems to me as if I had lived up here all my life; indeed, such quiet, happy hours count for as much as years elsewhere."

"You explain everything so well, you are so clever. Recall this feeling, if the day comes when you find it dull up here. Those people, who would not believe that you could be happy in solitude, will be surprised."

"Who refused to believe that? No doubt it was Pilgrim, that great artist: a pretty fellow he is; if he does not find angels, he immediately fancies them devils; but, I tell you fairly, he shall never come under this roof."

"Pilgrim said nothing of the sort. Why will you persist in having some particular person to hate? My mother said a hundred times over, the only way to have peace of mind, is to think well of your fellow creatures. I wish she had lived even a year longer, that you might have profited by her wisdom. Was it not well said? You understand everything. When we hate a man, or know that we have an enemy—I never knew the feeling but once in my life and it was terrible indeed—we feel, no matter where we go, or where we are, that an invisible pistol is aimed at our heads. My greatest happiness is, that I hate no one, and no one so far as I know, hates me."

Annele had not listened very attentively to this speech; she only asked: "Who said it then, pray, if it was not Pilgrim?"

"No one, in fact, but I often thought so myself, I own."

"I don't believe that: some one must have put it into your head; but it was very silly in you to tell me of it. I could repeat to you equally, what people said about you; people whom you would little suspect! You have your detractors also, just like other people; but I know better than to irritate you by detailing such foolish talk."

"You only say this to pay me off. Well, I deserve it, and now we are quits, so let us be cheerful again. The whole world is nothing to us now; you and I form our whole world."

And both were indeed as happy as possible, and Franzl, in the kitchen, was often seen moving her lips, which was her habit when she was thinking of any particular subject, and on this occasion she thought thus: "God be praised! it is all as it should be, and this is just the way in which Anton and I would have lived together, if he had not proved false, and married a black woman."

On Sunday morning, Lenz said: "I quite forgot to tell you, that I had invited a guest to dinner today—I suppose you have no objection."

"No; who is it?"

"My worthy friend, Pilgrim."

"You ought to invite your uncle also, it is only proper to do so."

"I thought of it repeatedly, but it is better not; I know his ways."

The church bells in the valley began to ring out, and Lenz said: "Is not that pleasant? My mother said a thousand times, that as we cannot hear the bells themselves, but only the echo from the wood behind our house, it is as if the melody came direct from heaven."

"Quite so," said Annele, "but it is time for us to set off." On the way she began: "Lenz, I do not ask through curiosity, but I am your wife, so you ought to tell me everything, and I promise you faithfully, by that solemn peal we are listening to, that I will never divulge it."

"You need make no vows—never do so, for I have a great objection to strong asseverations. What do you wish to know?"

"Well then, your uncle and you spoke in so obscure a manner on our wedding-day: what did you settle together about your inheritance?"

"Nothing at all: we never spoke one word together on the subject."

"And yet it seemed from your manner that it was all signed and sealed."

"I only said that my uncle and I understood each other; and so we do—we never speak about such things—he can do as he likes with his own."

"And you helped him out of his dilemma; for he was fairly beset and could not have escaped—such an occasion will never come again. He ought to have settled on us, I mean on you, a handsome sum."

"I cannot bear strangers interfering in family matters. I am in no difficulty, and even if he leaves me nothing I can earn what I require myself."

Annele was silent; but it was not a melody like that of the bells, now resounding in clear tones through hill and dale, that filled her heart.

They went on together in comparative silence to church, and afterwards, before going home, they paid a visit to Annele's parents.

Not far from their own meadow. Pilgrim shouted out behind them:—"Include a poor soul in your Paradise." Both laughed and turned round. Pilgrim was very merry on the road, and still more so at table. It was strange that Pilgrim, who had spoken so severely of Annele, now seized every opportunity of praising her. He was anxious to make Lenz forget what he had once said of her, and to make him feel his happiness now secure. After he was gone, Lenz said:—

"I never enjoyed my dinner more than today. What can be better in the world, than to be occupied with your work, and to have plenty to eat and drink, and a dear wife, and a dear friend to keep you company?"

"Pilgrim is certainly very amusing," replied Annele.

"I am also so glad," continued Lenz, "that you have fairly converted him. He was not very fond of you, but he is very different now; you are a witch; you can do what you will with every one."

Annele made no answer, and Lenz repented having told her this as there was no need to do so; but honesty never does harm. He therefore repeated that Annele must feel particular pleasure, in having so entirely changed one who had formerly undervalued her.

Still Annele did not say a word; but she had many a triumph yet in store for her, as she never missed an opportunity, either now or hereafter, of showing Lenz how bad, and wicked, and cunning, and false all men are.

"I never knew that the world was so bad. I have lived like a child," said Lenz, modestly; and Annele continued:—

"But, Lenz, I have seen the world in your place, and become acquainted with hundreds of men in the course of our traffic, I have seen and heard how they talk, as soon as any one turns his back whom they have made a great fuss with, and how they laugh at him for placing any faith in the existence of cordial words, and honest speech. I can tell you more than if you had travelled for ten years yourself."

"But of what use is it?" asked Lenz. "I don't see that such knowledge can do any good. If we go on our straight path, the world round us may be bad enough, but it can do us no harm; besides there are a great many good and upright men:—but you are right, the daughter of a landlord is at home among strangers—you know that, and told me so on that evening when we were first engaged. It must be a relief to you to have now a real home, where no one has a right to come in, and be as free and easy as he pleases, by ordering a pint of wine, and be as disagreeable as possible to other people."

"Oh! no doubt," answered Annele, but no longer so well pleased, for she felt annoyed again that Lenz should not consider her past life a happy one. He might consequently imagine that it was through him she first knew happiness.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ANCIENT HEIRLOOMS ARE DISMISSED, AND A NEW

TONE PREVAILS IN THE MORGENHALDE.

The bridal week, and many other weeks and months have passed away, about which there is not much to relate. Annele laughed at Lenz almost every morning, for he could never reconcile himself to the Landlady of the "Lion" sending up fresh baked white bread to his house from the village. It was not so much the luxury itself; but that people should accustom themselves to such indulgences, filled him with astonishment. In many other things too it was evident, that Annele had wants and habits which, to Lenz, seemed only suited to holidays and festivals. On this account she, of course, thought herself very superior to him, and blamed the inexperience that did not understand how to make life twice as agreeable at the same cost; and, in truth, everything in the household was now far better of its kind, without the expense being increased. From the very same flour, she baked far better bread than was formerly in the house. But along with her good management she was often petulant, and during the spring months she was constantly complaining and saying:—

"Good heavens! the wind up on the hill is so high, I often think it will blow down the house about our ears."

"But, my dear Annele, I can't prevent it blowing. Besides, that is the reason the air here is so pure and healthy. All men live to a good old age here, and you need have no fears about our house; it will endure for generations yet to come, for it is constructed of entire trunks of trees which will last for our great-grandchildren."

When the snow melted, and rushing streams filled the usually dry channels, and Lenz rejoiced in it, she complained that the deafening and incessant noise prevented her sleeping.

"You often, however, during the winter, used to say how much you disliked the deathlike stillness up here; that you never heard the sound of a carriage, or saw either horsemen or pedestrians going past—now you have noise enough."

Annele looked at Lenz with no very pleasant expression, and went out to Franzl in the kitchen and wept. Franzl went to Lenz and exhorted him not to contradict his wife, as it was neither good for her, in her present situation, nor for himself.

Lenz led a quiet yet busy life, and when he succeeded in producing a good tone in his instruments, he would say:—

"Just listen, Annele, how pure that note is; it is just like a bell;" and she answered:—

"What care I? it's no affair of mine. I fear, I sadly fear, that you make a mistake about your work; you spend too much time over it; it can never pay you. To succeed, a man must be quick, and sharp, and not fritter away his time."

"Annele, I must understand that best."

"If you do, then, don't talk to me on the subject. I can only speak as I understand the thing to be. If you want to have a milliner's doll to listen to you, go to the doctor's, and borrow one of his daughters; they have pretty red lips, and never speak a word."

The days passed quietly, and Spring, that now burst forth with such gladness on the earth, seemed to bring fresh life with its pure breezes, to the Morgenhalde also. The Landlady often came up to visit them, and enjoyed the bright sunshine on the hill. The Landlord was scarcely ever visible. He had become more gruff than ever. Annele evidently cared less to be with her parents, and clung with greater affection than ever to Lenz; indeed, she often went with him on Sunday mornings, and holiday evenings, to the wood, where her husband had put up a bench on his father-in-law's property, and there they used to sit happily together, and Lenz said:—

"Listen to that bird! that is a genuine musician; he does not ask if anyone is listening to him, but he warbles his song for himself and his wife, and so do I also."

Lenz sung sweetly in the echoing wood, and Annele replied:—

"You are quite right, and you ought to leave the Choral Society; it is no longer a fitting place for you: as a bachelor, Faller and the rest of them might quite well be your companions, but now that you are married, it won't do any longer, and you are too old to sing now."

"I too old? Each spring I am born afresh in the world. At this moment I feel as if I were a child once more. This is the spot where I built a little boat with my brother who died. How happy we were!"

"You always speak as if every trifle in your life were something marvellous. What is there remarkable in that?"

"You are right, I must learn to grow old; I am almost as old as the wood in fact, for I remember that when I was a child, there were very few large trees, but all young plantation. Now the wood, which is grown far, far above our heads, is ours."

"How do you mean ours? Has my father made it over to you?"

"No, it still belongs to your father—that is—on certain conditions. He never had the power entirely to cut down the wood, because it is our protection against the weather, a safeguard against the snow, or a landslip of the hill itself, falling on our house and burying it."

"Why do you talk to me about such things? What are they to me?"

"I don't understand you."

"Nor I you. In my situation you should not imagine such dreadful possibilities."

"Very well, then I will sing you something, and if anyone hears us, so much the better."

Lenz and Annele went homewards, singing, and soon a visitor arrived: it was the Landlord himself. He took his son-in-law aside into another room, and said:—

"Lenz, I can do you a service."

"I am glad to hear it. I shall be glad to learn what it is."

"Has the bailiff still got your money?"

"He paid me four hundred gulden, but I spent part of it in furnishing."

"Hard cash is now the thing; you can make a good profit by it."

"I will call it up from the bailiff."

"That would take too long. Give me a bill for the sum, I will invest it for you and you will gain five-and-twenty per cent."

"Then we must share it."

"I wish you had not said that. I intended that you should have had all the gain yourself, but I must say you are an honest man."

"Thank you, father-in-law, I do my best. I don't like to accept presents."

"Perhaps it would be better still if you left the money in my business, and whatever I make by it shall be yours."

"I don't understand your business; I prefer taking my steady percentage."

When her father returned into the sitting-room, Annele brought in refreshments, but the Landlord wished to decline them and to go away immediately. Annele however pressed him to remain, saying:—

"It is your own wine, father. Do sit down for a little; we see you so seldom now."

No chair in the Morgenhalde seemed substantial enough to bear the weight of the Landlord's dignity, so he drank a glass of wine standing, and then went down the hill, holding his hand on the breast pocket of his coat.

"How strange my father is today," said Annele.

"He has important business on hand,—I have just given him my two thousand six hundred gulden that I had placed with the bailiff."

"And what did he give you in return?"

"I don't know what you mean—nothing; I will ask him for a receipt some day, when I have an opportunity, because this is customary."

"If you had asked my advice, I should have told you not to have given the money."

"What do you mean, Annele? I shall never take anything amiss in future, when I see that you distrust even your own father; but Franzl is right; she is quite patient with all your whims, for at this moment every one must give way to your wishes."

"So!" said Annele, "but I don't wish anyone to give way to me. What I said about my father was mere idle talk;—I don't myself know what put it into my head; but Franzl shall leave the house! So she complains of me to you, does she?"

Lenz tried hard to deny this, and to excuse Franzl, saying that her intentions were very different—but all was in vain: before fourteen days had passed, Franzl must leave the house, Lenz tried to console her, as he best could, by saying that no doubt she would come back soon, and that he would pay her wages as long as she lived. Franzl shook her head, and said, with tears:—

"The good Lord will provide for me, no doubt I never thought I should have left this house, till I was carried out of it in my coffin. I have been eight-and-twenty years here,—but I can't help it. Oh, dear! to look at all my pots and pans, and my copper kettle and my pails! how many thousand times have I had them in my hand, and cleaned them. No one can say, when I am gone, that I was not tidy and orderly; there stand my witnesses; if they could speak, every handle and spout must say how I have been, and what I have been; but God knows all things; He can see not only into houses, but into hearts;—that is my comfort, consolation, and solace,—but I say no more. To tell the truth I am not sorry to leave, for I would rather spin thorns than stay here. I don't wish to vex your heart, Lenz;—I would rather you killed me at once like a rat, than be the cause of strife in your home: no, no, that shall never be. Have no anxiety on my account; you have enough without that; and if I could take your troubles with me, I would not care if I sank down on the way from the burden. Don't think of me;—I mean to go to my brother in Kunslingen; I was born there, and there I mean to stay till I die; and when I join your mother in paradise, I will wait on her just as I used to do. The good Lord will admit me for her sake, and for her sake I feel sure you will prosper in the world. Now, farewell; and forgive me if I ever offended you. Good bye, and good bye a thousand times over!"

Lenz was silent and gloomy for a long time after Franzl went away, but Annele was more cheerful than ever. She was indeed a sorceress, for she could influence him as she chose; her voice seemed to have some magic power, when she wished to please, that no one could resist. Pilgrim succeeded in pacifying Lenz entirely. He tried to persuade him that Annele could only now, for the first time, feel herself really mistress of the house, since the old maid took her departure, who had acquired a certain mastery in the family. Annele had certainly been accustomed to much greater activity in the house, and was much better pleased when there was a great deal to do; she declared to Lenz that she would never hire another maid, as so small a household was scarcely half sufficient work for herself alone. The apprentice was to assist her; it was not till Lenz brought in the aid of his mother-in-law that a new maid was engaged.

All continued now cheerful and peaceful in the house, far into the summer. Annele urged her mother to see that her father soon paid back Lenz his money, and the latter came one day and offered Lenz the wood behind his house instead of payment, but demanded another thousand gulden. Lenz replied that he did not want to buy the wood, he wished to have current money, so the affair was set at rest, and the worthy landlord gave Lenz his acknowledgment in due form, and properly executed.

Late in the summer there were great doings in the village. The Techniker married Bertha, the doctor's second daughter,—the eldest was resolved to remain single,—and the doctor's son, who made chronometers, returned from his travels. It was said that he intended to erect, near his father's house, a large establishment for the fabrication of clocks and watches, with all kinds of new machinery. In the whole country there were lamentations, for it was feared everyone would be ruined, and that now clocks would be made here, as they were in America, without a single stroke of a file, and entirely by the pressure of machinery. Lenz was one of those in no manner disturbed; he said that hitherto they had been able to compete with the American clockmakers, and he saw no reason why they should not do the same with regard to the Doctor's case; moreover, no machinery could place the mechanism properly together,—man's intelligence was required for that. It would be rather an advantage to many parts of the clocks, if they could be made quicker by machinery.

Lenz and the schoolmaster were, in the mean time, much occupied in trying to effect a project they had long cherished. The principal traders were to enter into an association, to render themselves independent of retail dealers, and merchants. But instead of any effectual support, they found only grumbling and complaints, and Annele, when she heard of the plan, said:—

"For goodness' sake give it up; I wonder you don't tire of always rolling the balls for others to play."

Annele, however, repeatedly urged Lenz to undertake an establishment of this kind along with her father, and if it was necessary, he might travel for a year in the interests of the firm, while she would stay with her parents. Lenz, however, declared,—

"I am not suited to that kind of thing, and I shall certainly not leave home as a married man, when I never did so as a bachelor."

He therefore entirely gave up all idea of an Association, and pacified Annele by assuring her that they would have quite as good an income; that she need have no fears on that account, and Pilgrim quite agreed with Lenz's views.

Annele consequently regarded Pilgrim as the chief obstacle to Lenz's advancement in life.

"He is a man," said she, "who never in all his life succeeded in anything, and he never will."

She tried, in every possible way, to sow discord between Pilgrim and Lenz, but she entirely failed.

Annele brooded over various plans, and was constantly reckoning and calculating in her head. She knew that Lenz had become security for Faller when he bought his house, and now she

constantly pressed on him the propriety of recalling this security. He was obliged to consent to her wish, but just as he arrived at Faller's house his friend came out to meet him, laughing, and saying—

"My wife has just presented me, for the second time, with twins."

Lenz of course could not, at such a moment, plague Faller by depriving him of the security; and when Annele inquired what he had done, he gave her an evasive answer.

The night before the Techniker's marriage with the Doctor's daughter, Annele had a son. When Lenz was standing by her bedside, full of joy, she said:—

"Lenz, promise me one thing; promise me that you will give up Pilgrim, or that you will try for three months to do so."

"I can make no such promise," said Lenz, and a bitter drop fell into the cup of his joy.

Annele was painfully excited when the sounds of the wedding music in the valley reached her ears, and both her mother and her husband were alarmed for her life from such agitation; but she fell into a sound sleep at noon, and Lenz closed every door carefully to exclude all noise. She became now more composed, and was gentle and loveable, and Lenz felt truly grateful for his happiness, both as a husband and a father. Annele was so unusually amiable that she even said:—

"We promised Pilgrim that he should be godfather to our child, and this is a promise we must keep."

It was strange to see how variable her moods were. Lenz wished Petrowitsch to be the other godfather, but he refused.

Pilgrim brought the infant a large parchment, with a great many signatures and flourishes, painted by himself, which he laid on the cradle: it was a diploma from the Choral Society, in which the newly born child, on account of the fine voice he had no doubt inherited, was named an honorary member of the society.

"Do you know," said Lenz, "what is the sweetest sound in the world? The first cry of your child. Do you see how he can clutch a thing already?" and he gave the infant his father's file into his little hand. Annele flung it away, exclaiming:—

"The child might kill himself with the sharp point," but in flinging it on the floor the point was broken.

"My father's honourable tool, consecrated by his memory, is now destroyed," said Lenz, distressed.

Pilgrim tried to console him by laughingly saying, that there must always be new men, and new tools, in the world.

Annele did not say a syllable.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PENDULUMS SWING TOGETHER, BUT THE STRESS ON THE MAINSPRING IS SEVERE.

"Annele, come here, I have something to show you."

"I have no time."

"Only look, for it will please you. See, I set agoing two pendulums, on both these clocks, the one from right to left, and the other the reverse way. If you will observe, you will see that in the course of a few days they will both swing in the same direction, from right to left, or both the reverse way. That is owing to the power of attraction they mutually exercise; they approximate to each other by degrees."

"I don't believe that."

"You can see it with your own eyes; and so it will be with us. The one starts from the right, and the other from the left, and we must gradually balance each other. To be sure the pendulums never tick quite together, so as to make but one sound; a Spanish king tried to accomplish this, and it fairly turned his brain."

"Such nonsense only plagues me; you seem to have time for it, however, but I have not."

In the course of a few days the pendulums vibrated in unison, but the hearts of the married couple obstinately pursued their separate course. Sometimes it almost seemed as if that miracle were to be accomplished, that was never yet attained by any work of human hands—identical vibration; but it was only delusion, and then the consciousness of having been deceived, was all the more sad.

Lenz thought that his disposition was very yielding, but it was not so in reality. Annele had no wish to be pliant or submissive; she thought that she knew everything best, she had experience in the ways of the world; men of every country, old and young, rich and poor, had all told her in the Inn, from the time she was a child, that she was as clever as the day.

Annele's nature was what is called superficial, but she was also easy to live with, lively, and active. She liked to talk much and often, but when the conversation was over, she never thought again either of what she had heard, or what she had said.

Lenz's disposition was more profound and solid; he was rather apprehensive by nature, as if habitually impressed with the transitory nature of everything in the world; he treated every subject, even the most insignificant, with the same subtle precision that he bestowed on his work —or as he liked to hear it called—his art.

If Annele had not recently seen people, she had nothing to talk about, but the more quiet their life was, the more Lenz had to say. When Lenz spoke, he always stopped working; Annele continued to speak, while finishing the work she had on hand.

Annele liked to relate her dreams, and strangely enough she always dreamt that she had been driving in a fine carriage with fine horses, in beautiful scenery, and a merry party; and "how we did laugh to be sure!" was always the burden of her narration; or else she dreamt that she was a landlady, and that kings and princes drew up to her door, and she made them such appropriate answers; whereas Lenz attached no importance to dreams, and disliked her repeating them.

Lenz could scarcely say a word early in the morning; his thoughts seemed to awake by degrees; he continued to dream long with his eyes open, and even while he was working. Annele on the contrary, the instant she opened her eyes, was like a soldier at his post, armed and ready; she commenced the day zealously, and all half-waking thoughts were hateful to her; she was and continued to be the smart, lively, landlord's daughter, owing to whose activity, the guests find everything in order at the earliest hour of the morning, and she herself ready to have a pleasant talk.

In the midst of the household bustle, Lenz often looked up at his mother's picture, as if saying to her: "Don't let your rest be disturbed; her great delight is noise and tumult."

When Annele sat by him and watched his work, her restlessness seemed to infect him. He was in the habit of looking intently at anything he had finished, or was about to finish; and then he felt as if her eyes followed each movement of his impatiently, and her thoughts were involuntarily reproaching him for his slowness, and so he became himself impatient and irritable,—so her vicinity did more harm than good.

Little Wilhelm throve well on the Morgenhalde, and when a little sister also came, the constant commotion in the house, was as if the spectre huntsman and his followers were always passing through it. When Lenz often complained of the incessant noise, Annele disdainfully replied, "Those who want to have a quiet house should be rich and live in a palace, where the princes each inhabit a separate wing."

"I am not rich," answered Lenz. He smiled at the taunt, and yet it vexed him.

Two pendulums can only vibrate simultaneously, and with the same number of strokes, when they are in a similar atmosphere, or at the same distance from the centre of the earth.

Lenz became daily more quiet and reserved, and when he spoke to his wife, he could not help being astonished that she found so much to say on every point. If he chanced to say in the morning, "What a thick fog we have to day!" she snapped him up instantly, saying: "Yes, and so early in the autumn too, but we may have bright weather yet: we in the hills can never depend on weather, and who knows which of us wants rain, and which fine weather, just as it may suit best what we have to do. If our good Lord were to suit the weather to the taste of everybody," &c. &c.

There was a long discussion about every trifle,—how a waggoner had been spoken to while his horses were getting a feed outside,—or a passing stranger who wanted something to eat, and who, in spite of the cover being quickly laid, had to wait a long time for dinner.

Lenz shrugged his shoulders, and was silent after such reproofs, indeed he often scarcely spoke during the whole day, and his wife said sometimes good-humouredly, and sometimes angrily: "You are a tiresome, silent creature."

He smiled at the reproach, but it hurt his feelings all the same.

The apprehensions entertained about the manufactory for clocks proved quite unfounded, for, on the contrary, the business for private hands never had been so flourishing. Lenz was very

proud of having prophesied this. He received much praise on this account, but Annele saw nothing remarkable in such a proof of his foresight: of course it is but natural that each should understand his own business, but one thing was quite certain, that the Techniker and the Doctor's son were fast making money, while the original clockmakers were thankful and content to remain in the old beaten path.

Annele frequently praised Pröbler now, who at least tried to make new discoveries.

Lenz, however, was quite engrossed with his work, and said to Annele: "When I think each morning I rise—you may work honestly to day, and your work will prosper and be completed,—I feel as if I had a sun in my heart that never set."

"You have a talent for preaching, you ought to have been a pastor," said Annele, leaving the room and privately thinking—-"There, that's a hit at you; we are all to listen to him, but what any one else says is of no consequence at all; that was a capital hit at him."

It was not revenge, but pure forgetfulness, that made Lenz often, when Annele was relating some anecdote, start and say, as if just waking up, "Don't be angry, but I have not heard one word you have been saying, that beautiful melody is running in my head. I wish I could make it sound as it ought! How clever the way in which the key changes from sharps to flats!"

Annele smiled, but she did not soon forgive such absence of mind.

The pendulums continued to diverge still further.

Formerly, when Lenz used to come home from the brassfounder or the locksmith, or from any expedition, his mother used to sit by him while he was at dinner, and was interested in all he related; he enjoyed over again with her the very glass of wine he had drunk away from her, and the friendly greetings of those he had met during his absence. All that Lenz detailed seemed of consequence to his mother, because it had happened to her son. Now, when he came home, Annele had seldom time to sit down beside him, and when she did so, and he began to tell her his news, she would interrupt him, saying: "Oh! what does that signify to me? I don't care at all about it. Other people may live just as they please; they are not likely to give me any share of their good luck, and I'm sure I don't want to have anything to do with their misfortunes. Men impose on you famously by their pretensions to goodness; they have only to wind you up, and then you play a tune to each, just like your musical clocks."

Lenz laughed, for Pilgrim had once called him an eight day clock, because he was always so carefully dressed on Sundays.

He had no rest during the whole week, therefore the Sundays were even more precious to him than ever, and when the sun shone bright, he often exclaimed: "Thousands of men, God be praised, are enjoying this fine Sunday."

"You speak as if you were some guardian angel, and must think of all the world," said Annele, pettishly.

Lenz soon learned never to utter such thoughts aloud, and became quite perplexed as to what he should, and should not think. Once he proposed to go with Annele on a Sunday to a meeting of the Choral Society in a neighbouring village, or to take no one with them but Faller and his wife down the valley; but she said, angrily:—"You can go where you please, it does not signify to a man in what company he finds himself, but I am not going with you, I consider myself too good for such people. Faller and his wife are not the kind of society that suits me—but you can go yourself, I shall not try to prevent you."

Of course Lenz stayed away also, and was more morose than he ought to have been at home, or in the Lion.

Lenz never in his life had a card in his hand, or played a game at bowls; other men drive away their ill humour by these resources, and pass away their time. "I wish I took any pleasure in cards and bowls," said he; but he was not prepared for Annele's peevish answer:—

"A man has a good right to play at either, if he only returns with fresh vigour to his work; at all events that is better than to play with his work."

The pendulums were getting further apart than ever. Lenz sold the greater part of his store of clocks at good prices. The only work that made no great progress, was the one he had undertaken at the request of his father-in-law, and when Lenz could not resist sometimes complaining to his wife, that he failed in this or that, she tried to persuade him that he did not think enough of making money; people like to have their orders quickly attended to, so you ought to lose no time in getting the work out of hand, but you are so over particular. "You are a dreamer, but a dreamer in broad daylight. Wake up, for Heaven's sake, wake up!"

"God knows! I live anything but a peaceful life; my sleep can be no longer called sleep! Oh! if I could only sleep well and soundly for one single night again! I always feel nervous and excited now; it seems to me as if I were incessantly awake, and as if I never took off my clothes day or night."

Instead of bestowing sympathy on Lenz, and striving in his depressed mood to inspire him with fresh self-confidence, Annele endeavoured to prove to Lenz, that though he failed, she could show him how to succeed. If he accomplished a thing and could not resist calling out to her, "Do you hear what a pure bell-like tone that is?" she would reply: "I must tell you fairly, once for all, that I detest every kind of musical clock. I heard that piece played in Baden-Baden, it sounded very different there."

Lenz knew this already, and had even told Pilgrim so, but he felt much hurt at the way in which Annele said it, for in this manner she paralyzed all his powers for his business.

Annele, however, had a private fixed plan of her own in her head, and she considered herself quite justified in trying to carry it through. She felt that her best faculties were lying dormant, for she could not employ them in her small household. She wanted to earn something, and an Inn of her own was best adapted for that purpose.

She had formerly endeavoured to estrange Lenz from Pilgrim. Now she made Pilgrim her confederate; he had said it was a pity that she was not a landlady, for she would give a fresh impulse to the Lion, and every one thought the same. Her object was, that Pilgrim should assist in persuading Lenz to undertake the Lion inn; he might still pursue his art—when she wished to be amiable she called it an art, but when in bad humour a trade—either in the Lion, or on the Morgenhalde; indeed the latter would be best, for he would be quieter there, and many a one had his workshop further from his home, than the Morgenhalde was from the Lion.

When Pilgrim came now, Annele said to him, graciously:—"Pray light your pipe, I rather like the smell; I seem at home when people are smoking around me."

"You are certainly not at home here," thought Pilgrim, but he took care not to say so. Though Annele attacked Pilgrim on every side, she could not obtain his co-operation, and Lenz was obstinate and impervious to all flattery, and proof even against bursts of rage, in a way she never could have expected from him.

"You first wished to make me a pedlar, to sell watches," said he; "and then a manufacturer, and now landlord of the Lion; if I am to become so entirely different from my former self, what did you see in me to induce you to marry me?"

Annele evaded any reply, but she said, bitterly:—"You are as soft as butter to the whole world, but to me as hard as a pebble."

Lenz thought he was an experienced man, but Annele wished to make him one. She neither said to him, nor admitted to herself, that she thought herself the best fitted of the two to gain a livelihood, but she wept and complained that she was of no use, and pitied herself on that account. She said she only wished to act for the best; and what is it she wishes? to work, to increase their means, but Lenz will not hear of it.

Lenz told her that the garden was formerly very productive, she had better cultivate it; but she had no taste for gardening:—"Every plant grows just where it is placed, in peace and quiet, and requires no pressing or driving forwards. Make haste! it is far too slow an affair to watch what is growing and blossoming in time: three visits to the kitchen, and three to the cellar, and I have gained more profit than I would get from such a garden the whole summer; and an old woman, to whom we pay a trifle, is quite good enough to work in the garden."

Now there was no end to the worry, and complaints, and lamentations, that they must live so sparingly at home, Lenz was often in despair, and sometimes so incensed, that he seemed to have become quite another man. Then he was seized with a fit of repentance, and he took up a different position, and said he was ashamed of all this discord before his workmen and apprentices, and if Annele allowed him no peace, he was resolved to send them away.

Annele laughed in his face. He proved to her, however, that he was in earnest, for he dismissed the young men. So long as Lenz had preserved his calm, unmoved nature, he possessed a kind of power over Annele, but now, by constantly upbraiding him, and deploring his certain ruin, Annele mastered him entirely; daily telling him he was good for nothing, that he had sent away his workmen from idleness, and that his good nature was only idleness in disguise.

Instead of laughing at such nonsense—for who had worked harder than Lenz from his childhood, or who could be less disposed to boast of it?—Lenz could not resist brooding over these reproaches for days, when he was at his work; and then one thought followed another, till a regular edifice was formed, while Annele had long forgotten all she had said. This kind of life, so entirely isolated, seemed to her like a rainy summer Sunday; when you have a right to anticipate that you are to amuse yourself, and enjoy the society of your neighbours; you are dressed in your Sunday clothes, but the roads are deep, the rain incessant, and staying in the house is like being in prison; but this state Annele resolved should not continue; changed it must and shall be, said she inwardly, and she became more irritable, and easily provoked by every trivial occurrence, though she never admitted to Lenz, or even to herself, the real cause of her ill-tempers.

Lenz sought peace out of the house, but she was not so displeased and impatient at his absence, as at the mode in which he effected it. He loitered about, and even when he was fairly out of the house, he would often return to the door two or three times, as if he had forgotten

something. He could not say what pain it caused him, to go away in a mood which made him entirely a changed man. He hoped that Annele might detain him, or say some kind words, that he might be once more his former self.

In former days, when he went on any expedition, his mother always gave him some bread out of her cupboard, for bread is a great safeguard from unseen dangers, especially if you chance to step upon trefoil; and a better safeguard than the bread, was his mother's kind words. Now he went on his way, as if the house were not his own, nor himself either. This was the reason that he lounged about and wasted so much time, and yet could not say what he wanted.

It must come of itself, for it is no superstition to think, that a true blessing is only bestowed on what is given and accepted, without being demanded. Long before evening, Lenz was sitting with Pilgrim, and Annele with her parents. The whole household seemed unhinged. Lenz never breathed a hint before Pilgrim of what was inwardly consuming him, and when Annele complained to her parents, they refused to listen to her, and seemed to have other matters in their head.

Lenz often went to Faller's also, where he was at his ease, even more than with Pilgrim, for here he was received with joy and respect when he came. The Lenz of former days was honoured as highly as ever in this house—at home he was nobody.

Faller and his wife lived happily together, they were mutually convinced that they were the most excellent people in the world; if they were only free from debt, and had a little money to spare, they would astonish everybody. They saved and toiled, but were always in good humour. Faller was not a particularly skilful workman, so he chiefly confined himself to the largest sized clocks—for the larger the work, the easier it is to complete—and he amused himself and his wife, by telling her of all the various theatrical pieces in which he had acted, during his garrison life, in different costumes. His wife was always a grateful public, and the royal mantle, crown, and diamonds, which Faller described, were all before her eyes.

How different from all this was Lenz's "home!" darker and darker became the shadows that obscured his soul; everything that passed seemed full of bitterness and woe.

When he could not escape being present at the practisings and meetings of the Choral Society, and was forced to sing songs of love, tenderness, and delight, his soul was sad within him. Is it really so? is it possible? Have men ever existed, so full of love and joy? and yet once on a time you too.... He often insisted on singing mournful melodies, and his companions were astonished at the heartrending tones of his voice, which sounded like the most touching lament; but while formerly he could never sing enough, he now soon gave over, and complained of fatigue, and was quickly displeased by any casual word, and then, as quickly offering his hand, and asking forgiveness, where there really was nothing to forgive.

Lenz tried to check such gloomy feelings, and said to himself that his irritable, nervous state proceeded from not being sufficiently industrious. He, therefore, now eagerly resumed his labours, but there seemed no blessing on his toil; he was often obliged to take out and throw aside what he had worked hard at half the night. His hand often trembled when he tried to guide the file, and even his father's file that he had sharpened afresh, and that had never failed in soothing him, had lost its influence. Angry with himself, he forced himself to be quiet and attentive to his work. "If you lose that too," said he, "then you have lost all—once on a time, you were happy alone with your art, now you must be the same. Just as one may hear a piece of music, in the midst of a noise from other causes, and you can perfectly distinguish the melody—so you must again become absorbed in your calling, and determine not to heed the tumult around you. If you resolve not to listen to it, you will not hear it. Be strong in your will."

Lenz succeeded in again working in a quiet and orderly manner—there was only wanting one little word from Annele. If she only had said:—"I am so glad to see you once more in your old place." He thought he could have done without this word, but yet he could not. Annele had these very words often on her lips, but she never uttered them, for at the swing-door her pride said again: "Why should you praise him, when he is only doing his duty? and now what a blessing it would be if we had only an inn; he works best when he is alone, when no one takes any notice of him; and then I should be in the public room and he in his workshop, and all would go well."

His work now cost Lenz double toil, and he was fairly exhausted at night, which had never before been the case; till now, he had never found his work knock him up; he allowed himself, however, no recreation, he feared losing everything, and no longer to find a single resource, if he once left his house and his workshop.

For weeks he never went into the village, and Annele was often with her parents.

A particular occurrence at last caused him to leave his house. Pilgrim was dangerously ill. Lenz sat up with him night after night, and it was a great effort of friendship to do so, for Annele had said to him:—"Your good deeds towards Pilgrim are only a cloak for your laziness, and for your slovenly, indolent nature. You fancy that you have played a good part in the world, whereas you have done nothing, and succeed in nothing. What are you good for?" He breathed more hurriedly when he heard these insulting words; he felt as if a stone had fallen on his heart and crushed it, and the stone was not to be moved.

"Now," said he, "there is nothing more that you can say to me, except that I behaved badly to my mother."

"Yes! and so you did—so you did! Hörger Toni, your cousin, who is now in America, often said before us, that a greater hypocrite than you did not exist, and that he was called in a thousand times to make up your quarrels with your mother."

"You say that simply because you would like to see me in a rage again, but you shall not succeed; it does not distress me in the least. Why do you quote a person in America? Why not some one here? But you only wish to sting me—good night!"

He went to Pilgrim, who was now convalescent, and stayed all night with him. As Pilgrim was getting better, he was naturally in good spirits, and Lenz was unwilling to destroy his cheerfulness; on the contrary, he listened patiently when Pilgrim related to him:—"During my illness, I learned to comprehend how it is that a bird all his life long only twitters a couple of notes. In the half life of a dreamy state, even one tone is sufficient. During four long weeks, my soul was haunted by this solitary notion. Man has no wings, but he has got lungs, and even with one lung left, I may still live to eat potatoes for seventy seven years, and if I had been a bird I would have incessantly whistled, like a silly bird, 'one lung, two lungs, two lungs, one lung,' just like a grasshopper."

The words that haunted Lenz were also few but sad. No one should hear them.

"A reference to the Bible," continued Pilgrim cheerfully, "quite confirmed my fixed resolution to remain a bachelor and alone, for it is clearly written there, that man was at first alone in the world,—the woman never was alone,—and that it is good that man *can* live alone. Only I change one little word, and say it is good that man *should* be alone."

Lenz smiled, but he felt the application.

Next morning Lenz, having sat up all night, went home weary and as pale as death to his work, and when he saw his children, he said:—

"I scarcely knew that I had children."

"No doubt you forget them utterly," said Annele.

Lenz again felt a stab in his heart, but he did not feel it so acutely as formerly, and when he looked up at his mother's picture, he exclaimed:—

"Mother! mother! She has slandered you too! can you not speak? Do not punish her, intercede with God not to visit her with a judgment for her sin. If he punishes her, my poor children and I must suffer also. Help me, dear mother, and influence her no longer to crush my heart. You know me—you alone—beloved mother!"

"I can't listen to such mummery," said Annele, and went with the two children to the kitchen.

The stress on the mainspring was severe.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE AXE IS PUT TO THE ROOT OF LIFE, AND TEARS ARE SHED.

It had been a sultry day, and was still a close, sultry evening, when the Landlord of the Lion, who had driven to the town in an open calèche with his pair of chesnuts, returned home. When he was driving through the village, he looked round in a strange manner to the right and to the left, and greeted every one with unusual politeness. Gregor, who had driven him, was in his postilion's dress, but had no horn, got down and unharnessed the horses, and yet the Landlord still sat motionless in the calèche. He was gazing thoughtfully at his Inn, and then again at the carriage and horses. When, at last, he alighted and stood on the ground, he sighed deeply, for he knew it was the last time he should ever drive in an equipage of his own. All seems just as usual, and only one single man, besides himself, knows what will soon be. He went upstairs with a heavy step; his wife was on the landingplace above, and whispered to him:—

"How is it settled?"

"All will be arranged," answered the Landlord, pushing quickly past his wife to the public room, and not going first into the back parlour, as he usually did when he came home. He gave the maid his hat and stick, and joined the guests present. His dinner was brought to him at the guests' table by his own desire, but he did not seem to relish it.

The guests stayed till late at night, and he stayed with them; he spoke little, but even his sitting with them was considered a great attention and pleasure.

The wife had gone to bed, and after she had been long asleep, the Landlord also retired to rest —but rest he found none, for an invisible power drew away the pillow from under his head: this bed, this house, all here will be no longer yours tomorrow! His thoughts chiefly turned on the calèche and the chesnut horses. He hastily rubbed his eyes, for he suddenly thought that the two horses were in his room, stretching out their heads over his bed, breathing hard, and staring at him with their great eyes. He tried to compose his nerves, especially dwelling on the fact, that he had borne his sorrows like a man. He had said nothing to his wife, she should sleep soundly this night at least; it will be time enough for her to hear the bad news in the morning, and then not till after breakfast. When we have had a good night's rest, and are thus strengthened and refreshed, and bright day is shining on us, we can bear even the worst tidings with more fortitude.

Day dawned at last, and the landlord, who was quite worn out, begged his wife, for once, to breakfast alone. At last he came downstairs, ate a good breakfast, and, as his wife urged him to tell her what arrangements had been made, he said:—

"Wife, I let you enjoy a peaceful night and morning, so now show some strength of mind, and hear my tidings with composure and resignation. At this very hour, my lawyer is announcing my bankruptcy in the next town."

The Landlady sat for a time dumb and motionless; at last she said:—

"And pray why did you not tell me this last night?"

"From the wish to spare you, and to let you pass the night in peace and quiet."

"Spare me? You? A greater simpleton does not live! If you had told me all this last night, I might have contrived to put out of the way a vast deal of property, that would have stood us in good stead for years to come, but now the thing is impossible. Help! Help! Oh Heavens!" screamed the landlady, suddenly, in the midst of their calm conversation, sinking back into a chair, apparently fainting.

The maids from the kitchen, and Gregor the postilion, rushed into the room. The Landlady started up and said, sobbing and turning to her husband:—

"You hid it from me, you never told me a word about it, or that you are now a bankrupt. All the shame, and all the disgrace rest on you; I am innocent, wretched creature that I am!"

It would now have been the Landlord's turn to faint away, if his determined will had not supported him; his spectacles fell down from his forehead over his eyes of their own accord, to let him see plainly if what was passing here was really true: this woman, who had never rested till he, the experienced baker and brewer, went into partnership with her brother in a large concern for selling clocks, and when his brother-in-law died, almost forced him to continue the business alone, although he understood very little of such a traffic;—this woman, who had always urged him on to fresh speculations, and knew his involvements even better than he did himself;—this woman had now summoned the rabble as witnesses, in order to devolve the whole shame and blame on him.

It was not till this minute that the Landlord of the Lion fully realized the extent of his misery; they had lived together thirty-five years, on looking back,—and on looking forwards, who knows how many more were to come?—and in order to save herself, and expose him to all the blame, his wife could carry her hypocrisy to such an extent as this.

His spectacles were dimmed, so that he could no longer see through them; he first quietly wiped his glasses with his handkerchief, and then his eyes.

At this moment he felt a degree of resentment and rancour that was never afterwards effaced; but the proud Landlady soon resumed her wonted calmness and composure.

When the maids and the postilion had left the room, the Landlord said:—

"You know best why you have done this; I have no idea what good it can do, but I shall not say one word more on the subject."

He persisted in this resolution and maintained entire silence, and let his wife lament and complain as she thought fit. It had always rather amused him to see how placid and amiable his wife affected to be in the world. He almost became now, in reality, the wise man he had hitherto been considered, for during all the violent speeches of his wife, he thought—

"It is marvellous what people can arrive at! practice makes perfection."

The unwise world, however, did not take the sudden downfall of the Landlord of the Lion so coolly. It rolled like a thunderclap over hill and valley—the Landlord of the Lion is bankrupt!

It cannot be! it is impossible! who can be sure to stand fast, if the Landlord of the Lion falls? Even the very Golden Lion itself, on the sign, seemed to fight against such an idea, and the

hooks, by which the painting was suspended, creaked loudly; but the commissioners of bankruptcy tame even lions, and do not, in the least, pay respect to them because they are golden ones. The sign was taken down. The lion looked very melancholy, one eye being hid by the wall, and the other seemed dim and sad, as if it wished to be also closed for ever, from feelings of grief and shame.

There was a great commotion in the village, and a great commotion in the Morgenhalde also.

Lenz ran down into the village, and then up the hill again to the Lion.

The Landlord was still pacing the public room, looking very grave, and saying, with an air of dignity:—

"I must bear it like a man."

He very nearly said—"like a man of honour."

The Landlady bewailed and lamented; she had known nothing of it, and vowed that she would put an end to herself.

"Father-in-law," said Lenz, "may I ask if my money is all lost too?"

"In such a vast heap of money, it is not easy to distinguish to whom such or such a sum belongs," answered the Landlord, in a sententious voice. "I intend to arrange my affairs presently. If my creditors grant me three years, I will pay fifty per cent. Sit down, it's no use brandishing your hands in that way. Lisabeth," called he into the kitchen, "my dinner."

The cook brought in a capital dinner, the Landlord quickly pulled off his cap, said grace, and sinking comfortably into his easy chair, he helped himself plentifully, and ate with the calm of a true sage. When the second dish arrived, he looked up at his wife, and said:—

"You should also sit down; the best pair of horses to help you up a steep hill, is a slice of good solid meat. Have they sealed up all our wine, or can you get me some?"

"It is all sealed up."

"Then make me presently some good coffee, to refresh me."

Lenz seized his hair with his hands. Is he insane? How is it possible that the man, owing to whom hundreds are at this minute in despair as to how they are to live, can be comfortably enjoying his dinner? The landlord was condescending and talkative, and praised Annele for not also rushing into the house, and adding to all these useless lamentations:—

"You have, indeed, a clever, industrious wife, the most sensible of all my children. It is a pity she is not a man, for she has an enterprising spirit; all would have been very different had she been a man. It is much to be regretted that Annele is not at the head of some extensive business; a large hotel would suit her exactly."

Lenz was indignant at his boasting, and his whole demeanour, at such an hour as this; but he strove to suppress this feeling, and, after an inward struggle, he said in a timid, almost humble tone:—

"Father-in-law, be sure above all things to take care that the wood behind my house is not cut down. I have heard people felling trees there all this morning,—this must not be."

The more mildly Lenz said this, the more vociferously the Landlord exclaimed:—

"Why not? he who has bought the wood can do as he pleases with it."

"Father-in-law, you promised me that wood."

"But you did not accept it. The wood is sold to a wood merchant at Trenzlingen."

"But I say you have no power to sell it; that wood is the sole shelter of my roof. Some of the single trees may be cut down, but the whole wood must not be levelled. This is the same state in which it has been preserved for hundreds of years. My grandfather himself told me so."

"That is nothing to me. I have other things to think about just now."

"Oh Heavens!" cried Lenz, with emotion, "what have you done? You have deprived me of what I value most on earth."

"Really! is money everything? I did not before know that even your heart, too, was buried in money bags."

"Oh no! you have caused me to seek afresh for parents."

"You are old enough to live as an orphan; but I know you are one of those, who, even when they are grandfathers themselves, go whining about, and saying, 'Mother! mother! your precious

child is injured!'"

Thus spoke the Landlord, and no one could have believed that he could be so spiteful. Lenz chanced to be the only one of his creditors who came within his reach, so he vented the whole burden of his wrath on his head.

Lenz was alternately pale and flushed, his lips trembled, and he said:—

"You are the grandfather of my children, and you know what you have robbed them of. I would not have your conscience for the world. But the wood shall not be cut down. I will try the question at law."

"Very well; do just as you please about it," said the Landlord, pouring out his coffee.

Lenz could no longer bear to stay in the room.

On the stone bench before the Lion sat a careworn figure; it was Pröbler. He told every one who passed by, that he was waiting here for the commissioners to arrive, for he had pawned his best work to the Landlord upstairs, and it was one in which he had combined all his discoveries; it must on no account be included in the inventory of sale, that other people might see it and imitate it, and thus he would have no profit after all his trouble. The commission of bankruptcy must first secure him a patent from government, which would make him both rich and famous. Lenz took a great deal of trouble to soothe the old man, but he clung fast to his idea, and would not be persuaded to move from the spot.

Lenz went on his way, for he had enough to do for himself. He hurried to his uncle Petrowitsch, who said with an air of great triumph:—

"There now! did I not say so? in this very room on the day when you wished me to go with you to propose for Annele, did I not distinctly tell you that the Landlord of the Lion had not paid for the velvet cap on his head, or the boots on his feet? and even his portly person he acquired from devouring the substance of others."

"Yes, yes, uncle, you were right. You are a sensible man, but help me now."

"You don't require to be helped."

Lenz related the circumstance about the wood.

"Perhaps we may manage to do some good there," said Petrowitsch.

"Heaven be praised! If I could only get the wood!"

"Not the most remote chance of such a thing; the wood is already sold; but they have only a right to cut down one half of it. The wood is the only safeguard for your house, no one living has a right to cut it down altogether. We will soon show this famous wood merchant from Trenzlingen that we are the masters on that point."

"But my house! my home!" exclaimed Lenz; he felt as if it was about to fall down, and he must rush home to save it.

"Your home! you certainly are not very much at home in this matter," said Petrowitsch, laughing at his own wit. "Go to the mayor and put in your claim. Only one thing more, Lenz; I never will again place faith in any man living; I told you on a former occasion, that your wife was the only good one of the family. You see I was not deceived about the two others. I now tell you that your wife knew it long ago, ay, for years past she knew beyond a doubt how her father's affairs stood, and you were the cat's paw, because the doctor's son-in-law, the Techniker, would have nothing to do with her, and he was quite right too."

"Uncle, why do you tell me that just now?"

"Why? because it is true. I can bring forward witnesses to prove it."

"But why now?"

"Is there any time when we ought not to tell the truth? I always thought that you and your Pilgrim had been two such heroic persons. I will tell you what you are. No man could be poorer than you, even before you lost your money, for you were always fretting and grumbling, and nothing can be more despicable than such a man; his sack must always have a hole in it. Yes, you are a regular grumbler, always regretting what you did the day before, and thinking, 'Oh! how unfortunate I am, and yet I meant well!'"

"You are very hard on me, uncle."

"Because you are too soft and yielding in your ways. Pray be firm and manly for once, and don't let your wife suffer; treat her kindly, for she is now far more miserable than you."

"You think so?"

"Yes. Annele of the Lion, once so proud, will feel it a sad blow, when she can no longer think that every one is proud of her saying good morning to them."

"She is no longer Annele of the Lion, she is my wife."

"Yes, before God and man; she was your own free choice; I did my best to dissuade you!"

Lenz hurried to the doctor, who was also the chief magistrate, but did not find him at home; his way seemed to lie through thorns that tore and lacerated him; good friends were not at home, and malicious people now freely uttered the malevolence they had secretly felt, and jeered at him and tormented him, now that he was helpless. He went homewards, but ran past his house to the wood, and ordered the woodcutters instantly to desist, saying: "You have no right to cut trees here."

"Will you pay us our day's work?"

"Yes."

"Very well," They took their axes and went home.

In his own house Lenz found Annele pressing her children to her heart, and crying out: "Oh! my poor children, you must beg! my poor infants!"

"Not so long as I have life and health," said Lenz; "remember I am your husband, only be calm and good-tempered."

"Good-tempered! I never in my life did harm to any one; and you are mistaken if you think now that you can make me your slave, and that I shall creep at your feet, on account of my poor father's misfortunes. Just the reverse! I won't give way in the smallest thing. It is now your turn to show some of that benevolence you are so proud of. Show me how you can stand by your wife."

"I will do so, undoubtedly; but unless a hand is opened, how can anything be placed in it?"

"Had you only followed my advice, and bought the Lion, we should have been provided for, and the house would not have been transferred to strangers; above all, don't say one word to me about your money! On the very spot where you are now sitting, you sat on that day; and here I stood, and here your glass stood so close to the edge of the table, that I pushed it farther on the table; do you remember? then and there, I told you plainly and fairly—a prudent man does not part with his money, not even to my father, nor to any one."

"Did you know of his difficulties at that time?"

"I knew nothing, absolutely nothing; but I did know what prudence meant, and so leave me in peace."

"Will you not go to your mother? she is in such bitter grief."

"What good could I do? to set her off again in floods of tears at sight of me? Why should I go down to be stared at, and pitied by all the people? Am I to hear the Doctor's fine daughters strumming at their music, and laughing as I pass by? I am quite contented to stay up here by myself; I don't wish to see anybody."

"No doubt it is all for the best," said Lenz, kindly; "perhaps you will in future be both better and happier here alone with me. The time may return, indeed it must surely return, to what it once was, when you said: 'Up here we are in Paradise, and we will let the world below drive and rush about here and there, as they please; we can be happy without that.' We once were happy, and we shall be so again; if you are only kind to me, I can do as much work as three men, and you need have no regret on my account, for I did not marry you for your money."

"Nor did I marry you for yours; indeed, I don't think it would have been worth while; if I had wanted to be rich, I might have got many a wealthy husband."

"We have been too long together to talk of the marriages we might have made," said Lenz, interrupting her; "let us go to dinner."

After dinner, Lenz mentioned the affair about the wood, and Annele said, "Do you know what will be the result?"

"What?"

"Nothing, but that you will be obliged to pay the woodcutters for their day's work."

"We shall see about that," said Lenz, and went again in the afternoon to the Doctor's, whom he had not found at home in the morning. On his way there, he was joined by a very sorrowful companion. Faller came up to him as pale as death, and exclaiming: "Oh! it is dreadful, too dreadful! a flash of forked lightning in a calm bright sky!"

Lenz tried to cheer him, saying: "That certainly between three and four hundred gulden were

a heavy loss, but he had no doubt of being able to bear up against it," and thanked his faithful comrade for his sympathy. All at once Faller stood still, as if rooted to the spot. "What! has he involved you too? He owes me thirty-one gulden for clocks, by which I made very little profit, but I let him keep them as if they had been in a savings' bank, to pay for a paling to go round my house; now I am thrown back at least two years."

Lenz wrung his hands, but said he could not stay another moment, as he must go to the magistrate instantly.

Faller looked after him sadly, and almost forgot his own misery in that of his friend.

The Doctor was much depressed by the stroke that had ruined the Landlord of the Lion. The sum that he lost himself was not great, but the bankruptcy was a misfortune not only to the village, but to the whole adjacent country.

When Lenz related that he had also suffered, the Doctor exclaimed, in horror: "So he has involved you too! nothing can surprise me now. How could he be so wicked? How had he the heart to do it?" but after a time he said: "How does your wife bear it?"

"She does not bear it at all, she places it all on my shoulders."

Lenz detailed the history of the wood, and urged instant help, that his house might not be exposed to all the violence of the weather and snow storms, and to prevent the hill crumbling down on his head. The Doctor in his magisterial capacity declared: "To level the wood to the ground, would be a disgrace to the whole country, and would probably destroy the best well; the one beside the church, which is fed by the wood. At all events, they must be obliged to leave sufficient timber on the side of the hill, to be a protection to your dwelling, but we have no power over them. It is a shame and an iniquity, that the owners of woods may cut them all down as they please. There is a law against it in progress, but I fear that if it ever passes, it will be, as it too often is, a case of shutting the stable door when the steed is stolen."

"But Herr Doctor, this iniquity will affect me first of all; can nothing be done?"

"I scarcely think so. When the burdens were taken off land, I was not a magistrate, your father-in-law was then the man. It was omitted to guard the rights of the community, yours included. To be sure, at that period no one would have built a house where yours now stands, if it had been supposed that the wood might be entirely felled some day, but you have no legal right to protection from the wood; make an application, however, to the commissioners; I will give you a letter to them, perhaps they may be able to assist you."

Lenz felt sadly dejected; he could scarcely stir from the spot, but he dared not make any delay, or think of the law expenses. He took a carriage, and drove to the next town.

In the meanwhile an almost forgotten person appeared at the Morgenhalde, and in the gayest attire too. It was cousin Ernestine, the grocer's wife, from the next town, who had so excited Annele's spite the first time she drove out with Lenz. She came to visit Annele in a new silk dress, and a handsome gold watch hanging at her side. She said she had been in the village, having some money to place in the savings' bank; they were, thank God! doing well; her husband carried on a flourishing business, as a house and land agent, and also a pretty brisk trade in rags; he was also agent for a Fire and Hail Insurance Office, and on the lives of men and animals, the finely printed cards of which, were hanging in every shop; that brought a considerable sum, without incurring any risk, and having come in this direction to collect arrears, she could not be so near without calling to see Annele.

Annele thanked her politely, and apologized for not offering her dinner; Ernestine assured her that she did not come on that account.

"I believe you did not," said Annele; "but these words have a double interpretation." Annele felt convinced that Ernestine had come on purpose to have her revenge, in order that Annele, who had always looked down on her, should now be filled with spite and envy; but Annele had too long played the part of a landlord's daughter, not to be able to receive her visitor with the most polite and cordial speeches; in this manner she did not sacrifice her pride—for she was, after all, the daughter of the Landlord of the Golden Lion, and the other only a poor cousin, who had once been a maid in their service; and she hinted to Ernestine, that the various branches of industry she mentioned, though very suitable for people of a certain class, would be wholly unsuitable to those of a higher order.

Ernestine, in truth, was not totally devoid of malice when she went to the Morgenhalde, although she had brought in the bag on her arm, a pound of roasted coffee and some white sugar, as an offering to Annele. When, however, she saw her, these spiteful feelings were changed into sincere pity, and when Annele treated her so haughtily, she quickly subsided into her usual meek submissiveness, and totally forgot her new silk gown and her gold watch. The present she had intended for Annele, she now converted into a mere sample of her goods, which, she said, she offered to her, in the hope of getting her custom, and she shed very heartfelt tears, when she said:—"That if all the persons who had received benefits from the Golden Lion, would now repay them in kind, Annele's parents would have wherewithal to live on for a hundred years to come; and she added, in all sincerity, that if Annele had only remained in the Lion after her marriage,

the inn would now have been as flourishing as in good old times."

This tempting bait made Annele forget old discord, and all the odious new finery of her cousin. Now there began an exchange of reminiscences of old days, intermingled with lamentations over the present, and false ungrateful people; and they agreed so perfectly, that Annele and Ernestine parted as if they had been the dearest friends from time immemorial, and had always lived together like sisters. Annele escorted Ernestine part of the way, and commissioned her to tell her husband to look out for a respectable inn, which might be bought and made profitable, especially where there was a brisk traffic in changing horses, and then she and Lenz would sell their house on the Morgenhalde.

Ernestine promised every attention to her wishes, and repeatedly begged Annele not to send to any one but her for groceries.

When Annele returned home, many were the thoughts that passed through her head: "Our inn provided for so many people in its day, and ensured their success in life, and now we are to sink into nothing! Even the simple Ernestine had her wits sharpened up with us, so that she can now actually conduct a shop, and has made a man of her shabby, ruined tailor. Once on a time, she was only too glad to wear my old clothes, and now, how she is dressed out!—like a steward's wife, rustling in silk, and rattling the gold in her purse: and I am not to get on in life, but to remain vegetating and fading away here, and even accepting benefits from Ernestine! for her heart failed her to offer me the coffee and sugar as a gift, so she pretended they were merely samples of her wares.—No, no, my good clockmaker! I intend to wind you up, and set you going in a strain of music you never heard before!"

She was very much satisfied at having given Ernestine orders, to find out a profitable inn for them. When any step is once taken, a line of conduct is quickly settled accordingly.

In the mean time she tried to be calm and quiet. Not till late at night, did Lenz return from the town with an adverse decision. There was no legal right on this property to the shelter of the wood; and when Lenz awoke in the morning, and heard the strokes of the axe on the hill behind his house, every stroke seemed to cut into his flesh. "I might as well die at once," said he to himself, despondingly, as he went to his work. The whole day he never said a word, and not till night, when he put out the light in his room, did he say aloud:—"I wish I could extinguish my life like this."

Annele pretended not to hear him.

Annele had as yet shed no tear, either for her own misfortunes, or the misery of her parents. With the exception of bewailing the fate of her children, when she first heard what had occurred, she was calm and composed. When, however, morning after morning, no more newly baked white bread came from the village, when she placed the loaf on the table beside the coffee, bitter tears rolled down her cheeks and dropped on the bread: she cut it off before Lenz saw it, and swallowed the bread steeped in her tears.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EVERYTHING GONE.

The Commissioners of Bankruptcy dragged everything into open day, and then came to light all the "Lion's" secret doings. The Landlord then appeared in all his iniquity.

In order to give security to people who, being strangers, were cautious in their dealings with him, he had deliberately deceived those who were connected with him, and dependent on him. Even his own postilions had lost their hardly earned savings. Poor clockmakers went up and down the village, complaining that the Landlord had robbed them of months and years of their lives, and they would all have been ready to swear that he was the most upright man in the whole country, far or near. The Landlady fared no better, in spite of her affectation of entire innocence. She had always made a great show in her house, and talked so big, and been so condescending to everybody! The Landlord had only deceived by his silence, and gloried in being called an honest man right and left, and correct and accurate into the bargain.

Many of the creditors came to Lenz at the Morgenhalde; they were not deterred by the distance; being in the village, at all events they thought they had a right to see the whole extent of the misfortune. It was from a mixture of compassion, and the wish to console him for his still greater losses, that they all deplored that Lenz should have been so shamefully taken in. Many comforted him by saying that perhaps he would inherit from his uncle, and assured him that if he one day became rich, they would ask no compensation from him,—indeed they had no right to do so. Wherever Lenz was seen, he was pitied and condoled with on the wickedness of his father-in-law, who had robbed his own son. There was only one solitary individual who still spoke a good word for the Landlord of the "Lion," and that was Pilgrim, and he did so cordially; always

maintaining, in Lenz's house, that the Landlord had only been deceived in his calculations, that he had placed entire faith in the success of his Brazilian speculation, which had failed, and that he was not a bad man: this entirely won Annele's heart, for she had always been very fond of her father. She did not hesitate openly to admit that her mother was a hypocrite; and yet they were constantly closeted together; and it was reported in the village that the Landlady was anxious to dispose of all the things she had secreted, by conveying them to Lenz's house. A poor clockmaker came straight to Lenz one day, and declared he would not say a word of these secret doings if he was only paid his own deposit. Lenz summoned his wife, and told her that he would never forgive her, if she received into the house one single article that ought to have been given up to the creditors. Annele swore on the head of her child, that such a thing had never occurred and never should. Lenz removed her hand from the head of the child, for he disliked all oaths. Annele told the truth, for the house on the Morgenhalde harboured no forfeited property. The mother-in-law was, however, often there. Lenz seldom spoke to her, and it proved very convenient that Franzl was no longer one of the family, for the new maid—a near relation of Annele's—conveyed repeatedly at night to the adjacent village, heavy baskets from the "Lion," and the grocer's wife, Ernestine, managed to turn all their contents into money.

People had pitied Lenz, because his father-in-law's ruin would probably be fatal to him also. He had answered confidently that he would stand firm; now, however, there was an incessant coming and going. Wherever Lenz owed a few kreuzers they were demanded from him, and he no longer got credit from anyone. Lenz did not know which way to turn, and he dared not confess to Annele the most severe blow of all, for she had warned him against it,—in the midst of all these troubles, Faller's creditors called up the sum due on his house; Lenz's security being no longer valid in their eyes. Faller was in an agony of distress when he was forced to tell this to Lenz, bewailing that, being a married man, he did not know where to lay his head.

Lenz unhesitatingly promised him speedy help; his former good name, and that of his parents, would still be remembered. The world cannot be so hard as to forget the well known integrity of his family.

Annele only knew of the smaller debts, and said:—"Go to your uncle, he must assist you."

Yes, to his uncle! Petrowitsch made a point of invariably leaving the village when a funeral took place there—not from compassion—but it was a disagreeable sight—and the very day after the ruin of the Landlord, Petrowitsch left home, yielding up on this occasion the unripe cherries in his avenue, as a harvest to the passers by, and he did not return till winter had fairly set in, and a new landlord settled in the "Golden Lion," the old proprietors having gone to live in a house adjoining that of their son-in-law, the wood merchant, in a neighbouring town. The old Landlord of the "Lion" had borne his fate with almost admirable equanimity; once only, at a little distance from the village, when the Techniker drove past him in his calèche, with his two chesnuts, the Landlord lost his usual phlegmatic composure, but no one saw him stagger and stumble into a ditch, where he lay for a long time, till at last he managed to scramble out.

Petrowitsch walked now in a different direction. He no longer passed Lenz's house, nor went to the wood, which was, indeed, by this time nearly cut down.

Lenz used to sit up late calculating; he could devise nothing, and soon a sum was offered to him, but it seemed to him as burning as if it had been coined in the Devil's workshop.

Ernestine's husband came one day with a stranger to the Morgenhalde, and said:—"Lenz, here is a person who will buy your house."

"What do you mean? my house?"

"Yes, you said so yourself; it is of much less value now that it formerly was, for since the wood has been felled, its situation is very dangerous, but still proper precautions may be taken."

"Who, pray, said I wished to sell my house?"

"Your wife."

"What? my wife? Come in: Annele, did you say I would sell my house?"

"Not exactly; I only said to Ernestine, that if her husband knew of a respectable inn in a good situation, we would buy it, and then sell our house here."

"But it is more prudent," said the Grocer, "to dispose of your house first; with ready money in hand, you will easily get a suitable inn."

Lenz looked pale and agitated, but simply said:—"I have no intention whatever of selling my house."

The Grocer and his friend were angry and displeased at such capricious people, who would take no advice, and caused so much trouble for nothing.

Lenz nearly got into a rage with them, but he had sufficient command over himself to say nothing in reply. When he was at last left alone with Annele, she did not speak a word, though he

looked at her several times; he at length said:—"Why did you do this to me?"

"To you? I did nothing to you; but it must be so—we shall have no peace till we leave this place. I won't stay here any longer, and I am determined to keep an inn, and you shall see that I will make more by it in a single year, ay, three times as much as you, with all your worry about your pegs and wheels."

"And do you really think you can force me to take such a step?"

"You will thank me one day for insisting on it; it is not easy to force you to give up your old ways, and to leave this house."

"I am leaving it now, this minute," said Lenz in a low voice; and, hastily drawing on his coat, he left the house.

Annele ran after him a few steps.

"Where are you going to, Lenz?"

He made no answer, but proceeded to climb the hill.

When he reached the crest of the hill, he looked round once. There lay his paternal house; no longer sheltered by trees, it looked bleak and naked, and he felt as if his whole life had been also laid bare. He turned again, and rushed on further. His idea was to go far, far away, and when he returned he might be different, and the world also. He plodded on further and further, and yet an irresistible impulse urged him to turn back. At last he sat down on the stump of a tree, and covered his face with both his hands. It was a still, mild, autumnal afternoon, the sun had kindly intentions towards the earth, and more especially to the Morgenhalde; he still shed warm rays on the felled trees which he had shone on, and renovated, for so many long years. The magpies were chattering fluently on the chesnut trees below, and the woodpecker sometimes put in his word. All was night and death within Lenz's soul. A child suddenly said: "Man! come, and help me with this."

Lenz rose and helped Faller's eldest little girl, who had been collecting chips, to place her basket on her shoulder. The child started when she recognized Lenz, and ran down the hill. Lenz gazed long after her.

It was quite night when he came home. He did not say a word, and sat for more than an hour looking down fixedly. He then glanced up at his tools hanging on the wall, with a singular, earnest expression, as if he were trying to remember what they were, and what purpose they were meant to serve.

The child in the next room began to cry; Annele went to it, and the only way she could pacify it was by singing.

A mother will sing for the sake of her child, even if her heart is crushed by a burden of sorrow. Lenz then rose and went into the next room, and said:—

"Annele, I was on the point of leaving the country for ever—yes, you may laugh: I knew that you would laugh."

"I am not laughing; it already occurred to me, that perhaps it would be a good thing if you could travel for a year, and try to retrieve our fortunes; possibly you might return with some sense, and things would go on more smoothly."

It cut Lenz to the heart that Annele should be eager for him to leave her, but he only said—"I could not make up my mind to go, when everything went well with me, still less can I do so now, when I am so miserable at heart. I am nothing, and good for nothing, if I have not a single happy thought in my soul."

"Now I must laugh at you," said Annele, "you could not travel, either when you were happy, or unhappy."

"I don't understand you; I never did understand you, or you me."

"The worst of all is, that there is not only misery without, but misery within."

"Put an end to it then, and be kind and good."

"Don't speak so loud, you will wake the child again," said Annele; as soon as this subject engaged her thoughts, she would not utter a syllable.

Lenz returned to the next room; and when Annele came in, leaving the door ajar, he said:—"Now that we are in sorrow, we should love and cherish each other more than ever; it is the only comfort left to us, and yet you will not—why will you not?"

"Love cannot be forced."

"Then I must go away."

"And I will stay at home," said Annele, in a desponding voice, "I will stay with my children."

"They are as much mine as yours."

"No doubt;" said Annele, in a hard tone.

"There is the clock beginning to play its old melodies," said Lenz, hurriedly, "I cannot bear to hear a single tone—never again! If one of them could dash out my brains, it would be best, for I cannot get a single thought out of them. Can't you say a kind word to me, Annele?"

"I don't know any."

"Then I will say one—Let us make peace, and all will be well."

"I am quite content to do so."

"Can't you throw your arms round my neck, and rejoice that I am here again?"

"Not tonight; perhaps tomorrow I may."

"And if I were to die this very night?"

"Then I should be a widow."

"And marry another?"

"If any one would have me."

"You wish to drive me mad."

"I need not do much for that."

"Oh! Annele, what will be the end of all this?"

"God knows!"

"Annele! was there not a time when we loved each other dearly?"

"Yes; I suppose we once did."

"And cannot it be so again?"

"I don't know."

"Why do you give me such answers?"

"Because you ask me such questions."

Lenz hid his face with his hands, and sat thus half the night; he tried to reflect on his position, and why, in addition to the wreck of his fortune, there should also be the wreck of his happiness—it was, indeed, horrible! He could not discover the cause, though he thought over all that had occurred from his wedding day to the present time:—"I cannot find it out," cried he; "if a voice from Heaven would only tell me!"—but no voice came from Heaven, all was still and silent in the house; the clocks alone continued to tick together. Lenz looked long out at the window.

The night was calm; nothing stirred, but snow laden clouds were hurrying along, high up in the sky.

Far off yonder on the hill, a light is burning at the blacksmith's house; it burned the whole night the blacksmith died today.

"Why did he die instead of me? I would so gladly have died." Life and death chased each other in wild confusion through Lenz's soul; the living seemed to him no longer to live, nor the dead to die—the whole of life is only one long calamity—no bird ever sung, no man ever uplifted his voice in melody.

Lenz's forehead fell on the window sill, he started up in terror, and to escape such horrible waking dreams, he sought repose and forgetfulness in sleep.

Annele had been long asleep: he gazed intently at her. If he could only read her dreams; if he could only succour her—her and himself too.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A BEGGAR, AND MONEY SAVED.

We are in a country where no thaw comes for many months when once the frost fairly sets in. The Morgenhalde is the only exception to this; there the sun usually shone with such power, that there were drops from the roof, while elsewhere heavy icicles were suspended motionless from the houses. This winter, however, the sun in the sky seemed less benign towards the Morgenhalde than in old times. There was no sign of any thaw outside the house nor inside. It was not only colder than it had ever been before—this was no doubt caused by the wood on the side of the hill being cut down; the trunks were all lying about, only waiting for the spring floods to be floated down into the valley—but those who lived in the Morgenhalde seemed frozen also. Annele seemed no longer able to wake up to life and activity; there seemed something congealed within her, which a warm breath could scarcely have thawed, and that warm breath never came. She who had lived so long with her parents at home, now when they had left the place, felt their loss sadly. She said nothing to any one, but a worm gnawed at her heart, in the thought that she was the only poor one of the family. She could do nothing for her parents, nor assist in supporting them; indeed—who knows?—perhaps she must one day go begging to her own sisters, and entreat of them to give the cast off clothes of their children to hers.

Annele went through the house silently, and she, who was once so talkative, scarcely ever spoke. She answered at once when she was asked any question, but not a word more. She scarcely ever left the house, and her former restlessness seemed to have been transferred to Lenz. He despaired of ever again making anything of his work; and, therefore, the tools he handled, and the chair on which he sat, seemed burning.

He had besides constantly small creditors to pacify, and was obliged to be civil to every one. He who once upon a time said, simply, "So and so is the case," and was believed, must now give the most strong and sacred assurances, that he would eventually pay the claimants. The greater was his anxiety, therefore, to redeem his pledged word, and he despaired of saving his honour, more than was at all necessary. His thoughts were constantly occupied by this and that person, waiting anxiously for their money, and his gloom and uneasiness daily increased. Annele saw well enough that he tormented himself needlessly, and she was often on the point of dispatching these unfortunate duns, with sharp words, and saying to Lenz that he should not be so humble to them, for the more meek people are in this world, the more are they trampled on. But she kept this to herself, for his anxiety would assist in accomplishing the project she had never given up. An inn must be bought, and then the world would have a very different aspect.

In his solicitude and despair, Lenz felt all the desolation of his heart, and often he stole a glance at Annele, and though he did not say it, he thought: "You are right, you told me once I was good for nothing—it is true now, for I am no longer good for anything; care gnaws at my heart, and our discord crushes me to the earth. I am like a candle lighted at both ends. Oh! if this were only soon at an end for ever!"

Watches and clocks were brought to him to be repaired, and in this way he cleared off some of his smaller debts; but it was sad to work now only to efface the past, when all his labour was required for the current expenses of the day, and no prospect for the future.

Many remained sitting with him till he had finished the work they had brought him to do, thus keeping him a prisoner in his own house, and yet he could not venture to send them away. Others took home their unfinished goods with hard and cruel words. "This can no longer go on, some substantial succour must be found," said Lenz to Annele; "I must again feel solid ground under my feet." She nodded slightly, but already the strong will within him inspired him with new strength.

Early next morning Lenz resolved to visit his mother's relatives, who lived on the other side of the valley; they would certainly help him, they had always been so proud of him, that they could not let him be entirely swamped.

Just as he arrived on the mountain ridge, day dawned, the stars in the sky grew pale, and Lenz gazed at the spacious snow covered region. Nowhere a symptom of life. Why should I live either? An expression taken from his sleepless nights, to signify total want of sleep, recurred to his memory—a *white sleep*—here it is! This feverish mood of his dreams made his cheeks burn, and an icy blast rushed over the heights.

Lenz was startled out of his reverie, by the wind carrying away his hat down a steep precipice. Lenz was hurrying after it, but he suddenly saw that he was rushing to certain death. It crossed his mind that it would be a good thing if he were to lose his life by an accident; but he shuddered at such cowardly thoughts.

The hail and snow continued incessantly, almost blinding him; even the crows in the air could scarcely guide their flight, being first hurled upwards, and then again dashed down, and those birds, usually flying along so steadily, fluttered their wings in wild terror and dismay.

Lenz struggled manfully along against snow and wind, and at last he breathed freer. There the smoke from houses is rising.

Lenz entered the first farmhouse.

"Oh! Lenz! welcome! how glad I am that you have not forgotten me!" said a tall, stout woman, as he came in; she was standing at the hearth, and had just broken up a thick branch of a tree; "what have you done with your hat?"

"Oh! now I recognize you—so it is you, Kathrine? You are grown stout. I come to you as a beggar."

"Oh! Lenz, not so bad as that I hope?"

"But it is indeed," said Lenz, smiling bitterly. He can even jest on such a subject. "You must lend me, or give me, an old hat, for the wind has carried off mine."

"Come into the next room with me. My husband will be so sorry not to see you; he is gone to superintend timber being carted down the hill from the wood."

Kathrine—for it was the Bailiff's daughter Kathrine—threw open the door of the adjoining room, and begged Lenz politely to go in first.

The room was warm and comfortable. Kathrine was not offended by Lenz frankly owning that he had not come on purpose to see her, for he did not even know that she lived here; but he was heartily glad that chance had brought him to her house.

"All your life long you were a truly good and honest man, and I am thankful to see that you are still the same," said Kathrine. She fetched an old grey hat, and a military cap of her husband's, and begged Lenz to take the cap, as the hat was too shabby, and not fit for him to wear; but Lenz chose the hat, though it was much crushed, and had no hatband. As Lenz was so positive, Kathrine brought her Sunday's cap with broad black ribbons, and cutting off one of the strings, she put it on the hat. In the meanwhile she spoke of her former home, and forgot no one.

Lenz looked in surprise at the active, energetic woman, who was so ready to oblige him, and who spoke in such a kind and straightforward manner; she insisted on Lenz taking a cup of coffee, which she made ready in a few minutes, and while he was drinking it, Kathrine said, probably recalling the many memories connected with old times:—"Franzl often comes to see me, we have always remained the best of friends."

"You look indeed, as if you were prosperous," said Lenz.

"I am thankful to say that I have no cause to complain; I am always well and healthy, and we have enough for ourselves, and something to spare for others; besides my husband is honest and industrious. We are not so merry here, to be sure, as we used to be at home; they can't sing here, but I should be as happy as the day is long, if we only had a child; but my husband and I have agreed, that if we have not one by the time our fifth wedding day arrives, we are to adopt one—Faller, we think, might spare us one of his, we hope you will help us in this."

"I will, gladly."

"You are sadly altered; you look so wasted away—Is it then really true that Annele is become so cross, and bad tempered?"

Lenz's face became as red as fire, and Kathrine exclaimed:—"Oh! dear, how stupid I am! don't take it amiss; I beg your pardon a thousand times over, I had no intention to offend you, and no doubt there is not a word of truth in the report: when the days are long, people talk for ever, and when they are short, they chatter all night too. I beg and pray you will think no more of it, and forget what I said; I was so glad to see you again, and now all my gladness is gone, and I shall be quite unhappy for weeks to come—you were right, and the Landlady of the 'Lion' too, in saying to Franzl that I was too stupid to be your wife. Pray, pray, give me back my officious words."

She stretched out her hand to him, as if he could really place her words in it again.

Lenz grasped her hand cordially, and assured her that so far from being angry with her, he was most grateful for her kind welcome. He wished to go away immediately, but Kathrine detained him, talking on at a great rate, in the hope of making him forget her unlucky question, and when at last he left the house, she called after him:—"Give my love to Annele, and come together soon to see me."

Lenz pursued his way, wearing the hat he had borrowed; "I have a regular beggar's hat on now;" said he, with a sad smile.

Kathrine's incautious speech pursued him no doubt in many other houses as well as here: he was now an object of compassion. This idea tended to soften his heart, but he would not give way to this weakness, saying to himself, that it was his own fault for not being more callous.

His stick fell out of his hand at least a hundred times, and each time that he bent down to pick it up, he could scarcely stand upright again.

Thus it is when a man goes along lost in thought; if his hands were loose, he would drop them

by the way. Collect your thoughts, Lenz!

He made a violent effort, and walked on briskly. The sun was now shining warm and bright, the icicles hanging from the rocks, glittered and dropped; the gay song, "Wandern, wandern," that he had sung so often with his friends, recurred to his mind, but he dismissed it at once; the man who once sung that in gaiety of heart, must have been a very different man then.

The relations whom he went to visit were rejoiced to see him on his arrival, and he recounted the adventure of his hat repeatedly, in order to account for the shabby appearance it gave him, but when he saw that his hat never seemed to have been remarked, he made no further allusion to the subject; and yet precisely where they said nothing they inwardly thought—"He must be sunk low indeed, to wear such a hat!"

In some houses they were civil, in others rude: "How can you expect us to help you? you are connected with so grand a family, such rich connexions through your father-in-law, and an uncle wallowing in wealth: they are the people who ought to assist you!"

Where people wished to be more kind, they said: "Unluckily we stand in need of all our money ourselves—we must build, and we have just bought some land;" or again: "If you had only come to us eight days ago, we had money, but now we have lent it out on mortgage."

Lenz went on his way with a heavy heart, and when he thought of returning home, a voice said within him: "Oh! if I might only never see the Morgenhalde more! To lie down and die in a ditch, or in the wood,—there are plenty of places to die in,—that would be best for me!"

An irresistible impulse, however, urged him onwards. "There is Knuslingen, where Franzl lives with her brother; there is still one person in the world who will rejoice to see me."

No one in the world could, indeed, be more rejoiced than Franzl when she saw Lenz. She was sitting at the window, spinning coarse yarn, but when Lenz came in, she flung the spindle into the air. She carefully dusted the chair twice over, on which she invited Lenz to sit down, and kept lamenting that things did not look tidier; she only now remarked how dull and smoky her room was. She wished to hear all Lenz's news, and yet she never let him open his lips, she was so busy talking herself, and saying:—

"When I first came here I thought the cold would have been my death; for I had been so used to our fine bright sunshine on the Morgenhalde. There is not a single ray of sun there of which we don't get our share. Now, however, I have at last become accustomed to do without it; but Lenz, you look very ill? There is something strange in your face that I never saw there before—that is not natural to you—Oh! when you smile like that, I see your old face again—your kindly face. I have prayed every morning and every evening, since I left you, for you and your family. I hope you got some good from it. I am no longer angry with Annele—not in the least: she was quite right; I am regular old lumber. How are your children? What are they like? What are they called? If I am still alive next spring, I must see them, even if I creep on my hands and feet the whole way." And then Franzl went on to say that she had three hens of her own, and two geese, and a patch of potato land, also her own. "We are poor," said she, crossing her hands on her breast, "but, thank God! we have never yet had occasion to see how other people live; we have always had enough for our own wants, and if it be God's will, I mean to get a goat next spring." She praised her geese highly, but still more her poultry. The hens, who had taken up their winter quarters in a coop near the stove, cackled as if in gratitude, and turning their red combs first to the right and then to the left, looked sideways at the man who was hearing all their good qualities detailed by Franzl. Indeed, the speckled golden Hamburg hen, whose name was Goldammer, stretched out her wings from joy, and flapped them cheerfully.

Lenz could not succeed in getting in a word, and Franzl thought she was consoling him, when she attacked the former Landlady of the "Lion" fiercely, and then branched off to tell how kind her old acquaintance Kathrine had been towards her, and the good she did to all the poor round her. "She gives me food for my hens, and they give me my food in return."

Franzl could not help laughing at her own joke. At last Lenz managed to say that he must leave her. Annele is right, he lets himself be detained too long by anyone, or everyone; even when he is in an agony to be off, he cannot cut short any person, especially if they are telling him their sorrows. He felt the justice of Annele's reproaches at this moment; she seemed to stand behind him to urge him away. He looked round, as if he really expected to see her, and seized his hat and his stick; then Franzl begged him to go up with her to her attic, for she had something to say to him.

Lenz was inwardly troubled. Has Franzl also heard of the discord in his house? and is she going to talk to him about it? She, however, made no allusion whatever to such a thing, but she brought forth from the centre of the straw mattress on her bed, a heavy, well filled shoe, knotted together with many fastenings, and said:—

"You must do one thing for love of me—I can't sleep at my ease till then—I implore you to take care of this for me, and to do with it whatever you choose; there are a hundred gulden and three crown dollars. I know you will do it, and let me get back my sound sleep."

Lenz would not be persuaded to take the money. Franzl cried bitterly when he wished to say

goodbye to her; she still detained him saying:—

"If you have anything particular to say to your mother, let me know; for, please God, I shall soon go to her. I will give your message faithfully, whatever it may be. You may rely on me."

Franzl kept fast hold of Lenz's hand repeating:—

"There was something I had to say to you; I have it on the tip of my tongue, but I can't remember it, but I am sure to recall it the moment you are fairly gone. I was to remind you of something—you don't know what it could be?"

Lenz could make no guess, and at last went away quite reluctantly. He turned into an alehouse on his way, and was greeted by a shout of—"Hurrah! capital! it is famous to see you here!"

It was Pröbler who welcomed him so boisterously; he was sitting at a table with two companions, and a large measure of wine before them. Pröbler was the spokesman here, and wished to rise to receive Lenz, but his feet evidently considered it better that he should sit still, and so he called out in a loud voice:—

"Come and sit down here, Lenz, and let the world outside become bankrupt, and turn into a mass of snow; it's not worth plaguing one's self about it. Here let us sit till the last day. I want nothing more, I care for nothing more, and when I have nothing more, I will sell the coat off my back and spend the money in good liquor, and then go out and lie down in the snow, and so save all funeral expenses. Look here, my friends! You have in this man an example of the shabbiness of the world. If a man is better conducted than others, he is sure to be ruined. Drink away, Lenz! See! this was once the best and most honest man in the world, and yet, how has it used him? His own father-in-law plundered him, fleecing him in the most shameless way, and causing his very house to be exposed and defenceless in the depth of winter. Oh! Lenz, once on a time I was honest too, but I don't even try to be so now—I am done with it for ever."

Lenz's heart sunk within him, at hearing himself quoted as the most striking example of a man completely ruined; he little thought ever to have won such a reputation as that. He strove to persuade Pröbler that it was no use first to yield to evil courses, and then to exclaim:—"See, world, what you have made me! Don't you repent it?" He endeavoured to point out to Pröbler, that no one has any right to expect the world to do for you, what you ought to do for yourself. A man must preserve his self respect was the idea uppermost in Lenz at this moment, but Pröbler would not listen to him; he took a knife from his pocket, and another from the table, and thrust them both into Lenz's hand, saying wildly:—

"There you have got both knives; I can do you no harm, I don't want to do you any harm: say it out at once, if I am not now a wretched ragamuffin, and if I should not have been good for something if I had a helping hand in the world. Your father-in-law—may the devil weigh him one day, fairly, ounce by ounce in his scale!—has smeared his creaking boots with my life's blood, and a fine polish it made! Say it out—what am I?"

Lenz, of course, acknowledged that Pröbler would have been a master mind if he had kept the straight path. Pröbler struck the table with his clenched fist from joy. Lenz had considerable difficulty in preventing his embracing him.

"I don't want any other funeral sermon, Lenz has preached mine; and now say no more, let us drink away as hard as we can."

Pröbler continued to talk wildly, though sometimes a clear thought flashed through his wandering brain. It was not easy to ascertain whether it was truth or a mere delusion, that he had lost his small savings set aside against the evil day, through the Landlord's ruin, or whether it was the sale of the mysterious work, for which he had expected a patent, that had reduced him to this state of desperation.

Lenz felt quite faint and oppressed by the close atmosphere of the room, and the clamour, and tumult, and his hair stood on end when he saw before his eyes, a living example of the degradation to which a man can sink, who has lost self respect, and whose only resource is to forget himself if possible.

"Your mother had a good saying," said Pröbler—"Did I tell you that this is Lenz of the Morgenhalde?—Yes! Your mother! 'It is better to go barefooted than to wear torn boots,' she always said. Do you know what that means? I have another saying however—'When the horse is taken to the knacker's yard, his shoes are first pulled off.' A tavern—that is an iron shoe! Wine here!" cried Pröbler, throwing a dollar on the table.

This mention of his mother's name, and her being alluded to at all, even in so strange a way, seemed a warning to Lenz, as if her eye had been sternly fixed on him.

He rose, in spite of Pröbler clinging to his arm. He wished to take Pröbler home with him, but he could not get him to move from the spot, so Lenz requested the landlord not to allow the old man to leave the house tonight, and to give him no more to drink.

When Lenz closed the door behind him, Pröbler threw his snuff box after him, shouting out:—

"I shall never want it again."

Panting for breath, as if he had just escaped from a hot, stifling covering, Lenz went on his way in the open air. Twilight was beginning to fell, the kingfisher was singing on the frozen stream below, the crows were flying towards the woods; a roedeer came out of the wood and stood still, looking fixedly at Lenz till he came quite close, when he sprang hurriedly back into the thicket, and his traces could be followed a long way by the snow that fell from the branches of the young firs.

Lenz stood still several times to listen, for he thought he heard his name shouted out behind him; perhaps Pröbler was following him; he answered in a loud voice, which was caught up by the echo; he retraced his steps a considerable way, but he saw and heard nothing; then he went straight forwards; the trees and the hills seemed to come to meet him, and he saw a female figure on his path, which looked like his mother. If she could see him as he now is!

The old woman who met him nodded kindly, and said he must take good care to be out of the valley before nightfall, for there were black channels visible in the snow, and avalanches were not unfrequent round here, and people were swallowed up in a moment, before they could look round.

The voice of the woman sounded strangely in his ears; it was as if his mother had really spoken—and a good hearted warning it was.

Lenz made a solemn vow, deep, deep, in his heart. He was anxious not to return home quite empty handed, so he went to the nearest town to his brother-in-law, the timber merchant, and was so fortunate as to find him at home. It was difficult for Lenz to explain his purpose, for his brother-in-law either was angry, or affected to be so. He reproached Lenz for not having advised his father-in-law better, and taken the business out of his hands. Lenz was the chief cause of the old man's ruin.

Whether the timber merchant were really displeased or pretended to be so, there is no better mode, at all events, of refusing assistance. Lenz implored him with uplifted hands to help him, or he must be utterly ruined. The brother-in-law shrugged his shoulders, and said Lenz had better apply to his rich uncle Petrowitsch.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ANOTHER WORLD.

"Good evening, Herr Lenz!" called out some one to the unhappy wanderer; Lenz started—who could call him "Herr" Lenz?

A sledge stopped, the Techniker threw back the furs from his face, and said:—

"There is plenty of room, let me give you a lift."

He got down, took off a fur cloak, and said:—

"Put this on, and wrap yourself well up in it, for you are heated from walking; I will take the horse's blankets, which will be quite sufficient for me."

Resistance was no use. Lenz took his place beside the Techniker, enveloped in the fur cloak, and the horses stepped out merrily; it was a most comfortable sledge, and the bells rung out cheerily; it was almost like flying through the night air, and now, in his poverty and abandonment, Lenz thought:—

"Annele was perfectly right I ought at this moment to have been driving my own carriage."

The thought made him still more sad; it was as if some malicious spirit had disposed every circumstance today, to place before Lenz's eyes the fact that his life had failed in its aim, and thus to awaken evil passions within him.

The Techniker was very conversable, and said especially what pleasure it gave him that Pilgrim was so intimate with them. Pilgrim had a remarkable sense of colour, but was deficient in correct drawing; he had himself studied in the academy for a year, but he had seen very soon that he had little real talent, and that a more practical profession was better suited to him. Now he was resuming his drawing in his leisure hours; Pilgrim helped him in the proper tone of colour, and he repaid this by instructing the latter in drawing; they hoped mutually to improve each other, and at this moment they were more particularly occupied in making new patterns for joiners, turners, and carvers in wood; they had also made various sketches for the dials of clocks, which would, no doubt, be most welcome and useful to the clockmakers. Pilgrim had

considerable imagination, and seemed quite delighted that his old favourite project was really likely to be carried into effect.

Lenz listened to all this as if in a dream. How can this be? are there still men in the world who can occupy themselves with such things, and rejoice in mutually improving each other? Lenz said very little, but the drive did him good. To be carried along so luxuriously, is certainly better than plodding wearily along hill and valley.

For the first time in his life Lenz felt something like envy. He was obliged to get out at the Doctor's house, but the kind family there insisted on his coming into the house.

How comfortable it all seemed! Are there really then such pretty, quiet houses in the world, where it is so warm and cheerful, and where blooming hyacinths exhale their fragrance at the window? and the inhabitants are so kind and peaceful, for it is evident that no passionate or loud words are heard here; and to see them all sitting together with their faithful, honest hearts, imparts more warmth than the best stove.

Lenz must drink some tea. Amanda gave him a cup, and said:—"I am so glad to have you among us again. How is Annele? If I thought your wife would like to see me, I should be glad to pay her a visit."

"Since five o'clock this morning—it seems to me eight days—I have not been at home; I believe Annele is quite well, and I will let you know when to come to us." After Lenz had said this, he looked round the room as if seeking some one. And who knows what thoughts passed through his soul?

How different would it have been if he had married one of these girls! Pilgrim had positively assured him that he would not have been rejected. He would then have been sitting here as one of the family, with a position in the world—and what a position! and his wife would have honoured and esteemed him, and all the good people here would have been his relations.

Lenz nearly choked on the first mouthful of tea he swallowed. The old lady—the Doctor's mother—who was eating her gruel at the tea-table, had always been very fond of Lenz. She made him sit down beside her, and as she was deaf, he was obliged to speak loud. She had been the companion of his mother, and liked to relate anecdotes of her, and how gay they had been together in their youthful days, especially in their sledging parties during the carnival, which are now quite out of date. Marie in those days used to be full of fun and frolic. The old lady inquired, too, after Franzl, and Lenz mentioned having seen her this very day—of course he made no allusion to her offer of money—and also of Kathrine's kindness to Franzl, and her wish to adopt a child. He related all this very pleasantly. All present listened to him quietly and attentively, and it seemed quite surprising to Lenz to relate anything without either being flatly contradicted, or hearing at all events, "What's all that to me?"

The good old grandmother begged him to come often, and to bring his wife with him. "Your wife is a clever, good woman; remember me to her and the children." Lenz felt it so strange to hear all this, and to be obliged to accept it thankfully. The old lady spoke so cordially, that there could be no doubt she meant what she said. It was evident that in this family nothing but good was spoken of any one, and that was the reason the old lady heard only pleasant things of her neighbours.

"Just as you came in," said the grandmother, "we were speaking of your father, and also of my dear deceased husband. A clock merchant from Prussia has just been here, and he said the clocks are not so neatly finished, as in the days when your father and my husband worked together; they don't keep time so exactly: but I replied on the contrary, all honour to the dead! but the present clocks go certainly quite as well as in the old time, but men were not so exact in those days as they are now, that is the reason. Am I not right, Lenz? You are an honest man: say, am I right or wrong?"

Lenz pronounced her to be perfectly right, and said how particularly good and fair it was on her part, not to allow the good old times to be praised at the cost of the new.

The Techniker attributed the extreme and strict accuracy of modern days, to railroads and telegraphs.

Now that the conversation had become more general, the Doctor took Lenz aside, and said: "Lenz, you will not, I hope, be offended with what I am about to say." Lenz shrunk from him. Is the Doctor, too, going to speak to him about the state of his family? He could scarcely stammer forth: "What do you mean?"

"I only wished to say, if it was not disagreeable to you, and I think you would perhaps not object to it—but what is the use of a long preface? I wish you to enter the clock manufactory of my son and my son-in-law, in the capacity of overseer. You will be of great use to them, and in time they propose giving you a certain share in the business, in addition to your salary."

This was like a hand from Heaven stretched forth to succour him. Lenz replied in feverish haste: "Yes, indeed, I can and will gladly accept. the offer. But, Herr Doctor, you are aware that I sought by every means in thy power, to induce all the clockmakers in our district, to enter into an

association. So many things have occupied me lately, that the affair has gone quite out of my head. I should not like to enter the manufactory, unless both your sons were to agree that their establishment should also belong to the association, perhaps one day become its property."

"That is quite our own idea."

"Very well, then. I have only one favour to ask. Do not mention it till I——" Lenz stopped short.

"Well! till when?"

"Till I have spoken to my wife about it; she has her peculiarities."

"I know her of old, but she is sensible, when her pride does not interfere. But we ought to respect her proper pride."

Lenz looked down; the Doctor was giving him a deserved lesson, and with a good motive as well as in a kind manner. That is the right way to speak; then advice is useful and acceptable.

His thoughts, however, speedily returned to the manufactory, and he said: "Herr Doctor, may I take the liberty of asking one more question?"

"Certainly; don't be so ceremonious."

"Which of our masters, hereabouts, are also to be included?"

"We have not yet spoken to any one—but, by the bye, we wish Pröbler to be one of our people, though, of course, in a subordinate situation, not like you; for he has a considerable talent for invention, and has made various discoveries, that may be made practically useful. It is to be hoped that the poor old man may prosper in his old age, for he is becoming most eccentric, indeed, almost crazy, since his secret, for which he expected a patent, was sold by auction at the 'Lion.'"

Lenz was silent for a time, and then he related where he had found Pröbler, and concluded by saying: "I have still another request to make, Herr Doctor. I cannot speak to my uncle. You are the first man in this country, and he who could refuse you anything can have no heart or feeling. Herr Doctor, do speak to my uncle, and beg him to help me. I scarcely think—the more I reflect on the matter—that my wife will allow me to enter the manufactory, and you said yourself that we must respect her proper pride."

"Certainly, I will go to your uncle forthwith; will you wait for me here, or go with me into the village?"

"I will go with you."

They all wished Lenz cordially good night; shaking hands kindly with him, and the old grandmother laid her left hand on his head as if blessing him, when she gave him her right hand.

Lenz went along with the Doctor; as they passed Pilgrim's house they heard him whistling, and playing on his guitar. This faithful friend felt deep sympathy at heart for Lenz's misfortunes, but to sympathise with any one, is after all a very different thing from being involved yourself in difficulty; a man's own life claims its rights.

Where the path went up the hill, Lenz left the Doctor, who only said: "Wait at home, I will come to you later. How wonderfully close it is this evening! I am sure we are going to have a rapid thaw."

"I sought aid far away, and after all it seems I am to find it at home. There are still good men in the world, far better than yourself," said Lenz to himself, as he went up the hill towards home.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE THAW EXTENDS EVEN TO PETROWITSCH, BUT HE FREEZES AGAIN.

"I know why you are come," said Petrowitsch, when the Doctor entered; "but sit down." He drew in a chair for him near the stove, where in front there was a bright fire blazing, and behind a well heated stove.

"Now, what do I want, prophet?" said the Doctor, summoning up all his wits.

"Money! you want money for my nephew!"

"You are only half a prophet, for I want a kindly heart also."

"Money, money, is the chief object. I will, however, at once say, I am not one of those who charitably lift up a drunken man lying on the road, and if he has broken his leg tell him he has only himself to blame. I say this to you, because you are one of the few people whom I respect in the world."

"Thank you for your good opinion; but a skilful physician must try to heal injuries, whether deserved or undeserved."

"You are a doctor, and yet you have the same malady as the whole country, indeed every one of our race."

The Doctor expressed his surprise at seeing him under so novel an aspect. He had always, hitherto, thought that his misanthropy proceeded from mere love of ease and indolence, but now he saw it was grounded on a system.

"Will you sit an hour with me? This is my seventieth birthday."

"I wish you joy!"

"Thank you."

Petrowitsch sent his maid to Ibrahim, to say that he could not join him, to play their usual game, for an hour; then he sat down beside the Doctor, and said: "I feel myself today in a humour to be communicative. I care nothing at all for what the world thinks of me; this log of wood that I am now laying on the fire, cannot care less who burns it."

"It would interest me very much, however, if you would relate to me how you have hardened into such a block of petrified wood."

Petrowitsch laughed, and the Doctor, though he knew how anxiously Lenz was expecting him, hoped, by seeing deeper into the rugged old man's character, to be able to bend him to his wishes. His plan was, that Petrowitsch should advance a certain sum, to enable Lenz to enter the manufactory as a junior partner.

"You were eight years old when I left home to travel," began Petrowitsch, "and so you know nothing of me."

"Oh, yes, I do! many wild pranks were related of the——"

"The little Goatherd? That name has been the plague of my life. I was two and twenty years in foreign parts, at sea and on land, in every possible degree of heat and cold that man or dog ever endured, and that name followed me like a dog, and I was fool enough not to give it a kick, and so get rid of it for ever.

"We were three brothers, and had no sisters. Our father was a proud man when we three came, but in those days children were not so kindly treated as now, and I think it was better; it made us independent, and a single word, good or bad, made more impression than a hundred now. My brother Lorenz, who was called by our family name Lenz at home, the father of the present Lenz, was the eldest, and I the youngest. Our second brother, Mathes, was a very handsome young man; he was carried off by that great butcher of mankind, Napoleon, and was killed in Spain. I have been on the battlefield where he fell. There is a high hill, and a mass of soldiers lie buried there, so what chance of finding out a brother among them! But what's the use of telling you that? Not long after Mathes had become a soldier, my brother Lenz went to Switzerland for a few months, and took me with him. Who so happy as I? My brother was a quiet, thoughtful man; every one must admit that. He was like a first-rate clock—exact and punctual,—but stern, very stern. I was a wild, unruly lad, good for nothing, nor had I any notion of sitting in a workshop. What did my brother do? He took me to a fair for hiring servants at St. Gall, which took place every year. The great Swiss farmers hire their shepherd lads from Swabia.

"As I was standing beside my brother in the marketplace, a stout, bluff Appenzel farmer came up, and stood opposite us, his feet well apart, leaning on a stick, and said to my brother, 'What is the price of the lad?'

"I gave the saucy answer, 'A log of Swiss impudence, six feet broad, and six feet high.'

"The stout farmer laughed, and said to my brother: 'The boy is no fool. I like him, and we can arrange the terms together.'

"Lorenz and the farmer came to an agreement, and the only speech my brother made me at parting was, 'If you come home before the winter you shall be well flogged.'

"I was a goatherd for a whole summer. It was a pleasant enough life, and I was constantly singing; but often the words rang in my ears 'What is the price of the lad?' and I felt as if I had been sold like Joseph in Egypt. Like him, my brother sold me, but I never became a great man.

"I returned home when winter came. I was not well used at home, but then I did not deserve to

be so. In the spring I said to my father, 'Give me a hundred gulden's worth of clocks, and I will take them about the country to sell.' 'You are more likely to get a hundred boxes on the ear,' said my brother Lorenz, on hearing this.

"At that time the whole business had devolved on him, and the household also. Our father was in bad health, and our mother did not venture to interfere. In those days women were not so much thought of as now, and I think on that very account they were better off, and their husbands too. I then contrived to persuade a pedlar to take me with him, to carry his clocks. I was almost bent double with fatigue, and often suffered miserably from hunger, and yet never could escape from my tyrant. I was as much under the yoke as any carthorse, but the latter is not allowed to starve, because its value would be gone. I sometimes thought of robbing my master, and running away, but then again, as a penance for my wicked thoughts, I would determine to stay with my tormentor.

"In spite of all I remained both honest and healthy. I must relate one circumstance here, because it is connected with my subsequent history, and cost me dear. I went to Spain with Anton Striegler. We were in a large village about twenty miles from Valencia; it was a fine summer afternoon, and we were sitting outside a posada, as an inn is called in Spain, chatting to each other. A handsome young man, with large black eyes, was passing; but, on hearing us talking, he stood still all of a sudden, and begun throwing up his arms as if he were mad. I gave Striegler a push to look at him, when the lad rushed up to us, and seized Striegler's hand. 'What were you speaking?' asked he, in Spanish. 'That is no one's business,' said Striegler, also in Spanish. 'What language was it?' asked the Spaniard again. 'German,' said Striegler. The young man grasped the holy effigy he wore round his neck, and kissed it as if he would devour it, and at last he told us that his father at home spoke that language, and begged us to come with him. On our way he related to us, that his father came to this village more than forty years ago, that he was a German, and had married here. For some weeks past he had been lying dangerously ill, and for several days he had been speaking in a language none of them understood, and his father could no longer understand his wife, or children, or grandchildren. It was quite heartbreaking. We went into the house, where we found an old man, with snow white hair and long beard, calling out, 'Get me a bunch of rosemary;' and then he sung, 'And plant it on my grave!' I shuddered on seeing and hearing this, but Striegler went up boldly to him, saying, 'How are you, fellow countryman?' Never, if I live a hundred years, can I forget the expression of the old man's eyes on hearing these words; they were wide open and fixed, and he first stretched out his hands, and then crossed them over his breast, as if he were pressing the precious words to his heart. Striegler spoke again, and the old man gave very rational answers, sometimes rather confused, but on the whole quite intelligible. He was originally from Hesse, but had taken the name of Caballero, and was naturalised in Spain. For fifty years he had spoken nothing but Spanish, and now at the point of death, he could not speak a single word of Spanish—it all seemed blown away into the air; and I believe, though I am not so sure of this, that he no longer even understood a syllable of Spanish. The whole family were most thankful that we could interpret what the old man said.

"Striegler profited by being so much considered in the village, and did a good turn of business there; and in the meanwhile I sat with the old man, and the best time I ever had was when I travelled with Striegler. I got plenty to eat and drink; the people fed me up as if it were to benefit the old man. He did not die, after all, and we went away in three days; but scarcely were we a couple of miles on our road, when the son came riding after us, to say that his father was calling for us in such distress that we must go back. We did so, and heard him talking German, but we could not understand what he wanted, and exclaiming, 'Now I am going home!' he died."

Petrowitsch here made a pause, and then continued:—"The whole affair made a considerable impression on my mind; I did not know how deep till long after.

"Striegler subsequently returned to Spain, and, I heard, married one of Caballero's daughters. When we were in France I met your father, Herr Doctor, who soon saw that I was far from being the good for nothing fellow I had been called. He furnished me with means to enable me to trade on my own behalf. I had learned to save and to starve for the benefit of others; now I did so to some purpose for my own benefit. I repaid your father his money punctually, and he entrusted me with more goods. I have been half round the world. I can speak five languages, but whenever I heard a word of German, especially the Black Forest dialect, it made my heart beat with joy. I had one great fault, I never could overcome the love of home. It glided after me, and by my side, as if it had been a spirit; and at many a jovial drinking-match in foreign lands the wine tasted to me as if some one had spilt salt in it."

Petrowitsch again paused, and poked the fire till it crackled and blazed up brightly; and, passing his hand over his wrinkled face, he began again thus:—"I pass over ten years. By that time my fortune was made, and I was living in Odessa. That is a splendid city; all nations seem at home in it, and I have a friend still there whom I can never forget. There are also villages in the vicinity, Lustdorf, and Kleinliebenthal, and various others, where numbers of Germans live, not from our country, but chiefly from Wurtemberg. I received proposals from home on every side, but I remained with your father to the day of his death. I had then realized a very pretty sum, and might have driven in my carriage, but I preferred going on foot through all Russia. I never knew what fatigue meant. Look at my arm even now! every muscle is like steel; but thirty years ago!—it was very different then.

"I established myself in Moscow, where I stayed four years. I ought not to say established myself, for I was never fairly settled or at rest in one place, I never, even for an hour, made myself at home anywhere, and that helped me to save and to make money. I met plenty of my countrymen, and I helped many. More than one, who has since prospered in the world, owes his fortune to me. I asked them what was going on at home. My father was dead, my mother dead also, and my brother married. I asked if any of them had ever enquired for me; the people, however, could not give me much information on that point. My brother said I would be sure to come home a beggar. And do you know what hurt my feelings most of all?—to hear all my countrymen still call me the Goatherd. My brother was to blame, for my being obliged to bear this degrading nickname all my life. I had all sorts of ideas in my head, and thought of sending him a couple of thousand gulden, and writing along with the money—'The Goatherd sends you this for the hundred boxes on the ear, for which he is still in your debt; and for all the kindness you have shown him, and all the care you have taken of him.' I often resolved to do this, but somehow I never did. I could no longer remain in Moscow. I wished to go home; but instead of going home I went to Tiflis, and stayed there eleven years; and as I began to grow older, I thought—'You must now act quite differently: you must go home, and take a whole sackful of gold with you; and all the people in the place shall see it except your brother, and you will not say one word to him.' And all this brooding over the matter, led me at last to be firmly convinced that he had persecuted and neglected me, and that he would have been glad if I had died. I was determined that he should be punished for this. I almost hated him, and often thought many evil things about him; and yet I could not get rid of his image, nor prevent myself from dwelling on it. Besides, I had always a longing for home, greater than I can describe. No water in the world was so good as that of the well near the church at home; and on summer evenings, how sweet the air was—quite like balsam! I would have given a thousand gulden to any one who could have brought me a roomful of air from home. These were ideas that passed through my brain thousands of times. And then I rejoiced in the thought how all the men in the upper and lower villages would flock together and say—'That is Peter,' or Petrowitsch, as they used to call me; and they should all be feasted for three days, and eat and drink as much as they liked. And in the large meadow before our house I would place long tables, and all should come who chose to come; all—all might have a place there except my brother. And yet, in the midst of this rancour, I felt that he was the only man in the world I really loved; but I was unwilling to own this to myself. Every successive year I said—'At the very next settlement I will go.' But I could never tear myself away; for in such a business as mine, where all you touch turns to gold, you have not the heart to leave it. I became old and grey by degrees—I scarcely know how. Then I was seized with illness—very severe illness. I remember nothing of what occurred during several weeks; but when I was recovering they told me that when I was delirious, I spoke in a language that no one could understand, except the doctor, who knew a word or two here and there, and said it was German, but he scarcely comprehended me. I had often called out 'Cain!' and said, 'What is the price of the lad?' Then I thought of old Caballero, whom I had seen in Valencia on his deathbed. Suppose you were one day to lie and thirst for water, as he did, and no man to know a word you were saying! Now my resolution was finally taken. Home, home, home! I soon got well, for I have a good constitution: I had settled my plans, and no obstacle should prevent my going home. If my brother creeps to me humbly, and says, 'I have not behaved well to you,' then I will stay with him till I die. How long may that be? What is all the world to us, when we have not those near and dear to us? On the journey—for at last I had actually started—I was just like a child who runs gaily home after escaping into the wood. I was often obliged to remember how old I was, and the hatred of my brother began to plague me again, and such a feeling is like an ever open wound.

"I got home at last.

"When I entered the valley, I felt as if the hills rose to come to meet me.

"I drove through several villages—so and so lived there. I no longer knew the names of the places, but when I had passed them I remembered the names. I came into our own village. It was a fine summer evening—the people had been haymaking, and the bells were ringing: it was as if I all of a sudden heard voices once more, that I no longer believed to be in the world. I had heard many bells during the forty-two years I had been in other lands, but no tones so sweet as these. I took off my hat involuntarily; but when the air of my own home blew round my head, it revived and refreshed me—there seemed a welcome home in it. I can't tell you how I felt: I thought my grey hairs must become young again. I recognised very few of the people I met on the road; but I knew you, Doctor, at once, for you were so like your father. Not a soul recognised me. I stopped at the 'Lion,' and asked—'Is Lorenz of the Morgenhalde at home?' 'At home! What do you mean? He has been dead for seven years.'"

"It was as if a flash of lightning had struck me to the earth. I repressed my feelings, however; indeed no one ever did know at any time what was really passing within me.

"I went to my room, and, late at night, out into the village, where a hundred things renewed my home feelings. I went to my parents' house—all was still there. I half resolved to leave the place again before day dawned. What could I do here? and no one had known me. But I did not go for all that.

"Soon people came from all quarters, holding out their hands in the hope that I would enrich them. But here, Doctor, one day, when I had nothing better to do, I fed the sparrows on my window sill; and after that, the importunate beggars came, as if possessed of an evil spirit, every morning to the same spot; and the noise they made drove me nearly distracted, but I could no

longer succeed in driving them away. It is easy to encourage others, but not so easy to get rid of them. I gave up asking after any one, for whenever I inquired I heard of nothing but misfortunes and death. Those whom I met, I was happy to see—those whom I did not meet, I made no mention of. All came crowding to see me, except my sister-in-law and her young prince. My sister-in-law said: 'My brother-in-law knows where his parents' house stands—we shall not run after him.' The first time I saw young Lenz I was not at all taken with him, for he had no look of our family, but was the image of his mother. Now when I looked round the village, and the whole country, I could have torn out my grey hairs at ever having come home. Everything seemed stunted, and dwarfed, and gone to ruin. And where are the old jolly times—the old spirit and fan? All gone! The young people were a worthless set. Was I not obliged to pull the unripe cherries from the trees in my avenue that their young stems might not be destroyed? My singing nephew was always sitting at home, while I had seen the world. Nothing hurt me; but every rough breeze or rough word hurt him, and made him ill. Once only I had a better opinion of him, and thought—He will yet brighten your life.' If he had married your daughter Amanda, I would either have gone to live with the young people, or they might have lived with me. My property would have come into your family; and that I should have liked, for to your father I owe the foundation of my prosperity—if it be prosperity. That confounded Pilgrim guessed my thoughts, and wished to make me the medium to propose this scheme; but I refused at once. I never will do anything for any one—never! I persuade no one to any course of action, nor can any one persuade me. Each one must live for himself; and this is the principal point I wish to impress upon you—that I never will give away one single kreuzer. I would rather throw my money into the sea. Now I have talked long enough. I am quite tired and overheated."

"How did the water taste from the well by the church, for which you had longed so much?" asked the Doctor.

"Bad, very bad—so cold and hard that I could not drink it."

The Doctor laid hold of this admission to endeavour to show Petrowitsch that the world, like the water in the well, had neither changed nor become worse; but that his stomach was no longer young, and his eyes and thoughts also had grown older. He said to Petrowitsch that it was but natural, that so much in contact with the world and with strangers, he should have become inured to all weathers, and indifferent to harsh words; but that it was also indispensable for the establishment of domestic industry and frugality, that some men should stay at home and work assiduously; and especially those who made musical works, ought to have a degree of acuteness of perception amounting to sensitiveness: at the same time he showed him that he was, in reality, himself as soft-hearted as his nephew.

He placed before him, in most emphatic language, that it was his duty to help Lenz; but Petrowitsch was once more the hard, inflexible, old man: and concluded by these words:—"I stick to what I said. I meddle with no man, and wish no man to meddle with me. I will do nothing. Not another word, Doctor, for I cannot stand it."

And so it ended. As a messenger now came from Ibrahim, Petrowitsch left the house with the Doctor. When they parted the Doctor went on to the Morgenhalde. He was obliged to draw his cloak round him, for there was a strong, but singularly soft wind blowing.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ANNELE THAWS ALSO, BUT FREEZES AGAIN.

While Lenz was journeying through the country in the deepest inward grief, Annele was alone at home with her thoughts. She was alone,—sadly alone,—for Lenz had not even left her a kind farewell, to keep her company. He had quitted her in silence, and with closed lips. "Pooh! a couple of kind words will soon turn him," thought Annele to herself; and yet she felt unusually nervous to-day, and her cheeks were flushed. She was not accustomed to sit and think; she had passed her life in bustle and excitement, and never once paused to reflect calmly on any subject. Now she had no power to escape from the voice of conscience. Let her occupy herself as she would, and go up and down the house, something followed her close, and seemed to pull her dress, and whisper, "Listen to me!"

She had hushed the little girl to sleep, and the boy was sitting beside the maid, winding the yarn she had spun; and when the girl fell asleep, Annele felt as if some one pressed her down on her chair, so that she could not rise, and that a voice said, "Annele! what are you become now?" The pretty, merry, much loved and praised Annele is sitting in a dark room, in a desolate house, sighing, fretting, and complaining.

"I would gladly submit to all this if I were only liked at home; but all I do, and all I say, is hateful to him; and I do no harm. Am I not frugal and industrious, and ready to work still harder? But up here we are as if in a grave." These thoughts made Annele start up, and as she stood

beside her child's cradle, she recalled a dream of the past night. On this occasion she had not dreamt of agreeable drives, or of visiting a pleasant inn; she thought she was standing beside her open grave. She saw it quite distinctly, and the clods of earth from the heap that had been dug out. "A bad omen," said she aloud, and stood long immovable and trembling.

At last she shook off this feeling of depression, and thought, "I will not die yet, I have not yet lived out my life, either at home or here."

She wept in pity for herself, and her thoughts wandered years back, when she had imagined it would be so delightful to live with a husband she loved in solitude, knowing nothing of the busy life of the world, for she was sick of the constant tumult of an inn, where she could not help suspecting, though she did not know it for a fact, that the whole extravagant mode of going on rested on a very tottering foundation. It was the fault of her husband, that she longed for a more profitable business to employ her dormant talents.

"He is like his musical clocks; they play their own melodies, but are incapable of listening to those of others."

In the midst of her depression, she could not resist smiling at this comparison. Her thoughts strayed farther; she would gladly have been submissive to a husband who showed the world that he had courage to be master, but not to one who did nothing all day but stick in pegs.

"But you knew well what he was," whispered conscience.

"Yes; but not exactly," was her answer; "not exactly."

"But has he not a good heart?"

"Yes, towards men in general, but not towards me. No one has ever been domesticated with him, so no one knows how full of odd humours he is, and how wild and strange he can be. But this can go on no longer; as we cannot gain a livelihood by clockmaking, we must by something else."

This was always Annele's grand conclusion, and her thoughts incessantly revolved round this point. She wished to employ her experience as a landlady in a well frequented inn, to which people would flock from far and near; and then, when she had plenty to occupy her, and was daily making money, and had other people to order about, quiet hours and happy days would return.

She went into the next room, and looked at herself in the glass. She dressed herself neatly, for she was no sloven; slippers she never wore, whereas Lenz would often go from one Sunday to the other, without once putting on his boots. While she arranged herself neatly, and for the first time for many weeks past, plaited her long hair into a triple coronet, her scornful looks seemed to say, "I am Annele of the Lion; I will have no more pining and lamenting; I will begin a fresh life, and he must follow my lead."

"Is your mistress at home?" asked some one outside.

"Yes."

There was a knock at the door. Annele looked up in surprise, and the Pastor came in.

"Welcome, Herr Pastor," said Annele, curtseying. "Your visit is meant for me, then, and not for my husband?"

"Yes, for you. I know that your husband is absent, I have never seen you in the village since the misfortunes of your parents, and I thought that perhaps it might be some relief to talk over matters with me."

Annele breathed more freely, for she was afraid the Pastor had been sent by Lenz, or had come of his own accord, to speak to her about him. Annele now lamented the unhappy fate of her parents, and said that she much feared her mother would not long survive the blow.

The Pastor earnestly entreated her, whether her parents were innocent or guilty, not to repine against the will of God, nor to withdraw herself from the world, in anger and vexation. He reminded her of what he had said on her wedding day, of the honour of husband and wife being identical. He added, kindly, that the Landlord of the "Lion" had probably miscalculated his resources, and, however heavily, yet without any evil intentions. "I did not forget," said the Pastor, wishing to give a different turn to the conversation, "that this is the anniversary of your fifth wedding day, so I wished to come and say good morning to you."

Annele thanked him cordially with a smile. But it flashed across her mind, "And Lenz could go away without even saying good morning to me!"

She now told the Pastor, in fluent language, how pleased she was to find that her Pastor should pay her such a compliment. She said much of his goodness, and that the whole village ought daily to pray that God might long spare him to them. Annele evidently wished, by her easy volubility, to lead her visitor to other topics, in order to prevent his discussing her affairs; she

was resolved not to allow the Pastor, even in the mildest form, to offer himself as a mediator in their household discord. She screwed up her lips with the same energy that Gregor the postilion displayed, when he was going to play one of his well studied flourishes on the horn.

The Pastor saw this plainly enough. He began to praise Annele on points where she really well deserved praise; that she was at all times so stirring and orderly, and, with all her bantering ways, she had yet invariably been strictly virtuous, and taken charge so admirably of her father's house.

"I am so little accustomed to hear praise now," answered Annele, "that the sound is quite strange to me, and I feel as if I never had been of use during my life, or ever had been good for anything."

The Pastor nodded, though very slightly. The hook was fast in; and just as a physician wins the confidence of an invalid by saying, "You suffer from such and such a pain, you ache here, or you are oppressed there,"—and the invalid looks up gladly, thinking, "This man knows my complaint already, and is sure to cure me;" so did the Pastor contrive to describe Annele's sorrows, as if he had experienced them himself.

Annele could no longer resist this sympathy, and Lenz came in for his full share of reproach and blame. "Help us, Herr Pastor!" said she.

"Yes, I can and will; but some one else must help too, and that is yourself."

The worthy man seemed suddenly to become taller, and his voice more powerful, as he reminded Annele of her hardheartedness towards Franzl, and of all the false pride she nourished in her heart. Annele listened with flashing eyes, and when the Pastor reproached her with her transgression against Franzl, she broke loose, as if on some prey for which she had laid in wait.

"So now it is come out,—the sly old woman! the horrid hypocrite!—it was she who had told all these things of her, and exasperated the Pastor, and the whole world, against her." No cat devours a mouse with greater satisfaction, than Annele now clawed and tore at old Franzl. "If I had her only here this minute!" said she repeatedly.

The Pastor let her rage till she was tired, and at last said: "You have exhibited no little temper just now, but I maintain, for all that, you are not really badhearted—in fact, not bad at all."

Annele burst into tears, and deplored her being so altered for the worse. She had become so passionate, which was not her natural disposition; and it all proceeded from her being able to earn nothing. She was not fitted to be the wife of a small clockmaker, and to look after his household. She ought to be a landlady, and if the Pastor would assist her in this project, she faithfully promised him, that she would never again give way to either anger or malice.

The Pastor agreed with her that to be a landlady was her peculiar vocation. She kissed his hand in gratitude. He promised to do what he could to effect this, but exhorted her not to expect a transformation of heart from any outward events. "You are not yet," said he, "sufficiently humbled by grief and misery. Pride is your besetting sin, and causes your unhappiness, and that of others also. God grant that some irrevocable misfortune to your husband, or children, may not eventually be the first thing to convert your heart!"

Annele was seated opposite the mirror, and unconsciously she saw her face reflected in it; it looked as if it was covered with cobwebs, and involuntarily she passed her hand across it, to brush them away.

The Pastor wished to go away, but Annele begged him to stay a little, as she could collect her thoughts better when he was there; she only wished him to remain a short time longer.

The two sat in silence, and nothing was heard but the ticking of the clocks. Annele's lips moved, without uttering any sound.

When the Pastor at length took leave of her, she kissed his hand reverently; and he said, "If you feel in your inmost soul what a privilege it is, and if your heart is humbled—thoroughly humbled, then come to the sacrament tomorrow. May God have you in his holy keeping!"

Annele wished to accompany the Pastor a little way, but he said: "No politeness at present. Be good and humble at heart. 'Judge yourself, that ye be not judged,' says the Apostle Paul. Judge yourself, and search your heart. Accustom yourself to sit quiet sometimes, and to meditate."

The Pastor was gone, and Annele sat in the same place. It was not easy for her to sit idle, and reflection was quite contrary to her nature, but she forced herself to think over what had passed. Her child woke up, and began to scream.

"The Pastor has no children; I cannot sit still any longer, I must pacify the child," said she, taking the little girl out of bed. Deep repentance, however, and new love for Lenz, had awoke within her heart. "We will settle our own affairs," said she, "without the help of either the Pastor or any one else."

It was noon and the sun shone brightly. Annele wrapped up the child well, and went with it before the house. Perhaps Lenz will soon be home, and she will welcome him kindly, and call out the "good morning" he forgot to say when he left her; and she would tell him that all was to go well between them in future. This is the very hour of her wedding five years ago, and this shall be another happy day.

A man was seen climbing the hill: he was not yet near enough to be recognised, but Annele said to the child, "Call, Father!"

The child did so; but when the man came up, it was not Lenz, but Faller. He wore a hat, but he had another in his hand; and, hurrying up to Annele, he called out—"Is Lenz come home?"

"No."

"Good heavens! here is his hat. My brother-in-law found it in the Igelswang, close by the spot where the wood is floated down. If Lenz has made away with himself! In God's name! what has been going on here?"

Annele trembled in every limb, and pressed the child so close to her heart that it began to cry loudly. "You are out of your mind," said she, "and will soon drive me mad also. What do you mean?"

"Is not this his hat?"

"It is," screamed Annele, sinking to the ground with the child. Faller lifted them both up.

"Has he been found?—dead?" asked Annele.

"No, God be praised!—not that. Come into the house—I will carry the child. Be composed—probably he only lost his hat."

Annele tottered into the house. A mist was before her eyes, and she waved her hands vaguely, as if to drive it away. "Was it possible?—Lenz dead? Now, just when her heart was turning again to him? and he has been always faithful to her. It cannot be—it is not so." She sat down in the room, and said—"Why should my Lenz make away with himself? What do you mean by saying such a thing?"

Faller made no answer.

"Can you only speak when no one wishes to hear you?" asked Annele, passionately. "Sit down—sit down," said she, striving to control her feelings, "and tell me what has happened."

As if wishing to punish Annele, by paying no attention to her words, Faller continued standing, though his knees trembled. He glanced at her with a look, so full of sorrow and bitter reproach, that Annele cast down her eyes. "Who could wish to sit down by you?" said he at length. "Where you are, there can be neither rest nor peace."

"I don't want any of your admonitions; you ought to be aware of that by this time. If you know anything of my husband, let me hear it."

Faller now repeated the universal report, that Lenz had been trying to borrow money in all directions, and also to get a certain sum to make good the security he had given, for the purchase of Faller's house. This was, however, no longer necessary, as Don Bastian had paid the purchase-money for him this very day.

When Annele heard that, she started up, and her gestures seemed to say—"So, he has deceived me, and told me downright lies. He is alive: he must be alive—for he must live to expiate his sin; for he declared that he had recalled his security. Only come home, liar and hypocrite!"

Annele left the room, and did not return till Faller was gone. All remorse—all contrition had vanished. Lenz had told her a falsehood, and he should repent it. "These watergruel, goodnatured people are all alike; because they have not the spirit to lay hold of a thing manfully, when necessary, they wish, in their turn, to be handled as tenderly as an egg without a shell; do nothing to me, and I do nothing to any one—refuse me nothing, I refuse nothing to any one, though it brings me to beggary. This is his doctrine! Only come home, pitiful milksop!"

Annele had no food warm at the fire for Lenz when he did come home. There was, however, a warm reception awaiting him!

CHAPTER XXXII.

A STORMY NIGHT.

When Lenz left the Doctor to mount the hill, he was full of happy confidence. Two paths were open to him—his uncle or the manufactory. When he saw lights shining in his house, he said to himself, "God be praised! those I love are expecting me. All will soon be right again."

Suddenly, like a fiery dart, the thought cut him to the heart "You have this day been wicked—downright wicked—doubly and trebly so. Both when you were with Kathrine and at the Doctor's, the sinful thought arose in your heart—how different your fate might have been! You have hitherto boasted of your honest heart—you can do so no longer. You are the father of two children, and have been five years married. Good heavens! This is actually our fifth wedding day."

He stood still, and his conscience smote him. He said to himself: "Annele, good Annele! I have sinned in thought today in every way. My parents in heaven will not forgive me if that ever occurs again. But from this day we shall commence a new union."

With this feeling of indignation against himself, and in the joyful security that all would soon be on a more pleasant footing at home, he entered the house. "Where is my wife?" said he, finding the children sitting in the kitchen with the maid.

"She has just lain down."

"What? Is she ill?"

"She did not complain of anything."

Lenz hurried to his wife. "God be with you, Annele! I say good morning and good evening together, for I forgot it when I left you so early today; and I wish you all happiness, and myself too. Please God, from this day forth, all will go well with us!"

"Thank you."

"What is the matter? Are you ill?"

"No; only tired—very tired. I will rise immediately, however."

"No; stay where you are, if it rests you. I have good news to give you."

"I don't choose to lie here. Go away, and I will come to you presently."

"But first listen to what I have got to say."

"Plenty of time for that; a few minutes can't make much difference."

All Lenz's lightness of heart seemed to vanish; but he controlled his feelings, and went out and caressed the children. At last Annele came. "Do you want anything to eat?" said she.

"No. How does my hat come here?"

"Faller brought it. I suppose you gave it to him to bring to me."

"Why should I do that? The wind carried it off my head." He related briefly his interview with Kathrine. Annele was silent: she was carefully hoarding up the arrow with the lie about Faller's security—the time will soon come when she can send it flying at his head. She can wait.

Lenz sent the maid into the kitchen, and taking his boy on his knee, he told Annele honestly everything, with one exception—the faithless thoughts he had entertained towards her. And Annele said: "Do you know the only reality in all that?"

"What?"

"The hundred gulden and three crown dollars old Franzl offered you. All the rest is stuff."

"Why so?"

"Because your uncle will never help you. I suppose you will own now, that you should not have helped him to slip through our fingers as to his intentions towards you, this day five years?"

"But the proposal about the manufactory?"

"Who is to enter it besides you?"

"I know of no one at this moment but Pröbler; and it is true he has made many useful discoveries in his life."

"Ha! ha!—capital! Pröbler and you!—a famous match, certainly! Have not I told you a hundred times that you would sink to his level? But he is better than you, for at least he has not brought a wife and family to beggary by his misconduct. To the deuce with such hypocrites and milksops! Go in harness with Pröbler, by all means!" cried Annele. And snatching the boy from his knee, she said passionately to the child—"Your father is a scamp and an idler, and expects us to put every

morsel of bread into his mouth. It is a pity his mother is not still living, to feed him with bread and milk. Oh! how low I am sunk! But this I tell you, that so long as I live you shall not enter that manufactory. I would rather drown both myself and my children; then, perhaps, the Doctor's long-legged daughter, the young lady who is so learned in herbs, might marry you."

Lenz sat still, entirely confounded. His hair stood on end. At last he said—"Don't dare to call on my mother: leave her at peace in eternity."

"I can do that easily enough. I didn't want anything from her, and I never had anything from her."

"What?—have you thrown away the plant of Edelweiss that was hers?"

"Oh, stuff! I have it yet."

"Where? give it to me."

Annele opened a cupboard and showed him the plant. "I am thankful that you still have it," said Lenz, "for it will bring a blessing on us both."

"You seem pretty well out of your mind with your foolish superstitions," answered Annele. "Must I submit to that, too? There! fly away in the air, Edelweiss, along with the sacred inscription!"

She opened the window. A stormy wind was howling outside. "There, wind!" called she, "come! Carry it all off with you—the whole precious concern!" The writing and the plant were whirled away in a moment. The wind shrieked and whistled, and deposited the writing on the bleak hill.

"Annele, what have you done?" said Lenz with a groan.

"I am not superstitious like you; I am not so lost to common sense yet, as to place any faith in the benefit of a spell."

"It is no superstition. My mother only meant, that so long as my wife respected what came from her, it would bring us a blessing. But nothing is sacred in your eyes."

"Certainly, neither you nor your mother are."

"Enough!—not another word," cried Lenz in a hoarse voice, dashing down a chair. "Go with the boy out of the room. Not one word, or I shall go out of my senses.—Hush! some one is coming."

Annele left the room with the child.

The Doctor came in.

"As I feared, so, alas, it is! Your uncle will do nothing—absolutely nothing. He says that he tried to dissuade you from marrying, and takes his ground on that point. I tried every persuasion, but all in vain. He almost told me to leave the house."

"Is it possible?—and on my account too! The dreadful thing is, that whoever is friendly to me, or wishes to do me good, is sure to come in for a share of my misery. Forgive me, Herr Doctor—it was not my fault."

"I know that well! how can you speak so? I have known many men in the course of my life, but never yet such a man as your uncle. He opened his heart to me, and he has the tender heart of your family, and I thought I should be able to guide him with ease, and lead him to the point I wished like a child; but, when it came to the grand climax, money!"—the Doctor snapped his fingers;—"it was all up! no further use talking! My belief is that he really has nothing of his own; nothing but an annuity from some insurance office; but let us put him aside altogether. I have talked to both my sons. If you don't wish to enter the manufactory, you may have six or seven workpeople in your own house here, as many as you can manage, and employ them for the benefit of the manufactory."

"Do not speak so loud. My wife hears everything in the next room; and just like you with my uncle, I unfortunately foresaw what she would say. In my life I never saw her in such a state as she was, when I told her about the manufactory. She won't hear of it."

"Think it over for a time. Won't you escort me a little way?"

"Pray excuse me, for I am so tired; I really can scarcely stand, for I have not rested since four o'clock this morning; I am not much accustomed to walk so far, and I almost think I am going to be ill."

"Your pulse is feverish; but that is natural enough. If you have a good sleep tonight, you will soon be all right again; but be careful of yourself for some time. You may have a very serious attack of illness if you do not keep quiet, and spare yourself and nurse yourself. Tell your wife

from me," said the Doctor aloud, so that she might hear it in the adjoining room, "that she should be very careful of the father of her children"—here he made a pause on purpose—"and nurse him kindly, and keep him at home; a clockmaker, from his constant sedentary habits, is but a weakly creature. Good night, Lenz!"

The Doctor departed. He often stumbled by the way, and almost sunk down into the snow drifts that were fast thawing in all directions, and on the surface of which were many dangerous, loose, rolling stones. He was forced to give his attention more closely to the path, and not to give way to sad thoughts; for he recalled what Pilgrim had lately said to him:—"Lenz lived, no doubt, tolerably enough with his wife, but a mere formal intercourse with any one could not satisfy him; what he requires is cheerfulness, happiness, and cordial love; and these he has not."

In the meanwhile Lenz was sitting alone. He was quite worn out with fatigue, and yet he could find no rest. He walked up and down the room restlessly, like a wild beast in his cage. He might justly have uttered many more complaints to the Doctor, for he was really suffering severely, and all at once he exclaimed in the bitterness of his heart:—"Alas, alas! to be ill, with an unkind wife! not to be able to go away—here must I be, and submit to her humours and to all her bitter speeches. She will say that my invalid fancies proceed only from folly, and my best friends dare not come to see me. To feel so ill, and to be dependent on the kindness of a malignant woman! Death from my own hand would be preferable!"

The wind extinguished the fire, and the house was filled with smoke. Lenz opened the window and stood long looking out:—"There is no longer a light at the blacksmith's; he is buried in the dark earth: happy the man who can be at rest like him, and out of misery!"

The air was warm, singularly warm; water was dripping from the roof; the wind was rushing and raging over hill and valley, and there were crashes in the air, as if one blast of wind came in collision with another, driving it forwards. On the hill behind the house there sounded a constant rolling and rumbling; as if the storm were savage at being deprived of the wood in which it was accustomed to career at will; and now the blast wreaks its wrath on the old chesnut trees and pines close to the house while they sway about wildly, and creak and strain. It is most fortunate that the house is so strongly built; one of the old fashioned kind, made of whole logs of timber laid crossways, otherwise there would be good reason to fear that the hurricane would sweep away the house and all in it.

"That would be famous!" Lenz laughed bitterly; but he often looked over his shoulder in terror, for the old beams cracked today, as if the house knew what was going on within its walls.

Such a night and such a mood, no inhabitant of this house had ever known; neither Lenz's father, nor grandfather, nor great grandfather.

He went to fetch writing materials, and found himself, by chance, with the light in his hand opposite the looking glass, staring at a human face with wild, sunken eyes. At last he sat down and wrote; he paused repeatedly, pressed his hand to his eyes, and then wrote on again hurriedly. He rubbed his eyes but no tears came to his relief:—"You can no longer weep; you have too much sorrow for one man to bear," said he in a low voice. He wrote:—

"Brother of my heart!

"It grieves me to write to you; but I must once more speak to you freely. I think of the days, and the summer nights, when I roamed about with you, dear friend. I cannot believe that it was I! it surely must have been another man! God is my witness, and also my mother in heaven, that I never willingly offended any one in my life; and if I ever offended you, beloved friend, forgive me; I ask your pardon a thousand times. I never did so intentionally. A man situated as I am, is not worthy to live.

"And now, this is the point: I expect no deliverance but from death. I know it is scandalous, but if I live the scandal will be greater. Each day of my life I am a murderer. I can no longer bear this. I weep night after night, and I despise myself for it. I may say that I might have been a quiet, upright, honest man, if I could have kept in the straight path. I am not equal to contend with others. Tears rush to my eyes when I think of what I have become, and yet I was once so different. If I continue to live, my life will disgrace my children; now it will only be my death. In the course of a year it will be forgotten, and the grass will be growing over my grave. I appeal to you by your good heart, and by all the kindness you have shown me all your life long, take a fatherly charge of my deserted children! My poor children! I dare not think of them! I once thought I could be as kind a father as any in the world—but I cannot—I cannot bring those to love me, who do not do so of their own accord, and that is my chief misery, a misery I am unable to conquer—it is like trying to climb a glass wall. My dear mother was right; how often did she say —'We can sow and plant all kinds of things, and by dint of culture make them flourish, but one thing must grow voluntarily, and that is mutual affection.' It does not grow in my case, where I would fain see it grow.

"Take my children out of the village when I am buried—I do not wish them to be present. Beg the Pastor to let me lie beside my parents, and my brother, and sisters. They were better off than

me. Why was I alone doomed to live, in order to die thus at last?

"You are my Wilhelm's godfather; pray adopt him. You always said he had a talent for drawing, so take him under your care. If possible, be reconciled to uncle Petrowitsch, perhaps he will do something for my children when I am gone; and I tell you again, and certainly I tell you the truth at such a moment as this, he likes you in reality, and you may become good friends yet. He has a kind heart, far more so than he wishes to have thought—my poor mother often and often said so. My wife.... I will say nothing of her. If my children do well, then you can say all kind of things to her from me, one day. I have been obliged to hear, and to say, what I could never have believed possible. Oh! world! what are you? I am in prison, and must make my escape. I have lived through days and nights that seemed like years. I am weary; weary to death; I can go no single step farther. For months past, when I close my eyes and try to sleep, I see nothing but horrors, and they pursue me by day also. As for the money I owe you, the watch I wear is your property, it will beat on your faithful heart, after mine beats no more—and when my things are sold, buy my father's file, and keep it for my Wilhelm. I have nothing to leave him; but don't fail to tell him often that his father was not a bad man. He inherits my unfortunate disposition: try to drive it out of him, and make him strong and energetic. And the little girl——

"It seems hard, hard indeed, that I must part with my life while I am still so young, but it is best it should be so. The Doctor will see that my body is not sent to the students at Freiburg. Greet him, and all his family, in the kindest manner from me. He has long seen that I was declining in health and happiness, but it was beyond the power of any doctor to cure me. Say farewell from me to all my good comrades, particularly to Faller, and the Schoolmaster. I fancy I have still much to say, but my eyes are dim and dizzy. My beloved friend and brother, good night! Farewell, for ever!

"Your faithful

"LENZ."

He folded up the letter, and wrote on the back "To my much loved brother, Pilgrim."

Day was dawning. He extinguished the light, and still holding the letter in his hand, Lenz looked out of the window, as his last greeting to the wide world outside. The sun is rising over the hill; first a pale yellow line, then a dark cloud stretches itself along, contrasting with the clear, deep blue sky; the whole plain, covered with snow, trembles in the pale, flickering light; a bright red glow steals over the surface of the cloud, but the centre remains dark; when suddenly—the cloud is rent asunder, in bright yellow shreds, the whole sky is golden, till it gradually catches a rosy hue, and then all at once the whole extent of the heavens becomes a mass of brilliant, glittering crimson; this is the world—the world of light, of bright existence; it will be seen but once more, before you leave it for ever!

Lenz concealed the letter, and went out round the house; he plunged almost up to his knees in snow. He returned into the sitting room. Annele had not yet risen, he therefore breakfasted alone with his children; and when the bells began to ring, he desired the maid to take Wilhelm to Pilgrim's. He first thought of giving the maid his letter with her, but he took it again out of her hand and put it in the girl's frock. When they undressed her at night, they would find it, and by that time all would be over.

"Go to Pilgrim," said he to the maid again, "and wait in his house till I come; and, if I don't come, stay there till night." He kissed the boy, and then turned away, and laid his head on the table. He remained thus a long time. Nothing stirred in the house. The bells in the valley below were sounding for church; he waited till the last note had died away, and then locked the house door, and came back into the room, crying in despair of heart, "Heavenly Father! forgive me; but it must be so!"

He sank on his knees, and tried to pray, but could not:—"Annele, too, used to pray often; and yet scarcely was the last word of prayer uttered by her lips, than strife and discord, scorn and mockery, broke loose again; she has transgressed both against heaven and earth. And yet I cannot die without seeing her once more."

He rushed into the next room, and drew aside the bed curtains. "Father!" cried the little girl, who was sitting on her mother's bed; and Lenz sunk down almost lifeless.

A hollow sound is heard. The earth is opening, surely, to swallow up the house! It is like thunder—underground, and overhead. A violent concussion makes the house shake. And suddenly all is pitch dark. The blackest night reigns everywhere.

"In God's name, what is it?" screamed Annele.

Lenz raised himself with difficulty. "I don't know, I don't know."

"What has happened?" Annele and the child cried and screamed. And Lenz called out, "Good God! what is it?" They were all stupefied. Lenz tried to open a window, but could not succeed. He groped his way to the next room, but all was dark there too. He stumbled over a chair, and ran

back into Annele's room, calling out, "Annele, we are buried alive! buried in the snow!"Neither of them could utter a syllable, but the child screamed loudly, and the poultry in their coops screeched wildly, as if a weasel had come among them; then all was still, as still as death.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

At this very hour Pilgrim intended to have gone to church; but on the way he turned, and went several times past Petrowitsch's house. At last he stopped at the door, and pulled the bell.

Petrowitsch had long since observed him from his window, and when he now rung, Petrowitsch said to himself, "So you are coming to me? You shall not soon forget your reception."

Petrowitsch was in very bad humour, as cross as if he had been suffering from the effects of intoxication, and it was very nearly the same. He had been tempted to revel in old remembrances, and to entrust another with his secret life. He was provoked with himself, for not having been able to withstand the temptation of appearing good, in the eyes of one man. He felt ashamed of ever facing the Doctor again in broad daylight. His usual pride, which made him say he was quite indifferent to what the world thought of him, was all gone. Now Pilgrim was come, and on him should be discharged the whole vials of his wrath. He will neither play the guitar, nor sing, nor whistle today.

Pilgrim came in, and said, "Good morning, Herr Lenz."

"The same to you, Herr Pilgrim."

"Herr Lenz, I come to you instead of going to church."

"I had no idea I was considered so holy."

"Herr Lenz, I come, not because I believe that it will do any good, but still I shall have done my duty."

"It would be well if every one did their duty."

"You know your nephew Lenz—"

"There is no Lenz whom I care about, except the one I see there," said Petrowitsch, looking at his wrinkled face in the glass.

"You know, however, that your brother's son is in distress."

"No, the distress is in him. This comes of giving way to the impulses of a good heart, and having companions who encourage such weakness; and whatever advice may be in opposition to this, is considered the mere whims of a peevish, withered old man."

"You may be right; but wise speeches do no good now. The misery of Lenz is greater than you think."

"I never tried to fathom its depth."

"In one word, I have the greatest fear that he may make away with himself."

"That he did long since. A man who marries so stupidly makes away with his life."

"I don't know what more to say. I thought I was prepared for everything; but not for this. You are worse, and yet different, from what I thought."

"Thanks for the compliment. It is a sad pity that I can't hang it round my neck as an order of merit, like the Choral Society."

The good humoured, merry Pilgrim stood before the old man, looking as foolish as a swordsman whose blade is made to fly out of his hand at each attack.

Petrowitsch feasted on this spectacle, and crammed a large piece of sugar into his mouth. Then he said, smacking his lips, "My brother's son followed his own devices, and it would not be fair on my part, were I to deprive him of the harvest he so richly deserves. He has squandered his life and his money, and I have no power to restore either."

"Indeed you have, Herr Lenz! His life, and that of his family, can yet be saved. All discord in the house will cease when they are once more at ease, and free from care and anxiety. The

proverb says, 'Horses quarrel over an empty manger.' Money is not happiness in itself, but it can bring happiness."

"A very remarkable fact how free and easy young people are with other people's money! but they object to earning it themselves! Once for all, however, I am resolved to do nothing for the husband of Annele of the 'Lion,' whose affection is only to be bought with money."

"And if your nephew dies?"

"Then he will, probably, be buried."

"And what is to become of the children?"

"No one can tell what becomes of children."

"Did your nephew ever offend you in any way?"

"I don't know why he should."

"What can you, then, do better with your money than—"

"When I find that I require a guardian, I will apply to Herr Pilgrim."

"Herr Lenz, you are a vast deal too clever for me."

"You do me much honour," said Petrowitsch, kicking off his slippers.

"I have done all I could, at all events," rejoined Pilgrim.

"And at a cheap rate; words cost little—how much a bushel? for I should like to buy some."

"This is the first and last time I ask you anything."

"And this is the first and last time I refuse you anything."

"Good morning, Herr Lenz."

"The same to you, Herr Pilgrim."

Pilgrim turned round once more at the door. His face was red, and his eyes flashed, as he said, "Herr Lenz, do you know what you are doing?"

"I have hitherto always known pretty well what I was doing."

"You are, in fact, turning me out of your house."

"Really!" said Petrowitsch, with a sneer. He, however, cast down his eyes when he saw the expression of Pilgrim's face—half rage, half sorrow.

Pilgrim resumed: "Herr Lenz, I submit to a good deal from you. Of all the men, far and near, who have seen trees and hedges growing, where sticks are to be had, not one can come forward and say that those who offended Pilgrim ever yet did so with impunity. You may do so, and do you know why? Because I allow myself to be maltreated for the sake of my friend. Alas! it is all I can do for him. I don't say one angry word to you—not one. You shall never have it in your power to say, 'Pilgrim behaved so rudely to me, that it prevents my doing anything for his dear friend Lenz.' For my friend's sake I submit to your insults. You may tell every one you turned me out of doors."

"I shall not gain much credit by that."

Pilgrim drew a deep breath, his lips quivered, and he left the room in silence.

Petrowitsch looked after him, with pretty much the same satisfied air that a fox displays when it sucks the blood of a leveret, and then lets it run away, as it best can.

He paced his room in high good humour, playing with the tassels of his dressing-gown. His satisfaction seemed positively to inflate him, for he stroked himself down with his hands, as if to say, "Now you are once more yourself; yesterday evening you were a soft hearted fool, and had no right to abuse this weak, wayward world."

In the mean time Pilgrim went homewards in a dejected mood, and, passing his own door, went far out into the fields, till at last he turned, and went home. There, to his great joy, he found his friend's child. "Thus it is when friends are really attached; my good Lenz was thinking of me, at the very same moment when I was thinking of him. Perhaps he knew, or at least had a presentiment, that I meant to go to Petrowitsch, and sent the child to me to assist my petition. But it would have done no good; to such a man as Petrowitsch, men and angels would speak equally in vain."

Pilgrim was unwearied in the games he thought of to amuse the boy, and in the drawings he

did for him; and then, with the aid of a white handkerchief, and his black neckcloth, he could make with his fingers hares, and hounds chasing them. Little Wilhelm shouted with joy, and made Pilgrim tell him the same story at least three times over. Pilgrim had a very pretty knack of story telling, especially about a certain chesnut brown Turk, Kulikali, with a huge nose, who could swallow smoke. Pilgrim dressed himself up in a moment as the Turk Kulikali, seated himself crosslegged on a strip of carpet on the floor, and did all sorts of conjuring tricks. Pilgrim was on this occasion quite as much a child as his young godson. Then they went down stairs, and dined with Don Bastian. In the afternoon, in spite of drizzling rain and snow showers, Pilgrim went to the riverside for an hour with Wilhelm. Was it not a pretty sight! Great blocks of ice were swimming along, and crows perched on them; they wished to see for once how they liked boating, but when one of the masses of ice was shivered, they wisely flew away, and settled on another. It was a giddy sight to look down on from above. It seemed as if the earth were moving, and the ice standing still. The boy clung timidly to Pilgrim. He took him home, and put a mattress for his godson on his old well worn sofa, for both agreed that young Lenz should not go home to-night; and it went to Pilgrim's heart when the child said, "My father speaks so loud, and my mother too; and my mother said my father was a wicked man."

"Oh! my poor Lenz, you must do what you can, to make your boy less sensitive than yourself," thought Pilgrim.

The rain and snow came down in such gusts, that it was scarcely possible to go outside the house, especially as large masses of snow were tumbling off the roofs. Soon it was evening, but Lenz did not come; and Pilgrim was startled by hearing the maid say that she had met Petrowitsch on the road to the Morgenhalde, not far from the house; he asked her "Whose child is that?" and when she said, "Lenz's son, Wilhelm," he patted the boy's head, and gave him a lump of sugar, or at least one half of it, as he broke it in two, and put one piece into his own mouth.

Is it possible? Can Petrowitsch really be softened? Who knows the heart of man?

After Petrowitsch had fully enjoyed his triumph over the Doctor and Pilgrim, he felt quite comfortable. He watched the people going to church in groups, and at last one solitary woman and then a man running to arrive in time.

Petrowitsch usually went regularly to church; indeed it was said that in his will he had bequeathed a large sum for the purpose of building a new place of worship; on this day he stayed at home, having sufficient occupation for his thoughts, but involuntarily it occurred to him—

"That fellow, Lenz, has good friends in his need. Pooh! who knows if they would have been as zealous, if they had been rich! ... Pilgrim's earnestness did, however, seem genuine: tears were in his eyes; he controlled his own indignation, and submitted to all my impertinence, for the sake of his friend; but who can tell if this was not all a trick on his part? No, no, there still are true friends in the world."

The organ vibrated from afar, and the singing of the congregation rose in the air, then all was still: the Pastor was, no doubt, preaching his sermon: one solitary human voice cannot be heard at such a distance. Petrowitsch sat in his chair with clasped hands, and it seemed as if some one was preaching to him, for suddenly he started up, and said aloud:—"It is a very good thing to show others that you have a will of your own; but it is also pleasant to be esteemed. After all, it is not worth much; but still, to take men by surprise, and to make them say, 'Well, we never could have believed this.' Yes, yes, that would be pleasant enough."

For many years Petrowitsch had not dressed himself so rapidly as today—usually his dressing, like everything he did, was a work of time, on which he could always spend a good hour—today he was ready in a few minutes. He put on his fur cloak—and he had the finest fur in the country; Petrowitsch had not been so long in Russia for nothing. His old housekeeper, who had seen him so short a time before in his dressing gown, looked at him in amazement, but she never ventured to address him, unless he first spoke to her. Petrowitsch, stepping out stoutly and carrying his goldheaded stick, with its strong sharp point, went through the village, and then proceeded up the hill. No human being was on the pathway, not a single soul looked out of the window—so there was no one to wonder why the old man had left his own house in such dreadful weather, and at so unusual an hour. Büble, however, barked loud enough to supply this deficiency, as if saying, "My master is going to a house—to a house—where no one would believe he was really going. I could not have believed it myself." Büble barked this out to a certain crow, who was perched contemplatively on a hedge, gazing, in deep thought, at the melting snow; Büble soon barked for his own behoof only, and the deeper the snow became, the higher Büble jumped, making various unnecessary scurries on his own account, up the hill and down again, and then he looked at his master, as if to say, "No living creature understands you and me, except ourselves—we know each other pretty well."

"I give up my peace for ever if I do it," said Petrowitsch to himself; "but if I don't do it, I shall have no peace either, and so it is better to earn some gratitude into the bargain; and he certainly is a good, single hearted, honest man, just like his father. Yes, yes!"

These were Petrowitsch's reflections. He arrived in front of Lenz's house. The door was locked; Büble had trotted on before him, and was standing on the door step, when at the same instant—Petrowitsch had actually the latch of the door in his hand—he sank to the ground. He

was lying under a mass of snow.

"This is the result of taking charge of other people's affairs," was his first thought as he fell. Soon he no longer had the power to think.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

BURIED ALIVE.

"Get a light, Lenz; get a light! Let us at least see our danger, whatever it may be. You sit there in the dark, groaning and lamenting: why are you shedding tears on my hand? What do you mean? Let go my hand that I may rise and strike a light."

"Annele, stay where you are!" Lenz could scarcely speak in his agitation. "Annele, I had resolved to put an end to myself, and came to take a last look at you; but now we are buried alive, and our child with us."

"If any act of energy on your part had been required to cause this misfortune, it never would have happened; it must have come of its own accord."

Still, still, these bitter, irritating words—still the same sharp, cutting tone. Lenz could scarcely draw breath.

"I must rise—I will rise," continued Annele. "I am not like you, letting my arms hang idly by my side. Come good, or come evil, just as it may chance, I am resolved to see what can be done. You would prefer waiting, I suppose, till you are dug out, or the snow at last melted? With me it is very different."

"Stay where you are, I will strike a light," answered Lenz, and went into the next room, but before he could light a candle, Annele was standing beside him. She had her child in her arms. He went to the granary, but quickly returned, saying, with horror, that the roof had given way under the weight of the snow; "And not snow alone," continued he; "large trunks of trees have rolled down on the house, along with the snow. That must have been the cause of the dreadful crashes we heard."

"What care I for that? The point now is to help ourselves, and to find some rescue."

Annele ran from window to window, and from door to door. "It cannot be! such a misfortune is impossible!" Not till she saw that nothing yielded to her frantic efforts, everything being as immovable as mason work, did Annele break out into loud lamentations, and place the child on a table. Lenz took the little girl in his arms, and begged Annele to be patient, she having now sunk down in silence. "The cold hand of death lies on our house," said he, "and it is no use struggling against fate."

"Where is my boy?" said she, suddenly starting up. "Have you hid him anywhere?"

"No; he is not here."

"God be praised! Then we are not all lost; one of us at least is safe."

"I will tell you fairly that I sent away the boy on purpose. I did not wish him to see me murder myself. Now it has turned out differently. God will demand our souls together. But this poor infant! it is hard it should die with its sinful parents."

"I have committed no sin; I have nothing to reproach myself with."

"Well! continue to think so, if you can. Do you not know that you murdered me, poisoning my heart, dishonouring me in my own eyes, striving to trample upon me, and depriving me of all moral courage?"

"A husband who can submit to such things deserves no better fate."

"Annele, for God's sake remember that in the course of an hour, we shall probably stand before another Judge! Search your conscience!"

"I don't want to hear your sermons; preach to yourself."

She went into the kitchen, and tried to light a fire, but she uttered a cry of distress. When Lenz went to her, he saw her eyes fixed in horror on the hearthstone, where rats and mice were sitting staring at her, and a raven was flying about in the kitchen, dashing first against plates, and then against pans, making them fall on the floor with a crash.

"Kill them, kill them!" screamed Annele, hurrying away.

Lenz soon got rid of the rats and mice, but he could not succeed in getting hold of the raven, without shattering all the crockery on the kitchen shelves. The light of the lamp drove the creature distracted, and without light it was impossible to find it. Lenz returned to the sitting room, and said, "I have loaded pistols here, so I could shoot the raven, but I dare not risk it, for the vibration from the shot might hurry on the final destruction of the house. So I will at least make this room safe."

He dragged a heavy press into the middle of the room, under the main cross beam, placing a smaller one on the top, which he crammed full of linen, and pushed it so tight against the ceiling, that it could support a great pressure.

"Now we will bring in here whatever food we have in the house." This he also completed quickly and surely.

Annele looked at him in astonishment. She could not stir from the spot; she felt as if suddenly paralysed.

Lenz then brought out his prayer-book, and Annele's, and opened them both at the same place —"Preparation for death." He placed the one before Annele, and began to read the other himself; but presently he looked up, and said, "You are right not to attempt to read this, for there is nothing here to suit us. Never before was there such a case: two human beings vowed to live in peace and unity, and mutually to enhance the value of life, but they signally failed, and went different ways, and yet now they are imprisoned together on the threshold of death. They could not live together, but they must die together. Hush!" said he, suddenly; "don't you hear a faint cry? It seems to me that I hear groans."

"I hear nothing."

"We can't light a fire," continued Lenz; "the chimney is choked up, so we should be stifled. But, God be praised! here is the spirit lamp that my poor mother bought. Yes, mother," said he, looking up at her picture, "even in death you help us. Light it, Annele; but be very sparing of the spirit. Who knows how long we must stay here?"

Annele was transfixed with amazement at Lenz's expressions and gestures. The words were often on her lips—"Are you the same Lenz who was always so supine and helpless?" But she did not give utterance to them; she was like a person in a trance, who would fain speak, but cannot. She could not articulate a syllable.

After she had swallowed a cupful of hot milk, however, Annele said: "If the rats and mice come in here, what is to be done?"

"Then we will kill them here too, and I will throw them out into the snow, that their putrid carcases may not taint the air. I will do the same to those in the kitchen."

Annele thought—"This must be another man! Can this be the former listless, indolent Lenz, who is now so bold, when face to face with death?"

Some words of kindness and appreciation trembled on her lips, but still she said nothing.

"Look! that confounded raven has bitten me," said Lenz, coming in with his hand bleeding, "and I cannot catch him. The creature is crazy from terror, for the mass of snow carried the bird along with it. There is a perfect pillar of snow in the chimney. It is ten o'clock. They are now leaving church down below in the village. When the last peal rang out, we were buried alive. That was our death-bell."

"I cannot die yet, I am still so young! and my child! I never knew, or anticipated, that I exposed myself to sudden death by settling in such a desert with a clockmaker."

"Your father is the sole cause of it," replied Lenz. "My parents were three times snowed up. The snow lay so thick outside, that for two or three days no one could leave the house; but we never were buried under it till now. Your father sold the wood; it is his doing; he let the wood be cut down over our heads."

"It is your fault; he offered to give you the wood."

"That is true enough."

"Oh, that I were safe out of this house, with my child!" lamented Annele.

"And you don't think of me at all?"

Annele pretended not to hear this speech, and exclaimed again, "Gracious powers! why must I die thus? what have I done?"

"What have you done? Soon, very soon, God will tell you. My words are of no avail in awakening your conscience."

Lenz was silent, and Annele also, though she felt she must say something, and yet she could not utter.

"Good heavens!" began Lenz at last; "here are we two doomed to die, and yet what are our mutual feelings? Misery and despair! and, even if by any unforeseen good fortune we are rescued, all the former tortures and discord will be renewed. My parents were, as I told you, three times snowed up. My mother took every possible precaution every winter in case of such an event, and laid in a great provision of salt and oil. I know nothing of the first two times, but I perfectly well remember the last. I never saw my father and mother kiss each other in my life, and yet they loved each other truly and faithfully in their hearts. And on that occasion, when my father said, 'Marie, now we are once more in the world, and separated from all other living creatures,' then, for the first time, I saw my mother kiss my father; and the three days that it lasted, the harmony in which they lived was like paradise. In the morning, at midday, and at night, my father and mother sung together from their hymnbook, and every word they spoke was calm and holy. My mother said, 'Oh, that we may one day die thus together, and be translated from peace here, to peace everlasting hereafter! I hope I shall die at the same moment with you, that one may not be left to grieve for the other.' It was then my father spoke of my uncle, and said, 'If I must die now, I have not a single enemy in the world. I owe no man anything. My brother Peter alone dislikes me, and that distresses me deeply.'"

Lenz suddenly stopped in the midst of his narration.

"Something is scratching at the front door, and now I hear whining and barking. What is it? I must see what it is," said Lenz.

"Don't, for God's sake!" screamed Annele, laying her hand on his shoulder.

Her touch was like an electric shock to him.

"Don't go, Lenz. It is a fox, or perhaps a wolf; they bark just like that I heard one once."

Encouraged by voices in the house, the voice outside became more clamorous, and the scratching and barking more vigorous.

"That is no wolf!" cried Lenz; "it is a dog. Hark! it is Büble! Good God! it is my uncle's dog, and my uncle is not far off; he is also buried under the snow."

"Let him lie where he is; the old villain deserves no better fate."

"Woman! are you mad? Even at such a moment you are poisonous still."

"I drunk nothing but poison during all the long days up here. It was my only refreshment."

Lenz went to the kitchen, and came back with a hatchet in his hand.

"What do you intend to do?" said Annele, clasping her child closely.

"Stand out of the way! stand out of the way!" cried Lenz, in a stern voice, and, exerting all his strength, he hacked the door, which opened outwards, to pieces.

It was indeed Büble, who darted in with a howl, but quickly rushed out again, and began to poke his nose eagerly into the snow, barking louder than ever.

Lenz set to to shovel away the snow, and very soon a piece of fur came to light. Lenz now worked more cautiously, and, laying aside his hatchet and shovel, he grubbed in the snow with his hands. He was obliged to take the snow inside the house, to gain space, at last.

He found his uncle. He was insensible, and so heavy that Lenz had scarcely strength to drag him in. He managed, however, to get him into his room, and, after undressing him, he laid him on the bed. Then he continued to rub him with all his strength till he revived. "Where am I?" groaned he, "Where am I?"

"With me, uncle."

"Who brought me here? Who took off my clothes? Where are the clothes? Where is my fur cloak, and my waistcoat? my keys are there. So you have got me at last."

"Uncle, do be quiet. I will bring you everything. Here is your waistcoat, and your fur cloak too."

"Give them to me. Are the keys safe? Yes, here they are. Ah, Büble! are you there too?"

"Yes, uncle, it was he who saved you."

"Ah, now I remember! we were buried in the snow. How long ago is it? Was it not yesterday?"

"Scarcely an hour since," replied Lenz.

"Do you hear help coming?"

"I hear nothing at all. Try to rest quietly where you are, while I go into the next room to fetch you some restorative."

"Leave the light here, and bring me something hot."

When he was alone, Petrowitsch thought to himself, "I deserve it, right well do I deserve it. Why did I go out of my way to meddle with their affairs?"

Lenz quickly returned with some brandy, which seemed considerably to revive Petrowitsch, who, fondling the dog that had crept close to him, said, "Now let me go to sleep for a time. What is that? Is it not the cry of a raven?

"Yes, one was dashed down the chimney by the snow, into the kitchen."

"Well, let me sleep."

CHAPTER XXXV.

A HEART TOUCHED.

Lenz went and sat down beside Annele in the sitting room. For some time neither said a word; the child alone laughed, and tried alternately to grasp the light, and then her father's eyes, that were fixed sadly on her.

"Thank God! that if we must perish," said Lenz, at last, "our boy at least is safe." Annele was silent; the clocks continued to tick quietly in unison, and now the musical clock began to play a hymn. The eyes of the husband and wife then met for the first time. Annele changed the position of the child on her lap, and clasped her hands reverently.

"If you can pray," said Lenz, after the sacred melody was finished, "I advise you to search your heart, and try to repent."

"I have nothing to repent of, so far as you are concerned, and what I really do require to repent of, I shall confide to God alone. I never wished to be unkind to you, I tried to be good and upright always."

"And I?"

"And you, too, did the same, so far as you could; I am more just towards you, than you are to me; you would not let me even try to earn a living."

"And all your harsh and dreadful words——"

"Pooh! words break no bones."

Lenz conjured and entreated her at least to be gentle and quiet before his uncle.

Annele replied as if in a dream:—"Your uncle croaking, and the raven screeching, tell me too plainly that die we must."

"You are not usually superstitious; it would be terrible if you were, for you threw my mother's legacy and the writing out of the window, and called on the storm to come."

Annele made no answer, and Lenz after a time rose, and said he would dig deeper into the hole from which he had rescued his uncle. If he could only dig his way through to the hill, he could then make his way out, and bring succour, Annele's first impulse was to stretch out her hand to detain him. If the snow were to give way, and Lenz be buried under it, neither she nor Petrowitsch would have strength to dig him out. She had already extended her hands to hold him back, but she covered her face with them, and let him go. He came back shortly, and said that the snow was so soft, that every hollow sank down quickly, and that he feared it was snowing heavily outside. He, however, shovelled out the snow, that he had brought into the house when digging out his uncle, and dragged a press against the entrance to the house, as fresh snow penetrated through the splintered door.

He was so thoroughly wet through, that he was obliged to change his clothes, and it was his Sunday suit, which was also his wedding suit, that he put on. "Five years ago this very day," thought he, "what a number of sledges were standing before the 'Lion!' if the guests that day were only here now to save us from death!"

After a short sleep, Petrowitsch awoke, but he lay quite quiet. He deliberately thought over all that had happened. In this extremity neither haste nor lamentations were of the smallest avail.

Yesterday he had recalled the whole of his past life; it seemed as if, within that short space of time, he had lived it all again, but now the end is come. He said this to himself quite coolly. How he was to behave to Lenz and Annele, he could not for some time decide. At last he called Lenz, and asked for his clothes, as he wished to rise. Lenz said it was very cold in the next room, and it was impossible to light the stove; moreover, his uncle's clothes were quite wet. Petrowitsch, however, still persisted on rising, and asked, "Can you not lend me a warm dressing gown?"

"Yes, I have one belonging to my late father—will you put it on?"

"If you have no other, I suppose I must," said Petrowitsch, peevishly, for in his heart it made him sad, and in fact nervous, to wear what his brother had worn.

"You look now wonderfully like my poor father," cried Lenz, "as like as possible, only you are not so tall."

"I had a hard time of it when I was young, or I should have been less stunted," said Petrowitsch, looking at himself in the glass, as he came into the room.

The raven screeched in the kitchen; Petrowitsch started at the noise, and desired Lenz, in an imperious voice, to kill the bird instantly.

Lenz explained why he could not, and then peace was to be established between Büble and the house cat. Büble continued to whine for a long time, for the cat had scratched him severely, but was now shut up in the kitchen, which had the good effect of making the raven silent.

Petrowitsch asked for some more brandy, and Lenz told him that fortunately there were three bottles of it still remaining; they were at least twelve years old, and had belonged to his mother. Petrowitsch soon made a tumbler of hot punch. He became more conversible, and exclaimed:—"It would be too absurd, certainly! here have I dragged my old carcase all through the world, and now I am to be crushed to death in my parent's house. Serves me right; why could I not get over my longing for home? Yes, a longing indeed." Then he laughed, and continued: "My life is insured —what good does that do me now? and do you know who is the cause of our all being buried alive? That upright man, the fat Landlord of the 'Lion,' who sold the wood that sheltered this rooftree, to pay his debts."

"Alas! by this action he buries his own child and his grandchild," said Lenz.

"Neither of you are worthy to name my father's name," cried Annele, in a shrill voice. "My father was unfortunate, but wicked he never was; and if you say one word more against him, I will burn the house down."

"You are crazy," cried Petrowitsch; "are we to be grateful to him for throwing these pretty little snowballs on our heads? But calm yourself, Annele, come here and sit down by me, and give me your hand, Annele; I will tell you something. I never thought you honest till now, but now you are so indeed; you are right, and I am pleased to see that you won't allow your old father to be abused. There are very few who still cling to those who have nothing. So long as people have money in their purse, we hear, often enough, 'Oh! how fond I am of you!' You are right, my girl!"

Annele looked up at Lenz, who cast down his eyes, and Petrowitsch went on to say:—

"It is perhaps as well that we should sit together thus at the very hour, when—who knows?—we may be doomed to die; now all must be clear and aboveboard among us. Lenz, come a little nearer! I think you hoped that your wife would console you in adversity; and just because you were dissatisfied with yourself, and could not exonerate yourself on some points, you longed for praise from others, instead of being the support and comfort of your wife,—proud Annele, of the 'Lion.' Don't shake your head, for you are proud enough. Pride is no bad thing, and I only wish Lenz had more of it; but wait a little, you will get it yet."

"Yes," cried Annele, "he told me lies; he persuaded me that he had recalled the security he had given for Faller, and it was not the fact."

"I never said anything of the kind, I only evaded your perpetual importunities."

"Now, as I said before," continued Petrowitsch, "it comes to your turn, Annele; say, upon your honour and conscience, whether you knew, when you married Lenz, that your father was ruined?"

"Must I tell the honest truth?"

"Yes."

"Then I solemnly swear that this was the state of the case.—I knew that my father was no longer a rich man, but still I considered him perfectly independent. I liked Lenz truly while we were still wealthy, but, at that time, my mother would not listen to a word on the subject. My mother was always very ambitious for us, and moreover, she never wished me to enter any family where I should have a mother-in-law."

"You would then have married me while my mother was alive," said Lenz, "and yet Pilgrim

declared that you said you never would have done so."

"When he said so, he told the truth. As a girl I used to say many foolish things, merely to make people stare, and because they laughed at my smart repartees."

Lenz fixed his eyes intently on Annele,—but Petrowitsch said:—

"Pray don't say any more, till I ask you to speak. You were both persuaded that you married each other out of pure love and tenderness, and yet each believed the other to be rich; and when this proved not to be the case, then all sorts of suspicions, and bad feeling, arose within your hearts. Say, honestly, Lenz; did you not believe that Annele was rich?"

"Yes, I did; but, uncle, the misery that consumes me—that makes my heart bleed, and my head burn,—does not arise from that; you know that to be true, I am sure, Annele?"

"I never valued my cleverness much," said Annele, "but at all events, I had both more quickness, and more experience than he had, and a better idea of managing our affairs—and if he had yielded to my wishes and settled in an inn, as I wished, we would not be now in this wretched state, and death, too probably, staring us in the face."

"And what means did you use to persuade him to fulfil your wishes?"

"I showed him that he was good for nothing but to knock in stupid pegs. I don't deny it. I did not spare him, and was resolved to break his will, so I said whatever came uppermost, and the more it seemed to hurt his feelings the more I was pleased."

"Annele, do you believe in eternal punishments?"

"I cannot do otherwise, for I suffer so cruelly now in the power of you both, nothing hereafter can be worse. You can both torment me as you please; I cannot defend myself, I am a weak woman."

"A weak woman!" shouted Petrowitsch, at the pitch of his voice. "A weak woman! A capital idea! You are so hard and stubborn, that the very walls might crumble down on your head without moving you; you pour the most deadly poison into your husband's heart, enough to drive him mad, and then you call yourself—a weak woman!"

"I could speak falsely," continued Annele, "and make you all sorts of promises in this hour of extremity, but I will not; I would rather be torn to bits, than give up a single atom of my rights. All that I said to him was true, and that I said it venomously, is also true."

"Then it was all true," cried Lenz, as white as a sheet. "Only remember one thing; you said my good deeds were only a cloak for my indolence, and also that I had behaved ill to my mother. My mother! what will you feel when we meet you, perhaps an hour hence?"

Annele said nothing. Petrowitsch, too, paused for a time, and then said:—

"Annele, if he had strangled you for that speech, he would have been beheaded, but God would have pronounced him innocent. Yes! as a landlord's daughter, you are sharp enough, and no doubt you have heard of rascally, worthless waggoners, who, when their horses don't go along fast enough, put burning tow in their ears, till the wretched animals are driven mad with pain. Your words towards Lenz were quite as cruel; they were the burning tow in his ears by which you drove him wild. There is my hand Lenz, you are too soft hearted, and go about, asking every one:—'Give me a kind glance, or a kind word,'—that is pitiable work. But you did not deserve such a punishment. You did not deserve that a she-devil should drive you out of your senses. Give me the child instantly! you are not worthy to carry an innocent child in your arms." So saying, he snatched the child from her; the child screamed, but Lenz interposed, saying:—

"Not so, uncle: Annele, listen to me, don't close your heart against me, I mean to speak kindly to you. Annele, we are both standing on the brink of our open grave."

"Heavens!" screamed Annele, covering her face with her hands, and Lenz continued:—

"You, too, are on the brink of the grave,"

Annele no longer answered, for she had sunk down in a state of insensibility on the floor.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

VOICES FROM THE DEAD.

As Annele fell, she upset the lamp on the table, which came down with a crash, and was

extinguished, leaving them in entire darkness. Lenz rubbed Annele's temples with the brandy that he luckily got hold of; she breathed at last, and grasped his hand. He carried her into the next room, and after laying her down on the bed, he hurried back to get a fresh light.

Lenz fortunately had an ample store of purified turpentine oil in the house, by which he usually worked at night. The raven, in the kitchen, had broken the large can, and an insupportable smell of rosin penetrated into the room, when the door was opened. Lenz lighted the lamp with the brandy, and the three miserable prisoners looked still more deplorable, by the blue flickering light.

Petrowitsch laid the child on the bed; her feet were as cold as ice. He ordered Büble to lie down on the child's feet, which Büble instantly did. Then Petrowitsch took Lenz by the arm, and led him back into the sitting room, the door of the adjacent room remaining open.

The raven and the cat were again at war in the kitchen, but they let them fight it out, till they were quiet of their own accord.

"Have you anything fit to eat?" asked Petrowitsch; "it is past five o'clock, and I am wofully hungry."

There was enough to eat, as a ham had fallen from the loft down the chimney; there was also bread, and a large sack of dried fruit.

Petrowitsch ate with a good appetite, and pressed Lenz to eat also, but he could not bring himself to swallow a morsel. He was anxiously listening to every sound in Annele's room. The child was talking in its sleep; a kind of confused muttering, as if from another world, and it was startling to hear it laugh—still sound asleep. Annele lay quiet, breathing softly. Lenz went in to take up the child, and called out in terror, for he had seized Büble by mistake, who bit at him fiercely. Annele was roused by the cry, and calling Lenz and Petrowitsch to come to her, she said:—

"I thank God that I still live, if only for one hour longer. I ask forgiveness from all, but more especially from you, my Lenz."

"Don't try to speak much at present," interrupted he. "Will you not be persuaded to take something? I have found some coffee, but not the coffee mill. I will bruise it if the child is awake. There is some good ham here besides."

"I cannot eat. Let me speak. What has happened? Why did you give such a cry, Lenz?"

"It was nothing. I wished to take the child, and Büble snapped viciously at me, and in the terror of the moment, and the anguish of our position, I felt as if some monster, I knew not what, was about to devour us all."

"Alas!" said Annele, "your distraction of mind, your nervous state, has all been caused by me. Oh! Lenz, what I dreamt has come to pass. Last night I thought I stood beside an open grave, and looked in, deep, deep, and dark; little heaps of earth rolled down and down; I tried to save myself, but could not; I stumbled, and was precipitated to the bottom. Hold me fast! Now it is past—lay your hand on my face—merciful powers! to think that you must die with me, that all this misery has fallen on us, in order to bring me to repentance! I deserve it, but you and this child." ... Tears prevented her saying more; she seized Lenz's hand and placed it to her lips, then she exclaimed:—

"An hour ago, I would gladly have died, but now I should be so glad to live! I should like yet to show the world what I can do! I see now what I have been. Henceforth I will thankfully implore a kind look or word. Merciful Father! succour us, and save us from this dreadful death, if only for a day, for an hour! I then would send for Franzl; Lenz, my first shortcomings began with her."

"Now I do verily believe that the evil one is fairly driven out," said the uncle: "a striking proof of it is your thinking of Franzl, and wishing to benefit her, whose life you embittered by turning her away. Here you have my hand in token of friendship; now all will be well."

Lenz could not speak; he hurried into the next room, and bringing some of the spirit, he placed it to Annele's lips, saying:—"Drink, Annele, and for every drop you drink, I would fain give you as many grateful and loving words." Annele shook her head, and he went on:—"Only drink it, to give you fresh strength. Now try to rest, and don't speak another word."

Annele said she could not rest, though she would have been glad to do so, as it was his wish; she lamented bitterly, that, in all probability they must all soon die; but Lenz tried to soothe her by saying, that they had still food enough to last for several days, and that they ought to thank God for his great mercy in this; and before what they had in the house was consumed, no doubt help would arrive. Annele then began afresh to deplore the great sin she now felt she had committed, in having received so unthankfully the blessings that had been granted to her, always living in peace and plenty, and yet these mercies she had utterly disregarded; and she perpetually bewailed and lamented, saying—"I feel as if snakes were winding round my head. See if every hair is not a snake—and only yesterday I was so proud, plaiting my hair."

With feverish, trembling fingers she took down her hair, and let it float over her shoulders, making her look still more wild and wretched.

Lenz and Petrowitsch had considerable difficulty in pacifying her; the uncle at last insisted on Lenz leaving Annele alone, and going with him to the next room, when Petrowitsch said to him:—"Pray endeavour to be composed, for Annele's sake, or she will die before any help can reach us. I never beheld such a revulsion in any human being, I could scarcely have believed it. Such a shock to the whole system must be very trying. Now tell me what letter was it that I found in your child's frock, when I placed Büble on her feet?"

Lenz related the desperate determination he had come to, and said it was his farewell to Annele and to life, and begged his uncle to give it back to him; but his uncle held it fast, and read it out in a low voice.

Lenz shuddered at hearing the words repeated, that he had intended being spoken after his death. He watched the expression of his uncle's face, so far as it was visible in the blue light, to see what he thought of it; Petrowitsch however, did not once look up, and read on to the end, when he gave one quick sharp glance at Lenz. He then put the letter in his pocket.

"Give me the letter, and I will burn it," said Lenz, in a whisper.

In the same suppressed tone, Petrowitsch answered:—"No, I mean to keep it, I have only half known you till now."

He was uncertain whether Petrowitsch meant this for good or evil, but the old man stood up, and took down his brother's file from the wall, holding it in his hand, which pressed on the well worn hollow, produced in long years of work, by his dead brother's fingers.

Perhaps at that moment he made an inward vow, that if they were rescued, he would supply the place of a father to Lenz, but he only said: "Come here, I want to whisper something to you. The basest action a man can commit is suicide; I knew the son of such a man, who said to me—'My father made his fate light, but ours hard!' and that son——" here Petrowitsch suddenly paused, and then said, close to his ear—"cursed his father's memory!"

Lenz started back in horror, and almost sunk to the ground on hearing these words, but Annele at this moment called to him:—"Lenz, for God's sake come here!" They hurried to her, and she said, still in a most excited state, "Oh! my dear Lenz, to think that you really wished to make away with yourself! Surely you could not have done so when it came to the last, for the children's sake; but I am the guilty cause of your ever dreaming of so fearful a sin. Oh! how your heart must have bled! I don't know what is the worst thing I have done, to implore your forgiveness for."

"It is all over now," said Petrowitsch, soothingly. It was singular that the same ideas should be working in Annele's brain, in her room, where she could not possibly hear a word of what the two men were saying in cautious whispers. Both tried to pacify her.

Several clocks now struck three.

"Is that noon or night?" asked Annele.

"It must be night."

They recapitulated all that had occurred since the snow had been precipitated on the house; and they agreed it must be long past midnight.

"Oh! daylight! if I could only once more, only just once more, see the blessed sun! Oh! rise in the sky and succour us! Oh! that it were light!" cried Annele, incessantly. They could not quiet her nervous excitement, till at last she dropped asleep from sheer exhaustion.

Petrowitsch also fell into a doze, and Lenz alone remained awake. He dared not sleep; it was indispensable that he should steadily face their deadly peril, and ward it off, so far as human means could avail. He extinguished the light. The store of spirits for the lamp must not be wasted—who knows how long it may still be required! And soon, as Lenz sat thus in silence and darkness, it seemed first noon, and then night; at one moment he wished it were day, at the next he hoped it was night. If it were day, help would be nearer; if night, those outside would have been working on longer, shovelling away the snow, and rolling away the heavy trunks of trees. Often he thought that he heard sounds outside, but it was all a delusion—it was the raven croaking in his sleep.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A PHALANX.

At the self-same hour—it was twelve o'clock at noon—Faller went to Lenz's home, wishing to tell him that he was now freed from the security for his house. It was raining and snowing alternately, and a violent wind drove the rain and snow about, so that it was scarcely possible to see through it. Faller, however, strode on sturdily, his head bent forward, struggling manfully with the storm. Suddenly he looked up, having arrived at his destination, when he rubbed his eyes, and stared round him aghast. Where have you got to? have you lost your way? Where is Lenz's house? He turned round and round, but could not understand where he was. Stop! there are the old firs that stand just in front of Lenz's house; but the house! the house! In his anguish of mind, Faller slipped into a snow wreath, and the more he struggled to extricate himself, the deeper he plunged in. He prayed to God, he cried for help—no one heard him. He managed to get hold of the trunk of a tree and to cling to the branches, for he could get no further; then a fresh avalanche came rolling down the hill, and carried the snow with it in its course, and Faller was free. And this last rush of snow having cleared the pathway, he hurried down into the valley. By the time he saw light glancing from the house, night had set in, and with shouts which quickly roused even those who were asleep, Faller cried aloud through the village: "Help! help!"

All hurried to their windows, and out into the street, when Faller declared that Lenz's house at the Morgenhalde was buried in the snow.

Faller rushed to the church, and rang the alarm bell. Very few people came from a distance; the weather was so dreadful, that the wind did not carry the sound of the alarm bell far.

Pilgrim and the Techniker were the first to arrive at the church door. There was no end to lamentations at this frightful occurrence, especially at night, and in such a hurricane. Pilgrim could not utter, he seemed frozen with horror.

The Techniker acted like a prompt and gallant young man. "Get ladders and ropes instantly," said he, "collect as many as you can, and shovels and hatchets."

Torches were lighted, while the storm, however, blew about wildly. Some women came also. They had tied their gowns over their heads as a shelter against the storm, and it was a strange sight to see these spectral looking figures, clinging to their husbands and sons, in the red light of the torches, and endeavouring to prevent their going to the rescue, from the fear of their being lost in the snow.

The Techniker wound the end of a long rope round his body—he assumed the command at once—and ordered six men, at considerable distances, to bind themselves together, so that they might not have to seek each other, and might be able mutually to assist each other out of a snow wreath, if they fell into one.

Pilgrim formed one of the band, and Don Bastian also offered to be one, but the Techniker told him to place himself at the head of another chain of men.

They took some dry wood with them to light a fire, and provided with a number of hatchets, shovels, and ladders, they set off up the hill. When they arrived at about fifty paces from the house—they could not get any nearer—a space was cleared of the snow in a sheltered spot, and a fire lighted. The ladders were placed against the mountain of snow, but they sunk in as soon as a man got on them; moreover the wind blew out the torches, and at intervals a cry was heard: "I am sinking!" Every kind of attempt was made, but all failed.

"Nothing can be done at night, and in such a storm," was the universal cry; at last it was resolved they should all go home; one watchman was to be left beside the fire. Faller immediately offered to remain, and Pilgrim wished also to stay, but the Techniker saw that his teeth were chattering from cold, and he insisted on taking him home, consoling him by saying, that if the inhabitants of the house on the Morgenhalde were still alive, help would be quite time enough in the morning.

In the village the report quickly spread, that Petrowitsch must be buried along with them in the snow, as he had gone to Lenz's house that morning, and had not returned; his comrade Ibrahim, when he heard the alarm bell, had run into the street with a pack of cards in his hand saying: "I am waiting for Petrowitsch." Pilgrim said to his new friend: "It would indeed be sad, if Petrowitsch at last resolved to assist Lenz, and lost his life on that account."

Pilgrim reproached himself severely for having spent the whole day in childish games with Wilhelm, for a kind of presentiment had drawn him towards the Morgenhalde—a sensation as if some misfortune had happened there; but he had persuaded himself that this feeling was purely imaginary, and had gone on playing with his godson; now he sat beside the child's bed till his eyes almost closed from fatigue, thinking how little the boy, who was sleeping soundly, anticipated what a misfortune this night might bring on his head—indeed perhaps had already brought on him.

Faller remained at his post like a soldier on the field, and a comrade stood with him—a dial maker, who had once been a sapper and miner. They held a council together how this snow fortress was to be stormed, but they could discover no mode of setting to work. Faller in the mean time stirred and replenished the fire on the side of the hill, furious that he could find no way to rescue his friend.

A stranger joined them at their watch fire; it was a messenger from the neighbouring town, who had been sent to summon Annele to her mother, who was dying.

"Fetch her out!" said Faller in bitter sorrow; "she is below there."

He then related what had occurred, and the man went homewards in the darkness.

Faller ventured to skirt the uprooted wood, by a bye path; if he could only reach the fir trees before the house, then aid would be nearer. In company with the dial maker, he pushed some large logs lying on the side of the hill, towards the fir trees; several were precipitated down, and remained standing upright in the snow, while one rolled down the hill, and rested on the firs.

"Good Heavens!" said his companion, "the large logs that we have rolled down, are sure to come in collision with the roof, and to crush to death the unhappy inmates."

"I am the most stupid wretch that ever lived, the most senseless, the most idiotical; now I shall have been the cause of your death, my dear, good Lenz!" cried Faller in despair.

After a while he managed to crawl on a bridge formed by the trunk of a tree, and succeeded in setting fire with his torch, to several trees that were heaped together on that spot.

"That will melt the snow surely," cried he, elated.

"Yes, but it may catch the straw thatched roof," replied his comrade.

Faller stood transfixed, but soon began to roll huge snowballs on the top of the fire, and succeeded in extinguishing it just as day broke.

It was a bright morning, almost as warm as a spring day; the sun shone warmly on the Morgenhalde, seeking the house that he had greeted for so many long years, but could no longer find it; he sought its master, who was always so quiet, and yet so busy, seated at early dawn working at his window, just like his father before him, and his grandfather before that; but neither house nor master was to be found, and the sun's rays blinked strangely, and flickered hither and thither, as if they had lost their way; the treacherous snow displayed its broad glittering white surface, as if saying: "Do your worst." The sun sent down fiery, burning rays, and melted the outposts, but the fortress itself must be besieged for days.

The men had all reassembled, with the Techniker at their head; and from the adjacent village, and many other parishes besides, there were plenty of stout hands ready to work.

The trees rolled down by Faller, at all events served as a firm support, and, miner fashion, a path was dug out below, and above also the work went on quickly, and according to a regular plan.

A solitary raven kept constantly flying among those who were clearing away the snow, and would not be driven away. Its companions in the air screeched to it in vain; it paid no attention to their cries, but watched those who were at work, as if it had something very particular to communicate.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A PLANT GROWS UNDER THE SNOW.

Lenz sat sad and silent in darkness and solitude, watching for death.

Petrowitsch awoke at last, and related to Lenz, that in the days of his youth, he remembered a house being overwhelmed by an avalanche in a similar manner, and that, when they at last succeeded in digging out the inhabitants, they found them all crushed flat, and four peasants who had been sitting round a table were crushed also, with their cards still in their hands. The old man shuddered as he recalled this circumstance, and yet he could not refrain from relating it; it was a relief to him to tell it, although it made Lenz shiver with horror. He however quickly added, that he felt sure that God would permit them to be saved, for the sake of the innocent child; and he almost rebelled against the decrees of Providence, in ordaining that the poor child should be buried along with them.

"Annele is now, however, become as good and placid as a child," answered Lenz.

Petrowitsch shook his head, and admonished him, if he ever saw the light again, not to be so easily reconciled; he advised him to act in such a manner, that Annele must daily and hourly seek to win his affections. Lenz resisted this advice, and told his uncle that it was evident he never had been married:—

"An angel dwelt within Annele, that might render home a heaven for any man, and the sad thing was, that in the bitterness of her trials, she had repressed all the naturally good impulses of her kind heart."

Petrowitsch shook his head again, but made no reply.

The child suddenly gave a loud scream, and Annele awoke and cried out:—

"The ceiling is falling! the ceiling is falling! Lenz, where are you? stay beside me! let us die together: give me the child in my arms!"

By degrees Annele was pacified, and with restored self command went into the sitting room with Lenz and Petrowitsch.

Lenz bruised the coffee beans, which were part of the present brought by Ernestine the grocer's wife; and again they all sat together by the light of the feeble blue flame. The coffee cheered them all. The clock struck. Annele said she had not tried to count the strokes, she would ask no more whether it were day or night; they would at all events live together in eternity, when the last fatal hour was past. She had hoped that they would have contradicted her fear of the worst, and the certainty she had expressed of approaching death, but no one said a word.

They continued to sit in silence together, for there was little more to say. After a long pause, Lenz said to his uncle that the past was now all smooth and clear, but he should like to know why his uncle had been always so dry and reserved towards him.

"Because I hated him whose dressing gown I am now wearing. Yes! hated him; he ill used me in my youth, and it was his fault that I was called the 'Goatherd' for life. In his file there is a hollow produced by long pressure; how much more must it work on the human heart!—and his pressure on it was hard indeed. My only brother cast me off; and when at last I came home, I rejoiced at the thought of giving vent to the mass of hatred I had borne about with me so long. I can, with truth, say that I hated him to the death. Why did he die, and leave me alone in the world, without our ever having exchanged one kind word at the last? On the whole of my long journey home, I felt so happy in the thought that I should again have a brother; and now he was gone and no one to replace him; but in truth, and to speak honestly, I did not really hate him, for had I done so, would I have come home? In this world I shall hear my brother's words no more, soon perhaps elsewhere,——"

"Uncle," said Annele, "at the same moment when Büble scratched at the door—at that very same time—Lenz was telling me, that when his father was once snowed up here, though not buried like us, he had said—'If I must die now, I have not an enemy in the world but my brother Peter, and I should like to be reconciled to him.'"

"Really! really!" said Petrowitsch, pressing one hand on his eyes, and with the other grasping the well worn file of his brother.

For long nothing was heard but the ticking of the clocks, till Lenz again asked why his uncle had always been so indifferent about him; it had grieved his heart, that, for nearly a year, his father's only brother had settled in the same place, and yet would not notice him; every time he met Petrowitsch, he would like to have gone up to him and taken hold of his hand.

"I saw that well enough," answered Petrowitsch, "but I was angry with you and your mother, because I heard that she spoiled you, and told you—seven times a day at least—how good you were, and the best son in the world, and so clever and so prudent! That was very unwise. Men are like birds. There are some who devour insects, and must have each minute a fresh one in their crops; and you are just like one of these birds, every minute a pat on the shoulder, or a panegyric."

"He is right, is he not Annele?" said Lenz, with a bitter smile.

"Not far wrong," answered Annele.

"Don't you say a word," cried Petrowitsch, "you are also a bird, or rather you were one, and do you know what kind of one? a bird of prey: they can endure hunger for days, but then they devour whatever they can get hold of—an innocent singing bird, or a kitten, with bones, and skin, and fur, entire."

"He is right here also," answered Annele, "I never was better pleased than when I got hold of some one to pull at, and to tear to pieces. I exhibited this unhappy tendency, the very first day you and I drove out together, when I felt such malicious pleasure in provoking Ernestine, and you asked me, 'Does that give you pleasure?' These words sunk into my heart, and I intended to become as amiable as you, and felt there was more real happiness in this; and yet I lived on in the old way, and every now and then I thought, 'presently I will begin to be very different, but no one shall see it, my husband above all must not suspect it;' and then the old evil spirit got the mastery again over me, and I felt ashamed that people should observe that I wished to be better, and so at last I gave up even wishing to be so. I felt I was Annele of the 'Lion,' who had been a favourite with every one who came to the house—that there was no need for any change. And I was furious with you, because you were the first person who ever found fault with me, for saying

what others praised and laughed at; and then I wished to show you that you were no great things yourself. And at last all hung on the one point: 'you must be a landlady again, then you will recover your self-esteem, and the world, too, will see what you are.' It was thus I thought, and thought wrong. Even yesterday—was it yesterday? when the Pastor was here. Listen! your uncle is asleep; I am glad of it. I am thankful to be one hour alone with you before we pass into eternity. No third person could understand the love we bear each other in our hearts, even amid all—all that has happened. If I could only see your face once more, only once fairly in the bright daylight! I can distinguish nothing by this blue flickering light. If I could see but once your kind face and loving eyes! To die thus without one last look, what agony it is! and how often I have turned away my eyes when I saw that yours were seeking mine! Oh! for but one single look, that I could see you once before we die."

Petrowitsch still pretended to sleep. He had quickly seen that Annele was eager to unburthen her heart, and that no third person ought to interfere. The child played with Büble, and Annele continued:—

"Oh! if I could but recall the years that are past! Once you said to me at noon: Is there anything in the world more cheering than the sun?—and then again one evening: What pure happiness fresh air brings! I ridiculed you for your simplicity; I was constantly sinning against your better nature; everything makes you happy, and so it ought to be. Just as I once threw away your father's file and broke the sharp point, and it seemed to enter my heart, but I took care you should not know this; and I threw out of the window your mother's pious writing, and the plant: there is not a single thing in which I have not acted wrong. I know—I know that you forgive me freely; pray to a gracious God that He will also forgive me in life and in death."

A musical timepiece began to play a hymn. Petrowitsch moved uneasily in his chair, but appeared to sleep again. When the air was ended, Annele exclaimed:—

"What is there that I have not to ask forgiveness for? even that clock. Now for the first time in my life, I hear how holy that music sounds, and yet how often I vexed you on this subject also! Good and gracious Lord! I ask it not for myself—but save us, oh! save us! let me prove that I wish to make up for the past."

"I feel quite happy now, even if we are doomed to die," said Lenz; "while the clock was playing it came into my thoughts—we have got the precious plant Edelweiss again; it grew under the snow in your naturally good heart. Why do you tremble so?"

"I am so cold, my feet are like ice."

"Take off your shoes, and I will warm your feet in my hands. Are you better now?"

"Yes, much better, but my head feels as if every hair were dripping blood. Hark! I hear the cock crow, and the raven screech. God be praised! it must be daylight at last."

They started up, as if help were really at hand, and the uncle, too, seemed to rouse himself from his supposed sleep; but suddenly there was a loud crash. "We are lost!" cried Petrowitsch.

All was again still. The ceiling of their sleeping room had given way, so that the door could no longer be opened. After the first moment of alarm, Lenz thanked God that his wife had a presentiment in her sleep of what had happened, and left the room with her child; and for their comfort he told them that their sleeping room was a new building, unconnected with the other part of the house; and that he had no fear of the stout crossbeams of the old house not standing fast and untouched. It did seem to him, however—only he took care not to say this—that the walls of the room next the sleeping one bent inwards; but this was merely a delusion, caused by the flickering, dim, blue light.

A long silent pause ensued; no sound was heard except when a cock was heard crowing in the distance, or when Büble barked and the raven croaked.

"This is an actual Noah's ark," said Petrowitsch; and Lenz replied:—

"Whether the issue of this is life or death, we are equally saved from the deluge caused by sin."

Annele placed her hand in his.

"If I had only my pipe; it is so stupid in you not to smoke, Lenz," said Petrowitsch, in a complaining voice. The thoughts of his collection of pipes at home, must have reminded him of his fireproof strongbox, for he continued:—"I tell you fairly, that even if we are saved, you need not expect any money from me—not a single dollar."

"We shall not want it then," said Lenz; and Annele asked in her clear voice:—

"Do you know who will not believe you?"

"You?"

"No! the world will never believe it; if you were to swear it a hundred times over, no man will

credit, that he who shared our deadly peril, will not share his life with us henceforth. The world will in future give us credit for your sake, and make us rich if we like."

"You are as shrewd and mischievous as ever," said Petrowitsch; "I thought all your gay gibes were at an end for ever."

"I am thankful they are not," cried Lenz; "Annele, keep up your lively spirits; if God rescues us from this peril, be honest and merry, as Pilgrim says."

Annele threw her arms round Lenz's neck, and kissed him affectionately. All the three suddenly felt that they had become as cheerful as if all danger were past, and yet, at this moment, it was greater than ever. They would none of them point it out to the others, but yet they saw with awe and fear, that the walls were trembling, and the cross beams sinking.

Annele and Lenz held each other in a close embrace:—

"Let us die thus, and shelter the child by our bodies," cried Annele. "Farewell, life! Lord God, save our child!"

"Hark! there is a hollow sound; help is at hand! we are saved! we are saved!"

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SAVED.

"I hear two distinct knocks following each other," cried Lenz; "I will give a signal in answer; I will set the clocks all playing."

He did so, but the confusion of sounds quite stupefied him; even at this moment of deadly anguish, the discord was insupportable to him. In his excitement, he had injured the mechanism of the largest musical clock, which went to his heart.

Again they held their breath and listened eagerly, but all was still.

"I rejoiced too soon," said Petrowitsch, his teeth chattering from excitement, "we are still nearer death than life."

Again distinct knocks were heard, and Petrowitsch complained that the hammering seemed to knock his head, and that every blow went through his brain.

Lenz could not have set the clocks properly, for suddenly one of them began to play the air of the grand Hallelujah, and Lenz sang with it:—"Hallelujah! Praise God, the Lord!"

Annele sang with him, placing one hand on Lenz's shoulder, and the other on the head of her child, and up above a voice shouted—"Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

"Pilgrim! my dearest of all friends!" cried Lenz, in a voice that was heartrending.

The door of the room was broken in with a hatchet.

"Are you all still alive?" cried Pilgrim.

"Praise and thanks be to the Lord! we are—all of us."

Pilgrim first hugged Petrowitsch, whom he took for Lenz, and the old man kissed him on both cheeks, Russian fashion.

Immediately after Pilgrim, the Techniker appeared, followed by Faller, Don Bastian, and all the members of the Choral Society.

"Is my boy all right?" asked Lenz.

"Indeed he is, I left him in my house," said Don Bastian.

By this time the snow was shovelled away from the window.

"The sun! the sun! I see the sun once more!" cried Annele, sinking on her knees.

The musical clock continued playing the Hallelujah, the Schoolmaster joined, and the whole of the Choral Society sung with him in full loud tones. It seemed as if an impetus had been given to the mass of snow by the powerful chorus, for the avalanche rolled away from the front of the house down into the valley.

The house stood free.

The door had remained open, and the moment the windows were also thrown up, the raven shot away into the sky, over the heads of all the assembled people.

"The bird is off," cried the child.

Outside, however, a raven had been long wheeling about, waiting for its mate; and now they flew along together, first high into the air, and then dipping down in circles far away over the valley.

The first woman who came up to Annele, was Ernestine, her cousin, who had heard of the sad catastrophe, and also of the death of the Landlady, Annele's mother, and had hurried to Annele in the hope of comforting her; she knelt down beside her; Lenz was leaning on Pilgrim.

Petrowitsch was becoming very indignant, that nobody took any charge of him, when luckily the Techniker came up to him just in time, wishing him joy of his providential escape. "So far so good," thought the old man; "this is the only well bred man of the whole band." Pilgrim too was very kind, and said aloud: "I beg your pardon for having hugged you so tight; I took you for Lenz: pray shake hands with me."

Petrowitsch gave him his hand instantly.

"I found a piece of your mother's writing in the snow," said Faller in a hoarse voice; "the words are almost effaced, but you can still see—'This plant is called Edelweiss—Marie Lenz.'"

"That paper is mine!" exclaimed Annele, starting to her feet. All looked at her in astonishment, and Ernestine screamed out:—"Annele, Annele! Look at her for God's sake! her hair is as white as snow!"

Annele went to the glass and uttered a cry of horror, and, clasping her hands over her head, she cried:—"An old woman, an old woman!" and sunk into Lenz's arms; after a time she rose sobbing, dried her tears, and whispered to Lenz: "This is my Edelweiss, grown under the snow."

CHAPTER XL.

ALL'S WELL.

The ravens flew over the valley, and flew over the hills, and at last they flew past a small house, where an old woman was seated at the window spinning coarse flax, and her tears were falling fast on the threads as she drew them out. It was Franzl; she had heard the report, that Lenz and his family were buried in the snow: even from Knuslingen, people had hurried to the rescue. Franzl would gladly have gone with them to help if she could, but her tottering limbs could not bear her thither, and unluckily she had lent her only pair of shoes to a poor woman, who was obliged to go to the Doctor. In the midst of all her distress, Franzl often struck her forehead and thought: "Oh! how stupid I was not to observe when he was here, that something was wrong; but what use is that now? I had it on the tip of my tongue that day, to beg him to take timely precautions against the snow. We were twice snowed up, for a day and a half: every winter we tried to guard against it. But it's too late to think of that now; my old mistress was right, when she said a hundred times over: 'Franzl, you can speak sensibly; but always an hour too late to be of any use.'"

The ravens, who were now flying past, could have told Franzl that she might dry her tears, as the buried alive were rescued; but men do not understand ravens, and human beings are some time before they can carry good news over hill and valley.

It was evening when a sledge came driving along, with a cheerful ringing of bells. What does the sledge come here for, and stop at this door?—there is no one at home but old Franzl.

"Who is getting out, is it not Pilgrim?" Franzl wishes to rise to meet him, but she is unable to stir.

"Franzl, I have come to fetch you;" cried Pilgrim. Franzl rubbed her eyes: "Is it a dream? what does it mean?" Pilgrim continued: "Lenz is saved, and all belonging to him, and I have been sent to fetch your fair Princess Cinderella! Will you entrust your precious person to my care in the sledge?"

"I have not a single pair of shoes to put on," said Franzl at last.

"I will lend you a pair of fur boots, I have below; they are sure to fit your small feet, Princess," answered Pilgrim. "And here is the skin—I mean the fur cloak of Petrowitsch the sorcerer. You

must come with me this very moment, my well-beloved Franzl of Knuslingen! You must cease spinning your magic threads, and leave your magic wheel here; unless it thinks fit to walk after us on its wooden legs." So saying, Pilgrim bowed to Franzl and offered her his arm, as if to lead her to a banquet.

Franzl was utterly confounded. Luckily her sister-in-law came home at this moment, and she seemed to have no objections to Franzl being carried off in a sledge. She assisted to help old Franzl to pack her things; but the old woman made her leave the room, for she wished above all to pack up a certain secret shoe carefully.

"I have my own feather bed here," said Franzl, "do you think you could put it on the sledge?"

"Let Knuslingen sleep on it in peace," answered Pilgrim; "make a footstool of your pillow, and leave all the rest."

"Must I leave my hens and my geese here too? They are my own, they all belong to me; and my beautiful gold speckled hen has been laying for the last six weeks."

The bepraised lady stuck her head out, between the bars of the coop, and showed her red comb.

Pilgrim said that hens and geese all ran after the veritable Cinderella of their own accord; and that if these chose to do the same, no one wished to prevent them, but that they certainly would not be taken in the sledge.

Franzl now charged her sister-in-law to pay the greatest attention to the cherished creatures she left behind: she was to take care of them, to feed them well, and to send them to her when a man came for them.

When Franzl was leaving the room, the hens began to cackle uneasily in their coop, and even the geese said a friendly word of regret as she passed them.

It was a fine, bright winter night when Franzl drove off with Pilgrim; the stars glittered above, and a heaven filled with shining stars arose within Franzl's soul. She often laid hold of her bundle, and pressed it till she felt her shoe was safe there; and often, as they dashed along, she thought it was all a dream.

"Look! there is my little patch of potato ground that I bought," said Franzl; "it was only a heap of stones, and I have cultivated it so well during the four years I have had it, that it is worth double, and the potatoes it grows are like flour."

"Potatoes may be very precious in the sight of the Knuslingers, but you shall get something better now," answered Pilgrim. He then detailed to her every particular, with regard to the rescue of the inhabitants of the house on the Morgenhalde, and told her that they all were now to live with old Petrowitsch, and that they were the best of friends; the old miser seemed entirely changed, and Annele's first request was, that Franzl should be sent for. Franzl sobbed aloud when Pilgrim told her that Annele's hair was now snow white.

At every house they passed, where lights were visible, Franzl would fain have stopped and told them the famous news. "There lives so and so, such good kind people! and they all deplored poor Lenz's fate; and it is hard that they should go on lamenting, when there is no longer any occasion for it. And they will jump sky high for joy, when they hear that the first thing they did was to send for old Franzl; and who knows if I may ever see them again to say good bye to them?"

Pilgrim, however, drove pitilessly past all these good men, and would not stop anywhere. When any one opened a window, and looked out at the sledge, then Franzl called out as loud as she could: "Good bye, and God bless you!"

And although, from the ringing of the bells, no one heard a word she said, still she had the satisfaction of having shouted a kind word to the good souls; for who knows when she might come back to Knuslingen?—perhaps never!

At the farm where Kathrine lived, Pilgrim was obliged to stop to feed his horse, but—there is no perfect joy on this earth—Kathrine, alas! was not at home. As she had no children of her own, she was constantly taking charge of those of her neighbours; and she was now nursing one of them in her confinement. Franzl, however, sent her a minute account of all that had happened, through the sempstress who was sewing in the house; and she repeated every word twice over, that she might not forget it.

When she got into the sledge again, she first fully enjoyed her happiness. "Now," said she, "I feel so much better. It is like sleeping soundly, but waking up for a moment in the night, and saying to one's self: Oh! this is famous,—and going sound asleep again."

Pilgrim, however, had nearly destroyed all her delight by a foolish joke of his.

"Franzl," said he, "you will have but a meagre portion now, I fear, up yonder."

"Up where?"

"I mean in the other world. You will henceforth live in Paradise; and those who fare so well in this world, cannot expect to be equally happy in the next—both would be too much."

"Stop! stop! let me out, I must go home," cried Franzl. "I will have nothing to do with you; I will not give up my happy life hereafter, for any thing this world can offer. Stop, or I will jump out."

With a degree of strength no one could have believed she possessed, Franzl seized the reins and tried to snatch them from Pilgrim's hand, who had the greatest difficulty in pacifying her, saying, that he saw she could no longer take a joke. But Franzl said she could make no allowance for people jesting on such sacred subjects. Pilgrim tried to persuade her, with the aid of the holy Haspucius—whose words he first repeated in Greek, and then kindly translated into German, and even into the Black Forest dialect, for her benefit—that he had distinctly written, an exception would be made in favour of household servants, for, however comfortable they may be in this world, their life is hard enough at best!

Franzl became more composed, and seemed to think that what was said about servants was true enough. Presently she resumed: "I shall have such pleasure in seeing my good Lenz's children—for I never saw them; the boy's name is Wilhelm, is it not? and what is the name of the little girl?"

"Marie."

"Of course; for that was her grandmother's name."

"I am glad you reminded me of that word grandmother; I had quite forgotten to say, that the children believe that I have gone to fetch their grandmother, and that she is to arrive in a sledge. The children are to remain awake till we arrive, so your Highness of Knuslingen must be so condescending as to allow the children to call you grandmother."

Franzl, the worthy spinster! pronounced this to be both wrong and untrue, for it is never right to deceive children. A family name belongs only to blood relations, and that is a point about which no jesting should be permitted. She consoled herself, however, by thinking that she would explain it all herself to the children; she had not the blessing of being born in Knuslingen for nothing. In the consciousness that she was the representative of the district of Knuslingen, she was firm in her duty.

The various episodes on the journey were, however, of some use in sobering down Franzl; for, first of all, she had persuaded herself that the whole village would form a procession to receive her on her return, and to escort her to her new home. She was, however, received only with a shout of uproarious laughter, and that was by Petrowitsch, who roared so at the sight of Franzl's costume, that he was obliged to sit down in a chair; and Büble played his part also, for, as he could not laugh, he barked loudly, and snapped at Franzl; and it was certainly rather unkind in Petrowitsch to call out, "Anton Striegler, your lover, must have known what you would look like some day, and this was why he threw you over and married another."

"And the worms will spare you yet a while, till you become tender; for you are too tough and skinny, even for them, as yet," answered Franzl, giving a hearty kick to Büble.

The long cherished hatred of years, and her rage at being twitted with her unhappy love, inspired her with this bitter answer. Büble stopped barking, and Petrowitsch laughing. Both had henceforth a wholesome horror of Franzl.

Lenz was asleep. Annele was with the children, who, after all, had fallen asleep, and she had some difficulty in refraining from throwing her arms round Franzl's neck; but she was ashamed to do so before Pilgrim and Petrowitsch.

"Look!" said she, "these are our children; give them each a kiss, they will not wake."

Franzl was to remain in the sitting room, while Annele went to the kitchen, to get ready something for her to eat. Franzl nodded—"She is very different from what she used to be." The good old woman could not, however, stay long in the parlour, and went to join Annele in the kitchen, who said: "Oh, what a luxury to be able to light a good fire!"

Franzl looked at her in surprise. She could not understand being so thankful for all the common things of life, which are too often accepted by us as mere matters of course.

"What do you say to my white hair?" asked Annele.

"I wish I could give you mine, for it is still quite black; and it will never turn grey, for my mother often told me I had a good head of hair when I was born."

Annele smiled, and said it had been so ordained; and that it was well she should bear about with her a lasting token that she had been in the jaws of death, and must now be doubly good in the world. "You forgive me, too, don't you, Franzl? I assure you I thought of you at the hour when death seemed very near."

Franzl burst into tears.

It was indeed wonderful to see the transformation that had taken place in Annele. When she heard the church bells ringing for the first time, she took her little girl in her arms, and, making her clasp her hands, she exclaimed, "Oh, my child, I little thought we should ever hear these sounds again!" And when Franzl brought in the first pailful of water, she cried, "Oh, how pure and refreshing spring water is! I thank our Heavenly Father who gives it to us!"

While the men had almost entirely recovered the awful hours when they had been momentarily exposed to destruction, Annele seemed to herself to have risen from the dead; she was now mild and gentle, and every hasty word went to her heart, so that Franzl often lamented to Pilgrim, and said, "I fear Annele will not live long, there is something so holy and unearthly in her look."

The escape of the inhabitants of the house on the Morgenhalde, was the cause of an event passing almost unperceived, that would otherwise have been a source of much talk and discussion.

On the second day after Lenz's rescue, the body of a man was found in a wooded ravine near Knuslingen, buried under the snow frozen. It was that of Pröbler. No one regretted his fate so much as Lenz, for he could not help thinking that it was his voice he had heard calling him, the night he left him; and he suspected something more in the death of the miserable old man than other people imagined, but he kept these thoughts to himself.

Annele prospered in Petrowitsch's large house, and was soon as fresh and blooming as ever.

They remained till late in the summer with their old uncle, till their own house was repaired and restored. Petrowitsch was not unfrequently rather crabbed. It made him very angry to see little Wilhelm jump on chairs and sofas, where Büble, however, might stretch himself at his ease.

Petrowitsch could not get rid of a bad cough he had got, from being buried in the snow. The physician advised him to visit some baths, but he refused to go. He did not say so, but he thought, if he was to die, he would rather die at home, and then all longing for home would be at an end. He often went with little Wilhelm to the Spannreute, the hill behind the house, where a vast number of well-grown larches had been planted to shelter the house, and deep trenches dug.

One day he said harshly to the boy: "Wilhelm, you are just like Büble; you can't go on the straight path, you are not content with that. You are only happy when rushing about, and jumping over hedges and ditches; that's your grand pleasure! Yes, Büble, you are just as bad; you two are capital playfellows!"

Then little Wilhelm replied: "Uncle, a dog is not a man, and a man is not a dog."

This simple speech of the child softened the old man's heart so much, that he begged Lenz, when he again took possession of his own house, to leave little Wilhelm with him.

It was Annele who chiefly urged a speedy return to their home on the Morgenhalde. Once she would have considered it Paradise to live in Petrowitsch's house, to be kind to the old man while he lived, and to inherit his wealth when he died; but now her sole wish was to pass the rest of her days, peacefully and frugally, in their solitary home.

The death of her mother, which was concealed from her for some time, was a heavy blow to her. All her misfortunes seemed to have been crowded into that one terrible night.

Wilhelm remained with Petrowitsch, who asked Pilgrim also to live with him. Those who were passing the house, often heard neighing like a foal, grunting like a pig, whistling like a nightingale, and hooting like an owlet; and often an old and a young child's head were seen at the window: it was Pilgrim and his young godson, trying to vie with each other, to see who could imitate most animals. And then the real barking of a dog was heard; it was Büble barking. And last of all, a loud laugh, interrupted, however, by coughing; it was Petrowitsch, who was incessantly laughing at the pranks of the old boy and the young one, till his cough stopped his merriment. He had not left the village for years, and he maintained that so much laughing was better for his health than any baths.

It was now the second summer since that eventful night. Lenz was working busily, and had now three journeymen under him, and all was going on prosperously.

One day Lenz went to his uncle, and said: "I never yet asked you for anything."

"But I will ask you something, which is, to be so good as to ask me for nothing."

"Not for myself, certainly, but for Faller. He was seized with severe hoarseness in getting us out of the snow. He must go to some Baths."

"Very well; here is money for the purpose. Tell him he must go in my stead, and float away my cough too. It is very good in you to ask nothing for yourself. You help yourself; that is always best."

It cost no little trouble to persuade Faller to go to the Baths; but Annele at last succeeded, through his wife.

Annele had now two friends, certainly very different from each other in every point. The one was the Doctor's Amanda, and the garden on the Morgenhalde had a great many cuttings from the Doctor's garden. Annele took much pleasure now in gardening; she had learned how to tend and nurse the plants herself. Her second friend was Faller's wife. "You are more in my own station," said Annele often, "for you too are a clockmaker's wife." Almost unconsciously, however, the entire subserviency of Faller's wife gratified her, for she was a combination of friend and servant.

Faller went to the Baths, where Annele's second sister was, and where he met an old acquaintance. The bath master was the former Landlord of the "Golden Lion," who, after the death of his wife, had retired to this place. He had the same benevolent air, and patronised every one whom he met. The trials he had endured seemed to have passed very lightly over him, for he was remarkably cheerful and communicative. He commissioned Faller to inform the whole village, and the whole country, that he had been comparatively innocent. He told him that his wife had misled him, and then affected the most entire ignorance and unconsciousness; and, even if he had been far more guilty than he really was, he had done ample penance for his sins in one solitary hour. He proceeded to detail to Faller, how his wife had denounced and exposed him on the very morning of his ruin, while, in fact, she was the one chiefly to blame. It seemed a relief to him to abuse Brazil, where, he said, no justice was to be found, or he would now, from his speculations in that country, have been a rich man. He then praised the Spa, and the good milk, which performed miracles; and if there were only gaming tables established here, it would be the most fashionable Spa in the whole country.

Faller came home again; but in the early spring, just as the snow was again melting, he died.

Shortly after his death, Petrowitsch was also buried. He had often conquered death; for since autumn his violent cough had become so much worse, that he constantly expected to choke; and in fact one of those attacks carried him off at last, quite suddenly.

Just as the Doctor had prophesied, so it was. Petrowitsch possessed nothing but an annuity, which he had secured by sacrificing the remains of his capital, for the greater proportion of it had been swallowed by the gaming tables at Baden-Baden.

Many discrepancies and contradictions in Petrowitsch's conduct, were thus explained. Above all, the Doctor maintained that the old man had been angry with the world, because he was angry with himself.

Lenz took one of Faller's sons to live with him, the little girl was left with her mother, and Kathrine, the farmer's wife, adopted the twins—she, indeed, only wished to take one, but the children refused to be separated.

Franzl was proud and thankful to be able to tell her old, kind friend Kathrine, the present state of the Morgenhalde. "I do not know," said she, "which Annele spoils the most—her husband or myself. The angels in heaven must rejoice, when they see how these two live together. You know I am from Knuslingen: no one can take me in; and though I don't wish to boast, I am pretty sharp, and see more than most people. At first they were still a little afraid of each other, like a house that has been burnt down—the moment you dig in it, the flames are apt to burst out afresh. They were alarmed lest any thoughtless word should tear open an old wound, until they by degrees gradually discovered that each was changed for the better, and mutually loved each other dearly; and what they used to imagine malice, and ill temper, irritating both so grievously once upon a time, they found to be only sorrow, at not having fallen on the right mode of making each other happy. All thoughts of keeping an inn are at an end with Annele; and I must say my Lenz has become much more manly and energetic. The Choral Society is changed into a Polytechnic; and they all say that Lenz appears there to the greatest advantage, for he is very clever. They have some office there: I can't quite explain what it means—but it is something to benefit everybody. My Lenz is the head, and he is called Master of the Union. When you see the Balancemaker from Knuslingen, he can tell you all about it better than I can, for he is a member also. Do you know that my Lenz had a fine silver medal sent to him from England, because his musical clock won the prize at the Great Exhibition? And when he showed the medal to Annele, he said: 'I am so happy for your sake, because it shows you I can do something.' Then she cried, and said—'That is a shred from our buried life—never wake it again. I need no testimonial of your merits from others: I can give you the best myself.'

"When she spoke thus, he looked up to his mother's picture, and said; 'Mother I you may rejoice in heaven, for we are happy!'"

Kathrine heard this good report with sincere pleasure. Franzl, however, was like a wound-up piece of clockwork. She continued:—"And did you hear what we inherited from Petrowitsch? Nothing but his dog, who will neither eat a morsel of potato, nor a bit of bread: he should soon learn to do so, I can tell him; but my Lenz is far too good to the dog, and says he saved little Marie's life. So not one kreuzer did we inherit from our rich uncle. The Doctor, it seems, said so long ago. He was in some Sickly Insurance, I think they call it, or some such name, and had nothing but a good annuity. Now it is evident why he was so hard and tough. And it is also come

out that his capital, that he had scraped together in so many different parts of the world, all went at the gambling table. Yes; there is no doubt that gamblers are often at the same time the stupidest, as well as the cleverest men. The Doctor said so, and what he says is always sure to come true. Won't you stay here till tomorrow? The Doctor's old mother is to be buried then—the very last of the old generation. She was not quite seventy-eight. My Lenz said, when his uncle died, 'I am rather glad that I don't get anything from him—I shall now help myself, and trust to no one else.' He intends to take his own son Wilhelm, and young Faller, as apprentices; but he says they must first leave home and travel."

"And are they good and kind to you?" asked Kathrine, merely to say something.

"Good Heavens! kind!—they are only too kind. I don't know what use I am of, that they pretend they could not be happy without me. It is only a sad pity that I can't help getting old; but my grandmother was eighty-three when she died, and I dare say she was in reality ninety-three, for all old people make great mistakes about their age, never having learnt either to read or to write. I may live to be as old. I eat and drink well, and sleep like a top. All prospers in our house. And see! the wood is beginning to grow famously, and it now belongs to us; and as surely as the wood is now growing as fast as it can, where God has placed it, and thrives just as it ought, so surely is everything in our house increasing and prospering. These are fine shady young trees, are they not? I hope to live to see them large timber."

Kathrine had not time to wait for that; and when she was on her way home with the twins, escorted part of the way by Lenz, and Annele, and Faller's widow, Franzl called out to her from the kitchen—"Kathrine, be prepared to stand godmother to our next."

* * * * *

This is the story of Lenz and Annele of the Morgenhalde; and now we know why the young mother has white hair, and why, at the moment of parting with her son, she begs him to bring her home a plant of Edelweiss.

When Lenz came home, he found a garland of fresh flowers hung over the picture of his mother. He nodded gratefully to Annele. She had always thus cherished the memory of this day. It was now eighteen years since his mother had been buried. They did not say it to each other, but they knew in their hearts, that the memory of their admirable mother bloomed always afresh in their hearts, just as the flowers in the fields, year after year, bear fresh blossoms.

Faller's widow and her daughter dined with them. On the former lamenting—"Oh! that my husband had only lived to see our twin sons setting off together to travel!"—Lenz told her how much she ought to rejoice, that the twins that Kathrine had adopted years ago, had done so well in the world. The one, who was a soldier, had become a corporal; and the other was to inherit his adopted father's property. Her daughter, a tall slender girl of fifteen, said she had promised to write to her brother, and to Wilhelm, the first of every month.

After dinner Lenz returned to work as usual. This day eighteen years, he had soothed a much more excited state of mind by work. It was invariably his custom to master all his emotions in his workshop. Annele sat beside him with her needlework. She was no longer restless, and her eyes no longer flashed with impatience, but had a sweet and calm expression; and Lenz's work always succeeded better when she was near. She spoke little, and the whole course of her present thoughts might be guessed from her saying—"Our Wilhelm has six shirts of that fine linen, that your excellent mother spun with her own hands."

The places of the two lads were quickly filled, for from all sides people pressed forwards to place their sons with Lenz.

Franzl was particularly proud and pleased, that Lenz took a grandson of the Balancemaker in Knuslingen, as an apprentice.

In the evening the Schoolmaster arrived, with a large bundle of papers under his arm. He laid them down. You could plainly read on them, in large letters—"Acts of the Clockmakers' Union."

The Schoolmaster begged Lenz, before the Members of the Union assembled, to walk with him in the wood. Lenz went with him. In the mean time Annele placed two rows of chairs straight in the room, for Lenz was Master of the Union.

THE END.

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